

Hindus in South Africa

Between 1860 and 1911, hundreds of ships carried over 150,000 Indians, mostly Hindus, from the Indian cities of Chennai and Kolkata, to work in the British Colony of Natal, in what is now modern day South Africa.

During this time many free Indians, including Hindus who were artisans and traders, also immigrated and built prosperous lives for themselves. Many of those who had arrived as indentured labourers also chose to stay on and gained a form of freedom, although they faced deep discrimination for many years to come.

In 1893, after studying law in London and returning to India for a few years, 23 year old Mahatma Gandhi arrived in South Africa to begin practicing law. He would spend the next twenty-one years of his life in South Africa, developing and refining his policy of peaceful resistance.

Aided by Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, South African Indians began to stand up to colonial oppression, agitating in particular against the unjust labour laws and the cruel practices of the indentured labour system. After much success organizing the Indian community in South Africa, Gandhi would eventually return to India and go on to become one of the most prominent leaders of the freedom struggle there. In India, Gandhi is popularly called the Father of the Nation.

Today, over half a million Hindus call South Africa home. They are mostly located in the city of Durban, which has been called the largest Indian city outside of India.

In recent years, a significant number of South African Hindus have turned to Christ. However, there is much work still to do among the Hindus of South Africa.



HOW CAN WE
PRAY?



Pray for South African believers, that they would discover and embrace opportunities to witness to their Hindu friends and neighbours.
(COLOSSIANS 4:5-6)

Pray for diaspora Hindus with positive relationships with Christ-followers to see Christ's power in their own households.
(LUKE 7:2-10)

Pray that South African Hindus, after discovering the matchless name of Jesus, would be emboldened to explore their distant roots in South Asia and even take up the task of sharing the good news of Jesus there among their ancestors.
(ROMANS 10:14-15)