

The Life of Adoniram Judson

by Thomas Sullivan

Thomas Sullivan's sermon explores the life and challenges of Adoniram Judson, highlighting his faith and perseverance as a missionary in Burma.

Duration: 53:31

Scripture: Judges 6:34, Romans 12:17, Galatians 5:22

Topics: "Biography"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chesky discusses the importance of reading and recommends a biography called 'To the Golden Shore' about a man named Judson. He mentions that people today are reading less due to the prevalence of iPods and MP3 players. Chesky also shares a story about a woman who visits prisoners and provides them with food in a private manner. He describes the distressing conditions in the prison, with over 100 prisoners cramped in one room during the hot season. Additionally, Chesky highlights Judson's leadership qualities and his tendency to view things in a negative light, contrasting him with another prisoner named Jonathan Price who remained optimistic.

Transcript

I'm going to pray again because this subject has affected me so much in the last number of years. I've wanted to teach this biography for a couple of years now. So I believe that there's something that can really make an impression on people here who are suffering.

Let's pray. Lord God, who is sufficient for these things, I am but a vessel and I'm delivering a message that is so far beyond me to comprehend. What biographers have called the most depressing story in the annals of American missionary history, the imprisonment of Adoniram Judson and Ava in Burma.

I pray that it could be useful to someone here this morning. In Jesus' name, Amen. In the year 1825, Ann and Adoniram Judson had just gotten back to Rangoon in the southern part of Burma.

And they had just spent two years in Ava. And Ann is writing to her family and she's reflecting on what they just went through for the last two years. And they thought we've lost a lot of ground.

Why did God in His providence allow us to go there? We're two years behind our task. And though she couldn't understand it, there's definitely lessons in what they went through in Ava that I think are applicable to us. But we have to do a brief biographical sketch of who Adoniram Judson is.

Judson showed some evidences of his great intellectual abilities at a young age. God's gift to him would enable him later to master that Burmese language and translate the Bible. He learned to read when he was only three years old.

While his father was absent on a journey, his mother conceived the idea of teaching her child in order that she might surprise her husband on his return. She succeeded so well that when his father came home, he greeted him by reading a whole chapter in the Bible. So that's at the age of three.

At the age of ten, he was sent to the home of a Captain Morton of whom he took lessons in navigation, in which he's said to have made great progress in the grammar school. He was noted for his proficiency in the Greek language. That's ten years old.

He entered into college at Brown University. The biographer Justin Edwards writes, it was at this period that French infidelity was sweeping over the land like a flood and free inquiry in matters of religion was supposed to constitute part of the education of every man of spirit. Young Judson did not escape the contamination, and the class above him was a young man by the name of Jacob Eames.

Keep that in mind because Judson is not converted at this time. This man is bringing him into infidelity. Eames was an amiable, talented, witty, exceedingly agreeable person in ways and manners, but who was a confirmed deist.

A very strong friendship sprang up between the two young men founded on similar tastes and sympathies, and Judson soon became at least professedly as great an unbeliever as his friend. So Judson goes through Brown University, and he has to give a speech at the end, and he veils his deism from his father. But about his 20th birthday, he broke his parents' heart with the announcement that he had no faith and that he intended to go to New York and learn to write for the theater, which he did six days later on a horse his father gave him as part of his inheritance.

But it didn't prove to be the life of his dream. He attached himself to some strolling players and, as he said later, lived a reckless, vagabond life, finding lodgings where he could and bilking the landlord where he found opportunity. That, discussed with what he found there, was the beginning of several remarkable providences.

So God had his hand on his life. You might say he was a hound of heaven. He went to visit his uncle Ephraim in Sheffield, but found there instead a pious young man who stunned him by being firm in his Christian convictions without being austere and dictatorial.

Strange that he should find this young man there instead of his uncle. The next night he stopped at a country inn. So he's on his way home.

It's too far to go, and he decides to spend the night at this country inn. The landlord mentioned as he assisted him to his room that he had been obliged to place him next door to a young man who was exceedingly ill, probably in a dying state, but he hoped that it would occasion him no uneasiness. It, however, was a very restless night.

Sounds came from the sick chamber, sometimes the movements of the watchers, sometimes the groans of the sufferer, but it was not these which disturbed him. He thought of what the landlord had said. The stranger was probably in a dying state, and was he prepared? Alone and in the dead of night, he felt ashamed that his atheistic beliefs were shallow.

What would his late companion say to his weakness? The clear-minded, intellectual, witty Eames, what would he say to such doubts? But still would think of the sick man. Was he a Christian, calm and strong in the hope of a glorious immortality, or was he shuddering upon the brink of a dark unknown future? Perhaps he was a free thinker. Educated by Christian parents, and prayed over by a Christian mother, the landlord had described him as a young man, and in imagination he was forced to place himself upon the dying bed, though he strove with all his might against it.

At last morning came, and the bright flood of light which had poured into his chamber dispelled all his superstitious illusions. As soon as he had risen from bed, he went in search of the landlord and inquired for his fellow lodger. So in other words, he's inquiring about the young man that he heard all night, and the innkeeper said, he's dead.

Dead? Yes, he's gone, poor fellow. The doctor said he would probably not survive the night. Do you know who he was? Oh yes, it was a young man from Rhode Island College, a very fine fellow.

His name was Eames. Judson was completely stunned. After hours had passed, he knew not how he attempted to pursue his journey.

But one single thought occupied the mind, and the words dead, lost, lost. So he's in an awakened spiritual condition. He returns home, and his father, a congregational pastor, has a couple of visitors, Edward Griffin and Moses Stewart.

Some of you would probably be familiar with Edward Griffin. His sermons have been published by the Banner of Truth. And both of these men have connections with Andover Theological Seminary.

And Judson isn't even a Christian, but they make a special arrangement at the age of 20 for him to go to Andover Theological Seminary. And remember, this man has a really great mind. He's not easily brought to the Christian faith.

He has so many questions. And there's a professor there at Andover Theological Seminary named Leonard Woods. That name is almost completely unheard of now, but Leonard Woods was a solid, Reformed, and Calvinistic theologian.

He lived at the same time as Charles Hodge. And I've often found it amazing that his works have never been put in print. I have a number of them myself.

But Woods was very much Judson's equal and was able to answer all of his doubts. In May of 1809, he committed his life to Christ and at the same time consecrated himself to the Christian ministry. At the age of 21, he began to think about the mission field.

This required great heroism since no missionary had ever left what was then America for any heathen land. So Judson was among the first ever to go from the American shores to the mission field. In 1812, he marries an Anne Hasseltine, and just 14 days later they board a ship to Calcutta.

On a long voyage, Judson had plenty of time to ponder and study. Part of his struggles was what to do with the children of converted heathens. Should their parents become Christians? Remember, he's raised by a congregational pastor.

He is not a Baptist. So he's studying out the subject, and he knows he's going to meet William Carey when he goes to India, who is a Baptist. He has plenty of time to study.

And by the time he gets to India, he becomes a Baptist. But he has a very tender conscience now because he's being funded by people who are not part of any Baptist church or denomination. And he realizes he has to tell the truth about his new convictions even though his funding is going to be cut off.

Anyway, the company welcomed by William Carey were not welcome in Calcutta. India was ruled by the East India Company, which was opposed to the introduction of missionaries, especially of Americans. To put this in context, it was around the time of the War of 1812, and because of the ramifications of that war partly between Britain and America, and the East India Company at this time controlled a lot of the trade in India and there was some relation, Americans weren't welcome there, and he had an order after a while that he has to return to America.

So he's made all of this effort to get there, only to be told that he has to return. But through some difficulty, he procured a passport to board a ship to what is called the Isle of France. There they spent four months, and the only vessel they could go on was leaving to Rangoon in Burma, which is interesting because that was Judson's original intentions to go to Burma.

He had read a book some years earlier called *A Star in the East*, and this book spoke of Burma and got him interested in missions there, but he was warned by William Carey, no missionary has ever had any success in Burma. Nobody has ever been able to stay there long enough. He was told he mustn't go.

What's interesting about this, you hear this, we throw this term around, God has given us an open door, and we have to be very careful how we use that term because if Judson had said, I'm proceeding because I have an open door set before me, he never would have done anything. There were so many obstacles in this man's path in order to get to Burma and in Burma to set up any kind of a mission. So they reached Rangoon and take possession of the English Baptist mission house that had been occupied by the son of William Carey.

This young man was temporarily absent and soon afterward resigned the mission in their favor and entered the service of the Burmese government. The Judsons learned the language during their time in Rangoon and spent a total of ten years there. During that time, Ann was taken ill, and in the early 1800s, when you're taken ill, you don't have any kind of medicine like we do today, a lot of times they went out to sea in hopes that the fresh air and the mist of the water would revive them, and she ends up going back to the United States.

And what's good about that, she's gone for two years. She decides that she has to extend her stay there, but while she's there, she wrote a book on the Baptist missions in Burma and stirred up a lot of interest in the work they were doing and raised funds. Back in those days, there was a magazine that tracked missionary work called *The Panoplist*.

I have a copy of this magazine. These magazines, they get bound into hardcover, and I actually have *The Panoplist* for the year that Judson writes to the United States and records his conversion to baptism. So now there's some interest in what they're doing in Burma, and funds are being raised.

But what was interesting as well is in those days, you didn't have e-mail. It was two years before they had had any correspondence from the United States of any sort with any kind of information about funds, with

anything from the family. After Mrs. Judson's departure, Mr. Judson had been left alone in Rangoon for nearly four months and continued his labors in complete solitude.

Through a number of interesting circumstances, his attention has turned from Rangoon to Ava and decided to plan a mission in the capital city. At this time, he had already translated much of the New Testament into Burmese. The reason he has to go to Ava while Anne was away, there's a Jonathan Price who comes to Burma to labor with him, and he's a missionary doctor and has some reputation for being able to assist people with cataract surgery.

How successful he was at this is kind of interesting. I might get into that later on. But anyway, this word gets to the capital, the government in Ava, and they ask him to come there because they need his assistance.

And Judson decides he needs to go with him because he needs a translator. So they end up in Ava. So now we pass from the record of his activities to the story of his sufferings.

When Mr. and Mrs. Judson left Rangoon to establish their home in Ava, the outlook was encouraging. They'd left behind them a small but vigorous church of 18 converted Burmans. They had been invited by the king to live in the capital city and received from him a plot of ground on which to build a mission house.

They felt sure of royal protection and favor. A dark cloud, however, was gathering on the horizon. War was impending between Burma and the English government in India.

For two years, the Christians of America were praying for them, and they were in suspense because they couldn't hear anything. When the war actually broke out, suspicion fell at once on all the white foreigners residing in Ava. For the history of a lot of this, I'm thankful to Larry Larson for providing this book, Henry Gouger, *A Personal Narrative of Two Years' Imprisonment in Burma*.

I borrowed that from Larry, and it supplied a lot of information. Gouger was British, so of course he was suspect to the government of Ava, and he wondered would the Americans escape scrutiny, but it was discovered that they had received some money from Britain. And it wasn't because they were doing anything wrong.

They were probably being assisted in their missionary efforts, but they were looked at now as spies. I was seized, Dr. Judson writes, on the 8th of June, 1824, in consequence of the war with Bengal and in company with Dr. Price, three Englishmen, one American and one Greek, were thrown into the death prison at Ava where we lay 11 months, nine months in three pairs and two months in five pairs of fetters. The scenes we witnessed and the sufferings we underwent during that period, I would feign consign to oblivion.

In other words, he didn't want to talk about it. The only reason we know about it, for one, this book, and also because Ann Judson later on wrote a very lengthy letter to Adenarm's brother detailing the sufferings. During this time, Ann did all she could to secure the release of Adenarm, but could do nothing.

Writing to her brother, she says, I then procured an order from the government for my admittance into prison, but the sensations produced by meeting your brother in that wretched, horrid situation and the affecting scene which ensued I will not attempt to describe. Mr. Judson crawled to the door of the prison, for I was never allowed to enter, gave me some directions relative to his release, but before we could make any arrangement, I was ordered to depart by those iron-hearted jailers who could not endure to see

us enjoy the poor consolation of meeting in that miserable place. So these words aren't going to do this justice, so I'm trying to help you out with a couple of pictures.

All of these pictures came from books.google.com. Though this book has been reprinted, all these books are available in the public domain. This is the actual prison artist sketch in Burma. It says the top prison among a barbarous people.

The official biography of Judson is written by Francis Whelan. This is volume one of two, so it's 800 pages. He writes, Imprisonment among a semi-barbarous people is something very different from confinement.

It is confinement embittered by every device of malicious and brutal cruelty. And Anne said, The situation of the prisoners was now distressing beyond description. This is an artist's sketch of what the inner prison was like.

Remember, it rarely got below 100 degrees at night, 108 during the day. At night, they had perfected this torture here where the fetters that were binding their ankles had a pole placed through it and they would be raised at just the right height. So these men had to sleep at night with their shoulders on the ground, their head on the ground, and their feet up in the air day after day after day.

These people over here in stocks. So Anne is like the importunate widow in Luke 18, pleading with the judge for some mercy, getting them food. If they didn't have food from an outside source, it wasn't going to be supplied by the jailers.

She says, I ought to, however, mention that by my repeated visits to the different members of government, I gained several friends who were ready to assist me with articles of food, though in a private manner. Now, during this time, she gives birth to a baby girl and couldn't visit the prison much until the baby was two months old. The situation of the prisoners was now distressing beyond description.

It was at the commencement of the hot season. There were above 100 prisoners shut up in one room without a breath of air excepting from the cracks in the boards. I sometimes obtained permission to go to the door for five minutes when my heart sickened at the wretchedness exhibited.

The white prisoners, from incessant perspiration and loss of appetite, looked more like the dead than the living. I made daily applications to the governor, offering him money, which he refused, but all that I gained was permission for the foreigners to eat their food outside, and this continued but a short time. The governor, think about Luke 18, was eventually worn out by Ann's entreaties, and for a time she was given permission to go in and out of the prison at will to administer medications.

This is Henry Gouger's description. There are four common prisons in Ava, but one of these only was appropriated to criminals likely to suffer death. It derives its remarkably well-selected name, and literally interpreted, In other words, don't spare.

From the revolting scenes of cruelty practiced within its walls, this was the prison to which I was driven. Now this is so interesting. I love the early 19th century, the way that they could find words to describe what you're going through.

They had such a good command of the English language, and if you read these books, for example, The Life of Stonewall Jackson by Dabney, if for no other reason to increase your English vocabulary, you haven't wasted your time, but this is before he's actually thrown into the prison, and he's, we'll say, under

arrest, and this is what's going through his mind. It is a misfortune to a man when he's thrown into circumstances of distress which he cannot see the end, to have his perceptions too acute, penetrating in perception for the occasion, to try to trace and to reason them through various uncertain phases to a resolution either favorable or disastrous to himself. You know, as I read that, I thought about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, but all of Jesus' fears were appropriate.

I mean, he knew exactly what he was going to suffer. This is a thing that goes through a mind of a man who thought he might be beat to death the next day or some other cruel form of torture, and his mind is very, very active. This is just a description of what the place smelled like.

This stench was absolutely indescribable, for it was not like anything which exists elsewhere in creation. I will therefore give the facts and leave the reader's nose to understand them by a synthetic course of reasoning if it can. The prison had never been washed nor even swept since it was built, so I was told and have no doubt it was true, for besides the ocular proof from its present condition, what I could see with my eyes, it is certain no attempt was made to clean it during my subsequent tenancy of 11 months.

This gave a kind of fixedness or permanency to the fetid odors until the very floors and walls were saturated with them and joined in emitting the pest, putrid fumes from thousands of tobacco pipes, the scattered ejections of the pulp and liquid from their everlasting pepper plant, and other nameless abominations still more disgusting to which strode the floor. And if this be added, the exsolution from the bodies of a crowd of never-washed convicts encouraged by the thermometer at 100 degrees, and it in almost without ventilation, is it possible to say what it smelled like? As might have been expected from such a state of things, the place was teeming with creeping vermin to an extent that very soon reconciled me to the plunder of the great portion of my dress. In other words, as this stuff got into their hair, you know, this is just a huge mess to live with this stuff, but on top of that, you know, you're fettered.

They had to shave the hair off of their heads. But he says, this is just merely superficial. Its hidden secrets had yet to be learned.

All think into insignificance before the awful thought that soon, perhaps in a few hours, all affinity with this world's cares and troubles would cease and he should be summoned into eternity. Now he's starting to wonder, am I really a Christian? I've been raised with this stuff. But in a few hours, I could stand before God.

Do these things really have their proper impression on my heart? I must make my honest confession that I felt the force and value of those sacred truths which I'd so often heard but so little regarded. A thoughtless, careless life absorbed in the pursuits of this world to the utter neglect of a future one is a sad position from which to contemplate the sudden change to eternity. I felt it to be truly so.

No one can enter completely into the thoughts and feelings and imagination of a person in this fearful position. It is useless to attempt to describe them for words cannot convey an idea of the intensity of the struggle between doubt and hope and fear which by turns flits across the unprepared soul in the prospect of its immediate change. I think about the words of the Baptist theologian, Andrew Fuller.

We have only so much religion as we can command in the day of trial. In modern English he says, everything that we know, everything that we read, all of our devotions and so on, if they do not withstand trial, they are not doing us a lot of good. This is such an amazing quote from him because I think about the amount of time that we spend on these theological discussion lists.

This week I was studying a course on John Owen and I hear that somebody is writing a PhD dissertation on John Owen's view of the Sinaitic Covenant. And then he says, The theology of learned schoolmen was as nothing to me now. It was not a time to reflect on their subtle reasonings and nice doctrinal distinctions.

But I felt that my religion was nothing if it failed to afford me consolation at such a time as this. I think I need to think about that a little bit more. Sometimes I think we have way too much time on our hands with some of the discussions that we have.

And this man had probably heard some of these things and he is saying, all that matters right now is, am I on the right foundation? Am I prepared to meet God? And as bad as it was, their condition even got worse. And this is so interesting to me. I thought about this a lot as I thought about the case of the Mejias.

With all that they've gone through and it just seems like another billow rolls over them. And I think, can it get any worse? And I think this is such an interesting observation. There is no lot which man has to sustain in this life so wretched that it is incapable of becoming worse.

In our discontented imaginations, we may think we have reached the bottom of the pit and be disposed to defy fate to make us more completely miserable. But in this we are mistaken. Someone looked for mischance sends us still lower and shows us that no line can sound the depths of the calamities to which human life is liable.

So what could he possibly mean? I understand his, if I remember right, his house had burned down. And again, he was suspected of having somebody burn his house down to destroy the evidence. So he's very fearful.

At all times he's fearful, but now he thinks, this is really going to go against me because I'm going to be examined very scrupulously. There are things in this book about what went on in this prison that I would not even repeat in the Sunday school about how people were tortured. It was so bad.

And while he was hanging upside down there, he could hear some of the cries of the torturers that were going outside. But as he was moved to the inner prison, his condition was more comfortable, but now he could see what was going on outside. And some of the things that he saw were so abominable that he says, it is inconceivable what a human being can do to another human being because of our depravity.

I have at the top here, all things work together for good. As Goudger got sick in prison at one time, the guards thought, now he's going to die, so they moved him into the inner prison. It reminds me of the superstitions of the Jews as they were persecuting Jesus and about to crucify him.

What a kangaroo court that he had received and the superstitions of these heathens in Burma. They had a rule in Burma that if you died in your cell in prison, the government wouldn't pay for it if they wrapped him in a mat and buried him. But if he's moved into the inner prison, the government will provide for the mat and all of the things if he happens to die there.

I have no understanding of the purpose of that, but because he was moved into the inner prison and because of the way that the air flowed, it was able to restore his health. Though when he was moved to the inner prison, he thought, this is really going to work against me. They certainly have something on me now and I'm about to die.

But instead he reflects, how often we are wrong in the conclusions we come to when appearances are against us. Excuse me. How often an event which comes in the guise of an enemy proves to be our best friend.

In this instance, the very act which in human reasoning ought to have deprived me of life, he thought he was going to die, was overruled to be the one which preserved it. So if he wasn't moved into the inner prison, he probably would have died. One more reflection from Gouger.

Abandon hope all ye who enter here. That's from Dante's Inferno. Because when I read this, it kind of reminded me like this is kind of a type of hell.

But hell is so much worse because there's no hope whatsoever. It would be most agreeable if I could vary this monotonous history by recounting some act of grace, some relief to suffering, some symptom of commiseration. But we were in a place where the accents of sympathy were never heard and where the light of hope is almost excluded.

And then it got worse again. The prisoners were placed on a death watch and marched from Eva to Amarapura to what was called Umpenlan Prison. It's six miles.

Picture this. Maybe it's 105 degrees. You're not wearing any shoes.

You've hardly had any exercise. You barely can walk. You've had fetters on your feet, and they're marched to the second prison.

And as a result, the hot burning sand and so on, the skin of their feet is completely worn off. They're leaving a trail of blood in the sand. The account given by Mr. Judson of his sufferings, he said he was dragged from the prison and they were stripped of their clothes and they were driven under a boiling sun over the hot sand and gravel until their naked feet were all one wound, and they earnestly longed for death to put an end to their tortures.

One biographical account said that he had told Ann that if he could have, he would have tossed himself into the river and ended it all, but had too much conviction that a Christian should not take his own life, and it kept him going. When night came on, finding that one of the prisoners had dropped dead and that the others were utterly unable to walk, their driver had halted till the next morning and then conveyed them the remainder of the distance in carts. On arriving and seeing the dilapidated condition of the prison, they confidently thought that they had been brought here for execution and tried to prepare themselves to meet a dreadful and perhaps lingering death.

But then somebody came and started fixing up the prison and whenever these men were about to give up hope, something would happen and they were able to keep going on for a length of time. In fact, I haven't mentioned this book, *To the Golden Shore*. We have copies of it in the library.

I know that Pastor Chansky has read it, I know Larry has read it, and I know the Christians have read it. And for being written by a man who doesn't profess to be a Christian, you wouldn't know that from reading this book. He's so faithful to the subjects in which he treats.

And I would recommend that book if you want to read a biography of what is going on. But there's a cage brought outside of the prison and inside of the cage is a lion and these men fear that they're going to be fed to the lion. And they try to sleep at night and they hear this lion outside and he's roaring and day after

day passes and nothing happens and the lion is hungry and slowly dying of hunger.

And they don't understand what's going on. There's not a lot of communication. Eventually, the lion is so hungry they try to feed it something, but it's already so far gone that as they remove the lion from the cage, Judson gets the idea to ask them if he might be put in the lion's cage because it's going to be a far more comfortable prison than where he was at that time with the fetters and everything.

To him, it was a palace after what he had been in to be in the lion's cage. But as the war progressed and Rangoon is taken and word keeps being received by the king that he's losing his generals, they realize that as this commander Archibald Campbell is approaching that they're going to have to negotiate terms of peace. And this was how Judson slowly got out of prison, slow at first because he was still a prisoner but not in fetters.

He's brought to the capital to translate. And as the story goes on, his condition doesn't get any better, but the British keep making more and more demands, and they realize they're conquered and they're going to have to give them what they want. And Archibald Campbell, I believe that was his name, said that any prisoner in your midst who wants to go free should be allowed to go free.

And Judson doesn't want to make it appear to the king that he's anxious to go free. He doesn't want to say anything against his own well-being, so he says, well, my wife has suggested that she would like to be free from here, and obviously if she goes to the British ship, I should go with her. And so by that he's released.

So let me read it again. He was instructed by the English general that every foreigner who wished to leave the country must be permitted to go or peace would not be made. The members of government now had recourse to solicitation and promised to make Mr. Judson a great man if he would remain.

To avoid the shame of expressing a wish to leave His Majesty's service, he told him that Sir Archibald had ordered that all who desired it should go, that his wife had often expressed that desire, that she should therefore be given up and that he must follow. The prisoners were then all released, and on a cool moonlight evening, with hearts overflowing with gratitude and joy, they took their passage down the Irrawaddy, bidding a final adieu to the scene of their sufferings, the golden city of Ava. You know, it's kind of interesting.

You wonder, you know, how would you take advantage of that? Now you've gone down a boat on the Irrawaddy River. You're in a ship. The British hear your story and are so overwhelmed with it that anything you want.

You can have the captain's bed to sleep on tonight. You can have the best of food. And Gallagher actually said that because of the sufferings, because of how frail his body was, he knew that to eat really good food right now would probably kill him.

And he didn't want to sleep on the bed. He said, if I could just sleep on the floor of the ship, I'd be very happy with that. Well, I want to call attention to Ann Judson a moment.

There's a missionary course that's offered from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. It's a history of missions, and he said that Ann Judson is probably one of his, the ladies he respects the most in all the annals of American history. The things that she had to do in order to keep her husband alive almost cost her her own life, and 11 months after they were released, eventually took her health anyway.

For example, when they were in prison in Nungpin Law, she had set up a place for herself to stay and became so sick that she couldn't nurse this baby. Remember, the baby is three months old. And so this baby is crying at night.

It doesn't have any milk to drink. And the prison guards show some mercy, and because of Judson's incessant, I mean the baby's incessant cries allow Judson to go at night with the baby and try to find anybody that could nurse it. And Ann was pretty much immobile for one or two months.

It almost killed her, you know, the heat. Before she set up a place at the prison, she'd be going back and forth two hours a day in the heat with this three-month-old baby. Her pleas with the Burmese government to show mercy to her husband, pleading with them that they weren't British spies, that we were American missionaries.

And I came across this tribute to Ann Judson, which appeared in a letter in Calcutta, India, after the war. It was written by a fellow prisoner of Mr. Judson. Mrs. Judson was the author of those eloquent and forcible appeals to the government which prepared them by degrees for submission to terms of peace, never expected by any who knew the hideous and inflexible pride of the Burman court.

The overflowing of grateful feelings on behalf of myself and fellow prisoners compelled me to add a tribute of public thanks to that amiable and humane female who, though living at a distance of two miles from our prison without any means of conveyance and very feeble in health, 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. When we were all left by the government destitute of food, she, with unwary perseverance by some means or other, obtained for us a constant supply. When the unfeeling avarice of our keepers confined us inside or made our feet fast in the stocks, she, like a ministering angel, never seized her applications to the government until she was authorized to communicate to us the grateful news of our enlargement or of a respite from our galling oppressions.

Besides all this, it was unquestionably owing in a chief degree to the repeated eloquence and forcible appeals of Mrs. Judson that the untutored Burman was finally made willing to secure the welfare of his country by a sincere peace. What's so amazing as I consider what this lady had went through, that baby died two months after Ann died. They had already lost two children, one on the way to Burma, a girl, and in between India, remember they went to India first and then took a ship in the Bay of Bengal to Burma and lost a little boy.

And she had written in her diary about how she looked at this boy that he was going to be our all joy, but God was pleased to show us our mistake and took him away from us. She said, Oh, may it be improved for our good and may God be pleased to withhold his hand and may we learn the things that he wants us to learn from this. Infant mortality was so common in that days.

There's so much more to this story. I wanted to focus on the imprisonment because Judson eventually married again to a widow of another missionary who was in Burma, ministering among the Karen people. His name was Dana Boardman.

His wife's name was Sarah. And it wasn't until 1831, remember it was 1825 when they got back to Rangoon, it was six years later before they really started to see the fruit of their labor in Burma. Today there are 3,700 congregations in Burma in the Baptist mission that all owe their beginnings to his diligence in translating of the Scriptures.

Remember the Bible says, unless the seed falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. And as Piper points out, how many times did Piper have to die in Burma it seemed? So many times that he went through so much.

I mean, even before he got to Burma just to raise the funds to be able to go, he went to England on a trip to try to raise funds. And then on the way to India, becomes a Baptist and all his funds are taken away. He was really shut up to the hand of God in everything that they were going to do.

One thing Piper pointed out in his biography of Adam and Iron Judson is comparatively we're so soft in America. He says, we may decide, I'd like to try this missionary work for six months or a year or something like that. But he says, I could imagine a missionary getting bent out of shape if that email wasn't received right away.

Remember, it was two years before Judson had any kind of intelligence at all from the United States. They didn't mark time the same way that we do here. If you got sick, you would go out on a ship for six months and hope that the fresh air would revive you, and then you've lost six months and then you just begin again.

So they had to persevere through all of that. Another thing you have to consider, Judson had to die to his own personal desires for two years while his wife was in the United States, which would be another death if you're a chaste man. And then he had to wait for her to return, and she had extended her stay in America.

And as I read this, it makes me feel pretty small, but I am thankful that God raised up men like this who had that kind of Christian mettle. And even after William Carey had warned him, you cannot go to Burma. A mission cannot be accomplished in Burma.

So one thing Judson had going for him, it was a weakness as well as a strength, is he was more of a leader than a follower of directions. And what's amazing about Gouger in this book is his understanding of analyzing other people. Judson had his faults in many ways, so much so that his defects became a continual martyrdom for him, as Gouger put it, because of the way that he viewed things in prison.

You know, some people are very introspective, and they're always looking at the dark side, and that was Judson, where Jonathan Price was extremely sanguine. It's almost a comedy because these men were so pressed together at night, and Jonathan Price had this habit at night where he would sleep with his knees up against his face. In prison he couldn't do that, so he'd have these bad dreams, and he'd kick the people next to him.

They had to endure all of that. There was one guy who even survived by eating one grain of rice per day in this prison, and eventually became blind because of a vitamin deficiency. And you say, well, you know, why does God allow all of that to go on? You couldn't say, strictly speaking, that they were persecuted for righteousness' sake.

They weren't thrown in prison specifically because they were Christians. They were thrown in prison because they were spies, and yet God still had his purpose. And one of the things that came from this is this intelligence was received back in the United States.

A great deal of money poured in for the cause of missions in Burma, and that assisted them a lot. But what was interesting is Anne interceded for them. She didn't have a lot of food, but she had plenty of resources,

and so much of the time she got their alleviation by giving them money because these people loved to have bribes or anything that they could get.

It's one of the things that kept them alive. I've got a couple of minutes if anybody has a pressing question. I did want to mention one other thing.

When I commenced this study, I said this is one of the most depressing stories in the annals of missionary history. Remember these biographies were written about 1850 and so on. Since then there was a book called *Tortured for Christ* by Richard Wurmbrand, the guy who founded the Voice of the Martyrs, and it's probably at least as depressing a history.

But the impression it made on me is how these people manifested the fruit of the Spirit under intense persecution. And to Richard Wurmbrand it was so important that he saw these people as heathen, under darkness, duped by the God of this world, and he refused to hate them. He refused to repay evil for evil.

And all I can say when I reflect on that is as our days are, so shall our strength be. And when we're ever called to any kind of persecution for the faith, I trust that we would manifest that kind of fruit of the Spirit. Brethren, I'm telling you, it smites my heart because I know in my own heart I have a long way to go.

But I hope this has still been helpful for me. Even if I wouldn't have been able to borrow this book from Larry, he had called my attention to it a few weeks back. It still had been on my heart for some time to tell you this story because this is our heritage.

This is the first Baptist missionary that we've sent out from America. And you can do a search on Google and Judson's name turns up all over the place, and yet we hardly know anything about this guy. Go ahead, Pastor Chansky.

Just to put in a plug for our reading about our heritage, it's happened today that iPods and MP3 players have in many ways resulted in people's not reading at a very disturbing rate. And that ought not be the case among God's people. And just to help to you, this book Tom referred to by Courtney Anderson called *To the Golden Shore*, which is available in our bookstore, it is a real page turner.

I think it's about 500 pages, isn't it, Tom? But you can't put the things out until you get past the first 30 or 40 pages. So take up and read and peruse that bookstore and make sure that you as a family are a reading family. As a young person, you're a reading young person because these resources are a great windfall to our souls.

Brother Larry, could you close our time in prayer for us? Father in heaven, we thank you for this story that we've heard and how you worked in days past, how you raised up those to go and spread the truth among pagans, among those who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ. Lord, we thank you for their commitment. Thank you for Aaron Judson and his commitment to the truth and his suffering that he went through because of his love for you.

We pray that these things would touch us even now and that we could grow from these stories and we could have a greater fervency for you, Father, who have died for all people of all kindred and tongue and nations. And we pray that even in our day that the gospel would go forth in power, that those many churches in Burma, that you would keep them faithful today and that your people there would be made strong. And we just pray that you bless the missionary efforts, Father.

They go out, we pray that more would go, that you touch hearts, that you have a burden for sending the gospel, Father. We just pray for this. We thank you, Lord, for Brother Tom and his laboring for us this morning.

Thank you for these things that we've learned. We pray that you'd use them in our lives. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

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