

## *News From the Homefront*

(Part One of Two of our trip from New South Wales to Western Australia)

### First Day-

A big rat was sitting near the front of a fuel station staring at all the customers. A Myna bird seemed to be disturbed and kept squawking at it. Frank thinks the rat must have been poisoned since it wasn't scared of anyone.

Towards dark, we started seeing a lot of "no vacancy" signs and wondered if an event was going on. Thus at the next little town we saw a vacancy and stopped for the night. There was one main restaurant called, "The Pickled Olive." We were tired and thought it might be expensive so opted for the light meals the motel was offering. However a thing we didn't notice until we got settled in our room was that there was a fold-up door about 1 ½ foot by 3 feet long in the wall. It was where our food was delivered. And there was no lock on our side of the wall. It reminded us of the way a prisoner gets their meal except the opening was much bigger. After we ate, we set the tray back and waited for the owner to come pick it up but he never did. It bothered me that he could open the fold-up door at any time and see in our room. Then after we went to bed, I kept thinking about that door and how it was big enough for a person to crawl through. Also we had no idea about the owner and I didn't like how he watched us unload our suitcases. I decided to get up and put some obstacles like our ice chest with dishes on top so it would make noise if someone crawled through. Frank slept soundly through it all. In the end, the owner was probably a nice man who was just curious why the two of us had four suitcases, an ice chest, a box of snacks, a briefcase, a computer, a medicine bag, and so forth.

### Second Day –

Driving through the state of Victoria, we saw road signs that said, "Drive on left in Australia." It must have been for the Americans. Other signs said, "Droopy eyes, Power nap now." Or, "Trouble concentrating. Power nap now." It is important not to drive while sleepy, but the signs didn't say to pull over first before power napping. Though I realize that is a given, it made me smile.

Was surprised to see a restaurant called, "The Pickled Pig." Am wondering why there are so many "pickled" restaurant names in Australia.

### Third Day –

Frank has been struggling with a sore throat, lost his voice, and his ear is aching; but thought he would get better in a few days. Instead he started running a high fever so we stopped at a little hospital to see a doctor. He was told his lungs were getting infected and he had an ear infection and was given an antibiotic.

We were on the road for nine hours and felt as though we were making little progress in the long trek ahead. It once again took us awhile to find a motel with vacancies and we ended up getting the last room available at one place. The bed was bigger than a single but not quite as big as a double/full; but we were so tired we didn't care. The part that made me sigh was that it was on rollers and if you barely moved, the bed would roll.

Americans are used to things "big," thus seeing trashcans the size of a shoe box at some motels has been a surprise. Although Australia is ahead of the USA when it comes to having liquid soap dispensers in the showers and by the sinks. Also most of these small motels/hotels have toasters in them. People can toast their bread and have the country's trademark Vegemite spread for brekkie (breakfast).

When we got to Adelaide, I was reading the map and Frank told me to find A-17 and how to meet up with a northern road. I looked at three different maps and couldn't find A-17. He told me that it was a big 4-lane highway and should be there, but it wasn't. So he pulled the vehicle over and stopped. I asked what he was doing wondering if he was actually going to ask for directions. But no, he wanted to look at the maps. I don't have a good sense of direction, but felt I could read a map. It's like reading a book. In the end, he couldn't find A-17 either. Perhaps the highway was new. Then to soften the blow of his pulling over, he said that he was glad that he was married to such a good map reader. But when I asked if I should be the one driving since he was sick, he teased and said, "Are you crazy?!" 😊

### Fourth Day –

Frank got more ill and we guessed that he was given the wrong antibiotic. We made it to Port Augusta to be able to have our own worship on Sunday. He was able to see a doctor at another health clinic and was given a different antibiotic. We decided to stay on Monday too so he could rest and get better before heading on.

### Fifth Day –

Did laundry, shopped for food and water for the Outback, and planned our route. Felt more refreshed physically but more importantly felt refreshed in the things of the Lord.

A friend in Christ, Cyd James