

DAVID LIVINGSTONE
MISSIONARY EXPLORER OF AFRICA

by

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Gospel Trumpet Company

Anderson, Indiana

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CHAPTER TWO

PREPARING FOR HIS LIFE WORK

"Others have done it. and I can too." So thought young Livingstone as he set about to prepare himself for missionary work.

He had been able to save but little from his meager earnings, for he had added his share to the family purse. But the story of Gutzlaff in China, how by his faith and courage he had conquered almost insurmountable obstacles, had fired Livingstone with a something that he could hardly explain. He, too, would train himself for the life of a medical missionary and would enter that dark land where sin and suffering abounded. What mattered it if he should have to meet opposition, mobs, and even death? JESUS had met them all and had said. "**Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.**"

But to Livingstone's great disappointment, the opium war breaking out about this time closed the door to China. However, he began his theological and medical training at Glasgow. in the winter of 1836-37. He had little money, but a strong determination and a willingness to endure hardships, During the six summer months he had to earn enough to pay his current expenses and his school expenses for the six winter months of school.

Accompanied by his father, he walked through the snow from Blantyre to Glasgow and began a search for lodging. They finally found a room in Rotten Row for two shillings (forty-eight cents) a week, and there his father left him. But when David too often found his tea and sugar missing he decided it would pay him to rent better quarters; so he did so.

Among his schoolmates was a young man who was a mechanic by trade and who had a bench and turning-lathe in his room. From him David learned many things that later proved of the greatest service to him in Africa. So strong became the friendship between Livingstone and Mr. Young, the mechanic, that years later Livingstone named after him a river which he supposed might be one of the sources of the Nile.

During his second session in Glasgow (1837-38) Livingstone applied to the London Missionary Society, offering his services as a missionary. He expressed to them his idea of missionary work, showing that he was not anticipating a bed of roses. He said that by the promised assistance of the HOLY GHOST he believed he was capable of enduring any ordinary share of hardship or fatigue. He further told them that he was not married nor under any engagement of marriage; that he would prefer to go out unmarried; that free from family care he might give himself entirely to the work.

In September, 1838, he was called to London to appear before the Mission Board. There he chanced to meet a young Englishman, Joseph Moore by name, who became such a fast friend of Livingstone that the two were compared to David and Jonathan.

The two young men were sent by the Mission Board to study under Richard Cecil, by whom they were given some practice in preparing and preaching sermons. Their duty was to write and memorize their sermons and to deliver them as the occasion demanded.

His friend told of one instance when Livingstone was to fill the pulpit in the absence of an eminent divine. He arose and read his text and then-said abruptly, "Friends, I have forgotten all I had to say." Then he hurriedly left the chapel. This failure, added to his hesitating manner in conducting family worship, almost led to his being rejected. But a friend pleaded hard for him, and he was given another chance.

He went to London to continue his studies and there completely won the hearts of his fellow students by his kindness and sympathy to all about him, though none considered him a man of any great ability. It was only during his last year in London that he came to his intellectual manhood and showed his real power.

About this time Livingstone came in contact with Robert Moffat, who on his furlough in England was creating much interest in his South African mission. Then it was fully decided that Livingstone should go to Africa. Gently, but definitely, GOD was leading the young man to his field of usefulness. But about the time he was to leave, a severe affliction seized him and he was compelled to return to his home in Scotland. The voyage and the visit had a wonderful effect, and he was soon in his usual health.

One more trip to Glasgow was necessary and then he returned home to spend but one night before he should sail.

David had so much to talk about that he wanted to sit up all night. Of course, his mother objected.

At any rate, he sat for several hours talking with his father of the prospects of Christian missions.

The next morning, November 17, they arose at five o'clock. Before leaving, David read the 121st and 135th Psalms and prayed with the family. His father walked with him to Glasgow where he was to take the steamer for Liverpool. There the father and son looked for the last time on earth on each other's faces and bade each other a fond farewell. Then with a lonely heart the father walked slowly back to Blantyre, and David was really on his way to dark Africa.

On Nov. 20, 1840, he was ordained a missionary, and on December 8, he embarked and sailed for the Cape of Good Hope. On the way, the ship stopped at Rio de Janeiro, and he had a little glimpse of Brazil. That was the only time he was ever privileged to visit the American continent. He was delighted with the country, but saddened at the degradation of the people.

Arriving at the Cape, he was detained there for a month, then sailed for Algoa Bay, whence he went by land to Kuruman, in the Bechuana country, the usual residence of the Moffats. Little did he realize then what a blessing the Moffat home held for him.

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