

# The Life of Adoniram Judson

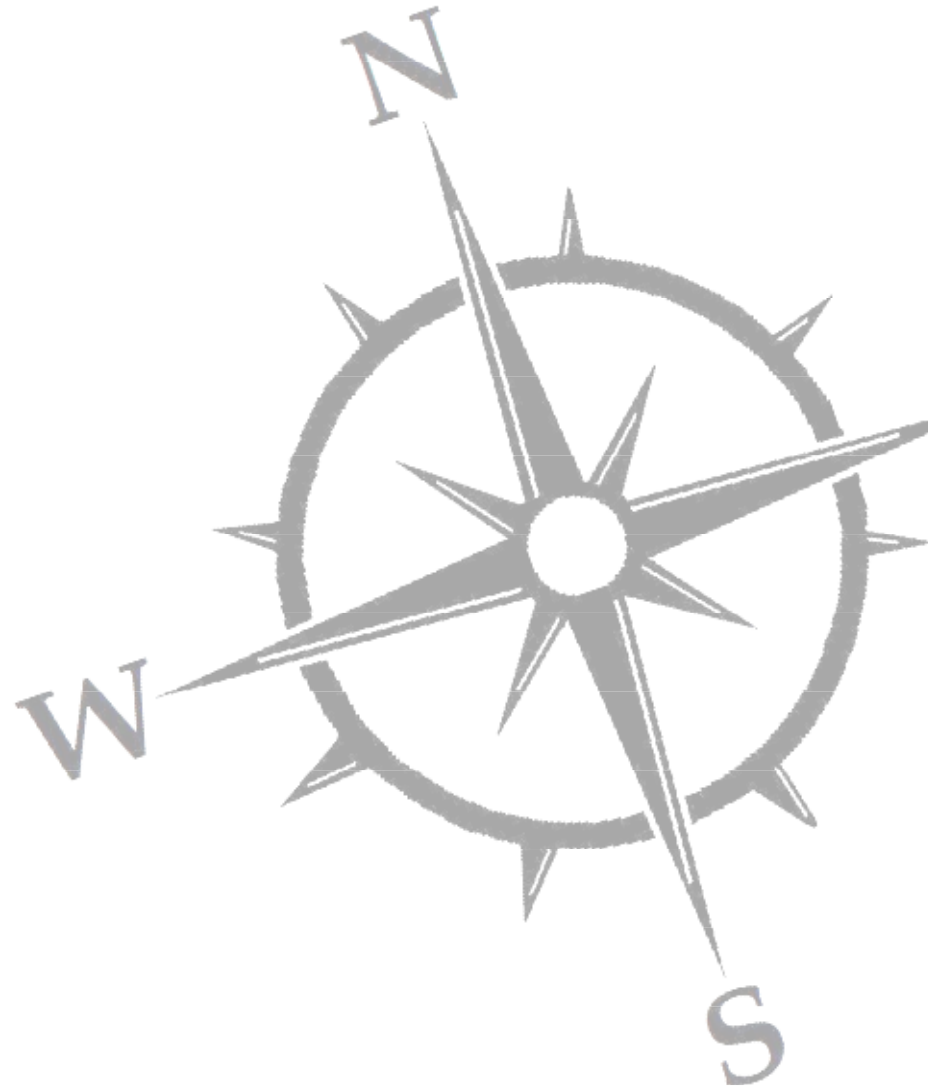
(1788–1850)

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Lesson: 2.8 – Wisdom  
Missionary Spotlight Series

This story reminds us that wisdom for our life comes from the Lord. Many people look to psychiatrists or learned men for advice on how to live, but true wisdom can come only from the Lord. Many times in life we get into situations where we are not sure what to do. God promises that He will give wisdom to those that ask for it by faith. Adoniram Judson needed God's wisdom to know what he should do and where he should go.

*"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." - James 1:5*







### **Who remembers where we left off last week?**

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

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Since the king had not been very happy with the Bibles that we had offered him or with what we had said to him, I wondered if it was even safe to stay in Burma at all. As we traveled back down river to Rangoon, I decided that we all should leave Burma immediately. It was too dangerous for us and I thought that no one would want to hear about Christianity once they heard that the king was displeased with it. I decided that we would all move to Chittagong. The pastor who was there had left and the new believers there were struggling and needed a pastor. Chittagong was not in Burma, so we would be out of the king's reach.

As our boat neared home, I also thought about the three new believers that we had in Rangoon. Anyone who made contact

with us would now be putting their life in danger. I was guessing that the Christians in Rangoon would not want to be around us for fear of what might happen to them or their houses and families.

When we arrived home, I explained my plans to the three believers. I expected them to agree and be grateful that we wouldn't be here during this time that the king was so angry. The opposite was actually the case. Maung Byaay begged us not to leave. He asked me to wait until they at least had 8-10 Christians in their group and then to train one of them to become the pastor of the church. He went on to ask me what would happen if we left and someone got saved. He said that he would not be able to baptize them or anyone else. They needed a pastor just like the people at Chittagong did.

I told Maung Byaay that I would think about it for a few days. While I was thinking it over, the three Burmese Christians got busy inviting people to church. The next Sunday morning, they each had brought one friend with them who was interested in hearing about the Christian religion. I must admit I was encouraged by their efforts. I prayed about it and I decided that it was silly to be afraid of the king. I would simply trust in the Lord to keep us safe.

I was also worried about the believers in Chittagong and decided to send James Coleman to be a pastor there to those people while Ann and I stayed in Rangoon. This would also give us and our new believers a place to go to if things got really frightening for us in Rangoon.

Once again, we were the only two

missionaries in Burma, but we did have our three new Christians there with us. They continued inviting others and not long after, two wealthy men became Christians. One man named Maung Shway-gnong was very close to accepting Jesus. Maung Shway-gnong was well respected Buddhist scholar. I was afraid that if he became a Christian the other Buddhists might kill him to make an example to other Burmese people and try and keep others from becoming Christians.

It was not long after this that Ann got very sick. There were not any good doctors in Burma. The nearest doctor was in Calcutta, India. We decided that she couldn't wait any longer and we boarded a ship heading to Calcutta. Before we left, I was able to baptize Maung Shway-gnong and a woman named Mah men-lay. Mah men-lay was our first woman convert. I wondered as I waved goodbye from the deck of the ship if I would ever see Maung Shway-gnong alive again, but I simply had to trust in the Lord to keep him safe.

The trip to India went well. This was one of the few good ship rides I had ever experienced. It went so well, as a matter of fact, that we arrived in less time than we expected. The doctor in India told us that some of the things that we were eating in Burma along with the tough life that we were living had made Ann sick. He said that she should go back to America for a rest, but Ann did not want to leave. We stayed in India for a few months and Ann regained her strength and wanted to return to Burma with me.

We got on board a ship, but sadly





had given him earlier over and over again and had memorized it and now believed it. He now wanted to join our church and be baptized as well.

I was so excited and realized that I needed to continue on in my work of translating the Bible so that they would have something to read. I finished the gospels and started to work on the book of Acts, but then I got very sick. Very soon after that, Ann also became very sick as well. I decided that the only thing to do was to send her to America. My younger brother, Elnathan, had become a surgeon and I wanted Ann to go and see him. It was a sad day for me as I helped her onto the ship. If everything went well, I wouldn't see her again for two years. And if something went wrong I knew it would be a long time before I even knew anything about it. Once again, I would just have to trust in the Lord to keep her safe.

Another missionary couple came to help me a few months after Ann had left. Their names were Jonathan and Hope Price. Jonathan was a doctor. He had blond hair and the people of Burma would often come up and pull his hair a little to see if he had a wig on. Jonathan seemed to be doing very well in his new home of Burma, but his wife Hope got very sick after only about six weeks in Burma. Jonathan tried all that he knew to do, but Hope passed away soon after arriving.

About that same time, the Houghs arrived in Burma again. They were the family who brought the printing press to Burma, but had moved out of Rangoon. They had run into Ann in India and had heard of the things that God was doing in Burma and

decided to come back and help out. I was very excited for them to be back.

Jonathan was a good doctor. He was very good at removing cataracts. Cataracts are things that older people can get on their eyes that make it difficult to see. People came from far and wide to have Dr. Price operate on their eyes. It wasn't long before the king in Ava sent a message that he wanted Jonathan to come to his palace. I knew that I could not just let Jonathan go alone. He did not know Burmese very well and one slip of the tongue could mean he would be in big trouble. We decided that the Houghs would stay in Rangoon and I would travel to Ava with Dr. Price.

As we stood before the king, I realized that the king wanted Jonathan to operate on many of the people in his palace. He also wanted us to stay around for a while. While we were in Ava, I was able to talk to several family members of the king. Many of them wanted to hear more about Christianity. The king's sister even told me one day that the king was considering giving us some land to build a kyoung, which is a holy house, for my religion.

Not everything in Ava went well though. In one surgery, Dr. Price made a mistake and the woman became blind. Dr. Price felt so bad that he married her right then and there. This woman was a Buddhist and Dr. Price had kind of put himself in a bad spot. On top of that, I had not heard from Ann in over eight months. I wanted to get back to Rangoon to see how things were going there, but could not leave Ava until the king gave me permission.

things did not go nearly as well on our trip back to Rangoon. Our ship was infested with scorpions and we ran into the worst lightning storms I had ever seen. Finally, after many weeks, we arrived back in Rangoon. I was surprised to see everyone there to meet us. Even Maung Shway-gnong was there to greet us. We immediately asked everyone what had gone on while we were away.

Some good news that we heard was that the old viceroy, whose wife was such good friends with Ann, was back as the ruler in our town. When we had left, a bunch of people tried to get Maung Shway-gnong thrown jail or killed, but the new viceroy said he didn't want to be bothered with what they were talking about so they let him go. Maung Shway-gnong had really become excited about his new faith and continued sharing it with others.

Another piece of encouragement came not long after we arrived back at home. Maung yah, who you may remember was the first person who had ever asked to hear more about Christianity, was now back in our town. He had studied and read all of what I





After almost a year of waiting, the king finally gave us permission to return home and to build a kyoung. I was so excited to hear this news. Jonathan Price decided to stay in Ava and continue his work. When I got home, I learned some sad news that Mah men-lay had passed away, and that many of the Christian's houses had been burned down. I also learned some good news that Ann was coming back soon and was also bringing Jonathan and Deborah Wade with her.

After I had left Ava, I wanted to go back. I had met several people in the king's palace who seemed like they were close to being saved. I hoped that we could start a church in Ava that would spread all through Burma. When Ann returned, she and I traveled back up to Ava. When we got there, I found that many of people that I had spoken with did not want to speak with me anymore. I wondered why they suddenly wanted nothing to do with English people.

I soon learned the answer when I met a man from England named Henry Gouger. Henry had brought a ship full of things to Burma from England to sell and had made a

great deal of money. The king of Burma would not let him take the money he made home to England, so he was trying to think of a way to get his money home. He told me that the reason he thought no one wanted to be seen with us was that Burma and England may be going to war with each other.

Not long after that, British ships attacked Rangoon and took over the city. I found out that Henry Gouger had been arrested. When they searched his house, they found maps that he had made so that he could travel around Burma and trade with the people. The Burmese thought Henry was a spy and was making maps so that the British knew where to attack.

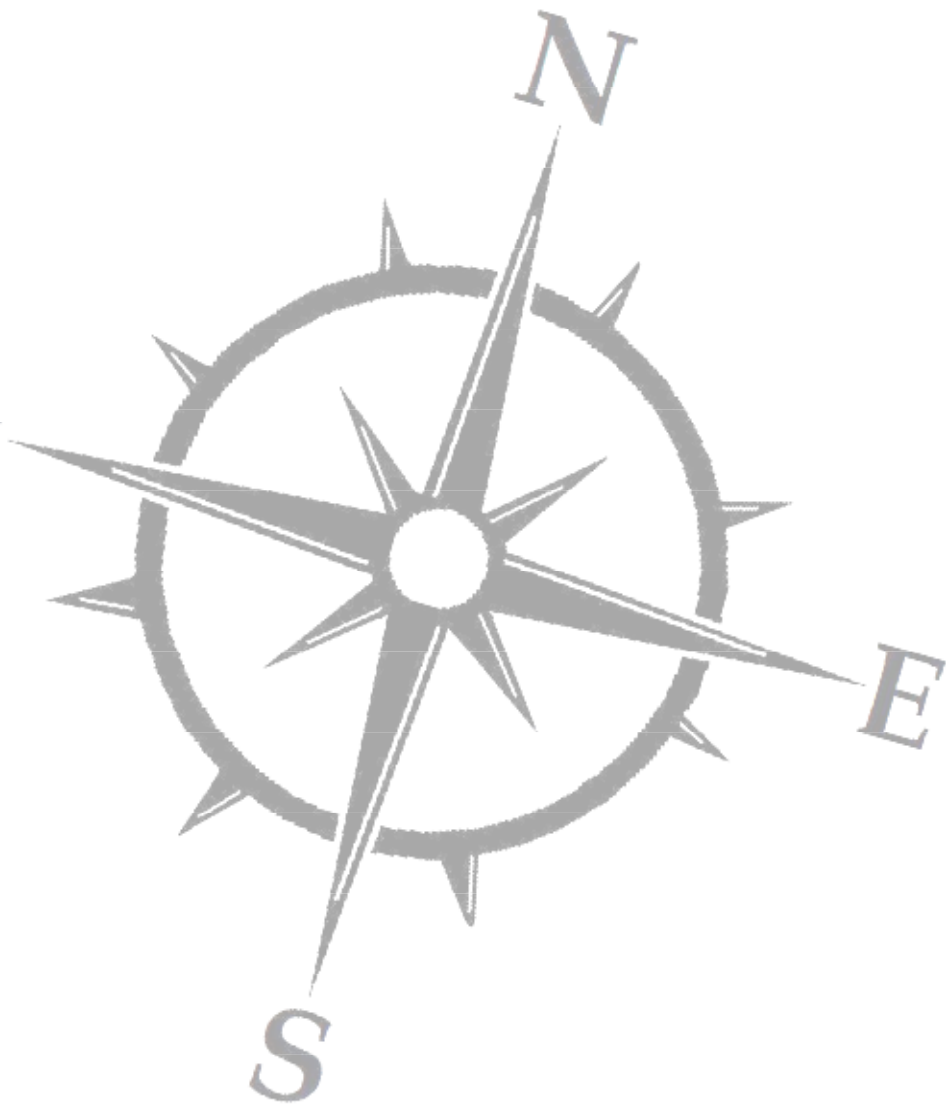
Later that week, as Ann and I sat down to dinner one night, the door suddenly crashed open. A bunch of men came rushing into the room. Each of the men had a black circle the size of a silver dollar tattooed on both of their cheeks. I knew these were the dreaded Spotted Faces. The Spotted Faces were a group of criminals who instead of being killed for their crimes were forced to run the Burmese prisons instead. "We want the teacher," said the one who looked like the leader holding up a large book. I told them that I was who they were looking for and they immediately tied up my arms and carried me out of the house.

What had I done wrong? I guessed that they thought that I was a spy for England like Henry Gouger. They took me to the court house. The governor of Ava came into the room. He stood looking at me for quite some time. I had seen him before and I hoped that he knew about all of what I had been

doing in Burma. I was not a spy. I glanced around the room. Besides the guards holding me, only the governor and I were in the room. The governor walked up to me and only spoke one word "Let-may-yoon." That was one thing that I was hoping not to hear.

**What do think that means? 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 2.8 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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