

Intro: Women have been a part of carrying the gospel where it's not for generations. And part of the legacy they've left can be found in the courage their stories inspire in an entirely new generation of women who would go. But that legacy can only be realized if their stories are told. Welcome to the Velvet Ashes Legacy Podcast.

Denise: Well, hello everybody, and welcome back to your Velvet Ashe's Legacy podcast. This is the podcast where we highlight the women who have left a legacy of inspiration and encouragement through the lives that they have lived. And this is one of our favorite things that we get to do here, is re-tell the stories. And sometimes those stories are of women that we are really familiar with, and sometimes they're not. But I am Denise Beck, the executive director here at Velvet Ashes, and I'm here with Sarah Hilkemann.

Sarah: Hey guys. So excited to chat with you today.

Denise: Sarah is our program director here, and we love getting to do this with you. And each week when we hop on, we like to tell you that we aren't the experts and we're just doing our best to do research and tell you the stories. But this week we are actually here with an expert, Dr. Laura Chevalier Beer is an independent scholar. In her areas of expertise are global Christianity and history of Christian missions. And guys, she has spent time on five different continents. She served and taught in a variety of intercultural settings, including actually spending some time in Kenya. She's a wife and a mom, and she's on our board, and we're just so excited to get to have, um, Laura here with us. Hello, Laura.

Laura: Hi. I am so excited to be here with you and Sarah today and all the women that are listening and others as well.

Denise: Yes, we're we're thrilled. And honestly, Sarah and I, a lot of times get to do a lot of research and we dig into this, but this month we are just getting to listen to you talk about this amazing woman. Sarah, do you know much about Ann Judson?

Sarah: Well, I, the very first like missionary story that I read when I was a kid was about Adoniram Judson. I am excited to learn more about Ann and yeah, all the different parts of her story.

Denise: Yes, I think that this is one of those that people have said we would love to hear this story. This is one of the more familiar stories to some people. Even though for me, I hadn't done a lot of study about this, so it's been really fun to get to kind of dig in a little bit and, and think about the different topics that I'm excited to get to talk about today. Laura, what about you? Has Ann Judson been somebody that you've always been interested in?

Laura: Actually, no. She's someone that I, I came across, um, much later in my kind of mission history, mission, missionary journey. I'd probably heard more about her husband Adoniram Judson. Um, and part of my, uh, work at, on my doctoral degree was looking at American women in Mission and how women have been so prominent in the history

of missions. And so I probably delved more into her life, um, during my doctoral studies actually.

Denise: That's what I really appreciate about the opportunity to retell these women's stories is because a lot of times we do hear about the men, their husbands that they were either serving with or alongside. And the women a lot of times have a really important role that just hasn't been told. And so I am really thrilled that we get to take today and just talk about Ann Judson. Laura, do your thing. Share with us all of the things that you have been studying about Ann.

Laura: All right, let's just jump in. Ann Haseltine Judson was alive from 1789 to 1826. Just to give you kind of a reference of the timeframe of her life. And we really can't talk about her life without talking about her husband Adoniram Judson. Um, the defining decision of her life was actually whether or not she was gonna marry this man. Um, she became, uh, one of the group of America's first foreign missionaries that were sent out, and he, he was the person who really drew her into that. So I just wanna begin by reading you a letter that Adoniram wrote to Ann's father. In it, he says, "I have now to ask whether you can consent to part with your daughter early next spring to see her no more in this world. Whether you can consent to her to departure for a heathen land and her subjugation to the hardships and sufferings of a missionary life, whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean, to the fatal influence of the southern climate of India to every kind of want and distress to degradation, insult, persecution, and perhaps violent death."

Laura: "Can you consent to all this for the sake of him who left his heavenly home and died for her and for you, for the sake of perishing immortal souls, for the sake of Zion and the glory of God? Can you consent to all this in the hope of soon meeting your daughter in the world of glory?" Now, <laugh>. Now, I don't know about you. If I was the parent receiving this letter, I'd be like, no, no, that's okay. She doesn't need to do that.

Denise: Oh my goodness.

Laura: Um, but this letter was written actually after Ann's own struggle with, um, the proposal that Adoniram had given her of whether or not she wanted to enter into this kind of life. And ultimately, her parents left this decision up to her. Now, her biographer, um, Knowles says that as far as anyone knew, no female had actually, after ever left America as a missionary to, uh, what he calls the heathen. And I just wanna talk about that word briefly here. The heathen it was very widely used during this time period among Christians especially, um, to refer to places that were not, not Judeo-Christian or even Islamic, and typically referring to lands where, um, people worship many gods or didn't really have any kind of known religious practice. And today it's considered more of a derogatory term. Even the word pagan is, is used that way too. So just keep in mind that whenever we're using that term, it's, it's in a direct quote, um, from these historical people who, who are using it. But we know today that's probably not the best way to refer to people in other, other countries, other places who have different religious beliefs and practices.

Denise: I just wanna say as we're reading that letter, her parents would've never experienced another example of this, right? So like, they're getting this letter to ask for their daughter to be taken. And now, you know, there's parents of global workers that can look and see how have other people done this? How have you walked through? They would've never had that experience. They're, they're experiencing this for the first time. And it's amazing to me that back in this day, they actually left it up to her because it's my impression of this era that women didn't have a lot of the ability to make their own decisions sometimes in this era. And that they, they said, no, we trust you to make this decision.

Laura: Yeah. And it's, it's kind of, it's kind of unique in, in that way, for sure. Um, and for Ann, her main struggle with, with this was not so much that, yes, there's all these things that could be hard that I'm looking forward to, but I just wanna make sure that God is calling me to be a missionary. At this point in her life she was, you know, had a, a strong relationship with God, and she, she wanted to make sure this was not just her, you know, deciding, oh, I wanna marry this man and it'll be fluffy and wonderful, and, oh, I'm in so in love or whatever, <laugh>, she wanted to make sure that this was her call as well. And so she struggles with it over the course of, um, a couple months. In October of 1810 she says, "Jesus is faithful. His promises are precious."

Laura: "Were it not for these considerations. I should, with my present prospects sink down and despair, especially as no female has, to my knowledge, ever left the shores of America to spend her life among the heathen. Nor do I yet know that I shall have a single female companion, but God is my witness, that I have not dared to decline the offer that has been made me, though so many are ready to call it a wild, romantic undertaking. If I have been deceived in thinking it my duty to go to the heathen, I humbly pray that I may be un deceived and prevented from going. But whether I spend my days in India or America, I desire to spend them in service of God and be prepared to spend an eternity in his presence. Oh, Jesus, make me live to thee, and I desire no more". Now, something I have noticed in both of these quotations, I don't know if you have, but just this idea of being ready to, to leave this earth and to be in eternity in heaven with God. Um, I mean, that's kind of the mindset that people had to have back then of...

Denise: Yeah, very much so. And not many people have that right now, Sarah, when I hear that quote, I think of the fact that she said, I may have no female companions, and it just reminds me of Velvet Ashes. And just that, that is something that many women struggled with before the ability to have communities like this where we're online and living together. And I don't know, whenever I read that, I just was like, yay.

Sarah: Yeah. Well, and I love that kind of in both the letter and this quote too. Like, it's not, like she said, it's not, you know, a wild romantic undertaking, like having this very realistic view of what, what was coming potentially and what they were getting into. I just, yeah, that's so impressive.

Laura: For sure. And then in November, like a month later, she, she makes this decision. She says, "Yes, I think I would rather go to India among the heathen, notwithstanding the most insurmountable difficulties in the way than stay at home and enjoy the comforts

and luxuries of life. Faith in Christ will enable me to bear, bear trials, however severe. My hope in his powerful protection animates me to persevere in my purpose. Oh, if he will condescend, condescend to make me useful in promoting his kingdom, I care not where, I perform his work, nor how hard it be behold the handmade in of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word". So I just wanted you at the beginning of this, um, podcast to hear Ann's own words from herself, because this woman had such a depth of faith to undertake on this very new and unique experience that had not been experienced by any other American woman thus far to her knowledge. And these convictions and these words that you've heard, they prove to be important and prophetic in her life, because she would probably face some of the most difficult trials, deprivations and persecutions of any missionary in history. As you hear her story, you'll probably be reminded of some of the things you read in the book of Acts, quite honestly. It's, it's that intense.

Denise: Well, I think it's important that you say that because when we do hear about those hardships, it's important to note she signed on knowing a hundred percent that this was what the Lord was calling her to, and it wasn't, uh, ramifications of a decision that she didn't know what she was getting into. Yeah, I think that's so important.

Laura: And I just wanted to give you a little background here too. Like, we've talked about the fact that there hadn't been American women who had gone out on mission, but you know, Christian missions didn't start with the Judsons, right? It didn't, it didn't start there. There's a whole history of mm-hmm. <affirmative> of centuries of Christian missionary work, but it looked different in different time periods. And so the time period that we're talking about, there hadn't been a, a whole lot of effort of like laypeople going out, or even just ministers going out and becoming missionaries. That was relatively new up until that point. There had been a lot of, you know, chaplains going with, um, explorers, and they were the ones that were kind of, you know, sharing the gospel with those that they met, but kind of the generation previous to the Judsons.

Laura: Um, there was writing that was being done about missions, and uh, one of the prominent, um, books that was written prior to their lifetime that was widely read during their lifetime was the Life of David Brainard. And that was written by a very famous person that many people are familiar with. Jonathan Edwards, an American minister theologian, um, very, very famous guy that we'll talk about a little bit more later. But he writes, um, a biography of this missionary, uh, David Brainard. He was an American Presbyterian minister, and he was sent to Native Americans in New Jersey by, uh, a Scottish group. He was very, very pious. He was very young when he went out, and he was greatly revered for the way that he approached missionary work. And he, his, his way of doing mission work was, uh, became a model for the spiritual life. And really, he was so invested in his work, he didn't take care of himself, and he died very young, having kind of spent himself and, and he didn't have enough to eat. He didn't get medical care. And so this is kind of the model that you see being held up in the circles that the Judsons are in. And so that's something to keep in mind also with their story of this is, this is what they think you're supposed to do is, you know, your, your life, your life is probably gonna be spent.

Denise: Yeah. Not, not a lot of self-care or, um, missionary care at that time happening.

Laura: And then a little bit later in, that um, same century, we're talking about the 18th century right now, 1792, a very, another famous person that you might be aware of, William Carey. He's considered the father of modern missions. He writes his Enquiry. This is, um, uh, an essay that he writes. He's been inspired by reading the life of David Brainard. And in this essay, he explores, uh, whether or not the Great Commission is still binding for Christians in his day, should they go out and should they share the gospel with others? And his conclusion is, yes, we should, and that we should use whatever means possible, but whatever means are available to us to go out and share the gospel with the world. And, um, so in 1793, the Baptists in, um, the United, United Kingdom at the time, the, um, British in England, um, they send out Carey and others to India, um, and they established Serampore mission.

Laura: Now, the interesting thing about this is they did bring their wives. And so this was an early precedent of, uh, missionaries bringing their wives with them. And so the Judsons would've heard of this, but it was still from England, a different place. The voyage wasn't maybe as long, the journey wasn't quite as dangerous. So there is this precedent, but it's slightly different. Then there's other mission organizations that are forming around the, this turn of the century time. The London Missionary Society is formed and interesting. This group is more of a, has a more of a reformed emphasis. They're not Baptists. And Adoniram comes from more of that background. And before he gets sent out by the Americans, he actually applies to the London Missionary Society to see if they'll send him out, just in case the Americans don't decide to do that. So there's these other groups that are functioning too at the same time.

Laura: And then finally in 1810, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which is called the American Board for Short, uh, is set up. And this happens because some seminarians, one of whom is Adoniram, appealed to the congregational, uh, leaders, the congregational kind of denomination leaders to start an American missionary sending agency. They're very enthusiastic. They want the Americans to send them out. Some of them have been, um, part of prayer movements that have been praying towards this over the years. And so in 1810, the American congregationalists decide to establish the First American mission sending organization. And so that's a really big deal in the history of missions.

Denise: Yeah. And for those of you that tuned in last month to hear Betsey Stockton wasn't the A B C F M who sent her out, Sarah, do I remember that correctly?

Laura: Yes, that's exactly right. Um, so she was, she went out a little bit later after the Judsons. So that's just a little background of like, like the mission history to know, like where they're falling. They're, they're not the first, you know, uh, missionaries to come from the western world to go somewhere else, but they're the first Americans to be sent out intentionally by an organization. So let's just get back to Ann and her early life. So she was born December 22nd, 1789, in Bradford, Massachusetts. And if you're familiar with the geography of Massachusetts, Bradford is, um, north of Salem. It's not right, it's not neighboring to Salem, Massachusetts. So Salem's on the coast and just straight, straight north, but inland a bit is Bradford. Ann was the youngest of five children. They called her Nancy, that was the family name for her. And she was very social and lively.

Laura: She didn't really have any religious inclinations to begin with in her life. And her family didn't really either, it was just what we would say, potentially, nominally Christian. So she spent her days, you know, trying to find amusements and, um, having fun with her friends, and probably in our minds, not doing anything terribly bad. But she, when she writes about it later, she doesn't think it's a very useful time in her life necessarily. So she actually has the opportunity to enroll at Bradford Academy. This is one of the first academies, private academies that accepted women. And while she's there, she befriends, um, a younger student named Harriet Atwood. And that's important to, to keep in mind for later. Harriet is part of, um, Ann's later story as well. And both Ann and Harriet become very educated women for their time period. Now, while they're both attending this school, there's a revival that happens at the school.

Sarah: Laura, I think this was a really significant time in Ann's life. So can you unpack that a little bit more, like the historical context that led to that revival?

Laura: You might be familiar if you're an American who grew up, uh, you know, studying American history with the terms the first and second great awakening. Um, if you're, if you're not an American, that might be something completely new to you. But those terms refer sometimes in American history and actually in, uh, global history because, um, it was a trans-Atlantic kind of phenomenon that was happening. But they refer to the evangelical revivals that happened in the 18th and 19th centuries, and Ann's life was intersecting with this, um, this wider movement that was happening, um, in, in culture. And so let's explain what, what those, what that means. Okay. Evangelical revivals, great awakenings. So the first great awakening, um, actually occurred in the 1730s to about the 1770s. This was before the American Revolution and before Ann's birth. So this is all happening before her time.

Laura: But I think it's important for you to understand that this, um, particular like movement happened. So I think probably many of you listening have heard of the Wesley's, John and Charles, and maybe even George Whitfield. There were actually British Anglicans turned Methodist, and they were key figures in the first great awakening or the evangelical revivals that happened in the 18th century. And what, what this was, was a wider cultural movement. It wasn't just a few people, it was many people who became convinced of, uh, their own sinfulness and realized that they needed to convert and accept Jesus as their savior. And so people like John and Charles Wesley and George Whitfield were preaching about these things, and people were coming to faith because of it. And there was probably in, in the United States and in England and other parts of Europe, there was, um, kind of a cultural Christianity that existed, most, most people considered themselves Christian.

Laura: But this great awakening that happened where people became convinced of the need to confess their sins and convert really was causing people to, to reconsider of whether or not they were really Christians. And then making a commitment to really be authentic Christians and to live out their faith in different ways. And so I talked about the, the British, um, Methodists that were, were talking and preaching, and their messages were coming across the ocean and back and forth. But there were also people in New England that were prominent at this time, too. So we've already mentioned Jonathan Edwards, who many of you are familiar with. He was a New England Congregationalist. So he's

coming from a slightly different theological background, direct descendants of the Puritans, if you're familiar with them in your American history. And so that's important to, to recognize that, um, there's, there's, um, believers before them, you know, but this particular time in history where there was this great emphasis on the need to be converted and that hadn't always been there.

Laura: And one of the things that that develops through, especially this New England congregationalist theology as history progresses and as other people take it on and, you know, take some of Jonathan Edward's teachings and kind of make them their own, is there's this idea called divine providence that, um, becomes very important to how people understand faith. And the idea that God has predestined some to be saved and some to some to not be saved. Um, but the Calvinist view is that this is God's, um, providence, and this is, he's in charge. So this is how it works. And along with that was this idea that if you become a true Christian convert, you need to express your faith, um, and live it out in what's called disinterested benevolence. And the idea is that your concern was serving God and others above yourself. We would call it maybe selfless serving, um, that, and that should be a mark of the Christian life.

Laura: So this disinterested benevolence was actually epitomized in what I, what I told you about before, um, the biography of the life of David Brainard that Jonathan Edwards had actually written. And so you see him kind of like giving his life away for the, the, the gospel, so much so that he doesn't even take care of himself at all, and he dies very young. But that's kind of like a model that has, that is, that is set up for, um, spiritual life that people, especially these New England Congregationalists look up to. So Ann was not alive during that time period, but her, her time period, there was a second great awakening, or another big movement, uh, across culture, across continents where, um, Christian people emphasize this need to be converted. And it was an evangelical conversion that you hear the gospel, you realize the conviction of sin, and you need to turn and change your life.

Laura: During this time, this was about the 1790s to the eight, uh, early 1800s, there was also some more social reform that was taking place. So Ann is growing up in, with this long history of evangelical revivals happening in her kind of neighborhood in her vicinity. Jonathan Edwards had been a minister in New England, um, in Massachusetts. She grew up in a slightly different part of Massachusetts, but there was, his influence was still felt during her time. And other, like I said, other theologians had taken it on, and it was, it was taught during her time. So the revival that's happening at her school is part of this second grade awakening. And there's teachers there, there's students who are experiencing this thing, this need to be converted. Now at this time in New England it's also important to point out that there were some other changes that were happening.

Laura: People were disagreeing and there was differences of theology. And this is about the time when you see Harvard Divinity becoming, um, not as evangelical. The Unitarians, um, took it over and kind of dominated the theology from 1805 onward. And so many of the conservative evangelicals were concerned about this change. And so they said, we need to start a new school that has an emphasis on, uh, what we believe to be the, the true gospel and the Bible. And, um, so they started a school called Andover Theological School. And this ends up being the school that Adoniram Judson enrolls in, where when

he decides to, to pursue seminary studies. And this is where he catches a missionary fervor along with other students that are there. So that's just some background on this revival that Ann's experiencing, um, as, as a young person. And so we'll, we'll talk a little bit more about what that looked like in her life now.

Sarah: Yeah. But that's so helpful to have, you know, this the big historical perspective, but then also bringing it to this one woman that we're talking about and how it's impacting her life. So yeah, super helpful.

Laura: So at age 16, Ann undergoes this conversion experience. So there's this revival at her school, and she is confronted with these ideas that she's a sinful person who needs to confess her sin and, and commit her life to God and be converted. And so at age 16, she makes peace with this idea that God is sovereign over our souls. And she views this idea that God is the one to decide as divine providence. Before she thought it was, you know, not something that she could get on board with, but she has these spiritual experiences where she's convinced that it's just God's divine providence. She continues to have a few doubts, but eventually she joins the local congregational church officially, and she begin, begins her own, um, study of theological writings. And, uh, some scholars have compared this to the same kind of study that a man would've had going to a theological school.

Laura: So she's doing this on her own. So she's, she's kind of a precocious girl, <laugh>, um, <laugh> She takes this upon herself to educate herself. She reads this famous book, the Life of David Brainard, among other things. And she concludes that she really just wants to be useful for Christ, that that comes up again and again. I want to be useful for, for Christ. And so one of the things that she does to be useful is she starts teaching school. She starts these schools to educate young children who maybe don't have, uh, access to education. And she does it for the purpose of educating them in, you know, reading, writing, arithmetic, etc., But also to bring them to Christ. So she, that's something that she does before she even becomes a missionary. So this desire to be useful comes up again and again, as I said.

Laura: So when she finally meets Adoniram in 1810, during the time that he and other seminary students are appealing to these congregational leaders to start the American board, she has in her mind, oh, this is something that I could do to be useful. She doesn't have it in her mind that he's gonna ask her to marry him quite yet, but she's very aware of what people are doing and how they're being useful for Christ. So Adoniram, he was actually born, uh, just a year before Ann in Malden, Massachusetts, that's a suburb of Boston. And so they, they didn't grow up right near each other, but they're in this, they're in the vicinity. He graduated from Brown University and similar to Ann, he didn't really grow up with a strong grounding in, in faith. Uh, it was just something that was kind of, you know, part of culture around him.

Laura: But after he graduated from university, he becomes convinced of the divine authenticity of the scriptures, and he begins to question how to become saved. And so <laugh>, instead of, you know, figuring that out on his own, he is like, okay, I'm gonna enroll in seminary.



Denise: Let's just, let's just get straight to it. You know, let's go all the way in, jump in the deep end.

Laura: So, I mean, yeah, he's, he's in seminary. He becomes an ardent believer in just a few weeks of being there. And the seminary is like, okay, you belong here, you can stay. And he also decides that he wants to make himself useful for ministry. So as I've already said, kind of the, the background of the American board, he and several of the other seminary students, they appeal to their congregational leaders. Can we, can we set up this, um, missionary organization to be able to send out American missionaries?

Laura: And they say yes. And he and several others are accepted as the first missionaries. And as, as time goes on, that kind of, um, morphs into adding some women <laugh>, um, these, the women that went out are, that are appointed, um, they're not initially married to these men when they are first designated as missionaries. So just to review, the first, um, eight missionaries appointed by the American board, were Adoniram and Ann Judson, Samuel and Roxanna Knot, Samuel and Harriet Newell, and then Gordon Hall and Luther Rice, went as single men. Now, initially, these women were not married to these men, but they eventually were, and they were designated as assistant missionaries. I think that's important to, to keep in mind that even, even though they're being allowed to go, they're being encouraged, uh, to go by some people. They're not full missionaries in the mind of the board or in the mind of anyone.

Laura: So that does tell you something about the his, the, the time period. So shortly after Ann accepted Adoniram's marriage proposal, Harriet Atwood, Ann's young friend from Bradford Academy met one of Adoniram's seminary friends, probably most likely through the circles that they were all moving in together. And his, the friend of Adoniram was, was Samuel Newell. Six months later, um, Harriet received a marriage proposal very similar to Ann's, and she accepts it, seeing it as her Christian duty. So, and, and Harriet is younger than Ann by about five years. So just think about like how young she was making such a important weighty decision. So this is happening 1810, 1811, and then quickly in 1812, they booked passage to India. You know, like, why did they do it quickly? They've been planning, they've been, you know, making preparation to go, but at this time, the United States was fearing a naval embargo by the British.

Laura: So let's just review our political history now a little bit. This is all happening post-Revolutionary War. It's also happening before the Civil War, but it's happening right before the war of 1812, which is a war between the US and Great Britain. It was primarily fought because, um, American soldiers were being impressed by the British Navy. There were disagreements over trade, Western expansion, native American policy. And so they're very fearful that they're not gonna be able to actually sail from the United States to India because of this impending naval embargo by the British, meaning that like the British are not gonna let, let them out. So they, they decide to sail soon. So February 5th, 1812 Adoniram and Ann finally wed, that same day, there's a sermon that's given by the minister that Harriet grew up with, of the church that Ann ended up joining. He sets out a missiology of what's called the missionary wife. And in this missiology, he says their job as missionary wives is not only to take care of the missionary household and assist their children in his work, but to teach the women that they're going to and the children, because the men have no access to them. So they

have quite a bit on their plate, take care of the home, help my husband, and then oh, also be a missionary to all the women and children around me. Quite, quite a hefty load. <laugh>.

Denise: Well, when you were getting ready to say that, you know, just like that he decided what the missionary wife was supposed to do, I was like, oh, really? How is he supposed to know this? You know? But, but you know, that does sound very much like what life would've been like for them and the things that would've naturally just fallen into their plates. Mm-hmm.

Laura: <affirmative>. And the interesting thing is, I don't know that he was the first person to come up with this, but he talks to them about the fact that they're going to be saving the souls of these women, but also that they're gonna be bringing about social change and what's called the upliftment of women. And as we're gonna hear later this year, in several of the other podcasts, this idea of uplifting women in other countries, other cultures became a rallying cry for, especially for American women's mission involvement of like, we have this purpose, we can go and help other women in other lands who are not valued, who, who maybe are, um, you know, suffering because of their, their sex. And so that's, that's something that's interesting about women's, um, mission. It's, it's almost always entwined with bringing about social change. It's not, you can't separate it from, from the spiritual aspect, which we sometimes try to do, uh, in evangelical circles of like, okay, this is true mission. Just, you know, I'll leave it at that for now.

Laura: <laugh> <laugh>,

Laura: So they're married on February 5th. February 19th, they depart from Salem. So the, the eight missionaries go in two groups because they're, they're, they're worried, you know, what if something happens on the voyage? What if we do get stopped by the vis, uh, the British? What if there's a storm, there's a shipwreck. We don't want everyone to be in the same boat. So four of them also depart from Philadelphia, but the Judsons and the Newells are together, and they go from Salem first. So they are considered the first missionaries sent out by the, the United States.

Denise: Okay.

Laura: So on board on this voyage, uh, it takes four months, by the way, <laugh>, uh, we'll talk about that a little bit later. But, so Ann has a lot of time to think and to write, and one of the things that she writes initially in this first couple weeks of being on board is that she's married a wonderful, remarkable man. And isn't that just wonderful to hear?

Denise: That's great. <laugh>, honestly, in light of everything they must have been experiencing, and they're, they're newly wets, literally. I mean, now there are things about, please be married for a year so that you can work out all of the newly weed stuff before you add culture stress into it. They are literally what, like 12 days in, you know, something like that when they're like taking off on this four month voyage.

Laura: So, but they're also spending a lot of time together, so they're having time to get to know each other. And so she's, she's concluded pretty quickly. Okay, I got a good one. <laugh>. Um, another thing that happens is she feels very seasick. So if anyone's ever gone on much of a voyage across the ocean, like that's typically a thing. But I, I found it really funny as I was reading about her journey, she writes a letter back to her friend, and she says this, she says, "I soon began to find the real cause of my ill health. It was want of exercise for some time. We could invent nothing, which could give us exercise equal to what we had been accustomed to. Jumping the rope was finally invented, and this we found to be of great use. I began and jumped several times in the day and found my health gradually return until I was perfect, perfectly well. I mentioned these particulars that you should you ever go to sea may escape ill health. I never enjoyed more perfect health in my life than I do now. And I attribute, attribute it to my exercising so much."

Denise: <laugh>, is she saying that jump roping was invented there? Like had people not jumped rope before? Or is that word usage just like they invented it for themselves on this boat.

Laura: My guess is they invented it for themselves, but I had that same question. Um, but I just think it's funny that, that like, that's what solves the problem for her jumping, jumping rope. And you know, the boat's probably not. It's, it's moving, you know, it's not solid. No. Like <laugh>.

Laura: So something a little bit more serious that happens on the voyage is that her husband, Mr. Judson, I'll probably call, call him Mr. Judson a lot because she does in her writing. It's, and it's so much easier to say than Adoniram true. Um, so Mr. J, he began to investigate beliefs on baptism. So their actual goal in going to India initially is to touch base with the British Baptist, William Carey and his group that are there. And so he starts investigating beliefs on baptism because he is like, I'm gonna go there and I wanna make sure that I know what I believe and I can defend it with these Baptists because he's a congregationalist. Congregationalist practice, infant baptism, baptist practice, what's called believers baptism. When you decide you want to become a Christian, then you get baptized. So he's investigating these beliefs and during that time, he comes to some conclusions, the four months that they're on this, uh, journey. So, like I said, it takes four months to get there. They leave February 19th, they get there in June 1812. That's a long time.

Sarah: Yeah. And I'm pretty sure, Laura, I would've been one of the ones that was very seasick during like the whole journey.

Laura: Uhhuh <laugh>.

Sarah: But yeah, as you were talking about that, I was just thinking how it's so interesting. So many of the women that we've covered so far had this, you know, long journey by sea, and it, in some ways it was like a buffer time almost of like you were saying, Ann was writing, she was exercising, like they had this time to sort of process like almost, you know, the grief of leaving and okay, what am I looking toward? What am I getting into this time of, you know, sort of thinking through their beliefs and some of that, you know? And it's, it's so different than today when we think about, okay, you get on a

plane and most likely in 24 hours you are wherever you are heading. You know, and just that, that difference of the buffer time. I mean, the nice thing about airplane travel is you don't necessarily have this sickness and the, um, the danger that was part of going by sea.

Denise: Yeah. But Sarah, you bring a good point because I think there's a lot of like blessing and, you know, we can literally be on the other side of the world within 24, 48 hours, you know? And yet what we lose in the time that we gain is this ability to slowly adjust to mentally, to physically adjust. And even to the point when we are mentoring young couples who are returning even just for a, you know, a furlough or home assignment, we're like, take your time, go somewhere else and just be for a few days for a week and just adjust slowly to coming back because you don't have that luxury of the four month ship. And it's, it, I think there is some important processing that happens when you give yourself that capacity and that space for processing. So yeah, I'll still take the airplane travel, I'm not gonna lie.

Laura: But yes, there's definite advances to that <laugh>. Yeah. So back to the judge since, so after four months, they finally arrive in India, and the port that they arrive at is Calcutta. And I've never been to India myself, and so just keep that in mind as I'm pronouncing names and locations and things here. But I have studied some of this history. Um, they arrived in Calcutta, which is located on the east coast of India, sort of in that upper northern area. And when they arrived there, they visited Serampore Mission, which is a bit north of Calcutta. While they're there visiting the mission with William Carey and his team, Ann's inspired by schools that she sees that have been set up by one of the missionary wives, Mrs. Marshman. And she says, I presume Mrs. Marshman does more good in her school than half the ministers in America. <laugh>.

Laura: I'm not sure if she knew that her words would get back to some of these ministers in America, but she, she's impressed. Like, and I think she probably is thinking in her mind, oh, I've done this in America. Like, this is something that I could do in the future. Yeah. Um, wherever we end up. So the disappointing thing is that very quickly, once they've arrived, the East India Company that's in charge of the Indian subcontinent at this time, or at least most of the Indian subcontinent, they tell the missionaries, the American missionaries, they, they can't stay. They're hostile to missionaries at this time. And you're probably wondering, well then why did the British missionaries get to stay? Interestingly, where they're located at Serampore, it was actually a Danish colony. So they're not under the East India company. So that's very disappointing news for these American missionaries.

Laura: They're, you know, very zealous. They're ready to go, you know, and then they're told they can't be there in India. So they start looking for passage elsewhere. The Newells end up leaving first. They get passage to what's called at that time the Isle of France. This is actually the island of Mauritius. If you're familiar with some of the geography of the Indian Ocean. The island of Mauritius is, um, way on the west, very, very far western side of India, not even really close to it at all. It's actually closer to Madagascar. So it's, it's closer to the continent of Africa than to India, but they get passage there, and it's a place that they feel like they can go to, but there's only room for two of them. So the

Newells go on ahead. Meanwhile, the Judsons who during their voyage over to India had become convinced of believers baptism.

Laura: They asked William Carey to baptize them because they, they don't agree with their congregational convictions anymore, and they decide we need to become Baptist. So William Carey baptizes them, but at the same time they realize, oh, this is gonna be a problem for our mission group, our American mission group. And maybe right now you're thinking, well, why is that such a big deal? Like there are differences in theology like that. If they all believed in Jesus, why couldn't they just stay together? But the Judsons didn't, concluded that they couldn't have the mission teaching two different beliefs on baptism. You have new converts coming in potentially, and you're telling them, oh, you don't, like, how does baptism work? They didn't wanna have conflicting, um, messages that they were sending. So they make the decision that they need to disaffiliate with the American board and separate from their team, at least in terms of where they end up long term. And this causes a lot of distress for Ann, because for one thing, these are her friends. I mean, Harriet Atwood Newell has been her friend since childhood. And then this the thought of not having any companions to work with, but then they, they get a little bit of a spark of hope because Luther Rice, one of the single men decides he's actually gonna become a Baptist too.

Denise: So yeah, I think that that's a really interesting point to navigate, because on one hand, at least in my experience, when we served cross-culturally, I felt like those lines fell away, those denominational lines, those theological lines, because we were just there, you know, to tell people about Jesus. And so some of those things took a backseat, but we aren't, we weren't on the same team. We were just working in the same area. And so when you are on the same team, I feel like that does become a confusing thing. And so I can't imagine doing all that it took to prepare to go there and feeling this, you know, linking arms and then when you get there, you know, losing that community and those people that you, you know, you had been on the boat with and you had traveled with, and, you know, so I think that, you know, in, in some aspects it is a really important conversation to have.

Denise: But also I think in, in some ways, I found that that mattered less when I was at cross cultural. And then when we came back to the States, I was like, oh, wow, it's a bigger deal here than whenever we were overseas. And we just all from all different denominations were like, how can we work together to make the biggest kingdom impact where we are and not get so tied up in some of these little things? So it, it is just this tricky thing to navigate. But, but again, we probably all on some level have had to navigate that, whether that was within our team or within the context of all of the expats that are there that we're working with.

Laura: Yeah. And it's important to note that they, they were still friendly. Like they didn't, you know, this disaffiliation wasn't like, oh, we don't want anything do with you anymore. It was just like, no, we probably shouldn't work together. And, and they also had financial consequences. So the way that the American Board worked was that they appointed you as a missionary, they're gonna support you financially. So they, these missionaries embarked with the money to take care of them for the year. You know, they, they have their funds with them, and so they have to figure out, okay, how are we gonna support

ourselves now because we are no longer supported by the American board. So what they decide to do is wait for sponsorship from the Baptists. Like, can we, can we rally the American Baptists to get behind us?

Laura: And so they are waiting and figuring out what they're gonna do with, um, William Carey's group and the British East India company decides they, they're gonna deport them, and they, they come and find them and like are trying to arrest them and get them on a ship to get out of there, and there are stories of them evading these authorities for several weeks and getting on and off ships and trying to go where they wanted to go versus where the, the East India company wanted them to go. You know, there's Ann on a small boat, she's separated from Mr. Judson, and there's, she's just there with these local men speaking of foreign language, and it's, it's just kind of crazy. But finally they are able to get passage to the Isle of France, the same place that the Newells had gone to. So, like I said, they're, they're disaffiliated with them as a mission, but they're still going to the same place where their friends are. But if you think about the geography of it, they're on the far eastern side of India. They have to go around the tip of India, like very far south, and then come up and then go way over to the west to get to the Isle of France. So this is a long voyage <laugh>, they finally arrive on January 17th, 1813, and Ann gets there and she is weary of wandering, and this is what she writes, " When shall I find some little spot that I can call my home while in this world"?

Sarah: Yeah, I mean, they really didn't get like the honeymoon period. I feel like, you know, where you arrive somewhere and everything's exciting and fun, and that quote about where's home, I, I'm sure so many people who have left a home to live somewhere else resonate with that, of how do we approach the topic of home? What, what does that even mean? And so, yeah, whether you're a woman serving cross-culturally or men, or you're, um, third culture kids, like this is, this is always a struggle no matter where we are.

Denise: What did you feel like made it feel like home to you when you were there? Because sometimes it's hard to attach, you know, that feeling of home. And for me it was like, you know, know certain things that were familiar or just my family being together, that that was home to me and I, and I don't know what, what made it feel like home to you?

Sarah: For me, I had a little bookcase that even though it wasn't like super practical to move around to all the different places, like just having a spot for, I didn't have a lot of real books that I brought with me, but just a little spot that stayed consistent.

Denise: And it seems like with Ann, they probably hadn't even had the chance to make anything feel like home to even know, like traveling where to set it up. They'd been on the move.

Sarah: Traveling this whole time almost. Or, or even when they maybe were in one spot, it was full of questions and like, what's gonna happen and what's actually next? And you know, just try to get things figured out, like Yeah. Just this whole season of being unsettled.

Laura: Yeah. And it's been almost a year. So they, they left February, 1812 and they arrive, um, at the Isle of France in January of 1813. That's, that's a long time to be just in transition.

And to, to make matters worse, when they arrive, they immediately find out that Harriet Newell has actually died.

Denise: Oh my goodness.

Laura: She's, she was barely 19 years old. She had just turned 19 years old, and she died while giving birth on her voyage to the island. And her, her baby died shortly thereafter as well. So this news just devastates Ann, she's gone through one trial after another so far, and they're just, they're not sure what they're gonna do. They decide that this is probably not the best place to set up a mission. There is already like a Christian presence there. They wanna go to a place where the gospel's never been preached. But thankfully while, uh, while they're there, uh, Luther Rice actually had, had traveled with them, and he returns to the US and he rallies the Baptists behind the Judsons, and they appoint the Judsons as the first American Baptist missionaries. They don't find this out till a little bit later, but that eventually happens and they become part of this new group that is fully behind them and supporting them. And it's interesting, I was doing my doctoral studies. I actually lived on the north shore of Boston and went to church in Salem, Massachusetts where they sailed from originally. And I worshiped in the building of the First Baptist Church in Salem. And I remember the first time I discovered that there was a stained glass window of the ship that they departed on originally from Salem. So just the fact that there was like that living, the history was lived right there where I was able to worship, was really exciting. That's

Denise: That's So powerful. I love, I love it when stuff like that happens. Makes it real.

Laura: Mm-hmm. <affirmative> for sure. So they're, they're not sure where they're gonna, where they're supposed to go, but they decide after praying and consulting and thinking that they're gonna set up, uh, mission in Penang Island, which is now Malaysia. So that, that's interesting. But then they can't find a ship to go there, <laugh>. So they make these plans and they, they can't follow through on them because they don't have the means to get there. So in May 1813, they sail back to India, to the city of Madrass, southern India. So Calcutta is on the northern part of the eastern shore, eastern coast of India. Madrass is on the eastern coast, but it's much further south. They decide that they're gonna go there, see if they can get passage to Penang, but when they get there, they're only able to find passage to Burma, which is now Myanmar.

Laura: So like, they're making these plans and they're, they're just not happening. And so they finally end up being fearful of the second, or being fearful of being deported again. They don't wanna get arrested again. Um, and so they take this option to go to Burma, July 13th, 1813. They finally end up in Burma. So let's see, that's like a year and a half after they set out from Massachusetts. They're finally where they're gonna be, some sources say as they're sailing across the Bay of Bengal, which is, you know, they're going from the southeastern coast of India. Um, and, and they're sailing east, Burma or Myanmar is east from there, as they sail across this body of water, the Bay of Bengal. Some sources say that Ann actually suffered a miscarriage during this passage, and she had no women with her, and she had no, no female companion upon her arrival either.

Laura: So she's just dealing with this heavy, heavy loss after loss and physical trauma as well. One of the encouraging things about the destination that they chose, um, and the city that they went to was called at the time, Rangoon. Now it's called Yangon. Again, the pronunciation for that. If you know how to do that better, I apologize if I've, I've not done it correctly, but that's the, the, to my best knowledge, that's how you say those names. And this is towards the coast in Burma. The good thing about this location was that William Carey's son, Felix Carey, was actually, um, working there and doing mission work. He was married to a Burmese woman, woman and had a family there. And, um, so there was, there was some, um, foreign contact that they could have there. The hard thing about Burma was that it was very different from India in that there was no foreign influencer conveniences.

Laura: So it was, they didn't have access to any kind of healthcare or other people who had navigated the, the cross-cultural just journey that they were on, in, in the same way that they would've had an India, the pre dominant religion was Buddhism and language learning was very difficult because they didn't have books to study. No one had made up like a, a study of how an English speaker could learn the language. So the, they're just, you know, using techniques of like pointing and saying like, what is this? What is this? And getting people to help them. But they undertook intensive language study for about two years, making their own notes, making their own like books and figuring out how to do it. And, uh, as they're progressing it, it became evident that Ann was the better ones, um, speaking. And her husband, Mr. Judson, he was much better at the structure and grammar. And I just find it interesting that this is kind of how it played out, because you still see that today, often, often women who don't maybe have the official missionary role, they're out there in the community, you know, buying groceries and talking to their neighbors, and they, so they tend to be able to um, pick up the language and speak it better than maybe someone who has an official role who's studying it in a classroom.

Denise: Yeah. And for all of those who are listening to this, who have had to undergo language learning with a spouse, you know, the tension that you feel when one of you is doing better than the other, and especially, you know, if as the woman you're doing better, does that affect your husband? Is he feeling that? Does it, does it change the tone of your house or the ability to do work well, you know, and so I, I just am wondering, you know, was there that tension that they felt in their marriage? If she was actually doing better than he was, how did he handle that? You know, language learning is just such a heavy thing that carries with it. You, you try not to tie it to your worth and you know, but you do a little bit. If you excel at it, you feel like so much better about yourself. And if you fail, you, you think that it, it speaks to your ability to do good things. And, you know, so I just feel like that one little instance in that sentence there carries so much connotation with it.

Laura: So Ann and Adoniram's struggles just continued. Um, like I said, they're in Burma at the time, and there's no access to healthcare. And Ann continually gets sick. So in January 18, 14, they decide that she needs to, to leave the country and go back to India to get well, she's gone for about four months. And this becomes kind of a pattern in their story of they, they leave to get help, they're gone for a long time. They come back, they get ill, they leave, they come back. It's, it's just kind of a vicious cycle because where they are, they really have no help. They're on their own and they don't, neither of them had any



kind of medical training really. The, the story continues to get quite heavy here. It's just gonna continue to go from bad to worse. And so I don't want people to listen and just get discouraged by it.

Laura: But the reality is, it was very hard. August 18, 14, Felix Carey's wife and children drowned. The, uh, Judsons are left alone. They don't have any other expats around them. September 1815, they have a son who's born that brings them much joy. But just a few months later, in May of 1816, this baby dies. And the Judsons take it very hard. The way that they deal with it is that their theology, this belief, strong belief in the sovereignty of God, they viewed it as God's hand that they needed to submit to his will. Ann writes, "Our hearts were bound up in this child. We felt he was our earthly all, our only source of innocent recreation in this heathen land. But God saw it was necessary to remind us of our error and to strip us of our little all. Oh, may it not be in vain that what he has done, may we so improve it that we, that he will stay his hand and say it is enough".

Denise: Hmm. That's a hard thing to hear, isn't it?

Sarah: Yeah. I think even, you know, I suppose it depends on our theology today, but yeah, it can, that can be just so tough for us to hear and think, how is that, how is that God's goodness? You know? And, um, but to trust his sovereignty or see his sovereignty in that.

Denise: Whether you agree or question with it, you can't question their total love and desire to do what the Lord asked of them. You know? And that they, they viewed everything in how can we serve him and align our hearts the best we possibly can with what he's asking us to do. And, and that's what I read when I see that is just two people, especially, you know, Ann, that says, you know, let this shape me to look more like Christ.

Laura: Yeah. And that's really what they press into is, we're here because we love God and God, you have to sustain us. And so they continue studying the language, they continue just persevering. And after two years of study, they're able to begin Bible translation. And they begin with just a book or two here. And Ann writes a catechism, which is just a, um, a little pamphlet that lays out some specific teachings about the faith. And then in March, 1817, they have their first, what they call real inquirer, someone who comes to them and asks about what they're doing there and what it is that motivates them and what are their teachings that they're, that they're there to explain. That's five years after they departed the United States,

Denise: Which is huge. I mean, how many people call it quit before that or, you know, I think even the trends right now, people are going for two and three years and, and just how long it takes to actually establish something that could produce any fruit sometimes takes a lot longer than that. And so, man, that the hard work that they put in, in five years, I think it would be easy to be discouraged

Laura: For sure. But they, they're continuing to be encouraged because, um, they have friends. They might not be right there, but they do have friends and one of their friends, William Carey, sends them printing supplies, things that they can use to, you know, create copies of the catechism and copies of the books of the Bible that they're beginning to translate. And they also have new missionaries that show up and join them in the work. They continue to struggle with illness and, and health issues and for that reason. And also to recruit someone to help them learn the language and assist them in preaching and teaching. They actually send Mr. Judson to, uh, a part of Bangladesh to find an assistant. He's planned to be gone for three months, and his trip ends up taking almost eight months. So can you imagine like you're expecting your husband back after three months and four months go by, five months go by, he's not there.

Denise: I imagine you're not receiving just like text messages, <laugh>, you know, to let you know I'm good. You know, like the, the time it takes for anything to reach you and, and she's just probably digging in, just continuing to day in and day out. Just keep putting one step in front of each other.

Laura: Yeah. So what happens is he's not really even able to send many letters because his ship isn't able to go where it's supposed to be going. So he tries to take a ship back and instead of going, um, back to, so Bangladesh is a little bit north of Burma, instead of going back south to to Burma, he ends up going across the Bay of Bengal, again, back to India because of the winds, and they're not able to get there. So he's like taking this whole like, huge journey. And, you know, he is on a ship, he's not able to send a letter back. And so that's what's going on with him. Meanwhile, Ann Judson's trying to deal with new missionaries that are there, the Huffs and one of the new missionaries, Mr. Huff, he faces, um, harassment by the, the local people in government.

Laura: And this is a relatively new experience. They haven't faced much harassment so far, and he's brought in to be questioned. And so they're thinking maybe we need to leave this area. And they're getting ready to leave. And just as Ann is getting ready to leave at Adoniram returns, and so, okay, big sigh of relief, then they enter a period of some really exciting things that happen in April of 1819. They open a zayat. A zayat is a Burmese building where travelers can rest and have spiritual discussions and conversations. It's so interesting that this is built into the culture of, like, these kinds of places exist for people. They, they have a place where they can rest. And oh, by the way, we also have spiritual discussions that happen here. So they build their own and they start hosting people and having conversations. And in April 30th, at the end of that month, they have their first convert. So that's 1819.

Sarah: It should've been so exciting. I can imagine just like all of the trials and then this moment of joy, you know, of seeing some of the fruit. And I love that, Laura, you were talking about this place that where they could have, you know, rest for travelers and spiritual conversations. And that was something you were saying that was already happening in the culture. It was a cultural thing. And so yeah, just like thinking as we're entering a new culture, you know, like paying attention to those things. Like where are conversations happening or like, where are people gathering or, you know, what are, what are the needs that need to be met? Where are those conversations happening? Like I was thinking, you know, a friend of mine noticed that the men were playing chess

in the evenings, and so he joined, you know, something that was already happening and he could just be part of the conversations that were happening or, you know, are women talking when they're at the market. And so yeah, finding those like local customs or, you know, asking questions, being curious about the local culture to find ways to share and have conversation, spiritual conversation with people. That's so cool.

Laura: Yeah, and I think it's all about paying attention. It's like, what are people doing already? Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And I think that's what they were doing. They were like, okay, this is, this is where people meet to have conversations. There are no Christian churches here. There are no, like, some of the other spaces maybe not accessible to us, but this is something that we could do. So they, they're encouraged. They have a few more converts that they welcome into their midst. But by the end of that year, December 1819, things have slowed down. And they think, you know, maybe there's, people aren't as willing to come to us. Maybe, maybe we need to seek the blessing of people, people who are higher up because maybe people are fearful of, you know, having contact with the foreigner. So, um, Mr. Judson and Mr. Coleman, one of the newer missionaries decide that they're gonna travel to the capitol of the country about three miles, 300 miles north of where they are, and seek the, the favor of the emperor and ask him if he can kind of lay down this, um, instruction that people who convert, people who change their religion are not gonna be persecuted.

Laura: And the emperor is open to them at first, but when he finally hears their inquiry of what they're really there for, he, he, it doesn't go well. He's, he's not open to, to giving them that blessing that they're seeking. And so they're discouraged. They think, well, maybe, maybe we shouldn't stay here. They, they go back to Rangoon where they're based and they think, let's, maybe we should just move to Bangladesh. But the converts there plead with them not to go. They're, they're new believers. They, they want the, the missionaries to stay with them, and so they decide to stay. But Ann continues to suffer from ill health. At the time, this particular illness, they called a liver ailment. And it just continues to persist. And she tries to go back to India to recover and get well. She doesn't. And then finally, um, in 1821, August of 1821, she decides that they decide that she must just go back home to the United States to recover.

Laura: And it's interesting to think about that was the, the long voyage that she's gonna endure. But that was still their best option, that she's just, she's gotta go home. And the interesting thing at this time is, despite all the hardship that she's experienced there, she still thinks of this place as her home and calls it the dearest spot on earth. Uh, and it's very hard for her to leave. And I imagine that's probably the case for, for many others throughout history who've been in hard places. But it's still, it's still become home. Your people are there, even though you still have your people in your other home, you know? But again, there's challenges with the transportation. She can't get back to the United States directly. So she has to go through England. She spends about a year in England. Think about all this time that she and her husband are like spending away from each other.

Laura: It's just kind of crazy to think about in this day and age. So after spending about a year in England, she goes to the United States, visits her family and friends, travels around a lot, doesn't get a lot of rest, and doesn't really improve in her health. Um, she continues to

have periods of good health and bad health. And then finally she decides she's gotta, she's just gotta go back home. She's gotta go back to her husband. Um, she hears that one of the new missionaries has been summoned to the capitol by the emperor, and she knows Mr. Judson's gonna probably go, she feels like she needs to be there. She's been gone for so long. So during this time that Ann is gone, it's, I, I don't have time to go into it, but several other missionaries come and several of them die pretty quickly.

Laura: So this is an environment where like illness and health are affecting what's happening in the mission in a big way. People are dying very, very easily, <laugh> like quickly. And she's going back with not fully recovered health. When she returns to Burma, she and Mr. Judson immediately go to the capital to check on this new missionary Dr. Price. And while they're there, they have difficulty finding housing. Eventually they get some land to build a house on while they're there, because they're there for a while. And they have some really promising conversations with some of the royalty and officials there. And they make friends with many of them. And it's, it's quite remarkable to read about that. They're like meeting with princesses and Queens and princes and the Emperor, and they're having conversations about faith and people are interested, but some people are more open than others during this same time that they're in the capitol,

Laura: Ann starts a female school, um, and she takes in some Burmese girls, she names two of them, Mary and Abby Hasseltine using her maiden name. And she had been promised when she's in the United States that people from Bradford Academy would set up a fund. And she uses this fund to support these, um, particular girls. And this, this this is kind of like a her model of ministry, of setting up schools and working with girls. So they're experiencing some really exciting things as they're spending this time in the capitol. But then in May of 1824, so this is several years later, the British attacked Rangoon, which is where they had originally been stationed in southern Burma. So in May the British attacked Rangoon. And then in June of that same year, while the Judsons and Dr. Price are still in the capitol, Mr. Judson and Dr.

Laura: Price are imprisoned by the Burmese in a death prison. It's called a death prison. That's the name that it's given. And they're suspected of being British spies because they're foreigners. They probably have had, uh, interaction with the British maybe to get supplies from India. So they're under suspicion. This probably is where the culmination of like the horrendous things and their experience happens is during this imprisonment, you think it's been pretty bad up till now. This is when it gets even worse. But yet when you read the writings of both Ann and her husband Adoniram, their faith is so strong and steadfast. It's kind of, it's very remarkable considering all that they go through. So during, at Adoniram imprisonment, he's chained in fetters. That means like chains around his neck, chains around his ankles and, and wrists. Uh, he's barely fed. He suffers fevers regularly and early on in his imprisonment, um, the officials come to Ann's house and they take away some of many of her things.

Laura: And she's very, you know, astute and tries to conceal as much as she can so that she'll have something to live on. And she succeeds somehow in doing this. And that those resources that she is able to stash away and hide sustains her over the next several years. She uses all of her resources available to her to try to free her husband. And Dr. Price, she writes letters, she visits governments, she bribes guards, she brings food to

her husband, she negotiates better conditions. She even like sets up a little shelter in the prison for her husband, like she is working and using all of her energy to try to help them survive and to get them out of prison. At the same time, she's caring for these Berman girls that are living with her and she's pregnant. So <laugh>, I mean, I'm just thinking about all this women, all this woman is doing seven months after Mr. J's in prison. She gives birth to her daughter Maria.

Denise: And so she's alone, he's not with her when she gives birth, right.

Laura: She's alone. She does at this time have a bengalese cook. And then there are some other believers still where she's located at this time. Um, there's at least one other believer who's kind of like helping her, but she has so many people to care for. And then on top of that, she's trying to do all of this for her husband. And like if she's not doing this, he's not getting fed, he's not getting cared for, and she really helps him survive. Later she writes to her husband's brother and says, my prevailing opinion was that my husband would suffer violent death and I should of course become a slave and languish out a miserable existence in the tyrannical hands of sun unfeeling monster. But the consolation of religion in these trying circumstances were neither few nor small. It taught me to look beyond this world to the rest, that peaceful, happy rest where Jesus reigns and oppression never enters.

Denise: I mean, that had to be what she was focusing on. Cuz I can't imagine her continuing day after day without that mindset, that mindset of I'm looking at Jesus instead of at my current situation.

Laura: For sure. And, and already living as if she's gonna die. Like, yeah, like my, my heavenly home is what awaits me, and if I die, I die. So it's, it's pretty intense to think about what she was going through and just the fact that her faith was so vital in her survival. So after some time, the Burmese see that they're losing the war, and so they decide to move these foreign prisoners because the Mr. Judson and, and Dr. Price were not the only foreigners. There was a whole group of them who had been rounded up, but they decide that they're gonna move these foreigner prisoners to a more remote location. And so they, they march them off to this new location that's more remote. They don't have, they take their shoes. Mr. Judson has these raw feet and Ann and all of her like just perseverance and grit.

Denise: Tougher than nails Ann.

Laura: <laugh>. Yeah. She, she follows them. She finds out where they've gone and she picks up her infant daughter and these two adopted daughters and her bengalese cook, and they follow and they suffer greatly because this new location does not have resources. They don't have a place to stay. They don't have food. She begs the jailer to let her stay in his home. The jailer has two rooms. He lets her stay with all of her group in a storage room, and they stay there for like six months. Food is hard to come by. There is disease rampant. It's just, I just can't imagine what she went through. Um, just, just thinking about it all.

Denise: Well, and knowing that when she was unwell before she left, she went to England, she went, you know, to take care of herself. And she stayed even though she was so sick and she was not doing well to take care of him, you know, so this was, she was obviously putting what was best for her in the backseat.

Laura: For sure. And it goes back to that model that I was telling you about earlier of like, this, this is what people expected of missionaries, and this is what the kind of faith, um, community that they were brought up in. This is, this is how you live it out.

Denise: This is the letter that he wrote to her dad at the beginning. Mm-hmm.

Laura: <affirmative>. Exactly. She's living it out.

Denise: <laugh>. Yeah.

Laura: So the next thing that happens while Mr. Judson is imprisoned and they're living in this smaller remote village, is that smallpox goes through the village. Her baby catches it village or the jailers kids catch it, her baby survives. But Ann ends up inoculating the village. So apparently she has inoculated the jailers, um, kids and they don't suffer greatly. And so everyone hears about it. And so she starts giving people shots. I don't know exactly how she did this, if she had, um, you know, the, the vaccine in her supplies somewhere, but she, she just sticks them in with a needle needle and says, take care of your diet. And she becomes famous throughout the village for this. I'm just thinking like, how gutsy is that to just like start giving people vaccines when you don't have any medical training? <laugh>?

Denise: Oh my goodness. Well, that could get into a whole nother conversation Yes. That we don't have time to get into today, <laugh> for sure. But don't you just imagine that there are so many stories that we just don't even know of her impact that happened during this time because she probably just did not have the strength to even communicate that there's, there's things we aren't gonna hear until heaven about the impact that she had during this season, living with the jailer in that community.

Laura: For sure. Um, and at some point she does move, I think, away from the jail and lives elsewhere, and she becomes very ill. And during that time, she stopped producing milk and her baby Maria suffers greatly, um, for this. And so she, what she ends up resorting to is begging the jailer to let her husband out so that he can take her baby around and beg from the village women who are nursing, if they can give her her baby nourishment. And I'm just, how heart rending is all of that. Like, the fact that that's what they were, that they had to resort to. And when you read about her writing, when you read what she writes about that time period, it, it clearly affected her in a deep way.

Denise: So this isn't like he's discharged, he's out for the day, somehow still imprisoned, but is able to carry this baby and ask for help, and then he goes back into the prison.

Laura: Right? So yeah. So he, he has times where he is like in fetters and chained. And then there's other times where like Ann is going into the prison, I think because they're

foreigners, they're so, and they're able to like negotiate things. There's a little bit of inconsistency in how they're treated for sure.

Denise: But I also feel like, I heard that the jailers like probably have pity for her. Like they have seen her and they probably have, you know, like seen her deteriorate. And I'm imagining that, you know, their hearts a little bit went out to her and all that they saw her do for her husband and, you know, in, in ways that they could, they probably tried to help, you know,

Laura: For sure. And she also helped save his children. <laugh>. Yeah. But finally after over two years of imprisonment, Dr. Judson or Mr. Judson and Dr. Price are freed by the British, and Ann never fully recovers her strength after that. So it's a joyful reunion. It's a joyful end to this long period of suffering. But only about eight months later, Ann dies from illness and while Mr. Judson is gone, and so he is just heartbroken. He's not there when his wife dies. And then six months later, his little infant daughter also dies. So that, that's kind of a, it sounds like a tragic ending to their story, but it's important to note that the mission continued to grow Adoniram married twice over and had many more children, many of whom lived. And by 1829, just a few years after her death, there were 18 converts and many, many Baptist missionaries were sent out.

Sarah: Well, and that wasn't the end of the impact of Adoniram and Ann, right. Laura, can you go into that a little bit more?

Laura: So the, you see, after Ann's lifetime, um, the church in Myanmar, or as we know it today, continued to grow. And it's important to remember that before the Judsons went there, they didn't know of any other Christians that were in the country. So many of the Christians today in Myanmar probably can trace some of their historic, um, spiritual legacy, uh, to the Judsons and all of the converts that were, were participating in the mission back in the 18, early 1800s. And that's kind of incredible to think about, especially when you think about the history that Myanmar has gone through. It's still a really difficult place for Christian believers and has been for so long. Um, but the church grew there and the legacy that the Judsons and those early converts have is just incredible to think about.

Sarah: Well, and especially in the context of how hard it was for the Judsons and all that they endured in their time. And yet yeah, you see even today the fruit of that and their sacrifice and the legacy.

Denise: Yeah. So I feel like everything that was accomplished in his life we owe to Ann Judson because he would not have survived if she didn't really give her life to ensure his could go on. And, and everything that he accomplished after that we owe to her and her sacrifice that she made for him. And, and yes, we maybe look at going to the field today and don't have to deal with quite maybe the extreme of hardships. You know, I don't know, maybe some of you who are listening are like, no, actually it is still this hard in some places, you know, when I feel like we lived in one of the most remote places in the world, and we had to count the cost, we had to know, okay, it takes us seven hours to get to hospital if something were to happen. And, and, you know, so we're weighing all of these different things, but, but I feel like we have books like where there are no

doctors and we have the internet, and we have the ability to kind of piece together some care for ourself that they just did not have. And yet, you know, I think we do wrestle with counting the cost, but it just have a little bit more resources than, than they had during that time. For sure.

Laura: Yeah, we do. And just so many, so many more ways to deal with the difficulties that we encounter.

Denise: Yeah, absolutely.

Laura: So I just wanna kind of just summarize a little bit the legacy of Ann. So we've heard about all of the struggles that she's gone through. We've heard about her persistent and just enduring faith that she possessed throughout her life, but beyond just the influence on her, her immediate mission, what, what else was there? Here I'm gonna reference Dana Robert's work, *American Women in Mission*, because she's done some, some great work, um, that included, uh, research on Ann. She says that Ann was, and still is the most influential woman in American mission history. There were so many countless biographies that were written about her that inspired many, many people to consider, um, becoming a missionary and supporting mission work beyond just the biography. She wrote a history of the mission work in Burma that again, inspired other people, especially Baptists. Besides the work that I've mentioned that she, she did with girls and writing a catechism.

Laura: She translated part of the Bible into Siamese, which is Thai and Burmese. So it wasn't just her husband who did translation work. She also had had time to do this, who knows when amidst all the hardships that she faced. But she did. And then, as I said, she inspired countless other missionaries. One of the people that she inspired was actually the third Mrs. Judson, Emily Chubbuck Judson was just a child and read about Ann and eventually ended up becoming Adoniram's third wife, when she was asked to write the biography of his second wife. So like, there's a continuing legacy that just happens within the own, their own, their own family. But it's interesting what, um, Dana Roberts says in some of her writing about, um, Ann, uh, she kind of classifies her as this missionary wife who is an activist.

Laura: You know, she's out there getting it done. She eventually dies. But the, the enduring thing that you know about her is that she was just giving her all to the work, but the other women that went out also kind of had a legacy that you might find more affinity with that might might be important to know about. So there was Harriet Newell, we heard about that, who died before she really even got to do anything. Her memoirs, her biography was printed and disseminated and was very, very influential. It was probably more influential than any other missionary biography until Ann's. And so she was, uh, considered like the proto-martyr of American missions. And then there's Roxanna Nott. She went out, um, on the later voyage that happened, they came from Philadelphia, and you don't really hear about her much in history. She was only there for a couple years, and then she returned home. And, and some people would've classified her as a failure. But all of these women have have place in mission history and mm-hmm. <affirmative>, they're important to remember. And I, I wonder for the audience that's listening, if they identify with any of these models or, um, people that they know maybe fit some of



these models, or if there's other models today for the missionary wife or just for the missionary woman that they resonate with.

Denise: And I think there are so many women that go to the field having in mind the kind that they wanna be, and they maybe end up being a different kind, you know? And it's like, I thought I was gonna be this, and then I never got married and I never had a family, or I did get married and I did have a family, and those changed how I could interact with who I thought I was gonna be and how I was gonna impact. And, and we get into our mind the type of impact we consider to be a success. And if we don't have that kind of success, you know, maybe we write off these other things that end up really inspiring other people, you know? And it's just so challenging to not compare ourselves and hold up a standard that we think this is what it needs to be, and allow God who uniquely created us and is uniquely crafting our story to say, this is the model.

Denise: Nobody else maybe has lived this model before, but this is the model that I had for you. And there's value in that. I, I don't know. I think one of the things, Sarah, even that I think we keep hearing and why we wanna tell these stories is because the legacies need to be told to be inspiring to other people, to to hear, you know, and, and when, when women aren't writing or when they aren't being told, their stories just kind of fade away and we aren't learning from them. We aren't being inspired by them. I don't know. Sarah, what do you think, uh, what did you wrestle with, even with the type of person you wanted to be on the field?

Sarah: Yeah, it is interesting thinking about when we have these models and these examples, and if we're only focused on one type, you know, especially thinking of like personality of maybe we saw a woman who was very outgoing or very skilled in something like skilled in translation work and think, okay, this is what I have to attain. This is what I have to become, you know, whatever that is, even like as a single thinking, okay. The epitome is to be, you know, a missionary wife or whatever, you know, and then, and then it doesn't happen, or it doesn't go the way that we thought it would. And then that can feel like, well, I have failed because I had this one model in mind, and that's not what happened. And so, yeah, like you were saying, Denise, having all of these stories that we are reading, listening to, talking about is so important to see the amazing variety of ways that God works in us and the variety of stories that he is writing for us, and that he has written for these other women. And, you know, I wish, I wish that we didn't have, you know, like sort of the forgotten women, right? Um, because even if they didn't have the success, um, however we would define that, their stories are still so valuable. And sometimes yeah, we can feel like, well, I'm just gonna be the forgotten failure, and yet God is working, or we don't know. We don't know what God's gonna do because we haven't seen the end of the story yet.

Denise: Yeah,

Laura: For sure. And I, I wonder too, and I haven't done a lot of, um, research into Roxanna's story, but the reasons why they left, I don't know, maybe she was taking better care of herself,

Denise: Right? Right.

Laura: And she, she's of the three, she's the one who lived.

Denise: She's the one who lived. And we don't know about her legacy in the work that she did back in the States. You know, I don't, I don't know either, but I think about mothers who sacrificed maybe their own impact because, you know, like the Wesleys, John and Charles Wesley, you know, there's so much about Susanna Wesley and what she did to inspire her children, and that was her legacy. They're the ones that maybe we remember for what they did. And so it's like, what, what were the, what was the legacy potentially that was lived out through other people because of her? And so I so appreciate what you brought in about the history and historical context and what was happening in the world. I feel like that's something that I am not well-versed in and I'm not well studied in, and how it impacts the stories and helps us to have a better, well-rounded impression of what was happening, um, during this time. What helped shaped why these decisions were made and why things were hard. And so thank you for bringing all of that into us and into this story today.

Laura: Well, thank you for having me. It's been such a pleasure to have a conversation with you and to share Ann's story with, uh, a wider audience.

Denise: I agree. I hope you have been blessed by this story. I hope it inspires you to, to dig in deeper, whether that's with Ann's story or with another story, and how you might gain inspiration and courage for wherever you're serving. And so we always wanna remind you, until next time, remember, you might be living the story that will be the courage for someone else's legacy. Thanks for joining us, and we look forward to bringing you another story next month.