

HEROES OF THE CHURCH: Adoniram Judson



I. God is Achieving His Goal for the World Through Missions

“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the Church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.” - John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, 11.

- A. God’s Concept of Missions Announced to Satan - “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” (Gen 3:15)
- B. God’s Effect of Missions Told to Abraham - “...I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and *in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*” (Gen 12:1-3)
- C. God’s Enjoyment from Missions Revealed to Israel - “... *you shall be my treasured possession* among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Ex 19:4)
- D. God is Praised Through Missions in the Psalms - “*All the ends of the earth* shall remember and turn to the LORD, and *all the families of the nations* shall worship before you.” (Ps 22:27)
- E. God Announces Missions in the Prophets - “The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and *all the ends of the earth* shall see the salvation of our God.” (Isa 52:10); “At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and *all nations shall gather to it...*” (Jer 3:17)
- F. God’s Risen Son Commands Missions - “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and *make disciples of all nations...*” (Matt 28:18)
- G. God’s Power for Missions is the Cross - “They sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood *you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.*’” (Rev 5:9)

II. Missions Is Achieving its Greatest Success Through Suffering

- A. Jesus told disciples - “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves...Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, as a witness [*marturion*] to them and the Gentiles.” (Mat 10:16-18)
- B. Paul affirmed Jesus’ words - “As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’” (Rom 8:36)
- C. Missions Comforts the Martyrs in Heaven - “I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, ‘O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.” (Rev 6:8-11)

III. Adoniram Judson (1788-1850) and the God-Glorifying Cost of Missions

- A. Conversion Story
- B. Marriage to Ann Judson
- C. Travel and Sickness for the Sake of the Gospel

“You cannot imagine how very difficult it is to give them any idea of the true God and the way of salvation by Christ, since their present ideas of deity are so low.” - Adoniram Judson

- D. Prison, Deaths, and Depression – “*God is to me the Great Unknown. I believe in him, but I find him not.*”

- E. Joys and Pains of Ministry

1. The Blessing of 1831 – “*The spirit of inquiry . . . is spreading everywhere, through the whole length and breadth of the land. . . Some come two or three months' journey, from the borders of Siam and China - 'Sir, we hear that there is an eternal hell. We are afraid of it. Do give us a writing that will tell us how to escape it.' Others, . . . 'Sir, we have seen a writing that tells about an eternal God. Are you the man that gives away such writings? If so, pray give us one, for we want to know the truth before we die.' Others . . . 'Are you Jesus Christ's man? Give us a writing that tells us about Jesus Christ.*”
2. Married Emily Boardman in 1834, had 8 children (buried 2).
3. Returned to United States after 33 years, met fiction writer Emily Chubbuck (she was 29, he was 57), and enjoyed the happiest years of his life.

“We are blessed with our full share of cockroaches, beetles, lizards, rats, ants, mosquitoes, and bed-bugs. With the last the woodwork is all alive, and the ants troop over the house in great droves. . . Perhaps twenty have crossed my paper since I have been writing. Only one cockroach has paid me a visit, but the neglect of these gentlemen has been fully made up by a company of black bugs the size of the end of your finger—nameless adventurers.” - Emily Judson, 1847.

- F. Judson’s Trust in the Sovereignty of God – “*If I had not felt certain that every additional trial was ordered by infinite love and mercy, I could not have survived my accumulated sufferings.*”

IV. Adoniram Judson and the Promises of Christ

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” (John 12:24)

“Jesus said, ‘Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel,³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.’” (Mark 10:29-31)

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