

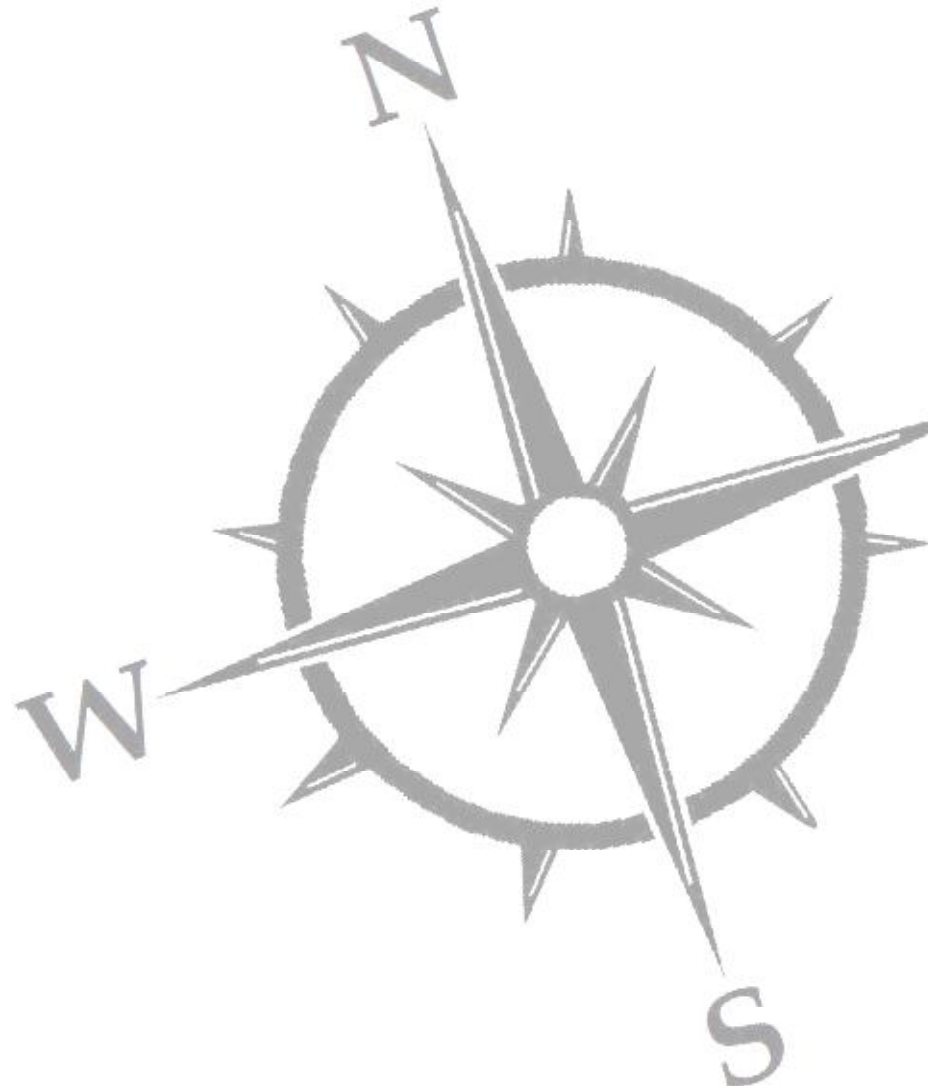
The Life of David Livingstone

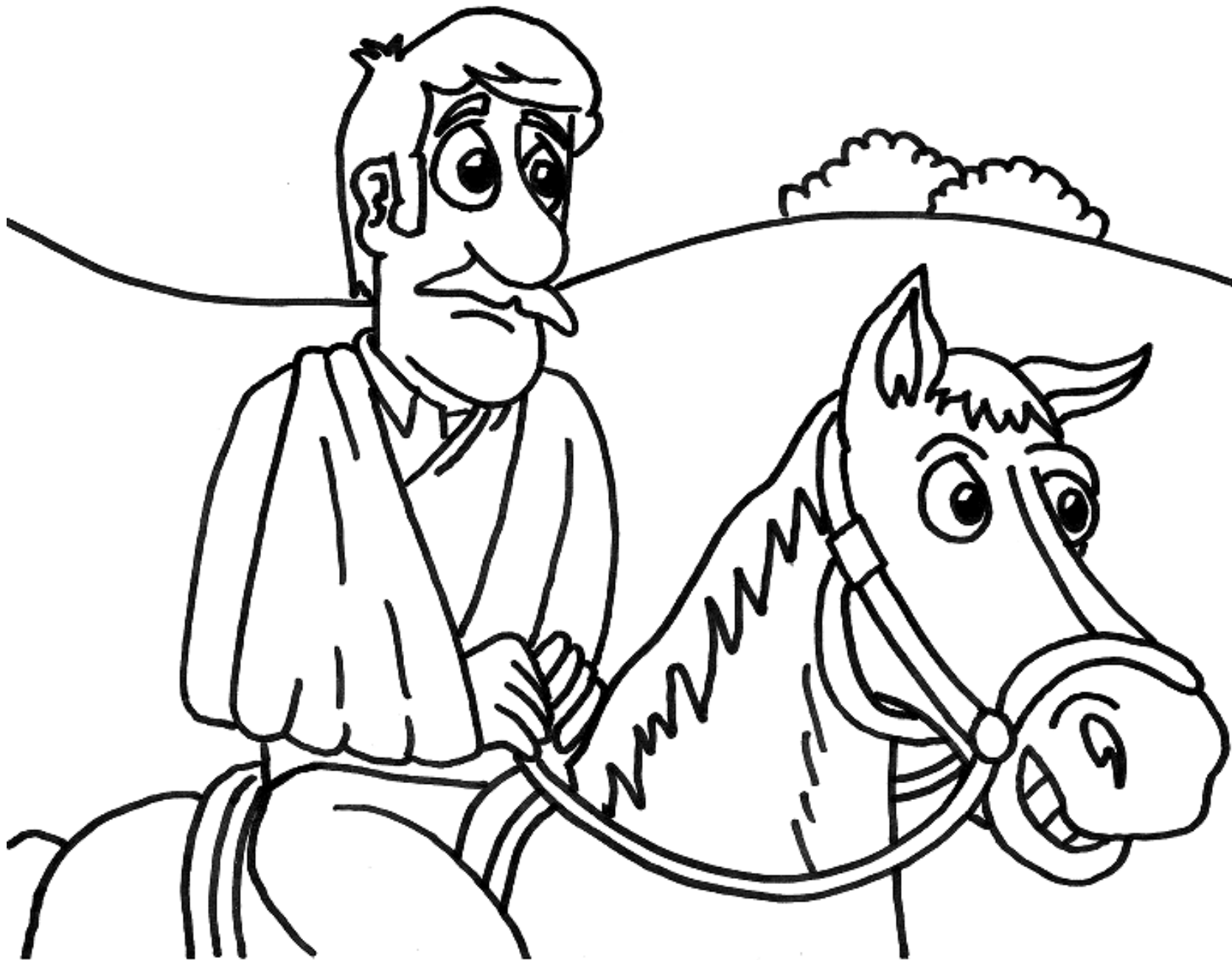
(1813-1873)

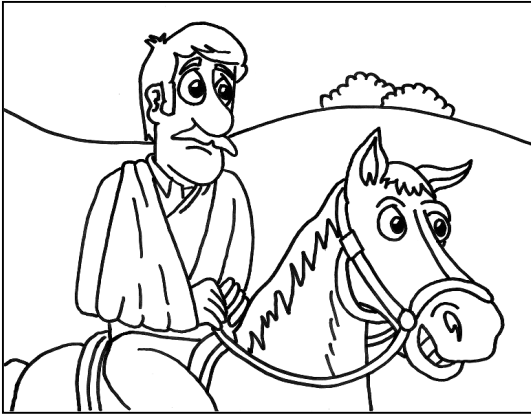
Lesson: 5.7 – Proclaim Missionary Spotlight Series

This story reminds us of the importance of witnessing to the unsaved. Salvation is free to all, but many have never understood its message. Go and tell the good news to all peoples. David Livingstone knew that the gospel message about Jesus was the most important message for the world to hear.

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” - 2 Corinthians 4:3-4







Who remembers where we left off last week?

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

Because of the lion attack, I ended up spending several weeks lying on my back resting and waiting for my arm to heal. During this time, I did a lot of thinking. I remembered back to how Roger and I had first started building the mission station here in Mabotsa. That was back in July of 1843. Around December of that year (and before the lion attack), we heard the news that the Moffats were back in Africa. I was so excited that I had jumped onto my horse and rode 150 miles to meet them. Though I was kind of embarrassed at how I had rushed down there like that, it did give me a chance to talk with Robert Moffat about all that had happened since I had arrived in Africa. I also got a chance to talk with Robert's oldest daughter, Mary.

Up to that point, I had always thought

that I would never get married, because I didn't think any woman would want to leave a comfortable place like England for a rough life in Africa, but as I had talked with Mary, I realized that she didn't feel that way at all.

Two months after my lion attack, I got on my horse, and with my one good hand, I rode back to Kuruman to pay a visit to the Moffats. I had an important question to ask. I wanted to talk with Mary and see if she would think about possibly marrying me.

After I arrived in Kuruman, I sat and talked with Robert Moffat for a long time about my lion attack, about how Mebalwe was doing at the mission, and about how things were going at the mission overall. Then I excused myself and went outside to find Mary.

I looked around at everything there in Kuruman. Things here ran very well, and the Moffats had helpers to do the cooking and washing. I wasn't sure if Mary would want to come with me to Mabotsa where she would have to do a lot of the cooking and cleaning herself. As I walked back and forth around the garden by her house, I decided it wouldn't hurt to ask her.

I was surprised when Mary agreed to marry me. We decided that I would go back to Mabotsa and work on building a house for us there, and then I would come back and get married in January.

I was very excited to go back to Mabotsa and start work on our house. About halfway through building it, a large rock fell off of the top of one of the walls one afternoon, hit me in my bad arm, and nearly broke it all over again. I had to rest it for two

weeks before I could even begin to use it again.

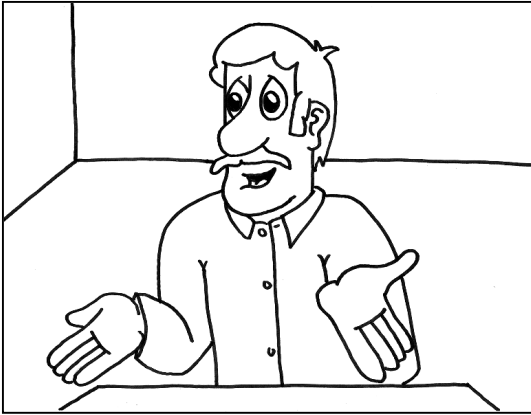
In January of 1845, Mary and I were married. We stayed in Kuruman for about two months before traveling back up to Mabotsa. Once we arrived, I immediately jumped back into work there.

It was during this time that Roger and I began to have some disagreements on things. Roger always tried to remind me that he had been in Africa much longer than I had and that he should make the decisions on things at the mission station. I had spent a lot of time talking with the natives and could speak their language much better. The people seemed to trust me more than Roger, and I think this also made Roger angry. Before long, I realized that one of us would probably need to leave Mabotsa.

One night, I told Mary that I believed that we should move somewhere else. She wondered if it would be back to Kuruman, but I told her that I wanted to go to a place where no missionaries had been before. I told her that I would like to try to go to Chonuane. Chonuane was where Chief Sechele lived. He was the chief that I gave ointment to for his sore eyes and also the one whose son had been very sick, and I had helped him to get better. He was one of the few people that I had met who seemed interested in the gospel.

Not long after that, Mary and I moved forty miles north to Chonuane. Soon after arriving, we had a baby boy named Robert. Life in Chonuane was a little tougher than it had been in Mabotsa. The whole area was having a famine, and it was hard to get things





to grow there. I had brought a copy of the Old Testament with me that Robert Moffat had translated into the local language. I taught Chief Sechele how to read, and not long after that, he decided to become a Christian. Chief Sechele had a problem though. Like most chiefs, he had several wives. He decided to give up the last two wives and send them back to their families with many possessions.

I was sad that the people didn't accept Jesus as easily as Chief Sechele did. Chief Sechele even offered to have his men get out whips and whip the people until they believed in God, but I knew that God would not be pleased with that.

After being in Chonuane for two years Mary and I had another baby boy. The famine there got so bad that we decided to leave. Many of the tribe's people thought that I had brought "bad magic" on them. In the end, the drought and famine got so bad that the Chief decided that the whole tribe would move with me.

We found a good spot forty miles west in Kolobeng on the shores of a river. I

got to work on building a dam in the river, planting crops, and building a mission station. Everything seemed just right to build a big mission there just like the one in Kuruman...everything that is except for the neighbors.

Living nearby was a group called the Boers. The Boers were not from Africa. They were Dutch people who had moved to Africa almost 150 years before I got here. When they arrived, they had captured people from several tribes and made them their slaves. All of that changed in 1814 when the British invaded and took over. British law said that people could not own slaves. Because of this, the Boers had packed up and moved further towards the middle of Africa. The Boers had already overtaken many tribes in this area, and they would have attacked Chief Sechele's tribe except they knew that I lived with them. They tried everything to get me to leave. They even said it was forbidden to preach about Jesus in their territory, but I stood my ground and stayed with the tribe.

One day, Chief Sechele got a note that told him that the Boers were going to attack him and that he should surrender so that many of the people would not have to die fighting. I rode over three hundred miles to the Boers headquarters. There, I argued for hours with the commanding officer. Finally, I told him that I would write a letter to England telling them what the Boers were doing. The officer decided to call off the raid, but he told me that he could not promise that there would be no raids in the future. To the north of us was the great Kalahari Desert. If I could find a path through the

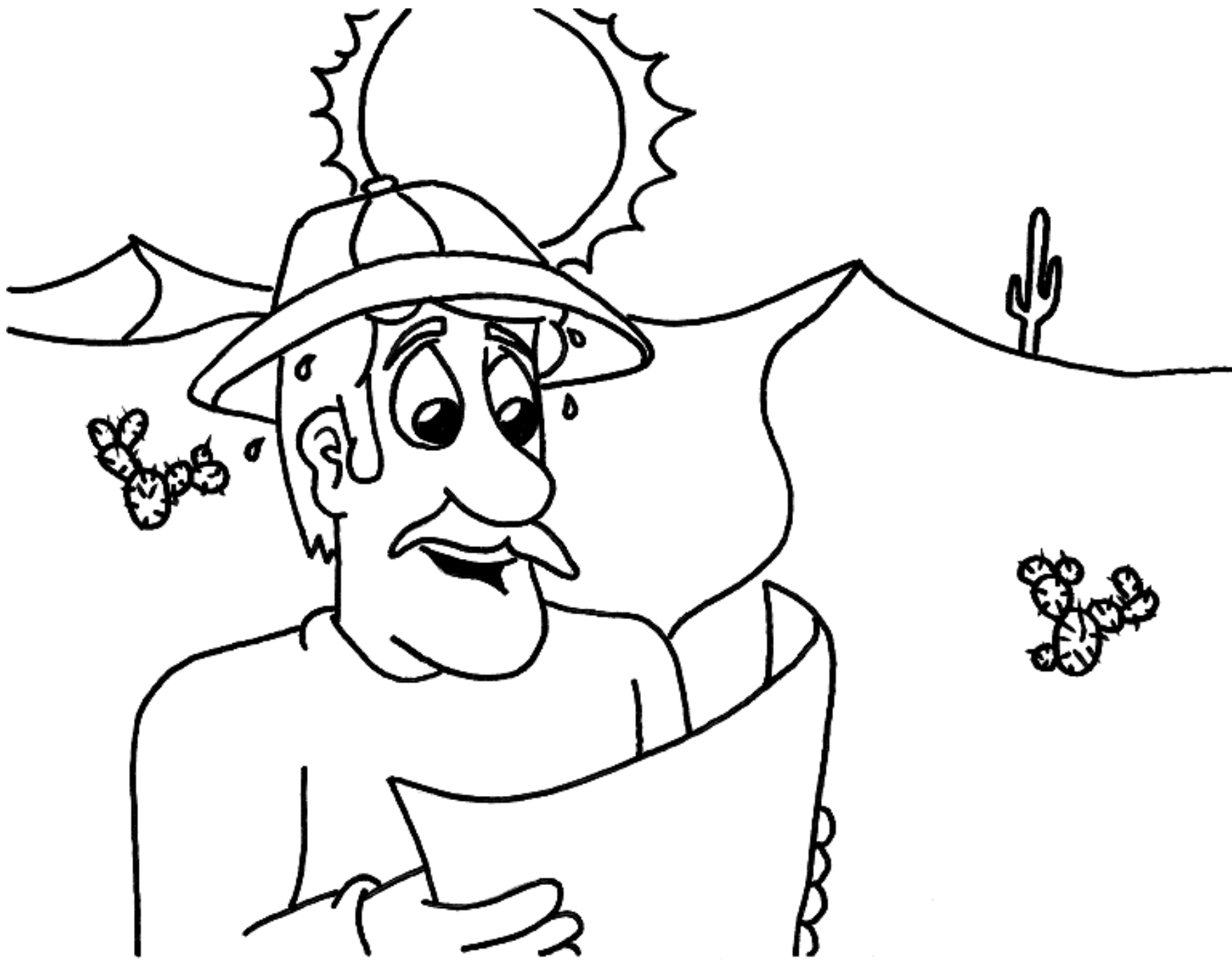
desert, I could lead Chief Sechele's people away from the Boers altogether. But I needed supplies and money to be able to do this. I tried to ask the London Missionary Society, but they could not give me any extra.

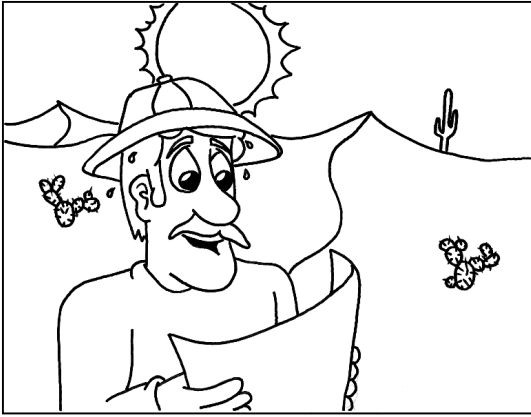
I knew that there must be some way, so I wrote letters to people in England telling them what I would like to do. One of the letters went to Captain Thomas Steele. Captain Steele had helped Roger and I travel up to Mabotsa to start our mission station there. Captain Steele could not help me, but he had sent my letter on to his friend Cotton Oswell. Cotton Oswell was a wealthy man who loved to hunt in Africa. Captain Steele thought he might be just the man to help.

One day, in December 1848, I came into the house and read Mary the letter that had just arrived. Cotton Oswald had written to tell me that he had arrived in Port Elizabeth and had bought wagons, oxen, and many supplies, and he wanted to travel with me. Mary said, "Thank the Lord! All of those supplies must have cost over 600 pounds."

God had answered my prayers. I tried to get Chief Sechele to come along, but he was very nervous that the Boers might try to attack, so he wanted to stay with his people. I did find thirty men from the tribe who would join me. I couldn't pay them, but I promised to make room in my wagon for any elephant tusks that they wanted to bring along. Elephant tusks were worth a lot of money along the coast.

Many people in Africa talked about the "great lake" in the desert. It was called Lake Ngami. I had learned how important it was to set up a mission station by a lot of





water and wondered if Lake Ngami would be such a place.

When Cotton arrived, we instantly became very good friends. Cotton didn't mind trying to look for Lake Ngami and was excited to set out. We traveled 120 miles northwest to the village of Serotl. This was the last place marked on any map. We moved further on and came across Chief Sekomi and the Bamangwato tribe. The chief loaned us two men to serve as guides and help us to find water.

Once we started, Cotton and I soon began to wonder if the Bamangwato guides were leading us away from the water rather than to it. You see, the desert doesn't have very many rivers or lakes in it. If you want water, you have to look for rainwater that collects in certain spots underground. The problem was knowing where to dig to find that water.

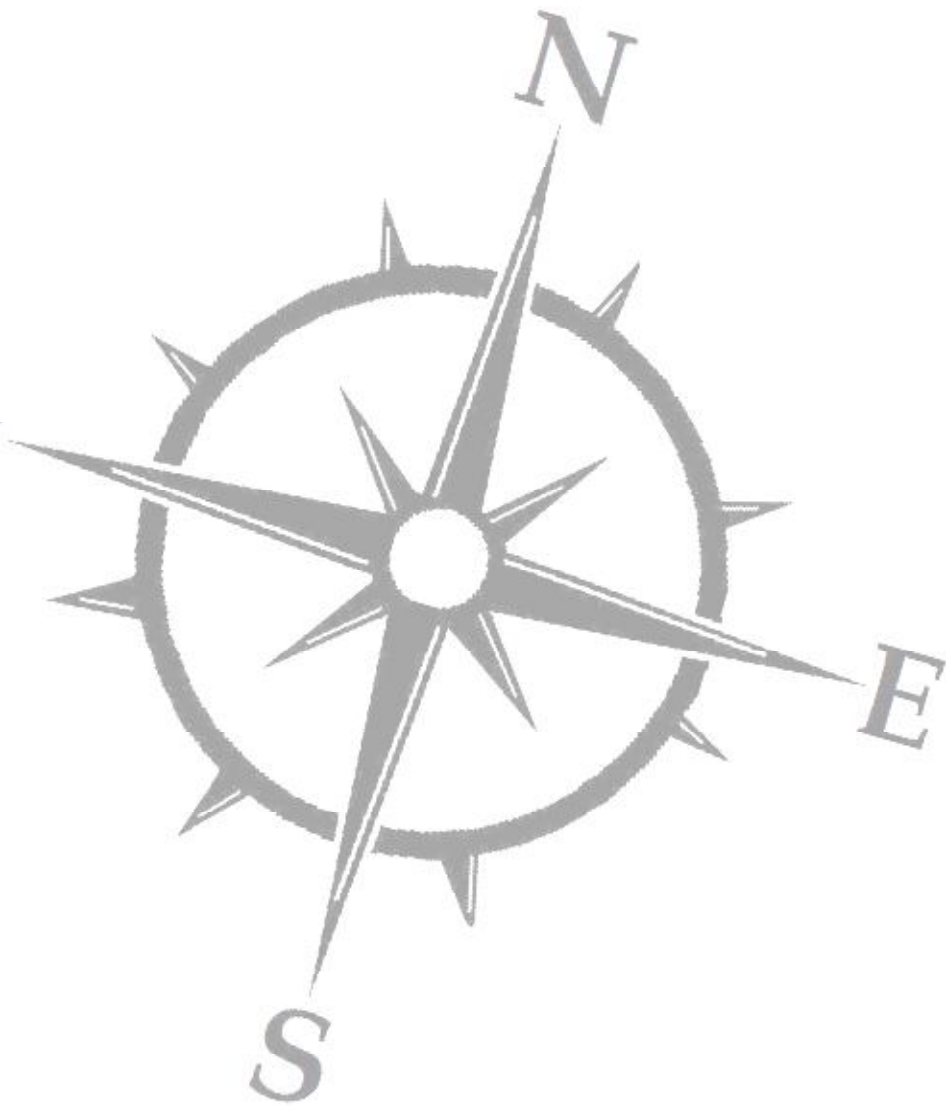
After traveling for almost a month, things became bad. For several days in a row, we dug hole after hole looking for water to drink. By this point, we had sent our guides away, and we were too far into the desert to

be able to turn around. We were so thirsty that we had to find water fast. As I was thinking one day, I spotted something moving in the bushes. Cotton chased after it on his horse and came back with a girl. We tried to talk with her, but no one could speak the girl's language. I then pulled out a string of brightly colored glass beads and gave them to the girl. Then we pretended to cup our hands and drink out of them. The girl seemed to know what we were talking about, and she pointed and began leading us away.

"Don't lose sight of her," I told Cotton. "I hope that she is not going to try to trick us like those Bamangwato guides did," Cotton said. I agreed and tried to keep a sharp eye out. Suddenly, the oxen and horses began to act very strangely. I couldn't figure out why until I looked ahead and saw what was in front of us.

**What do you think was in front of them?
To find out, come back next time.**

*(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to lesson 5.7 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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