

DAVID LIVINGSTONE

(1813 – 1873)



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MOTIVATION

1. GENERAL

“God has taken away the greatest man of his generation, for Dr Livingstone stood alone” So wrote Florence Nightingale to his sorrowing daughter, and no careful reader of his life can fail to recognize in him one of the grandest heroes not merely of this but of any age.

ESTIMATE OF HIS LIFE

As a **missionary explorer** he stood alone, traveling 29,000 miles in Africa, adding to the known portion of the globe about a million square miles, discovering lakes N'gama, Shirwa, Nyasa, Moero and Bangweolo, the upper Zambezi and many other rivers, and the wonderful Victoria Falls. He was also the first European to traverse the entire length of Lake Tanganyika, and to travel over the vast water-shed near Lake Bankweolo, and, through no fault of his own, he only just missed the information that would have set at rest his conjectures as to the Nile sources. He greatly increased the knowledge of the geography, fauna and flora of the interior, yet never lost sight of the great objects of his life the putting down of the slave-trade, and the evangelization of Africa

His attainments as a **physician** were of no mean order. The London Lancet, expressing the hearty appreciation of the medical profession, says:

“Few men have disappeared from our ranks more universally deplored, as few have served in them with a higher purpose, or shed upon them the luster of a purer devotion”.

During the thirty-three years of Dr Livingstone's service for Africa, his labours as a **philanthropist** and a missionary were unceasing. Largely as a result of these labours, that infamous slave-trade, against which he struck the first blow, has now been obliterated along thousands of miles of African coast where once it held full sway, and all Christian nations have banded together to forbid and punish this traffic throughout a vast area in the interior, planting stations for 1,500 miles inland for the enforcement of the law.

As a **missionary** his immediate success may not have appeared great; he was but a forerunner “preparing the way of the Lord”. His was the work of the pioneer, blazing the way, making the rough places smooth for others to follow, opening the country for Christianity to enter in. But scarcely had the civilized world learned of his death, before, inspired by his example, there began a mighty movement on behalf of Africa. The first fruits of that last dying prayer for the country to which he had given his life were seen in the establishment near Lake Nyasa of a mission founded by the churches of Scotland, henceforth to be known by the name of Livingstonia.

So, in submitting this proposal, it is for the following reasons:

2. I want to show you from his life how David Livingstone was the **greatest missionary** of all time, especially in Africa. Never in the annals of missionary legend has a man been more lionized than David Livingstone. He was the hero that Victorian England so desperately needed, and the recognition he was accorded fuelled African missions for most of a century. He became a hero for all generations to follow, and “after his death and his burial in Westminster Abbey, David Livingstone’s reputation was secure from assault by anyone but the most reckless heretic. Even in the middle of the twentieth century, historians would still acknowledge him as the greatest missionary of them all. For almost a hundred years he would take his place in the pantheon of English –speaking Christians as a figure of inspiring sanctity and devotion, to be considered in the same breath as St Francis of Assisi and St Joan of Arc

Kenneth Latourette wrote:

“His purpose was to open the way for the Gospel, for the righting of wrongs, and the healing of social sores. He dreamed of the benefits which Western civilization could bring to Africa. He loved the Africans, dealt with them tactfully and selflessly, and won their confidence. Fearless and with an indomitable will, he drove his body, often racked and spent with fever and dysentery, to incredible exploits. A keen observer, he made voluminous records of what he saw. His Christian faith sustained him, kept him humble, and in the end mellowed the native asperity of his character. In his later years he severed his connection with the London Missionary Society, not because he had changed his purpose, but because he believed that he could best fulfill it as an agent of the British Government”.

Stephen Neil comments:

“The fame of Moffat has been a little over-shadowed by the superlative greatness of friend and son-in-law David Livingstone (1813-73). Livingstone came from a hardy clan of Scotsmen, Reared in poverty and godliness. He arrived in Africa in 1841, and for ten years served in the ordinary routine of missionary work. But he like John Williams, was not a man to be held to one single reef; the mind and impulse of the explorer were in him, and he was always drawn on, in his own words, by ‘the smoke of a thousand villages’ that had never seen a missionary”.

3. To show the **characteristics** which go into the making of a great missionary, especially in Africa. He came from England’s poor, but he was buried among England’s kings. His cradle sat in a Scottish weaver’s hut, but his grave lies in Westminster Abbey. In between that humble cradle and that glorious burial are all the elements of drama – the challenge of the Dark

Continent, the forward-faced explorer driving ever onward. Here is the will of one frail man cutting a swath through the unknown wilderness, the uncharted jungle, the untouched desert.

The dynamic of his Christian personality made a way through cannibal tribes, and his dauntless courage made crocodile-infested rivers disappear. He vowed vengeance upon the slave trade and fought until the world was ready to say, "Slavery shall be no more". When he went to the Unknown Continent its heart was a blank, but his labours wiped the word 'unknown' from Africa's map. He opened Africa to the gospel, and gave to the world a new Africa.

Jonathan Hilderbrandt wrote:

"By 1840 the gospel had reached many parts of South Africa. Through the efforts of Robert Moffat and others it has pushed north into Bechuanaland (Botswana). But still by 1840 there were vast areas of the interior of Africa that were unreached by the Good News. In order to open up the interior a man was needed who would be fearless and hardworking: this man also had to have a great desire to see unknown areas mapped out so that other missionaries could follow with the Gospel. The man who did that very thing was David Livingstone".

4. I will demonstrate the price **paid by his family** enabling him to achieve the impossible. Writing after his wife's death, Livingstone reveals something of their wonderful relationship which sustained them both during his years in Africa:

"It is the first heavy stroke I have suffered, and quite takes away my strength. I wept over her who well deserved many tears. I loved her when I married her, and the longer I lived with her I loved her the more. God pity the poor children, who were all tenderly attached to her and I am left alone in the world by one whom I felt to be a part of myself. I hope it may by divine grace, lead me to realize heaven as my home and that she has but preceded me in the journey. Oh my Mary, my Mary! How often we have longed for a quiet home, since you and I were cast adrift at Kolobeng; surely the removal by a kind Father who knoweth our frame means that He rewarded you by taking you to the best home, the eternal one in the heavens. The prayer was found in her papers – 'Accept me, Lord, as I am, and make me such as Thou wouldst have me to be'. He who taught her to value this prayer would not leave his own work unfinished. One a letter she had written 'Let others plead for pensions, I wrote to a friend I can be rich without money; I would give my services in the world from uninterested motives; I have motives for my own conduct I would not exchange for a hundred pensions'.

"She rests by the large baobab-tree at Shupunga, which is sixty feet in circumference, and is mentioned in the work of Commodore Owen. The men asked to be allowed to mount guard till we had got the grave built up, and we had it built with bricks dug from an old house.

“From her boxes we find evidence that she intended to make us all comfortable at Nyasa, though she seemed to have a presentiment of an early death – she purposed to do more for me than ever.

11th May, Kongone – My dear, dear Mary has been this evening a fortnight in heaven – absent from the body...”

5. To look at the enormous needs of **Africa** today and show how not only was Livingstone the man of Africa, but the need is now great for more men after the caliber of David Livingstone. What are some of Africa’s greatest needs today? Patrick Johnstone writes:

There are many big challenges for African Christians to confront in the ‘90’s. The Colonial past is fading, the wrong of apartheid is being removed and these can no longer be used by African leaders to turn attention away from present realities. Specific challenges about which to intercede:

1. Rapid growth with inadequate discipling. So great has been the harvest that non-Christian customs, worldviews and attitudes have invaded the church. Syncretism is a major problem in many areas. Thoroughgoing repentance and renunciation of sin and the works of darkness is often lacking and many Christians are not free from the fear of witchcraft and evil spirits. The new generation or third wave of African Christianity takes a clear stand against these, but many churches are seriously compromised.

HIS EARLY LIFE

David Livingstone was a great missionary pioneer path-finder whose greatest desire was granted only after his death. The cessation of the slave trade and the opening up of Africa to Christianity and lawful commerce. He had the grace to see that his mission was part of a divine plan to set many souls free from slavery, both physical and spiritual. Livingston’s great goal of bringing to the world’s attention the plight of the African slave trade was achieved largely through the work of his convert, Henry Morton Stanley.

Born in Scotland on 19 March 1813, David Livingstone was the fourth son, (two other baby boys died in their infancy) Another brother and two sisters followed shortly after him. David was brought up in a pious but poverty stricken home where privacy was non-existent. Young David had a mind of his own and strength of character to match. He was an avid reader and borrowed extensively from the local library. By age 9 he had already committed to memory the 119 Psalm and won a copy of the New Testament as a reward. By age 10 David was employed 14 hours a day, 6 days a week at the local cotton spinning factory. David managed to read in the factory by placing his book on a portion of the spinning jinny so that he could catch sentence after sentence as he passed at his work. Thus he maintained fairly constant study, undisturbed by the roar of the

machinery. As a fervent reader, he earned the reputation of being unsociable and remote. His **conversion** at age 20 inspired him to resolve to devote his life to the alleviation of human misery (Somerville 14)

From this time forth 3 themes would dominate his life; **evangelization, exploration and emancipation**. He wrote at that time; **“That the salvation of men ought to be the chief desire and aim of every Christian.”** He therefore made a resolution; **“that he would give to the cause of missions all that he might earn beyond what was required for his subsistence.”**

He was much influenced by William Wilberforce’s book **“Practical Christianity”**. He also saw the ravaging effects of alcoholism, and as a result abstained totally for life. (Somerville 13)

After 10 years of daily drudgery at the cotton mill, David set out to study theology and medicine. Medical science in the 1830’s was, by today’s standards primitive. Surgical operations were performed at hazardous speed because of the lack of anaesthetics. Chloroform and ether were not introduced until several years later and the discovery of antiseptics lay 25 years ahead. The study of chemistry was growing, but physics had hardly started, and biochemistry and bacteriology was unknown. Nothing at all was known about the tropical diseases he was to encounter such as malaria and black water fever.

During his missionary training, Livingstone was reported to be “worthy but remote from brilliant” and “steady but not rapid” in his progress. He is reported to have had a lack of confidence in public praying and preaching. During one Sunday morning service his mind failed him in the midst of the meeting and he abruptly hurried out of the pulpit.

Livingstone wrote to his sisters during his training, **that we need to be “Uncommon Christians, i.e. imminently holy and devoted servants of the Most High, “Let us seek that all selfishness be extirpated, pride banished, unbelief driven from the mind, every idol dethroned, and everything hostile to holiness and opposed to the Divine will crucified. That holiness to the Lord may be engraved on the heart and evermore characterize our whole conduct”**

It was reported that it was not in his character to relax. Livingstone was an idealist. He took his task and calling most seriously and whatever he did he performed thoroughly. His character was uncompromising. He was described as diligent and inflexible in his adherence to His word.

Friends described him as **“ a man of resolute courage”, “fire, water, stonewall would not stop Livingstone in the fulfillment of any recognized duty”**.

FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

When he landed in Simons Bay on 17 March 1841 David Livingstone was coming to a continent that was plagued with problems. Africa was still a place of mystery to the Europeans. The Arabs, south of the Sahara never ventured inland far from the coast. The rivers were riddled with rapids and sand bars. The deadly disease, malaria, was widespread and inhibited travel. Entire expeditions of 300 to 400 men had been decimated by malaria. The African terrain was difficult to negotiate. Floods, tropical forests and swamps thwarted wheeled transport.

Journeys to Cape town for supplies took six months from Kuruman. Robert Moffat, the missionary pioneer under whom Livingstone apprenticed had persisted for 8 years before winning a soul for Christ. The harsh interior and high temperatures plagued both men and cattle

Livingstone's dogmatic opinions and blunt puritan manner made him somewhat unpopular with fellow missionaries, particularly as he was rather tactless. It upset Livingstone to see so many missionaries living in safe and comfortable localities in the south, treading on one another's heels and sometimes corns – while innumerable villages in the north remained unevangelised. He also strongly believed that more use should be made of the African Christians – to train them as evangelists (Somerville 85)

Chief Sekomi once requested from Dr Livingstone; "I wish you would change my heart. Give me medicine to change it, for it is proud, proud and angry, angry, angry."

On one of his evangelistic journeys some of Livingstone's African companions – not knowing that he understood the language – commented **"he is not strong, he is quite slim, he will soon knock up"** As Livingstone put it **"this caused my Highland blood to rise and made me despise the fatigue of keeping them at the top of their speed for days together, until I heard them expressing proper opinions of my pedestrian powers!"**

Livingstone soon acquired a reputation of fearless faith – particularly when he walked to the Barka tribe – infamous for murder of 4 White traders whom they had mercilessly poisoned and strangled. As the first messenger of mercy in many regions, Livingstone soon received further challenge. Chief Sechele pointed to the great Kalahari desert "you never can cross that country to the tribes beyond; it is utterly impossible for us Black Men" The challenge of crossing this obstacle began to fascinate Livingstone. Livingstone wrote: **"I shall try to hold myself in readiness to go anywhere, provided it be forward"** He is reported to have had a steadfast manner and folk knew where they stood with him. He was intent on making friends of those amongst whom he ministered the Gospel. He treated Africans with patience and tact, seeming to have an instinctive understanding of them. Practically all Africans responded to his calm courage and persevering heart. However, with

Europeans he was often tactless and, on occasions, even overbearing. In his writings he declared

“I am conscience that, though there is much impurity in my motives, they are all in the main for the glory of Him to whom I have dedicated my all.”

Livingston's plans to establish a Bible College for Africans was frustrated. However, the Sovereignty of God was seen in this. Had Livingstone's wishes been carried out, he might have spent his life's work training in a Bible college rather than traversing Africa and dealing a death blow to the slave trade.

The three great daily challenges – heat, harsh conditions and hardness of hearts. One convert Chief Sechele, challenged Livingstone. “Do you imagine these people will ever believe by your merely talking to them? I can make them do nothing except by thrashing them, and if you like, I shall call on my headman to use our whips of rhinoceros hide, we will soon make them all believe together!”

Livingstone had to often confront the problem of polygamy and witchcraft, Interpersonal complications with fellow missionaries led him to even further inland. In the first 5 years of his marriage to Mary Moffat, David built 3 homes. each further away from civilization.

Livingstone's favourite topics in preaching were; the love of Christ, the Fatherhood of Christ, the resurrection and last judgement. Dr Robert Moffat described Livingstone's preaching as highly effective. It was simple, Scriptural, conversational and held the attention of the people.

“I hope to be permitted to work as long as I live beyond other men's line of things and plant the seed of the Gospel where others have not planted. But every excursion for that purpose will involve separation from my family for periods of 4 or 5 months.”

“ I am a missionary, heart and soul. God had an only Son, and He was a missionary and physician. A poor, poor imitation of Him I am, or wish to be. In His Service I hope to live, in it I wish to die.”

During his first missionary journey with his wife and 3 children their 4th child Elizabeth was born. Within a few weeks she died and the rest of the family were sick. He received much criticism for the “Irresponsibility” of taking a wife and 4 children on a missionary journey in the wilderness.

“I shall open up a path into the interior or perish.” “May He bless us and make us blessings even into death” **“Shame upon us missionaries if we are to be outdone by slave traders!” “If Christian missionaries and Christian merchants could remain throughout the year in the interior of the continent, in 10 years, slave dealers will be driven out of the market”**

At age 40 Livingstone puts his wife and children on a ship in Cape Town bound for England, and he headed back for his first great missionary journey alone in the interior of Africa. **“Let us do our duty to Christ, and He will bring us through the world with honour and usefulness.”**

At the end of this most remarkable missionary journey, He would be able to say **“I have drunk water swarming with insects, thick with mud, putrid with rhinoceros urine and buffalo dung.”** His indomitable personality and fearless faith, strong personality and God given goals enabled him to battle against loneliness and depression and resolve to persevere. Words such as “try again” and “all will come well in the end” were hallmarks of his character. The destruction of his farmhouse by fire only encouraged him to head out to the interior without anything holding him back. In his journal he wrote **“Purify my motives sanctify all my desires. Guide my feet and direct my steps so that the great and glorious Jesus may be glorified.”**

“Discoveries and inventions are culminative ... filling the earth with the glory of the Lord, all nations will sing His glory and bow before Him ... our work and its fruit are culminative. We work towards a new state of things. Future missionaries will be rewarded by conversions for every sermon. We are their pioneers and helper. Let then not forget the watchman of the night, who worked when all was gloom and no evidence of success in the way of conversions cheers our path. They will doubtless have more light than we but we serve our Master earnestly and proclaim the same Gospel as they will do.”

“A quiet audience today. The seed is being sown, the least of all seeds now, but it will grow into a mighty tree. It is as if it were a small stone cut out of a mountain, but it will fill the whole earth.”

Missionaries ought to cultivate a taste for the beautiful. We are necessary compelled to contemplate much moral impurity and degradation. We are so often doomed to disappointment, we are apt to either become callous or melancholic, or if preserved from these, the constant strain of the sensibilities is likely to injure the bodily health. It is necessary to cultivate the calm beauties of nature.

There is a Governor among the nations who will bring all His plans in respect to the human family, to a glorious consummation.”

“We are like voices crying in the wilderness. We prepare the way for a glorious future in which missionaries telling of the same tale of love will convert with every sermon.”

“We work for a glorious future which we are not destined to see, the golden age which has not yet been but will be. We are only morning stars shining in the dark but the glorious morn will break – the good time coming yet.”

“The dominion has been given by the power of commerce and population unto the people of the saints of the most High This is an everlasting kingdom, a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands which will cover the whole earth for this time we work”

Battling rains, chronic discomfort, rust, mildew and rot totally drenched and fatigued, laid low by fever, Livingstone continued to persevere across the continent. Hostile tribes demanded exorbitant payment for crossing their territory. Some tense moments were stared down by Livingstone, Gun in hand. Trials tested the tenacity of the travel wearied team.

“Can the love of Christ not carry the missionary where the slave trade carries the trader?”

After 2 years pioneering across the hinterland of Africa, Livingstone reached Luanda. The “Forerunner” ship was ready to take him to England. However, Livingstone chose to return overland to bring his guides and porters back to their village. Rather than risk their being sold into slavery in Portuguese West Africa, he preferred to take another 2 years crossing the continent that had almost killed him, on his first journey. However, had Livingstone chosen to return he might well have ended his ministry. The ship sank with all hands lost!.

“In traveling the heart becomes the numbed. I feared much I was becoming a heathen myself but a little rest has, thank God, quickened my spiritual feelings.”

“These privations, I beg you to observe, are not sacrifices. I think the word ought never to be mentioned in reference to anything we can do for Him who though He was rich , yet for our sakes became poor”

Often Livingstone endured excessive and unnecessary suffering and deprivation because lack of funds prevented him from affording the “luxury” of a canoe!

“We have still a debt of gratitude to Jesus on our own account besides, and there is no greater privilege on earth, than after having our own chains broken off, to go forth to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”

After his discoveries and writings of the first missionary journey across Africa, Livingstone wrote and spoke often on the needs for Christianity and commerce to bring civilization to Africa and to curtail the slave trade.

“Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay, it is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather, it is a privilege!”

“I beg to direct your attention to Africa: I know that in a few years I shall be cut off from that country, which is now open; do not let it be shut again! I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and

Christianity; do you carry out the work which I have begun? I leave it with you!"

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY – ZAMBEZI EXPEDITION

Livingstone's second great missionary expedition – the Zambezi and Shire expedition was the best funded, the largest and most traumatic. Now Livingstone was appointed as a consul of Her Majesty, he was to have six Europeans assistants, many naval men, the support of the British Navy, vast amounts of equipment, a paddle steamer and almost unlimited funding.

Unfortunately, Livingstone had had little, if any, training or experience in leading men. He was a solitary man, aloof, with an iron will and incredible powers of endurance. He lacked the leader's ability to identify with his men and relate to their responsibilities. He demanded of every man the same stamina and tenacity as he enforced upon himself. Livingstone had incredible patience with the natives, but little time for Europeans of unequal disposition. His many years alone had made him self-sufficient and is inclined to talk. His restless energy made him a trying companion.

He communicated very little and remained undeviating in all of his plans. Each man was provided with a full, written portfolio outlining their individual duties and prayers were required every morning with the team.

The Malaria infested Delta, the shallow river and shifting sand bars marred the progress of the expedition up the Zambezi. The country – Mozambique – was in a state of war at the time of the expedition. Navigating through the tense battle zone Livingstone also had to deal with repeated character clashes within his party. The paddle steamer consumed vast quantities of wood – requiring one and a half days wood chopping to keep the vessel going for just one day. The boilers and cylinders were always giving trouble and the pipes were often blocked. The cramped, heated conditions frayed nerves and when it rained the roof leaked and everything was saturated. The hull was also made out of thin steel which had not been properly tested and soon started to rust in a honeycomb of holes. The "old asthmatic" had to be continually plugged up and at night it would be beached upon a sand bar to prevent its sinking.

Livingstone took a rather unsympathetic view of sickness and urged his party to keep active even when they were fever ridden from malaria. The heat claustrophobic conditions and fever aggravated the working conditions and friction soon developed. Especially with David's brother Charles.

Rapids and waterfalls made the Zambezi completely impassable. This was a severe blow to the expedition as it proved the river unsuitable as a highway for commerce and Christianity. The realization that the Zambezi would not prove to be the highway he had hoped for, greatly depressed Livingstone. However, this forced him to turn north and to thereby discover and expose to the world the main trade routes for the slave trade.

“I love peace as much as any mortal man. In fact, I go beyond you for I love I so much I would fight for it. When I see a matter to be done, I go on regardless of my feelings.” “It is not enough to be a servant, you must be a friend of Jesus. Love Him and surrender your entire being to Him. The more you trust Him, casting all your care upon Him, the more He is pleased” While Livingstone poured out his devotion to the Lord into his journal and into his correspondence to his family at home, he kept his thoughts private, alienating himself from his followers even further. Fever plagued the crew.

While the repairs had to again be made to the launch, Livingstone purposed to walk back to the Makololo across present day Zimbabwe, to visit his old mission station. As he approached the Makololo, rumours reached him that nearly all the missionaries had died from malaria. Three missionary couples had responded to Livingstone’s challenge to establish a permanent mission base amongst the Mokololo. Going against the caution of Robert Moffat, the missionaries headed into the disease ridden district of Linyanti, and soon the virulent, malicious malaria had claimed 6 lives out of a party of 9. Tragically, a few metres from their graves stood Livingstone’s wagon, the canopy torn by weathering and time, however, it contained a medicine chest full of quinine and other drugs to combat malaria. By failing to search out the wagon the party lost 6 of their numbers! By the time Livingstone arrived the 3 survivors had returned to Kuruman.

During this expedition, Livingstone often saw the sickening sight of slavery. Livingstone’s mere presence often sent the Yao slave raiders scurrying into the bushes. Many hundreds of slaves were set free by Livingstone and his co-workers during this time. On one occasion a war party of Yao warriors attacked the missionary party. While attempting to avoid confrontation, the team found themselves cut off and surrounded by the aggressive and blood thirsty mob. Finally, Livingstone was forced to give the command to return fire. The slave traders fled. This incident led to much criticism in England. Charles on hearing one outburst from Britain replied : *if you were in Africa and saw a host of murderous savages aiming their heavily laden muskets and poisoned arrows at you, more light might enter your mild .. and if it didn’t, great daylight would enter your body through arrows and bullet holes.”*

At Nkhotakota, the missionaries burnt over a thousand gorees (a slave stick with a v-neck) used in the “devilish trade in human flesh.” “This abode of lawlessness and bloodshed reeked of slaughter and the lakeshore was literally stewed with human bones and putrid bodies” In many districts near Lake Nyassa , the dead outnumbered the living. During this trip a further disaster occurred when one of the teams camped at a mosquito infested area, and tormented, set off again in the darkness of night by canoe to seek a more suitable camping site. In the darkness they entered a side current and the canoe overturned. They lost everything – from food to vital medical box. The loss of this medicine condemned the entire team to death. The soaked men huddled on the banks of the Shire river were all soon wasting away from malaria. The expedition was being attacked from all sides – from storms at sea, to sand bars and sickness. Out of a complement of 60 sailors, 50 fell sick with fever on the Zambezi. Dysentery, broke out on top of the fever. The engines of the ship were severely

damaged through poor maintenance by a lazy engineer. On top of this Livingstone's wife Mary, who was able to join the expedition, soon succumbed to malaria and died

Livingston's previous inflexible determination hardened into an obsession in the desire to push himself to the limits of human endurance. His indomitable spirit rose as he set his heart to accomplish goals which seemed impossible. The hostility of the Portuguese was increasing . Famine ravaged the countryside. The boats were restricted to the first part of the Zambezi and sickness savaged the men. As before when tragedies threatened to crush Livingstone, **he fought back by forcing himself to go through physically grueling exploration.** Further battles with slave traders ensued.

As Livingstone fought to physically drag the new "Lady Nyassa" steamer up the Shire river over the rapids onto Lake Nyassa, exhaustion and sickness reduced the expeditionary survivors to an all time low. As more of this men resigned, Livingstone persevered until the British Government recalled the expedition. The 5 years of hard slog, sickness and the sights of slavery had worn everyone down. **His Zambezi expedition was regarded as a failure.**

However, Livingstone had explored the Zambezi river, the Shire river and the Ruvuma river and had ruled each one of them out as navigatable. More importantly, the trip has cemented Livingstone's desire to see the slave trade cease. Firstly, there was the internal slave trade between hostile tribes. Secondly, there were slave traders from the coast, Arabs or Portuguese, for whom natives were encouraged to collect slaves by marauding and murder. Thirdly, there were the parties sent out from Portuguese and Arab coastal towns with cloths, beads, muskets and ammunition to exchange for slaves.

Livingstone's return from his second expedition in July 1864 must have been a severe disappointment. Not one member of his family came to meet him, and there was none of the fanfare and welcome of his previous return. Livingstone had lost favour with the press, the clergy and the government. He had created an international incident by exposing the slave trade of the Portuguese. This trip had failed to produce the trade and river routes which had been hoped for. Shortly after his return, the tragic news arrived that his 19 year old son, Robert, had died from wounds received in the battle in the American civil war.

In his writing and public speaking engagements, Livingstone spoke on his twin concerns- to enlighten people on the evils of the slave trade, and to spread the Christian Gospel amongst the heathen. Although he was renowned for his exploration, it was in his mind only a means to evangelism.

THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Livingstone's last great expedition would be doomed from the start because of the shabby treatment and miserly lack of support received from the British government and people. Nonetheless, he was as ever the optimist. Poor funds

severely hampered his work. The porters and crew recruited for his expedition proved, to be a total disaster. Most proved to be lazy and incompetent, many were deceitful and thieving. The abominable treatment of the animals by the porters resulted in the death of most of them. The indolent porters abandoned or sold almost all of his provisions. Two of his bearers absconded with the medicine chest and other supplies. Fever and dysentery and hunger sapped Livingstone's strength. His supplies failed to be sent to Ujiji and his mail was delayed over a year. Livingstone was incapacitated by the gravest illnesses that had yet afflicted him. Leaches, maggots, putsi flies, fever, Pneumonia and sunburn plagued him. Almost his entire supply of food, medicines and other stores were stolen. Huge sores and tropical ulcers developed from cuts on his feet. Cholera afflicted him, torrential rain drenched them daily. Amidst these unrelenting trials, **Livingstone seemed to become more heavenly minded.**

He particularly spent much time in the Psalms

"By different agencies the Great Ruler is bringing all things into a focus.

Jesus is gathering all things to Himself and He is daily becoming more and more the centre of the world's hope and of the world's fears." As

Livingstone persevered in attempting to find the source of the Nile, on the 15th July 1871 he witnessed the massacre in Manyuena. Arab slave traders slaughtered many hundreds of people in the market place. Livingstone raised the British flag and gave protection to all who rallied under it. But the massacre continued as Muslims went on the rampage burning down countless houses from village to village. Over 27 villages were destroyed. On one particular day after this Livingstone survived 3 attempts on his life in just one day!

At this his darkest hour, God provided for the destitute and frail Livingstone in a remarkable way. Out of the jungle came Henry Morton Stanley and his large expedition. This unusual soldier turned journalist turned explorer, Stanley, was to become Livingstone's most notable convert and his prime vehicle for exposing the slave trade in Africa and mobilizing the people of Britain to combat it effectively. Although, quite different in character, the two men had a lot in common. Both had had a hard upbringing, were stubborn, fearless, intolerant of other men's weaknesses and were drawn to a goal tenaciously. Stanley had brought desperately needed provisions, mail, medicine and encouragement. As Livingstone was nursed back to health, they set off together to explore Lake Tanganyika.

"My Jesus. My king, my life, my all, I again dedicate my whole self to Thee.

Accept me, and grant, O gracious Father that ere this year has gone I may finish my task. In Jesus Name I ask it. Amen. So be it." Where thousands of men would have given up, Livingstone was prepared to press on. He had a profound conviction that he had been divinely chosen for this specific calling he was engaged in. He saw himself as having a divine mandate which gave him the strength to persevere and persist against all odds. Nothing must be allowed to stand in the way of his goal and if anything threatened to do so he was apt to show irritation. Some regarded his fine faith and absolute lack of fear as madness. ***"I would say to missionaries, come on, brethren, to the real heathen, you have no idea how brave you are***

until you try.” “Nothing earthly will make me give up my work in despair. I encourage myself in the Lord, my God, and go forward” On 1.5.1873
Livingstone died on his knees by his bed at Chitambo in present day Northern Zambia.

Stanley’s writing on Livingstone’s discoveries, awakened the conscience of Britain to achieve the greatest victory for his cause. Livingstone sacrificed and inspired many to count their lives but nothing for the cause of Christ. His life also influenced the beginning of many missions after his death. He sowed in tears. It was only after his death that his greatest desires were granted – the cessation of the slave trade and the opening of Africa to Christianity and lawful commerce.

CONCLUSION

1. AS A MISSIONARY

All through that region of eastern and central Africa in which Livingstone spent so many years, and for which he uttered so many prayers, new mission stations are being planted, the Universities’ Mission, the London Missionary society, the Free and Established churches of Scotland, the Methodists, Swiss, and other societies all having representatives there. So great an expansion of missionary enterprise could never have taken place in so short a time but for Dr. Livingstone, energy in opening Africa and for his enthusiasm in enlisting recruits for his loved field.

At a moderate estimate there are now between thirty and forty missionary societies working in Africa, and over 500 missionaries spreading the glad tidings of salvation. The converts, though already numbering many tens of thousands, are as yet but a handful among the two hundred millions with which Africa teems but their number is steadily growing and when we remember that until a few years ago nothing was known of the vast interior, we have reason to thank God and take courage. Soon the continent will be crossed by a network of railways, penetrated by explorers, settled by traders, and dotted over with Christian missions. Already roads are being built and railways constructed, steamboats sail up and down the great lakes and rivers, and a submarine cable has been laid. It will not be long ere all these millions of inhabitants will be practically within the reach of Christian missionaries.

2. AS A MAN

But beyond and above Doctor Livingstone’s greatness as a missionary, a physician, a philanthropist, and an explorer, it is the character of the man that shines out preeminently great. The rare symmetry of this was such that one who knew him bears witness **that he was the most Christ-like man he ever knew.** Another says that she never knew any one who gave to her more the idea of power over other men, such power as Christ showed while on earth, the

power of love and purity combined. A friend of his earlier days remarks: "There was truly an indescribable charm about him, which, with all his rather ungainly ways and by no means winning face, attracted almost every one, and which helped him so much in his after-wanderings in Africa. He won those who came near him by a kind of spell."

1. This power lay first of all in his large-heartedness, his genuine kindliness and **consideration for others**, which prompted him to be just as courteous, just as *Christian* let us rather say, in his treatment of the poor and ignorant.

2. Dr Livingstone showed the same spirit as was in his Master in taking a **genuine interest in those about him**. Nothing was too trivial for him to be interested in if it concerned his brother-man. One or two extracts from his journals will suffice here. "As we were sleeping one night outside a hut, but near enough to hear what was going on within, an anxious mother began to grind her corn about two o'clock in the morning 'Ma,' inquired a little girl, 'why grind in the dark?' Mamma advised sleep, and administered material for a sweet dream to her darling 'I grind meal to buy a cloth from the strangers which will make you look a little lady.' An observer of these primitive races is struck continually with such little trivial touches of genuine human nature." Truly "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

"It is rather a minute thing to mention, and it will only be understood by those who have children of their own, but the cries of the little ones in their infant sorrows are to some in tone, at different ages, here as all over the world. We have been perpetually reminded of home and family by the wailings which were once familiar to parental ears and heart, and felt thankful that to the sorrows of childhood our children would never have superadded the heart-rending woes of the slave-trade."

3. Dr Livingstone's **wonderful patience** has already been spoken of. Under the most trying circumstances he still preserved his self-control. Occasionally, as in the case of the Boers' unprovoked assault on Kolobeng and Limaue, he could find no excuse for those in fault, but generally he was quick to see extenuating circumstances. For instance, after being deserted by some of his men he says: "I have taken all the runaways back again; after trying the independent life they will behave better. Much of their ill conduct may be ascribed to seeing that after the flight of the Johanna men I was entirely dependent on them. More enlightened people often take advantage of men in similar circumstances; though I have seen pure Africans come out generously to aid one abandoned to their care. I have faults myself."

In another place he speaks of sometimes being ashamed when he finds that he has been vexed at the natives without cause. Of course they often misunderstand and the conduct of white men must frequently appear to them silly or half-insane.

4. Another marked trait in Livingstone was his capacity for **solitude** enabling him to endure an amount of loneliness that would have crushed any ordinary

man. For, notwithstanding his interest in and love for the natives he must often have felt an inexpressible desire for the companionship of those who could understand his motives and who by birth and education were fitted to be his intimate associates. His keen love of nature, his close habits of observation, must have helped him to pass cheerfully through his many lonely hours; but, best of all, he had constantly with him the presence of Him who had said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The weary, tread-mill-like march he says was particularly favourable to meditation, and many must have been the hours of sweet communion held with his Master.

5. Dr Livingstone's **courage** in exposing himself to danger if in the path of duty is no less to be commented on, though he himself never speaks of it. Dr Moffat gives several instances as samples of what was habitual to him, only one of which we site. Once, he tells us, when Dr.Livingstone was engaged in his special mission work a messenger came in the greatest haste to solicit his attendance on a native who had been attacked in a wood by a rhinoceros, and frightfully wounded. Livingstone's friends urged him not to take the risk of riding through the woods at night, exposed to the rhinoceros and other harmful beasts as he was certain to be, telling him that it was sure death to venture; but he felt that it was only a Christian duty to save the poor fellow's life if possible, and resolved to go in spite of the danger to himself. Starting at once to relieve the sufferer he forced his way for ten miles, in midnight darkness, through tangled brack and thicket, till he reached the spot where the wounded man lay, only to find him dead. But was it wasted sacrifice? Was it not rather as the sweet ointment spilled out of love to the Lord?

6. Although the recipient of prizes, degrees, gold medals and honours of many kinds, Dr Livingstone still preserved an unusually childlike, **humble** spirit. Once when a great man expressed admiration for his wonderful achievements, he replied; "They are not wonderful, it was only what any one else could do that had the will." Ah! But was not such a will wonderful? What too shall we say of such modesty as this? "Men may think I covet fame, but I make it a rule never to read aught written in my praise

7. PASSION FOR CHRIST

My Jesus, my king, my life my all. I again dedicate my whole life to Thee. Accept me and grant O gracious Father that ere this year is gone, I may finish my task. In Jesus' name