



HIIM REPORT

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Reflections on 10-Day Trip to India

HOUSE OF ISRAEL
INTERNATIONAL
MINISTRIES



Abiding in the Hope of Israel

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“When our feet hit Indian soil, you will be with us. Every step in India will be one that you take as well. Every village that we enter, you will enter also. And when we sit down to talk with an Indian Jew, you will be the fulfillment of the Word of God: *‘And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.’*” (from February’s **HIIM Report**)
You did all of that, and we could only do it because of your support. Thank you.

THE STORY BEHIND INDIA—As most of you know, in the last 11 years I have not been able to leave the States. Most of my ministry has been operating through representatives. Praise the Lord! God enabled us to help many Beta Yisrael in Ethiopia, Israel, and America. A journey the Lord put in my heart years back has happened – going to India. Morris Ruddick (you will hear from him on page 2) and I just returned from a 10-day fact-finding trip to India in search of Indian Jewry.

people viewed me as one of their brothers.

A SPIRITUAL CONNECTION—In India, the voice of the Lord has witnessed to me in a clear way that the Indian people are crying out to know the only true God. God wants a man who will say like Isaiah, “Here I am, Lord, send me.” I am willing to go and proclaim the good news to the people of India. Many wonderful things happened during those divinely inspired ten days.

A PHYSICAL CONNECTION—When I was in Israel, many people told me I look Indian in origin. Maybe they were right that my ancestors were Indian Jews.

THE SEARCH IS ON — From the meetings to all the driving around, everything was very meaningful and intense. Morris and I were so happy to work together, searching for the lost sheep of Israel whose ancestors suffered in the Inquisition. I really appreciate all the work my dear brother Morris did on this trip. Our search uncovered many clues, but we know that we have more to do to complete the puzzle regarding the Indian Jews.

When we arrived in Mumbai, India, the immigrations officer started talking to me in Hindi. He was confused when I did not respond to him; then he gave me a smile and started talking to me in English. After he let us through, Morris and I went to the luggage place to pick up our baggage. An Indian man approached me and started talking to me in Hindi. I was overwhelmed with how the

AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION—Besides that, the God of Israel filled our hearts with compassion for the

Indian people. India has a population of over 1.2 billion people and millions of gods to worship. For the majority of people the standard of living is very poor and humble, but we found them to be nice and friendly, not made bitter by their poverty. Although every country deals with its poor, actually, in some areas, I have never seen this level of poverty in all my life: the homeless and their children searching through garbage for food—it made our hearts cry out to the Lord. I pray that your heart cries out with us as we seek to bring the light of Messiah to God’s people in the East. ✨

Shalom,
Kokeb Gedamu



BAGHDADI JEWS



Despite the name, the Baghdadi Jews are not exclusively of Iraqi origin: many came from Iran, Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen as well. These Jews emigrated

to India around 250 years ago and settled in the city of Bombay (Mumbai). They were traders and quickly became one of the highest earning communities in the city. As philanthropists, some of them donated their wealth to public structures. The David Sassoon Docks and a Sassoon Library are some of the famous landmarks still standing today.

As well as to Bombay (Mumbai), Baghdadi Jews spread to other parts of

India, with an important community in Calcutta. Parts of this community did well in trade (particularly jute, but also tea) and, in later years, contributed as officers to the army. ✪

Pictured - Famous Baghdadi Jew: David Sassoon (1792 - 1864) treasurer of Baghdad 1817- 1829; leader of Jewish community after Baghdadi Jews emigrated there.

(information & picture taken from http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baghdadi_Jews)

More extensive report on India Trip in April Newsletter with a feature on the Bnei Menashe Jews.



A REPORT FROM MORRIS RUDDICK

Prior to our departure I wrote that "in the natural, our task might be described as hunting for a needle in a haystack; or even perhaps taking a shot in the dark." Yet, due to being convinced this mission was born in the heart of God, in retrospect, the Lord has exceeded our expectations. Praying frequently and taking time to discern developments, we have had many wonderful surprises as the Lord has arranged the pieces of this mosaic in a way we could have never done on our own. We have traveled to three cities within India: Pune, Goa and Mumbai. We've visited synagogues, ancient Jewish quarters, interviewed rabbis, pastors, nuns, heads of local ministries, a journalist, community leaders, Christian and Jewish-Christian lay people, along with Indian nationals of both Catholic and Jewish heritage. We've been exposed to the history of the Jews in India; reviewed local books with insights into the time of the inquisition in India and visited the ruins of what some feel may be India's original synagogue in Goa, destroyed during the inquisition. As I share just a few of the highlights, let me say that some things we have sought have not yet materialized; while others have far surpassed what we expected. However, an incredible foundation has been laid for the "next steps." In it all, God has been faithful. We also are so very grateful for your undergirding in prayer, as indeed, through faith and patience we are inheriting the promises (Hebrews 6:12). (Highlights will be featured in the April Newsletter.)



L to R -- Morris Ruddick, CEO of Global Initiatives Foundation, & me arriving in India; Me & 2 Hindu believers whose ancestors came from Portugal; Our visit to an ancient synagogue, their emblem--a Star of David with the eye of David; Judah, 82, born of Jewish parents, raised in a Catholic Church; Nuns showing us ancient church documents with info on the lost sheep of Israel.

A SPECIAL NOTE OF GRATITUDE:

I would like to say thank you from the depths of my heart. I love all of you and am grateful for those who have supported and prayed for us on this, our first journey to India to find the lost sheep of Israel. A special "thank you" goes to Shery in New Jersey, Dr. Winer from Philadelphia, Morris from Denver, and Pastor Rajesh from India. I know the many sacrifices you made to make possible this, our first exploratory mission to India. My friends, please pray about how God would have you sow into our next trip. You have helped us in planting the seeds. Will you help us water them? May God bless you abundantly from Zion. — Kokeb

