Development, Implementation, And Evaluation Of An Evangelistic Approach For Gujarati Hindu Indians In Kenya

Haren Sthalekar
Andrews University

This research is a product of the graduate program in Doctor of Ministry DMin at Andrews University. Find out more about the program.

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin

Part of the Practical Theology Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin/357

This Project Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Project Documents by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact repository@andrews.edu.
Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF AN
EVANGELISTIC APPROACH FOR GUJARATI HINDU
INDIANS IN KENYA

A Project Report
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Haren Sthalekar
June 1984
DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF AN EVANGELISTIC APPROACH FOR GUJARATI HINDU INDIANS IN KENYA

A project report presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Ministry

by

Haren Sthalekar

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

Gottfried Oosterwal, Chairman

Arnold Kurtz

Allan G. Lindsay

Date approved 7/31/84
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** ........................................... vi

Chapter

I. Introduction ........................................... 1
   - The Task of the Project ............................. 1
   - Justification for the Project ....................... 1
   - Overview of the Project ............................. 4
   - Limitations of the Project ......................... 5

II. Backgrounds of the Hindu Gujarati Indians in Kenya ........................................................................ 7
   - Introduction ........................................... 7
   - Historical Background ................................. 7
   - Sociological Structure ................................ 12
   - General Characteristics of Hinduism ............... 16
   - Comparison between Hinduism and Christianity ... 19
   - Cultural Practices .................................. 23
   - Conclusion .......................................... 27

III. Considerations for an Evangelistic Approach ................................................................................. 29
   - Introduction ........................................... 29
   - Evangelism in the Past ................................. 29
   - Health Evangelism ..................................... 33
   - Incarnational Ministry .................................. 38
   - Cross-Cultural Evangelism and Functional Substitutes for Indigenization .............................. 47
   - Rituals .................................................... 49
   - Festivals .................................................. 51
   - Worship ................................................... 52
   - Music ...................................................... 52
   - Drama ...................................................... 53
   - Ashram ..................................................... 53
   - Summary .................................................. 55

IV. Record of Two Years' Work ................................. 56
   - Introduction ........................................... 56
   - Initial Preparations ..................................... 57
   - Arrival in Kenya and Setting of Goals .............. 58
Chapter

IV. (Continued)

Ascertaining Seventh-day Adventist Contacts with Asians ................................ 62
A Survey of the Asian Community .............................................. 65
Beginning of Contacts, Health Programs, and Rotary Club ......................... 67
Acquainting the Asian with the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the "Total Health Seminar" 72
More Health Programs and Financial Limitations .................................. 77
Moving Residence and More Contacts .......................................... 80
Some Set-Backs and a Turn of Events .......................................... 82
Religious Discussions and Bible Studies ....................................... 85
New Possibilities in New Areas .................................................... 91
The End of the Two-Year Period ................................................... 94
Conclusion ..................................................................................... 95

V. EVALUATION OF THE WORK ..................................................... 96

Introduction .................................................................................. 96
Factors Which Inhibited the Work .................................................... 97
Internal Factors .............................................................................. 97
Apathy towards Asians ................................................................. 97
Lack of Interest in Asian Work ....................................................... 97
Lack of Available Funds ................................................................. 97
Lack of An Appropriate Support Infrastructure ..................................... 98
External Factors ............................................................................ 98
Prejudice ......................................................................................... 98
Closely Known Social Structure ...................................................... 98
Self Sufficiency .............................................................................. 98
Insecurity ......................................................................................... 99
Factors Which Enhanced the Work ................................................... 99
An Indian Working for Indians ....................................................... 99
Family Compatibility ....................................................................... 99
An Understanding of Hindu Culture and Religion .................................. 99
Health and Life-Style Education Meets Human Needs ......................... 99
Health Seminars Help Break Down Ignorance of Seventh-day Adventists ... 100
Identifying with Homogeneous Group ............................................. 100
Incarnational Ministry ................................................................... 100
The Work that Was Accomplished .................................................. 100
The Work that Could Have Been Accomplished .................................. 101
Conclusion ...................................................................................... 102

VI. CONCLUSION ........................................................................... 104

Critique ........................................................................................ 104
Suggestions for Future Work .......................................................... 105

APPENDICES .................................................................................. 106
| A. Invitation to the Beezee Health Seminar | 107 |
| B. East Africa Review Article about the Beezee Health Seminar | 110 |
| C. Invitation to "A Quick Look at Seventh-Day Adventists" | 112 |
| D. A Copy of Facts and Figures | 114 |
| E. Invitation to Total Health Seminar | 116 |
| F. Articles from the Sunday Standard | 119 |
| G. Article from the Adventist Review | 121 |
| H. An Article from The Aga Khan Health Review | 123 |

BIBLIOGRAPHY | 125 |
VITA | 131 |
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the many who have contributed to the successful implementation of this project report.

First and foremost is Dr. Gottfried Oosterwal, chairman of my committee. He not only guided in the writing of this report and offered many valuable suggestions but also inspired my wife and myself to dedicate ourselves as missionaries. He has given encouragement during the difficult moments, and his genuine interest is very much appreciated.

Grateful thanks are also expressed to Dr. Arnold Kurtz for all the help he has rendered, especially in making it possible for me to complete the final writing of the report from Australia.

Sincere appreciation is also extended to Dr. Eoin Giller who offered constructive criticism during the final draft of the report and to Dr. Alan Lindsay for his suggestions and help in preparing the final draft.

Finally, gratefulness is also expressed to my wife Sue who not only helped with the typing of the initial drafts of the report but also was a companion in the implementation of the project.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Task of the Project

The task of the project was:
1. To study the historical, sociological, religious, and cultural backgrounds of the Gujarati Hindus in Kenya.
2. To develop an evangelistic approach suitable for the Gujarati Hindu people.
3. To implement the evangelistic approach for a period of two years in Kenya.
4. To evaluate the approach.

Justification for the Project

The Seventh-day Adventist Church anxiously awaits the second coming of Jesus Christ. In preparation for that glorious event, it seeks to fulfill the great commission of proclaiming the Gospel to the whole world. It is on account of this that the Adventist church is presently the most wide-spread of all Protestant denominations,\(^1\) with a membership that is rapidly approaching the five million mark.\(^2\)


There are, however, large groups of people throughout the world who have not yet learned of the Gospel. One such group is the Hindus. There are a total of 481,241,300 Hindus in the world, distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>478,073,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1,379,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>415,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>425,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>96,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>852,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though Seventh-day Adventist churches have been established in many countries where there are large populations of Hindus, there has been very little success in gaining conversions from among them. In India, which has a population of 697,529,984 there are only 102,242 Seventh-day Adventists, very few of whom are converts from Hinduism. In Fiji, Bali, and several parts of the world where Hindus are in the majority, there are virtually no Seventh-day Adventist converts from among them.

Kenya has a population of 17,100,000 of whom about 200,000 are Indians, and though Kenya and Uganda together make up the East African Union, the largest Adventist Union in the world, not a single convert is from Hinduism. It is also significant to note that the majority of Hindus in Kenya are Gujarati-speaking people who originally came from the state of Gujarat in India—a state from which there are virtually no conversions.

---

The usual methods of evangelism have met with no success among the Gujarati Hindus in Kenya and elsewhere. Therefore, it appears to be imperative that new methods be developed. Oosterwal has pointed out that the "standard method" approach to evangelism is rooted in the view that all human beings are basically the same, have the same essential needs, and can be reached, therefore, by the same means and methods. Those tried and tested methods which have worked in one place are therefore applied in other places. However, this method of evangelism considers the differences in language, custom, and culture insignificant and of little or no consequence to mission and evangelism. Thus this "standard method" as a means to evangelize the world is "totally inadequate, is in fact doing more harm than good."

Obviously, in order to evangelize the Gujarati Hindu Indians in Kenya, an approach other than the "standard method" approach needs to be used. The new approach must take into account the backgrounds and the needs of the people. Thus, it would seem that a project such as this one would be greatly needed.

Furthermore, since I was called to work as an evangelist for the Asians in Kenya, most of whom are Gujarati Hindus from India, a project of this nature would be beneficial to my own work.

This project includes a record of the two-year implementation of the evangelistic approach and contains an evaluation and suggestion for further implementation. This should be valuable to church members, pastors, evangelists, and administrators both in

---

Kenya and other parts of the world where there are Hindus.

The insights gained from this project should also help in further study, experimentation, and research into developing an even more effective approach for evangelism among the Hindu people, and even, perhaps, among people of other historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds. Most important, it will help the Adventist church as a whole to move one step further towards fulfilling its great commission. As far as can be ascertained, no project such as this has been undertaken previously by anyone. In view of this and the above reasons, I feel justified in engaging in a project of this nature. It must also be mentioned here, however, that I am fully aware of the need of the ministry of the Holy Spirit for success in Christian work. The Holy Spirit can work more effectively, however, when we do our best. Ellen G. White says: "The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort."¹

This project is therefore undertaken with the realization of both the need for the Holy Spirit and the need of the development and implementation of a suitable evangelistic approach to the Hindu people.

Overview of the Project

Chapter 2 consists of a study of the various backgrounds of the Gujarati Hindus in Kenya. It contains the historical background of their presence in Kenya, as well as their history in India prior to their coming to Kenya. It also examines the

sociological structure of these Gujarati Hindus, their religion, namely Hinduism, and proceeds with a comparison between Hinduism and Christianity. Finally, the people's cultural practices rooted in their religion are discussed.

In view of these backgrounds, chapter 3 attempts to develop a four-step evangelistic approach: (1) the work done in the past among the Gujarati Hindus is noted; (2) the counsels of Ellen G. White with regard to health evangelism are discussed; (3) the principles of incarnational ministry and the attitude of the evangelist are considered; and (4) some factors in cross-cultural evangelism are noted and suggestions are made for finding suitable functional substitutes for indigenization.

In chapter 4 then, is presented the record of the implementation of the approach. The chapter begins with my initial preparation and then continues with a fairly chronological record of the work I was able to do over a period of two years. Mention is made of the various programs conducted and the various events which occurred during the period.

Chapter 5 consists of an evaluation of the work. Various factors which either inhibited the work or enhanced it, are thereby noted.

Finally, in chapter 6, in the conclusion of this project, a critique is presented of the whole project, and some suggestions are made for a more fruitful work in the future.

Limitations of the Project

A considerable amount of time was spent in obtaining details of the historical, sociological, cultural, and religious
backgrounds of the Gujarati Hindus. A vast amount of information is available since the history of these people goes back over five thousand years. It would be very difficult to mention even briefly all the significant details in the short space provided in a project of this nature. Therefore, the material presented in chapter 2 is very brief. It is believed that anyone wishing to implement further projects of this nature would study more materials from the books listed in the Bibliography and other literature available.

The chapter on evangelistic approach is limited due to lack of sufficient material available in view of no such work being done. Also, general principles are noted for the approach rather than fixed, rigid steps in order to allow flexibility and possible alterations during implementation. The details of how to present the distinctive beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church are also not included because many books are available on this subject.

Finally, I would like to note that a two-year period is not enough for such a pioneering work. Time limitations for the completion of this project dictated that a two-year period be selected. The implementation of most of the concepts would, however, require a period of perhaps ten years.

With these limitations in view, the chapters that follow give details of the project.
CHAPTER II
BACKGROUNDS OF THE HINDU GUJARATI
INDIANS IN KENYA

Introduction

In order to communicate the gospel to a group of people, it is of utmost importance to understand its background. Since my work was mainly for the Gujarati-speaking Hindus who originally came from India, it was my purpose in this chapter to study their historical background, their sociological structure, their religion, and their cultural practices.

Historical Background

The Gujarati Hindus came to Kenya mainly from what is now the state of Gujarat in India. Since their history in Kenya goes back only to the beginning of this century, it is well to know their history not only in Kenya but also in India.

Their Indian history goes back to the time of the Indus Valley civilization. Centers of this civilization have been found at Lothal, Rangpur, Amri, Lakhabaval, and Rozdi. Of these, Lothal is only forty-seven miles south of Ahmedabad, the largest city in present day Gujarat. Here archeologists have recently

uncovered the earliest known urban civilization of the subcontinent, dating to about 3500 B.C. The archeologists have excavated part of the ancient port, complete with dockyard, streets, houses, underground drains, and a wall. This was perhaps one of ancient India's most important ports, having maritime connections with Mesopotamia and Egypt.¹

Not much of the history of Gujarat is known, however, until the extension of the rule of the Mauryan dynasty over the area. This is evidenced by the edicts of the emperor Asoka, around 250 B.C., which were carved on the Girnar rocks in the Saurashtra Peninsula. After the fall of the Mauryan dynasty, Gujarat came under the rule of the Sakas, from A.D. 130 to 390, under the Gupta empire during the fourth and fifth centuries, and under the Maitraka dynasty of the kingdom of Valabhi for the next three centuries. At that time the capital was at Valabhipura, near the eastern crest of the Saurashtra Peninsula and was a great center of Vedic, Buddhist, and Jain learning. The Güjarara-Prathharas, the imperial Gurjaras of Kanauj who ruled during the eighth and the ninth centuries, succeeded the Maitraka dynasty.

The name Gujarat is derived from this dynasty of the Gurjaras who were supposedly a sub-tribe of the Huns. They in turn were followed by the Solanki dynasty. During that time the boundaries of Gujarat reached their farthest limits and remarkable progress was made in economic and cultural areas. Then followed the Vaghala dynasty, which was defeated in 1298 by Aladin Khalji,

Sultan of Delhi, and Gujarat came under the Muslim rule. It was Ahmed I, the first independent Sultan of Gujarat, who founded Ahmedabad in 1411.¹

It is from and around this city of Ahmedabad that the majority of the Gujarati Hindu Indians in Kenya come. By the end of the sixteenth century, when Gujarat came under the rule of the Moguls, Ahmedabad had become one of the finest cities in India. Shahjahan, the Mogul emperor who built the Taj Mahal, spent the first years of his romantic marriage in Ahmedabad. Sir Thomas Roe, an envoy at Jehangir's court, described Ahmedabad as a "goodly city as large as London, the handsomest town in Hindustan, perhaps the world."²

Later, during the middle of the eighteenth century, the Marathas overran Gujarat, and finally Gujarat came under the administration of the British East India Company in 1818. After independence in 1947, Gujarat became part of the Bombay state until 1960, at which time Bombay state was split into the present-day Gujarat and Maharashtra states.³

It is from this land of Gujarat in India that the Gujarati-speaking Hindu Indians in Kenya come. The British government brought approximately 30,000 Indians to Kenya to help with the building of the railway at the end of the last century. They were brought because only a few among the original inhabitants of Kenya

²Fodor, p. 355.
could be quickly trained in skilled and semi-skilled work as tradesmen, craftsmen, and clerks. The railroad was to link Mombassa with the British protectorate of Uganda, and the building of the railroad is regarded now as the beginning of all history in Kenya.\(^1\) The railroad was completed in 1901.\(^2\) Many of the Indians who were brought to help build the railway decided to stay after the completion of the work. Among them were Indian traders, mostly Gujarati Hindus, who saw a commercial opportunity in the opening of the interior of the country.\(^3\)

By the early 1920s political battles began between the Europeans and the Indians. The Indian traders saw the future of the country in terms brown rather than white dominion.\(^4\) They formed the East African Indian Congress, a political party, which operated on a basis similar to the motherland organization of the Indian National Congress.\(^5\) By 1930, however, the British government made it clear that the ultimate responsibility for the future of Kenya lay with the British government alone. Since then the Indians concentrated on and monopolized both trade and industry, including imports and exports.


When Kenya became independent in 1963, 176,613 people of Indian origin inhabited the country. Of these, about three-fourths chose to keep British citizenship. In 1968, the government passed laws to elevate Kenyan citizens, mostly black, into better jobs that Kenyans could not do. On account of this, thousands of Kenya-born Indians holding British passports attempted to leave Kenya. The number of Kenyan Indians entering Britain grew from a rate of one thousand per month in 1967 to about one thousand per day in February 1968.

In 1982, President Moi of Kenya said that the Indian businessmen were guilty of hoarding essential goods, selling them on the black market, and ruining the economy by smuggling currency out of the country. He further stated that any Indians, even a citizen of Kenya, found guilty of these charges would be deported. Later, on August 1, 1982, during the attempted coup, looting, mainly of Indian houses and shops, took place because of the feeling generated against them. On account of these factors the population of Indians in Kenya has declined to between 70,000 and 80,000.

The history of the Gujarati Indians thus shows that they have had a very long and illustrious historical background in India, and that they have been in Kenya from the beginning of its history. They have tried to dominate Kenya politically but have had to remain content to dominate only economically. After Kenyan independence,

1965 Britannica Book of the Year, s.v. "Kenya."

The 1969 World Book Year Book, s.v. "Kenya."

however, and due to the government policy of Africanizing the economy, Indians have been leaving Kenya in large numbers. It is important, then, to study the sociological structure of these people within the context of their own society and in the context of the Africans among whom they live.

Sociological Structure

Apart from the Gujarati Hindu Indians, there are other Indians in Kenya who came from different parts of India such as Goa and Punjab and who practice other religions such as Jainism, Sikhism, Islam, and Roman Catholicism. Their numbers, however, are very small and their sociological structure is very similar to that of the Gujarati Hindus. Therefore in the following sociological details, the general term 'Indians' is used though it applies more particularly to the Gujarati Hindu Indians.

The Indians who remained in Kenya after the completion of the railroad did so mainly to achieve economic prosperity. Since their hopes to obtain political power were foiled by the British government, they concentrated on trade and industry. A few engaged in such professions as law, medicine, teaching, etc., but the majority have their own manufacturing industries, wholesale and retail businesses, etc. Thus, most of the remaining Indians are well-to-do and can be classed as being among the rich and the upper middle class. Since very few Africans are involved in business and other professions, not many of them are in the same economic bracket as the Indians.

Several schools and hospitals were opened by the Indians.
These were mainly to serve the needs of their own community, whereas the European Christian mission schools and hospitals were opened for the welfare and evangelism of the community. The Indians also started many clubs for sports and social entertainment. Membership in these clubs was restricted to members of their own community and often to only certain subgroups within the Indian community. It was only after independence that membership in the clubs and admission to their schools was opened to Africans.

A few service clubs such as the Lions Club and the Rotary Club were also started in many parts of Kenya. Their membership, however, has consisted mainly of Europeans and Indians. Only very recently have a few Africans been made members of these organizations. Thus even social groups have provided very little interaction between the Indians and the Africans.

Many of the Indians in Kenya have kept up business and family contacts with Indians in India, especially those in Gujarat. They have also kept to their Indian way of life in every possible respect. Their clothing, such as the sari, are as prominent as in India. Their food practices are also the same as in India. The typical Indian food and clothing items are either manufactured in Kenya or are imported from India.

Almost all of the sub-communities of Indians have special classes for the children on the weekends. These include courses for learning Gujarati and other Indian languages, Indian music and dancing, the Hindu religion, etc. Indian children are encouraged to join as many of these courses as possible and participate in various Indian programs and activities.
The women of every sub-group within the Indian community also have their own clubs. Club meetings are held in homes of the members if the group is small, or in their community hall if the group is large. These meetings provide social interaction and give the women an opportunity to catch up with news about others within the community. The women's clubs also often invite guest lecturers and organize for the members short courses on topics concerning health, family, etc.

Most of the sub-groups within the Gujarati Indians are sub-castes of the Hindus. Each of these sub-castes has its own temple, school, community hall, and other facilities for its group of families. Intermarriage between the sub-castes are rare. People do mix fairly well, however, with the members of other sub-castes. Interaction with Africans, on the other hand, is very limited. Under the auspices of the Hindu Council of Kenya, several large gatherings are organized. These include dinners, speeches by dignitaries visiting from India, debates, competitions, and large-scale celebrations of the annual Hindu festivals. These programs give opportunities for various sub-groups of the Indians to get together, but Africans are not included in these programs.

The Indians have also continued the practice of the joint or extended family system. This means that most of the households are large and include grandparents, two or three sets of parents, and a number of grandchildren. The grandparents maintain the authority in the house and are respected by all. The parents usually run a business enterprise, and these businesses are often run by two or three brothers with the eldest brother having the
main say in business matters. The women look after the affairs of
the house. In this situation, there is a great deal of support
and caring within the family. There is never the need of a baby-
sitter for the children, nor is there any problem in taking care of
the sick. Finances are handled jointly, and major decisions
relating to business, family, or even religious matters are made
jointly, especially with the advice of the elderly in the home.

Due to the uncertainty of their future in Kenya and to the
fact that they can afford to send their children abroad for higher
education, parents commonly send their children to England or the
United States of America soon after they finish their secondary
schooling. Consequently, only few Indians from among the younger
generation remain in Kenya.

Many of the present-day Indians in Kenya have been born in
Kenya, but they have not taken Kenyan citizenship. Since their
parents have, in most cases, chosen to opt for British passports,
they have retained for themselves the right of abode in England.
This has now endangered their future because of the policy of the
Kenyan government to Africanize the economy. It is perhaps a
question of only a few years before almost all of the Indians will
have to leave Kenya since few of them seem willing to become Kenyans.

From all this it is obvious that the Indians have lived
very isolated from the Africans. They have not tried to assimilate
the African culture, nor have they tried to live on social
equality with the Africans. This has been accentuated by the fact
that almost all the Indians are employers of Africans. Since most
of the Indians are quite rich, it is not uncommon to find them
living in large mansions and employing several servants. These servants or house-helps are all Africans. Also most of the Indians employ Africans at their business premises. They have thus been able to provide many jobs for the Africans. However, this has caused the distinction of the Indians being the employers and the Africans being the employees. It is also quite normal for a Hindu Indian of an upper caste to employ someone from a lower caste and not mix with them socially. This tendency has been carried over by the Indians in the employment of the Africans and the social gap has remained distinct.

All these factors clearly indicate that the Hindu Indians in Kenya are socially very isolated from the Africans. They have their own schools, hospitals, clubs, and social institutions and live within their own religious and cultural practices.

Economically, the Indians are the employers and in the higher class of society. Socially, they are a close-knit group and do not mix with the Africans. Some of those tendencies are rooted in their Hindu way of thinking. Many of their cultural practices are based also on their Hindu religion. Therefore, in order to better understand their ways, it would be helpful to examine the Hindu religion. This is done in the next section which includes the general characteristics of Hinduism as well as a comparison between Hinduism and Christianity.

**General Characteristics of Hinduism**

The word 'Hindu' originally referred to people of a particular geographical location--it being a corrupt form of
'Sindhu', a region watered by the river Indus. The Hindus themselves call their religion Sanatana Dharma or 'Eternal Religion'. Dharma refers to both the sacred law of the scriptures and the religious beliefs. It, however, is more than that. It is a total way of life, conduct, and religious consciousness. Also, Sanatana means eternal, having neither beginning nor end, and is equal with life itself. Therefore, Sanatana Dharma is universal truth, not revealed by any act of a personal God but seen by those whose minds catch its reflection and transmit this truth to humanity.¹

Hinduism is thus an eternal and universal religion for man in general and not for the Hindus alone. The Hindus, however, have no desire to propagate their religion to the followers of other religions. It is the most non-missionary and non-proselytising of the world religions. Hinduism believes that all religions proclaim the same moral principles and have ideas of a god whom they can worship and to whom they can pray. It is therefore important that a non-Hindu become a better follower of his own religion rather than change his religion, since a religion of another place and time is not necessarily true or false.²

Hinduism does not have any ecclesiastical organization or structural administrative unity for the purpose of guiding the life of its adherents. It is not an organized machinery of religiosity which takes care of the religious life of its followers and disseminates its tenets to outsiders. The precepts of Hinduism


are deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of the followers who adhere to the doctrines, pray, and build temples freely whenever they like and in any structure or form. Believers install their own deities and pray and worship in their own way. This freedom marks Hinduism as distinct from other world religions.¹ Also, Hinduism knows no separation between the sacred and secular life. The Hindu faith embraces all facets of existence.²

In many respects Hinduism is a unique phenomenon in the history of religions. Unlike most world religions, Hinduism does not regard the concept of God as being central to it. It is not a system of theology. Neither does it venerate any particular person as its sole prophet or founder. It does not recognize any book as its absolute authoritative scripture, nor does it insist on any particular practice as being obligatory. Yet Hinduism has persisted through the centuries as a distinct religious entity and has continued to increase its number of devotees. Perhaps the secret of its remarkable responsiveness to the changing conditions of life and thought is that it has remained free from any institutional rigidity.³

Dr. Radhakrishnan, former president of India, pointed out that "Hinduism is a movement, not a position; a process, not a result; a growing tradition, not a fixed revelation."⁴

¹Ibid., p. 38.
⁴Dandekar, p. 341.
Hinduism has grown gradually over a period of five thousand years, absorbing and assimilating all the religious and cultural movements of India. Therefore, "Hinduism is more like a tree that has grown gradually than like a building that has been erected by some great architect at some definite point in time." These general characteristics of Hinduism reveal that it is quite different from Christianity. Therefore, it is advisable now to compare some of the main beliefs of Hinduism with those of Christianity.

Comparison between Hinduism and Christianity

It ought to be borne in mind at the outset of this comparison of Hinduism with Christianity that every religion is an indivisible unity, and that every part of said religion is so vitally related to the whole that its real significance can never be understood without constantly keeping in mind that essential unity and totality.  

As noted above, Hinduism does not have an absolutely authoritative book like the Bible of Christianity, nor does it have a sole prophet or founder like Jesus Christ. Hinduism does not have an ecclesiastical structure as is the case with all Christian denominations, and it does not have a concept of mission as does Christianity. Also, Hinduism does not consider fixed corporate

worship or certain practices as obligatory, as do Christians who have a fixed day for worship, a set service for worship, etc.

Further, Hinduism is inclusive, whereas Christianity is exclusive; that is, Hinduism does not insist that its adherents give up their attachments to other religions, as is the case with Christianity. Thus the concept of proselytising, which is deeply rooted in Christianity, is not only foreign to a Hindu, it is outright abhorrent. Hinduism is based on a cyclical theory of history whereas Christianity is based on a rectilinear theory; and the universe of Hinduism is vast in space and time compared to the compact and tidy universe of Christianity.¹

Hinduism conceives of God as a Supreme Being, the Impersonal Brahma, a philosophical Absolute, beyond all hamperings—either ethical or metaphysical. This is quite in contrast to the Christian God who is a Supreme Personality, perfect in character, the Creator, and loving Redeemer.² Hindus believe that God cannot properly be conceived and that the ultimate reality, ultimate truth, can only be expressed as Satchitananda—"sat" meaning 'being', chit meaning 'consciousness', and ananda meaning 'bliss'—that is, ultimate and absolute being, consciousness, and bliss. The Hindus, however, have never been content to know about God but have always sought to 'realize Him', to experience His presence, not in the imagination or in the intellect but in the substance


of the soul. In Christianity, though absolute prohibition is enforced against any image of God, He is understood to be personal in the fullest sense, and anthropomorphic terms are used to describe Him.\(^1\)

In Hinduism, the human individual is an emanation or temporary manifestation of the impersonal Supreme Being and is not responsible before God. In Christianity, on the other hand, man shares in the moral character of God, and though man is capable of selfishness, disobedience, and degeneration, he is responsible to God.\(^2\)

According to Hinduism, the world is a temporary, worthless illusion, whereas to Christianity it is a substantive manifestation of the divine plan, wisdom, and power. In Hinduism, however, people are born into the four-fold caste system which is accepted unquestionably as consisting of mutually exclusive strata. By contrast, in Christianity, mankind constitutes a family designed for mutual service. The Hindu believes that there is an impersonal law of Karma which administers due retribution to every person for his deeds by assigning to him in his next reincarnation a higher or a lower social status. The Christian believes it is the gracious personality of God who administers just rewards and punishments, but not in the form of reincarnation.\(^3\)

There is no real sin according to Hinduism. Ignorance and violation of rules entails continued reincarnation. In Christianity


2Hume, p. 39.  

3Ibid., pp. 39-41.
sin is real and may involve the individual, his fellowmen, and God. To obtain salvation, the Hindu may follow any one of the three optional methods—jnana marga or the way of knowledge, bhakti marga or the way of devotion, or karma marga, the way of works. In Christianity, salvation is obtained through faith in and devotion to Jesus Christ who helps to transform the character of His followers into the likeness of a child of God.  

Both Hinduism and Christianity hold that man was originally created good and that suffering has entered into the world through the sin of man by his free will. Also, both in Hinduism and Christianity God himself descends into the world to check the course of evil. The difference between the two systems in the idea of incarnation is due to differences in their views of creation. In the Hindu view, all creation is a manifestation of God. Therefore there can be innumerable avatars or incarnations, since the world and souls came forth from Brahma from age to age in an endless cycle and are reabsorbed again in pralaya. But in the Christian view, creation is a real creation that took place only once in time and leads through successive stages to a culmination. Thus incarnation is a unique historical event by which the course of human history is given direction and reveals its ultimate significance.

Hinduism and Christianity also differ with regard to the question of the ultimate state of man. This is due to their divergent views about the relation between man and God. A Hindu, 

\[\text{Ibid., p. 39.} \quad \text{Griffiths, pp. 50-54.}\]
in order to say that the soul is of the same essence as God, uses the analogy of the pot and the clay, or of sparks coming from a fire, or of a drop of water mingling with the ocean. But a Christian, in order to show the difference between the soul and God, would rather speak of iron which is heated by the fire so as to be transformed by fire and yet the iron remains iron and does not actually become fire; or like air which is wholly filled with light and manifests light but yet does not become light. Hinduism affirms that it is possible to be jivanmukta—attain liberation from all spatial and temporal limitations while still on earth; whereas Christianity holds that the present limitations of the body are transcended only after death.¹

It can thus be seen that Hinduism and Christianity differ in many respects. In order to approach a Hindu with the Gospel it would be of utmost importance to understand the Hindu way of thinking so as to be able to appreciate his views and be able to point out the differences. The understanding of the Hindu religion also helps one to understand the Hindu culture. The cultural practices of the Indians are very much dependent upon their Hindu beliefs. The next section studies some of their cultural practices.

Cultural Practices

The cultural heritage of the Indians is a product of nearly five thousand years of continuous civilization. Although India has suffered damage from invasions and foreign rule, it has retained its unique culture. Indians in Kenya have retained this

¹Ibid., pp. 67-83.
culture as well. This can be seen in the architecture of their temples and other buildings, in their music and dances, in their observance of festive occasions, and in the adherence of traditional Indian customs.

Indian culture is based on their religion--Hinduism. All Hindu children are instructed in their religion through stories, religious festivals, and ceremonies. Underlying these are certain attitudes toward life which slowly and imperceptibly become a part of the personality of every Hindu. Therefore, these cultural practices must be considered in some detail.

Most Hindu homes consist of extended families, that is, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins all living together. Since children love stories and have many older people around to tell them, they grow up listening to many tales. These may serve the immediate purpose of stirring up their emotions but they also serve to teach about holy places of pilgrimage, great scholars, heroes and heroines, and the traditional Hindu attitudes towards life. The most widely known stories are from the epics of the Ramayana and Mahabharata and from the Panchatantra or the collection of fables.

Many festivals are observed according to lunar and solar calendars. Some are in celebration of the harvest season and some in honor of gods and goddesses. Among the most important festivals are: (1) 'Holi', which ushers in the spring, and is associated

---


2Ibid., pp. 47-58.
with Kama, god of life (during its celebration people throw colored water at each other and play practical jokes); and (2) 'Diwali' or 'Deepavali', which means a garland of lights, and is associated by some with the goddess of wealth and good fortune, Lakshmi and by others with the date of the coronation of Rama. This holiday is celebrated in the Hindu month of Kartik or October-November. During this festival people illuminate their homes with rows and rows of lights and distribute sweets. It also marks the beginning of the new year.

Other festivals are connected with the worship of other deities, such as Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu who is worshipped as the goddess of beauty, wealth, and prosperity; Durga and Kali, considered to be manifestations of Paravati, the consort of Shiva, who is worshipped as the mother goddess and is the symbol of strength and power; Saraswati, the consort of Brahma, who is worshipped the goddess of learning and as patroness of all creative arts and sciences; and Ganesha or Ganapathi, the son of Shiva, who is worshipped as the god who removes obstacles.¹

Every Hindu is also expected to follow the path of dharma (or duty) and to be initiated through religious rites or samskaras into successive stages of life.² These include: Namakarana--the ceremony of naming a child; Nanaprasana--the ceremony for weaning the child; Upanayana--the ceremony in which a high caste boy is introduced to the rites and duties of his caste and is given a sacred thread as a symbol of his new birth; Vivaha--the marriage

¹Ibid., pp. 63-68. ²Ibid., p. 68.
ceremony; and Sraddha--meaning respect, the ceremony at funerals.¹

The pattern of worship varies considerably among the Hindus. Since the Hindu religion is very individualistic, it is distinguished by the fact that there are no community services at definite hours. The gods are worshipped anywhere at any time, either by priests or individuals.² Also, since religion is an intensely personal matter, Hindus may worship the deities of their choice in many ways. Some go to the Mandira, or temple, daily, some less often, especially on special occasions, and some only when they feel the need. However, worship in the home is more widely practiced. Almost every home contains a prayer room which is elaborately decorated and furnished with deities.³ Every morning and evening the high caste Hindu is supposed to perform the religious duties called pratahkritya and sandhya, consisting of meditations, rituals, and prayers. Some Hindus also follow weekly religious observances such as fasting on a particular day of the week.⁴

The women are accorded an important place in the household. It is the woman of the house who is the most diligent about the prayer ceremony. The wife is known as sahadharmini or coworker in doing dharma, and the husband and wife jointly are called dampatis (joint owners of the household).⁵

¹Sen, p. 34.


³Younger and Younger, pp. 74-75. ⁴Sen, p. 32.

⁵Younger and Younger, pp. 70, 75.
In general, all these cultural practices stem from the Hindu religion. It is what makes them distinct from other groups in Kenya. Therefore, in order to approach them with the Gospel it is also of great importance to know about and to understand their cultural practices.

With this background of the Gujarati Hindu Indians in mind, we can now draw some general conclusions and then proceed to the discussion of suitable evangelistic approach.

**Conclusion**

The study of the historical background of the Gujarati Hindu Indians, their sociological structure, religious beliefs, and cultural practices has revealed some very important aspects which must be borne in mind when approaching them with the Gospel.

1. It is important to note that though these people have lived in Kenya for quite some time, their history originates in India and they have retained not only their language, style of clothing, and food practices but also their religion and other cultural practices.

2. They have isolated themselves from the Africans and are therefore a separate social group. It would therefore not be possible to invite them to meetings and other social events that include Africans, therefore it would be necessary to plan for meetings especially for them at places where they would be most comfortable.

3. Their family ties and the extended family system makes them dependent on their elders for decisions in all matters including
religion. Therefore, a decision to accept another religion is a very difficult decision for them to make on an individual basis. In other words, it is best to approach the whole family as a unit.

4. They have a very distinct culture with well-developed systems of thought with long-established traditions and rituals. Thus it would be important to find substitutes for some facets of their culture as well as their own forms of music and art and allow them to retain others. This aspect is discussed in detail in chapter 3 in conjunction with the development of a suitable evangelistic approach.
CHAPTER III

CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN EVANGELISTIC APPROACH

Introduction

This chapter first notes what evangelistic work has been accomplished for the Hindu Christians, both in Kenya and in India, and whether any lessons can be learned from this experience. Second, the question of health evangelism is examined as a suitable approach for beginning evangelization of the Hindu community. Special note is taken of the health counsels of Mrs. Ellen G. White, who in her writings has contributed so much to the advance of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Third, the attitude required in the approach and what is the best way to present Christ to the Hindus are considered. Finally, some factors involved in cross-cultural evangelism and functional substitutes for indigenization are discussed.

Evangelism in the Past

The Christian faith first came to Kenya in 1498 when Vasco de Gama landed in Malindi. It was not until 1889, however, that the Catholic mission was formally established by the Holy Ghost Fathers. Protestant missions began with the arrival of Johann

\[^1 World \textit{Christian Encyclopedia}, 1982 \text{ ed.}, \text{s.v. "Kenya."} \]
Krapf of the Anglican Church Missionary Society in 1844. By 1980, in spite of the late start of Christianity in Kenya, 26.5 percent of the population were Protestants, 26.4 percent Roman Catholic, 17.6 percent African indigenous, and 2.5 percent Orthodox. The Seventh-day Adventist church began its work in Kenya in 1906, and its present membership is 144,444. Kenya and Uganda together constitute the East African Union which has the largest membership among all the Unions of the world within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In spite of the rapid success experienced by the Christian churches in their work in Kenya, none of them have had any success with the Indian population. When Seventh-day Adventist evangelists have held campaigns, they hoped Indians would also attend the meetings. This has not been the case. Obviously the usual methods have not interested the Indians and some other methods must be tried if the Indians are to hear and accept the Gospel.

Unfortunately, a very similar situation is evident in the work for the Gujarati Hindu Indians in India. According to the

---

4 Seventh-day Adventists use this term for a unit of church administration. It is comprised of two or more "conferences," which are associations of local congregations in a given territory.
generally accepted tradition, the Gospel was preached in India by the Apostle Thomas, beginning in A.D. 52. However, even after so many years of missionary activity only 2.6 percent of the people of India are Christians. Also, the spread of Christianity has been geographically very uneven. The Christians are concentrated mainly in the south where Christianity was first established, and in the east where several minority groups have been converted. In the state of Gujarat, however, there are only 109,341 Christians, a very low figure compared to the state population of 33,960,905. The Seventh-day Adventist church, too, has had no success in Gujarat, though it began its work in India in 1890. After nearly 100 years, the total membership in Gujarat is approximately 200, all of whom were originally from other states. Most of the Indians in Kenya are from Gujarat and from the city of Bombay—previously the state of Bombay consisted of the city itself among with Gujarat. Bombay is now part of the adjoining state of Maharashtra which has a population of 62,693,893, the population of Bombay being 8,227,000. It is again of significance to note that the membership of the


3 World Christian Encyclopedia, s.v. "India."


5 Ibid., s.v. "India."

6 Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, s.v. "India."

7 The Statesman's Year-Book 1983-1984, s.v. "India."
Maharashtra Section of the Seventh-day Adventist Church consists of only 6,317 believers, including a large number of employees at the Maharashtra Section office, Central India Union office, Southern Asia Division office, Oriental Watchman Publishing House, Adventist Communication Centre, Adventist World Radio Studio and office, Voice of Prophecy Correspondence School, Poona Adventist Medical Centre, Hume McHenry Memorial S.D.A. School, Home Study Institute, Lasalgaon S.D.A. High School, and Spicer Memorial College.¹

It should also be noted that almost all the employees at the above institutions are from other states. Apart from myself, there probably is no other Seventh-day Adventist who is originally from the city of Bombay and whose mother-tongue is Gujarati.

These facts and figures significantly show without doubt that the Seventh-day Adventist church, or any other church, has had virtually no success in evangelizing the Gujaratis. The traditional evangelistic approaches have been tried without success. This is quite evident again from the recent evangelistic project conducted by John Willmott, the present Ministerial Director of the Southern Asia Division² who conducted a project in 1981 for his D.Min. degree, in the city of Poona, where all except one of the above-mentioned institutions are located. He reported that he had assistance from the Southern Asia Division, Spicer Memorial College, and local church pastors. He hired a private school hall with a seating capacity of 400. As a result of his meetings fifty-seven persons were baptized. He reported that 69 percent of the audience were Tamil-speaking.

¹Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook 1983, s.v. "Institutions," "Southern Asia Division."
²Seventh-day Adventists use the term Division as a regional branch of their world headquarters or "General Conference."
people, a language group from South India; and that 53 percent were unemployed. He further noted that only four Hindus attended.\footnote{John Willmott, "Urban Evangelism in India: An Evangelistic Project Conducted in the City of Poona" (D.Min. Project Report, Andrews University, 1981), pp. 58-61.}

This shows that even with all the possible help from pastors and administrators, and the fact that meetings were conducted in a non-Seventh-day Adventist location, in the midst of Hindus, he was not able to attract the Gujaratis or the Marathi-speaking, well-to-do Hindus. In an interview, John Willmott stated that his long experience has shown that most of the converts come from other Protestant churches such as Methodists, Baptists, Charismatics, and Anglicans; less than 5 percent come from Hindu backgrounds. He also stated that "we have not touched the higher castes" of Hindus and there is very little work in cities such as Bombay, and then only among the Christians.\footnote{Interview with John Willmott, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 29 September 1980.}

This gives ample evidence that if we are to present the Gospel to the Gujarati Hindu Indians in Kenya, the traditional evangelistic campaign approach will have to be discarded and some different method be used. One lesson to be learned from the past is the futility to continue with the old approach. The following sections, therefore, look at alternative possibilities and tries to develop a plan for approaching the Indians in Kenya.

**Health Evangelism**

It would appear that the best approach to the work for the Indians in Kenya would be health evangelism. This would help to...
break down prejudices and show genuine concern. Doors may then be opened for the presentation of the Gospel. This belief is based on the counsel Ellen G. White has given to the Seventh-day Adventist church.

White has called the medical missionary work "the pioneer work of the Gospel,"¹ "a great entering wedge,"² "the door through which the truth of this time is to find entrance to many homes,"³ "the right, helping hand of the Gospel, to open the doors to the proclamation of the message,"⁴ and "necessary to the advancement of the cause of God."⁵ Thus she strongly suggests that the best and perhaps the only way to approach people with the Gospel is first of all to do medical missionary work for them. When the doors are thus opened, the proclamation of the Gospel can begin.

White further states that such work will give access to the people. "Do medical missionary work. Thus you will gain access to the hearts of the people. The way will be prepared for more decided proclamation of the truth."⁶ And, "A demonstration of the principles of health reform will do much toward removing prejudice

³Ibid., p. 497.
⁶White, Evangelism, p. 514.
against our evangelistic work." These are very important state­ments because the Indians in Kenya do have a prejudice against the Christians. The work of the Christians has been concentrated on the Africans, and therefore the Indians feel that Christianity is not for them. However, if medical missionary work is done for them, it could help remove the prejudices and the Indians would feel that Christians are interested in them also.

The Indians in Kenya constitute the higher class of the society. Therefore, Ellen White's advice is very pertinent: "Health reform will reach a class and has reached a class that otherwise would never have been reached by the truth." And, "first reach the higher classes if possible. . . . Plan to reach the best classes and we will not fail to reach the lower classes." Thus she advises that the higher classes be reached first. This is quite the contrary to what has been done in the past, especially among the Indians in India. Nothing has specifically been done for the higher classes. In Kenya too, they have been neglected. It would be good to plan on approaching the higher classes before any more time goes by.

Ellen G. White also says that

Not only should those who believe the truth practice health reform, but they should also teach it diligently to others; for it will be an agency through which the truth can be presented to the attention of unbelievers. They will reason that if we have such sound ideas in regard to health and

---

1White, Counsels on Health, p. 497.


3White, Evangelism, p. 553.
temperance, there must be something in our religious beliefs that is worth investigation.  

Here she makes a very important point--not only will health evangelism open doors for work with the higher classes but it will create in them an interest in our religious beliefs.

It would, therefore, be of utmost importance to know what the principles of health reform are. Ellen White, herself, has written much about it. She has given much information on the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, and she has written much on the benefits of natural foods and healthful habits. She says that the true remedies are: pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, and trust in divine power.  

"True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful."  

Many important principles are mentioned in her books and these can be supplemented by scientific and medical findings on healthful living. This material can then be used for teaching principles of health reform.

The above counsels of Ellen White are even more relevant today than ever before. She wrote: "It is the Lord's design that the restoring influence of the health reform should be a part of the last great effort to proclaim the Gospel message."  

---

1 Ibid., p. 514.
3 White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 562.
ministerial lines but medical missionary work."¹ How imperative it is then that medical missionary work be used to reach people.

Every minister, according to White, should not only be interested in medical missionary work but actually give instructions in this area to others. She says: "You will never be ministers after the Gospel order till you show a decided interest in medical missionary work, the Gospel of healing, blessing and strengthening."² "Every Gospel worker should feel that the giving of instruction in the principles of healthful living is a part of the appointed work."³

At this point I feel that it is relevant to give a personal testimony. I was born and brought up in a high caste Hindu Gujarati family. My prejudices against Christians had been nurtured, and I never entertained the thought of attending any evangelistic meetings. However, I became a vegetarian and attended a vegetarian congress where I became acquainted with a Seventh-day Adventist minister. At this time, I was a very heavy smoker and was happy to receive the minister's offer to help me give up the habit. He administered a Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking and both my wife and I gave up smoking. This aroused our interest in the health principles observed by the Seventh-day Adventists. Slowly closer friendships with Adventist church members were established. Then it was that my interests in the religious beliefs of the church were aroused. Later, after I had joined the church and had decided to study for

¹White, Counsels on Health, p. 533.
²Ibid.
³White, Ministry of Healing, p. 147.
the ministry, I was attracted to the counsels of Ellen White discussed above. I studied a number of courses related to healthful living that I might adequately prepare myself for the work as a minister, using health evangelism as the entering wedge. On account of my personal experience and the counsels of Ellen White, I feel very strongly that the best way, and perhaps the only way, to approach high caste, high class Gujarati Indians in Kenya is to use health evangelism until sufficient contacts are established, prejudices are broken down, and people are led to question the religious beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

The programs for health evangelism should include those that would be most appropriate to meet the needs of the people. These could include: Five-day Plans to Stop Smoking, nutrition lectures, Stress Control Clinics, Weight Control, and hydrotherapy demonstrations.

While programs for health evangelism are being implemented and contacts are being made, one important aspect needs to be given very careful consideration. This is the question of the attitude towards the people. The work ought to be done in the spirit of Christianity and could well be termed "incarnational ministry." This aspect is dealt with in the next section.

Incarnational Ministry

The success of a missionary depends largely upon his attitude towards those whom he evangelizes. Many have failed because they have not understood the people or gained their confidence and
affection. Formerly, the Christian missionaries manifested aggressive, controversial attitudes which were deservedly met with irritation and counter-aggression. These attitudes were inevitably interpreted as offensive pride and created the least favorable atmosphere for a deep and humane religious encounter. This then led to the so-called sympathetic approach of tracing similarities and trying to build bridges on the assumption that Christianity is the crown of the best in all religions. This, however, evinced a hidden feeling of superiority which is rightly sensed as condescension. This means that such militaristic terms as 'crusade', 'campaign', etc., should be avoided, to be replaced by such words as love, joy, etc. In addition, the missionary must understand the beauty of the Indian culture and admire its virtues.

E. Stanley Jones, who is referred to as one who knew India better and loved it more than any missionary, said that the missionary "must not come in pride of race and superior being. . . . He can never look on 'these people' and 'this land' and 'this government'. . . . They must become to him 'my people', 'my land', 'my government'. In other words, he must become an adopted son of the land.

1 The Presentation of Christianity to Hindus (New York: Board of Missionary Preparation, n.d.), p. 45.
2 Kraemer, pp. 301-2.
4 Presentation of Christianity to Hindus, p. 47.
of his choice." Jones went on to say that "the whole program of evangelization of the East depends on our taking a Christian attitude towards the nations of the Orient." "The only Christian attitude is to be the servant of all. Anything less than this or other than this is un-Christian." 

This Christian attitude is summed up well by Stephen Neill who says that the Christian

must endeavour to meet them at their highest, and not cheaply score points off them by comparing the best he knows with their weaknesses, weaknesses such as are present also in the Christian scheme as it is lived out by very imperfect Christians. He must as far as imagination will permit, expose himself to the full force of these other faiths in all that they have that is most convincing and most alluring. He must rejoice in everything that they possess of beauty and high aspiration. He must put himself to school with them, in readiness to believe that they may have something to teach him that he has not yet learned. He must sympathize with their earnest efforts to relate themselves to the needs of men in the modern world. He must listen with respectful patience to every criticism that they have to make both of Christian thought and Christian practice. All this can be done, if the Christian is really humble.

This question of the attitude displayed by the missionary seems to be the whole crux of the matter. Perhaps it could well be said that Christian missionaries have not had success in evangelizing the Hindu Indians because they have not taken the right attitude towards them.

3 Jones, Along the Indian Road, p. 41.
Once, when E. Stanley Jones asked Mahatma Gandhi for his suggestions for making Christianity nationalized in India, Gandhi replied:

I would suggest first, that all of your Christian missionaries and all, must begin to live more like Jesus Christ. . . . Second, I would suggest that you must practice your religion without adulterating or toning it down. . . . Third, I would suggest that you must put your emphasis on love, for love is the centre and soul of Christianity. . . . Fourth, I would suggest that you study the non-Christian religions and cultures more sympathetically in order to find the good that is in them, so that you might have a more sympathetic approach to the people.1

These are staggering insights from a person who never became a Christian. One wonders whether the reasons for people like Gandhi not becoming Christian is the fact that Christians have not been living like Jesus Christ by showing love to others.

Among many other statements made by Mahatma Gandhi, perhaps the following should also be carefully studied:

I have told my missionary friends, "Noble as you are, you have isolated yourselves from the people you want to serve." . . . I miss receptiveness, humility and willingness on the part of the missionaries to identify themselves with the masses of India. . . . In a word, let them go to the people not as patrons, but as one of them, and not to oblige them, but to serve them and to work among them. . . . There is a proper evangelization. When you feel that you have received peace from your particular interpretation of the Bible, you share it with others. But you do not need to give vocal expression to it. Your whole life is more eloquent than your lips. . . . The rose does not need to write a book or deliver a sermon on the scent it sheds all around, or on the beauty which everyone who has eyes can see. Well, spiritual life is infinitely superior to the beautiful and fragrant rose, and I make bold to say that the moment there is a spiritual expression in life, the surroundings will readily respond. . . . There is thus no truer or other evangelism than life.2

---

1 Jones, Christ of the Indian Road, pp. 146-48.

Thus the advice from missionaries like E. Stanley Jones and others, and from people like Mahatma Gandhi is that the missionary or the evangelist should show the meaning of Christianity by his attitudes. This should be evidenced by his humility, by his love and service to others. It is not the multimedia type of evangelistic campaign that is needed; but it is, instead, a truly loving, caring Christian who willingly serves the needy, cares for the afflicted, and demonstrates his Christian love for others.

Ellen White wrote: "Love must be the prevailing element in all our work."¹ Then she added:

There is an eloquence far more powerful than the eloquence of words in the quiet, consistent life of a pure, true Christian. What a man is has more influence than what he says.²

What all this amounts to is: "Incarnational ministry." This concept is based on the understanding of what the Bible says about mission. Inasmuch as the above statements are good advice, they are valid for implementation only because of the support from the Bible.

George Peters said, "God is a God of missions. He wills missions. He commands missions. He demands missions."³ Now, the word 'mission' comes from the Latin verb mittere, to send, and the noun missio, the sending. It is the same as the Greek 'apostello', from which the word apostle has been derived. Therefore, 'Apostle'

¹White, Evangelism, p. 303.
²White, Ministry of Healing, p. 469.
and 'missionary' both mean "the one who is sent."¹

In order to understand what mission is all about, we must examine what Jesus said about it. Usually one thinks of Jesus' Great Commission as the one in Matt 28:29 (TEV) "Go then to all people everywhere and make them my disciples..." However, the crucial form of the Great Commission is the Johannine. In his prayer in the upper room, Jesus had anticipated it, for he said to the Father: "I sent them into the world, just as you sent me into the world" (John 17:18, TEV). Later, perhaps in the same upper room, but after his death and resurrection, Jesus turned his prayer-statement into a commission and said, "As the Father sent me, so I sent you" (John 20:21, TEV). Thus, deliberately and precisely, Jesus made His mission the model for ours. Therefore, our understanding of mission must be deduced from our understanding of the Son's mission.² Let us consider this carefully.

First of all, Jesus did not touch down like a visitor from outer space, or arrive like an alien bringing his own alien culture with him. He took upon Himself humanity, flesh and blood, and experienced frailty, suffering, and temptation. Just so, the Church is sent into the world to be identified with others. This principle of the Incarnation has seldom been taken seriously and therefore has been the cause of evangelical failure.³


Secondly, Jesus said of Himself that He had not come into the world to be served, but to serve. The Bible frequently uses the word 'slave' to characterize the person sent.¹ In addition, Jesus came not only to preach but also, and more generally, to serve. Therefore, rather than shouting the Gospel at people from a distance the missionary should become deeply involved with the lives of those he hopes to evangelize, to think with them their problems, and to feel with them their pains.²

Thus, mission really means identification and service with love and humility. This is incarnational ministry. This can be put into practice only by living among the people, identifying with the people, and trying to understand the people, their hopes, their fears, their problems, their aspirations, their sorrows, and their joys. This takes time. To begin with, a deep friendship and mutual trust has to be developed. Therefore, one has to be able to visit the person at his place of work and in his home, to meet his family and his friends, to enjoy recreational hobbies with him, invite him over, and in general allow him to know you and make him realize your love and concern for him. It is only then that the person will see and will want to know about Christianity and about Christ, about the love of God.

It is with this in view that information related to the historical, cultural, sociological, and religious background of the Hindus becomes most relevant. When these aspects are understood--

and only then--incarnational ministry can truly be practiced.

When the Hindu is finally willing and wanting to know about Christianity, it must be borne in mind that, to a Hindu, it is the experience which is of utmost importance. When recounting his own experience, E. Stanley Jones said:

A Hindu said to me one day: "I've read the Acts of the Apostles. The apostles had a strange power in their lives. Have you this power in your life . . . the power of the Holy Spirit?" . . . Another Hindu, a student, asked me: "How can I find God?" I took my Bible to show him the steps. In the midst of it he leaned over and closed the book in my hand and said: "Now you tell me how you found God."1

Because of this P. Chenchiah, V. Chakkarai, and A. J. Appasamy, known as the trio of South Indian Theologians, have stressed this aspect of experience. To P. Chenchiah (1886-1959) the central fact of the Christian faith was the direct experience, anubhaya of Christ.2 V. Chakkarai (1880-1958) stressed that the knowledge of Christ must have its start in personal experience--as the indwelling Christ, the antaryamin.3 And their contemporary, A. J. Appasamy, stressed this and had in all his writings the theme 'abide in me' as the chief end of man.4

The task of the evangelist or the missionary to the Hindus, therefore, is to know Christ personally and then to introduce Him to the Hindus. Jones describes this task:

There is a beautiful Indian marriage custom that dimly illustrates our task in India, and where it ends. At the wedding

3Ibid., p. 168. 4Ibid., p. 119.
ceremony the women friends of the bride accompany her with music to the home of the bridegroom. They usher her into the presence of the bridegroom . . . that is as far as they can go, then they retire and leave her with her husband. That is our joyous task in India; to know him, to introduce him, to retire . . . not necessarily geographically, but to trust India with Christ and trust Christ with India. We can only go so far . . . he and India must go the rest of the way.¹

Perhaps it should be added that this does not mean that the distinctive beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church should not be taught or discussed with Indians. To the contrary! But it does mean that the task of the evangelist is to introduce Christ to the Hindu and allow him to experience Christ for himself, to experience the peace, joy, love, and hope that a Christian enjoys. Once he has experienced these things, he will want to follow Christ all the way and be only too happy to learn what Christ has to say in the Bible.

From this discussion on incarnational ministry, it is evident that my task in approaching the Hindu Indians in Kenya is to identify and live with them, to serve them with love and humility, and, as opportunities arise, to introduce them to Jesus Christ.

Whenever the Gospel is to be presented to people of a different culture, there is another important aspect which needs consideration. It is the question of cross-cultural evangelism. Linked with this is the question of which aspects of the other culture could be retained into Christianity, and which aspects would need suitable substitutions by Christian practices. These two aspects of cross-cultural evangelism, choosing what to retain and finding suitable functional substitutes, are discussed in the next section.

¹Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road, pp. 253-54.
Cross-Cultural Evangelism and Functional Substitutes for Indigenization

In the Old Testament of the Bible, one finds that God revealed Himself to mankind through the Hebrew nation, language, and culture. In New Testament times, the revelations came through the framework of the Graeco-Roman language and culture. Thus God looks upon cultures as potential channels for His interaction with man.  

God's word comes in the forms, expressions, and customs of particular cultures. In order for men to understand, God's word must be expressed in human forms and symbols that belong to the particular culture in which people live.  

The missionary, then, must come to understand and appreciate not only the importance of the culture to those born in it but also the usability of the culture as a vehicle of God's interaction with man. Christianity, as it spreads, must fit each culture, adopt new customs, and adapt itself to diverse contexts.  

This is an absolute necessity because people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers. They prefer to join churches whose members look, talk, and even act like themselves. This is seen, for example, in South Africa

---


Cross-Cultural Evangelism and Functional Substitutes for Indigenization

In the Old Testament of the Bible, one finds that God revealed Himself to mankind through the Hebrew nation, language, and culture. In New Testament times, the revelations came through the framework of the Graeco-Roman language and culture. Thus God looks upon cultures as potential channels for His interaction with man. God's word comes in the forms, expressions, and customs of particular cultures. In order for men to understand, God's word must be expressed in human forms and symbols that belong to the particular culture in which people live.

The missionary, then, must come to understand and appreciate not only the importance of the culture to those born in it but also the usability of the culture as a vehicle of God's interaction with man. Christianity, as it spreads, must fit each culture, adopt new customs, and adapt itself to diverse contexts.

This is an absolute necessity because people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers. They prefer to join churches whose members look, talk, and even act like themselves. This is seen, for example, in South Africa

---


names to those of Western origin. Even a casual glance at the names of the administrators of the SDA church in India make this obvious.

Since most of the converts in India came from the lowest social strata, they wanted to make a clean break from the past. Those, then, who have been Christians for three, four, or more generations have been cut off from the roots of indigenous culture. This makes it difficult to use new experiments.¹ Yet it is of utmost importance that the missionary to the Hindu be on the lookout for expressive symbolism and rich ceremonial which can stir and lift the Indian spirit.²

Had some of these aspects of cross-cultural communication and functional substitutes for indigenization been put into practice in India, it would have greatly helped my own work in Kenya. I am convinced that this should have been implemented among the Indians from the beginning of the work for them. Then, as the Indians were converted, they could have started with the substitutes and developed them in such a way that these substitutes would now facilitate other Indians in becoming Christians. It would be difficult to list what these ought to be. This would depend on the Indians themselves. They should decide what is important for them to retain, so long, of course, as it does not conflict with the principles of Christianity. Some aspects of the Indian culture which ought to be given special consideration are noted below.

Rituals. In the Hindu culture great emphasis is placed upon ritual. Ritual is comprehended as the language of religion

¹Subbamma, p. 139. ²Winslow, p. 55.
which expresses the symbolic message to the receiver. The major events in the life of a Hindu are associated with important religious beliefs or ceremonies in the form of rituals. For example, puberty is considered a very important time. When a boy is about sixteen years of age, holy thread is offered to him in a long initiation ceremony. Ceremonies are also held for menstruating girls. These rites need not be discarded, but modified. Symbolism and accompanying teaching of higher life and responsibility could be made Christo-centric.

Another event of importance is when a Hindu seeks discipleship under a guru. He celebrates the event by inviting all his relatives and friends, arranging a good meal, distributing fruit, and making it a joyous occasion. Also, he washes the feet of his guru to show respect and obedience to his religious teacher. This practice can be given a suitable form and incorporated into baptismal ceremony.

Hindus are also very particular in observing various kinds of rituals during harvest time. They would welcome special prayers for a bountiful harvest, for the initiation of new implements, and for offering of their first fruits to God.

One ceremony, often stamped as idol worship, is that of the death anniversary. If not observed, it creates a void and is believed to show a lack of respect for the beloved elders. Some provision could be made to continue the celebration to help the families know and appreciate their past history and remember the goodness of their forefathers. It could be a time to show gratefulness for all that their ancestors mean to them.¹

¹Subbamma, pp. 141-46.
Festivals. Festivals play an important part in the life of the Hindus. It would be well, therefore, that they not only be introduced to the festivals throughout the year of the church but also be allowed to incorporate some of their own festivals into the life of the church, just as in the early days the Christian church took over Christmas. Pilgrimages to some important Christian centers could be arranged where a Christian mela or a religious fair could be held. These pilgrimages could have emphasis on fellowship and learning. The festival of Diwali or Deepavali could be continued to symbolize the triumph of the light of knowledge over the darkness of ignorance. Another important annual ceremony is the Rakshabandhan, a celebration of brother-sister love. On that day, a brother visits his sister who ties a cord around his wrist to symbolize their mutual affection. In turn the brother assures the sister of his love and protection at all times. Not only could this practice be continued, but a father's day and mother's day could also be added. In another festival young unmarried girls offer special prayers for being blessed with a good husband, and married women offer special prayers for the welfare and the long life of their husband. Such a custom can also be continued. The church can create occasions for the continued observance of these and other festivals. These would not only break the monotony of life but would give to the devout Hindu inner joy and satisfaction.\(^1\)

\(^1\)Winslow, p. 57. \(^2\)Subbamma, pp. 149-52.
Worship. Most Hindus have a prayer room in their house. These contain religious images as sacred symbols. The people usually offer flowers, light lamps, repeat mantras or sacred sentences or prayers, and read the Scriptures before beginning the day's work. Very often the people meet in different houses over a period of hours where they have Bhajans or worship accompanied by music. Unfortunately, when someone from such a background joins the Christian church, a void is left. The rich experience of daily puja or worship is lost and religion becomes a once-a-week affair. And even then, it is often worship in Western style with which the Indians do not feel quite at home. Hindus frequently like to visit the local temples and other larger temples.

This need for worship on the part of the Hindus should be taken care of by converting the puja rooms in the house to a place of prayer for Christ. Prayer houses could be built to take the place of temples.\(^1\) Experiments in Indian Christian architecture such as that exemplified in the splendid Christian temple in Dravidian style at the Tirupattur Ashram should be encouraged.\(^2\) Also the custom of taking off one's shoes when entering a house or a hall for worship or fellowship and sitting on the floor mat without chairs could be continued and encouraged.\(^3\)

Music. Singing plays a very important part, especially in congregational worship. Unfortunately, joyous singing cannot result when little known Western hymns are played on Western instruments such as the piano and organ. Familiar tunes, including

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 147-49. \(^2\)Winslow, p. 58. \(^3\)Octavianus, p. 1244.
some folk-songs, and using indigenous musical instruments could be freely encouraged. Many Hindus know how to play native instruments and could easily compose Christian songs and sing them to the familiar tunes. Bhajans, worship accompanied by music, could also become a part of the regular service. The devotional music of India has a moving appeal to the Indian soul. I can testify from my own personal experience how much more I am stirred by Indian religious music played on the sitar or other musical instruments than by Western hymns played on the piano or organ, though I have been a Christian for nearly eleven years. Other Indians express the same feelings. Yet, in India, one often finds in an isolated little Seventh-day Adventist church, an imported piano which may be used only when a missionary visits.

Drama. Throughout the centuries, drama has been of great importance in the religious experience of the Hindus. The two outstanding themes are love and miraculous deeds of the gods drawn from the epics. These can be adapted to Christian drama since there is an endless resource of these themes in the Bible and in the lives of individuals transformed by the Gospel. In drama and in music, the Indian theories of rasa and raga can be incorporated for religious expression appropriate for their emotional expressions. Also, kirtan, narration of sacred stories, and the ancient art of puppetry could be encouraged.

Ashram. To an Indian, an Ashram is what a monastery and church combined is to the West. In Sanskrit, sram means 'to exert

---

1Subbamma, p. 165.  2Winslow, p. 55.  3Subbamma, pp. 153-65.
oneself physically'. Therefore, Ashram, the opposite of sram, means 'a place of physical rest' or 'abode of peace and rest'. To an Indian, the name Ashram brings a religious tone of piety and sacredness, abandonment to the things of God, a place where discipling takes place. Ashram originated and developed in India and has become a cultural symbol of spiritual life, service, and communication.

As a response to demand for indigenization in the church in India, the Indian Christian Ashram movement began with the first Christian Ashram started in 1921. There are now about fifty Indian Christian Ashrams throughout India.

The major concerns of these Ashrams are: a life of prayer and meditation, Bible study, simple living, manual labor, common fund and caring of resources, service to fellow men--particularly the sick, the suffering and the needy, witnessing to the love of Christ by life and work, evangelistic work, promotion of indigenous forms of worship and witness, and working for peace and reconciliation and fellowship with all.

Unfortunately, the Seventh-day Adventist church in India has not seen it fit to start an Ashram. However, I am of the opinion that the church should consider this not only in India but also in other parts of the world where there are large groups of

---

3 Thannickal, pp. 312-13.
4 Thomas, p. 213.
Indians. It would be good to start one in Kenya. I hope that in the near future when a group of Indians want to join the church that church administrators will consider starting an Ashram. This would not only help to incorporate the ideas presented earlier in this section regarding functional substitutes, but it would also encourage other Hindus to want to become Seventh-day Adventists. The Ashram would provide a place for nurture and continual growth of the Indian Christians and would provide avenues for outreach and service to others.

Having now considered certain concepts for an evangelistic approach to the Hindu Indians in Kenya, it is appropriate to make some concluding remarks.

Summary

From the discussions in this chapter it is evident that the traditional methods of evangelism have not been successful in evangelizing Hindu Indians. Therefore, some other methods of evangelization are necessary. It would seem best to follow the advice of Ellen White and use health evangelism. This may very well break down prejudice and help to foster goodwill and then religious discussions could be held. In order to do this, the attitude toward the people should be one of humility and love, the truly Christian attitude of service. Finally, cross-cultural factors need to be taken into account. When a group of Indians become Christians, certain functional substitutes need to be found so that they can become and remain Indian Christians.
CHAPTER IV

RECORD OF TWO YEARS' WORK

Introduction

This chapter begins with my initial preparations and setting of goals prior to the beginning of my work in Kenya. This is followed by a fairly detailed report of how I made initial contact with the Asian community and began conducting health programs and developing friendships. A report is made of my attempts to have dialogue-discussions and of presenting the Gospel.

In Kenya the Indians, along with those from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc., are all classed as Asians although most of them are Indians. In this chapter, the term 'Asians' applies to all the above groups.

The details reported in this chapter are not strictly chronological; they are conceptualized to provide thematic continuity. Their chronology, however, is preserved as far as possible.

Though this project was designed specifically for evangelism among the Indian Hindus, it actually included some work among the non-Hindu Indians, especially the Ismaili Muslim community and the Roman Catholic Goan community. In fact even some of the African and European communities were included. This was due to two facts: (1) all Asian groups are closely linked
sociologically and (2) they live in the midst of Africans and Europeans. To work exclusively for the Hindu Indians could create prejudices. Furthermore, I believe that I am called to minister to the needs of all classes and races—although my specific task in relation to this project was directed toward the Hindu Asians.

Initial Preparations

I was born in Bombay to a well-to-do, highly educated Hindu family belonging to the 'Gaud Saraswat' Brahmin caste. My father was Maharashtrian and my mother Gujarati. After obtaining qualifications in the field of electrical engineering from the University of London, I established my own engineering business in Bangalore. It was there my wife and I became Seventh-day Adventists. Shortly after joining the church we followed through with previous plans to emigrate to Australia. There I took theology courses at Avondale College with the desire of becoming a minister. I later attended Andrews University in America and obtained M.A. and M.Div. degrees. This training and experience convinced me to obtain employment with the church to work specifically for the Indian Hindus who had not heard the Gospel.

During the latter part of 1979, Pastor D. K. Bazarra, the executive director of the East African Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, visited Andrews University. He asked me whether I would be willing to go to Kenya to work among the Indians there. After accepting the offer and while waiting for the call to be processed, I completed the classwork for the D.Min. degree and spent considerable time researching information related to the
Indians in Kenya and in developing an evangelistic approach.

Due to further delays encountered while settling my home-base as Australia, my wife and I were able to attend the Institute of World Mission. Together we presented a paper on "Information about Kenya and Our Work There." Though born a Hindu, the study of Hindu culture and background has proved very useful in preparing me to better understand the people for whom I was called to work. Although it was decided that it would be best to take a step-by-step approach to meet people's needs as the mission developed, I designed a tentative program in order to give some structure to the process.

My wife, who is English, and I had lived in India for nearly six years after our marriage. She was well-versed with the backgrounds and the culture of the people and therefore very much interested in helping to implement the project.

With such a background, we believed we were adequately prepared to approach the task of going to Kenya to evangelize the Indian Hindus. I was aware of the fact, however, that these people were in a country where the majority of the people had a different culture and religion; and that our evangelistic approach would have to be flexible enough to take into account the social, economic, cultural, political, and other environmental circumstances.

Arrival in Kenya and Setting of Goals

On May 31, 1981, our family arrived in Nairobi, Kenya, to work for the East African Union of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA church as an evangelist for the Asians. The Union office is located
in Thompson Estate, about ten km south of the center of the city of Nairobi. Accommodations were provided by the Union for our family in one of the houses adjacent to the Union office. All eight missionary families employed by the Union in the departmental work for the Union are housed in this area.

The first work I undertook was to ascertain the approach that had been used in the past to evangelize the Asians. Although the SDA church had been established in Kenya for nearly eighty years, no specific work had been done for the Asian community. The Asians were contacted for Ingathering appeals and by colporteurs, but as far as I could find no church health or spiritual programs had ever been conducted specifically for them, nor had any other person ever been asked to work specifically for them. It had been anticipated that during the usual evangelistic meetings the Asians would also come and become members of the SDA church. Such a result had never been accomplished over the many years. However, the Better Living Centre of the SDA church had made some impact on the Asians, and several Asians over the past years had attended health programs conducted there.

My second task was to discuss with the officers of the Union the general plan I proposed to follow. This plan was based upon the research of the previous chapters of this project. I discussed my plan with the executive director and the ministerial director for the Union. Then all these plans were put into writing in the form of a memorandum. The relevant portions included the following:

As it has been difficult to interest Asians to attend traditional evangelistic meetings and to incorporate them into the existing churches, I hope to try a different approach and modify it as I go along.
To begin with, I intend to make social contacts with the Asians. I hope to meet with those who have been contacted previously by other church members for Ingathering and those who have attended programs at the Better Living Centre. I also propose to join, if necessary, some clubs or associations where I will have more opportunities of meeting with professionals such as doctors, professors, engineers, etc. I shall also meet with evangelists of other Christian denominations to obtain insights into their methods; also I shall contact some of those who have been converted from Hinduism to Christianity, in order to understand what caused their conversion.

While I am making contacts and developing friendships and mutual trust, I shall endeavour to study the Hindu religion in the context of Kenya in order to find bridges between Hinduism and Christianity. I shall also prepare some literature that will appeal to them and arouse interest in Christianity. Subsequently, I hope to have dialogues with them and eventually begin Bible studies, perhaps in small groups at first and then in larger groups. I do not intend to rush and aim at converting individual Asians so as not to antagonize the rest. But, I hope to work with families and build up homogenous groups.

Finally, as a group of Asians gets ready to join the church, I hope to give some consideration to their cultural background and incorporate these in the music, way of worship, etc., as far as is acceptable in a Christian church. In this way they would feel more comfortable in their setting and yet bear in mind that they are a part of the world church with a world mission.

I believed it was necessary to have this plan understood by the Union officers. In order to keep them and other officers informed of the work, I proposed to send a memorandum once a month to the East African Union executive director, to the then Afro-Mideast Division executive director, and to the president of the Australasian Division, my home-base.

This program continued throughout the two-year period and was very much appreciated by the officers, who continually encouraged me in my work.

Next, it was important to decide on the place of work. Although exact statistical numbers were not available, it was found that the majority of Asians lived in Nairobi, the capital of the
country and its economic center. Most of the major industries and businesses, the High Court, and many major hospitals are situated there. In addition to this, the climate and central location of Nairobi encouraged the majority of Asians to settle there.

The second largest community of Asians is in Mumbassa. A large number of these were Muslims or Roman Catholics. On my visit there I found that since there was no SDA Medical center, school, or headquarters, there was little contact between the Asians and Seventh-day Adventists. It seemed best, therefore to stay in Nairobi and concentrate the work for the Asian community there. It would be possible to expand the work in Mumbassa and other places later.

With these initial decisions made we set our goals and soon after, when asked by the Union communications director to prepare a "Statement of Mission"—a task given to each departmental director—we were able to present the following statement:

My specific task is to work for the Asian community in East Africa. Most of the Asians are Hindus, Moslems, and Roman Catholics; and the Seventh-day Adventist church has not been able to effect any conversions from among them. Efforts will therefore be directed towards understanding specific needs of the Asian community, and acquainting them with the work and the message of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The health message will be used in the beginning, and Bible Study groups will be begun as the interest grows. At first the work will be mainly in Nairobi where there is a large concentration of Asians, and in time other parts of the Union will be covered. With full commitment to the mission of the church, to preach the Gospel to all the world, it will be my goal to reach all I can, teach all I can reach, win all I teach, train all I win, and enlist all I train for Jesus.1

Before beginning work, it was necessary to try to ascertain the budget that would be allotted for my work. Prior to my

arrival I had received the impression that considerable amount of money would be available as the work of evangelism to the Asians was considered very important. However, it was soon discovered that during the elapsed time, between invitation and arrival, a new secretary-treasurer had been installed, and he felt that the Union did not have much funds for evangelism. I was assured, however, that when my plans were finalized, I could present my budget proposals and they would be given due consideration.

It should be noted here that neither the ministerial director for the Union nor I were members of the Executive Committee for the Union, although all other departmental directors were. I hoped this would not be an impediment to my work although I realized I might be unaware of certain Union policies and might also be unable to present my program and requirements in person to the Committee.

Ascertainment of Seventh-day Adventist Contacts with Asians

Since no Asians were members of the church, I endeavoured to find whether any of the officers of the Union had developed any contacts with the Asians. This would enable me to find a quicker way into the community and help to build friendships and begin to work more quickly.

The first avenue I explored was the Union and Conference publishing directors to obtain names of people contacted through colporteurs. Unfortunately, the new Union publishing director had just arrived in Kenya and had had no contacts with Asians. I was able, however, to meet with the local conference men who were very
successful colporteurs in Nairobi. They mentioned that almost all their sales were in the Asian community. They thought that the Asian business people purchased the SDA books such as *The Desire of Ages* either to give as presents to their African employees or to friends who were Christians. Some purchased health books for the library in their offices. When I requested a list of names and addresses of these Asians, I was informed that the Asians were not aware that these books were published by Seventh-day Adventists, and it would be wiser not to contact these people as a Seventh-day Adventist. On the other hand, I was requested to pass on all the details of people whom I contacted so the colporteurs could try to sell books to them. I thought it would be better to wait until the Asians were better acquainted with the work and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventists.

The second avenue to explore was the contacts made by the Union officers and other Seventh-day Adventists for "Ingathering" (the annual public appeal for funds). The Asians were said to give very generous donations and much of the appeal money came from their community. When I requested each of the Union officers to give me a list of contacts they had made for Ingathering, none came forward, so I had to obtain a list from the officer in charge of the Ingathering records. The list contained only the names of the organizations. No record was kept of the names or designations of the persons contacted. Contacting organizations would be futile. I was told, however, that it was expected that my efforts to contact the Asian community would increase the funds considerably during the next appeal.
Next, I queried the Union officers and other members of the church to find if anyone could give me any contact they may have made with the Asians. To my dismay none seemed to have developed any strong associations or friendships with any Asians. Some Seventh-day Adventists knew some of the shop owners from whom they made regular purchases, but not a single contact was made by any of the missionaries or African members of the church to whom I was introduced, nor could I find any Seventh-day Adventist who had invited any Asian to his home or who had been invited to any Asian home.

I finally found that the only avenue of approach was through the Better Living Centre. The physicians and dentists had developed a good reputation for the center and one of the physicians was conducting health-related programs on a fairly regular basis. Though most of the clientele was European, a few Asians attended the center for treatment and the lectures. The physician, Dr. Nelson, was pleased to have me associate with him in conducting health programs and in pursuing contact with the Asians reached through the treatments and lectures.

Thus it was clear that the best established avenue for beginning any work for the Asian community would be to develop interest among contacts attending the Better Living Centre.

In addition, it was decided to make a survey of the Asian community to learn more about it and to develop contacts through personal efforts.
A Survey of the Asian Community

It soon became apparent that no specific statistical studies about the Asian community were available. However it seemed necessary for the work we were planning to know as many details as possible. This was done by meeting with Asians and obtaining as much information as possible. Fortunately, I became acquainted with the Secretary of the Hindu Council of Kenya and she provided me with many rough statistical figures. These can be summarized as follows:

Although the Asian population at the time of Independence of Kenya in 1962 was over 100,000, by 1981 it had declined to between 75,000 and 80,000. About 50 percent of these lived in Nairobi. About 65 percent of Asians are Hindus and Jains, 20 percent Muslims, and the remaining 15 percent include Goan Roman Catholics, Sikhs, Parsees, etc. Thus by 1981 about 25,000 Hindu Asians were living in Nairobi. The majority of these people speak Gujarati and a few speak Marathi and Hindi, although almost all the Asians can speak Hindi, the national language of India.

Among the Hindus, about 10 percent are Brahmins and some of the major subcastes are 30 percent Shahs, 15 percent Lohanas, and 15 percent Patels. Almost every group has its own temple. About twenty Hindu temples exist in Nairobi. Some large ones are situated on the main roads of the city--the Kenya Bhrama Sabha, Lohana Mandir, Ram Mandir, Hare Rama Hare Krishna Temple, Akshan Purshottam Temple. There are also three Jain temples, five Sikh temples, and several Muslim mosques, such as at City Market, Eastleigh, Pangani, Park Road, and Ngara.
The Asians have a total of 151 institutions throughout Kenya and are registered with the Hindu Council of Kenya. Of these, forty-one are in Nairobi. These institutions are run separately by individual castes and subcastes. They have large auditoriums for community functions including marriages, etc. During the week they are for social activities and games. Several institutions also run schools and hospitals. There are over twenty schools in Nairobi run by these institutions as well as the Shah Hospital renowned for its facilities. These were originally for their own communities but are now open to all. Several large clubs are also run by these communities. One such club is the Premier Club which until recently was only for the Patel community and was called the Patel Club. Another popular club for all communities is the Parklands Sports club. Other Asian communities have their own institutions— for example, the Ishmaili or the Aga Khan Muslim community has several schools in Nairobi, a very well-known hospital, the Aga Khan Hospital, and the Aga Khan Club which provides facilities for sports and social activities. The Goan community has its own Gymkhana Club and other facilities.

Most of the Asians are engaged in retail and wholesale businesses and own most of the shops in Nairobi. They are involved in large manufacturing establishments—some in collaboration with European companies. Several are engaged in other professions— physicians, surgeons, chemists, opticians, lawyers, solicitors, advocates, construction engineers, etc.

Socially the Asians keep within their own sub-communities and have their own community programs, entertainment, etc. The
women of most sub-communities have their own clubs or associations and meet on a regular basis for various activities. The men belong to the Lions, Rotary, and other clubs, and spend their leisure time with their family and friends at their community clubs.

Those Asians who are Christians almost all are Roman Catholics from Goa and are fairly isolated socially from the Hindus. A few, perhaps about fifty, Protestant Christians, mainly from South India, are engineers, etc., on short-term government contracts.

Beginning of Contacts, Health Programs, and Rotary Club

I believed that it would be best for me to identify myself as a Seventh-day Adventist minister from the beginning when I came in contact with Asians rather than to try to conceal my identity. This would eliminate any misunderstandings at a later date and would give me an opportunity to acquaint the Asians with the work of the Seventh-day Adventist church. It would also provide me with an opportunity to explain to the Asians reasons why I was a Christian. I had business cards printed and gave these to Asians whenever I visited in their offices, shops, etc. Since the Asian community is not extremely large in Nairobi, most people were quick to notice that I was a newcomer. It was easy for me to inform them that I was a minister of the Seventh-day Adventist church and would be conducting health programs and other programs for their communities.

At about the time I arrived in Nairobi, June 1981, Dr. Nelson of the Better Living Centre had planned to conduct a series of lectures on nutrition and invited me to join him. The lectures
were attended by about fifty people, most of whom were patients of Dr. Nelson. About half were Asians and the other half were Europeans, with a few Africans also in attendance. This series was followed by a Stress Control Clinic in July 1981. This was attended by about thirty-five people, half of whom were Asians. Most of the Asians who attended these series were Goan Roman Catholics, who feel socially closer to Europeans than Indians. There were a few Sikhs and Muslims and a very few Hindus. When I examined the lists of people who had attended the health programs in the past at the Better Living Centre, it was obvious that the percentage of Hindus who attended was extremely small.

The Better Living Centre is situated in a large SDA compound along with the Nairobi Central Church, the largest and the only English-speaking Seventh-day Adventist church in Nairobi. The compound also includes the Maxwell Primary School, an academy, and a dormitory for students—run on the American system for the children of the missionaries, and a guest house which accommodates about ten families. From my view it seemed that although the Better Living Centre was conveniently located near the center of the city, its proximity to the Seventh-day Adventist institutions and residences made the Hindu Asians feel uneasy and hindered their attendance at the programs. This view was based on the fact that during my personal visits, I was able to find many Asians interested in health programs, but when I gave them the details of the location, their interest declined and they did not attend the lectures.

One woman who attended a series of nutrition lectures was
the chairperson of the Femina ladies' club, a club of about twenty-five members. The members were not inclined to attend the lectures at the Better Living Centre but invited Dr. Nelson and myself to their club meeting at the end of July 1981 to give a talk on nutrition. Since Dr. Nelson was unable to go, my wife and I went to the ladies club. Providentially, one of the guests at the meeting was the Secretary of the Hindu Council of Kenya. She was very impressed by the lecture and said that she would spread the word to other clubs so all could benefit from it. Many such clubs of Asian women meet once a month and rotate around the various homes of the members. Membership is restricted to their own little sub-community, and since the women are well-educated and are from well-to-do families, they do not take up employment. They keep themselves occupied by meetings and social work within their own communities. Some of these clubs have memberships of up to 300 and hold their meetings in the community halls. All the meetings close with a fellowship time and a meal.

One Asian woman who attended the health programs at the Better Living Centre was the managing director of Beezee Secretarial Services and also chairperson of the Nairobi Professional Women's Club. She invited me to address the club on Mental Fitness at the September 12 meeting. The meetings of this club are co-sponsored by the Nairobi Hilton Hotel which hosts the meeting and provides refreshments. Its membership of about 100 business and professional women, mostly Asians, meet once a month. The meetings are well organized, have printed invitations, and are well publicized. 

[^1]: See a copy of the invitation for this talk in appendix A.
My talk was much appreciated, and an interesting review appeared in the *East African Herald*.¹

Subsequently, I decided to conduct a Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking, at the Better Living Centre, as several people had shown an interest in it. The Plan was conducted from October 5 to 9, 1981 with the help of an SDA medical student, Paul Wangai. Attendance was very small; eight people came including one Asian. However, it was a success in that all who attended gave up smoking and one of them was the Hon. G. S. Mia, the assistant minister of finance for the government of Kenya. In spite of the small attendance, the success of the plan became quite widely known among the Asian community.

Thus, during the first four months, I conducted a few health programs and began to receive invitations to speak to various organizations among the Asian community.

In addition to conducting these programs, I spent much time visiting Asians in their shops and offices and trying to develop personal friendships. It seemed, however, that the best way to become better acquainted with the men would be to join clubs where they spent most of their spare time. Unfortunately the clubs and associations affiliated with the Hindu Council of Kenya catered to families in their various sub-communities and were not open to membership to anyone except their own sub-group, thus excluding non-Hindus. Therefore, I looked into the possibility of joining either the Lions Club or the Rotary Club. However, these are open to membership by invitation only. Fortunately, Joseph G. Smoot,

¹See a copy of the review in *East African Herald* in appendix B.
president of Andrews University, was visiting Kenya during April 1981. He had known me previously and took an interest in my work. He suggested that I ought to become a member of the Rotary Club. Since he is a Rotarian himself, he took me as his guest to one of the Rotary Clubs in Nairobi. There I became acquainted with several prominent Asians who were members of the same Club and they invited me to join. At that time, due to a large membership in the existing Rotary Clubs, a new Club was being formed so I was invited to become a Charter Member of the Nairobi Utumishi Rotary Club.

The membership of the Club proved very valuable in making contacts with many influential Asians and gave me a better status within the Asian community. Since I was the only minister in the Rotary Club, it became fairly normal for me to be asked to say the grace at the meetings and to offer a vote of thanks, etc. I was made a member of the Community Service Committee which took up the task of installing lightning conductors at schools—there had been several incidents of children being killed by lightning. The project gave me opportunities to meet with many professional people, including government officials. My role in the Rotary Club was appreciated and the following year, when the secretary of the Club could not continue his work, I was selected as acting secretary for the remainder of the year. The following year I was elected secretary.
Acquainting the Asian with the
Seventh-day Adventist Church and
the "Total Health Seminar"

As contacts with the leaders of the Asian community and
with those in the offices and shops, I found that hardly any of
them were aware of the existence of the Seventh-day Adventist
church and its work in Kenya. The few exceptions were those who
had come in contact with the Better Living Centre. I found that
the general tendency among Asians was to believe that the Seventh-
day Adventist and other Christian churches were in Kenya to
evangelize the Africans. As in India, most Hindus thought
Christianity was for the lower classes and for the uneducated,
thus the general tendency to keep away from Christianity.

An example of this attitude was noted during the annual
Nairobi Show held in September 1981. This Show displays the
products of almost all organizations and with brochures, etc. informs
visitors of the organization's activities. The Seventh-day Adventist
church in the past had participated in this Show with a large stall
displaying photos of the work being done by the church and had
hand-out materials for visitors. Along with many others, I volunteered
to help at the stall. During my many hours there, I noticed that
all the Asians shunned the SDA stall and, although thousands of
Asians visited the Show, only one family very briefly entered the
stall when they were attracted by a film on exercise.

It became my belief that I should contact the Asians,
acquaint them with the work of the SDA church, and help them realize
that the church existed to serve them as well as the Africans.
Further, I desired to show them that Christianity had something to
offer the educated, higher class people. To fulfill this aim, I decided to organize a reception at a prominent location in the city where various leaders and prominent people, especially from among the Asian community, could be invited. There I would continue with a Health Seminar to acquaint them with the Seventh-day Adventist health message and also provide them with a vegetarian meal.

After much consideration, the Serena Hotel, one of the best in Nairobi and with a large reception hall frequently used by Asians for their functions, was chosen for the reception and seminar. The cost for such a reception, including printing of invitations and other details, was worked out and a budget proposal was presented to the Union. It would have been preferable to have continued the seminar for two weeks; however, due to limited finances, approval was granted for a period of four evenings.

Invitations were sent to the chairpersons and the secretaries of every club and association registered under the Hindu Council of Kenya. Chairpersons of other prominent clubs and organizations including Rotary Club, Lions Club, etc., were also invited along with the managing directors of various large industries. Many prominent Africans and Europeans and representatives from the news media were also among the invitees. I also invited the assistant finance minister, the Hon. Muia, who had attended my Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking, as my chief guest at the reception, and the health minister, the Hon. Magugu, to inaugurate the "Total Health Seminar." All invitees were asked to come with their spouses.

The reception and Health Seminar were held October 22, October 27, 28, and November 1, 1981. Unfortunately, due to
inaccurate information from a Hindu Council Officer, the dates for the Health Seminar conflicted with the Diwali and New Year celebration of the Hindus. When I realized the situation, it was too late to change the dates since the Serena Hotel was already booked up weeks ahead and the invitations had already been sent. However, I did try to contact the invitees personally and almost all of them accepted my personal invitation though some had prior engagements for Diwali celebrations. About 300 people attended a part of or the entire Seminar.

The printed program accompanying the invitation mentioned that after the vegetarian buffet a 45-minute talk "A Quick Look at Seventh-day Adventists" would be given. During the talk I gave a short history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its work in the areas of education, health, publishing, SAWS, communications, health-food factors, etc., throughout the world and particularly in Kenya. Emphasis was given to the SDA concept of man which includes the physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects. I briefly discussed the religious beliefs of the church--the Gospel, Sabbath keeping, and the second coming of Christ. At the close, every person was given a copy of Facts and Figures of the S.D.A.'s.

The chief guest, the Hon. Muia, spoke very highly of Seventh-day Adventists and strongly urged the audience to avail themselves of the services offered by the church. He gave his

---

1 See copy of the invitation to the program "A Quick Look at Seventh-day Adventists" in appendix C.

2 A copy of Facts and Figures of the S.D.A.s appears in appendix D.
personal testimony of how he gave up smoking through the Five-day Plan.

The Total Health Seminar was to have been inaugurated by the minister for health, the Hon. A. K. Magugu. At the last moment he was unable to attend. He sent the assistant minister for health, Hon. Dr. Wameyo, in his place. I acquainted the audience with the work of the church in the area of health and emphasized the special and unique work of the church in health education and prevention of disease. The Hon. Wameyo spoke highly of the church and welcomed this new concept of a Health Seminar.

The topics for the three nights of the Seminar were: "How to Avoid Diseases That Kill Most People," "How to Live Longer by Extending the Middle Years of Your Life," and "How to Stay Mentally Fit in a Stressful Age." Each session included a one-hour lecture followed by a vegetarian supper; another talk of forty-five minutes followed by a half-hour period for questions and answers. The first session included a discussion on the causes of heart disease, cancer, stroke, and other degenerative diseases and the effects of smoking, drinking, and using caffeine. It ended with a discussion of vegetarianism. The second talk emphasized the necessity of healthful habits and laid stress on exercise, water, fresh air, sunlight, and rest. The third talk considered the causes and effects of stress and ended with a recommendation of trust in Divine Power.

Throughout the Seminar I emphasized the fact that I was a

---

1See copy of the invitation to the "Total Health Seminar" in appendix E.
Christian and that the Christian way of life had taught me how to look after my body and mind and helped me spiritually. I gave my own testimony about giving up smoking, drinking, and becoming a vegetarian and adopting a more healthful way of living. This encouraged several in the audience to give testimonies. Although it was not planned, the last day of the Seminar the session was lengthened as several wanted to testify how they had been helped by following some of the suggestions made during the Seminar.

Many people had requested more information on health. Therefore I prepared a short summary and distributed it on the last day of the Seminar and promised to look into preparing more literature.

Although I was not sure how the Asians would respond to religion, I decided that since the Serena Hotel reception hall was available for one more night at a very nominal cost, I would hire the film 'Jesus' and invite the audience to view it. The response was poor with only about twenty families attending.

However, the Health Seminar not only helped those who attended to become acquainted with the Seventh-day Adventist church and its beliefs but also gave the church much publicity throughout Kenya through the news media. On the day of the reception, I was invited to appear for a live, televised interview by the Voice of Kenya, the Government-owned and the only national radio and television network in Kenya. The interview, a part of the "Mumba Lao" program, lasted twenty minutes. I was asked how a Seventh-day Adventist minister was involved in a Health Seminar, about the SDA philosophy of health, etc. The opening of the Total Health Seminar was also
covered on radio by the Kenya News Agency. The Standard newspaper had three feature articles on three different days and gave summaries of my talks. The Adventist Review, the SDA magazine, also had an interesting article about the programs.

More Health Programs and Financial Limitations

Following the Health Seminar, I received many invitations to speak at meetings at various organizations, some were small ladies'-club meetings in homes and some were large organization meetings with a membership of 300 or more. Over the next few months, I spoke at 'Stree Niketan' with a membership of 300 Asian ladies; 'Narivrund' with a membership of 15; 'Hindi Mahal Mandal' with a membership of 250; Kenya Science Teacher's College with over 300 students; Ladies' Auxiliary of the Lions Club of Nairobi, with a membership of 60 Asian ladies; Nairobi Rotary Club, membership 80; Vihar Club, membership of 180 Asian ladies; Nairobi Utumishi Rotary Club, with a membership of 30; Art Arena Club, membership 30 Asian ladies; and Nairobi South Rotary Club, membership 80; among others.

At many I was asked to speak on either nutrition, with an emphasis on vegetarianism, or on stress control. Also, I was asked invariably to talk on the effects of smoking and alcohol.

As a result, many people became interested in the SDA health message and wanted to know more about the programs. Unfortunately, the invitations limited me to only ten minutes to about one hour to speak. It was possible, therefore, to give only a few useful hints and create an interest which would encourage people to attend
larger programs. The Asians consistently did not respond to invitations to attend programs conducted at the Better Living Centre. The possible alternative was to conduct more of the "Total Health Seminars" as well as other programs at non-Adventist locations. This would require money, and until the end of December, this was out of the question. However, I was told that a certain amount of funds would be available for 1982. Another major factor also had to be taken into account, that of audiovisual equipment. The Union had purchased a few projectors, etc., for the use in the Better Living Centre. Since this equipment was often used at the Centre it was impossible for me to borrow it when needed. Even for the 'Total Health Seminar' I had to borrow equipment from one of my Rotary friends who lent it at no cost. I decided to purchase some audiovisual equipment from the 1982 budget. Due to the high cost of such equipment in Kenya, the budget was insufficient to buy the basic equipment, leaving no money for anything else.

I had to rely on persuading the Asians to arrange programs in their own halls. This was often possible and several such programs were conducted. However, since their halls were used daily for games, weddings, and other functions, it was not possible to conduct any continuing series of programs.

During the health lectures, my wife often accompanied me and aroused the interest of the ladies in doing exercises. Many of them had shown an interest in attending a fitness course if my wife could find a place to conduct classes. Several places were investigated but were too expensive. Finally, some Asian ladies
belonging to the Aga Khan Club were able to persuade their organization to allow my wife to conduct fitness classes at their pavillion. This was called the Keep Fit course. The ladies also invited me to give talks on health to the group.

On April 5, 1982, the Keep Fit course was begun with twenty-five ladies attending. The class was held four days a week for eight weeks in one hour sessions. During the program participants were given information on exercising, slides and films were shown, and short talks given.

The Fitness classes were very much appreciated, and the Aga Khan committee invited my wife to conduct another series. So another session was conducted for eight weeks ending July 15, 1982.

During the first week of June, the Aga Khan community organized a Health Emphasis Week in celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the accession of His Highness the Aga Khan. Their Health Committee chairman who had also attended the Total Health Seminar requested me to conduct a Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking at their primary-school hall during the celebrations. Fifteen people attended the session and all gave up smoking. This incident was reported in their magazine.¹

The Aga Khan community and many others suggested that I should charge for these programs so I could hold the programs more often and be able to hire halls, etc. This possibility was discussed since the people interested were all well-to-do and would gladly pay for the programs. The Union administrators felt, however, that since the past programs had always been conducted as a free

¹See copy of the article in The Aga Khan Health Services-International Newsletter, No. 13, January 1983, in appendix H.
service to the community, no fee should be charged. On the basis of this decision the number of programs were limited. However, the Aga Khan community and many individuals did donate funds from time to time after some of the programs had been conducted.

I was also asked on occasion whether the information used in the lectures could be made available. I was willing to do this but found that printing even a few pages of summary and making a few thousand copies would cost more than what funds were available. A few people who had taken extensive notes during some of the lectures got permission from me to make copies and circulate them among their friends.

In early 1981 the Quinquennial Session of the SDA Union Conference was held. I was asked to continue my work as evangelist for the Asians and also to become the Associate Ministerial and Health and Temperance Director. This was a welcome position, especially since as Associate Health and Temperance Director I would be even better accepted when giving talks to other organizations.

Moving Residence and More Contacts

By May 1981 I had spent one year in Kenya and had been successful with health programs for the Asian community. However, as I was getting more and more closely acquainted with the people, I was becoming more and more aware that although the Asians did not mind my being a Seventh-day Adventist, they did not feel comfortable in visiting me at my office or in my residence.

The Union office is situated in a predominantly European area. Though the office building is quite impressive, shortage of
office space has necessitated the offices for the ministerial department, including mine, to locate in a nearby housing complex with an unattractive and awkward entrance. This made it inconvenient for me to invite Asians to my office. Also, my house was in the midst of the SDA missionary residences. This seemed to hinder Asians from freely visiting me. Only two Asians had visited me at home over the twelve-month period, although many invitations had been offered. Therefore, I decided to move out into an area that was predominantly Asian and live among them.

Another factor influenced this decision to move out--lack of available funds for conducting programs. I believed that if I had a larger house with a larger living room and kitchen, I could invite groups of people in my house and conduct programs at home where my wife could give cooking demonstrations and conduct small exercise classes.

As discussed above, I was aware of the need to build strong friendships with the Asians. This could be done by inviting them to my home, thus providing a comfortable situation where both health programs and religious discussions could be held.

In view of this, I approached the Union officials who approved of the idea. After a prolonged search, I found a large house with a large living room that could seat fifty people. The Asian owner was pleased to rent it at a much reduced rate. However, the Union officials did not think it was wise to rent such a large house for my family. My proposal to pay for the slightly higher rent from my evangelistic budget was also unacceptable. We later found a smaller house at a slightly lower rent. We moved in on May 31, 1982.
The move made a sudden difference in our relations with the Asians. They began to visit our home and began to invite us to theirs. Some Asians suggested that we have a house-warming party. Many Asians attended this function and it was regarded as a success.

I also decided to join Parklands Sports Club and the Aga Khan Club where many Asian families spent their evenings and weekend leisure time. Some of our Asian friends proposed my name for membership and I was accepted. This gave me more opportunities to make closer contacts with Asians. My family was also able to make use of these places and to make personal contacts with people. We were invited to dinner, and to birthday and wedding parties on several occasions. I was also invited to be a guest by the Kenya Brahma Samaj at their annual dinner, and by the Hindu Council of Kenya at their annual Diwali celebrations. Such functions are usually restricted to their own members. Among those who became my personal friends were the Secretary of the Hindu Council of Kenya, and the Chairman of the Aga Khan Health committee.

Some Set-Backs and a Turn of Events

Mid 1981 brought a few set-backs--personal and external. First, my wife suddenly contracted Bell's palsy which paralyzed the right side of her face. Since we were very friendly with Asian doctors, we decided to obtain treatment through them--one a physician and a lecturer at Nairobi University, and another a neurologist. My wife soon recovered and this helped to increase our friendship.

Then I began to suffer from mental and physical exhaustion.
Apart from the various health lectures and the many visits, etc., I had been involved in other programs. These included a Spirit of Prophecy Workshop, a Communications Seminar with Elder Hudgins, the Quinquennial Session of the Union, Ministerial workers' meetings and the One Thousand Days of Reaping promotion with Elder Quigley, Temperance Seminars for SDA workers with Elder Steed, Rotary Club responsibilities, and preaching in local churches and conducting health programs for local churches. My Asian physician friends advised me to take some rest. Thus, our family decided to take our yearly vacation in England. The vacation refreshed me and my family and helped prepare us for further work among the Asian community.

During my vacation, an attempted coup on August 1 resulted in large-scale looting, break-ins, rape, and other violence. The government had successfully regained control of the situation, but these events affected my work considerably. Asians, Africans, and Europeans were affected alike; but the main effect in the Asian community was manifested in a feeling of insecurity.

From August 30 to September 2 the fourth I.C.P.A.—International Committee for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse—was to be held in Nairobi. I had been deeply involved in its organization. It had received much publicity and should have been a boost to my work, but, unfortunately, perhaps due to the curfew and the losses that many had suffered, none of the Asians whom I had contacted and who had shown a keen interest earlier attended the convention. Eventually I received invitations from one Asian ladies' group—the Venus Club of the Patel community—
consisting of about twenty-five ladies, and one invitation from the Nairobi Gymkhana to give talks on health during the following nine months, that is, until May 1983.

The Aga Khan group of Moslems were at this time very busy making preparations for the visit of His Highness the Aga Khan, in October. I was invited to a luncheon hosted in his honor but could not stimulate further interest in conducting health programs. Thus I was hindered from doing much for the Asian community apart from personal invitations. I did receive an invitation from the Kenya Science Teacher's College to give a talk on the effects of smoking and alcohol. Following this I was invited to conduct a Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking for about twenty people. The group gave up smoking.

Due to the University of Nairobi being closed indefinitely and unrest in the country, most of the Asian young boys and girls left the country a short time after August. Within the next few months, many of my close personal Asian acquaintances left the country. Many others were making plans to leave in the near future, thus making it difficult to develop a long-term health-oriented evangelistic approach.

Therefore I changed my approach and began talking about religion. I found that the Hindus were attending their temples more regularly and the Moslems their mosques, showing that as is usual in a crisis, people had become more interested in religion.

Due to lack of funds, I was unable to help those who had suffered materially—either on a large scale of help or with smaller amounts for smaller mishaps. For example, due to an
electrical fault, the house next to mine was completely burnt out
and the two Asian families there lost everything. Unfortunately,
I was unable to obtain any assistance by way of money or furniture,
etc., from our church headquarters and had to contact the heads of
their own community to help.

Thus I was unable to do much materially nor could I conduct
health programs for the Asian community. However, the move of my
family's residence helped me to conduct some programs there. After
moving to the Asian area of Westlands, I was allowed to have my
office at my residence and also to keep some audiovisual equipment
at my home. Therefore, when I invited Asian friends to my home,
the discussion would quite often lead to health topics which could
be shown on some health films and slides. Quite often, the people
who had attended these programs requested me to give further talks
and show slides, films, etc., to their friends and relations either
at my or their homes.

My wife conducted another Keep Fit course for the ladies.
She also gave cooking demonstrations. Due to lack of space, these
had to be limited to only a small number. Our children made several
friends with children of Asian families in the neighborhood.

Thus, with the turn of events, my work for the Asians
changed to a one-to-one and family-to-family ministry in the house-
holds.

Religious Discussions
and Bible Studies

From the time of my arrival in Kenya, I kept looking for
possibilities for religious discussion and Bible study with the
Asian community.
After a series of health programs at the Better Living Centre, a Bible study group was started that included a French lady, an African couple, an American lady, and two Asian ladies one of whom was a Goan Roman Catholic, and the other, a born Hindu, married to a Goan Roman Catholic. The French and the American lady lost interest very soon. The Asian lady married to the Roman Catholic also dropped out due to some family problems. The other Roman Catholic lady was also a member of another small Bible study group conducted by Life Ministries organization. She was attracted more towards the latter as she felt that she could continue to remain in her own church. She invited me to attend the other group with her, but the minister there did not feel comfortable with a Seventh-day Adventist attending and requested me not to attend. Thus I was left with the African couple who continued with the studies and were eventually baptized in November 1982. The man is the auditor for the Ministry of Co-operative Development and his wife is the secretary to the managing director of a large finance company. Both are from Taita, a tribe from which there are few Seventh-day Adventists. They will be an asset to the church.

I did not persevere with the Roman Catholic Goan ladies, nor did I do much work for that community. My work was directed more specifically toward the Hindus. However, I found another missionary, Dr. S. Gamadia, a Methodist minister from the U.S.A., who was sponsored by an Inter-denominational organization. He had arrived in Kenya a few months before I had and had also been looking for avenues of evangelism among the Hindus. We became good friends and visited in each other's homes. He found an Asian
couple who had been converted from Hinduism to Christianity as a result of having attended Christian schools. They were very isolated and quite on their own. Dr. Gamadia began meeting in their home once a week hoping to get other Asians interested. He invited me to attend and participate. The only ones who developed any interest were a few children from the neighborhood. Because of the lack of success with adults, Dr. Gamadia began a radio ministry by having a short ten-minute program early every morning. He and his wife became very engrossed in this ministry. He invited me to give a testimony for one of his programs. Dr. Gamadia received a few inquiries about Christianity in response to his radio broadcasts but had no literature to send. I gave him a supply of *Steps to Christ* and these were sent to the interested people. Nothing more developed from these contacts. Dr. Gamadia himself attended my health programs and also came twice to the Bible studies. Due to his commitment to preparing radio programs, he was unable to continue. He also did not want to enter into controversial issues with me, preferring rather to work together in harmony. When his funds came to an end he had to return to the U.S.A. for six months. During his absence, the Asian couple in whose home he had held meetings lost interest in Christianity. The husband warned his wife against getting involved in Bible studies with anyone. When Dr. Gamadia returned to Kenya, August 1982, he decided it would be better for him to leave for India and direct his efforts there.

My membership in the Rotary Club opened up many opportunities for me to witness. I was quite often asked the reasons for my
being a Seventh-day Adventist. During my many visits to shops and offices, the Asians were immediately able to recognize from my name that I belonged to the Hindu Brahmin caste. And since I always introduced myself as a Seventh-day Adventist minister, I was often questioned about how I came to be in that profession. This gave me many opportunities to witness and to give my reasons for being a Christian and to tell people what Christianity was all about and what had attracted me to it.

After changing my residence, my wife and I had often been conducting health programs at our home and had also been having discussions at the homes of Asians. The meetings slowly developed into close friendships with opportunities for religious discussions.

One of the things that the Asians seemed to notice and like was that whenever we invited them for a meal, we had a blessing on the food and also for those present. In return, whenever we were invited by the Asians in their homes, they would request me to pray. There were also some occasions when some families were leaving Kenya, we were invited to attend the farewell specifically to say a prayer. Various people present invariably told us later how much they appreciated the prayer. The aspect of public prayer is quite unusual in the life of the Hindus; yet since they are used to personal devotions, they are very appreciative when someone else says a prayer for them.

As closer friendships with Hindus developed, I was often asked about my views and beliefs on the question of suffering and death. One such occasion arose when our neighbor's wife, an Asian, was to have a baby. On the day of the delivery, her husband was at work
and she felt it would save time if she asked us to take her to the hospital. As we reached the hospital, she asked me to pray for her. Unfortunately, she delivered a dead baby. We stayed with her through this time at the hospital and were able to use the opportunity to comfort her. She asked me for my beliefs on the reason for this mishap and I responded. After this, I had other opportunities to discuss religion with her. The family developed close relations with us and the son began to attend Sabbath School regularly. However, they also began to finalize plans to send their children away and to sell their business and property preparatory to leaving.

Discussions on spiritual matters began quite naturally and spontaneously once the close friendship developed. This process seems to be the key element in reaching Asians for Christ. The Asians were aware of my emphasis on spiritual aspects since at every lecture or talk I gave, I ended with an emphasis on the spiritual application. Two illustrations of this are shown by the following quotes from my lectures which appeared in the feature articles in the newspapers: "Human beings are physical, mental, spiritual as well as social beings. And all these aspects of health must be in proper balance for one to be in dynamic radiant health."¹ "The long-term way of dealing with stress is to develop a positive philosophy of life, with faith and trust in God."²

Many Asians were experiencing a lot of stress. I knew many who were spending up to two or three hours every day at their temples or mosques. These people were very interested in

¹The Standard (Nairobi), November 18, 1981.
²The Standard (Nairobi), December 6, 1981.
discussing with me my beliefs about dependence upon God. Thus for the next few months I was constantly involved in such religious discussions with the Asians.

It was about this time—September 1982—the Ministerial Director for the Union conference decided to return to the U.S.A. on permanent return. This was a blow to me for we had been good friends and provided encouragement to each other. Since he was leaving, some evangelistic meetings would have to be cancelled. I thought perhaps these funds could be used for work with the Asians. I felt that the time had come to attempt to have religious seminars or small dialogue-discussion groups in which Asians could be invited to participate. In the Westlands area where I lived—and where most of the Asians lived—there were two hotels which had some conference halls that were available for fairly low rent. Because of the religious discussions I had already had with many Asians, I thought that it was the right time to move into religious seminars. These could be conducted for a few weeks and then we could move into evangelistic-type meetings during which further Seventh-day Adventist beliefs could be presented. However, I was informed there would be no funds available at least until the beginning of the following year.

The turn of political events also caused the cancellation of a program I had been anticipating. I had been contacted in July by the Secretary of the Hindu Council of Kenya to give a talk on Christianity. During some past years, the Hindu Council had organized a Religious Seminar where people from different religions were asked to present their beliefs in order to help the Hindus
understand other religions. Another such Seminar was planned for September 1982, and since I was known among the Hindus, they wanted me to present a talk on Christianity. I was looking forward to this and hoped it would be a great opportunity for me to present the Gospel to a large number of Hindus. There were no funds to print literature but I had hoped to give out summary leaflets. Unfortunately, the Seminar was cancelled along with all other programs of the Hindu Council from August onwards.

New Possibilities in New Areas

During the month of October 1982 I was asked to preach at the Nairobi South C Y.M.C.A. where a group of Seventh-day Adventists were meeting on Sabbath. Because the Nairobi Central Church membership had grown so large, a few families had decided to start meeting at the Y.M.C.A. with the hope of acquiring one of the free plots of land which, from time to time, are allotted by the government for the building of churches and schools. Since the African family with whom I had been studying the Bible lived in that area, I believed that this would be a good opportunity to persuade them to attend a Seventh-day Adventist church and make a positive decision. I invited them to attend church where I preached a series of sermons on the doctrines. This led to their baptism. Since the group did not have a pastor and were still under the Nairobi Central church, the Board asked me to lead the group and to take charge of their Sabbath services and other activities. My wife was asked to help in the Sabbath School and social activities.

Shortly thereafter, in December, a plot was allocated by
the government for the building of a church in the Nairobi South C district. The group did not have much money so I became involved in fund raising. The Nairobi South C area is comprised of a mixture of Asians and Africans. The plot that the government gave the church was on a road housing predominantly Asian families. I, therefore, looked into the possibility of working for the Asians in that area and also in using the plot of land for that purpose. I made a proposal to the Union conference to either hire or erect a tent on the plot to be financed from my budget for 1983. Further funds could have been found through the South C group. The money collected for leveling the ground, building toilets, a place for the caretaker and parking spot would have provided adequate facilities. In this way the tent could be used by the group on Sabbath for worship. During the week I could begin to hold health programs for the Asians. The church group was very enthusiastic and were willing to print handbills and go door-to-door to invite the Asians to the programs. As time progressed, it was planned that I would begin with religious seminars and discussion groups, and perhaps even an evangelistic meeting. Since the plot was in the midst of Asian residences, since a tent would have no connotations of a church, and since many of them knew or had heard of me and my health programs, it seemed to be an ideal opportunity.

Because the budget for 1983 was to be decided at that time I submitted my proposal to buy a tent with the suggestion that the tent could be kept by the Union conference for future evangelistic programs since the Union did not own one. Otherwise the tent could be sold and more than half the amount be recovered. Because the
Ministerial Director for the Union had left and there was no possibility of a replacement for perhaps a year, and since there was no one in the Ministerial department, it was hoped that this proposed budget would be accepted. However, it was denied due to lack of funds.

At this time the Division Ministerial Director thought that because there was no Ministerial Director for the Union, he should conduct some evangelistic meetings in Nairobi. He discussed this plan with me. It was decided to advertise widely throughout Nairobi and even try to persuade Asians as well as Africans to attend meetings. The meetings were to be held in an area where the Asians would feel comfortable, and I would have a talk on health at the beginning of the meetings. Then I would lead out in some of the religious topics. This was all planned for mid 1983, but, unfortunately, the proposal was turned down.

I continued my work in the South C area with the Seventh-day Adventist group and for the Africans in that area. I became involved in a Bible study group at the Electricity Department Training School, a Bible study group at the Y.M.C.A., and also Bible studies with some who were losing interest and with friends of Seventh-day Adventists. As a result, thirty people were baptized in May 1983. Also, due to transfers from other churches, the group at the Y.M.C.A. increased from about forty to nearly 300. I invited some of my African friends from the Rotary and other clubs to attend the Sabbath services, but was unable to interest any Asians to attend.

At this time my wife was also trying without much success
to interest the Asian ladies. Although she could understand Gujarati fairly well, and most of the Asian ladies were able to speak English well, she felt it would be beneficial if she could learn to speak Gujarati better. She hoped this would make her more acceptable to the Asian ladies and help her to feel more comfortable as well. Unfortunately, I was not able to finance this as I was already using a large portion of my salary in dinner parties for the Asians and for travel. Therefore, when I requested funds to help finance this project, I was told that according to policy, my wife could learn Swahili, the national language, but not Gujarati.

The End of the Two-Year Period

By May 1983, I had been in Nairobi for two years. During the last six months of this period I was actively involved with the Nairobi South C SDA group of Africans. However, the work for the Asians became less and less. This was caused by a lack of funds. In addition, programs could not be held because of the lack of invitations and interest from the Asians. Thus, in the latter period, no programs could be held in their communities.

The Union committee decided that the film projector should be kept at the Union office instead of my home, and this put an end to my being able to show films in my home and in the homes of the Asians. This was unfortunate since the equipment was not used by anyone else during the six-month period from the time it was transferred to the Union office until I left the country.

A large number of people who had attended my programs and with whom I had developed close associations had left the country.
Many others were either in the process of leaving or thinking very seriously about leaving. After consultation with the Eastern Africa Division officers, I decided to ask for permanent return to Australia.

Conclusion

The above record of my work over a two-year period shows that I would be able to achieve much in evangelizing the Gujarati Hindus in Kenya. In view of the fact that absolutely no work had been accomplished over the long existence of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Kenya, my work speaks for itself that my approach was a success. There were, however, certain factors which inhibited the work and there were certain factors which enhanced the work. A proper evaluation of the work in the light of these factors are now considered in the next chapter.
CHAPTER V

EVALUATION OF THE WORK

Introduction

During the two-year period working in Kenya for the Asians, I was constantly evaluating my methods and making changes to suit the circumstances and the people. This chapter evaluates the work as a whole and refers to factors which inhibited the work and which enhanced it. In a work of this nature, it is difficult to make any substantial statistical evaluations. It would be too soon to anticipate conversions when the work was, in fact, one of pioneering among perhaps the most difficult-to-reach group of people in the world and amongst whom no success has been obtained in the eighty years the Seventh-day Adventist church has existed in Kenya. Therefore, the pioneering by this work should be considered a success. For future work among Asians in Kenya and in other parts of the world, it is necessary to look at what could have been achieved without hindrances and what could have been done differently.

I wish to stress that the evaluation is designed to facilitate the removal of factors which may hinder work for the Asians in the future, as well as stress the factors which should be built upon in reaching out with the Gospel to the Asians.
Factors Which Inhibited the Work

Several factors inhibited the work. These can be classified into two types—the internal and the external.

Internal Factors

Apathy towards Asians. A general apathy was evident among the Seventh-day Adventist members and among the Union conference and other church officers with regard to the work for Asians. The tendency seemed to be that since conversions among the Asians had not been accomplished so far, they might as well be left alone. No one in the church was even aware of the various organizations within the Hindu Council of Kenya. There was also a lack of knowledge about the cultural and religious backgrounds and practices of the Hindus. I did not meet one SDA who had made friends with any Asian to the extent of mutual visits in their homes. The only interest and contact seemed to be Ingathering and selling books—both without identifying with the SDA church.

Lack of interest in Asian work. No provision for work among the Asians had been made. Although I was able to organize one Health Seminar and buy some audiovisual equipment, I was unable to continue to hold further health programs, religious discussion groups, or even buy a tent, when it seemed that the time was ripe to initiate an effective work.

Lack of available funds. No funds were allocated. Also, neither the Ministerial Director for the Asian work, nor I were members of the Union Committee. After I had been in the field about
about a year, the Ministerial Director left on permanent return without a replacement. This made it even more difficult for me to know the financial and other matters of the Union and to present my needs.

Lack of an appropriate support infrastructure. The Seventh-day Adventist church had no suitable substitutes to offer to the Asians for entertainment, sports, schools and worship.

External Factors

Prejudice. Because most Asians were not aware of the existence and the work of the Seventh-day Adventist church, and since the Asians in general did not think too highly of the Christian church, there was a substantial wall of prejudice which had to be broken down.

Closely knaw social structure. The social structure of the Asian community is very closely knit. It was therefore difficult to hold discussions with individuals and hope for a change even in physical habits without the whole family or a larger group being activity involved in the decision.

Self sufficiency. The Asian community is very self-sufficient financially, materially, and even as far as their social and spiritual needs are concerned. The club-type structure of every sub-community provided financial security and spiritual uplift. Socially they did not need to leave their community since it offered everything by way of entertainment, sports, schools, and hospitals.
Insecurity. The Asian community was in a state of insecurity. Most of them were making plans to leave Kenya. Thus most of them did not have the time or the inclination to think of a change in life-style either physically or spiritually. The insecurity from outside made them stronger in their bonds within their own community.

Factors Which Enhanced the Work

In spite of the above inhibiting factors, there were several which enhanced the work.

An Indian working for Indians. Since I was not only of Indian origin but a Gujarati, who had been born and brought up as a Hindu, the Asians were able immediately to identify with me since I could speak the same language. And though I was a Christian, to them I was still a Brahmin.

Family compatibility. My wife was also able to identify with the Asians, though she was English, since she had lived in India for some years and was well-versed in Indian cooking and clothing. Our two daughters were also accepted by the Asians without any problems.

An understanding of Hindu culture and religion. Owing to the fact that I was from a Hindu background and had studied deeply the Hindu religion and customs I was able to communicate an attitude of understanding which helped to foster trust and friendships.

Health and life-style education meets human needs. My study and interest in health education and my personal testimonies
of life-style changes helped to create interest and encouragement for others to follow those ways.

Health seminars help break down ignorance of Seventh-day Adventists. The reception and the total Health Seminar helped to give a good image of the Seventh-day Adventist church to the Asians. It helped to spread the essentials of health principles through the leaders of the Asian community.

Identifying with homogenous group. Moving my residence to an Asian area helped to build friendships and eased making new contacts.

Incarnational ministry. Putting into practice the principles of incarnational ministry, discussed in chapter 3, by showing genuine concern and care, and by living like the Asians helped to show the meaning of Christianity and to develop their interest in Christianity.

The Work that Was Accomplished

In summarizing the work that was accomplished in the two-year period, the following must be noted:

First of all, the Asians were made aware of the existence of the Seventh-day Adventist church as a religious organization interested in the welfare of all, including the Asians. They also learned of the work that the church has been doing throughout the world and particularly in Kenya.

Second, the Asians were not only made acquainted with the health principles of the church but many were able to participate
in and benefit from programs such as the Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking, nutrition classes, Stress Control Clinics, etc.

Third, many of the Asians were introduced to the Gospel and what Christianity really is--including the beliefs in prayer, Sabbath-keeping, etc.

It would be difficult to guess how many people were contacted, but without a doubt about half the Asians in Nairobi were either contacted by me personally or attended one of my programs through the invitation of their friends. Many of these gave up smoking and other harmful habits and acknowledged the benefits they received. For example, the managing director of one of the largest industries--Steel Billet Limited--phoned to tell me he was following some of the health principles and had benefited to the extent that instead of being admitted to the hospital for treatment due to nervous strain, he was back to normal work. At one time the chairman of the Arya Samaj stood up at the end of one of my lectures and, after asking permission, testified and said that he had been greatly benefited from following the health principles.

The Work That Could Have Been Accomplished

If some of the factors inhibiting the work had not been present, I believe I would have been able to conduct religious seminars and dialogue-discussion groups. These could have been arranged at one of the conference halls available for hire thus enabling me to present the Gospel, my testimony, and my experiences.

After a few weeks of such seminars, I could have started a separate seminar for those who were specifically interested in
knowing more about the Seventh-day Adventist church.

At the same time, I could have conducted several more "Total Health Seminars" and other health programs. Thus those who had not yet attended these programs could also have benefited and there would eventually have been more Asians interested in the religious aspect. I could also have had pamphlets printed on topics related to health and such topics as "What Is Christianity?"

I also suggested to the Union administrators the possibility of either starting a separate school or expanding the facilities of the present school in order to enroll Asian students. Many Asian families had shown a keen interest in such a proposal because they were thinking of eventually sending their children abroad for higher studies. Such a school would have been a great evangelistic agency.

The suggestion was made that the Union administrators look into the possibility of having a hall which could be used for conducting health seminars, other programs, and which could be used for recreational purposes. The idea would have enabled the conducting of many other programs as well as inviting Asians to use the recreational facilities.

Finally, if these things could have been accomplished, the possibility of having a separate worship place for an Asian congregation could be considered, especially with the concept of Ashram and using functional substitutes suggested in an earlier chapter.

Conclusion

I realize that two years is a very short time for pioneering work among Hindus. However, it seems that the work that was
accomplished was significant. With favorable administrative support and funding, as well as developing a relational approach to Hindus through health programs and social contacts, it appears that it would be possible to initiate a successful evangelistic work among that community. There were some inhibiting factors which could have been avoided and perhaps more could have been accomplished, given a different political situation.

It is now time to turn to a formal conclusion of this Project Report.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Critique

I believe that this project has shown that an understanding of the historical, sociological, cultural, and religious background of the Hindus aided in approaching their community with an attitude, which helped to build mutual trust and friendship. The health seminars helped to enhance the image of the Seventh-day Adventist church as a Christian group who had a better life-style and who were interested in the welfare of others.

The traditional evangelistic approach had brought no contacts or interest from the Hindus, whereas my approach enabled me to contact a considerable portion of the Hindus. By using the health evangelism approach, I was able to begin religious discussions within the short time of two years. A further implementation of the approach would most definitely have resulted in further dialogue-discussions, especially if some kind of ashram type of setting were to be made available. This should then open up the possibility of conversions to Seventh-day Adventist Christianity.

I believe that the steps taken in this approach were successful. If there had been more financial and other support an even greater success could have been achieved. However, in view of the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist church from its
establishment in Kenya in 1906 until 1981 was unable to do any work for the Asians, the work that was accomplished in the short period of two years shows that my approach was a right one and that this project has served its purpose.

Suggestions for Future Work

Anyone intending to approach Hindus with the Gospel are strongly urged to take the following steps.

First, spend a significant time studying the historical, sociological, cultural, and religious background of the people.

Second, gain the support of the church administrators and persuade them to allocate sufficient funds to allow an indepth work to be carried forward.

Third, make an effort to provide an ashram situation where the Hindus will feel comfortable for dialogue and for worship. Also give consideration to incorporate selectively their patterns of worship, music, architecture, etc., into the church. They should be allowed to continue with their way of eating, clothing, and social customs so long as they are not a direct contradiction to the standards in the Bible.

Finally, take the task of evangelizing the Hindus seriously. It is my hope that the church as a whole will plan and work so that the many millions of Hindus will hear the Gospel, and the Seventh-day Adventist church will come closer to fulfilling its commission.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

INVITATION TO THE BEEZEE HEALTH SEMINAR
Invitation

Saturday Seminar  
NAIROBI HILTON
PROGRAMME

8.30 a.m. Arrival
9.00 to 9.30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
    by Courtesy of Nairobi Hilton
9.30 to 10.30 a.m. Talk:
    "HOW TO STAY MENTALLY FIT IN A STRESSFUL AGE."
    By Dr. Haren Sthalekar
    B.Sc. (Hons.) (Bom.), B.Sc. (Eng.) (Lond.)
    M.A. (Rel.), M.Dw. (A.U., U.S.A.)
10.30 to 11.00 a.m. Break
11.00 to 11.45 a.m. Questions and Answers
12.00 noon Close

Beezee Secretarial Services Limited
and
Nairobi Hilton

have pleasure in inviting

to a Seminar on Saturday, 12th September, 1981
    at 8.30 a.m. at the Nairobi Hilton

The Guest Speaker will be Dr. Haren Sthalekar of
    Better Living Centre, Milimani Road, Nairobi
who will discuss:
    "HOW TO STAY MENTALLY FIT IN A STRESSFUL AGE."

Please send acceptance to:-
P.O. Box 30652 or Telephones: 23424/22636
Please bring this card with you.
APPENDIX B

EAST AFRICA REVIEW ARTICLE ABOUT
THE BEEZEE HEALTH SEMINAR
The Beesia Secretarial Services, located in Nairobi, and the Nairobi Hilton Hotel invited Pastor Haran A. Stalekar to give a talk on "How to stay mentally fit in stressful age." The director of the program was Mrs. Besty Pinto. It was attended by about one hundred professional and business women. Pastor Stalekar discussed the results of research on the causes of stress and then outlined a program for controlling and resolving stress. In order to benefit from his discussion it was decided to cut short the break time and the time for questions and answers. Many have reported that they are putting into practice the techniques discussed by Pastor Stalekar and are reaping the good benefits.

**FINALLY BRETHREN. . . . . . . . .**

Good, Better, Best, never let it rest, until the good is better and the better is best!
APPENDIX C

INVITATION TO "A QUICK LOOK AT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS"
PROGRAMME

6.00 p.m. Arrival/Registration
6.30 p.m. Welcome
6.40 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. Vegetarian Buffet
7.30 p.m. to 8.15 p.m.
“A QUICK LOOK AT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS”
8.30 p.m. Close

East African Union
of
Seventh Day Adventist Church
have pleasure in inviting

To

A RECEPTION

on Thursday, 22nd October, 1981.
at the Nairobi Serena Hotel
The Chief Guest will be:
Hon. G.S. Muia, M.P.
Assistant Minister of Finance.
APPENDIX D

A COPY OF FACTS AND FIGURES
MEMBERSHIP
Baptized adult church members
(June 30, 1980) 3,382,914
Organized churches 21,061
Sabbath school members 3,987,040
Sabbath schools 40,941
Ordained ministers (active) 9,144
Full-time salaried workers 87,743

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
Total denominational schools 4,610
Current value educational institutions (1978) $517,909,474
Total enrollment 496,550
Schools above elementary level 731
Academies (high schools) in North America 17
Colleges in North America 10
Universities 2
International correspondence school 1

MISSION WORK
Nations in which church had organized work 190
Languages in which church works 581
Publishing houses 51
Languages in which church publishes 184
New missionaries sent outside Home Division last year 283
World Mission funds received $36,716,348

BROADCAST OUTREACH
Stations airing Adventist programs weekly 3,425
Bible correspondence schools 130

GOOD-NEIGHBOR PROGRAM
Persons helped 9,428,614
Number of articles of clothing given 14,746,664
Hours of work contributed by laymen 13,026,656
Cash and value of goods given to needy $36,106,119

CONTRIBUTIONS
Total church offerings in world $579,253,499
Tithes (one-tenth of personal income) 353,075,613
Total offerings in North America 401,647,297

HEALTH-CARE MINISTRY
Hospitals and sanitariums 148
Dispensaries and clinics 239
Physicians (residents, interns, dentists 1,770
Investment in Health-care facilities (1978) $785,429,329
Patients treated 5,999,241

Note: Latest available figures: 1979 unless otherwise indicated.
Figures are for world unless otherwise indicated.
APPENDIX E

INVITATION TO TOTAL HEALTH SEMINAR
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
EAST AFRICAN UNION

Invitation

TOTAL HEALTH SEMINAR
PROGRAMME FOR THE TOTAL HEALTH SEMINAR

Topics

Tuesday, 27th October, 1981
"HOW TO AVOID DISEASES THAT KILL MOST PEOPLE"

Wednesday, 28th October, 1981,
"HOW TO LIVE LONGER BY EXTENDING THE MIDDLE YEARS OF YOUR LIFE"

Sunday, 1st November, 1981
"HOW TO STAY MENTALLY FIT IN A STRESSFUL AGE"

Timings
6.00 p.m. Arrival/Registration
6.15 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. Talk
7.15 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. Vegetarian Supper
8.00 p.m. to 8.15 p.m. Talk
8.15 p.m. to 9.15 p.m. Questions and Answers
9.15 p.m. Close

East African Union
of
Seventh Day Adventist Church

have pleasure in inviting

to a Total Health Seminar on 27th and 28th October and 1st November, 1981 at the Nairobi Serena Hotel

The Minister for Health
The Hon. A.K. Magugu E.G.I., M.P.
will Inaugurate the Seminar on Tuesday, 27th October, 1981

Speaker for the Seminar will be:
Haren Sthalekar
B.Sc. (Hon.), B.Sc. (Eng.) ( Lond.),
MA (Hil.), M.D. (AU, USA)

Please send acceptance to: H.A. Sthalekar
P.O. Box 42276, Nairobi or Phone: 569864, 567364

Please bring this card with you.
APPENDIX F

ARTICLES FROM THE SUNDAY STANDARD
Seminar on total health

IN developed countries, about half the people die of degenerative diseases like cancer, stroke and heart diseases. Until recently these diseases did not worry Africans much but as more and more of us adapt the Western way of life and diet, these diseases are now becoming more common.

What's even more disturbing is the fact that whereas previously these have been seen as what can be called 'old age' diseases, now they claim younger and younger people. How to avoid these diseases was the topic of discussion on the first day of a Total Health Seminar organised by the Seventh Day Adventist Church East African Union, which started on Tuesday, October 27.

"How To Live Longer By Extending The Middle Years of Your Life" was the topic for discussion on Wednesday October 28 and the seminar will end on Sunday on which day participants will talk on "How To Stay Mentally Fit In A Stressful Age.

JOYCE CHIRA

How to cope with stress

By JOYCE CHIRA

How do you react when confronted by a stressful situation? With hostility, aggression, of with feelings of intense frustration and guilt — or are you relaxed, completely composed and could not be bothered?

Most people combine the two types of responses and find it the best way of coping with stress.

According to psychologists, the body is full of stressed conditions. Tapping the list of these conditions is the death of a spouse, the death of a parent, the death of a parent’s parent, the death of a spouse’s parent, the birth of a child, etc.

Within 75 per cent stressed, hospital operation is 57 per cent and even just being married is 37 per cent stressed.

Other stressful conditions include: pregnancy (40 per cent), change of employment (25 per cent), ill-health (23 per cent) and even talking to a wash hand is stressful.

From the above it seems like life itself is stressful. Technically speaking however, these events or problems do not themselves create stress, but reflect the reactions to the conditions.

Stress is defined as the individual’s physical, mental and emotional reaction to any condition which disturbs the normal equilibrium, and stress becomes worse when it provokes the individual’s negative response.

Although human beings need a certain amount of stress to add spice to life and to be able to develop and complete human capacity, too much stress can be damaging.

We thus need to regulate our lives and keep our level of stress in a minimum. In a talk given to participants at a Total Health Seminar, Dr. Henrik A. Silvester of the East African Union of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, suggested several short term measures to help people cope with stress. He suggested that we should:

Accept our limitations. We should not set ourselves unrealistic goals.

React positively to others. We should all have attitudes we can talk to. Someone we can trust.

Respect ourselves. And think highly of ourselves and whatever qualities we possess.

Develop cheerfulness and happiness and learn how to smile.

Be prepared to make decisions. If they turn out to be wrong, the error can be corrected. Being indecisive is frustrating not only for ourselves, but also for the people we deal with.

Have a balance by engaging in activities that use the different parts of the brain. For example, we should talk with music as well as engaging in other stimulating intellectual activities.

Plan our lives. Set priorities.

Keep changes to a minimum. Too many changes disrupt the nervous system.

Evaluate the situation, then.

Dr. Silvester emphasized that there are only short term measures for dealing with stress.

"The long term way of dealing with stress is to develop a positive philosophy of life, with faith and trust in God," says Dr. Silvester.
APPENDIX G

ARTICLE FROM THE ADVENTIST REVIEW
A Quick Look!

“A reception for the leaders of various communities and organizations in Nairobi, with the theme ‘A Quick Look at Seventh-day Adventists’ has proven an ideal way to acquaint people with the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” states Pastor Haren Sthaleker, Associate Director for the Ministerial, Health and Temperance Departments of the East Africa Union.

Honoured guest at the reception was the Honourable G. S. Muia, M.P., Assistant Minister of Finance for Kenya. Hon. Muia had earlier attended a Five Day Plan to Stop Smoking conducted by Pastor Sthaleker and has stopped smoking. He commended the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and urged people to avail themselves especially of the health programs conducted by the church.

The reception was followed by a 3-day “Total Health Seminar.” Topics Pastor Sthaleker presented during the three days were:

1. “How to avoid diseases that kill most people.”
2. “How to live longer by extending the middle years of your life.”
3. “How to stay mentally fit in a stressful, age.”

Dr. Wameyo, M.P., Assistant Minister of Health, inaugurated the seminar and the talks were interspersed by audio-visual presentations with a question and answer period at the end of each session. At each of the meetings a vegetarian meal was provided.

The reception and Total Health Seminar were held at the Nairobi Serena Hotel with about 300 people attending some or all of the meetings.

Pastor Sthaleker was interviewed on television with regard to the seminar and radio and local newspapers carried good coverage of all the programs.

APPENDIX H

AN ARTICLE FROM THE AGA KHAN HEALTH REVIEW
Stop Smoking Campaign in Nairobi

Encouraged by the remarkable response to the recent lectures on lifestyles and their relationship to health, the Aga Khan Health Services launched a "Stop Smoking Campaign" in Nairobi. Participants were asked to stop smoking for five days.

Persuasive lectures by Dr. H. Shakkaf and Dr. Bradley Nelson of the Seventh Day Adventist Mission's Better Living Centre, prompted 15 people, including heavy smokers, to give up smoking.

To check the participant's determination, a follow-up review was held a week later, and it confirmed that heavy smokers had indeed been transformed into non-smokers.

The success of the Campaign has prompted the Aga Khan Health Services to organise similar programmes bi-annually, because of its low cost and high benefit potential. The organisers intend to reinforce, at every occasion, the harmful effects of tobacco in the human body.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Periodicals


The Presentation of Christianity to Hindus. New York: Board of Missionary Preparation, n.d.


The Standard (Nairobi), November 18, 1981.

The Standard (Nairobi), December 6, 1981.


Reference Books


Interview

Haren Sthalekar was born in Bombay, India in a high caste, well-to-do Hindu family. His mother is Gujarati and father Marathi. After obtaining B.Sc. (Hons.) degree from the University of Bombay in 1960, he went to England. There he obtained a B.Sc. degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of London in 1964. Towards the end of his eight-year stay in England, he was married and returned to India with his wife Susan. In India he started a small-scale industry of his own and continued in the field of engineering until 1973, at which time he and his wife both became Seventh-day Adventists.

Shortly after joining the Seventh-day Adventist church, Haren and his family arrived in Australia according to previous plans. He, however, decided to go to Avondale College to study theology and train for the ministry. After two years of studies, they went to Andrews University to continue his studies. There he obtained the M.A. and M.Div. degrees and also completed the classwork for the D.Min degree. He also obtained C.P.E. from the Kettering Medical Center.

While at Andrews University, Haren hoped to be offered employment by the church as an evangelist for the Hindus. Providentially, towards the end of his studies, he was asked by the East African Union to work as an evangelist for the Asians there.
This he gladly accepted. During his stay in Kenya from May 1981 to May 1983, he was also asked to be the Associate Ministerial, Health, and Temperance Director for the East African Union. His work and training in the area of health also led to his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Health, London.

In July 1983 Haren returned with his family to Australia and has been working towards the completion of his D.Min. degree. He has been offered employment as a teacher by Spicer Memorial College in India.

Haren and Susan have two daughters. From the time of their joining the church they have been very actively involved in work for the church in various capacities. Haren's dedicated ministry has led many to join the SDA church. His main concern has been the evangelization of the Hindus and to do his part in fulfilling the great commission of Jesus Christ.