

High On The Mountain Top

Description

For a title I was vacillating between “High On The Mountain Top” and “I’m Sitting on Top of The World” — the former won out when I noticed it was the opening song in the Mill Hollow First Ward Sacrament Meeting today! (We love being on the list to get the program via email every week — it helps keep us connected to our home — thanks, Kerensa!) And in light of the Come Follow Me lesson on Isaiah with its mountain-as-temple metaphor, it’s a perfect match!

Mostly because of the fame of Mount Everest, Nepal’s position within the high mountainous region of the Himalayas justifies its “top of the world” moniker. No, we didn’t go to Everest, not on foot, not even in a plane (although we would still like to do that).

Instead, we went with Manoj on an outing to the south rim of the Kathmandu valley, where we undertook a hike that I can only compare to the hike I did as a teenager up the back side of Mount Olympus in Salt Lake City. Approximately the same elevation gain — 4000 feet — over about 6 miles. More like 7 miles for Mount Olympus, which also requires a bit of scrambling near the top, whereas you can drive to the (almost) top of Puhlichowki Mountain — the highest mountain in the Kathmandu region — 2,791 meters (9,156 feet)!

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Our driver, guide and good friend, Manoj!



A beautiful day for climbing steps



Pausing to rest and admire the beauty



About as good a view as we got



Peaks visible from halfway up



Himalayas visible above the haze



Beautiful flowers



Beautiful woodlands



Bright red berries

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Enjoying a convenient tree chair



Happy hikers taking a selfie break



The top at last!



Happy to have made it!



Site of two temples



Temple bells and colors — compare and contrast with, say, the Bangkok Thailand temple



Manoj and his first encounter with snow!

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Finding his tree nook

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We love Manoj and his beautiful smile!

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Wonderful convenience — outhouse by the trail

Come Thursday morning we were hurting big time. Due to the heaped-on abuse of the day before, every muscle in our bodies — not just legs, since of necessity we used trekking poles, so arms, shoulders and back too — was complaining — Loudly! But we're so very glad we persevered and accomplished the journey "there and back again" — even if it took all day! Another entry for our We-Can-Do-Hard-Things file.

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Lunch on Thursday courtesy of Rachana, Manoj's wife.

On Friday we were invited to help CHOICE Humanitarian employees assemble hygiene kits for local schoolkids. Still feeling the aftermath of our big hike, we were surprised that our old bodies were up to doing much repetitive motion that turned out to be a ton of fun! Some Young Single Adults from the Branch (and two older sisters) joined the activity. Four hours later we had completed 750 kits!









We all enjoyed mo-mos for a lunch break.



In humanitarian project work this week ...

Yesterday morning we got word that our latest proposal was approved! This was one we had serious doubts that it would fly, so we and our NGO-collaborator were stoked! Now 16 schools in a poorer area of eastern Nepal will be getting new toilets, hand-washing stations, and other necessities and educational materials.

At Church yesterday it really hit us as we both shared our testimonies that this was our last Fast and Testimony meeting in the Kathmandu Branch. Oh, how we will miss these amazing people — so many of whom we have grown to know and love, because we have been blessed to be able to serve them in some small ways. Only 23 days left in our missionary service! Tomorrow our replacements enter the Provo Missionary Training Center, spend two weeks there and then fly to Kathmandu to arrive on Monday the 18th. So much to do to get ready for the passing of the baton!

Other sights that caught our attention this week:

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They moved where things are shelved but haven't changed the signs yet.

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What fate awaits us?!

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Goat meat, anyone?!

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Not high on the hygiene scale!

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Interesting suspended scaffold with bamboo rungs

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Unusual garden on the side of a building

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Its twin right next door

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Ross Dress for Less Kathmandu Style



The Ubiquitous Winnie-the-Pooh bags



No comment



Ditto

Date Created
03 Mar 2024
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