

PARENT AND TEACHER GUIDE

Water Of Life

Themes Found in This Story:

- Water pumps and missions
- Oral Bible storying

The Story:

Water Of Life: A new water pump is built in the village, and Madala tells the friends the story of Jesus at the well.

The parent/teacher may read the story aloud, or print the story for the children to read or follow along.

Characters in this Story:

Madala: (mah-DAH-lah)

He is a chameleon from Zambia. His name is the respectful way to say 'old man' in the Chinyanja language.

Maro: (MAH-roo)

She is a Sifaka Lemur from Madagascar. Her name is short for 'Marojejy', a national park that is home to many types of lemurs. Like many children in Africa, she cares for her younger siblings because they have no parents.

Francois, Philibert and Jejy: (frahn-SWAH, fee-lee-BEHR and JEH-jee)

They are Maro's little brothers and sister. Francois and Philibert have French names—a common language in Madagascar. Jejy's name is the last half of 'Marojejy', like her big sister's name.

Tshameka and Reë: (tshah-MEH-kah and REE-ah)

They are twin lion cubs from South Africa, near Rustenburg and the World Cup stadium. Tshameka is the oldest—his name is the Tswana word for 'play'. His sister Reë's name is short for Reënboog, which is Afrikaans for 'rainbow'—South Africa is also known as the 'Rainbow Nation'.

Omulonga: (oh-moo-LOHN-gah)

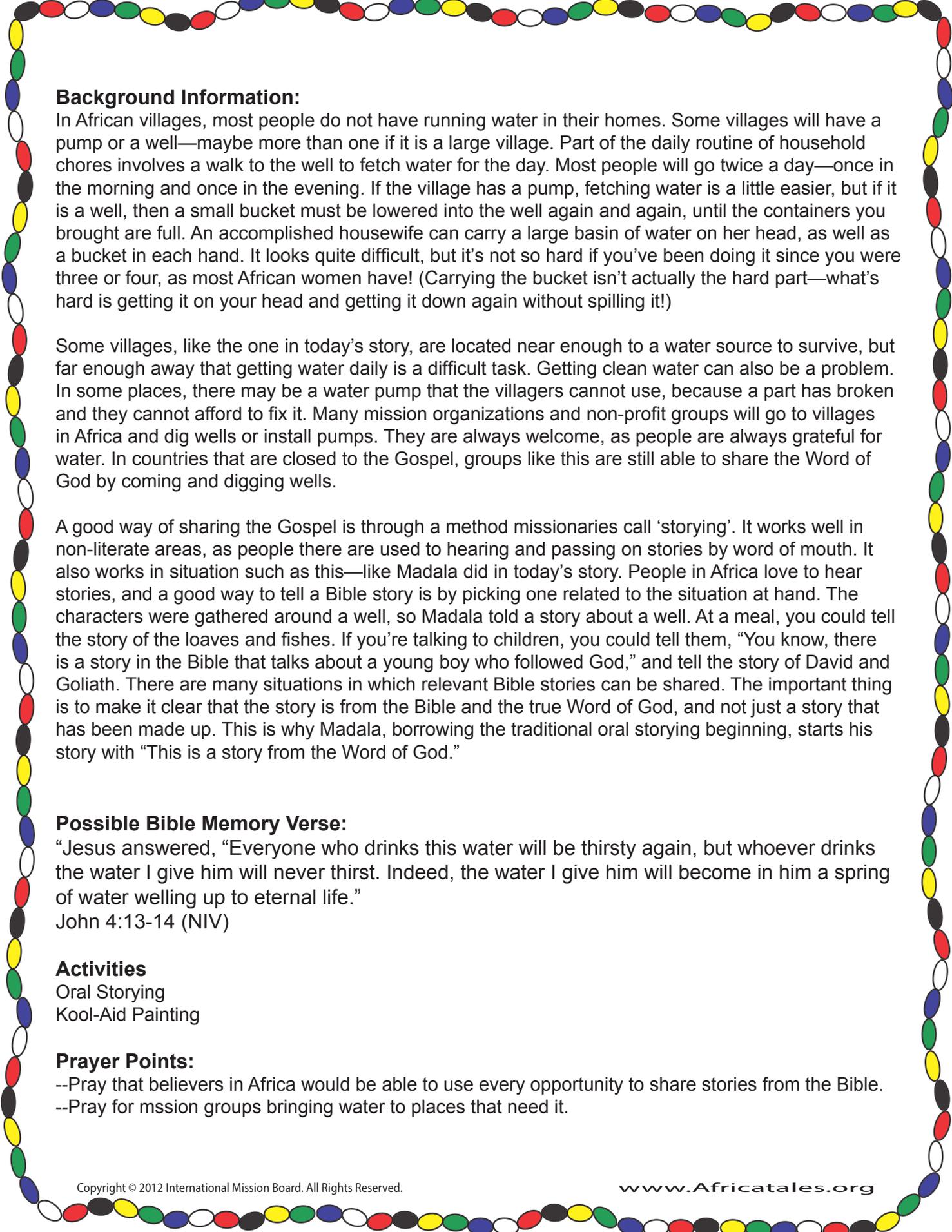
She is a Black-footed Penguin from Namibia, an immigrant new to the area. Her name is the Oshiwambo word for 'river'.

Nyati: (NYAH-tee)

He is a Cape Buffalo from Kenya. His name is the Swahili word for 'buffalo'.

Suloliko: (soo-loh-LEE-koh)

She is a Zebra Duiker from Guinea. Her full name is 'Suloliko Lamalaka' which means 'close to the king' in the Guinean language of Kissi.



Background Information:

In African villages, most people do not have running water in their homes. Some villages will have a pump or a well—maybe more than one if it is a large village. Part of the daily routine of household chores involves a walk to the well to fetch water for the day. Most people will go twice a day—once in the morning and once in the evening. If the village has a pump, fetching water is a little easier, but if it is a well, then a small bucket must be lowered into the well again and again, until the containers you brought are full. An accomplished housewife can carry a large basin of water on her head, as well as a bucket in each hand. It looks quite difficult, but it's not so hard if you've been doing it since you were three or four, as most African women have! (Carrying the bucket isn't actually the hard part—what's hard is getting it on your head and getting it down again without spilling it!)

Some villages, like the one in today's story, are located near enough to a water source to survive, but far enough away that getting water daily is a difficult task. Getting clean water can also be a problem. In some places, there may be a water pump that the villagers cannot use, because a part has broken and they cannot afford to fix it. Many mission organizations and non-profit groups will go to villages in Africa and dig wells or install pumps. They are always welcome, as people are always grateful for water. In countries that are closed to the Gospel, groups like this are still able to share the Word of God by coming and digging wells.

A good way of sharing the Gospel is through a method missionaries call 'storying'. It works well in non-literate areas, as people there are used to hearing and passing on stories by word of mouth. It also works in situation such as this—like Madala did in today's story. People in Africa love to hear stories, and a good way to tell a Bible story is by picking one related to the situation at hand. The characters were gathered around a well, so Madala told a story about a well. At a meal, you could tell the story of the loaves and fishes. If you're talking to children, you could tell them, "You know, there is a story in the Bible that talks about a young boy who followed God," and tell the story of David and Goliath. There are many situations in which relevant Bible stories can be shared. The important thing is to make it clear that the story is from the Bible and the true Word of God, and not just a story that has been made up. This is why Madala, borrowing the traditional oral storying beginning, starts his story with "This is a story from the Word of God."

Possible Bible Memory Verse:

"Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:13-14 (NIV)

Activities

Oral Storying
Kool-Aid Painting

Prayer Points:

--Pray that believers in Africa would be able to use every opportunity to share stories from the Bible.
--Pray for mission groups bringing water to places that need it.