JULY 9 1988

Posted on July 9, 2008 by Eddie

Category: Africa

You know that you are in for a hard day when your first thought on getting out of bed is "how long until siesta?â€™â€™The cold that has been threatening Sue for a few days came on with a vengeance. I didnâ€™t realise that you could catch colds in Africa! My stomach is playing up again, leaving me feeling awfully tired.

Went into Vavoua with Emile, we had to wait about forty minutes to get a taxi (a twenty seater minibus). Once in town we found a cobbler to fix my sandals, which had given up the ghost again. The chap turned out to be a Christian and did the job for nothing, which was rather nice. At the carpenters, where we had ordered the chairs last week, the boss had not heard of us. It turns out that one of his employees is doing work in secret around the corner and pocketing the money. We eventually tracked the guy down and were not in the least bit surprised to find that the chairs werenâ€™t ready as promised. Heavy as lead, they still need gluing together and a coat or two of varnish. He says they will be ready on Monday, being a trusting sort, I almost believe him.

Normally, my siesta consists of an hour lying on the bed reading pulp fiction, the Guardian Weekly, which we subscribe to, or magazines, sent from home (hint). It is a measure of how tired I feel that today I slept for three hours straight. I felt vaguely human afterwards.

We spent some time praying and thinking through our language learning. We have a basic problem in finding people to talk to. We were told that as soon as we got to the village we would have an endless stream of folks coming to see us. Far from it, apart from the village folle, who comes round regularly and frightens David, we have only had two or three visitors in the last week.

It is a measure af the faithfulness of God, that having prayed both Sue and I had really good language learning sessions afterwards. I went out for a walk and came back fifty minutes later, head spinning, having learned to count to ten, and numerous parts of the body. In a sense what I learned is unimportant, 24 hours later I have forgotten the majority anyway, although it will be relatively easy to relearn the stuff and this time it should stick. What is important is the contact with people in the village who are willing to talk and spend time with ignorant and tongue tied foreigners. One of the tricks in language learning is to take it a little at a time. It is very frustrating to have someone tell you in detail the name for each division of the finger, when you still donâ€™t know the word finger itself.

I was right I should have a stock of sermons handy, I preached on Psalm 46 at about five minutes warning this evening. I hope it made sense to someone. The temptation is to think that it doesnâ€™t matter, this is only a small congregation out in the bush. But it does matter, in Godâ€™s eyes this place is as precious as any of our big evangelical congregations at home. I must put as much care into what I say here as I would if I were preaching at Spring Harvest (I can dream, canâ€™t I?), more so in effect, in Britain the people could go home and check what I say in their Bibles, here, only the few who read French can do that.