

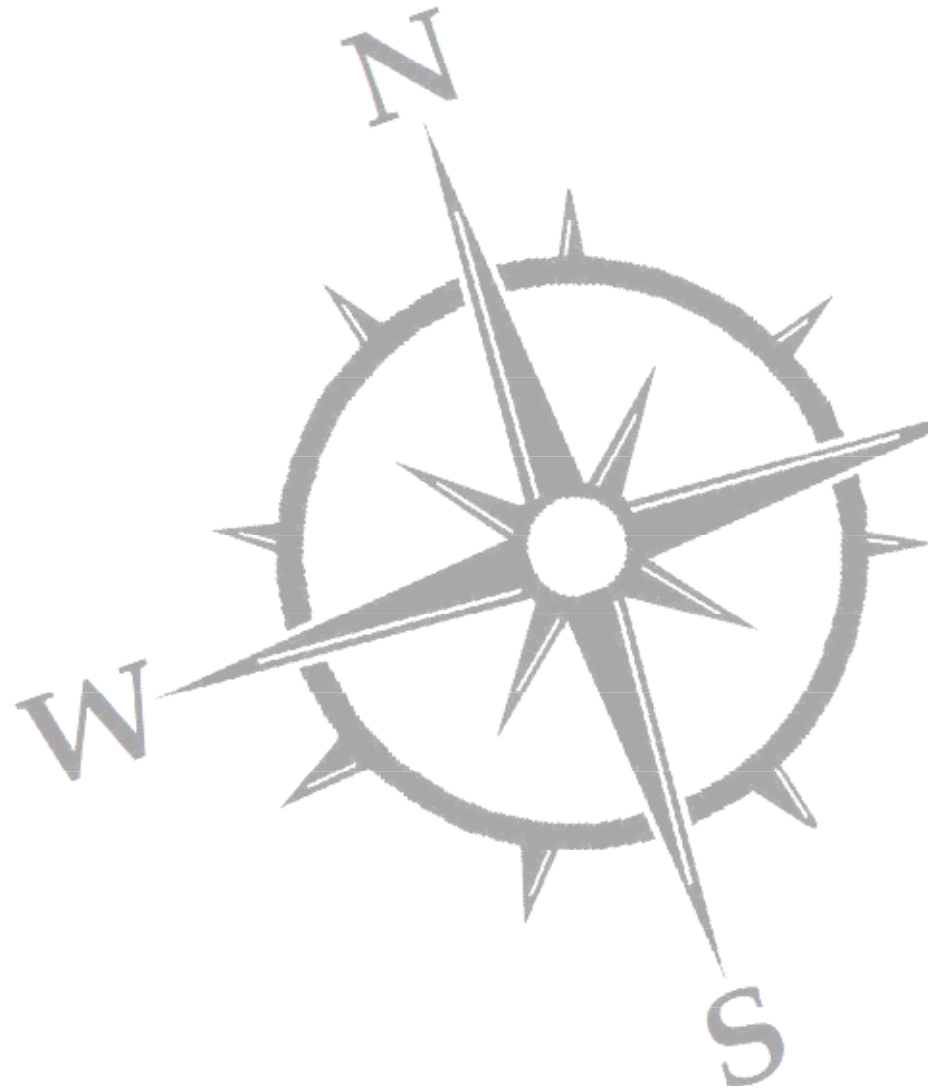
The Life of Robert Moffat

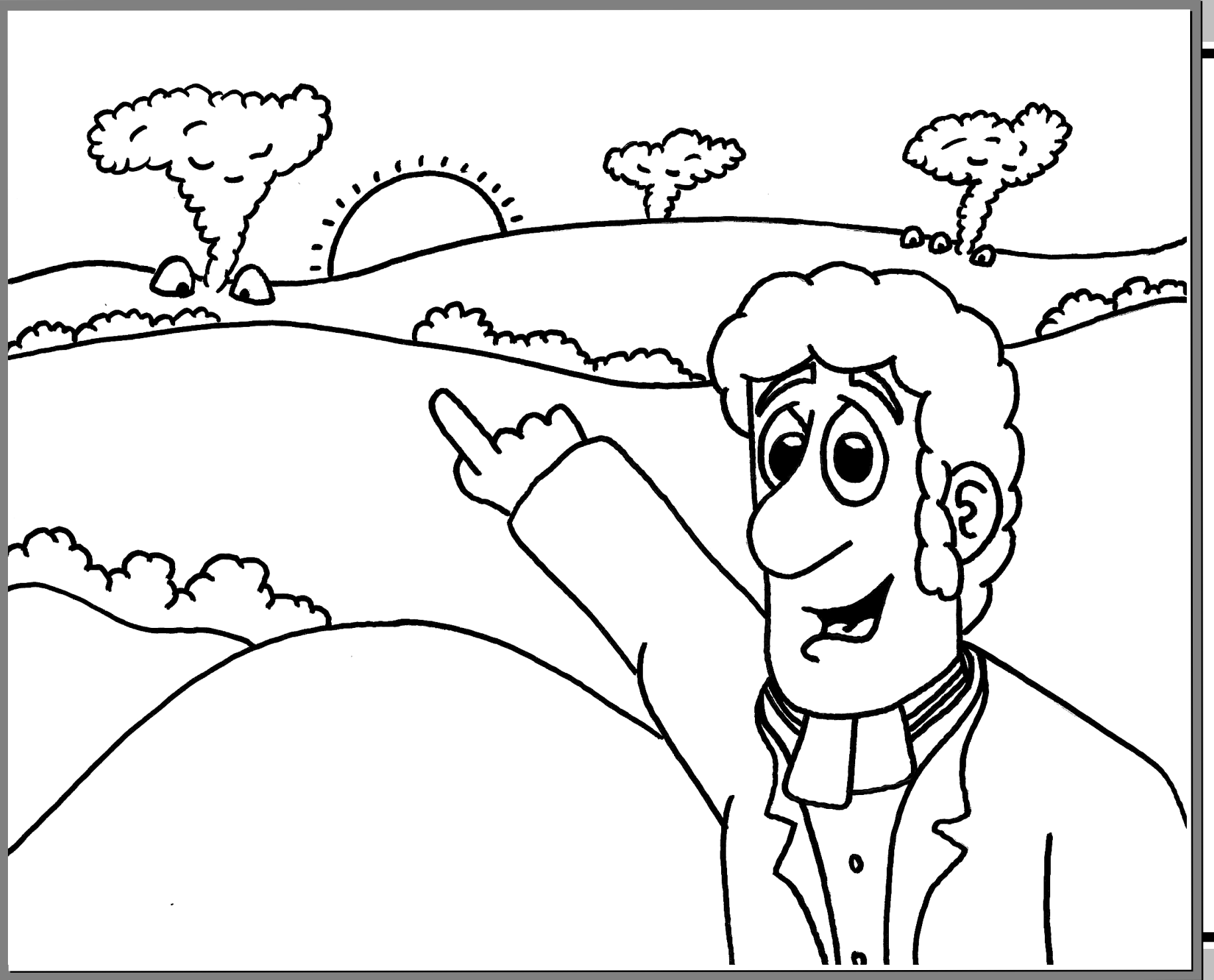
(1795-1883)

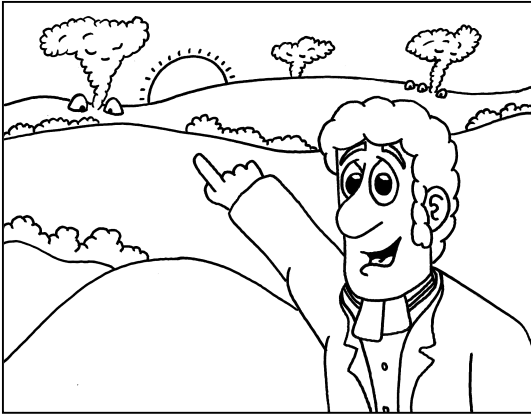
Lesson: 6.26 – Change Missionary Snapshot Series

This story reminds us that God can change the heart of even the worst sinner. God's wonderful gift of salvation will transform someone from God's enemy into God's child. God completely changes them. They are not just trying to live better or turning over a new leaf, they are completely new on the inside. Robert Moffat was about to watch God take those who hated God and the Bible and transform them into servants of the Lord.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." - 2 Corinthians 5:17







Introduction:

How many of you have ever seen a cocoon or chrysalis? A cocoon or a chrysalis is an amazing thing. An ugly, fat caterpillar goes inside it and a little while later, a beautiful butterfly comes out. A great change happens on the inside of that cocoon. Our story today is about a missionary to a place where people hated God and the things of the Bible. This missionary risked his life to go and tell these people about Jesus' love. There were many times that he could have been killed or seriously hurt. Could the gospel change these people's hard hearts? Let's listen carefully and see what happens in this story about Robert Moffat...

Missionary Story:

"I wonder if today will be the day!" I said as I walked up a short hill that I had walked up several times before. I reached the top of the hill and sat down just as the sun was creeping up on the Eastern horizon. I stood up to get a good view of the plains to the north. The sunlight lit up the plains for miles and miles. And then I spotted it. Small

clouds of smoke began to drift into the sky all over the plains. "The smoke from the campfires of a thousand villages that have never heard about Jesus!" I said out loud. Very soon after arriving in Africa, the mission told me they wanted me to work with one of those thousand villages with a Chief Afrikaner who lived to the north of the Orange River. First, however, I needed to get the governor of the East India Company's permission to travel there. As I made my way back down the hill, I saw a missionary friend of mine. "They said Yes!" Mr. Kitchingman yelled waving a paper over his head. I hurried the rest of the way down the hill to have a look at the paper he was holding.

It was true. A few days later we bumped and rumbled down the path behind the sixteen oxen that pulled our wagon. Walking beside the wagon were some of the porters (or servants) that we had hired to guide and help us. The plan was to travel for several weeks up to a place called Bysondermeid. Mr. and Mrs. Kitchingman would stay on there and I would continue with a couple of other travelers and the porters.

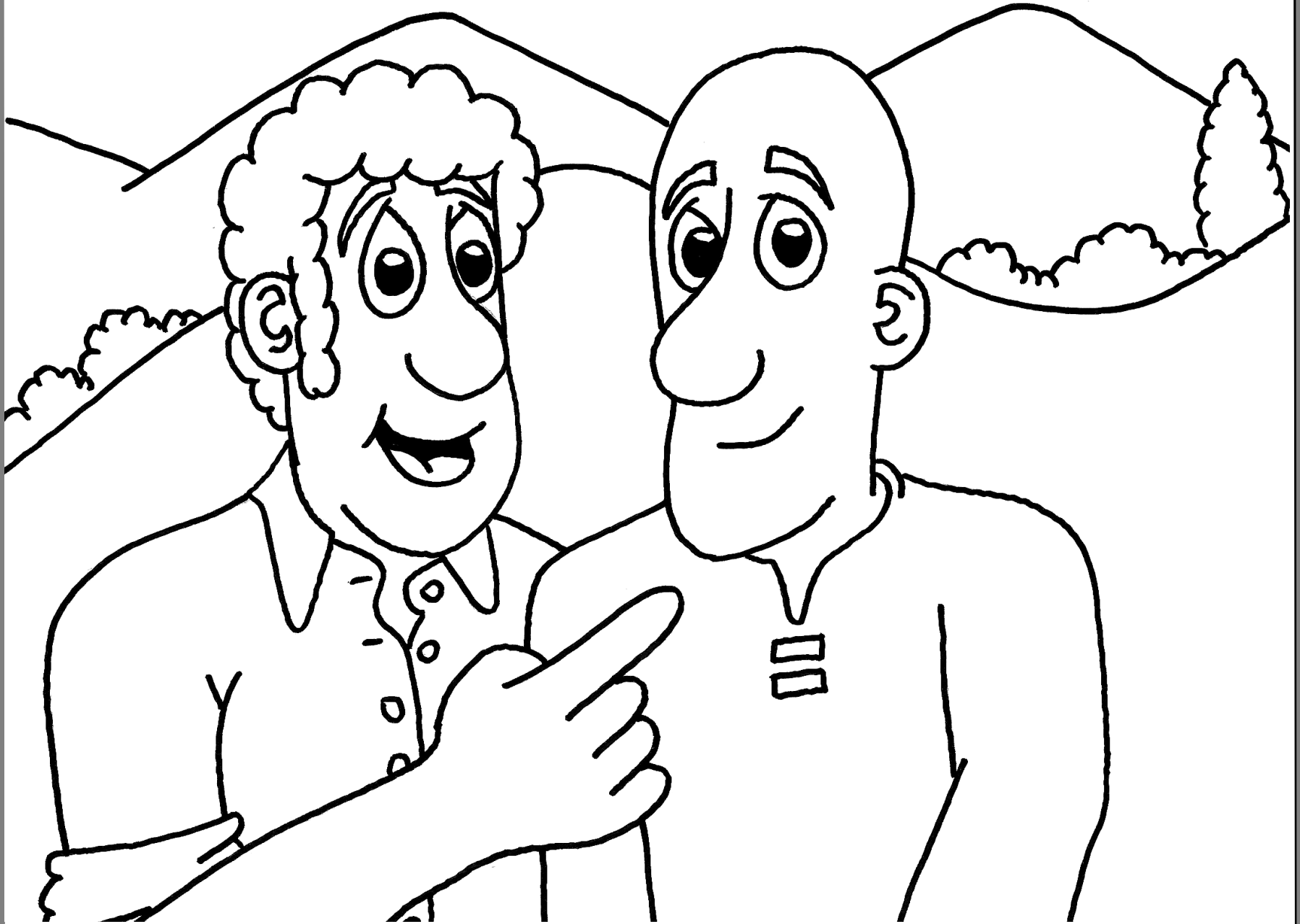
By the time we reached Bysondermeid several weeks later, everyone was exhausted. We stayed in Bysondermeid for several weeks getting our strength for the next part of our journey. "You're going to work with Afrikaner?" one Dutch farmer asked me one afternoon. "That chief killed two of my brothers and he'll most definitely kill you too," he said. Another farmer said he thought that Afrikaner would tie me to a tree and let his sons practice by shooting arrows

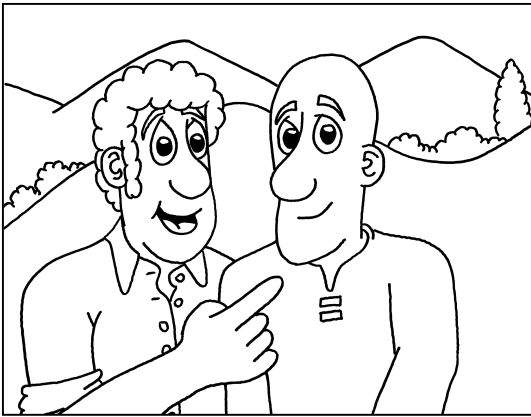
at me. I ran into other farmers over the next week. Each one had the same kinds of things to say. One farmer said that Afrikaner would take my skin and make a drum out of it.

It was true. There were many wild stories about Chief Afrikaner. He was certainly an outlaw and a murderer, but there were also other stories of him welcoming people there. At the same time, many said he could change from being your friend to being a killer very quickly. I knew that God was more powerful than Afrikaner could ever be and God could do something amazing...He could change Chief Afrikaner's heart.

After a few weeks of travel, the rough trail that we were following disappeared and sand surrounded us for miles in every direction. Instead of traveling during the daytime when the desert was the hottest, we traveled at night. There were many times while crossing that desert that we nearly died. One night, the oxen wouldn't stand up. "We must find water before the oxen die!" I said. We headed off into the darkness, found a spot, and began to dig...and dig...and dig. Finally, the smallest puddle of water began to appear. The water was almost black with dirt and mud, but it was water. We each took turns taking a drink and gave some to the oxen. A few days later, the oxen wandered off while we were asleep. While looking for the oxen we nearly died of starvation, but finally, some riders saw us and helped us.

After four months of traveling, we arrived in Chief Afrikaner's village. I was taken to the Chief right away. "You are from across the sea?" the Chief asked me with an angry look in his eyes. "Yes, I was sent from





person. “He was like a terrible lion, but now he seems more like a gentle lamb,” a boy from the village said at my school one day. “I want to become a Christian,” Chief Afrikaner announced one day. I was delighted to tell him about Jesus and help him pray to be forgiven for his sins.

Several weeks later I needed to go back to Cape Town. “I want you to go with me,” I said to Chief Afrikaner. “I thought you loved me,” the Chief said “you know that they will surely catch me and kill me... I am an outlaw. I would rather put my head in a lion’s mouth.” I smiled at my friend. “You are different now... the governor will see that.” Finally, he agreed to come, but we would have to be careful as we traveled. “I think it would be best if you went as my servant,” I said. The mighty chief I had first met would never have agreed to that, but now he was learning to be humble.

We made our way back toward Cape Town. Along the way, we stopped at many of the same farms as I had on the way up. At one farm, the farmer almost fainted when he saw me. “Don’t come near me ghost!” he shouted. “I am not a ghost,” I said “I am alive.” The farmer said that everyone had heard that I had been murdered by that terrible Chief Afrikaner and someone even said that they saw my bones. Finally, the farmer could see that I was not dead. “I’d be too scared to even be in the same room as that Chief,” he said. I smiled. “Well, actually, the chief is right here in the room with us,” I said. “My servant, is none other than Chief Afrikaner and God has changed his heart, He has become a Christian.” The farmer’s mouth

London,” I said. Chief Afrikaner said nothing else, but turned and walked away. “Is he angry?” I wondered as I began setting up the place that I would be staying in.

I started right away holding a service in both the morning and evening and teaching school to the children of the village during the day. I was surprised to see that Chief Afrikaner came to every service and seemed to listen to what was being said. “I hope he does not get angry at me and turn into a killer,” I thought to myself one day. I soon learned from the people of the village that the chief was indeed a terrible and terrifying man, but they said that something inside him seemed to be changing and the people were noticing.

After a few months of being in the village, I got very sick. I could tell that I was getting a high fever and went and laid down. For days, I barely ate. At one time, I turned over to see Chief Afrikaner. He stayed with me in my tent until I was better. “The chief is reading the Bible,” someone announced as they ran by my hut one day. Slowly, day by day, the chief was becoming a different

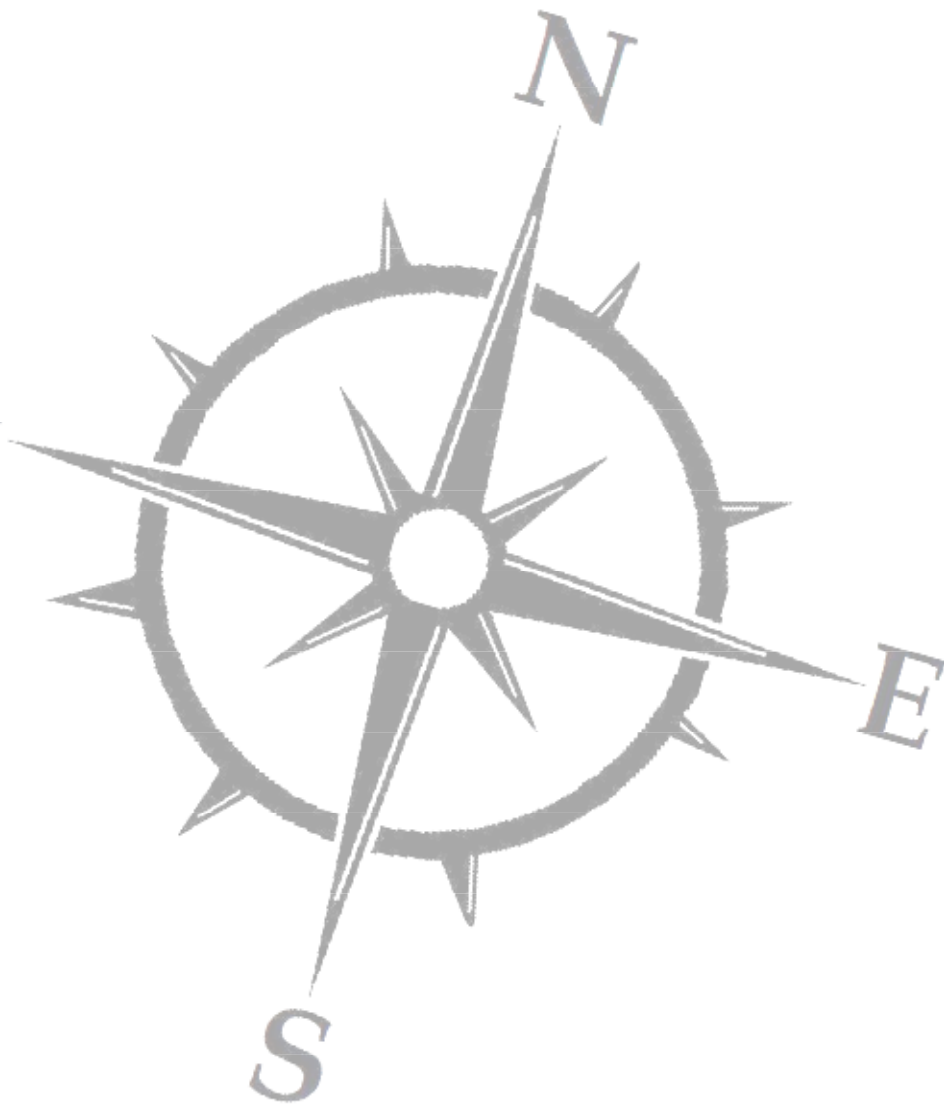
fell open. “Oh dear Lord, what amazing power you have,” the farmer said shaking his head. “Indeed He does,” I said.

Application:

You know, boys and girls, Ezekial 36:26-27 tells us that God can save even the worst of sinners. He can change our dirty hearts and make them clean and new through His salvation. Some people are afraid to tell others about the Lord. Robert Moffat was not afraid to tell Chief Afrikaner and many other people throughout Africa about Jesus. Robert knew that God could take a man that was a terrible murderer and save him and change him. Even the governor later agreed that the Chief was completely different and pardoned him.

Robert Moffat worked in Africa for over 50 years. He opened several mission stations in the interior of Africa. He also translated the entire Bible into the language of the Bechuanas. During a visit to England, he sat down with a young missionary named David Livingstone. He told David about that smoke of a thousand villages that had never heard about Jesus. Robert saw many people from those villages accept Jesus as their Savior.

*(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to **lesson 6.26** on **page 90** in your **China 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 information from:

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