

MAY 2008

WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH PROVERBS 29:18

CATCH THE VISION



The
Villages
of India

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VOICE OF GOD RECORDINGS



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Villages of India

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Which One Are You?

Believer, Make-Believer, Unbeliever. You're in one of these classes.

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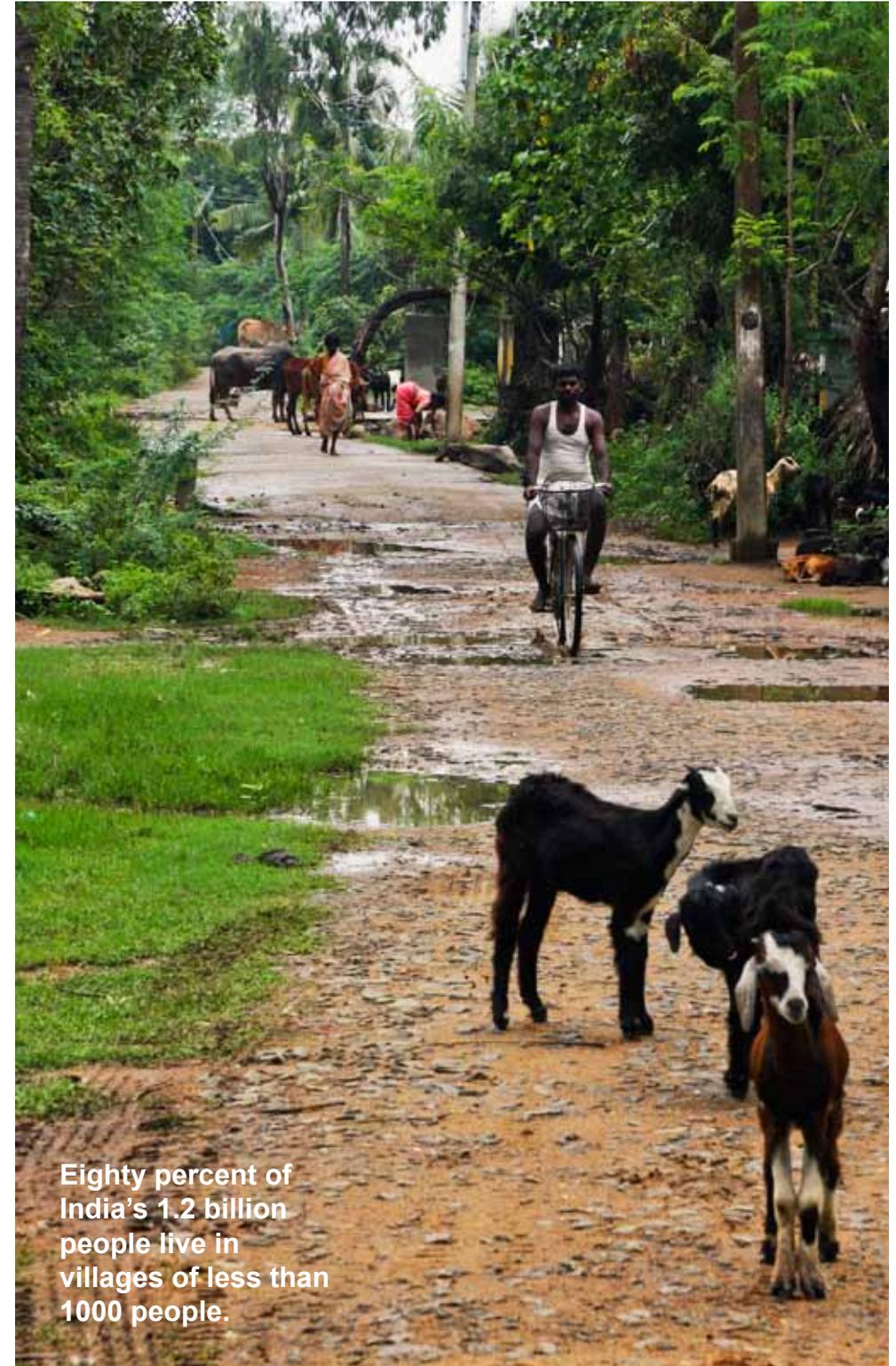
Catch The Vision Magazine

It is our prayer that the *Catch The Vision* publication will serve as your personal connection to the Bride of Christ in other lands.

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My Thoughts - Brother Joseph Branham

How could I start a day without speaking to Him first?



Eighty percent of India's 1.2 billion people live in villages of less than 1000 people.



The dot on the forehead of Indian women (left) is called a bindi. It may symbolize marriage, but in general, it is worn as decoration by both men and women. This woman looks intimidating with the bindi, paint, and gold studs, but she turned out to be a kind and polite person. The brothers gave her a Message book, and she promised to read it. You might be seeing this face - without the decorations - on the other side.

You never know when the Light will strike a predestinated seed. The brothers plant the seeds (right), they are watered by the Word, and God gives the increase.

Whether in India, China, Africa, or the United States, children are children. They could be seen running up and down the streets, playing with whatever toys they could get their hands on. Mother is always keeping a watchful eye (below).





Every once in a while, the brothers will come across Christian worshippers. The Hindu culture still has a strong influence on their worship, even though they have accepted Christ into their lives. Christian shrines like this are common.



So diverse are the beliefs, that Hinduism is often called a “museum of religions.” It is separated from most other religions in that Hinduism does not advocate the worship of one particular deity. Millions of gods are worshipped in India.

The names of *Vishnu the preserver*, *Shiva the destroyer*, and *Brahma the great creator* are continuously called out in prayer by almost one billion worshippers in the country of India. From the most remote village to the swarming city of Bombay, pagan idols are seen at every turn. In the cities, giant holy temples with golden statues of Buddha, Ram, and Krishna are packed with worshippers. Images of idols like Ganesha, Maya, Indra, and Shakti stand guard over hundreds of thousands of tiny villages throughout India. The intermingling of millions of gods forms a bewildering conglomeration that clouds the minds of the worshippers.

To add to the confusion, Hinduism preaches the *transmigration of souls*, meaning the soul is reborn according to the deeds of a person during his life. Thus, a person who has sinned may be reborn as a lower animal such as a cow or a dog. An animal, through his good deeds, may very well be reborn as a human. As far as religion is concerned, almost anything goes in India.

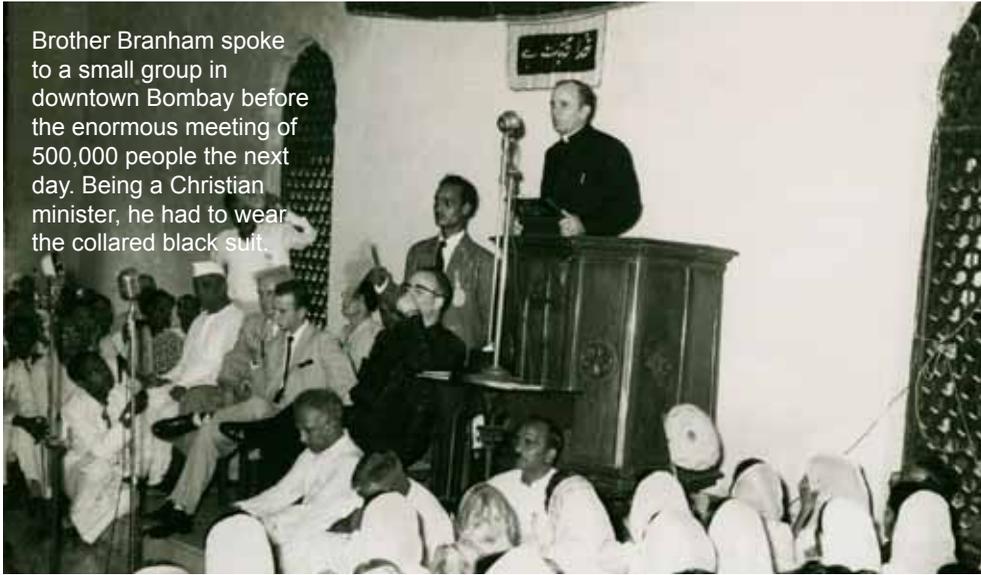
Through the chaotic haze created by these idols and superstitions, the Lord Jesus can be seen calling His children from the confusion that is called Hinduism.

The Beginning

It all started with one man. A “holy man” from America was rumored to have spiritual gifts that cast out evil spirits and even heal the sick. The word spread through Bombay and throughout the countryside. Curious villagers journeyed from far away to see this miracle worker.

Soon, word came to a devoted worshipper of the sun god, Surya. Twenty years earlier, Surya *rewarded* his loyal servant by turning his eyes white with blindness. Without sight, the man did his best to provide a meager living for his wife and two sons, but he longed to see again. The ojhas (witchdoctors) could cast spells onto his enemies and bring floods to destroy the villages, but there was no hope for his sight to return. Or was there?

Brother Branham spoke to a small group in downtown Bombay before the enormous meeting of 500,000 people the next day. Being a Christian minister, he had to wear the collared black suit.



Could this holy man give him back his sight? This was not possible for any god that he worshipped. Maybe this man would introduce him to another, special god.

Soon, the entire city of Bombay was buzzing about a deaf child that could now hear. The previous night, hundreds of people witnessed the healing of the boy's ears. Could this be true? A god that heals the sick? The new god was indeed powerful! That evening, more than half a million people gathered to hear about this god and see if the rumors were true.

The holy man came to the platform as the sun set on the excited crowd. Bent on overpowering him, the ojhas began to cast spells. The doubters accused him of being a psychic. Nothing they did affected his resolve as the sick were brought before him. Soon, the blind man had his opportunity. As he drew closer, he could feel something much different than he was used to. The holy man stopped and looked into the audience. "I challenge any religion here

to come and give him his sight, and he will join your religion and so will I." A silence fell over the crowd. Even the ojhas were helpless. The blind man could not see the person speaking to him, but he could hear the Voice. There was something about that Voice.

The holy man turned and asked, "Will you be willing, sir, to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and will forsake all idols and everything else, and will serve Him as long as you live? If you will, raise your hands." The trembling hand raised into the air. "Lord Jesus, let it be known that Thou art God."

The one true God made Himself known on that day in the autumn of 1954, and planted a seed that has grown into thousands of Indian believers.

The Villages

The majority of the 1.1 billion people that inhabit India live in rural villages. Once outside the cities, time seems to go backwards hundreds of years. Most of the



Life in the villages of India steps back hundreds of years. Motorized vehicles are rare, so most of the work is accomplished the same way it has been for a thousand years.

500,000 villages of India are made up of less than 1,000 people. Ox-drawn carts carry vegetables to the market. Fields are cultivated by hand. Water is carried from a local well. Homes are made with mud bricks and grass roofs. Few villages have electricity or plumbing, and most are almost completely isolated from the outside world. Their world is small, but by the hand of a few Holy Spirit filled missionaries, many of the people in these villages have received an eternal blessing.

Early on Saturday morning, the brothers bowed their heads in prayer. "Father, may Your Holy Spirit guide us to Your lost sheep. May we be a witness of Your eternal power. Help us to represent Your prophet and messenger to these people." They fill the van with Message books, and drive into the unknown.

They are trusting in the Lord to lead them. They have no plan, just faith. The Lord directs their path to a village of about 100 people called Thirukazukundram, meaning the "blessed

place of the eagles." Brother Joel sees a pair of shoes lying outside the door of one of the huts. There must be someone home. He walks to the door, leans into the undersized opening, and asks if someone might have time to talk to him.

A young Hindu woman respectfully comes out to meet Brother Joel. Speaking in Tamil, he introduces the prophet, "I would like to tell you about a very special man that served the one true God, Jesus Christ." She is honored that he would freely share his religion, and gladly accepts the books about this great prophet.

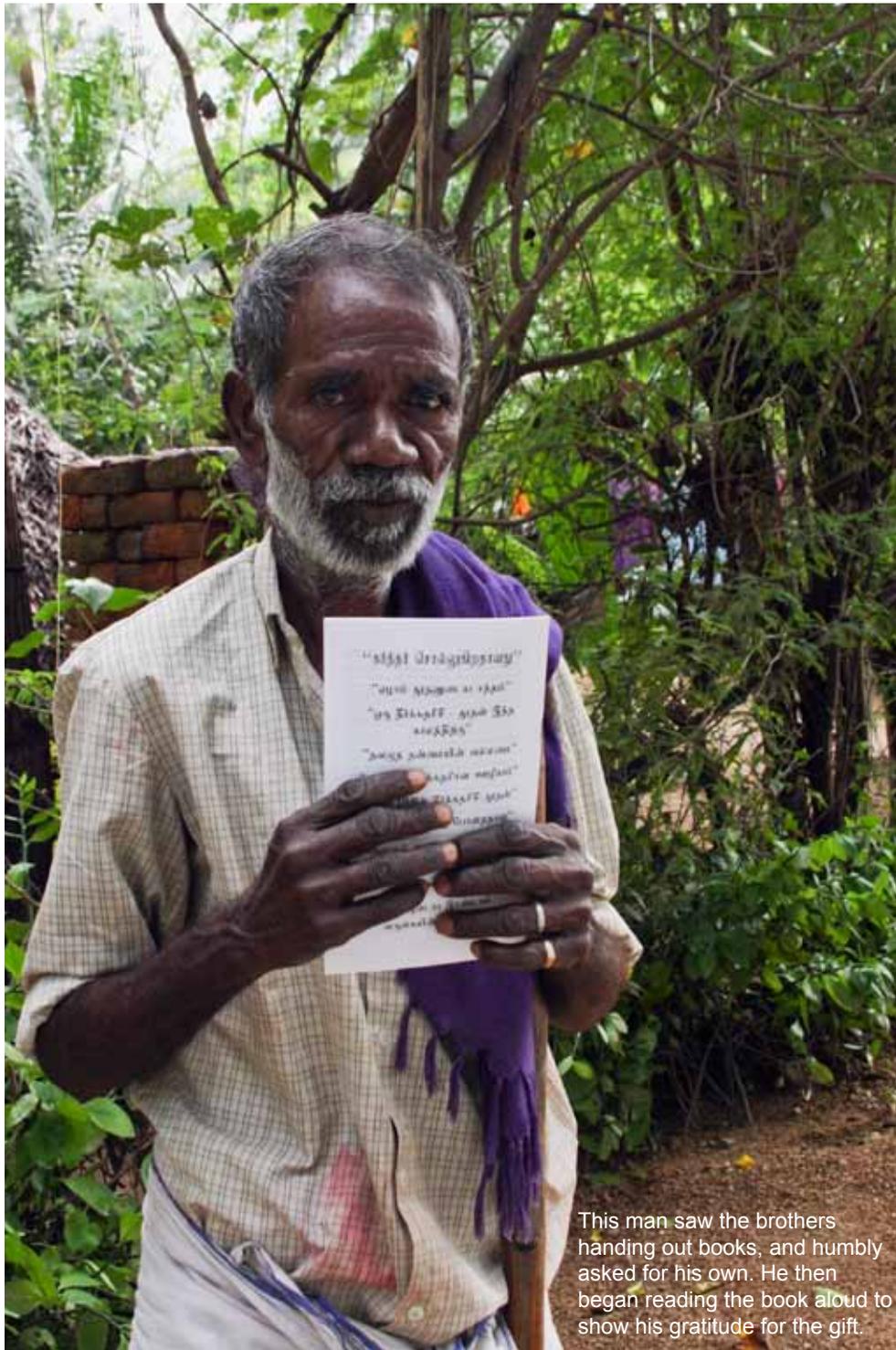
Farther down the muddy road into the village, Brother Joel meets a woman carrying a water pot. His thoughts immediately go back to a familiar story. Like the woman at the well, this woman eagerly listens to the testimony of a God that forgives all her sins. She cannot read, but she still wants one of the books. Brother Joel promises that when he returns, she will be able to hear the



The brothers went from house to house witnessing to the villagers about Brother Branham's Message (left). Most were honored that someone cares enough to freely give them as many books as they can read. A crowd quickly formed (above) while the brothers were witnessing to a man about rapture, oncoming judgment, and the end of the world.

Many of the villages have open sewers, and the stench is often unbearable. Although the living conditions are poor by western standards, the Holy Spirit is just as welcome in one of these grass huts (below) as in the greatest of churches.





This man saw the brothers handing out books, and humbly asked for his own. He then began reading the book aloud to show his gratitude for the gift.



“Are you here to give us money?” she asks with a gleam of hope in her eyes. “No, I am here to give you the Word of God,” He confidently answers. She smiles and looks up, “Tell me about this God.”



Life in the Indian villages is slow. There is a lot of work to do, and a lot of time to do it. The villagers were fixing a damaged roof when the brothers approached. Like most of the people they meet on their missionary trips, these women gladly listened to the testimonies.

prophet's Voice with her own ears. She hurries off to tell her family about these wonderful stories.

The people that live in the villages of India are poor, but the next village seems to be the poorest of the poor. There is no sewer, so the stench is almost unbearable. Goats walk through the barren yards. Trenches are dug

around the grass huts to prevent rainwater from muddying the dirt floors. Cattle and villagers bathe side by side in the town spring. Many of the townspeople are busy replacing roofs that were damaged by a recent storm. A smiling man approaches the brothers to see why they are honored with visitors. They greet the man and say, "We want

to tell you about the end-time Message. It tells of rapture, oncoming judgment, and the end of the world. And there is an eternal place of rest for a chosen few." Others hear the conversation and approach. Soon a small crowd is quietly listening to these odd stories about a single, jealous God that will not allow the worship of any idol.

The brothers move on from house to house, testifying to whoever will listen. Farther into the village, an old woman sits in the door of her family's house, seemingly waiting for something. "Are you here to give us money?" she asks with a gleam of hope in her eyes. "No, I am here to give you the Word of God." She smiles and looks up, "Tell me about this God."



Brother Joel's thoughts immediately went to a familiar story when he met this woman carrying a waterpot.

The Work

Brother Joel Paramanadam has been in charge of the VGR office in Madras since 1985. He and the brothers at the office have a deep burden for the wandering souls of the Indian countryside. Every weekend, Brother Joel and one or two of the office employees load up the van and drive out of town. They don't know where the Lord will lead them. They simply go by faith, trusting that the same Jesus Christ who led the apostle Paul to bring the Message to the people of Corinth, will lead them.

Like the city of Corinth, the villages of India are plagued by strange gods and

violence. The ojhas are figures of awe, fear, and suspicion among the people. They take advantage of the confusion created by the mystifying array of idols, and make the village dependant on their mystical powers. It is not uncommon for one of these ojhas to cast a spell on an enemy of the village or even an unsuspecting missionary. Even ministers of the Gospel have fallen prey to their wicked spells. They have such influence that, by their direction, parents have murdered their own children to ward off "evil spirits." Whether it is superstition or an actual force of the enemy, it is difficult to deny the power of the ojha.

Three missionary-minded brothers from another country recently visited our office in Madras. All three looked perfectly normal to the office manager, but there was something desperately wrong. At one of their stops, two of the brothers witnessed an evil spirit enter the third. The brother would not eat or drink, and said that he desired the torment and flames that he could find only if he returned to that village. He pleaded with the brothers to let him return to the village and take his own life. For the next three days, he neither ate nor slept. Finally, despite his objections, the brothers were able to get him on a flight back home, where his local assembly put the matter before the Lord in prayer. After a long battle, the spirit left him and he returned to normal. To this day, he does not remember anything about his trip to the villages of India.

The brothers do not approach their mission lightly. They are wary of the forces of the enemy, and approach each trip in earnest prayer. Most of the people

they meet are receptive and honored that someone would care enough to visit their village. But lurking in the shadows, the demons are always present.

The VGR staff understands the risks, but the burden for lost souls overcomes every fear. Protected by the shield of the Holy Spirit, they draw their swords and boldly invade the enemy's ground to gather the Lord's sheep. Their efforts have been rewarded by hundreds of jewels in God's crown.

During one of the trips, Brother Joel met a staunch Hindu named Sharma. The man claimed to be possessed with demon spirits that would not allow him to sleep. Neither the witchdoctors nor the gods could remove the demons. It would take something much more powerful than Hindu superstitions to heal this man. Like roaches fleeing the light, the spirits left him as soon as he began reading the first Message book. A deep desire in his heart wanted more. The former Hindu then read the Bible from cover to cover. He read Message book after Message book over and over again. "What else did the prophet say? I want to hear more." Rather than a confusing never-ending quest to be liberated from the cycles of reincarnation, he found rest in the Absolute. Now every time Brother Joel visits to bring him more messages, Brother Sharma has a new story: "Women should not wear pants! The prophet said it is a sin for a woman to wear a man's clothes. And she shouldn't cut her hair either." On Brother Joel's latest trip, the story was a familiar one: "Did you know that God raises the dead? God gave the Shunammite woman a son, then he died, and the prophet Elisha brought him back to life."

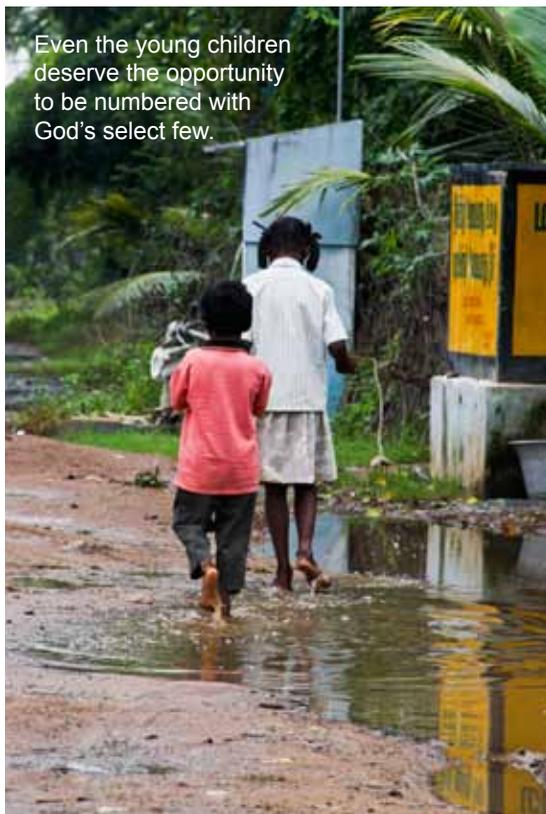
The Results

The Hindu people are tolerant of other religions. Hinduism has no definite origin or single holy book, so, like their gods, there are many variations in their beliefs. They have no trouble accepting Jesus as God's Son. However, they do have trouble accepting Him as *God's only begotten Son*. To say that God has only one Son would deny the many gods that make up the Hindu religion. However, even a Hindu cannot refuse the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The brothers that travel into the villages often demonstrate that power through healing the sick and casting out devils, but their main objective is to spread the end-time Message. The salvation of one soul is worth ten thousand worlds.

The God that we serve is as alive today as the day He walked the earth, **AND HE HAS A VOICE**. The same Voice that the blind sun-worshipper heard in 1954 is today still leading Hindus to the Lord Jesus Christ. Because of the burden placed on the hearts of believers throughout the world, over 100,000 believers in India are now listening to that same Voice. The prayer, "Lord Jesus, let it be known that Thou art God," is ringing true throughout India. In what may be the most unlikely place – a mud hut in an idol-worshipping village – God can be heard speaking to His chosen few. Once the Light strikes the predestinated seed, no idol or witchdoctor can deny the one true God, **JESUS CHRIST**.

Notable facts for the India office

1. India is an industrial nation with state-of-the-art printing facilities. All the Message books that VGR distributes in India are printed at an Indian printing company.
2. Most of the need in India is for cassette tapes. They are duplicated in the Jeffersonville office, and shipped in containers to our office in Madras. A container weighing 4,520 pounds recently left our docks in Jeffersonville. Within the container were 25,960 tapes. Recently, we have started to make the switch to MP3 CDs.
3. As far as languages, India is one of the most diverse countries in the world. We are currently translating the Message into 14 different languages that are distributed throughout India and neighboring countries. Eight different translators are continuously translating more messages.
4. To date, there have been over 470 messages translated for the Bride of Christ in India.
5. The first VGR office in India was a one-room apartment in Madras. In 1993, we moved to a building with 6,000 square feet of storage and office space. The entire complex was donated by Brother Joel and his wife, Sister Mala.
6. Over 80% of the people in India live in rural villages. The people are served by 850 libraries throughout the country, including one in a leper colony.
7. Believers who do not have access to a tape library receive tapes via a postal lending library.
8. The pictures in this issue of *Catch The Vision* were all taken on a recent missionary trip to the villages of India. ☺



Even the young children deserve the opportunity to be numbered with God's select few.



India Office Staff

(from left to right) Brother Joel, Brother Pabhu, Brother Ruben, Sister Ching, Brother Roy, Sister Mary, Brother Simon

Believer, Make-believer, Unbeliever WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

And a man saying that a man be a prophet, and then saying his Teaching is wrong? If that ain't a money-working scheme, what is? The hour is close at hand when that thing will be pulled out on the scene. Yeah. But that's the kind that, that make-believer, pat you on the back, call you "brother," just as Judas. But, remember, He knowed from the beginning. He still knows. Yes, sir.

Remember, all these listening to this tape, too, that's right, you're in one of them classes. That's exactly right. Now we're going to close. Every person that's here, present, every person that listens to this tape; and even though someday I have to leave this world, these tapes will still live. That's right. See? And you're in one of these classes. You've got to be in one of them. It's exactly. You can't escape it. You're in one of these classes.

Now what? Identify yourself with a Bible character that believed, where you believed the Word when It was vindicated, like I proved It tonight, that it was a vindicated Word always, always contrary to the popular belief.

If you should have lived in the days of Noah, now let me just ask, what side would you have been on, the church side or Noah's side, the prophet? See?

If you'd have lived in the days of Moses, would you have believed Moses' message after It had been proven and vindicated by God? But would you went with Korah and Dathan, and them, and said, "You're not the only holy man. Other people can do these things that you do, too"? See? You'd have to be one, and you are, tonight.





CATCH THE VISION MAGAZINE

We all know that everyone can't go into the missionary field, but we pray that this new *Catch The Vision* publication will bring the missionary field to you.

We are excited about the new format. It will allow us to publish more in-depth articles and print better photographs. The magazine will be written to put you out on the missionary front. We want you to experience the joy of giving a humble Indian a Message book. We want you to shed a tear with the Venezuelan as she gives her heart to the Lord Jesus. We

want you to shout praises with the African as God's mighty Hand casts away every sickness. These people would not have these opportunities if it was not for your burden, and we want to show you the fruits of your labors.

We wish we could send everyone a copy, but because of the high cost of printing and postage, we will only be able to send future issues of the magazine to families and churches that contribute directly to Voice Of God Recordings. We hope that it will keep you well informed of how your contributions are benefiting the Bride of Christ.

Along with the new magazine, we will also be sending out a *CTV Update*. This will replace the *CTV* newsletter and will be sent to the entire mailing list. It will be smaller to save printing and postage costs, but we hope that it will be a blessing to all that believe the Message, whether they contribute to VGR or not.

We are honored to have a part in spreading the Message brought to us by God's prophet, William Marrion Branham. It is our prayer that the *Catch The Vision* publication will serve as your personal connection to the Bride of Christ in other lands.

WMB THOUGHTS

by Bro. Joseph Branham

As I awoke this morning, I began the morning as I do every day; I spoke to Him. How could I start a day without speaking to Him first?

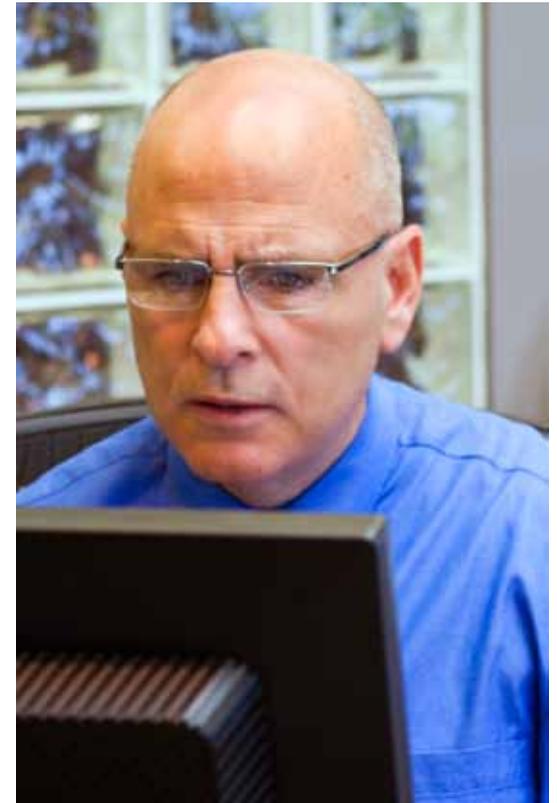
I then began to get ready to come to work. I placed my MP3 player on my side to hear the prophet and the Message that I love so dear. While listening to that Voice and making my breakfast, my heart stirred within me as I heard the prophet speaking the Words of Life.

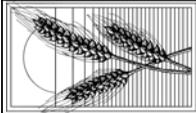
I went into my living room to read my Bible: the book of Acts. How excited I was to read the words of Paul and to think about all he had to endure for this Gospel. As I knelt down to pray, I began to reflect on what an honor and privilege it was to start my day speaking to the Lord; hearing His prophet's voice and the Message that is perfecting and calling out a Bride; reading His Holy Word; worshipping Him; calling upon His Name and knowing He was there to hear my prayer; and having the assurance in my heart that this Word is truth and is alive in my life today.

Paul stood before Agrippa, proclaiming a resurrected Jesus Christ. He had no fear when the serpent bit his hand. He was not afraid. He was so full of the Holy Ghost that he KNEW it could not harm him. Oh Lord, let that Life live in me!

What a privileged people we are. What a time we are living in. To think that He knew us before the foundation of the world and predestined us to be sons and daughters of God: to be living in the time that the saints of old wanted to be living in.

Words can never express the love I have for our Lord and Savior, for this Message, and for you, His Bride. May I never take this Message, or the privilege I have to serve the Bride, for granted.





CATCH THE VISION IS PUBLISHED BY VOICE OF GOD RECORDINGS, INC.

Dedicated to the ministry of God's prophet, William Marrion Branham.

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." REVELATION 10:7

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