



Unit 8
Africa

Vervet monkeys

Lesson 22

Transformation in Twashuka

Some places are known for their beautiful buildings. Some places are known for their delicious restaurants or peaceful parks. Walale (wah-LAH-lay), a village in the heart of the country of **Zambia**, was known for its sin. Criminals from other places often fled to Walale to hide. Many drunkards, murderers, and people who practiced witchcraft lived in the village. Life in Walale was full of darkness. How could Walale ever change?

With God, all things are possible.

In 2008 God turned the heart of Aaron Mulenga, a Zambian Christian, toward Walale. Aaron and his wife, Jennipher, began spending time in the community, praying and waiting for God to work. The Mulengas began holding a Bible study under an avocado tree in Walale. Many people in the village thought they were crazy. Were they

drunk? What were they doing? The Mulengas continued coming to the avocado tree twice a week. They visited the villagers in their homes. They began to share the gospel with the people who would listen. Slowly, the curious villagers began to join them at the avocado tree, especially the children. The Mulengas met many children. They played with them. They prayed with them. They shared Jesus with them.



Homes in Walale



Avocados

Aaron invited his friend Charles Mwila to join him in the work God had given him in Walale. Aaron and Charles walked together through the community, praying for God to work in the hearts of the people, praying for the village to be transformed with the gospel. They fasted together as they asked the Lord to come down into the community and rescue it from evil. The two men quickly came to love the community and the hurting people all around them.



Aaron and Charles under the avocado tree

“It was beautiful how the Lord opened doors for us to reach out to this community,” Aaron said. “We brought nothing. We just came with the Word of God, nothing else. No resources. It was just starting from scratch. We just obeyed God’s voice and God’s way to say ‘go.’ We said, ‘If we don’t go, then who can God send?’ God raised us to be the blessing to the people in this community. Not that we brought silver and gold. We brought nothing. Every long journey starts with one step.”



Agnes, the first new Christian in Walale

The people of Walale were amazed by these newcomers to their village. They were gentle. They were willing to help anyone. Whenever there was a problem, the newcomers rushed to lend a hand.

Aaron and Charles began establishing house churches in the village. The gatherings quickly grew as more and more people decided to become followers of Jesus. One after another, people in the village began living new lives.



Charles with a child of the village



Village children going to school

Aaron and Charles saw how much the children of the village needed clothing, food, and education. They saw how much the children needed the love of Jesus. The men felt the Lord urging them to start a school for the children of Walale. They knew they didn't have enough resources to start a school and keep it running, but they knew the Lord would provide. He did!

Aaron and Charles built a school building. The children came flooding in to learn. At first the children had to do their schoolwork on the floor, then God provided the money for desks. At first they had to fetch water from shallow, dirty wells. Then God provided money for a new well near the school with an abundance of fresh, clean water. The school outgrew one building, and God provided the money for another. When they outgrew that building, God provided money for a third.

The children who come to the school learn how to read, write, add, and subtract. They learn about farming as they raise food on the school grounds. They learn about science and history, but the most important subject is Jesus.

Charles Mwila became the school principal. "We are very much interested in having their lives transformed," he said. "We are making sure that we impact their lives spiritually so that they become like ambassadors even in this community to spread the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Discipleship has been at the center of our school."



New desks!



New well!



Learning about Jesus!

As the village of Walale began to be transformed with the gospel, it started gaining a new reputation. It even gained a new name. People no longer called it Walale, which was the name of an old witch. They gave it a new name: Twashuka. This name means “we are lucky” or “the lucky place.” Charles said the people wanted the village to have a new name “because of many things that the Lord has done.” He said the village “has really seen serious transformation spiritually. People have really changed here. We have seen the faithfulness of the Lord.”

Twashuka is now a community filled with Bible study groups. Every Sunday a church meets in the school. Hundreds of villagers have decided to follow Jesus and have been baptized. Young men play soccer and study the Bible together through a community soccer ministry. Teen girls meet together to learn about living lives of purity and faith. Christians from Twashuka now travel to neighboring villages to share the gospel with others who don’t know Jesus.

You never can tell where prayers under an avocado tree might lead.

For nothing will be impossible with God.
Luke 1:37



You can learn more about this ministry at ReachingTheHeartOfZambia.org.

Activity Ideas

- Find **Zambia** on your globe.
- Complete “Lesson 22: Zambia” in the *Atlas Workbook*.
- Answer the questions for Lesson 22 in the *Lesson Review*.
- Color the picture for Lesson 22 in the *Coloring Book*.
- Read the introduction to “Ba Yesu, Iyee Ee!” (*Folktales and Songs of Our Great Big World*, page 26) and listen to Track 16 at notgrass.com/FSOGBW.
- Imagine that you are a child in Zambia who is excited to go to school for the first time. In your creative writing notebook, write a letter to a child in a wealthier nation telling why you are excited.
- Read the chapters titled “Milking time” and “Most dangerous” in *Akimbo of Africa*.

Chacma Baboons

They are fun to watch . . . until they show up at your picnic uninvited. They are quite entertaining . . . until they open your vehicle door and look for a leftover sandwich. They are amusing . . . except when they try to steal your groceries as you leave the store. They are chacma baboons, and southern Africa has a lot of them!



Chacma baboon on top of a car



Chacma baboons are large, hairy monkeys that live in several countries in southern Africa. They spend much of the daytime looking for food. They have handy pouches in their cheeks where they can store extra food. The pouches are as big as their stomachs! At night chacma baboons sleep on the high branches of trees, on rocky cliffs, or nestled in caves. Chacma baboons usually live in troops of 15 to 100 individuals. Sometimes the troops are larger, with the baboons numbering up to 200. Chacma baboons can live to be 40 years old.



Chacma baboons raiding trash cans in Cape Town

Chacma baboons tend to be troublemakers. They cause problems for farmers when they get into fields and sample the crops. In cities such as Cape Town in the country of **South Africa**, baboons raid gardens, knock over trash cans, and break into houses and restaurants. Sometimes they get in trouble with the law. At times wildlife rangers use paintball guns to chase the baboons away. In 2020 a particularly stubborn and troublesome baboon called Kataza got himself into serious trouble. After Kataza led other baboons on 15 raiding expeditions near Cape Town, local officials captured him. In the end, Kataza was sentenced to live away from the city in a home for baboons.



Even though some chacma baboons make life harder for the people around them, one particular baboon in the 1880s made life much easier for a South African railroad man. Jim Wide lost both of his legs in an accident while he was working for the railroad. Mr. Wide carved himself two wooden pegs to use as legs so he could hobble around. The railroad company gave him a new job that didn't require him to move around very much. He became a signaller, responsible for pulling the levers that made passing trains switch from one track to another.



Railroad switch lever



Jim and Jack at work

Even though Mr. Wide didn't have to use his legs very much at work, he still had to get to and from the signal box. He found a solution when he befriended a chacma baboon called Jack. Every day Jack pushed Mr. Wide to work on a little cart. Jack learned to pull the right levers at the right times. When the railroad authorities found out about the monkey business happening in the signal box, they fired Mr. Wide. Mr. Wide convinced them to watch Jack at work and see how capable he was. When they saw the baboon doing his job, the authorities hired Mr. Wide back—and they hired Jack! The baboon became an official railroad employee. He worked faithfully for nine years until he died in 1890.

Jack proved that not all baboons are troublemakers!

**God made the beasts of the earth
after their kind, and the cattle
after their kind, and everything
that creeps on the ground after its kind;
and God saw that it was good.**

Genesis 1:25



Jack pushes Jim on his cart

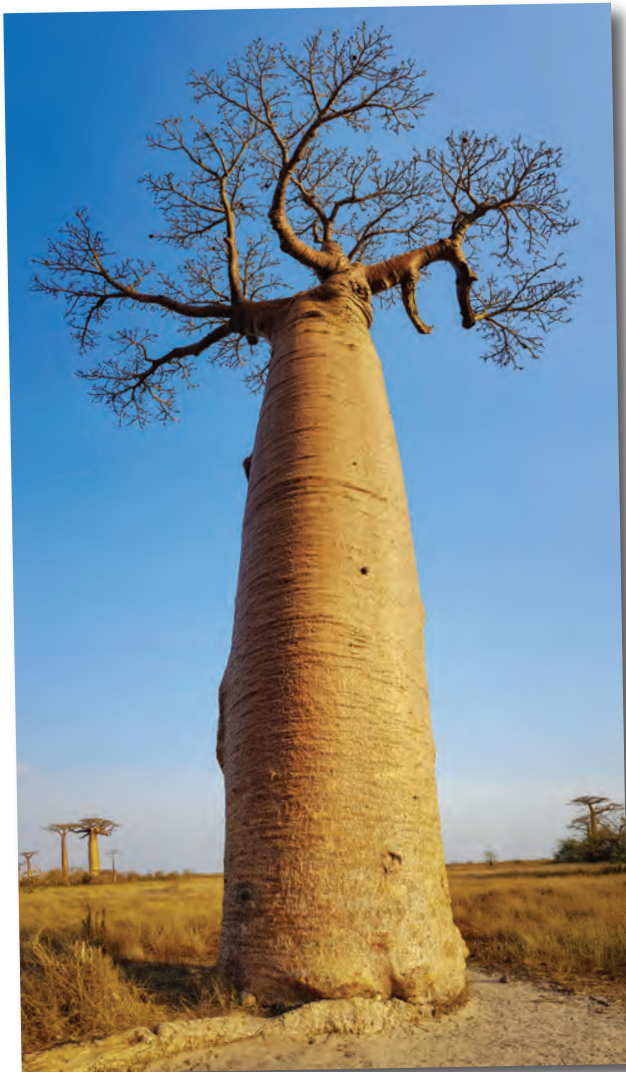


Activity Ideas

- Find **South Africa** on your globe.
- Complete “Lesson 23: Baboon Trip” in the *Atlas Workbook*.
- Answer the questions for Lesson 23 in the *Lesson Review*.
- Color the picture for Lesson 23 in the *Coloring Book*.
- Family Activity: Make Malva Pudding (page 112)
- Read the chapters titled “Mamba hunt” and “Capture” in *Akimbo of Africa*.

Baobab Trees

It can grow to be almost 100 feet tall. It's hard to know for sure, but it seems to be able to survive for thousands of years. Africans call it the "tree of life." It is the baobab tree (pronounced BOW-bab or BAY-uh-bab).



Baobab tree in Madagascar



Baobab fruit

Baobab trees are enormous. Some are so large that it would take 20 grown men holding hands to reach around them. People have figured out many ways to use these amazing trees. They use the bark to make rope, cloth, mats, baskets, paper, nets, and fishing line. They eat the leaves and fruit and use different parts of the trees to make medicines. They make glue from the pollen. Many baobab trees are hollow at the bottom. People have used these hollow areas as burial sites, animal stables, post offices, and even prisons!



At the base of a baobab tree

For most of the year, baobab trees reach up toward the sun with bare, scraggly branches that look like roots. Around the start of the rainy season they produce leaves and large flowers. They also produce a nutritious fruit. During the rainy season, a single baobab tree can absorb an astonishing 30,000 gallons of water! When there isn't much water around, elephants sometimes quench their thirst by eating spongy baobab bark.

The island of **Madagascar** lies off the eastern coast of Africa. One of the island's most popular sites is the Avenue of the Baobabs. Scientists believe the baobabs on either side of this dirt road started growing around 800 years ago. The views of the avenue are especially beautiful in the orange glow of sunrise and sunset.



An elephant munches on baobab bark

Avenue of the Baobabs





Making a cistern out of a baobab



Gathering water from a baobab

Farther south on the island lies the Mahafaly plateau. A plateau is an area of high, level ground. Some years the Mahafaly plateau doesn't receive any rain at all. During other years, it only rains a few times. The people here depend on baobab trees to help them survive. They hollow out cisterns inside the trees, which requires days of backbreaking work. The cisterns catch and hold rainwater, keeping it amazingly fresh for months. The people who live on the Mahafaly plateau are thankful for every drop of water the baobabs provide. Baobab roots are also rich with water. People dig them up and grind them to make porridge. When the water in the baobab cisterns finally runs out, the villagers have to travel many hours by cart to buy water. In this region, baobab trees are definitely trees of life.

The Bible compares a person who delights in the law of the Lord to a strong tree:

**He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in its season
and its leaf does not wither;
and in whatever he does, he prospers.**

Psalm 1:3



Activity Ideas

- Find **Madagascar** on your globe.
- Complete “Lesson 24: African Islands in the Indian Ocean” in the *Atlas Workbook*.
- Answer the questions for Lesson 24 in the *Lesson Review*.
- Color the picture for Lesson 24 in the *Coloring Book*.
- Read the introduction to “The Legend of the Baobab Tree” (*Folktales and Songs of Our Great Big World*, page 27) and listen to Track 17 at notgrass.com/FSOGBW.
- Read the chapters titled “A brush with danger” and “Sssensational sssnake factsss” in *Akimbo of Africa*.

Family Activity: Make Malva Pudding

This rich dessert is a favorite in South Africa. **Read through the directions before you begin!**

Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 tablespoon baking soda
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons apricot jam
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1 tablespoon melted butter, cooled to room temperature
- 1 cup milk

Sauce Ingredients:

- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup hot water
- ½ cup butter



Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease an 8" x 8" baking dish with cooking spray or butter.
2. Melt 1 tablespoon of butter. Set aside to cool.
3. In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, and sugar.
4. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the egg, apricot jam, melted butter (at room temperature), vinegar, and milk.
5. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients. As you begin to mix, you will see bubbles from the baking soda and vinegar reaction. Be careful not to overmix these ingredients.
6. Pour the batter into the prepared 8" x 8" dish.

7. Bake at 350°F for 35-45 minutes. The top will be very brown, but this does not mean it is done. Insert a knife or fork after 35 minutes to test for doneness. It may come out with crumbs, but it should not come out wet.
8. When your pudding has been in the oven for 30 minutes, begin making the sauce. The sauce and the pudding both need to be hot when you pour the sauce over the pudding.

Sauce Instructions:

1. Combine all of the sauce ingredients in a medium saucepan.
2. Heat to a simmer and cook until the sugar is dissolved and the butter is melted. This mixture should not come to a boil. If your sauce is finished before your pudding, turn the heat down to the lowest setting to keep warm.
3. When your pudding is finished baking, poke holes in the top with a skewer and slowly pour the sauce over it. It might seem like you have too much sauce, but pour it all! The pudding will absorb it.
4. Wait 5 minutes before serving to give the sauce time to soak in. South Africans like to serve malva pudding warm with custard or ice cream.



Be safe in the kitchen! Children must have adult supervision.