

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

Women Heroes of the Faith**Lesson 4B - Ann Judson**

(Wife of Adoniram Judson, missionary to Burma)

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This lesson is a continuation of Lesson 4A, which is a must read to fully understand the whole story of Ann Judson.

The first order of business was to learn the language. It was not an easy task on several levels. Burmese books were written on palm leaves with engravings – no paper or ink. Sentences were written without breaks between words, without punctuation, and without capital letters, thus all the letters ran together making it very difficult to decipher. In Burmese there are eleven vowels and thirty three consonants. These are put together in so many different combinations that around one thousand characters must be learned to understand the written language. The young couple plunged into action, devoting hours every day to studying and subsequently mastering the language. Eventually, after acquiring a printer, Adoniram was able to write and print some gospel tracts which they regularly passed out to the lost Burmese people. He also began the arduous work of translating the Bible.

Language learning was just the beginning of the hardships the young couple would face as they worked to bring the light of the gospel to those in the darkness of Burma. Three times during the first ten years Ann became so ill she was forced to leave Burma, without her husband, in search of a climate where she could recover her health. Adoniram suffered from extreme headaches which were caused by his incessant studies. In the fall of 1815, they were blessed by the birth of a baby boy, Roger, only to be struck with grief eight months later as he passed on to eternity following a feverish illness. The young couple persisted in their service of the Lord in spite of this great sorrow. In 1819, Adoniram traveled to Chittagong (a twelve day journey by sea) in hopes of making contact with some Burmese Christians who lived there. The voyage was met with heavy winds that sent the ship far off course. For seven long months Ann had no word whatsoever concerning his whereabouts or whether he was even still alive. She stayed faithful to their work in Rangoon, while praying desperately for some news. Adoniram finally obtained passage back to Burma, though his trip, in addition to being fraught with danger and illness, was fruitless with regard to meeting the Burmese Christians.

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These hardships would have been more easily born had the Judson's had the joy of seeing regular converts and a church quickly established in Burma, but it was six long years before even one person called upon Jesus. Finally on April 30, 1819, MOUNG NAU came to saving faith. Ann wrote about this glorious and most sought for occasion:

"This event, this single trophy of victorious grace, has filled our hearts with sensations, hardly to be conceived by Christians in Christian countries. The circumstance has convinced us, that God can and does operate on the minds of the most dark and ignorant; and that he makes His own truths, his own word, the instrument of operation."

The newly saved man had this to say (as recorded by Ann in her letter):

"In our religion there is no way to escape the punishment due to sin; but, according to the religion of Christ, He Himself has died in order to deliver His disciples. I wish all the Burmans would become His disciples; then we should meet together as you in your country; then we should all be happy together in heaven. How great are my thanks to Jesus Christ for sending teachers to this country! And how great are my thanks to the teachers for coming."

After MOUNG NAU, a few others were converted, but the threat of persecution and even death for doing so was heavy upon them. In 1823, following the arrival of new missionaries, Adoniram decided he and Ann should hand over the Rangoon ministry to them and move to the capitol city, Ava. Ann explained his reason for doing so in the following letter:

"Mr. Judson has his boats in readiness to proceed to Ava, and tomorrow we go on board. He has obtained considerable favour from high officers in Government, and thinks our prospects at Ava very encouraging. The King's own brother, a very powerful prince, has his attention excited by the Christian religion, and has lately written a very affectionate letter to Mr. Judson, requesting his speedy return to Ava, and to bring with him all the sacred books."

Little did Adoniram and Ann realize that this move would introduce them to their greatest trial yet.

Shortly after their arrival in Ava, war between England and Burma broke out. All foreign men in the capitol city were under suspicion of being spies for the British and were subsequently arrested and questioned. Adoniram was no exception. On June 8, 1824, an officer and several other Burmans showed up at the Judsons' home and asked for "the teacher." They seized Adoniram, tied him with a chord, and led him away. As soon as they were gone, Ann destroyed all of her letters, journals, and any other writing she had so that the authorities would not be able to find any record or mention of correspondence with the English. She also hid Adoniram's New

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Testament manuscript by burying it in the garden. The next morning Ann discovered that Adoniram had been taken to the “death prison.” She desperately began taking every measure she could think of to try to get her husband released, daily pleading with authorities, bringing them gifts, and putting her own life at risk in attempting to go before the magistrate with her request. Her efforts were in vain. For the next seven months she visited the prison almost every day with what little food she could for her husband and the other prisoners, while continuing her efforts to beg for his release. A fellow-prisoner, an Englishman, later described her service as follows:

“Though living at a distance of two miles from our prison, without any means of conveyance, and very feeble in health, she forgot her own comfort and infirmity, and almost every day visited us, sought out and administered to our wants, and contributed in every way to alleviate our misery,”

The treatment of the prisoners was horrific. They were chained by their ankles to bamboo poles which were hoisted at night to the point where only the prisoners’ shoulders were left on the ground. The unsanitary, filthy, and sweltering conditions led to illness and death suffered by many of the prisoners. Ann wrote to her brother-in-law and told him the situation was “indescribable.” In the midst of these sufferings, Adoniram was worried about the New Testament manuscript which Ann had buried in the garden. He feared it would rot in the ground, so he had her sew it inside of a dirty, old pillow (one so dirty that none of the guards would even want to touch it) and bring it to him. When mid-January rolled around, Ann had to stop her visits to the prison because she was due to give birth any day. On January 26, 1825 little Maria Judson was born. Three weeks later, with Maria in her arms, she resumed her visits to the prison and her pleadings with the authorities.

On May 2, 1825, the prisoners were moved from the city of Ava to Oung-pen-la. With bare feet they were forced to walk on the hot, rocky road to their new location. The bottoms of their feet became raw with open cuts and blisters. The men were barely alive and in agony when they arrived at their new prison. Ann, with her three month old baby, began the journey the next day. Adoniram was shocked and dismayed when he saw her arrive that night. There was no place for her and the baby to stay. He could do nothing to protect them. Thankfully the jailer said she could come to his house, and that is where she ended up spending the next several months. These were even more trying months than those spent in Ava. There was very little food to procure to bring to the prisoners, and Ann battled such illness that she was bedridden for two of those months. Finally the Burmese government

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succumbed to the British. On November 5, 1825, Adoniram was freed from that awful prison. He was summoned to Maloun, where he was required to be a translator between the British and the Burmans for six weeks. During that time Ann, again being very ill, returned to Ava to wait for her husband. She spent much time in prayer for his safe return, until they were once again reunited. Of great joy to them was the fact that their close friend, Moung Ing, had recovered the pillow with the treasured manuscript from the death prison and had watched over it until their return.

After the war, things in Burma were more favorable for the spread of the gospel. Adoniram decided to move his family to Amherst, a city in a territory now under British rule, where there would be religious tolerance. Their plan was to establish a mission and as many schools as they could afford. They were overjoyed at the prospects. Unfortunately Ann never got to see their plans come to fruition. On October 24, 1826, at the age of 36, she stepped into eternity after having suffered from another violent illness. With a severely grieving heart, Adoniram wrote to Ann's mother of her death:

"...The doctor is decidedly of opinion that the fatal termination of the fever is not to be ascribed to the localities of the new settlement, but chiefly to the weakness of her constitution, occasioned by severe privations and long protracted sufferings which she endured at Ava. Oh, with what meekness, patience, magnanimity, and Christian fortitude, she bore those sufferings! And can I wish they had been less? Can I sacrilegiously wish to rob her crown of a single gem? Much she saw and suffered of the evil of this evil world; and eminently was she qualified to relish and enjoy the pure and holy rest into which she has entered. True, she has been taken from a sphere, in which she was singularly qualified, by her natural disposition, her winning manners, her devoted zeal, and her perfect acquaintance with the language, to be extensively serviceable to the cause of Christ; true, she has been torn from her husband's bleeding heart, and from her darling babe; but infinite wisdom and love have presided, as ever, in this most afflicting dispensation."

In Proverbs 31, the Bible describes the virtuous woman. It begins and ends with these verses, Proverbs 31:10-12 ***Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. 12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.*** Proverbs 31:27-31 ***She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. 29 Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. 30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.*** These verses provide a most fitting description of Ann Judson. She had been faithfully devoted to her husband and to the cause of Christ in Burma. She could say

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along with the apostle Paul, 2 Timothy 4:7 *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*

All of the frightening prospects Adoniram had written about to Ann's father when asking for her hand in marriage had come true. But also true, and cause for rejoicing and comfort, was the last sentence of that proposal letter in which he wrote of her ending up "*in the world of glory, with a crown of righteousness, brightened by the acclamations of praise which shall redound to her Saviour from the heathens saved, through her means, from eternal woe and despair.*"

Exactly six months after the death of Ann, little Maria joined her mother in heaven. Adoniram had suffered unspeakable loss. His devotion to Christ remained, however, and he continued his ministry in Burma for the rest of his life. He died on April 12, 1850, at the age of 62. He had completed the translation of the entire Bible into Burmese and had written a dictionary as well. His work and sacrifices had not been in vain; at the time of his death, there were more than 7,000 converts to Christianity and 63 established congregations in the country of Burma.

**All quotations are taken from the book, *Ann Judson, A Missionary Life for Burma* by Sharon James.

Notes

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Women Heroes of the Faith**Lesson 4B - Ann Judson**

Name _____

(*) if asterisk is shown in the question, scripture is required along with an answer in your own words.

1. Why are Gospel tracts so important in the spreading of the Gospel?

2. When Adoniram died what trophies was he and Ann able to present to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

3. Why did Adoniram travel to Chittagong?

4. Why was Adoniram arrested?

5. When did Burma become more favorable to spread the Gospel?

6. What did the conversion of MOUNG NAU teach Ann and Adoniran about God?

7. What were the 4 challenges Ann and Adoniram faced in trying to translate the Burmese language?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____

8. Where did Ann put Adoniram's New Testament after he was arrested?

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9. What was the great deed done by Moug Ing?

10. All of which Adoniram told John Hasseltine when asking for his daughters hand in marriage came true, yet what verse comes to mind for all her efforts?*

11. How many years past before Ann and Adoniram saw their first convert?

12. In what ways was Ann Judson a Proverbs 31 woman?

True/false

- There are 11 vowels in the Burmese language.
- Adoniram and Ann had 3 children, only 1 lived.
- When Adoniram was in prison, Ann would visit him daily even though she was ill.



Scripture memorization, write out these verses on the back on this page:
2 Timothy 4:7; Proverbs 31:10, 11, 12; Proverbs 31:27, 28, 30
(Must be in KJV)

Any questions?