

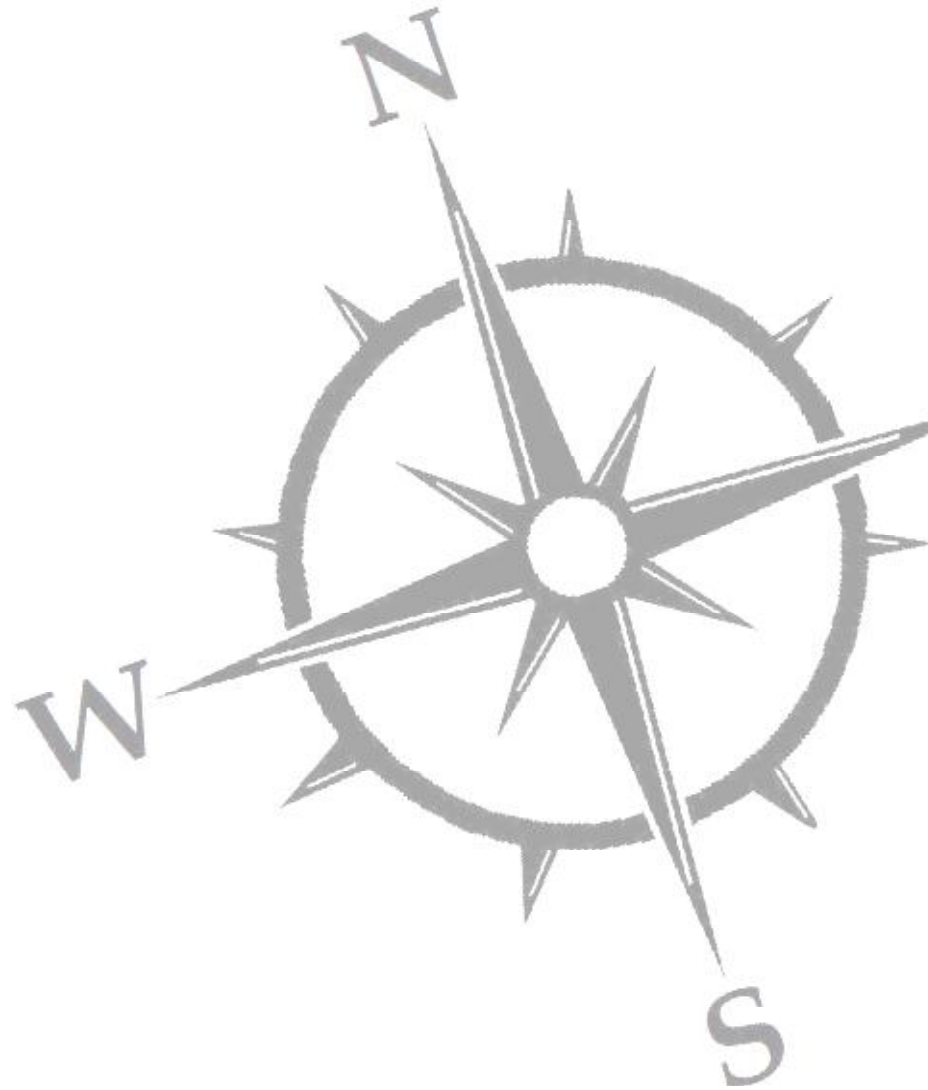
The Life of David Livingstone

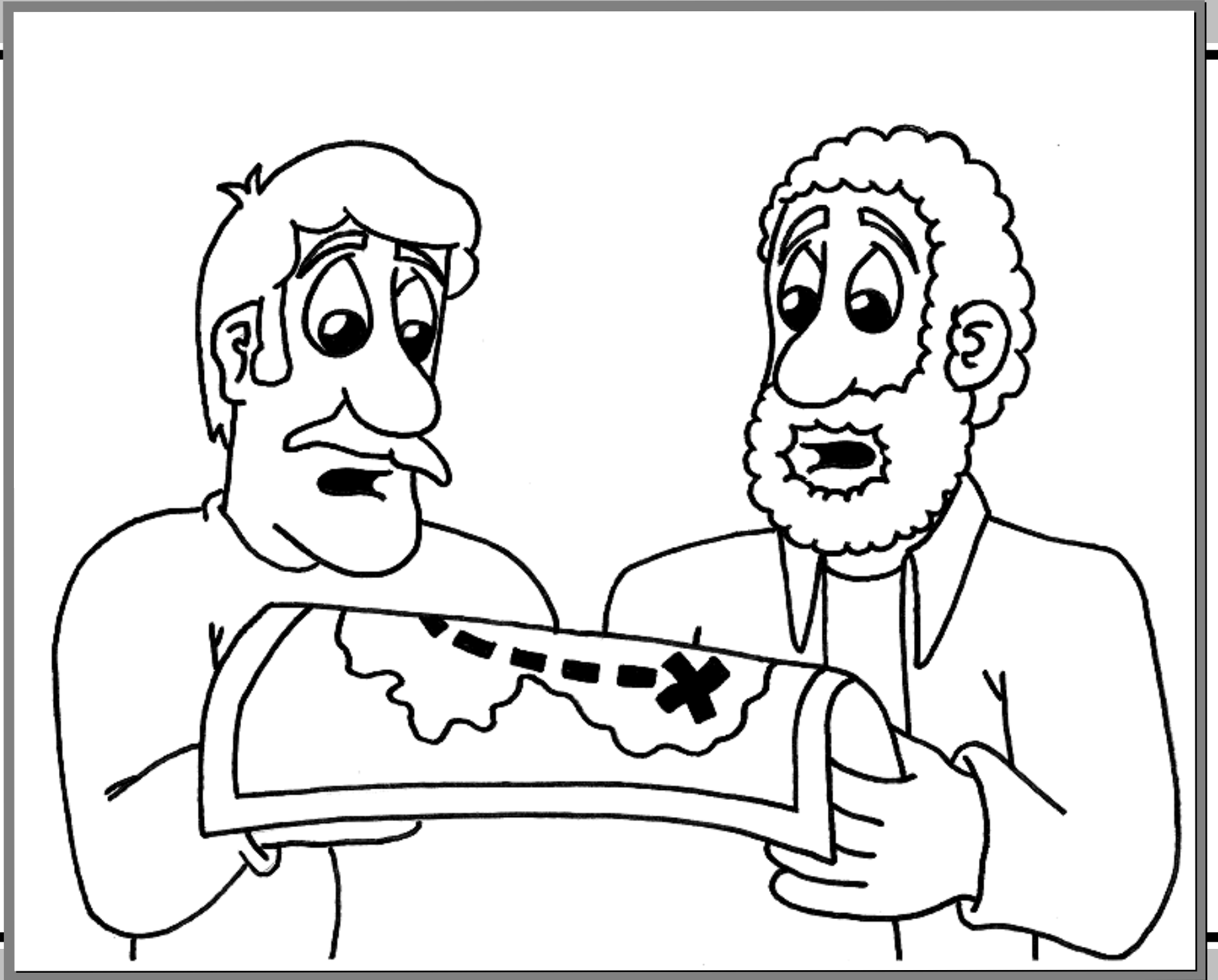
(1813-1873)

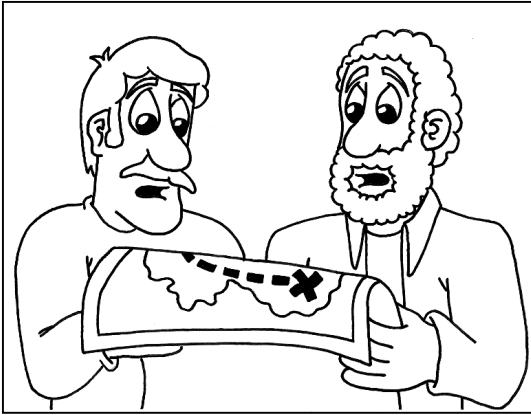
Lesson: 5.10 – Finishing Missionary Spotlight Series

This story reminds us that even if we start out our Christian life well, it is very important that we finish well. We must be faithful in serving the Lord throughout our whole life. David Livingstone had served the Lord all of his life, but finishing the race is just as important as running hard the rest of the race.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:" - 2 Timothy 4:7







Who remembers where we left off last week?

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

Two days after leaving Tete, the *Ma-Robert* just would not go any farther against the river current. I decided to pull to the side of the river and do a little exploring on foot. On both sides of the river, large boulders and rocks lined the shore. It took all the skills I had to climb them. They were burning hot from being in the sun and very smooth which meant there was no place to grab onto them. Finally, I was able to climb them and the large cliff behind them as well. As I reached the top, I was able to look out over many miles that lay ahead in the river. The Major who, a couple of years before had told me that we could easily travel up the Zambezi River from the coast to Victoria Falls, had been wrong. As I stood looking out over the river, I could tell that mile after mile of rapids lay ahead. There would be no easy

way to travel up the river.

I climbed back down to the boat and shared the news. No one said anything as we traveled back to Tete. After we arrived, Dr. Kirk, who was one of the six men that the Royal geographical society had sent to accompany me, and I set off in the direction of the coast to explore the Shire River. Perhaps we would have better luck with that river. The Shire River was filled with Duckweed that kept getting caught in the engine of the *Ma-Robert*. Finally, we reached a village called Magomero and the Manganjis tribe. This looked like a wonderful spot for a future mission station. After this, we went back to Tete, but we soon returned and discovered two more lakes...Lake Shirwa and Lake Nyassa.

When I got back to Tete, two letters were waiting for me. One was from Mary telling me that my new daughter Anna Mary had been born. Mary also wanted to know when she would be able to join me. I had dropped her off with her parents in Kuruman over a year before. I wrote back to her telling her the sad news about how we could not travel up the Zambezi River and that I wasn't sure when she could join me.

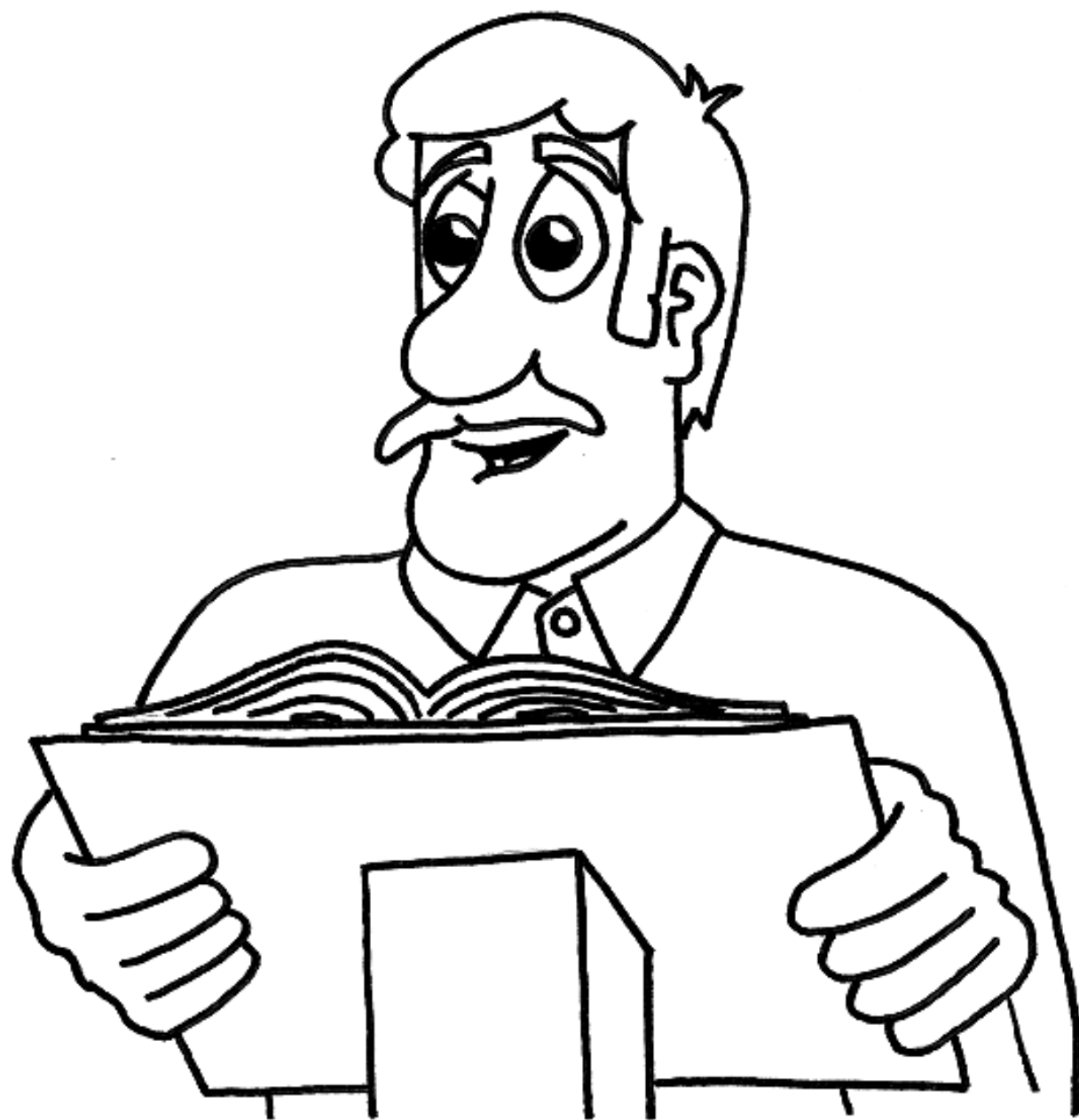
The other letter was from the London Missionary Society. The letter said to expect two missionary families who were coming to work with Chief Sekeletu and the Makalolo tribe. I didn't think that the tribe was ready to have permanent missionaries and didn't know how the new missionaries would get to the tribe through the harsh conditions of Africa. It was too late to write and stop them though. I knew that these families had

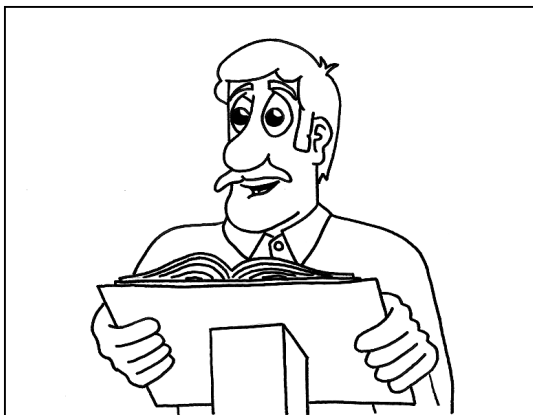
probably already arrived in Africa even as I was reading this letter.

In March of 1860, I headed back to the Makalolo tribe with those who had come with me earlier. When we arrived back with the Makalolo tribe, we learned that some white people had arrived in Linyanti which was nearby. Dr. Kirk quickly traveled there but returned to say that one of the families had died from sickness, and the other fled to Kuruman. I was sad that this had happened and hoped that the London Missionary Society would give me more notice before sending out missionaries the next time.

Dr. Kirk and I headed back to Tete. This time, we tried to travel down the Zambezi River by canoe. I was able to do it, but Dr. Kirk's canoe flipped over, and he lost everything, but thankfully he did not die himself. Along the way, the *Ma-Robert* had gotten stuck on another sandbar, and we left her to rot on the sandbar. That boat was no longer worth all our trouble.

When we got back to Tete, there was another letter from Mary. She was tired of waiting and was traveling up to me on a ship. That ship was also carrying a brand new steamship that I had purchased in England from the money I got from my book. This ship I named the *Lady Nyassa* because I wanted to explore Lake Nyassa with it. It was wonderful to see Mary again. It had been nearly four years since I had dropped her off with her parents in Kuruman. Mary left Zouga and Anna Mary with her parents in Kuruman. Mary had been with me for 2 months when she caught malaria. This was her first time with the disease. Even though





she had two doctors by her side, myself and Dr. Kirk, she was not able to recover and she passed away. I was very sad. I had lost the most important thing to me...my wife. I decided that I should travel back to England to be with my children.

To get back home, I decided that I would sail *Lady Nyassa* to India. I had seen so many horrible things done and so many people made slaves. I didn't want my boat to be used in any way by the slave traders. I figured if I took it to India and sold it, I could pay for my youngest children's education with it. George Rae, who was one of the original six people sent with me by the Royal Geographical Society, thought that I was crazy. He said that *Lady Nyassa* was a steamboat for going up rivers not for sailing on the ocean. He said that one big wave would tear her to pieces. I set out anyway.

In April of 1864, I set out for India. We sailed up the African coast to Zanzibar and then across to Bombay, India. We arrived in India in June and set out for England arriving there in July. Right when I arrived in London, I was taken to a reception

at the Prime Minister's house. I spent my entire first week at many appointments with different government officials. Finally, when the week was over, I hurried home to see my family in Scotland. Zouga and Anna Mary had been sent from Port Elizabeth earlier and had arrived before me. My sisters Agnes and Janet were taking care of them. My eighteen-year-old son Robert had gone off to America and was fighting in the civil war there. My fifteen-year-old son, Thomas, had developed a problem with his kidneys and was quite sick. My other children, Agnes (who was seventeen years old), Zouga (who was now twelve years old), and Anna Mary (who was just turning 5 years old) were all doing well.

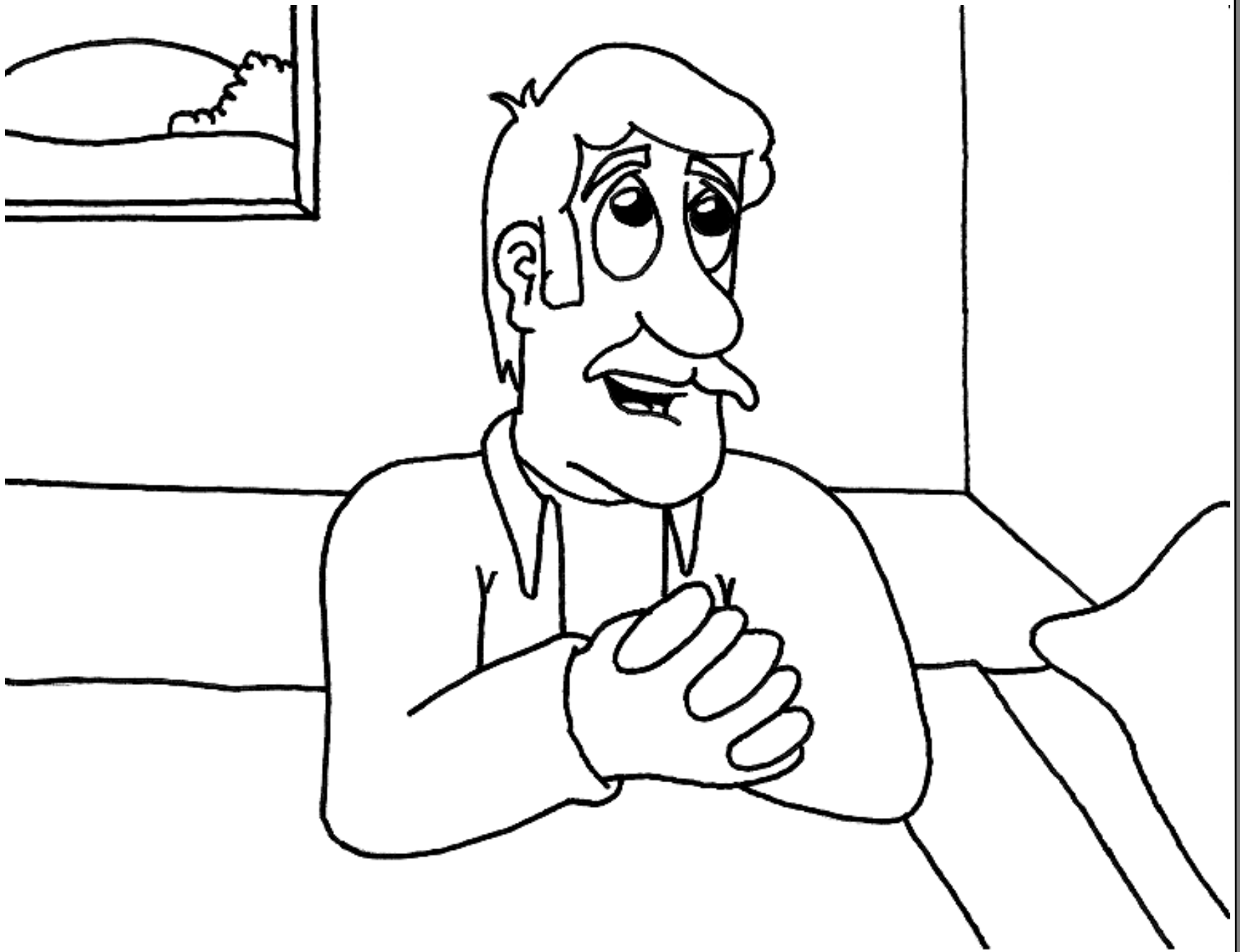
Back home, I quickly settled into a routine. Not long after that, I began writing a second book about my travels up and down the Zambezi River. I also gave many lectures about the horrible slave trade in Africa. In August 1865, I was given money by the Royal Geographical Society and others to go back to Africa and find ways to stop the slave trade there. Just as I boarded the ship, I got some terrible news. My mother had passed away, and my oldest son Robert had also passed away as a prisoner of war in a camp in North Carolina.

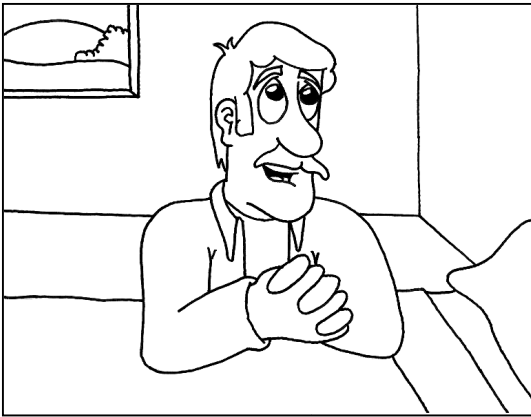
It was with a heavy heart that I headed back to Africa. I wondered if this would be the last time I would ever see England. I watched as England got smaller and smaller on the horizon. I arrived back in India and very soon got back to Africa. I set out from a place called Mikindani with a new group of men that I had hired to help me explore the Rovuma River. Two of the men I

hired were named Susi and Chuma. They had both been slaves, and I had helped to free them. They were faithful helpers, unlike the others. Over the next few weeks, all of the other men slowly deserted me. Finally, the last few stole my medicine box. They took it back to Mikindani and told the people there that I had died. I knew I would not make it very long if I got sick without my medicine box, but I decided to press on and continue exploring.

I saw many more terrible things about the slave trade as I traveled. I also spent a lot of time making maps of the areas that I was seeing. I discovered two other lakes along the way...Lake Bangwelo and Lake Moreo. In 1870, I came across a large river that the Africans called the Lualaba. I wondered if this river connected to the Nile River. That would sure make traveling here much easier. There was only one way to find out, and I set off in a canoe to see. It turned out to be one of the Congo Rivers and would be no use to me after all.

It was January of 1871. I was now fifty-eight years old. I sat on the bank of the Lualaba River by the Nyangwe village. I had become very sick. I did not want to stay here as the people here were cannibals, but I had no choice. I had run out of everything and was very sick. It wasn't until October that I was able to move to a nearby village called Ujiji. I had not heard any news from the coast in a long time. I was too sick to continue to explore or to go back. One morning, Susi came into my tent and told me a white man had arrived. Very soon a man came into my tent and said "David





Livingstone, I presume?" His name was Henry Stanley and he had been sent by an American newspaper to see if I was still alive. Henry had brought letters from my family and newspapers telling great news of things like the Suez Canal that had been opened. Henry also loved to explore and agreed to explore Lake Tanganyika with me. I thought maybe that this lake may be the source of the Nile River. It was slow going, but we finally made it and found that this was not true. We returned to Ujiji where Henry stayed with me for three months. He begged me to come back with him, but when I refused he offered to take my journals with him. It was five months after he left before I was able to explore again. Over these last few weeks, Susi, Chuma, and I explored more of the Lualaba River. It is March of 1873. I think in a few days we will head to a village called Chitambo and visit the people there.

(Summary of the life of David Livingstone)

David did not make it to Chitambo.

As they neared the village, it was raining very heavily, and they stopped and quickly set up a hut for him to stay in. David asked Susi to give him some medicine and fell asleep. Sometime over the next two hours, David climbed out of his bed, knelt beside his bed, and folded his hands to pray. This was where his men found him. David had gone to Heaven while talking to the Lord.

David's men knew he was considered a great man back in England, and they decided that they would see that his body was taken back to England no matter what. They buried his heart under a tree in Africa and then wrapped and prepared the rest of his body. They had to travel over one thousand miles to get David's body to the coast, but never abandoned him even though they had to take it through swamps and people who harassed them for carrying it. They reached the coast, and David's body was taken back to England where he was buried in the famous Westminster Abbey. Not long afterward, a mission station was established on the edge of Lake Nyassa in his honor. It was called Livingstonia.

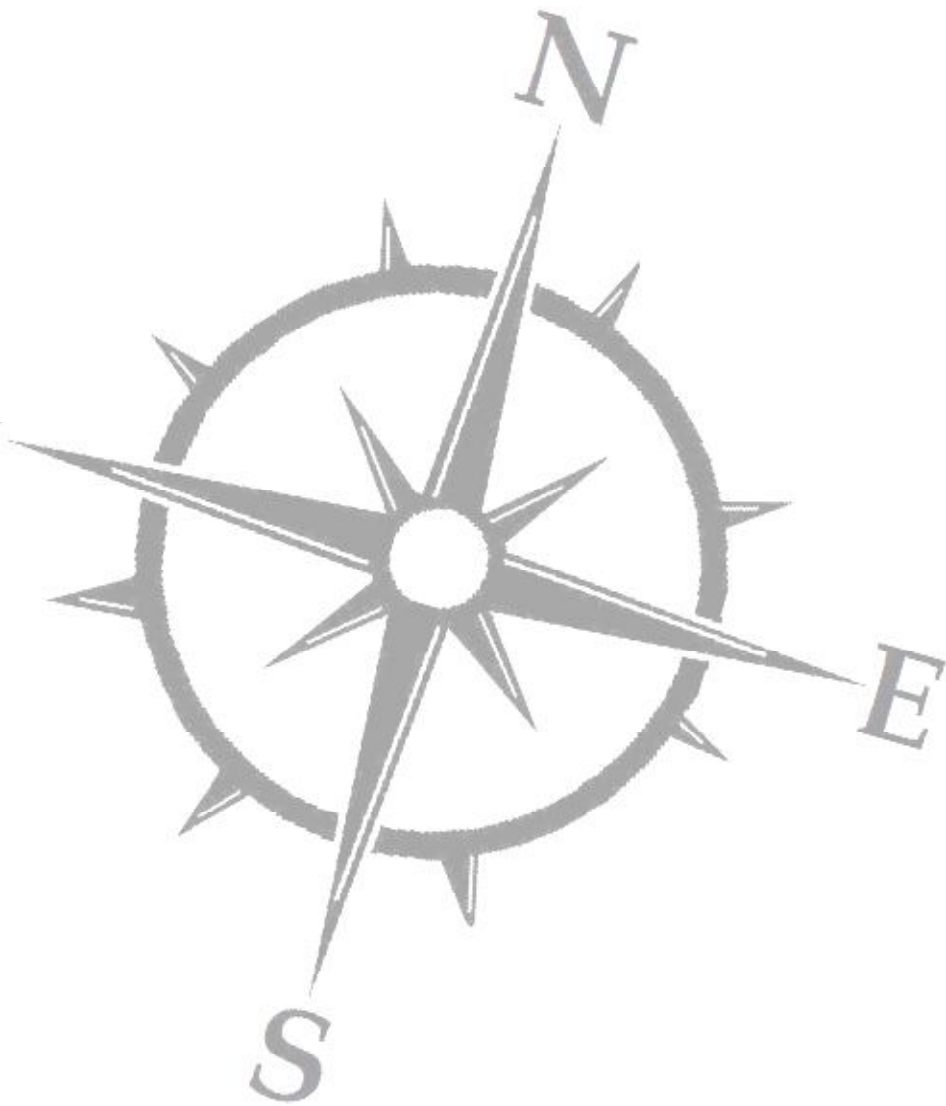
David never forgot about the smoke of a thousand villages that had not heard about Jesus. David Livingstone had traveled over 30,000 miles throughout Africa. Through his travels, he shared the gospel message and reached many Africans for Christ. Through his maps, he opened the door of Africa so that many missionaries could come there in the future and continue where he had left off. Through his work and efforts, many slaves were set free, diseases were treated, and evil practices were done

away with.

Africa had lost a wonderful doctor, a great leader, and a wonderful friend who had given his life to see that they heard the good news of the gospel. David Livingstone's life can be summed up in his own words: "Lord, send me anywhere, only go with me. Lay any burden on me, only sustain me. Sever any ties but the tie that binds me to Thy service and Thy heart."

Would you be willing for God to use you like He used David Livingstone to do great and wonderful things?

(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to lesson 5.10 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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