

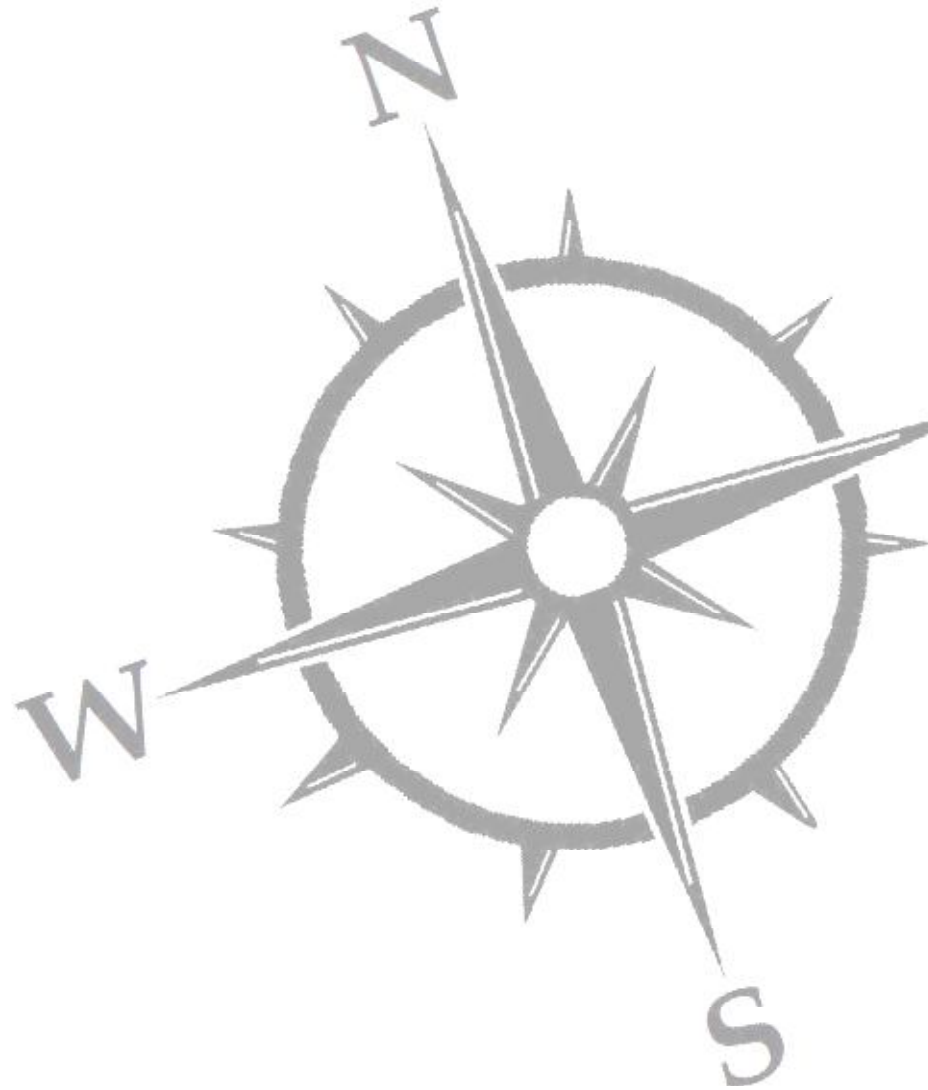
The Life of David Livingstone

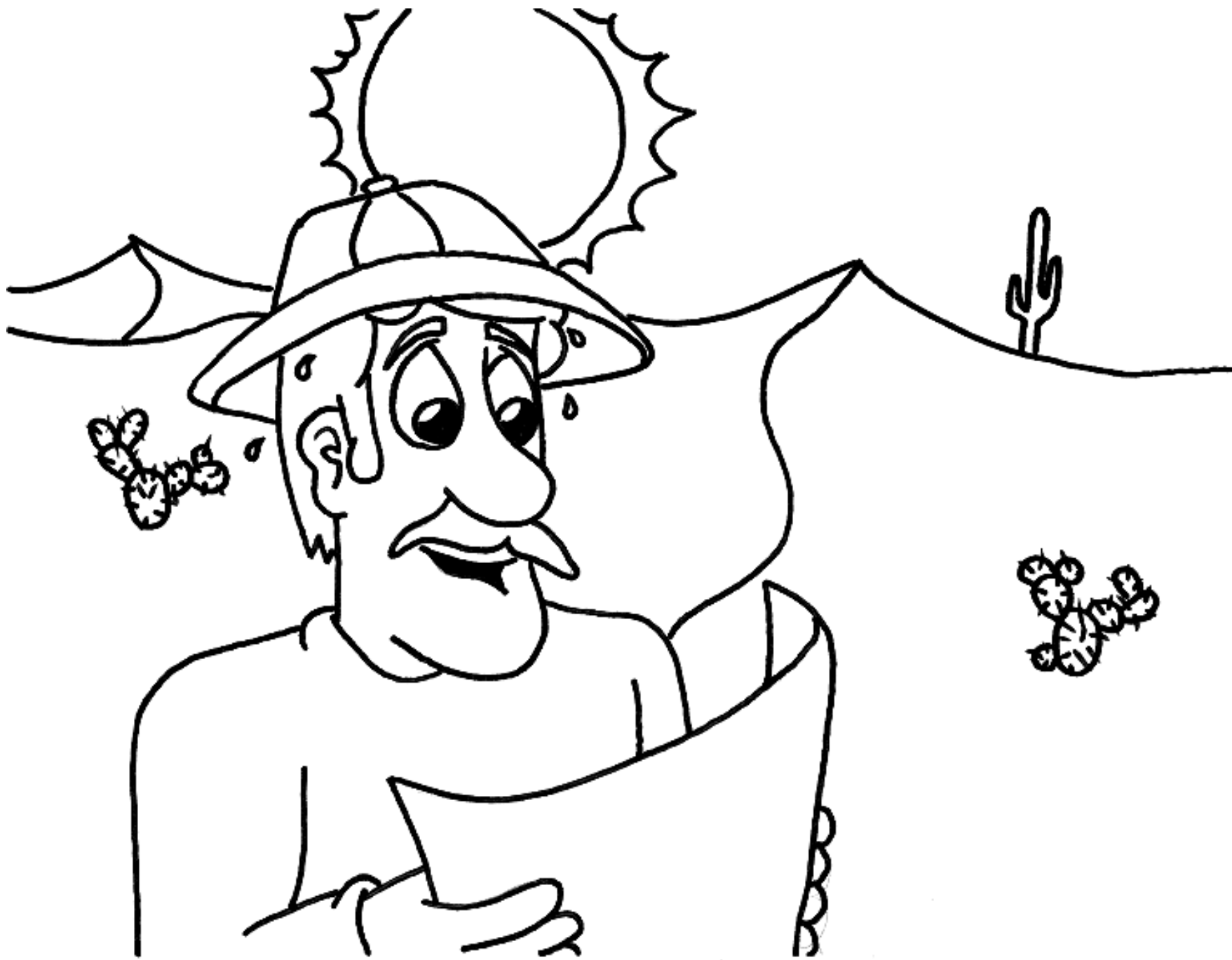
(1813-1873)

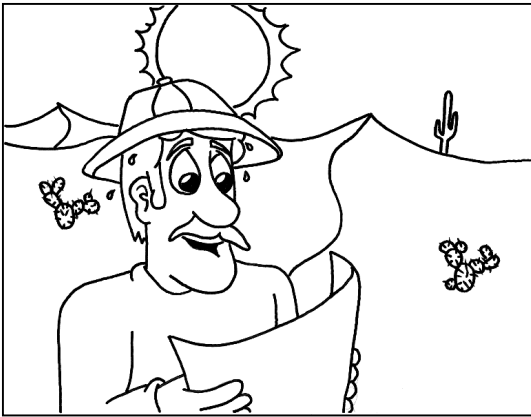
Lesson: 5.8 – Strength Missionary Spotlight Series

This story reminds us to not rely on our own strength, but the Lord's. Our strength will fail us, but Lord's power never runs out and is available to those who ask for it. Not depending on God can get us into trouble. David Livingstone faced many things that he was not strong enough to overcome, but he relied on the Lord for the strength that he needed.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." - John 15:5







Who remembers where we left off last week?

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

Cotton Oswell and I traveled for over a month in the Kalahari Desert. Over the last few days, we had completely run out of water. Then we spotted a girl hiding in the bushes. We tried to talk to her and show her that we were looking for water, and she pointed and led us away. Suddenly, the animals began acting very strangely. I looked ahead and saw a beautiful site...water. A large spring was right in front of us. The animals could smell the water. We were all so excited. We jumped down and splashed in the water. We drank and drank from the cool spring.

Once I had taken a big drink, I turned to thank the girl, but she had vanished. As I looked around for her, I spotted something else...a river. I told Cotton that I had a feeling that if we followed that river it would

lead us to Lake Ngami. I carefully took readings and marked on my map where this spring was for the future.

I had been right about the river. This was the Zouga River. We followed it and twenty-seven days later we came to the edge of Lake Ngami. It was a splendid sight. Herds of many different kinds of animals were there drinking at the lake. I saw herds of elephants, buffalo, zebras, and crocodiles. Thousands of birds filled the skies over our heads.

I knew that we were the first missionaries to ever lay eyes on this beautiful lake. The trip back home went much better than the trip traveling to Lake Ngami had gone. We followed the river back to the spring and then followed my map. On it, I had marked all of the places where we had found water. Chief Sekomi was shocked to see us alive. His two guides were even more surprised to see us alive after all that they had done to lead us away from the water.

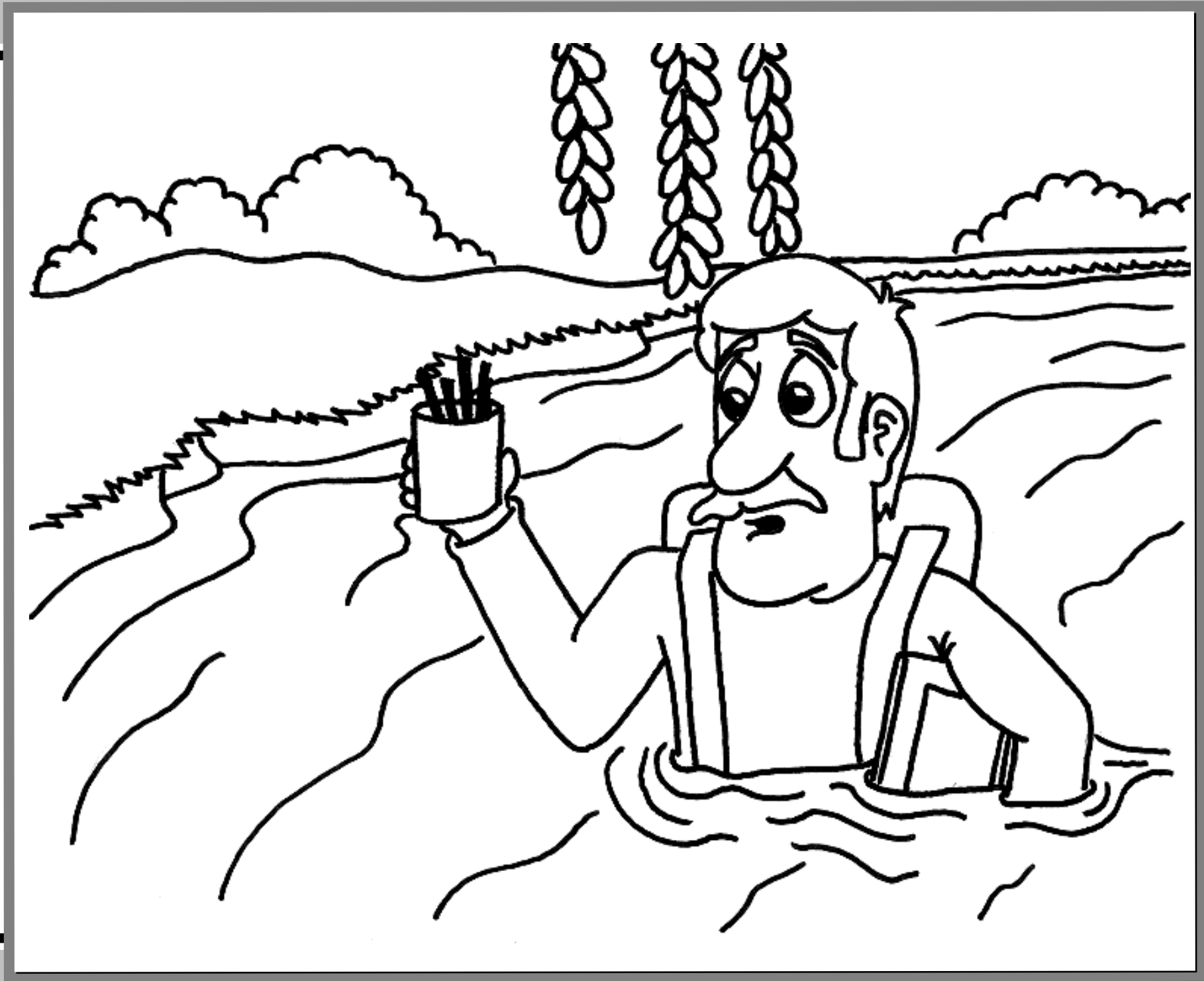
I was very excited to get home to my family and to write letters to my family in Scotland, Captain Steele, and to the London Missionary Society. When I arrived back in Kolobeng though, a man named John Freeman was there. John was in charge of the London Missionary Society. He had come to check on all of the missionaries in Africa. He did not seem too pleased with how things were going in Kolobeng. I knew that I was not good at staying in one place. I felt that God wanted me to find new areas that had never heard the gospel. I had even written a letter just a few weeks before to the London Missionary Society saying that I wanted to

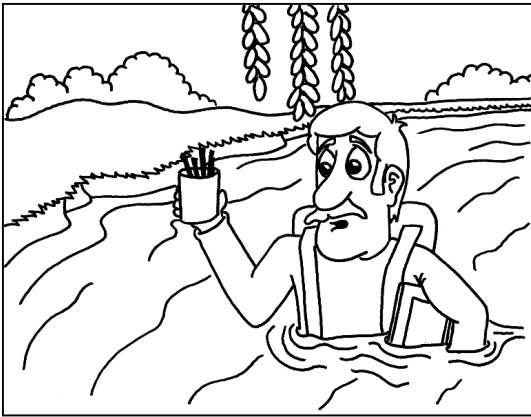
“plant the seed of the gospel where others have not planted.” The problem was that I needed money to be able to go out exploring like this, and the London Missionary Society didn't have it.

During the next few weeks, Chief Sechele told me about a great chief named Chief Sebitoane who lived just past the Zouga River. I was sure that Chief Sebitoane would be very important if I were to get the gospel to that part of Africa. When I told my wife about my plans to go north, my whole family decided to come with me this time. Chief Sechele, some of his men, and Mebalwe also agreed to come.

We left in July of 1850. Things went well along the way. We were able to find water, and everyone was doing well. Once we arrived at the Zouga River though, things started to change. Two of my children got malaria. Even though we had searched for several days, we could not find any sign of Chief Sebitoane or his tribe the Makalolo anywhere. I had to return home so that my children could get better.

When I got back to Kolobeng, there was a letter there waiting for me. The letter had come from the Royal Geographic Society in England. They had awarded me a gold medal for my work in discovering Lake Ngami. The letter also had a prize of twenty-five pounds in it. I was very excited to have the money, and I planned to use it for another trip to find Chief Sebitoane, but that would have to wait until the wet season was over. While we were home, my wife had another baby girl named Elizabeth. Elizabeth was a very weak baby. The Lord took her home





Little did we know that the wagon wheels made things go much slower because they kept getting stuck in the sand. By the third day, we had run out of water, and we were only halfway across. Things were looking bad. I thought we might all die from not having water. On the fifth day, we came across a small waterhole. Some rhinoceroses had found it first and left the water all black. We were so thirsty that we did not care, and we got something to drink from that waterhole.

Two months after leaving Kolobeng, we finally made it to the Chobe River. A man named TONUANA was waiting there. Chief Sebitoane had sent TONUANA because he had heard that some white men were looking for him. TONUANA offered to take us downstream a ways to the island where Chief Sebitoane was staying. I decided that Cotton and I would go alone and that Mary and the others would stay with the wagon by the river.

As I paddled my canoe behind TONUANA, I wondered if this might be a trap. Perhaps the Makalolo tribe was even right now preparing poison food for us, or perhaps they might all be waiting in the bushes to attack us. I prayed that God would keep us both safe.

We paddled for four hours, and the only real sound we heard was the calls of the birds overhead, or every once in a while a splash as a crocodile slithered into the river around us. Finally, we reached the island. I was about to be the first white man to ever meet Chief Sebitoane. Several warriors came and pulled our canoe out of the water. Then they all stepped back, and there stood a man

with leopard skin over his shoulders.

The chief welcomed us and held a huge celebration that night for us. Later on that night, I suddenly woke up feeling like someone was standing beside me looking at me. It was Chief Sebitoane. He sat down with Cotton and me and told us his life story. He spoke about all of the evil things that he had done and about what he had stolen and the ways that he had tricked other chiefs. After speaking with him, I truly hoped that very soon he would become a Christian as Chief Sechele had.

Five days later, Chief Sebitoane asked to meet my family. I was overjoyed, and we paddled back up the river. The Chief was fascinated by my children and stayed with us for a week. When he headed back downriver, something terrible happened. The chief caught pneumonia. I went and visited him, but knew that I could do nothing for him. I knew that if I touched him or tried to help him in any way the people would say that I had killed him if he died.

It wasn't long until the chief did die from pneumonia. Now we had a bigger problem. The Makalolos were not sure what should be done with us. The chief's daughter Mamochisane was now the new chief. What would she think of the strangers who had come to the village? She would decide what should be done with us, but she lived a week's journey away. It took nearly a month for the answer to arrive. Mamochisane said to treat us like her father had and to help us get to wherever we wanted to go.

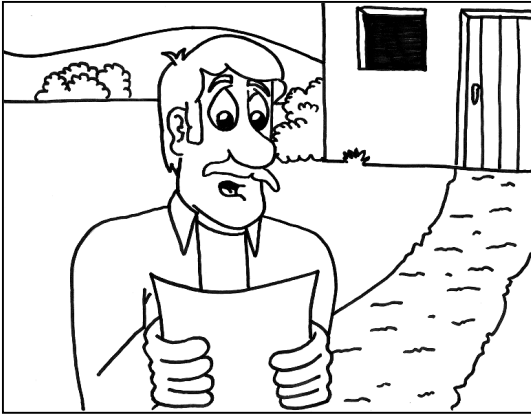
I was excited by the news. I had heard that there was a great river about three days

after she caught a bad cold. This made my wife and me very sad for some time. We moved down to Kuruman for a while to be with Mary's parents. A year later, we returned to Kolobeng. I had talked with Cotton Oswell again and we decided that we would try a third time to head into the Kalahari Desert to find Chief Sebitoane. Once again, my family decided that they wanted to come along.

We left in April of 1851. This time we did things a little differently. Cotton and some of the men would travel ahead of us on horseback to the places that were marked on my map. There they would dig for water and set up camp so that it would be ready when we arrived later.

When we reached the Zouga River, we found a native man who told us that Chief Sebitoane was beside another river called the Chobe River. To get to him, we would have to cross the great salt plains of Ntwetwe. The man warned us that it would take three days to get across the salt flats, that there was no water there, and that we would need to bring enough water with us to last for three days.





away and asked if the Makalolos would take us there. Once again, we left Mary and the others with the wagon, and Cotton and I traveled to see the great Zambezi River. Along the way, we had to lead our horses through water that was up to our chest and filled with crocodiles. I was glad that the Lord kept us safe.

The river was an awesome sight to see. Our guide also told us about a great waterfall that they called “the smoke that thunders.” My wife was going to have another baby any day, and Cotton had to get back to England, so we told them that it would have to wait for another time. On the way back to Kolobeng, my new baby was born. We nicknamed him “Zouga” after the Zouga River. Another one of my sons, Thomas, got very sick. All this illness and difficulty was not good for my family. I decided that they needed to go back to Scotland and stay with my family. That way, my children could go to school and they would be protected from all the diseases and dangers in Africa. Not long after we got back to Kolobeng, we all packed up and traveled

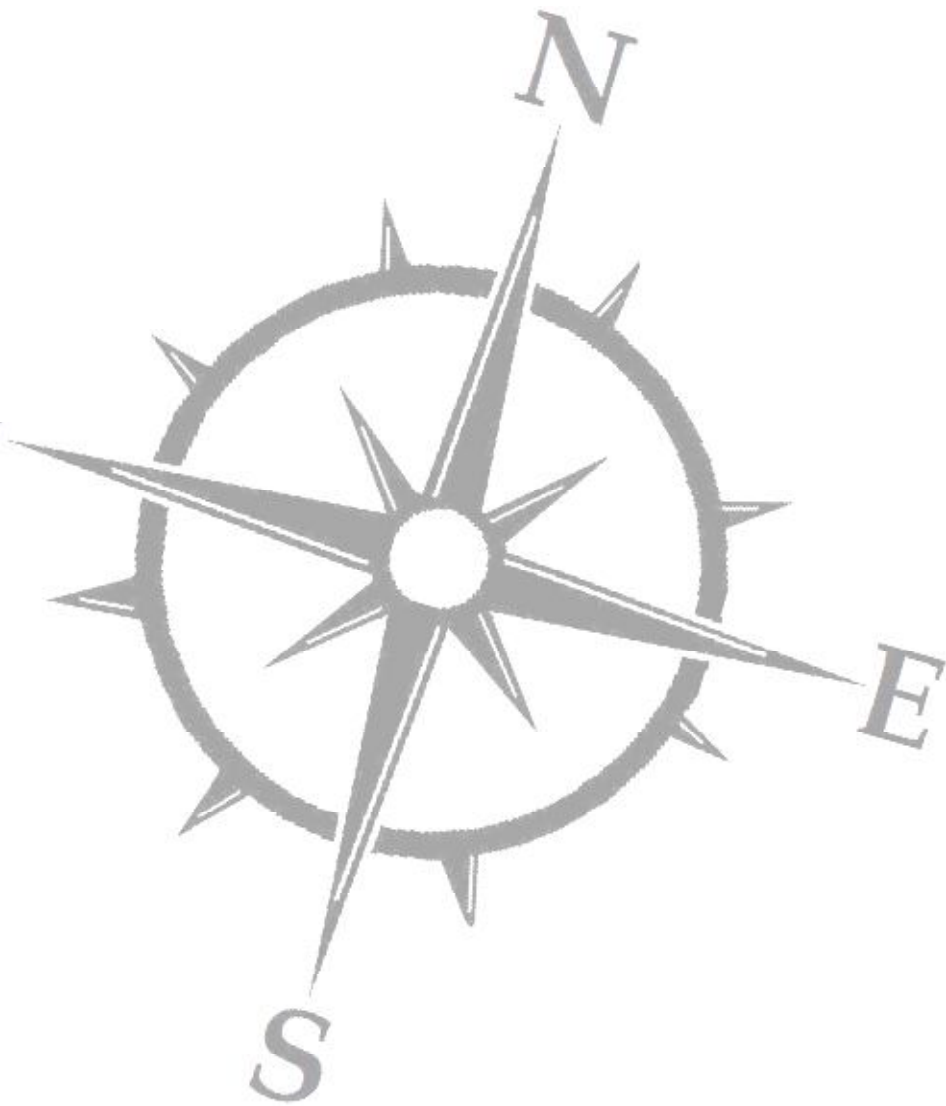
back down to Port Elizabeth. Cotton traveled with my family back to England and once again was very generous. He gave Mary a purse with over 150 pounds in it. That was more than I made in a whole year. He also bought new clothes for all of my children. I watched as my family stood on the deck of the *Trafalgar* on April 23, 1853. I could see my six-year-old Robert standing next to his five-year-old sister Agnes. Agnes was holding little Thomas’s hand, and Mary was standing behind them holding baby Zouga. I waved until the ship was long out of sight.

Not long after my family had left, I packed up my things and headed back to Kuruman with plans to head up to Kolobeng. I arrived in Kuruman, but I had to wait around for two weeks while I fixed a broken wagon wheel.

The day before I was supposed to leave, Chief Sechele’s wife Masebele, came running into the mission compound yelling my name. As I came out into the courtyard, I could see that her eyes were wide open and that she was very afraid. She was sobbing as she handed me a note. “What’s wrong?” I asked. All she could do was to point to the note. I wondered what might be written inside.

What do you think the note said? To find out, come back next time.

*(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to lesson 5.8 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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