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One Week In Laxmipuram

The trip was miraculous from beginning to the end. Although we had applied for visas (Derek and I) about three weeks before the time of departure, the Indian Embassy needed an endorsement from New Delhi. In spite of several faxes and telephone calls, at 4pm on the evening we were travelling, we had no authorisation to enter India. Derek and I fasted and prayed. His Fellowship at Haddenham prayed with him, as did our Fellowship at Emneth. There were prophetic assurances that God wanted us to go and was about to open the door, so that we would be able to travel. Derek packed his suitcases in Haddenham and left home for Cambridge, where he was to spend the last morning at work. I got my things together and a lady evangelist took me to Cambridge, even though a telephone call that morning to the Indian Embassy in London had revealed that there was ostensibly no way we could travel.

Derek and I prayed with our evangelist prayer-partner, and the Lord instructed us to go to the Indian Embassy in London. In obedience, Derek drove us to London. When we arrived at 4pm, we were led of the Lord to apply for an emergency visa, and within a few minutes, we walked out with our passports stamped and okayed for travel. We celebrated the victory with a meal at the home



Family of Dr Ratna Rao:- L-R Anita, Ratna Rao, Joshua, Mercv, Marv

of Derek's cousin near Arnos Grove Tube Station in London, and were then conveyed by car to Heathrow to begin our journey.

We were not met at Chennai Airport in India. It did not bother us too much, as we had both visited last year and knew our way around the place. We put up at Gokulam Park Hotel in Ashok Nagar where we were well received by old friends. It was by now quite late on the night of the 2nd of June and we were both grateful for nice beds in air-conditioned

comfort. After a good night's rest, the Lord again went with us to Chennai Railway Station where we secured comfortable air-conditioned berths in on a train service going to Eluru



Call for Salvation

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in Andhra Pradesh.

We checked out of the hotel and after an overnight journey, arrived at Eluru on the morning of the 4th of June. After a frightening encounter with the police officers at Eluru, we had our first meeting that night at Laxmipuram. We met about a hundred people, the majority of whom were women, in a tent put up for the occasion. Both Derek and I preached the Word of God we had been given and in addition, Derek sang a prophetic song. All the interpretation was done by Rev Dr Ratna Rao. Our meeting ended at 11pm, but we still had the excitement of having our vehicle towed back to our hotel in Eluru, as it broke down on the very uneven surface. We were roused from sleep fairly early on Tuesday, 5th of June, as another session was scheduled at Laxmipuram with the audience of the previous evening. The messages were well received and we had a great feast afterwards in the home of Dr Ratna Rao's brother, Joshua, where the latter's wife, Mary, and their mother Mercy hosted us. We



travelled back to Eluru to rest and confirm our

Visiting Pastors in Goya District, Andhra Pradesh

return flights, only to return to Laxmipuram for a third session – this time on the Holy Spirit. There was a considerable anointing on those meetings, and both the speakers and the audience were greatly blessed. The programme changed radically on Wednesday morning. We all clambered on to a bold -



Open Heaven. God's Holy Spirit manifested in power and glory

fashioned 4-wheel-drive vehicle (a land rover/jeep) and were taken on a tour of the Goya Tribal Mission Fields. We travelled all day, from about 8am to 5.30pm on very rough terrain and visited and encouraged many villages, where the gospel was just being established. We were regaled with tales of supernatural intervention of God in the setting up of facilities for provision and for worship in some of those rural, indigenous population groups. After a



Christian Rice Factory Owner

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short break for food, there was an evening devoted to disbursing gifts to widows and orphans at Laxmipuram.

Joshua's living room, we rushed back from Laxmipuram to Eluru, checked out of the hotel and started the train journey back to Chennai. We needed to rest on the overnight

There was a terrible thunderstorm in the night and we made a start to the day by confirming our return berths (air-conditioned) on the train for getting back to Chennai. We were pressed into participating in the launching of a health scheme by Dr Ratna Rao. The State Chapter of the Indian Medical Association was well represented – the State President, a



School Church in Goya District

Consultant Paediatrician make the important speech of the occasion. His wife, a medical practitioner was also present as well as a Consultant Dermatologist. They were all non-Christians. Both Derek and I made speeches lauding the virtues of a subsidised primary health scheme to serve the poor of the rural areas. After another feast in

journey and again at the Gokulam Park Hotel on arrival (throughout Friday). Apart from the emotional parting from Mama Mercy (Dr Ratna's mother), accompanied by Malathi (wife) and Wanitha (daughter), that was the end of our visit. We had an uneventful trip

through Colombo to Heathrow, London where we landed on Saturday the 9th of June. Derek was taken back to his car at his cousin's place, while Clare Henderson very kindly took me home to Bridget, who had kindly allowed me to travel, in spite of the advanced state of her pregnancy.



Opening of Primary Health Scheme

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Missionary Centre Project. Water storage, pump and bore well.

From the description of our visits, the structure of the vision is clear. Dr Ratna Rao is acutely conscious of the need for the Great Commission to be implemented in his state (Andhra Pradesh). His vision is for the whole of India to be saved. His plan is to bring local converts from each area to Laxmipuram for residential courses in evangelism and church growth principles. The trained personnel are now sent back (usually these are married couples) to evangelise and build living fellowships in their local areas. They would use their local dialects/languages in teaching and preaching. In addition, living among them, the local group of new believers would be disciplined (apprenticed) into communities of love and holiness.

To implement this scheme, Dr Ratna Rao needs the support of all those interested in seeing the Kingdom of God truly established in those areas where the Gospel is almost totally unknown. These missionaries (as in Luke's Gospel chapter 10) would be apprenticed to Dr Ratna Rao, and then sent out without much material support into very poor and heathen areas. They need initial financial provision to start the work (which involves doing what the local people do e.g. farming or rice milling) as well as preaching and teaching. They will be brought back to the centre (Laxmipuram) for days of refresher courses. This is the need. Hab 2:2 suggests writing the vision on tables. Those who see the need can then commit themselves to regularly supporting with prayer but also materially.

Bill Isaacs -Sodeye September 2001