

SAMUEL MORRIS

also known as

Prince Kaboo

born about 1872 or 1873

died May 12, 1893



Edited and printed by Brother James
Knoxville, Tennessee, U.S.A.

From *Samuel Morris*, published by Barbour Publishing, Inc.
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Printed: Tuesday, June 12, 2012

Edited and printed by: Brother James

Who is Prince Kaboo?

The year was 1873 and the place was in a particularly wild, dangerous part of Liberia, West Africa, in a region known as Kru somewhere close to the Cestos River. In that region where there was frequent and vicious tribal warfare, there was a tribal chief named Kaboo, whose wife bore him his first son: also named Kaboo. Because he was a prince, Kaboo was in danger of being abducted and held for ransom by neighboring tribes. He was abducted three times, but what happened to Kaboo is something so astonishing that many people still, today, over 100 years later are reading books about Prince Kaboo—books that have been translated into several languages.

Because his father lost the fight/war/battle, Prince Kaboo was captured and held for ransom by the neighboring Grebo tribe when he was about 15 years old. Though he had been ransomed the first two times he was captured, this the third time he was taken by a tribal chief who was a madman and a drunkard. When Kaboo's father, Chief Kaboo, came with the ransom items (ivory, nuts, rubber, rice, palm kernels, and sundry other articles), the tribal chief protested that the items were not enough payment for the indemnity. The Grebo chief held the younger Kaboo for several months, while Chief Kaboo regularly brought more ransom indemnity, but each time, the Grebo chief insulted Chief Kaboo saying, "Is this all you bring me? It is not enough; bring me more or you will never get you son back."

Regardless, how many time Prince Kaboo's father brought items of indemnity, the chief insisted that the ransom was not enough. So desperate was the father, that he once tried to trade his daughter, Yout, for Kaboo, but, Kaboo, knowing what would happen to his sister, refused to let his father trade her.

Since it seemed that Kaboo's father would not be able to give any more indemnity, Kaboo was given a daily beating. The purpose of these beatings was to persuade Kaboo's father to bring more

ransom—his father being kept informed about the daily beatings. Each time the punishment was more severe, and a thorny-poisonous vine was used to tear his back to shreds of bleeding flesh.

Finally, Kaboo was so low that he was be unable either to sit or stand. It was then that the enemy came up with an even more fiendish plan: Prince Kaboo was to be laid over a cross tree and beaten into unconsciousness. Next he was to be buried up to his neck and his mouth would be propped open by an inserted stick. He would then be smeared with honey to attract some driver-ants that eat human flesh. Finally, Kaboo's enemies planned to place his skeleton where all ransom defaulters could see it and be warned. This day happened to be a Friday.

However, after he was placed on the cross tree, and was just about to be beaten, a most extraordinary thing happened. Later Kaboo described it this way: "A bright light appeared, surrounding my bleeding body. Everyone was so shocked at the sight of that light that even the Grebo chief screamed in terror. Also, a voice that seemed to come from above was heard by those around there. The voice said, 'Get up, Kaboo, get up and run away'." Again: this voice was heard by everyone there.

When Kaboo tried to get up, his mangled body was miraculously healed. The vines that his hands had been tied with fell off. That Friday he had not had anything to eat or drink, but his body was not only healed, but he had the strength of a man who had eaten a full meal. As Kaboo fled into the jungle, he felt no hunger, thirst, or weakness. He ran swiftly, trying to get as far as he could from the Grebos, avoiding the beaten paths, choosing rather to fight his way through jungle underbrush, roots, and tangled vines, and where there were also thorn bushes and poisonous cobras, lizards, and vipers.

Kaboo did not understand what was happening to him, but he kept running in terror. As the sun was setting, he hid in the hollow of a tree trunk until darkness settled down upon the jungle and finally got some much needed rest, sleep, and refreshment. A host of insects and tree frogs sang their soothing songs as he slept.

When he awoke on his first day in the jungle, a Saturday, he realized that he had not eaten anything since Thursday. He was ravaged by thirst as well as hunger. Hearing the sound of running water, he followed the sound until he found some cool, clear water and drank heartily.

One of the first things that Kaboo did was, he found a lime tree, cut open a lime, and rubbed it on his wounds. The lime juice stung, but soon the swellings on his body were gone.

With the coming of day, what Kaboo described as “a kindly light” illuminated his path, and he was led by that light—not knowing where he was going. The light also guarded him from leopards, wild boars, poisonous snakes and lizards, as well as from cannibals who inhabited parts of those tropical jungles. At times he heard the low growl of leopards. Wild nuts, fruits, and roots were his food. At times he followed streams. Jumping from stone to stone was easier than fighting the tangled brush, which scratched and tore his flesh. Overhead were berries to eat, and under rocks were grubs which he also ate.

At times he saw men in the jungle. He hid lest they capture him and take him to the Grebo chief for a reward. He watched as they watered their cattle, and came out of his hiding place only when they left.

Going downstream, he noticed that the water became deeper, and the alligators more frequent. Of course, that meant that he was coming closer to the ocean, though he did not know that his destination was close to that water. In that country there were also black cobras, puff adders, and boa which frequently hung from trees. Also besides the leopard, there were lions, and crocodiles. But he was especially afraid of the cannibals.

After a few weeks, he felt safe enough so that when he saw people, he just walked past them. No one seemed to notice him. Wild bananas and mangos also became his food.

How many weeks he fled through the jungle is not recorded, but one day he found himself at the edge of a plantation outside Monrovia, Liberia. Standing at the edge of the plantation, Kaboo was amazed at the orderliness and peacefulness of this place.

He saw many things that he had never seen before. For the first time in his life, Kaboo saw a large wooden house painted white. It had round pillars that seemed to reach as high as a tree. There were dozens of glass windows and the whole place was surrounded by a white fence. Kaboo felt that he has come into a whole new world.

He saw people. Who were they? He did not know, but he felt that whoever or whatever had set him free had also sent him to this place. That thought gave him courage to approach closer. He heard music, singing. Before him was a field of plants with white flowers and red berries—a beautiful scene. On a hillside, he saw men, women, and children picking berries. Another thing he had never seen: these people had their heads covered with cloth. They were picking dark brown berries—a kind he had never seen before—and putting them in a basket. He also wondered why those people were not eating the berries.

About that time, he saw a Black boy coming toward him, carrying a basket and singing. But as Kaboo looked at his face more closely, he was stunned to realize that this boy was a Kru (the same tribe as he was). Finally Kaboo felt safe enough to come out of hiding and slowly came to this boy—still wearing only a monkey skin for clothing. He called to the boy in his Kru language “A nuane, a nuane.”

Big surprise! the Kru boy recognized him, and called him: “Prince Kaboo! What are you doing here? It is really you?” Kaboo certainly didn’t look like a prince. He was dirty, starving, wounded, and worn out with weariness and anxiety. Kaboo recognized him also and called him by name, “Yes, it’s really me, Locust! But what are you doing here?”

“I’m picking coffee beans, This is a plantation; I work here. Come, Prince Kaboo, walk beside me so we can talk while I am picking beans. It is so good to speak to someone in my own language [Nigrite] again.” As Locust picked coffee beans, he explained to Kaboo that the Black people there were returned slaves from America—now free men. “But since they come from different tribes, they can’t speak to each other. We have all learned

the English language, and we use English to talk to each other. But what about you, Kaboo, tell me about yourself.” When Kaboo finished telling what happened to him, Locust continued, “Why don’t you ask for work here on the plantation? My boss is a good man. He will give you a job here on the plantation, food and clothes.” And he continued, “You are safe now, brother. I’ll take you to see Mr. Davis, the owner.”

So it was that Kaboo finally felt safe from the terror that had been in his past life and realized that he was in a place of safety. Locust added, “I now have an English name: Nathan Strong. When you become a Christian, you will get a new Christian name.”

But Kaboo did not know what a Christian is. Moreover, he thought much about the voice and the light that had saved his life and had brought him to this place. Who was it? It must have been some kind of spirit. Kaboo had been taught about spirits since he was a young child, but most of those spirits were to be feared and appeased with sacrifices. This Spirit was different. Kaboo was hungry for answers.

One day Kaboo found his fellow Kru kneeling on the floor, his face and hands were turned upward. He was talking. “What are you doing,” Kaboo asked.

“I’m praying.”

“Who are you praying to?”

“I’m praying to God.”

“Who is your god?” Kaboo asked.

“He is my Father,” answered the boy.

Kaboo concluded, “Then you are talking to your Father.” For the rest of his life, Kaboo spoke of praying as “talking to my Father.”

This day, too, was a Friday. It was on a Friday he had escaped from his would-be murderers, and it was on a Friday that he reached the one place in Liberia where he would seem to be safe. For the rest of his life, Kaboo never ate or drank anything on Fridays; he was celebrating his “Deliverance Day”. Kaboo was about 16 years old at that time, about 1888.

Two days later was a Sunday, and for the first time in his life Kaboo attended a church meeting. Sometime later a missionary lady named Miss Anna Knolls related the account of the conversion of the apostle Paul. Using a translator, the missionary spoke of the Light that shone around Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road. When Kaboo heard that, he jumped up and said: “I have seen that light! It is the same light that brought me here. And I heard that voice. When they were whipping me, and I was about to die, I heard that voice. I saw that Light!” His face glowed with revelation. “Now I know who it was who saved my life. It was Jesus!”

Miss Knolls closed the meeting, took Kaboo aside with his translator, and got him to tell his whole story. Miss Knolls was astonished at his story! When Miss Knolls finished telling Kaboo the story of Jesus, he said, “I understand Jesus being taken as a pawn to save the lives of sinners.” Tears were streaming down his face as he said this. He had once been a pawn that was suppose to save his people.

The missionary, Miss Knolls, a graduate from a Christian college in the United States, became prayerfully interested in this attentive young African. Soon he became a humble learner at the feet of Jesus, and daily she noticed evidence of a divine touch upon his life.

Kaboo followed the lead of his friend and began to talk to his Father. He prayed earnestly for answers to the aching questions in his heart. *Could a poor boy like me know God? Was it God who saved me from destruction?* His friend Nathan (Locust) explained the gospel till Kaboo finally said, “So, there is no need to make altars and leave food for our dead relatives/ancestors!”

It was not long, however, before Kaboo became awakened to his need of a still greater change. His past suffering had left vengeful thoughts against those who had treated him so cruelly. At the same time that he yearned to be free from hateful thoughts and fears, he was also hungering and thirsting for more of God. Even after working hard all day, he spent much time in prayer. His companions in the small quarters where he slept failed to

understand the deep longings that caused him at times to break out in supplication to God. It wasn't long before they made him go into the woods at night to talk to his heavenly Father.

Late one night, when he returned to his bed after talking to his Father, his heart was still so lifted in prayer that something happened which he later described: "All at once light started shining brighter and brighter in that room. At first, I thought the sun was rising, but the others were sound asleep. The room grew brighter until it was filled with glory. The burden of my heart suddenly disappeared, and I was filled with a sense of inner joy. My body felt as light as a feather. I was filled with a power that made me feel I could almost fly. I could not contain my joy, but shouted until everyone in the barracks was awakened: 'Praise God! Praise God! I am His son! He is my Father!' There was no more sleep that night. Some thought I had gone crazy; others, that a devil had gotten into me. I was now a son of the heavenly King. I knew then that my Father had saved me for a purpose, and that He would work with me."

The next day he told Miss Knoll about what happened, and said, "It was my adoption; the heavenly Father adopted me." Miss Knoll opened her Bible and read to him: "...you have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father."

Kaboo agreed, "Yes, that's it! God came to me last night. He has adopted Kaboo!"

In response to deep longings for God, Kaboo became completely committed to God, and the Holy Spirit came into this uneducated African boy. As a result, many lives were touched and transformed by this simple, innocent young boy in the next few years.

He became a member of the Methodist church in Monrovia and was baptized under the name of Samuel Morris. This name was chosen by Miss Anna Knolls as a gesture of gratitude to an American banker who, during her missionary training years, had assisted her financially. Sammy spent two happy years in Monrovia, supporting himself by doing odd jobs. Miss Knolls and

others gave him lessons in English and reading, and he proved to be a fast learner.

Question: Do we have any evidence that the stories Kaboo told were true? Yes. Not too long after these events, Kaboo met another Kru boy who had escaped from the same cruel chief who tried to kill Kaboo. This boy was standing at the scene when the chief was about to lay Kaboo on the cross tree for a beating, and he saw the light that surrounded Kaboo, and he heard the voice that told Kaboo to flee. He saw the broken and bleeding Kaboo get up with a healed body and start running. Somehow he also had escaped from his masters and made his way to Monrovia. Through Sammy's influence, that lad was led to believe in Jesus Christ the Messiah and was baptized under the name of Henry O'Neil. The two Kru boys became fast friends, as well as worthy servants of the Lord Jesus.

One day, someone read to him the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel, where Jesus Christ the Messiah told His disciples of the future coming of the Spirit of God to the world. Now, Sammy had already experienced the incoming (or in-filling, or baptism into) of the Holy Spirit, but this was the first time that it was pointed out to him from the words of Jesus. For hours at a time, Kaboo pondered on the Holy Spirit, and he went from missionary to missionary in Monrovia, asking questions about that Holy Spirit. No one seemed to be able to answer his questions. Finally, a missionary friend, unable to answer any more of his questions, told him that most of her knowledge about the Holy Spirit had been learned from Stephen Merritt of New York City. And in the simplicity of child-like faith, Sammy said, "I will go to New York to see Stephen Merritt."

As quickly as he could, he walked to the seacoast where a sailing vessel was anchored in the harbor. When the captain came ashore in a small boat, Sammy greeted him in English with these words, "My Father in Heaven told me you would take me to New York. I want to see Stephen Merritt who lives there."

The captain was astonished by this confrontation. "You are crazy, boy," was the captain's reply as he turned away with a cuss

word.

Sammy just sat on the shore, and each time he saw the captain, he repeated his plea. The last time he said, “My Father told me you will take me now.” By this time, the captain had lost some deserters and needed another hand.

“How much shall I pay you?” he asked.

“Nothing. Just take me to New York, so I can see Stephen Merritt.” So it was that Sammy Morris began the next chapter of his life.

As he boarded the ship, he saw a young person lying on the deck, unable to walk because of an injury. Sammy knelt at his side asking God to heal him. At once the prayer was answered.

However, the captain had supposed that the boy he had taken aboard was an experienced sailor and, when he learned otherwise, was about to send him ashore. “Please keep him. He has done so much for me,” pleaded the lad who had been healed as Kaboo prayed for him. Gruffly the captain consented. However, occasionally the captain rained cuffs and blows on Kaboo as well as on the rest of the crew.

This crew was the most ungodly array of men imaginable. A Malay (a man from Malaysia) who was a veritable giant, one whom everyone feared, took a special disliking to Sammy, and vowed to kill him.

Once during a drunken brawl, the Malay, with a cutlass/sword in his hand, was advancing on some of his shipmates, when Sammy quietly stepped in front of him with the words, “Don’t kill! Don’t kill!” Sammy courageously stared at the man in his eyes. A strange power seized the half-crazed man and, dropping his weapon, he returned to his bunk.

Hearing the commotion, the captain appeared, ready to shoot the trouble makers, but when he saw that Sammy had stopped the fighting, the captain knew that Sammy had an unusual power or influence over those cruel men on board. The captain wanted to know what kind of power Sammy had, and so he beckoned Sammy to follow him to his cabin. In the cabin (which Sammy had thoroughly cleaned), the captain cleared his throat and said, “Will

you pray for me?”—the very man who had cursed him, kicked him, and knocked him unconscious was now asking him to pray for him.

First Sammy helped the captain pray a prayer of repentance, then Sammy knelt and prayed, “Oh, Father, thank you for overpowering the Malay. Thank You for peace onboard this ship. Dear Father, forgive the captain and make him whole again.” Next the captain and Sammy prayed together that the rest of the crew would come to know the unsurpassed love of Jesus Christ the Messiah. The captain even thanked God for sending Sammy onboard.

The Captain invited the ship’s officers into his cabin, and he, the captain, read to them from a Bible! Soon the captain quit paying his men in rum, and before long, he was calling them together for prayer. Sammy also sang some of the old Gospel hymns, but when he did, there was a quality or virtue about that singing that reached the hearts of the men who heard him.

Not long after this, the Malay was stricken with an illness that seemed to be fatal, Sammy’s prayers were answered, and the Malay was restored to health. The Black teenager he had hated then became the object of his devotion and followed him everywhere.

Attacked by Pirates

Before leaving Africa, the captain decided to make one more stop to barter with the natives. Just as he was heading to shore in a small boat with a load of merchandise, several small boats were launched from the shore and hundreds of men were coming to rob the ship of its cargo. The captain was surrounded, but his men had superior weapons, and they were shooting to kill. The captain made it back to the ship, but more pirates came in more small boats. There were hundreds of pirates coming after the ship.

When the captain got back on the ship, he told Sammy to go into his cabin, lock the door, and just “pray boy pray.” Sammy stayed in the cabin and poured out his heart, “Oh, Father, do something. Stop this horror, please, Father.” His prayer was answered by a miracle. As hundreds more men were heading to the

ship in their canoes, suddenly a storm arose and caused the ship to sway back and forth so heavily that those men were unable to climb up on the boat; they turned around and went back to the shore. There is little doubt that the heavenly father sent the storm in answer to Sammy's prayer.

In the cabin, Sammy knew the battle was over when the noise quieted down. Then he prayed, "Thank you, Father. Praise your holy name". Then he heard the splash of bodies, as the dead were thrown overboard.

Finally the captain came to his cabin and knocked for Sammy to open. When he got in, he fainted from exhaustion and loss of blood. Sammy tore away the captain's clothes, washed and bandaged his wounds. When the captain woke up, Sammy was praying beside him. The captain put his arm around Sammy's shoulders, drew him near and said, "Sammy, your prayers saved us and the ship. We were out-numbered 10 to 1."

Sammy went on deck to help the wounded, but instead he saw a number of his dear friends being tossed/buried in the sea. He dressed the wounds of the survivors, while everyone went about his business without any curses or beatings. After that attack, the men became more interested in spiritual things, and crowded the prayer meetings in the captain's quarters.¹

The ship took nearly six months to reach New York. Before anyone realized it, there was the Statue of Liberty right before them, holding her Torch of Liberty and welcoming the "...huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse, the homeless, tempest-tossed..." Sammy fit all of those descriptions on the Statue's plaque/pedestal.

Looking at the Statue of Liberty, the captain's words to Sammy were: "You are now at liberty to search for your Mr.

¹One source said this ship had a crew of 18 men, but did not make it plain if there were 18 before or after the pirates killed some. Nor did it say or how many crew members were killed.

Merritt, you've earned your passage with your good work on the ship. Thank you, Sammy." This was only about 5 years after the Statue of Liberty had been set in place. Sammy was about 18 years old.

By that time, the crew loved Sammy so much that they provided him with more decent clothing—though by no means the best. He went on shore fully dressed. The parting with his friends—for that was what these rough sailors had become—was painful, and many wept as they bade Sammy good-bye. This humble, Spirit-filled boy, by his influence and prayers, had opened their eyes to a higher plane of living than they had ever believed possible. Some of them became true penitents at Calvary's Cross.

Again it was Friday, Sammy's original Deliverance Day on September 27, 1891

New York

As soon as he disembarked the ship, Sammy called out to the first person he saw, "Where can I find Stephen Merritt?" Now, this man happened to be a homeless vagrant, and Stephen Merritt was the leader of a rescue mission named Bethel Mission. So this vagrant had been in that mission several times, and knew Stephen Merritt—another divine appointment in Sammy's life. The vagrant said to Sammy, "I'll take you to him for a dollar." After walking about 3 miles to 8th Avenue, Sammy and his companion reached Mr. Merritt's office—just as he was locking the door to leave for the day. The vagrant pointed to Mr. Merritt and said, "That's Mr. Merritt."

Sammy walked up to Stephen Merritt and said, "I am Samuel Morris. I have just come from Africa to talk with you about the Holy Spirit." Mr. Merritt had another appointment, so he took Sammy to the Mission next door to his office, and promised to see him later that evening.

"I want my dollar," called out the vagrant, who had been completely forgotten at the unusual meeting.

"Stephen Merritt pays my bills," replied Sammy. And his newly-found friend smiled and handed the vagrant a dollar.

It was about 11 o'clock before Mr. Merritt returned to the Mission. But what he saw, he never forgot: Sammy was standing in the midst of 17 men on their knees, with tears streaming down their cheeks, and they were humbly pleading for God's mercy. As Stephen Merritt looked, he saw Sammy's dusky face aglow with the light of Heaven. That meeting was so glorious that nobody wanted to leave. Sammy had not been in America but a few hours, and already he had won 17 men to the Lord Jesus Christ the Messiah, and that despite the fact that Sammy could barely speak English, and what he spoke had a strong accent.

Several times, Stephen Merritt himself had been arrested for keeping meetings open at a late hour. The judge had released Merritt with the understanding that he was to close his meetings at the mission at eleven o'clock sharp.

As they left the mission, Sammy marveled that they were to ride in such a fine carriage. "What beautiful horses!" Sammy exclaimed. He was fascinated by the beautiful team of horses that pulled the carriage, and he could not take his eyes off of them. He had never seen anything like that before. The gas light also fascinated him. "What makes the lights shine on the street?" he asked. When he was told, "They are gas lights," Sammy did not know the word *gas*.

By the time Mr. Merritt had gotten Sammy to his own home, it was past midnight, but his wife, Dolly, was still waiting up for him. When she heard her husband's footsteps, she opened the door to welcome him after his long hours of mission work in New York City. She could not hide her surprise when she saw a shabbily-dressed Black teenager with him. In an almost shocked tone of voice, she asked, "Who is this, Stephen?"

Stephen Merritt's answer was, "An Angel in Ebony."

Dolly stammered, "What are you going to do with him?" When Mr. Merritt told her that he was going to give him the bishop's room, Dolly responded, "Oh, no, don't do that."

Stephen Merritt was a good Methodist minister and home secretary to Bishop William Taylor. As Merritt was escorting

Sammy into his comfortable home, Sammy, who had never slept in a real bed before, offered to sleep on the hay in the barn next to the horses; he was still fascinated by the horses. However, Merritt would hear none of it. He took Sammy to the bedroom that was reserved for the bishop when he came to New York. But Sammy said, "When are you going to tell me about the Holy Spirit?"

"Not tonight, son, It's one o'clock in the morning, was Merritt's answer. "Good night."

But Sammy said, "Let's pray together." As he prayed, the Holy Spirit touched Merritt's spirit so much that he knew he had never before met God as he did in those few minutes of prayer with Sammy Morris. That day he came into a much deeper understanding of his heavenly Father.

The surroundings were so bewildering to the African lad that Mr. Merritt, much to his own amusement and enjoyment, had to help him prepare for the night.

The next morning, Sammy was missing. Merritt looked all through the house for his young friend, and finally found him in the stables. "What in the world are you doing here?" he chided Sammy. "I hunted the whole house for you."

"I came out here to see the horses. There was a man grooming/combing/brushing them, so I helped him," Sammy said. What a fascination Sammy had with the horses!

At breakfast that morning, Sammy, having had no food since Thursday evening (because Friday was his Deliverance-Day fast), ate heartily of Mrs. Merritt's cooking.

Mr. Merritt was scheduled that day to officiate at a funeral, and he decided to take his young guest along. Two other ministers were to assist, and Mr. Merritt went to pick them up in his carriage. As soon as they saw a poorly-clad Black boy in the coach of the home secretary of the bishop, they were extremely startled. At first they hesitated getting into the carriage, and their hesitation was very obvious. To relieve his own embarrassment and to put his friends at ease as they drove along, Mr. Merritt pointed out to Sammy various places of importance in the metropolis. But Sammy had not the slightest interest in the buildings. Suddenly he turned to

Mr. Merritt and asked, “Have you ever prayed in a coach?”

“No,” Mr. Merritt admitted.

“We will pray,” Sammy said, and Mr. Merritt stopped the horses and knelt down. Sammy prayed something like this: “Father, I wanted to see Stephen Merritt, so I could talk to him about the Holy Spirit, but He shows me the harbor, the churches, the banks and other large buildings, but says nothing to me about this Spirit I want to know more about. Fill him with yourself, so that he will not think, talk, write or preach about anything else.”

In all his former years of religious life, never had the presence of the Holy Spirit been so real to Stephen Merritt, as when this African youth, his soul aflame with love for God, prayed for him in such unusual surroundings. From that time, he was a changed man, and his ministerial friends noticed a blessedness about him they had never seen before.

When they proposed buying clothing for Sammy, they thought the best was none too good for this “Angel in Ebony”. Mr. Merritt dropped Sammy and the 2 ministers off at a clothing store to shop for new clothes for Sammy, while he ran another errand. When he came back, the 2 ministers presented him with a huge bill for buying Sammy “the best.”

Never had such a sermon come from the lips of Stephen Merritt, as the one he delivered at the funeral that day. So powerful was the operation of the Holy Spirit that many people knelt at the casket, repenting of spiritual coldness.

On Sunday, the boy accompanied Mr. Merritt to a Sunday school and Sammy was asked to talk about the Holy Spirit. The building was over-flowing with young people. Mr. Merritt introduced Sammy: “This is Samuel Morris. He has come from Africa to talk to your superintendent about the Holy Spirit. I have asked him to speak to you this morning about the things of the Lord.”

When the Sunday school students saw a Negro teenager mount up on the platform, they snickered. Sammy waited till everyone was quite. He started with these words: “I was born a prince...” telling the whole story. But when Sammy started speaking, his

words so touched their hearts that soon their snickering was changed to weeping. Everyone recognized the presence of God among them. When the bell rang for the class to end, no one moved. Sammy prayed. One by one, the young people surrounded Sammy, kneeling and asking God to accept them. Six hundred young people crowded around the altar, kneeling and weeping in prayer. The room was electric with the power of God. All this within 3 days after Sammy had arrived in America.

Sammy’s brief stay in New York was such a blessing and spiritual refreshment for Mr. Merritt that a fresh anointing rested upon him, and as a result, there were 10,000 conversions to Jesus Christ the Messiah before he left that church. Years later, Mr. Merritt wrote that many bishops had laid hands on him to anoint him, but none of them blessed him as the simple little 18-year-old Sammy.

Sammy Goes to College

In view of Sammy’s purpose in coming to America, Mr. Merritt decided that Taylor University, then located in Fort Wayne, Indiana, would be the place where Sammy could best receive a Christian education. He recommended Sammy to the school authorities as “a diamond in the rough”.

When Mr. Merritt proposed sending Sammy to Taylor University, no one was more eager to see him go than Mrs. Merritt, but not because she liked Sammy—she wanted him gone from her house. However, at Sunday dinner, it was Mrs. Merritt that asked Sammy to give thanks. He prayed such a simple, moving prayer that even Mrs. Merritt was moved to tears. The prejudice and reserve in her heart was wiped away. After dinner, Mrs. Merritt put her arm around the black boy, and said, “Our home is yours, Sammy. Whatever we have, we will share with you. Stay with us as long as you like.”

A “Sammy Morris Missionary Society” was formed, which took on itself the responsibility of providing Sammy with clothing,

books and the other things he would need at the college. There were so many gifts that they filled three trunks. Within a few days, Sammy was on his way to Fort Wayne, which he reached on Friday, his “Deliverance Day”.

When Dr. Reade, the president of the college, asked Sammy if he had any preference as to living quarters, Sammy answered. “If there is a room nobody else wants, give it to me.” Later, Dr. Reade, writing to a friend, said, “I turned away, for my eyes were full of tears. I was asking myself whether I was willing to take what nobody else wanted. In my experience as a teacher, I have had occasion to assign rooms to more than a thousand students. Most of them were noble Christian young ladies and gentlemen, but Sammy Morris was the only one of them who ever said, ‘If there is a room nobody else wants, give it to me’.”

At the university Sammy had difficulty getting adjusted. He could hardly read at all, and still had a poor command of the English language. A student said to him, be ready for breakfast in ten minutes, but Sammy said he did not know what 10 minutes is. Another person told him that the gas in the gas lights is poison, but he didn’t know what poison was. He was unable to fill out an application form. Even the college president was heavy-hearted because of this situation. On top of that, the college was in the throes of a financial struggle, and Sammy was a non-paying student.

An appeal was made for funds to educate the lad who had come from the jungles of Africa to learn about the Holy Spirit. The response was disappointing, until a butcher, Josiah Kichler, donated five dollars for what he termed the “Samuel Morris Faith Fund”. This act and name suggested a way to arouse interest in Sammy’s education and, when the “Faith Fund” was advertised as such, money was given in ever-increasing amounts. When Sammy was confronted with this fund, he said that the fund should be used to help all needy students, not just him.

One day Sammy asked Dr. Reade if he could get a job. “I want to earn money so that Henry O’Neil can come here to be educated. He is a much better boy than I am. He worked with me for Jesus in Liberia.”

It was decided that they pray about the matter, and the next day, Sammy, with a bright smile on his face, exclaimed, “Henry O’Neil is coming soon, my Father tells me.” Within a short time, Dr. Reade was informed that a missionary who had known both boys in Africa had returned to America and was arranging for Henry’s education in the United States.

Still, Sammy’s schooling posed serious problems, for what he had learned in Monrovia had been extremely elementary. He required special teachers. Again his Father provided for him: Several young Christian women volunteered to take turns teaching him.

Sammy heard of a Black church in Fort Wayne, and on his first Sunday at the college, he set out to attend it, but it was so far that he reached it late. The minister had just come to the pulpit when Sammy walked in. Instead of taking a seat, he walked right up to the pulpit and spoke to the minister: “I am Samuel Morris, and I’ve just arrived from Africa. I have a message for your people.”

“Do you have a sermon prepared?” the minister asked.

“No sermon, but I have a message,” Sammy replied.

Somehow, the minister was convinced that he should let Sammy speak. He began, not by preaching, but by talking to his Father. Quickly the church was filled with commotion as people got on their knees, weeping, praying, and shouting for joy. The church was revived, and the presence of God was so mightily felt that nobody wanted to go home. The people basked in the presence of the Lord. Sammy had appealed to their heavenly Father from the depths of his own soul, and they understood that Samuel Morris had spoken the language of the human soul. His intercession had been uttered in absolute faith, and the Spirit was there in answer to that child-like faith.

The results of such a revival could not be hidden, and local newspapers made known to a wide area the name of Sammy Morris, the young African attending Taylor University. Many persons came from far and near to visit him. Always courteous, but

not interested in mere chit-chat, he handed each visitor a Bible and requested that they read a portion out loud. In this way, he hid the Word of God in his heart.

A student in the college, with atheistic ideas, thinking he could confound the African lad by his arguments, asked for a personal confrontation with Sammy. When he came into his presence, Sammy according to his usual custom, handed him the Bible, requesting that he read a chapter. Instead, the older man threw the Bible on the table saying scornfully, “I never read that Book any more; I don’t believe a word it says.”

Sammy, astounded, was silent for a few minutes. Then, with tears coursing down his cheeks, he asked incredulously, “My dear brother, when your Father speaks to you, do you not believe Him? When your Brother speaks, do you not believe what He says? The sun shines, and do you not believe it? God is your Father; Jesus is your Brother, and the Holy Spirit is your Sun. Kneel down and let me pray for you.”

The Spirit of God smote the heart of the proud man and, before the end of the school year, he was converted and later became a bishop.

During Sammy’s career at the college, the financial condition became most acute, and it seemed the school must be closed. Interested persons felt this could not take place, with such a Spirit-filled student as Sammy Morris in attendance. The “Faith Fund” saved the college. So many donations were given that the trustees were able to purchase ten acres of ground for a new building/campus for the school in Upland, Indiana. Taylor University still stands there today—a memorial to the Negro youth who exemplified to his generation—and many succeeding ones—the possibilities and power of God’s grace. At the dedication of the new ground-breaking, Sammy was chosen to give the dedicatory prayer and preach a sermon.

Sammy loved this nation that had taken him to its heart. The changing seasons were sources of enchantment and gratitude. In Africa, the leaves don’t change color and fall in autumn. When

he first saw the leaves change color, and saw the beauty of the multi-colored landscape in the fall, he was astonished beyond words. Someone had to explain that the leaves fall in autumn and come out again in the spring.

He interpreted the falling snowflakes as messages from heaven, and once while in prayer, he fervently exclaimed, “A year here is worth a lifetime in Africa.” One time someone asked him if he liked eating turkey. His answer: “In Africa, we ate raw monkey; here we eat roast turkey.”

Kaboo Passes On

But the winters of the United States proved too rigorous for this child of the tropics, and a severe cold weakened his naturally-frail constitution. [He spent two winters in America.] He continued to attend classes and church services, but the fact that he was ill could not be hidden. He was taken to a hospital in Fort Wayne, where loving care did everything possible to save this “Angel in Ebony”.

At first, Sammy did not understand why prayer for his healing was unanswered. But when his heavenly Father tenderly revealed to him the fact that soon he would be in the City where the inhabitant shall not say, “I am sick,” he accepted with joy the knowledge that the purpose of God in his life had been fulfilled. On May 12, 1893, quietly and peacefully, he fell asleep in Jesus.

Blessings Continue After Sammy's Passing

1. Now, let's go back for just a moment to the atheist student whom Samuel Morris won/converted to the Lord Jesus during his college days. After the ex-atheist entered the ministry, one day, he was conversing with a radical unbeliever/atheist. The unbeliever became so angry that he struck a blow which knocked this former-atheist clergyman into unconsciousness. When his senses returned, his first impulse was to strike back. But just at that moment, he had a vision of Sammy under the blows of the drunken sea captain—then praying him into the kingdom of God. "If Samuel Morris could forgive that man," he thought, "can't I have the same spirit?" Struggling to his knees, he lifted his voice in prayer. So powerful was his prayer that soon the unbeliever was asking forgiveness for his display of temper, and he cried, "God, have mercy on a sinner such as I am."
2. Several years after Sammy's death, the ship captain who had brought him to America, visited Stephen Merritt. When he heard that his young friend was in Heaven, he burst into tears, saying that most of the sailors who had known the lad were still manning the same ship, and that his saintly influence had brought about permanent transformations among them.
3. After his brief contact with Sammy, Stephen Merritt himself entered into a new era of spiritual life. In a ministry among the mentally disturbed, he was so blessed that many healings came about as a result of his prayers.
4. Sammy's last resting place in Linden Wood Cemetery in Fort Wayne, Indiana, has become a "mecca" for many of both the White and Black races. The sacred influence of the Holy Spirit seems to linger around the spot, and conversions there have not been unusual.

5. Although Sammy himself never returned to his native land, others carried the Gospel torch into its darkness. At a prayer gathering soon after Sammy had passed away, a young man said, "I must go to Africa in Sammy's place. It is my prayer that the mantle of his simple faith will be thrown over me." At the same time, two others volunteered their services.
6. Because of the way the Samuel Morris Faith Fund was handled, it could be said that Sammy "saved" the whole university of financial collapse.

To any who doubt the validity of the remarkable incidents in the life of the "Angel in Ebony", the words of Dr. Reade are worthy of thought:

Most of us have gone too far away from simple child-like faith. God cannot do many mighty works in us because of our unbelief.

Published by:
Brother James
Knoxville, Tennessee, U.S.A.
printed: Tuesday, June 12, 2012

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French: *Sammy Morris Le Petit Nègre*

There is also a Chinese translation available.

Kaboo was born to a chief during a time of tribal wars in the jungles of Africa. This is a most astonishing account of this African teenager, who, after suffering unimaginable torture, escaped, and saw miracle after miracle happen to him. Prince Kaboo was filled with the Spirit of God, and was enabled to get almost instant answers to prayer.