

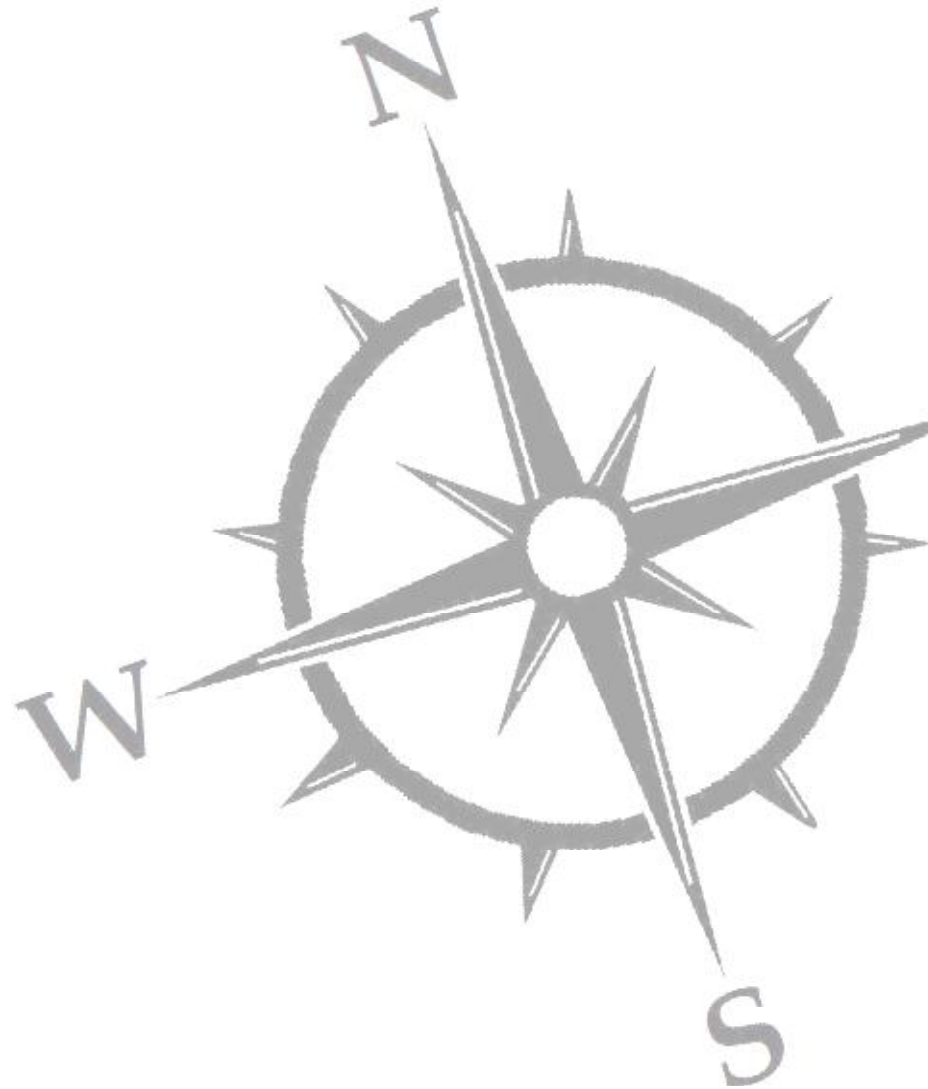
The Life of Samuel Leigh

(1785-1852)

Lesson: 4.24 – Direction Missionary Snapshot Series

This story reminds us that God leads and guides those who are serving Him. He leads us to where we need to be and away from things that might harm us. It is our job to follow His leading. Many times in life, we get into situations where we are not sure what to do or where God wants us to go. God promises to guide and give wisdom to those that are serving Him by faith. Missionary Samuel Leigh needed God to guide him in what he was about to do for the people of China.

“For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.” – Psalm 48:14







Introduction:

Imagine being dropped off in the middle of a huge jungle. It would be confusing and a bit scary to not have a guide along with you. You might get lost or come across something that might hurt you. A guide is a person who knows the area and can help you to figure out where to go and what to avoid. Our story today is about a missionary in Australia and New Zealand. This missionary found himself in a couple of places where he did not know where to go or what to do. Was he lost or would God guide him to safety? Let's listen carefully to what happened to Samuel Leigh...

Missionary Story:

CRASH! The thunder echoed loudly in the sky over the ocean. "This storm came out of nowhere," one of the sailors shouted over the wind. My wife and I had recently come to New Zealand. While working with a group of people, I had learned about some larger villages up the coast that were safe to visit. I had hired some native fisherman to take me there. Everything was going fine

until this fierce storm had begun.

Though we tried to fight it, the storm pushed us further out to sea. We were finally able to make our way towards the land. The closer we got to shore though, the bigger the waves got. The waves got so big, that they forced us into the Wangaroa Bay where the fiercest cannibals on the island lived. A few years before, a ship called the *Boyd* had stopped there. The cannibals had killed and eaten nearly everyone on board.

No sooner had my feet touched the sand before our boat was surrounded by natives who were holding spears and shouting things at us. I quickly tried to explain to the chief that we were only there because of the storm and that we would leave the next morning. The chief finally agreed and led us to a hut to spend the night in. "Why is God letting this happen?" I thought to myself once we were inside the hut.

My mind flashed back to a couple of years before when my wife and I first arrived in Sydney, Australia. We had only been there a short time when I bought a horse. I planned to take the gospel to the settlers in the areas around Sydney but wasn't sure where to start. "Will you visit a friend of mine in Castlereagh?" one of the new Christians in Sydney asked me one day. "I'll give you a letter from me that will tell him who you are and that I sent you," he continued. Early the next morning, I set out on the 35-mile trip through some thick woods. I traveled all day and arrived just after sunset. I saw a man standing on his porch. "Sir, I have a letter from your friend in Sydney," I said, "he hopes that you will allow me to come in and

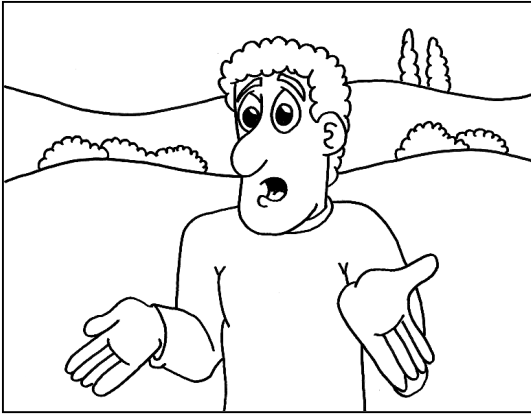
speak with you about the Lord." The man frowned, "I will NOT allow it!"

On the inside I was frustrated. "Why did I waste my time traveling out here?" I thought to myself. "Sir, will you at least allow my horse and I to sleep in your barn overnight? I'd be willing to pay you for it." The man continued to frown and slowly folded his arms across his chest. "I will NOT allow it!" he said again. I looked around. "Did God lead me out here into the middle of nowhere for this?" I wondered. "Sir, do you know of anyone in these parts who might take me in for the night?" I asked. "John Lees might," he said nodding his head, "he lives a couple of miles that way."

"A couple of miles?" I thought, I almost turned around, but finally decided that it was getting too dark to try to make it all the way home. I kicked the sides of my horse and prayed for God to help me as I rode onward. Two miles up the road, I came to a small wooden hut. I was so tired, I didn't even climb off my horse. "Is there anyone here who would allow a tired missionary to spend the night?" I called out. The door flung open and a boy came out and grabbed my horse's bridle. I got down off of my horse and stepped inside the hut.

In the middle of the faintly lit room, I saw several people seated around a small table with open Bibles in front of them. "Praise God!" said Mr. Lees, "we were just about to read God's word. We have been praying for three years that God would send us a missionary and here you are! Would you be willing to read for us?" I sat down and read from Isaiah 35. The verses talked about





being in a lonely wilderness. Tears ran down my cheeks. Here I was in a wilderness place. Five minutes before I had been a stranger in a strange land and now I was gladly received by Mr. Lees family. I soon learned that Mr. Lees had been a terrible drunk, who had nearly destroyed his family by selling everything they owned to get alcohol. He was planning to sell their last valuable possession, a pig, at the market the following day, when he had a terrible nightmare about a snake coming out of the liquor bottle trying to bite him. The dream scared him so bad that he cried out to God, began reading the Bible, and had asked Jesus to save him. "There is no one around for miles to help me and my family learn more about God," Mr. Lees said.

We have prayed for three years for God to send us someone to help us and teach us." I spent the next day with John and his family teaching them and praying with them. John was so grateful that he donated land and had a small church built on his property. From then on, I rode out to visit and teach them every couple of weeks.

A flash of lighting brought my mind back into the hut. "Even though I had no idea what God was doing that time with John Lees, God knew exactly what He was doing. He certainly is in control of this situation too," I thought as I drifted off to sleep.

"Listen," one of the sailors whispered a few hours later, "they are arguing over the best time to roast and eat us." I could see sunlight peeking through the cracks in our small hut. "Don't worry," I said, "They can't do anything to us without God's permission." I stepped outside. Everything that the natives did seemed like they were getting ready for a huge feast. I was guessing that they were just waiting for us to make a run for it.

"Chief Te Ara," I said, "will you take us for a tour of your island in our canoe? I would like to see more of this beautiful place." The Chief smiled and agreed. We traveled north and before long saw an old hull of a ship sticking out of the water. "Some men came in that ship," the chief said, "the men were very cruel to us, so we killed and ate them."

Not long after, we arrived back at the beach and found a large group of natives waiting. I got out of the canoe with the chief and walked up onto the shore right in the middle of the group, leaving the rest of my sailors in our canoe. The natives began to yell and shake their spears. They were not going to let us leave this beach alive. Then I had an idea. "I have fishhooks," I shouted reaching into my pocket and pulling a handful of tangled wires and fishhooks, and holding them up in the air. I threw the fishhooks as far I could behind them. The

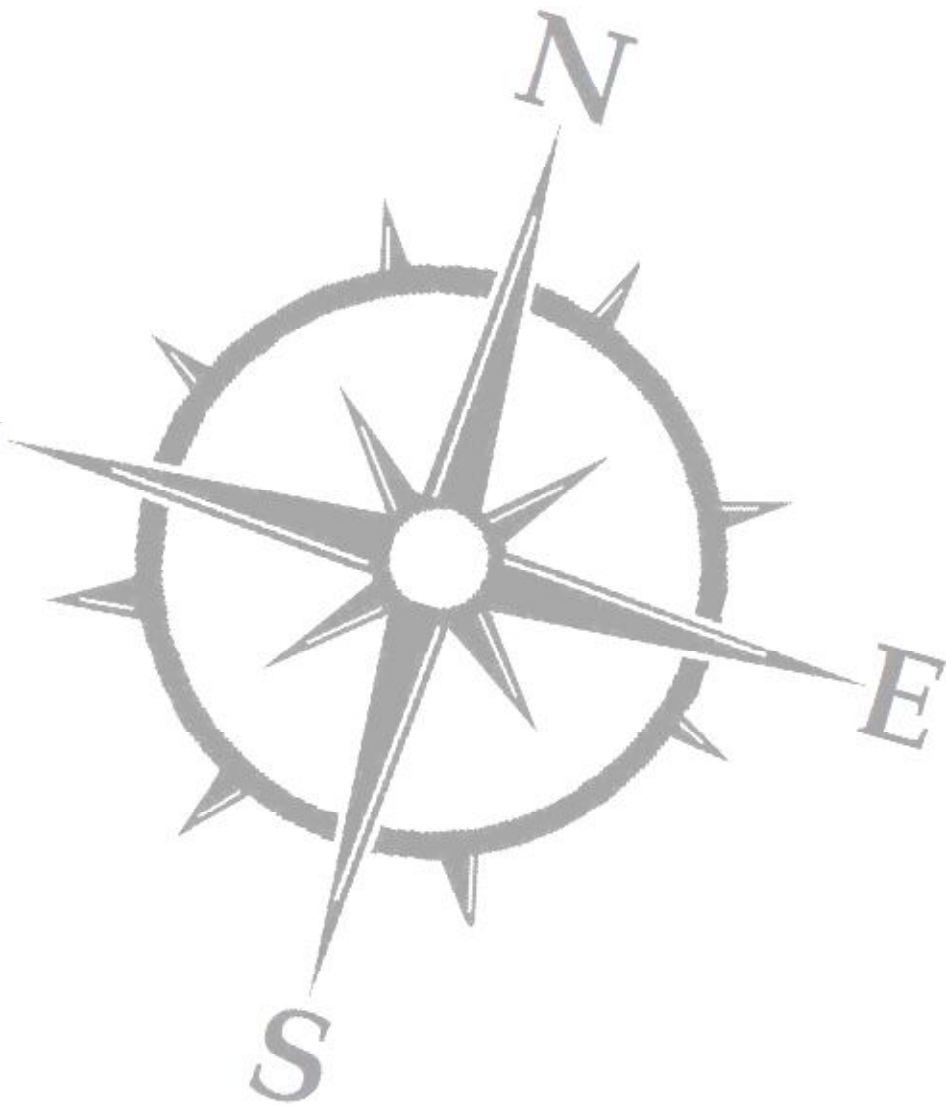
natives loved metal hooks and then immediately turned and dove after them, pushing and shoving each other to find them in the sand. I turned and ran as fast as I could to the canoe. "Someday, I must come back and tell these people about Jesus," I thought as our canoe quickly paddled away.

Application:

You know, boys and girls, Psalm 48:14 tells us that God will guide those who are serving Him. God has a wonderful plan for each of our lives. His plan is always the best plan and the one that will bring us the most joy. Just like a jungle guide, God is watching out for us every step of the way. Samuel Leigh's life was in great danger that day. Years later, Samuel came back to that very beach and worked with that same tribe and many came to know Jesus as their Savior.

Samuel Leigh used his life to reach the peoples of Australia and New Zealand. Australia was originally a place where criminals were sent to get them away from everyone else. New Zealand was a place that was filled with cannibals. Samuel traveled 150 miles every 10 days to preach in 15 churches in Australia. He then tried to reach the cannibals of New Zealand. Samuel understood that no matter how evil a person was, his loving God was more than able to save and change them from the inside out.

*(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to **lesson 3.26 on page 90** in your India 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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