The Next Steppe

March 2020

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying,

“This is the way; walk in it.”

Isaiah 30:21

Walking Beside Us

As I mentioned last month, John and I had spent 11 days in Mongolia after the CVM All Asia Retreat. Our goal was to renew our acquaintance with the country, meet some of the folks we will be working with at V.E.T. Net, and get a bit of a feel for what housing and food / household goods are available in the city.

I will admit that it was not an immediate renewal of love at first sight. The first 4 days in Mongolia were a bit rough for me. I had come down with a flu bug on the flight between Kuala Lumpur and Seoul (6 hour flight with headache, fever, chills), and then had respiratory symptoms the rest of the time in Mongolia.

So not feeling 100%, having two presentations to prepare for Friday (we arrived Sunday night), and spending our whole time in the city were making me question, “God, are you sure this is where we are supposed to be?” I finally gave in and stayed home from work on Thursday (while John went to two dairies north of the city) to rest and try to get ahead of the bug. I prayed for some confirmation that He wanted us in Mongolia.

Friday morning, I was to give the morning devotion (all V.E.T. Net staff gather every morning at 8 a.m. for music and a message). As the staff were singing (all in Mongolian, and not a tune I knew), I just felt the Spirit in the sincerity of the worship, even when I couldn’t understand any of the words. After my devotion, there were a couple folks who came up to give encouragement…Mary said that usually the Mongolians do NOT do that; thank you, God. Then, John and I headed out with three of the vets and a driver to travel about two hours east of Ulaanbaatar to visit some dairies. When we arrived, the first thing we did was go into the herdsman’s ger, sit on stools, and drink soo te tse (salt milk tea) and eat lunch (lamb, rice, and some onion and carrots all mixed together).

Our companion on our sunrise walk.

One of the Mongolian dairy women with a newborn calf.
John and I both had an immediate feeling of being back “home” in Mongolia. As we discussed it later, we felt a peace in our souls that God was answering our prayer and confirming Mongolia as our location. The rest of the day we gave a mastitis presentation to the dairymen, looked at facilities and cows, answered questions, and got a feel for some of the potential areas for work and training on the dairies.

We were once again reminded that we serve an awesome God who loves us so much. If He never did anything else for us beyond saving us from our sin, that would be more than enough. But He tells us to call upon Him and ask, and He promises to never leave us nor forsake us.

While at the retreat, John and I took the opportunity to hike up a local hill to view the sunrise. On the second day as we walked from our guesthouse through the village, a dog came out and joined us. We had no food, and he was not seeking treats nor affection. He walked along, ahead of us mostly, marking everything in his path. We hiked up the hill and he went with us. We stopped to take some pictures, and he wandered off a bit. I thought he would likely go back down the hill to the village, since there really was no reason for him to stay up there with us. But as John and I sat down, read a devotion, and prayed together, our companion sat down a ways away from us and waited. Then we headed back down the hill, and he came with us. As we made our way through the village, he disappeared as quickly and quietly as he had appeared. It may sound funny, but it really was like God sent this friend with us that morning just to let us know that we are not alone, and that He will be with us wherever we go (Joshua 1:9). What a comfort that the Creator of the universe is always with us!

Praises:

- a good trip to Asia and Mongolia; confirmation of God’s call; finding an apartment in the city that will be available in the fall

Prayers:

- for everyone at V.E.T. Net in Mongolia, that they would grow strong in their faith and that God would bless them and their families
- for continued favor of the Mongolian government towards V.E.T. Net
- for our children’s health and faith walk

Blessings,

Laurie (for John)