

It Takes a Wedding

Description

Paraphrasing what [the song](#) mentions, weddings are joyful events where we celebrate life and everything good about it.

Yes, we were privileged to go to an Indian wedding this week! We were invited by the vendor, Mayank, whose cousin was getting married. Mayank supplies all the water filtration (reverse osmosis) systems that have been installed for the clean-water humanitarian projects Taunya talked about last week. Josh and Jawan have become good friends with him, and they consider him a godsend because of how good and reliable and supportive he is. He really is great to work with, and we too look forward to getting to know him better and working with him in some upcoming projects once we move to our own area. (Still don't know when that will happen.)

So Monday we went to the Central Market where Josh was to pick up his suit pants that they had to remake. While there, Taunya and Jawan both decided to choose the fabric for and custom order an outfit called a Kurti to wear to the wedding. After some persistent asking, the shopkeeper agreed to have them ready Thursday night at 9:30. Thursday 10pm came and with it brief disappointment. But thankfully they came through, and at 10:15 the delivery was made!

When we arrived at the wedding venue Friday evening we were wowed by the setting. Flowers, arches, statues, furniture and everything — so ornamental and festive.



At the wedding



Inside the wedding venue

Going into the main courtyard we were greeted by the bride's father, warmly welcomed, and thereafter treated like VIPs. We were there a little earlier than most guests — Mayank said there would be more than 500 coming — and so the servers in their blue uniforms and caps were hovering around us eager to have us sample all the *hors d'oeuvres* and refreshments we could possibly want. Surprisingly, pasta and pizza were two of the dozens of offerings in this food-court-like array of buffet-style booths featuring traditional cuisine from all over India. Roti (like crêpes) was fun — both to watch being made and to eat.

<http://firstthreeodds.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/making-roti.mp4>

We learned that all the wonderful food we saw and sampled in the outside courtyard was just a warmup for the main course, which was inside where the atmosphere was a bit more intimate. The main course was an all-you-can-eat buffet, a fantastic smorgasbord of vegetarian Indian food delights.

Mayank informed us that this was a typical middle-class wedding. But he also said parents will save up for the entire life of their daughter to be able to afford it!

After we finished eating, we went over and met the groom, who had recently arrived. He was very friendly and gracious, and eager to have his picture taken with the four of us. I think for the most part Indians consider that a badge of honor, to have a picture taken with Americans.

As we were leaving we saw the beginning of some kind of ceremony for just the groom, together with his family and friends. The bride was not there yet, by design in their tradition. It was after 10pm, so we didn't stay for her arrival, which I'm sure was spectacular!



Getting underway



Seats for the bride and groom



A seat for Elder and Sister Jones,
Deepanshu, Sister and Elder Neff

Other notables:

On Thursday we had another meeting with Vinay where we discussed how we could collaborate with his organization to lift the poor and needy in New Delhi. (In my last post I mentioned his NGO in connection with the homeless shelters they run.) He told us his story, during which the Spirit in the room was strong as we pondered the nature of our calling. After losing his job in the aftermath of 9/11, he wondered what to do with his life. He said he felt called to serve God's children, the weakest and most vulnerable of them, and so he founded a charitable society that he first conceived of 30 years ago, that would by the Grace of God chart the course of the rest of his life. Twenty-two years later the Sadik Masih Medical Social Servant Society is still going strong, and serving more and more marginalized people, who, as stated on their website, are the [unheard and demeaned due to various social and cultural reasons](#).

Yesterday, we traveled to Kalyanpuri to witness and participate in the beginning stages of the distribution of the blankets that were delivered Wednesday night. It was thrilling to see it actually happen and get to help passing out a few blankets to those who had pre-qualified to receive them. Just seeing their grateful faces was a wonderful experience.

While waiting for the project kickoff we met a woman who wanted to thank us personally for what we

were doing. She spoke pretty good English, which she learned when she worked for a time as a housekeeper for an English-speaking family. I tried talking to her in Hindi, just some simple Hindi phrases — and gave everyone a laugh at how silly I looked in my over-earnest attempts at enunciation!



Waiting to distribute blankets



Blanket distribution begins!

The work is progressing. We feel so blessed to be here and to be able to help in this work. We thank our Heavenly Father and our Savior for the privilege and opportunity to play our small roles. We thank you for your ongoing love, support, prayers, and good thoughts sent our way. Have a great week!

Other pics:



Happy Republic Day!



The India Gate

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