

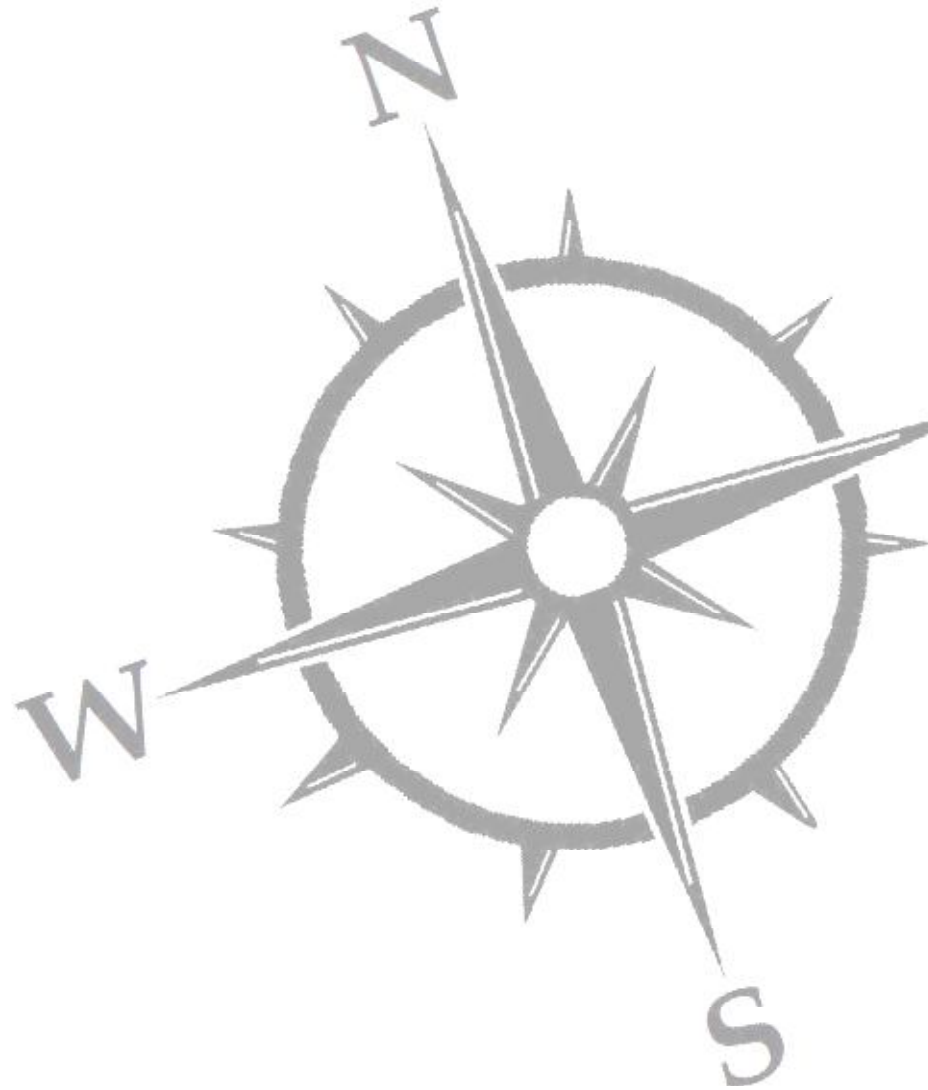
The Life of David Livingstone

(1813-1873)

Lesson: 5.5 – Action Missionary Spotlight Series

This story reminds us that Christians are to be actively serving the Lord. With the Lord returning at any time, Christians are to be busy working to reap eternal benefits. David saw a great spiritual need in Africa. Others might have been content to just stay where everyone else was. David didn't just think about the needs that he saw, he decided to go and do something about them.

"Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." - Luke 12:43







Who remembers where we left off last week?

(Read the last paragraph from last week's lesson to begin this lesson as a review).

We had finally arrived at Kuruman, and Roger Edwards took William Ross and me on a tour of the mission compound. We saw the workshop and the irrigation system that brought water to the compound from a nearby spring. As we came around the corner of one building, I spotted a large mud-brick building. "Is that the church?" I asked. Roger nodded and told me that each Sunday, they had over 400 African people attend church. I told him how exciting it was that there were that many Christians in Kuruman. Roger quickly told me that even though over 400 people came to church, only about 40 of them were true Christians.

That night, as I sat on my bed, I wrote the number forty in my journal. Only forty people were true Christians. Robert Moffat had been here for twenty years and had only

seen forty come to know the Lord, yet there were thousands of people north of here who had never heard about Jesus. That night, I realized that staying at Kuruman all of my life was not for me. God wanted me to travel north and reach those thousands of lost tribes for Him.

Two days later, I spoke with Roger Edwards. I asked him if he would like to go with me and explore what lay a bit north of us. Roger wasn't so sure that he wanted to go off exploring. He figured Robert Moffat would not be happy about that. He also was worried about who would run things at the Kuruman mission station. I reminded him that we now had William Ross and his wife, and they could help Robert Hamilton run things at the station. In addition, the Moffats weren't supposed to be back for another year. Exploring would let us have more information on where future mission stations could be set up.

Roger finally agreed to go with me, but he told me that he had some translation work to finish first. One month later, we had our wagon packed and had set off towards the north. We had hired an African Christian named Pomare to go along with us as our interpreter.

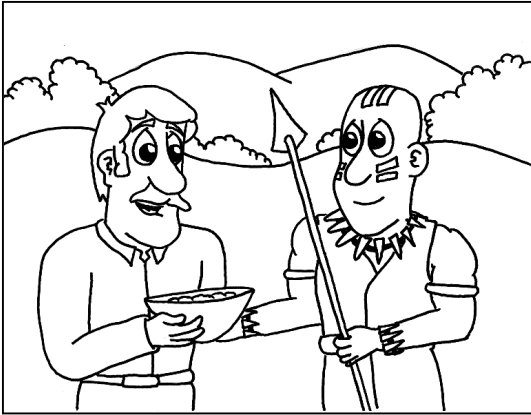
Once again, I was excited to see all the wildlife of Africa. I tried to draw all of the herds of Zebras and Rhinoceroses in my journal that we passed. It took nearly two weeks of traveling before we spotted our first African village. I stood up in the wagon to get a better look.

Soon the wagon was surrounded by large men holding spears. They were

jumping and dancing around. I quietly whispered to Pomare asking him if they were planning to harm us. He told me that he thought they were friendly, but that I may want to keep my gun hidden. Two natives grabbed the oxen and led us into their village. Pomare told me that they asked for us to get down out of the wagon. He thought that they might want to introduce us to their chief. This was a big moment. I was about to meet my first African chief. Pomare translated and told us that Chief Moseealele welcomed us to his village. He explained that these people were the Bechuana tribe, and this village was called Mabotsa.

That evening, the Chief held a feast for us. I found it very interesting watching all the people. The chief also gave us a hut to sleep in for the night. As I lay in the hut that night, I tried to write down some of what I saw. At one point, it looked like the ground by my bed moved a little. I thought my eyes were playing tricks on me and blew out the lamp and went to bed. The next morning when I sat up, my hands had a bunch of little blue bubbles all over them. Roger jumped up when he saw my hands. "Those are African lice!" He told me that the lice live in the dirt, but that he had completely forgotten about them because of the floors back at the mission station. The ground had been moving last night after all! We had to heat a needle and burn each one of them off one by one. Somehow we would have to burn the area and lay a tarp down so that this did not happen again. But how would we do that? The chief might get angry if we refused to sleep in the hut that he had offered us.





these other missionaries wanted to just run back to their houses and forget about these thousands of people who had never heard about Jesus. I told Roger that we would press on just a little further north to see what else we could find. I added that I doubted that the Moffats would beat us back to Kuruman.

Four days of traveling led us to another tribe. This was the tribe of the Bakwains. Once again, the people came out and surrounded our wagon. Most of these people had never seen a white person before. They wanted us to roll up our sleeves so that they could look at our skin more closely. Some of them even spit on our freckles and tried to rub them off.

Once again, the chief held a feast and offered us a hut to sleep in. This time I was ready. I had Pomare tell the chief that I was a doctor and needed my medicine tent to help the people of his tribe. Our visit with the Bakwains was a great success, and I wondered why the mission station had such a hard time making friends with these tribes. I asked Roger about it one night in our hut. He explained that in Africa, the way that you showed you were important was to have many wives. Because God's way was to only have one wife, many Africans did not like missionaries or the gospel message. I now understood why it could be difficult for these people to accept the Lord.

We stayed about a week with the Bakwains, and then it was time to press on. The people asked Pomare what they had done wrong to make us want to leave. I had Pomare explain to them that they did nothing wrong and that we would come back and

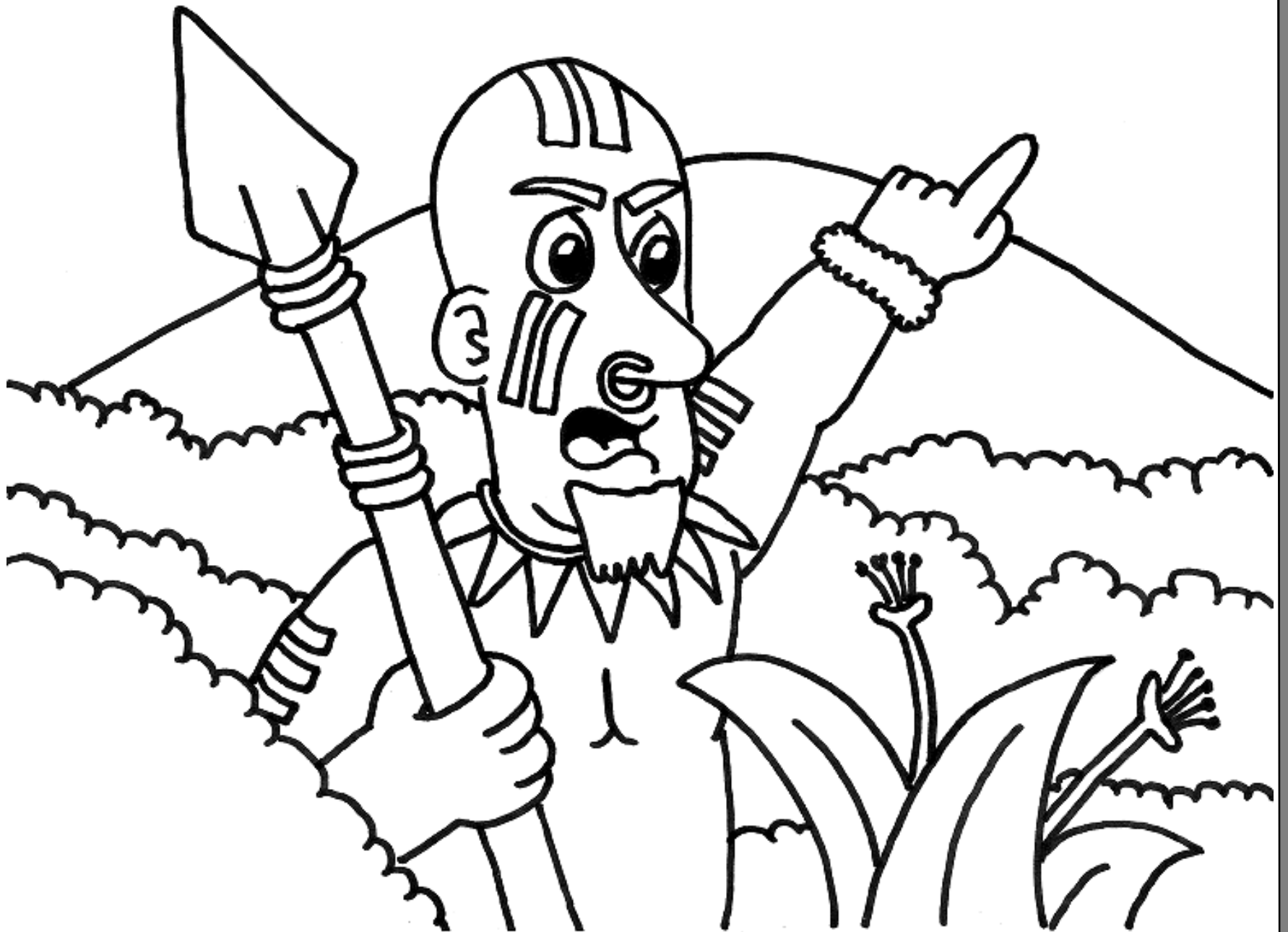
visit them again very soon. We headed back toward Kuruman, but we took a different way home so that I could add to the map I was making. When we were about 150 miles from Kuruman, we came across another Bakwainian tribe. Chief Sechele sent word that he couldn't have us stay there because of his sore eyes. I brought the chief some ointment for his eyes which soon began to make them feel better. The chief was so thankful for the ointment that he gave us a freshly killed deer for meat to take along with us. We left his village promising to return soon.

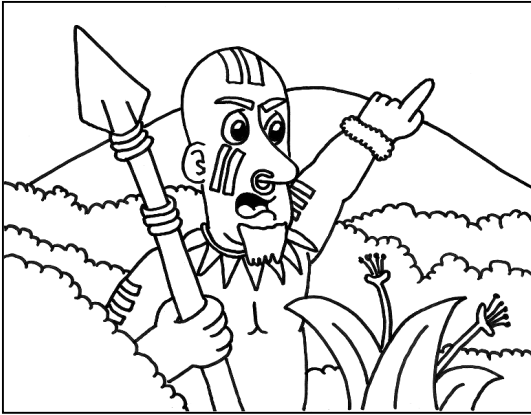
As we traveled back to Kuruman, we did not know that we were being followed. After about ten miles of traveling, we stopped to set up our camp for the night. It was then that I heard a strange noise coming from under our wagon. It sounded almost like someone was sobbing. I looked and found a young girl who was about eleven years old hiding under our wagon. I asked her what was wrong, but then I remembered that she couldn't understand English. I went and found Pomare and he talked with the girl for a few minutes. The girl's parents had died when she was very young. Her older sister had then taken care of her. Her older sister had just died the week before and now her uncle was selling her as a wife to someone else in the village. The girl wanted to stay with some friends who lived near Kuruman instead and when she heard that we were going there, she decided to follow us. Now that we were quite a distance away from her tribe, she decided to show herself to us.

Right as Pomare finished telling us

A while later we had our answer. Pomare told me that the people wanted to see what was in our wagon. The whole village was interested in everything we pulled out. They liked my shaving mirror the best. They passed it around with each person trying to make a sillier face in the mirror than the person before him. They soon spotted my black medicine bag. They asked what was inside. I asked Pomare if they would know what medicine was. He told me that each village had a witch doctor. As soon as Pomare told them that I had medicine, the people lined up to be cured. Then an idea popped into my head. I told Pomare to tell the people that we would help them, but that we need to set up my special medicine tent. This way Roger and I could burn the ground and lay down a mat and not get bit by the lice again, and this would not offend the chief.

The people waited patiently as we set up the tent. Over the next several days, I treated many kinds of sickness and injuries in the village. On the fifth day, we packed up our stuff to leave. Roger asked me if we were heading back to Kuruman. I wondered why





the story, a warrior came running down the trail holding a weapon. It was too late to hide the girl, so I just stepped in front of her. I soon learned that the girl was supposed to be married to this warrior's brother, and he had come to get her. Pomare and the warrior began to yell at one another. I quietly prayed that the Lord would help us and keep us safe. Finally, the warrior agreed that if the girl gave him the beads in her hair (which was used as money in their village) he would let her go. The girl quickly took the beads out and gave them to the warrior. He turned and trotted off back home.

We soon arrived back in Kuruman, and I found myself curing people who had come from all around. I reminded myself that I did not come to Africa to just cure people's diseases but to preach the gospel.

I decided to take another trip north, but this time Roger said that he would stay behind. I hired three African men to go with me and brought Pomare again as well. It was February of 1842. I decided to take a different route to be able to add to my map. I decided to go back and visit Chief Sechele

first. I meant to visit Chief Sechele but ended up in a different tribe of Bakwains. This tribe was led by Chief Bubi. Pomare explained to me that Chief Bubi and Chief Sechele's tribes were enemies. Long before, Chief Bubi had killed Chief Sechele's dad when Chief Sechele was just a little boy.

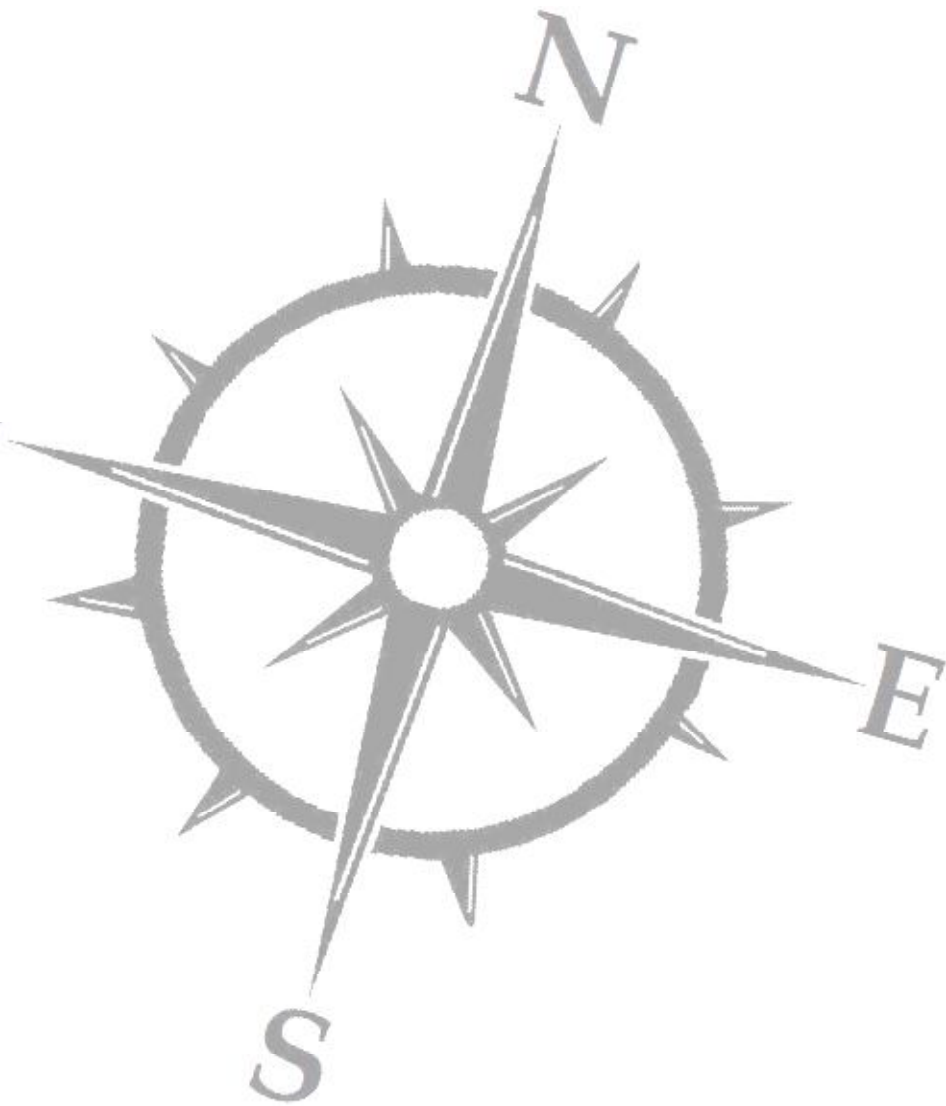
I refused to take anyone's side but instead worked on helping the sick there. I spent a lot of time with these people, and I was able to learn a lot of the Bantu language and start talking with the people. I told the tribe and Chief Bubi about Jesus. Because of my ability to heal people, I was given a lot of respect. Only one other person in the village had this kind of respect and that was the rainmaker. The village rainmaker's job was to make it rain so that crops would grow. I wanted to help these people not rely on their rainmaker and so thinking back to Kuruman, I built an irrigation system for them from a nearby river. The tribe's crops now had a steady supply of water, and everyone was excited. By the time I left, I was the most popular man in the village.

I had only been gone a couple of days when a native caught up to the wagon screaming "Chief Bubi is dead!" "What had caused the chief's death? Would the tribe blame me for this?" I wondered.

What do you think might have happened to the chief? Will David be blamed somehow for his death? To find out come back next time.

(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson

*please refer to lesson 5.5 on **page 136** in your Africa Expedition - Leader's Guide).*



References

For further reading or to obtain more information on this portion of the life of this missionary, please consult the following sources from which we obtained our information:

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