

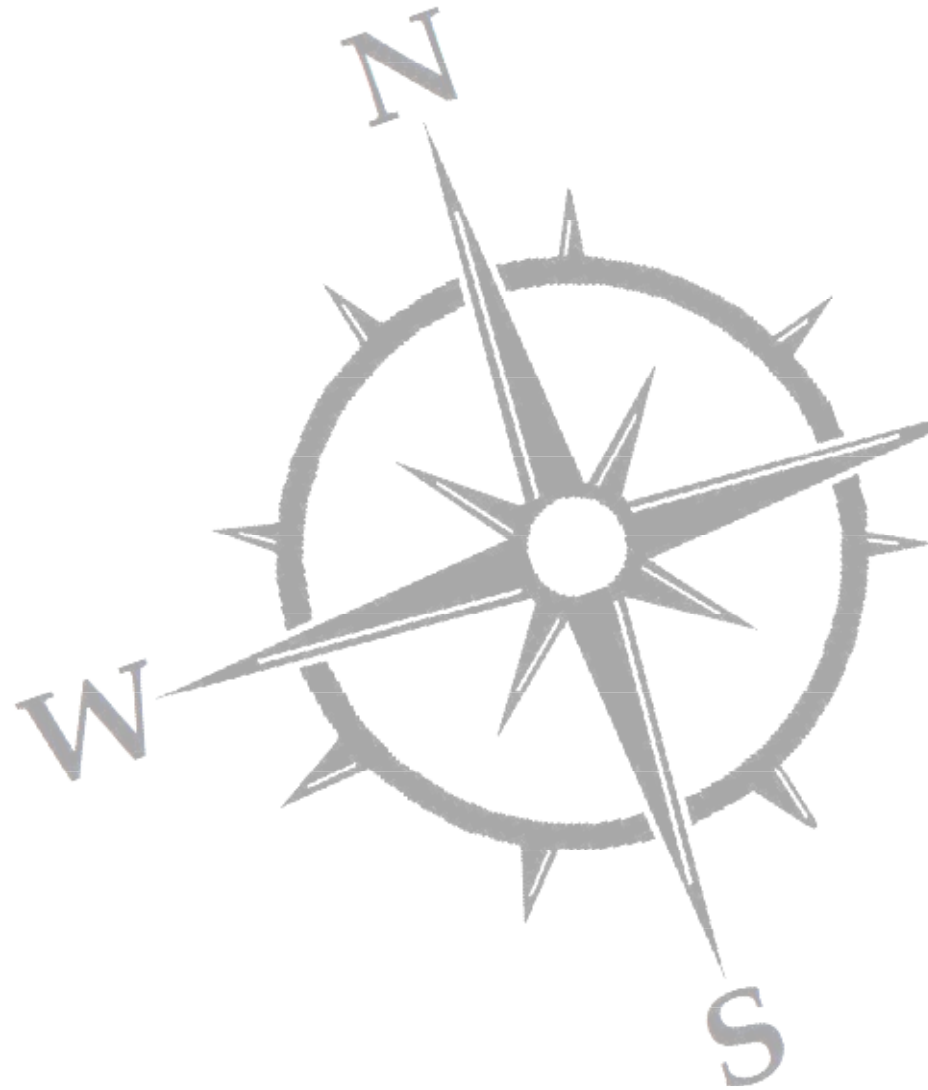
The Life of Adoniram Judson

(1788–1850)

Lesson: 2.9 – Endurance
Missionary Spotlight Series

This story reminds us not to quit in the service of the Lord. The Devil often uses opposition to the cause of Christ to discourage us and make us want to stop. The Bible reminds us that Christians are soldiers for the Lord. Christians are to endure and not give up even when the fight is tough. Adoniram Judson kept on serving the Lord even when things got difficult.

“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” – Galatians 6:9







Who remembers where we left off last week?

(Read the last paragraph from last week's lesson to begin this lesson as a review).

Let-may-yoon was the name of the worst prison in all of Burma. The words "let-may-yoon" actually meant "death prison." I was given no trial or jury. The governor of Ava just decided that because I looked like an Englishman, I was a spy...and the only place for a spy was prison. I was dragged by the soldiers to a cart that was waiting just outside the courthouse.

The prison was not a long way off from the courthouse and we arrived there pretty quickly. There was a man standing at the gate. He was one of the spotted faces with the circles tattooed on his cheeks. I noticed the word "loo-that" tattooed on his chest. "Loo-that" meant murderer. He told me his name was Aphe and he chuckled with an evil kind of laugh as he opened the gate of the prison. Spotted faces were criminals

of all sorts. The spotted faces did not run the prisons very well and they were not kind at all to the other prisoners.

Once I had gone through the gate, I was taken into the courtyard of the prison to a large flat stone. I had heard of the many kinds of torture that these prisons were famous for and wondered if this is what was coming next for me. Aphe commanded the other spotted faces to put shackles around my ankles. They all laughed as I tried to walk in them and kept tripping.

From there I was taken down some stairs and through a door into a prison cell. It smelled just awful. It reminded me of how that cell I had stayed in on board the L'invincible Napoleon had smelled. The smell alone would make you sick. The cell had no windows. Once they had shut the door and my eyes adjusted to the darkness, I could faintly see that I was in a cell with at least forty other people. Right near where I was sitting I saw my friend Henry Gouger sitting against the wall. Next to him, I saw Captain Laird who had captained one of the ships I had been on.

About one hour after I arrived, the door was opened and Jonathan Price was brought in. The guard then lowered a bamboo pole down from the ceiling in the center of the room. The pole had chains attached to it. In order to keep us from trying to escape each night, the guards chained our feet to the pole and then raised it up in the air so that just our neck and shoulders touched the ground. We kind of hung upside down to go to sleep. Once they left, the only sound I heard were the rats running around in our

cell.

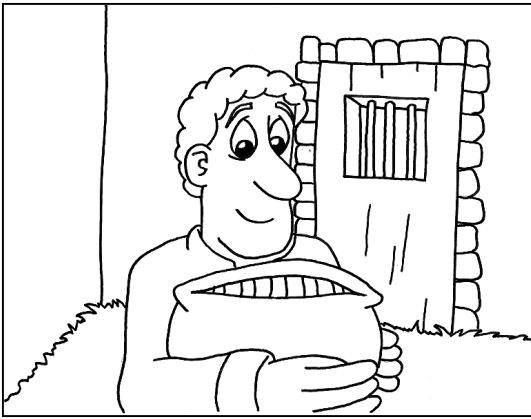
Before I fell asleep, I wondered what was happening to Ann right now. Was she strung up and a different cell somewhere else? We had just found out that Ann was going to have a baby. I had been so excited, but now I wondered if our baby would even be born at all. I also thought about the New Testament that I just finished translating into Burmese. I had left it in the desk drawer at home. Would they burn my house or find the New Testament and destroy it somehow? It had taken me years to complete it and I wondered if it was already gone.

Prison life was not fun at all. The guards came in early each morning and let us into the courtyard for a ten minute walk. Then it was back into our stinky cell. The only way that you got any food was if someone you knew brought you some. There were some Buddhist women who brought in a fish paste on some leaves. It smelled awful and after sitting out for a few days, I didn't know how people ate it.

Ann arrived on the second day that I was there. She had brought me some food. I was so excited to see her. We did not get to talk long, before the guards roughly pushed her back toward the gate. As she left, I wondered if I would ever see her again. Thankfully, I did get to see her again.

Ann would come and visit whenever the spotted faces would let her. On one of her visits, she told me that she had buried most of our gold in the garden behind the house. She had also buried my New Testament translation. I knew the paper would rot if it was left in the wet soil for very long. I





see Ann for several days. Then one day, I was slipped a note that said that my new baby had been born and that her name was Maria. I was very excited to meet little Maria, but wondered if she would survive or if she would ever get to meet me. Would I die in this horrible prison?

Every once in a while, we would hear a cannon or gun fire. We wondered if it was the British getting nearer to Ava. Each time we heard something, the spotted faces would stop letting us walk outside and would keep a closer eye on us.

One day, as we were sitting in our hut, the Spotted Faces surrounded our hut and told us to get out of it. One of the guards saw me holding my pillow and told me to leave it in the hut. As I was taken back to the prison cell, I looked back only to see the hut being broken apart and my pillow sticking out under the debris.

Back in our cell the prisoners all had different ideas of what was happening. We wondered if the British had attacked Ava. Henry and I heard other prisoners say that they had heard rumors that we would all be killed at three o'clock the next morning.

At three o'clock, the cell door swung open. Some of prisoners began to scream and cry. They took the eight of us who were foreign prisoners and drug us out to the courtyard. Aphe stood up and told the guards to put more shackles on us. I wondered why they would want more leg irons put on us. The extra shackles were put on and we were returned to our cell. Everything went back to normal except that now they would get us up in the middle of the night to take our walks

instead of letting us walk during the day time.

Two months later, Aphe came in and told us to get up and follow him. We had been in the prison for almost a year and were very weak from not eating well and from sitting all day long. Even Captain Laird who had been a big strong sailor was now weak and frail. We left the prison and walked the best we could down the road to the courthouse. At the courthouse, we were told we were being moved to another town. Though we did not know it, the town was eight miles away. None of us had shoes and our feet were very weak and tender because we had used them so little in the past year.

We started off. Not long into the walk, our feet began to blister as we walked on the hot brick road in our bare feet. After going about a half mile, one of the prisoners collapsed. The spotted faces yelled at him to get up, but he did not have the strength. Finally they went looking for a cart to push him in.

After going about two more miles my feet ached and burned so badly. Henry Gouger's servants came up and when they saw what was happening to us, they tore off their turbans and tried to wrap our feet up in the cloth. The spotted faces wouldn't let us stop, so they had a difficult time tying them around our feet as we walked. It helped my feet some, but more than that I cried because of the kindness that they were willing to show to us.

We finally reached a village later on that night. As I leaned against a wall, I learned that we had to walk another four

thought and thought and finally came up with a plan. I told Ann to find the oldest, yuckiest pillow that she could find and to then sew the Bible translation inside it. This way the translation would always be right where I could see it and it would be too filthy for any of the spotted faces to want it.

The weeks dragged on and finally Ann was able to convince someone in the government to help me. The Spotted Faces allowed me and the other foreign prisoners to go out and sit in little huts in the courtyard during the day. Though I had to hear to the screams of other who were being punished in the nearby courtyard, it was much better than the smell of that cell. We were only allowed to stay there during the day time and then we were returned to our cell to have our feet hoisted back up again at night.

Henry and I passed time playing chess. We made pieces out of little pieces of bamboo that we found. We also found a piece of cloth and used soot from the oil lamps to draw a chessboard on it.

Months had passed and I knew that our baby would be arriving soon. I did not





miles the next day to another tiny village where we would be staying. “How can I do this again tomorrow?” I thought to myself. The cart arrived shortly after us and in it was the collapsed man who had collapsed on the way. The spotted faces turned us all over to the commander’s guards to be watched.

The next morning, none of the prisoners could move. The guards finally realized that no matter how much they yelled, it would not get us moving so they brought a cart for us to ride in. We were so sore that every bump along the road hurt. We soon stopped just outside of an old hut. Part of the roof had fallen in and the door had been torn off. We were told to go into the hut. All of us crawled up the steps and inside the hut. I was so tired and sick that I passed out. When I woke up, I saw that my feet were chained up in the air like they had been every night in the prison. Only something much worse was here at this prison. This village was surrounded by rice fields. With rice fields comes mosquitoes! Because we had no roof or door, the bugs quickly came in. We all lay on our backs with our feet in the air

helpless as the bugs swarmed around biting at our bloody feet. Can you imagine being bit by mosquitoes, but not able to swat them away or scratch where they had bitten. It was a horrible night.

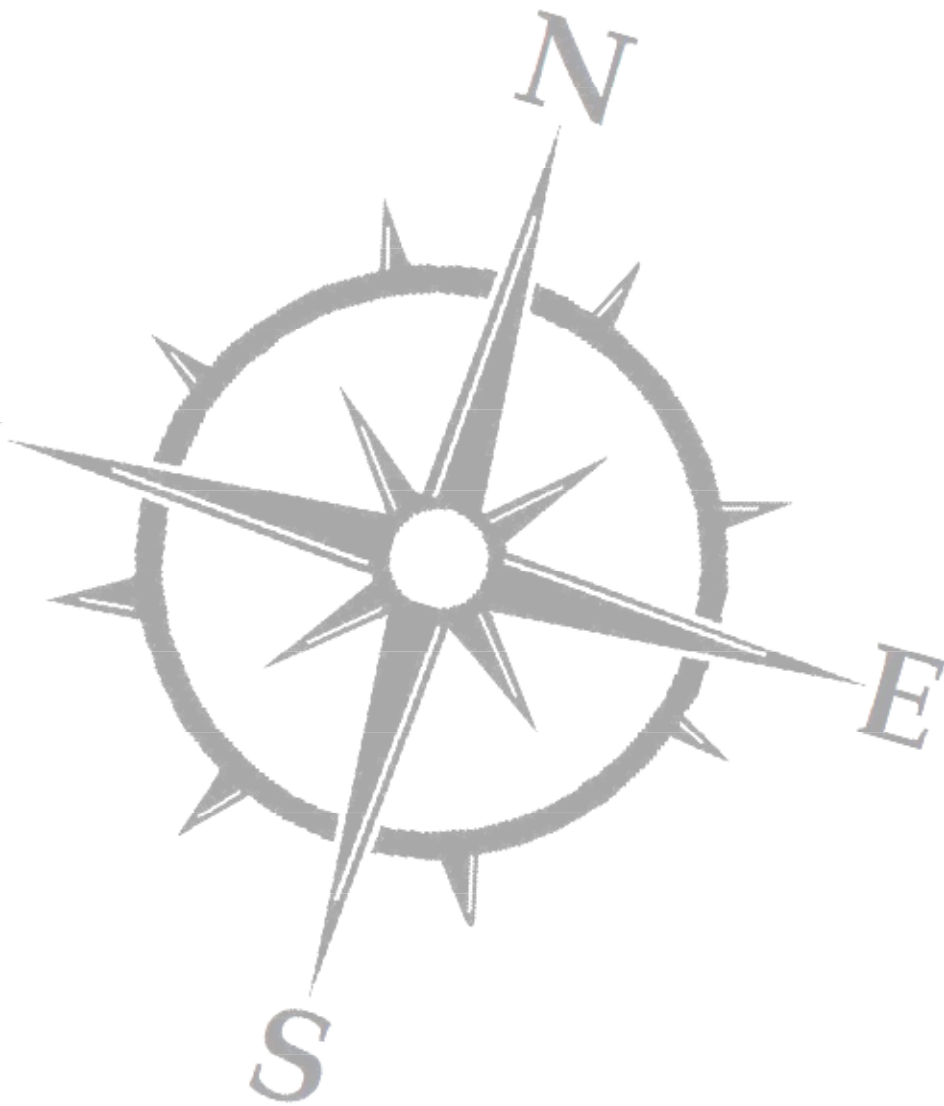
The next morning, however we saw some good signs. Some of the local villagers came and repaired our roof and put on a new door. The guards also let us come out on the porch to enjoy the breeze. Henry was the only one with enough strength to actually crawl out there, but we were happy to see that we might not have come here to die after all.

Over the next couple of days, Dr. Price’s friends showed up with some food for us to eat. Later that day, Ann and Maria arrived. They had stayed the night in a nearby village. Ann told me that she planned to stay nearby. As I looked at her and Maria, I wondered if any of us would be alive in a month.

A few days later, as we all sat in our hut, we heard a strange sound. We looked through a crack in the wall and saw down the road one of the oddest sights we had seen in Burma. Four of our guards were pushing a large cage that was up on wheels into our camp. “Do you see what’s inside?” Henry said. I looked again through the crack in the wall. We had thought that things were going much better and that we weren’t going to be killed after all. One more look through the crack and now I wasn’t so sure. Why would they bring something like that into our camp?

What do think was out there? What will happen next? To find out, come back next time.

*(For additional information, discussion questions and materials on this lesson please refer to lesson 2.9 on **page 136** in your *Burma Expedition - Leader's Guide*).*



References

For further reading or to obtain more information on this portion of the life of this missionary, please consult the following sources from which we obtained our information:

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