

A River of Life

"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" ~John 7:38

The Ganges River in India is the most sacred river to Hindus and is personified as a goddess or "Mother Ganga." It is believed that those who die in proximity to the river will go to "heaven" with all their sins washed away. The cremation of a dead body at the banks of Ganges, or even casting the ashes of the deceased into its waters, is also believed to lead to the salvation of the departed. Ironically, considering that the waters of the River Ganges are purifying to the soul by all Hindus, the Ganges River stands as one of the most polluted rivers on earth.

Ravindra grew up in a staunch Hindu family and understands the

religious significance of the Ganges River. As a young man, he took his religion seriously and obeyed the strict Hindu rituals and ceremonies.

As he grew into adulthood, Ravindra married. He dreamed of living happily in a committed Hindu relationship. He hoped for a blessed life. Early in their marriage, however, he discovered that his beliefs were opposite those of his



Ravindra and his wife

Prayer Points

- Pray for the discipleship of new Indian believers as they turn from worshipping over 33 million gods to the One True God. May they grow in their faith and knowledge of God and His Word.
- Please pray for divine boldness and courage in the lives of new believers.
- Pray for open doors and access into areas and among people who need to hear the Good News.



Ganges River

wife. Ravindra was a devout Hindu. His wife, on the other hand, was a Christian and a devout follower of Jesus Christ. Ravindra was angry and not in favor of her biblical beliefs.

Ravindra's wife continued to follow Jesus and serve Him. This made him so angry and frustrated that, out of desperation, he took her back to the house of her parents and left her there.

In the meantime, Ravindra moved to southern India and began working in a factory. After six months, he suddenly fell ill. He tried several ways to regain his health, but nothing was working. He was physically miserable and also began to miss his wife. He regretted the pain and loneliness he had caused her. Ravindra decided to journey back to her, but was concerned as to how she would receive him.

Upon seeing her, he was surprised when she welcomed him back. She committed to daily prayer for his health. Although Ravindra couldn't quite understand it, he knew that his wife had something special... something different. He also realized there was a big difference between Christianity and Hinduism.

Over time, Ravindra's health



Hindu ritual in the Ganges River



New believers line up for Baptism in an Indian village

improved. He was no longer sick. He also became increasingly drawn to, and interested in, the faith of his wife. As a result, he started asking questions.

Ravindra noticed that when his wife spoke about Jesus, she talked about Him as if He was a very close friend — as if He was someone with whom she had a personal relationship. She shared with Ravindra that Jesus was the only way to obtain forgiveness for his

sins and

receive eternal

life. The

truth of her

statements

hit him very

hard. He could not stop

thinking about them.

Ravindra had lived his entire life on the strict performance of religious duties and purity of mind and body. This new teaching was very foreign to him. He began to realize the challenge of having a relationship with hundreds and hundreds of Hindu gods.

Finally, Ravindra decided to attend the house church with his wife. Over time he began to converse with other believers. And for the first time, he began to understand there was nothing he could do to earn the forgiveness of the one true God and secure a

place in heaven for eternity. Without faith in Jesus Christ, all of his good works were useless.

Ravindra prayed and asked Jesus to be his only God, Savior, and Master. He felt new hope and peace flowing through him and began telling everyone about this personal and loving God.

God used the strong faith of Ravindra's wife to point him to the Savior and the good news of Jesus Christ. He shares this about her; ***"My wife became part of God's great river of life bringing hope to a dead world."***

Together, Ravindra and his wife have planted over ten house churches and baptized dozens of new believers. Many of those believers are now telling others about the saving power of Jesus and starting house churches in their villages and communities.



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