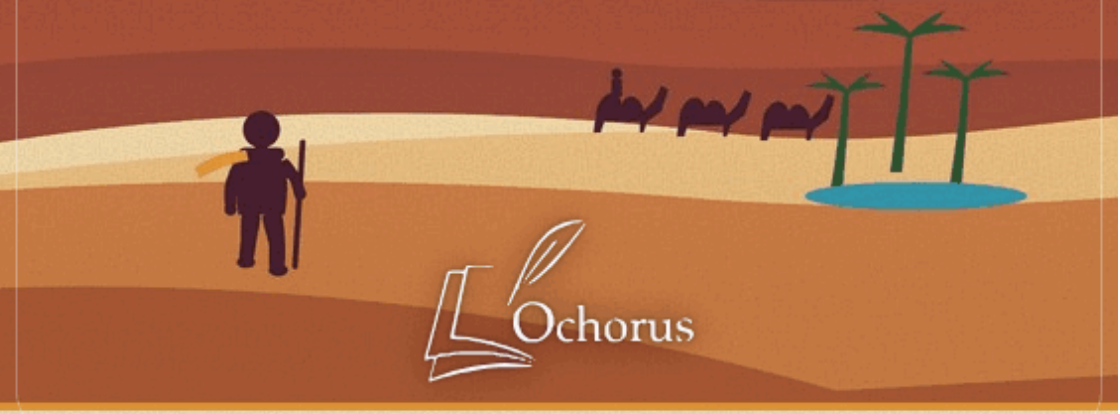
OCHORUS ORIGINALS

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Brave for God: Book Three

Six more who followed Jesus into the wide world



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Matthew 10:8

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Adoniram Judson: The Man Who Hid the Bible in a Pillow

Adoniram Judson was one of the very first people from America ever to sail across the world as a missionary. In 1812 he and his young wife Ann set out for Burma, a faraway land in Asia where almost no one had heard of Jesus. It was a brave and lonely thing to do; nobody had shown them how.

Burma was hard. The language was hard, the climate was hard, and for six long years Adoniram preached and taught and waited before even a single Burmese person believed. But Adoniram had set his heart on one enormous task above all: to translate the whole Bible into the Burmese language, so that the people could read God's words for themselves. Year after year he worked at it, page after page.

Then war broke out between Burma and Britain, and because Adoniram was a foreigner, the frightened rulers threw him into a dreadful prison. He was chained and kept in the heat and the dark for nearly two years, not knowing if he would ever come out alive.

In all that misery, one worry gnawed at him more than any other. His Bible translation — years and years of precious work — was hidden at home, and if it were found and destroyed, it could never be replaced. His wife Ann thought of a clever, brave plan. She sewed the great bundle of papers inside a hard, lumpy pillow and carried it into the prison for Adoniram to rest his head on. The rough guards, wanting something soft

and fine, turned up their noses at the ugly, uncomfy pillow and left it alone — and so, night after night, Adoniram slept on the Bible, and it was saved.

At last the war ended and Adoniram was freed. Worn out and grieving — for faithful Ann did not live long after — he finished the work anyway. He gave the people of Burma the whole Bible in their own language, and it is still read there today. Adoniram Judson had learned that God's work is worth waiting for, worth suffering for, and worth guarding — even inside an ugly pillow.

Jim and Elisabeth Elliot: The Ones Who Went Back

Deep in the forests of Ecuador, in South America, lived a people called the Waorani, who had almost no contact with the outside world and who killed strangers who came near. Jim Elliot and four of his friends believed that even these people should have the chance to hear that God loved them. So the young men learned all they could, dropped gifts from a little aeroplane to make friends, and at last landed on a sandy riverbank to meet them face to face.

For a few days it went well. Then, one afternoon in 1956, the five men were attacked and killed with spears on that lonely sandbar. To the watching world it looked like a total, tragic waste — five good young men dead, and nothing to show for it. Jim had once written words his friends never forgot: it is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

And then came the part no one could have imagined. Instead of giving up in anger and grief, Jim's wife Elisabeth, together with the sister of one of the other men, decided to go and live among the very people who had killed their loved ones.

They walked into the forest and made their home with the Waorani. They learned the difficult language. They cared for the sick, held the babies, and lived as friends and neighbours — sitting down each day beside the men who had thrown the spears. Slowly, as the Waorani watched this

astonishing kindness, they began to ask why. And many of them, including some of the killers themselves, became followers of Jesus, and brothers to the families they had wounded.

The people who had seemed the hardest to reach were reached — not by force, and not by revenge, but because two women chose to go back with forgiveness and love. It was the very thing Jim had believed was worth dying for.

Sundar Singh: The Holy Man Who Followed Jesus

Sundar Singh grew up in a Sikh family in the north of India, a serious boy who searched and searched for God but could not find peace. He grew so angry and unhappy that one day he did a shocking thing — he burned a Bible. And yet, deep down, he was still desperate to know God, so much so that he decided that if God did not show Himself, life was not worth living.

Early one morning, in the middle of his despair, Sundar prayed one last time — and he saw Jesus, alive, full of love, speaking to him. From that moment Sundar belonged to Jesus, and nothing could shake him, not even when his own family turned him out and, he believed, tried to poison him for it.

Sundar decided to serve Jesus in a way his own people would understand. In India a *sadhu* is a holy man who gives up money and comfort and wanders from place to place seeking God. So Sundar became a sadhu for Jesus. He put on a simple saffron robe, owned almost nothing, and walked barefoot across the length of India, telling everyone he met about the Saviour he had seen.

He did not stop at India. Sundar climbed high into the freezing Himalayan mountains, the tallest in the world, and crossed into Tibet, a land closed and dangerous for a Christian, where he was beaten and once left for dead. His feet were often cut and bleeding from the rocky roads, and people began to call him "the apostle with the bleeding feet."

In 1929, though he was ill and tired, Sundar set out once more for the mountains of Tibet, to carry the good news to people who had never heard it. He walked up into the high passes — and was never seen again. No one knows exactly what became of him. But all across India and the mountains, people remembered the barefoot holy man who had given up everything to follow Jesus, and would go anywhere, however hard, to tell of Him.

Lottie Moon: The Cookie Lady of China

Lottie Moon was a tiny woman — barely four and a half feet tall — but she had one of the biggest hearts and sharpest minds of her day. She was one of the first women in the American South to earn a full college degree, at a time when most people thought girls did not need one. She could have done anything. She chose to go to China.

When Lottie arrived in her Chinese town, the children were shy of the strange foreign lady and ran away from her. So Lottie thought of a delicious idea. She went into her little kitchen and baked trays of sweet teacakes and cookies, and offered them to the children. Soon the children were not running away at all — they were running toward her, and their mothers came too, and Lottie told them all, over the cookies, how much God loved them.

Lottie lived in China for almost forty years. She learned to dress and speak and cook like the people around her, until she no longer felt like a foreigner at all but like one of them. She loved the Chinese as her own family, and they loved her.

Then a dreadful famine came, and the people all around Lottie began to starve. Lottie could not bear it. She gave away her food. She gave away her money. She gave and gave until there was almost nothing left for herself, growing thinner and weaker because she would not eat while her neighbours had nothing.

By the time others realised how little she had kept for herself, Lottie was very frail. She died in 1912 on board a ship taking her home to rest, having quite literally given everything she had for the people she loved. To this day Christians remember Lottie Moon every Christmas — the small woman with the plate of cookies who spent her whole self on China.

Helen Roseveare: The Doctor Who Trusted God in the Dark

Helen Roseveare was a brilliant young doctor from England who could have had a comfortable life curing patients at home. Instead she packed up her medical bag and went to the Congo, deep in the heart of Africa, where there were hardly any doctors at all.

There Helen worked harder than she had ever worked in her life. She built a hospital out of almost nothing. She trained young African men and women to be nurses and doctors, so that the healing would go on long after her. She treated thousands of sick people who had never seen a doctor before. It was exhausting and wonderful.

Then a violent rebellion swept across the country, and soldiers seized the mission. Helen was taken prisoner and treated with great cruelty, and for months she lived in fear and pain, not knowing if she would live or die. It was the darkest time of her life.

And yet, in that darkness, Helen said she sensed God asking her a question she never forgot. Not *can you bear this suffering,* but something stranger and gentler: *can you thank me for trusting you with this, even if I never tell you why?* It did not make the pain go away. But it turned her fear into a kind of quiet courage, knowing she was not alone and not forgotten.

When at last she was set free, everyone expected Helen to go home to England for good, and no one would have blamed her. But once she had rested, she went back — back to the Congo, to keep building and healing

and teaching. In the years that followed she helped train a whole new generation of African doctors and nurses, so that the healing would go on for good and never depend on her alone.

Helen Roseveare spent the rest of her long life telling people what she had learned in the dark: that God is with us in our hardest hours, and that He never wastes our suffering when we place it in His hands.

Simeon Nsibambi: The Man Who Lit a Fire

Simeon Nsibambi was a well-off, respected man in Uganda, in East Africa. He had a good government job as a health officer, fine clothes, and a comfortable home. He was already a churchgoer. By every outward sign, he had everything a man could want.

But Simeon was not satisfied. Something in him was hungry for more of God than he had ever known — a real, living, joyful faith, not just a respectable one. He could not shake the feeling that there was far more to knowing Jesus than he had yet found.

One day Simeon met a young English doctor named Joe Church, who felt exactly the same hunger. The two men shut themselves away for a whole weekend with nothing but a Bible, reading and praying and asking God to fill them with His Spirit and make them truly new. And God met them. Something caught fire in Simeon's heart that never went out.

He could not keep the joy to himself. Simeon gave up his fine job and took to the roads of Uganda, stopping rich men and poor men, strangers and friends, anyone who would listen, to tell them that they too could know Jesus and be washed clean and made new. People thought it strange that a man would leave a good position to do such a thing — but they could not argue with the joy on his face.

Others caught the fire from Simeon, and then others caught it from them, and the flame spread from village to village and country to country. It became the great East African Revival, a wave of new life that swept across

Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania and changed hundreds of thousands of lives — and it is still burning today. Simeon Nsibambi is remembered, quite simply, as the man who lit the fire.

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