

David Livingstone

Part 3

God's Explorer

In 1856, after spending sixteen years in the jungles of Africa, David Livingstone returned to England for a short visit. To his surprise, he was greeted as a national hero.

DR. LIVINGSTONE!
WELCOME HOME! HOW
DOES IT FEEL TO BE
THE MOST FAMOUS
MAN IN ENGLAND?

WELCOME HOME, LIVINGSTONE!

APOSTLE OF
AFRICA!

NO, PLEASE! A MAN MAY
BOAST WHEN HE IS PULLING
OFF HIS ARMOR, BUT I AM
JUST PUTTING MINE ON! ¹

¹ Explaining that he had only begun his battle to win Africa for Jesus, here David Livingstone refers to the king of Israel's comment in 1 Kings 20:11, "A warrior putting on his sword for battle should not boast like a warrior who has already won" (NLT).

I AM NOTHING BUT A
SERVANT OF GOD, WHO
HAS SIMPLY FOLLOWED
THE LEADINGS OF HIS
HAND.

Livingstone received many honors and awards from all over England.

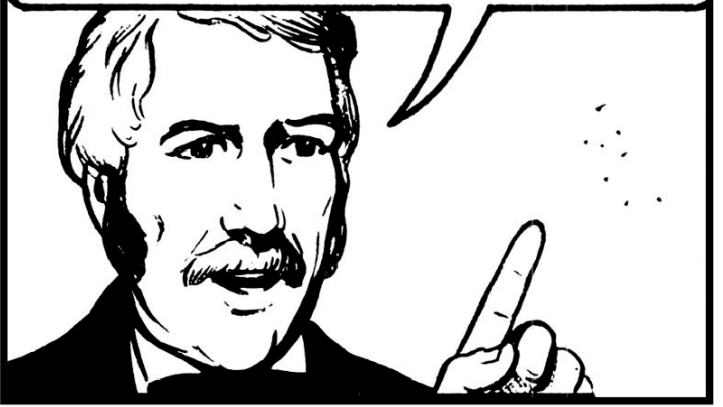
DR. LIVINGSTONE, THIS IS IN HONOR OF
YOUR GREAT WORK AS A MISSIONARY IN
AFRICA, AND IN RECOGNITION OF THE GREAT
SACRIFICE YOU HAVE MADE!

SACRIFICE? HA!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I NEVER MADE A SACRIFICE! NO MATTER HOW MUCH I GAVE UP, GOD ALWAYS GAVE ME BACK MUCH MORE.



CAN THAT BE CALLED A SACRIFICE WHICH IS SIMPLY A SMALL PART PAID BACK OF THE GREAT DEBT THAT WE OWE TO GOD, WHICH WE CAN NEVER REPAY?



SACRIFICE? IT IS NO SACRIFICE! RATHER IT IS A PRIVILEGE!



WORRY, SICKNESS, HARDSHIPS, OR DANGER MAY SOMETIMES CAUSE OUR SPIRITS TO WAVER AND SINK; BUT LET THIS BE ONLY FOR A MOMENT! BECAUSE ALL THESE ARE NOTHING WHEN COMPARED TO THE GLORY WHICH SHALL HEREAFTER BE REVEALED IN US, AND FOR US!²

(² ROMANS 8:18)



SACRIFICE? OF SUCH A WORD WE OUGHT NOT TO TALK WHEN WE REMEMBER THE GREAT SACRIFICE THAT JESUS MADE WHEN HE LEFT HIS FATHER'S THRONE ON HIGH, TO GIVE HIS LIFE FOR US!



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I NEVER MADE A SACRIFICE!



Livingstone's speeches and writings while in England inspired many other missionaries to go to mission fields.

In 1858, Livingstone returned to Africa, where he spent much of the next eleven years preaching the Gospel and exploring. By 1871, no one in England had heard any news from him for four years.

HE PROBABLY DIED OF MALARIA.

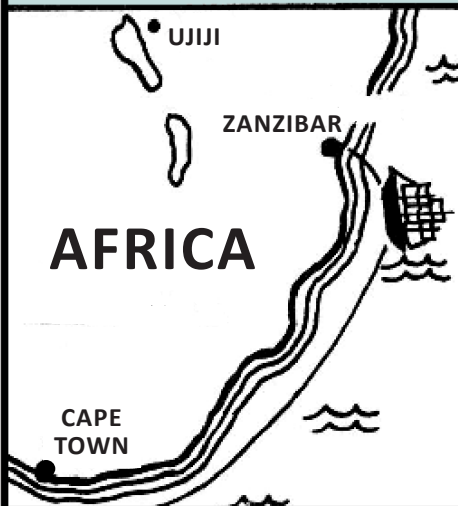


OR WAS KILLED BY WILD SAVAGES.



In order to find out what had happened to him, a Welsh reporter named Henry Morton Stanley was sent to Africa by an American newspaper.

Stanley started his search from Zanzibar on Africa's east coast.



MAY THE LORD GO WITH YOU, STANLEY.



WELL, THANK YOU. BUT I'M NOT A CHRISTIAN LIKE DR. LIVINGSTONE.

After many months, Stanley heard stories from local Africans of an old European man lying sick at Ujiji.



Stanley at last reached Livingstone.



He saw the white face of an old man among the natives. The man had on an old cap with a gold band around it, and a short jacket of red blanket cloth.

Stanley greeted Livingstone.



DR. LIVINGSTONE, I PRESUME?

YES.

A historically famous meeting on the African continent.

Stanley stayed four months.

MEET MY TWO MOST FAITHFUL SERVANTS, SUSI AND CHUMAH.



HOW DOES HE MANAGE TO LIVE HERE? IS HE CRAZY?

I have found myself wondering at this solitary old man who carries out everything that is said in the Bible, "Leave all things and follow Me." I marvel at his love, his gentleness, his enthusiasm, and good humor, the earnestness with which he goes about his business. I must admit that his love and compassion are becoming quite contagious.

Then one night.



SIR, WHEN I CAME TO AFRICA I WAS AN ATHEIST.

BUT SEEING THE WAY YOU LIVE HAS CHANGED ME.



GO BACK?

I WILL GO ANYWHERE— PROVIDED IT BE FORWARD!



The time came for Stanley to return to England.



FOR YOUR HEALTH'S SAKE, SIR, I BEG YOU TO COME BACK WITH ME!

A few years later Stanley returned to explore more of Africa.

Two days after Stanley left, Livingstone wrote:

March 19, my birthday! My Jesus, my King, my life, my all! I again dedicate my whole self to Thee! Accept me, and grant, O gracious Father, that before this year is gone that I may finish my work for Thee! In Jesus' name I ask it, amen.



It was just one year later that Livingstone went home to be with the Jesus.

During that last year Livingstone made one more journey, though he was a sick man and in constant pain, often not able to sit up. But he pushed on.

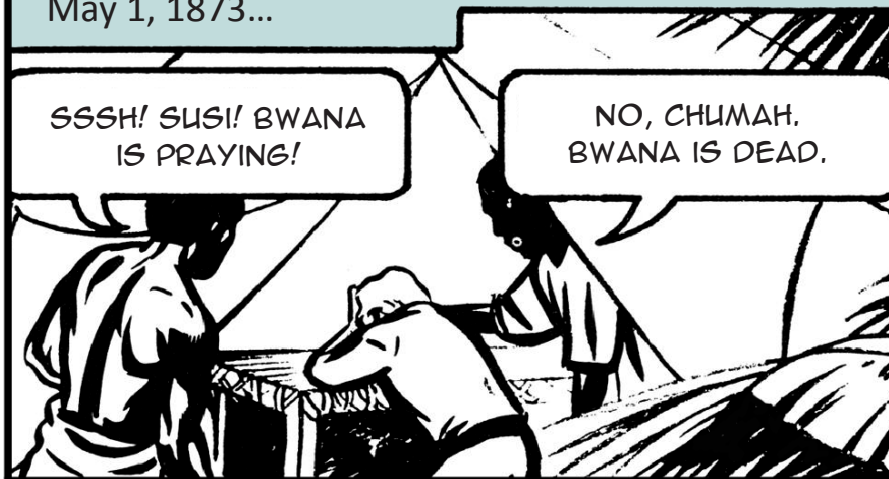
WE PRAISE THEE,
O GOD!



He finally reached Old Chitambo, where on May 1, 1873...

SSSH! SUSI! BWANA
IS PRAYING!

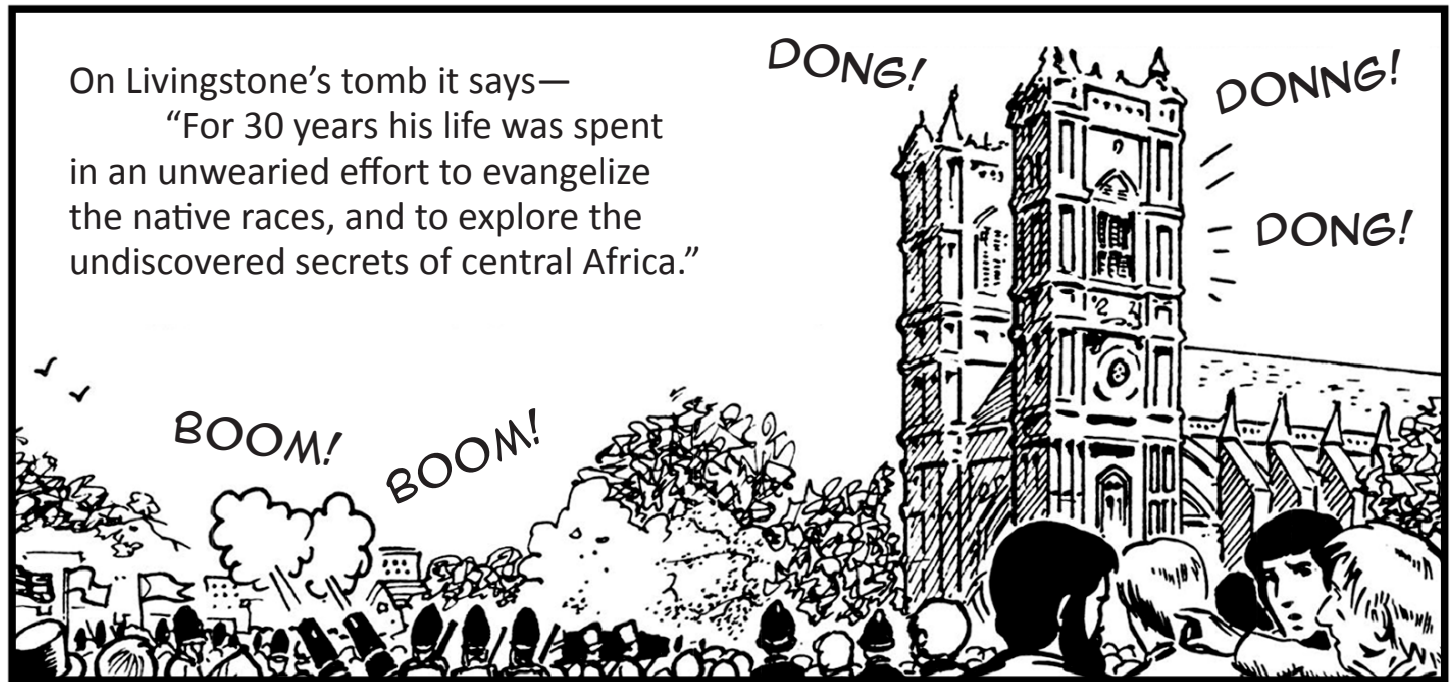
NO, CHUMAH.
BWANA IS DEAD.



God took Livingstone while he was kneeling in prayer.

With great risk to their lives because of local superstitions about death, his two faithful servants, Susi and Chumah, embalmed his body and carried it, along with his diaries and medical supplies, 1,500 miles to the sea. From there his body was taken to England by ship.

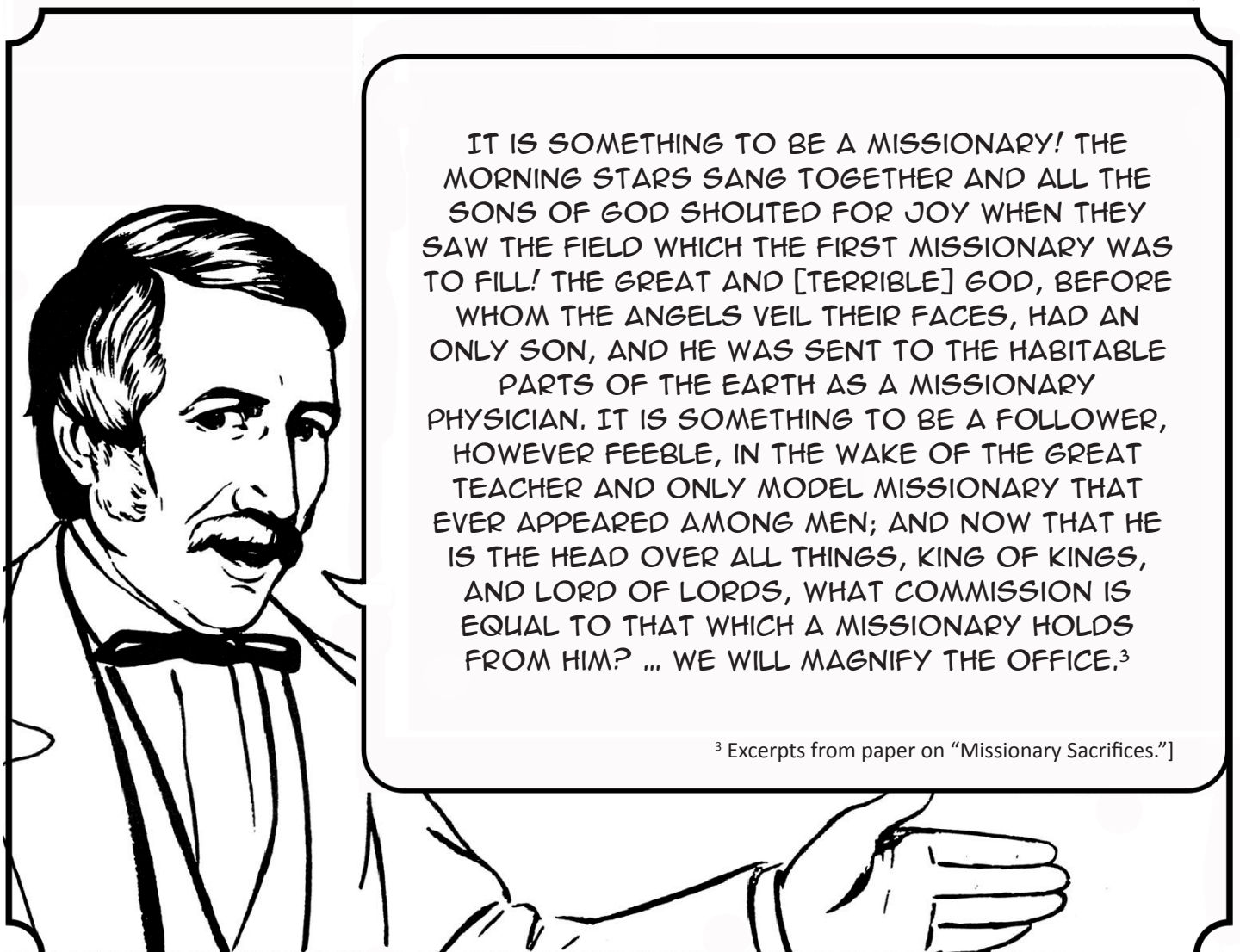
And so, David Livingstone, one of the greatest men of the 19th century, was buried in the famous London church, Westminster Abbey. His funeral was one of the greatest that London had ever seen.



On Livingstone's tomb it says—

"For 30 years his life was spent in an unwearied effort to evangelize the native races, and to explore the undiscovered secrets of central Africa."

Most important of all are the thousands of people he taught about Jesus, and the many people he inspired in future generations to spend their lives as missionaries on the field.



IT IS SOMETHING TO BE A MISSIONARY! THE MORNING STARS SANG TOGETHER AND ALL THE SONS OF GOD SHOUTED FOR JOY WHEN THEY SAW THE FIELD WHICH THE FIRST MISSIONARY WAS TO FILL! THE GREAT AND [TERRIBLE] GOD, BEFORE WHOM THE ANGELS VEIL THEIR FACES, HAD AN ONLY SON, AND HE WAS SENT TO THE HABITABLE PARTS OF THE EARTH AS A MISSIONARY PHYSICIAN. IT IS SOMETHING TO BE A FOLLOWER, HOWEVER FEEBLE, IN THE WAKE OF THE GREAT TEACHER AND ONLY MODEL MISSIONARY THAT EVER APPEARED AMONG MEN; AND NOW THAT HE IS THE HEAD OVER ALL THINGS, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS, WHAT COMMISSION IS EQUAL TO THAT WHICH A MISSIONARY HOLDS FROM HIM? ... WE WILL MAGNIFY THE OFFICE.³

³ Excerpts from paper on "Missionary Sacrifices."]

Before David Livingstone, the whole of Central Africa north of Kuruman was unexplored. During his 30 years in Africa, Livingstone traveled 29,000 miles (46,671 kilometers), and mapped 1,000,000 miles (1,609,344 kilometers) of the African continent. He discovered six lakes and many great rivers, including one of the largest waterfalls in the world, Victoria Falls. He was also the first European to cross Africa from coast to coast.



S&S link: Christian Life and Faith: Witnessing and Missionary Training: Great Men and Women of God-1b

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