

The Ancient Hindu Diaspora

Today, we pause to dwell upon an Ancient Hindu Diaspora that came into existence mostly after Jesus commanded His disciples to, **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”** *Matthew 28:19-20*

In ancient times, some forms of Hinduism did extend their influence west, most notably into the region of modern day Afghanistan, but the majority of the Ancient Hindu diaspora headed east and settled around South East Asia, forming communities that have lasted so many centuries that they are considered native faiths and peoples of the lands that they are now a part of.

As early as the first centuries, sea-based trade from South Asia led to cultural exchange in places such as modern day Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. And crossing land, interaction also took place between South Asia and South East Asia via modern day Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Local indigenous faiths mixed with various Hindu traditions, and produced an array of communities that embraced a Hindu identity. This spread of ideas, practices and beliefs, while significant in its influence, was not accompanied by large-scale migration of Hindus out of South Asia. Instead, small groups of dedicated individuals went as traders, sailors, priest and pundits, participating in an exchange of goods and ideas that became deeply intertwined with new host cultures. Many courts welcomed Hindu ideas, mythology and ceremonies and created a synthesis that can still be seen today across the region.

Some continually existent communities with ancient ties to the South Asian Hindu community, include the eastern Cham people group in Vietnam, Hindus with ancient roots on the Malay peninsula (which hosts over 2 million Hindus today) and some smaller communities in Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia. Indonesia itself has the fourth largest population of Hindus outside of South Asia, with over 4.5 million residing mainly in Bali and Java.

HOW CAN WE PRAY?



Pray that Hindus in this region would encounter Jesus in real and powerful ways. **(HEBREWS 9:14)**

Pray that these Hindu peoples, would see the great light of Jesus, who desires to be their glory and everlasting light. **(ISAIAH 9:2 AND 60:19-20)**

Pray that God will wipe away the tears of the many lost peoples in this region and that they will turn to Him to have death swallowed up forever. **(ISAIAH 25:8)**

