

A Pilgrim's Journey

By Uday, India

My favorite railway in the world is Australia's transcontinental railway. The line runs from Sydney on the east coast to Perth on the west coast, traversing a whole continent and connecting two oceans—the Pacific and the Indian.

Hence the train which travels this route is called the Indian-Pacific. It spans a distance of 4,202 km (2,610 miles) and crosses three time zones—farther than London is from Istanbul.

For most of the journey the train travels through some of the most rugged and barren landscapes in the world. In one section, it crosses the Nullarbor Plain, which is an arid, treeless plain with a moon-like landscape the color of cayenne pepper. The word "Nullarbor" is derived from the Latin *nullus arbor*, meaning "no trees." Nothing but parched, infertile limestone soil surround the track and stretch endlessly into the horizon. For one distance of almost 474 km (296 miles) there are no bends at all in the line; it is the longest stretch of straight railway track in the world.

Traversing the great featureless plain, the train is the only moving feature in the desolate



Nullarbor Plain

The wealth of the city, beautiful streets, glittering buildings, parks and open spaces, a beautiful river flowing into the sea—it is hard to believe that just a little while before we only saw dust and scrub all around us. We have arrived at a shining new city, but only after huge, vast emptiness.

What an analogy of the Christian's journey! As a pilgrim passing through this transitory world, the most efficient way he can travel is by walking the path God has ordained for him, just as that train travels across the straight track laid out for it. Aided by God's Spirit, we can traverse the desert of this world in the comfort He gives. Even though there is hell all around us, we have heaven in our spirits.

A shining new city also awaits us at the end of our journey—a city not built by the hands of men, but by God the Creator Himself. As Revelation 21 describes, it is a city unlike any here on earth, prepared for His own dear children who love Him and abide in His love; a city in which, unlike the cities of men, goodness dwells and evil shall not enter; a city where we shall leave the heat, dust, and scrub of this world behind us. "The former troubles are forgotten

... and shall not be remembered or come to mind" (Isaiah 65:16–17 NKJ).

So let us travel the path God has ordained for us, enjoying the journey, knowing that He is with us through it all, and that He will get us to our heavenly destination safe and sound.



Perth, Australia, by night

landscape. Even though there is only desert outside, the comfort, amenities, and relaxed atmosphere on board make the journey enjoyable.

After a seemingly endless journey, the train reaches its final destination—the city of Perth. It feels like arriving in another world altogether.

If you'd like more inspirational reading, subscribe to *Activated!* Contact the address below or visit www.activated.org.