

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 4: The God Who Reveals Himself

Unit 4 Big Question and Answer:

Can Anybody Tell Me What the LORD Is Like?

He's Not Like Anyone Else!

PFI NIV Songs 4, Tracks 3,4

Unit 4 Bible Verse: 1 Kings 8:23, NIV 1984

"O LORD, there is no God like you." 1 King 8:23

PFI NIV Songs 4, Track 6

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 6

The LORD Is Holy

God is holy. He set apart from everything and everyone else. He is good and He is great. He never sins in anything He thinks, says, does or plans. Because He is holy, He hates sin. Sin is rebelling against God and His good ways. God is so holy that nothing sinful can come into His presence.

We are all sinners, so how can we ever become God's people? It is only because of Jesus, the holy Son of God. Jesus came to earth and lived a perfect life. He chose to die on the cross to pay for the sins of God's people. He suffered the full punishment for their sins, exchanging their un-holiness (sinfulness) for His perfect holiness. Now all who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior are saved. They get to know God and will one day live in His holy presence forever.

God calls His people to live for Him by being holy as He is holy. He wants them to reflect the way He is. God's Holy Spirit helps them do this. He lives in their hearts and helps them to love God and obey Him. God's people will always struggle with sin while they live here on earth. But one day, they will live with their wonderful God in heaven, perfectly good and holy, changed by Him to never sin again! How wonderful that will be!

BIBLE VERSE

How do I know this is true? The Bible tells me so!

Bible Truth 6 Bible Verse: Isaiah 6:1-3

"I saw the LORD seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings...and they were calling to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory!'"

CASE STORY

Our story is called:

The Case of the Remarkably Merciful Message.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. What was the Merciful Message? Who came to believe it?
2. What was so remarkable about how merciful it was?

This story doesn't take place in Bible times. It starts out on August 9, 1788, in Malden, Massachusetts.

What a happy day this was for Mr. and Mrs. Judson! Mrs. Judson had just given birth to a son. "Thank You, Lord, for our son, Adoniram. Please make him a man who loves You. Please use him to tell many others about You. Do great things through him," they prayed.

It soon was clear that God had given Adoniram some unusual gifts--gifts that could be used to do great things for God. When only three years old, little Adoniram began to read and memorize the Bible. He learned about God's holiness: His perfect goodness and power. About our sinfulness: that we all deserve God's punishment. About God's love for sinners through Christ: who suffered and died as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all who would turn and trust in Him. And about God's offer of eternal life to all who do trust in Jesus: their sins forgiven, the Holy Spirit in their heart, the promise of life with God forever in heaven.

By the time he was four, Adoniram began to tell others these great truths, too. His favorite game was playing church with the neighborhood children. He, would preach a little sermon and lead the others in singing, "Go, Preach My Gospel," a favorite hymn at their church. "We must go into all the world and tell them about the love of Christ, its height, its depth, its length and breadth!" Adoniram urged the other children, "Oh, that Jesus would suffer and die to save sinners like you and me!"

When Adoniram was old enough to go to school, he amazed his teachers. "We've never had such a smart student!" they told his parents. "You must send him to Providence College so he can finish his education."

His parents happily agreed. It looked like all their prayers for their son were being answered! The Lord was preparing Adoniram to do great things for him.

Adoniram found the work at Providence College difficult. The other students were very smart. Even so, Adoniram was soon known as one of the college's best students.

Another extremely smart student named Jacob Eames heard about Adoniram. He heard how smart he was and that he came from a godly family. Mr. Eames thought it was silly to believe in God and decided to do something terrible. He would do everything he could to get Adoniram to stop believing in God.

Eames' plan worked. Adoniram was so charmed by his new friend that he rejected all that he had learned about God. For you see, it's one thing to know about the love of Christ and the forgiveness He offers; but it's another thing to believe in Christ and ask for forgiveness for yourself. Adoniram had been a "knower" as a child; but had not been a "believer." He had yet to trust in Jesus as His own Savior.

"I don't believe in God as you do," he told his parents. "I'm not going to spend my life telling other about Jesus. I want to be rich and famous," he told them. "But first, I am going to travel. I want to see America," Adoniram got on his horse and set off down the road, ready to live life his own way.

One evening Adoniram came to a little country inn. "Do you have any rooms available?" he asked.

"I do, but it's next to the room of a dying man. He's in a lot of pain and makes a lot of noise. You might not want it," the innkeeper replied.

"I'll take it. Death doesn't bother me," Adoniram said.

But listening to that poor, dying man all night did bother Adoniram... a lot! Questions about this dying man filled his mind: "What kind of man was he? Was he ready to stand before the holy LORD? Did he trust in Jesus' death as payment for his sins? Where would he spend eternity?" Adoniram wondered. Then he scolded himself: "You're thinking about death as a Christian would! Eames would think that was ridiculous."

That night, the man died. "What was the man's name?" Adoniram asked the next morning.

"Jacob Eames," the innkeeper replied.

Adoniram gasped in horror. "It was my friend! Eames! Now he's dead!" he said. "He died unprepared to meet the holy Lord. He never confessed his sins or trusted in Jesus for forgiveness. He died without hope!" he exclaimed. "I will, too, if I don't give up my rebellious ways and turn to Him! What a fool I've been!"

Right then, Adoniram confessed his sins and trusted in Jesus as his Savior! God forgave Adoniram and filled his heart with His love. Adoniram was overcome with God's

kindness to him! "How great is God's love for sinners that He would choose to forgive me even though I chose to reject Him all these years!" Adoniram thought.

Adoniram rode straight home to tell his parents the change the Lord had brought to his heart. How they rejoiced! Adoniram's life plans changed, too. He made it his one goal to live a holy life. Every day he lived by asking, "Does this please the Lord?"

He also decided to go to Burma to tell people about Jesus. "How will these people be saved if no one will go?" Adoniram thought. "They have to face the holy God like the rest of us. Surely the love of God through Christ must reach to people in all parts of the world. I will go and tell them, that they might turn from their sins and trust in Christ and be saved."

A few years later, Adoniram and Ann--his new bride of just seven days--said goodbye to their friends and families and set sail for India and then Rangoon, Burma. How different Rangoon was from Massachusetts! They had left the snowy, cold winters of New England for the steamy tropics and rainy season floods of Burma. Back home, there had been churches in every town. Now there were only Buddhist pagodas (temples) with giant statues of Buddha in them.

Adoniram and Ann stared up at the massive Shwedagon Pagoda of Rangoon. It was covered with 60 tons of gold and over 5000 diamonds. Its spire alone was over 300 feet tall! It was the pride of the Burmese people, but it made the Judsons so sad. There was nothing in Buddha's teachings to point the Burmese people to Jesus. Buddha taught there was no God who people could know and love, only a great invisible force that people who follow Buddha's teachings will become a part of. Many of the people lived in fear of evil spirits that they believed must be pleased by sacrifices to keep them from doing harmful things to them. Oh, how the Burmans needed to know about the height, the depth, the length and breadth of the love of Christ! Adoniram knew this more than ever.

"The still, small voice of God will come and replace your power," Adoniram vowed as he stood looking at the huge pagoda. "The churches of Jesus Christ will take the place of these monuments to idols. Voices will sing hymns of praise to Jesus Christ!"

The only place Adoniram and Ann could find to live in was a small mud hut, built on a swamp outside of the city

wall. On one side was the trash dump and on the other was the cemetery. Yet even in these horrible conditions, the Judsons eagerly set to work on learning Burmese--one of the most difficult languages in the world--so they could tell the people of Burma about the love of Christ.

The Judsons prayed and worked for six, long years before the first Burman came to believe in Jesus. The Judsons rejoiced at God's blessing and kept praying and working. Slowly others came to believe, too.

As the number of Burmese Christians grew, so did anger from the Burmese government. They didn't want their people to believe in Jesus! They accused Adoniram of being a spy, though they knew he wasn't one. They threw him into prison, even forcing him to live in an abandoned lion's cage for a while. Ann and their child suffered greatly, too; but, never did they regret coming to Burma.

"Think much on the love of Christ, think much on the love of Christ!" Adoniram would tell everyone. Nothing--not even their lives-- was too much to give up so that the Burmese might know God's great love offered to sinners through Christ. After thirty-four years, Adoniram boarded a ship for America. It was time to go home for good. He had translated the entire Bible into Burmese, started sixty-three churches, and seen over seven thousand Burmese come to know the Lord. But his body, sick and worn from years of difficulties, was never to make it back to America. Adoniram died on board the ship and his body was buried at sea.

What were the last words of this man? They were "Think much on the love of Christ; think much on the love of Christ!"

Even at the very end, all he could think of was the love Christ showed by coming to be the payment for sins, that many might know the wonderful fellowship with the holy God, rather than face His just punishment for their sins.

Our Bible Truth is: The LORD Is Holy

Our Bible Verse is: Isaiah 6:1-3

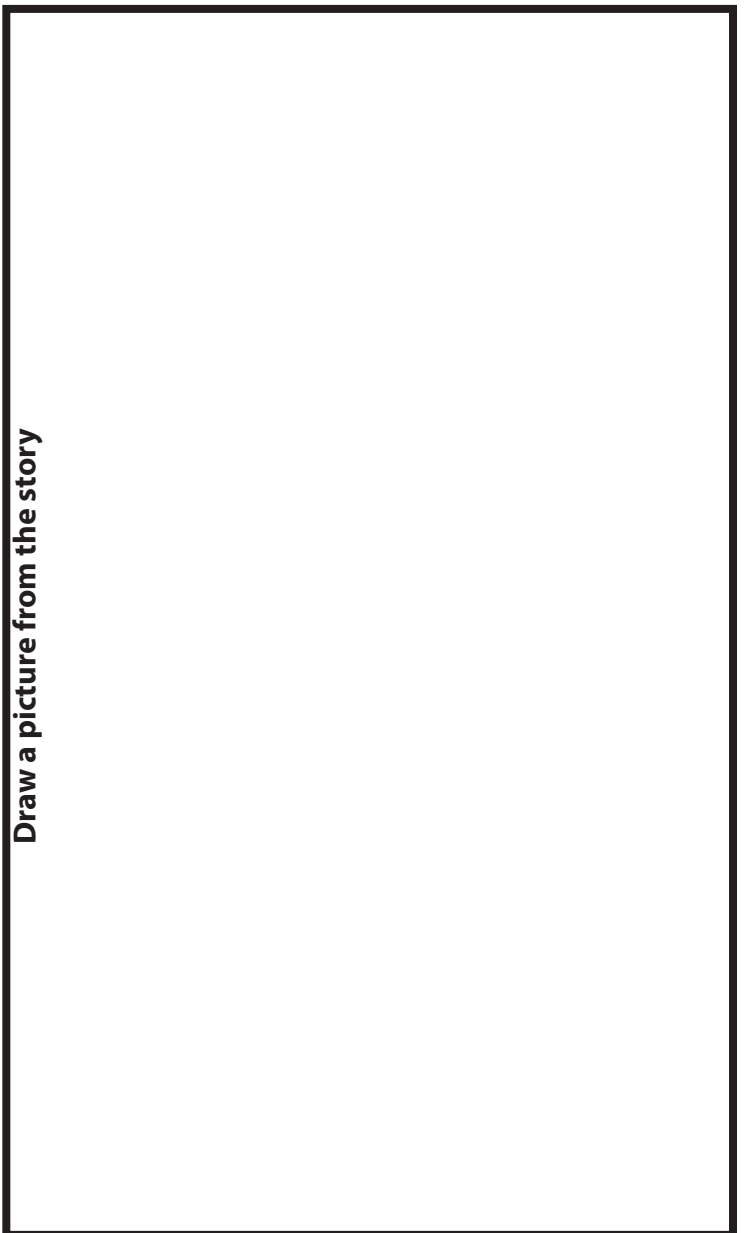
"I saw the LORD seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with 6 wings...and they were calling to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory!'"

Adoniram Judson lived a life thinking much on the love of Christ, for he knew how he had no hope before a holy

God without Christ's loving sacrifice made on his behalf. He gave his whole life as an offering of thanksgiving in return. Nothing was too much to do for His Lord.

What about you and me? Do we think much on the love of Christ? Do we realize that it is only through Him that we shall receive forgiveness for our sins and enjoy fellowship with the holy God rather than punishment? Like Adoniram Judson, like the people of Burma; like all people, everywhere, we need Jesus to be our Savior. It is God's free gift to all who turn from their sins, confess them to God and trust Jesus as their own Savior.

Let's praise God for loving sinful people like us so much that He would send Jesus to save us. Let's ask Him to help us to live out our lives thinking much on His love; and to create in us a willingness to serve Him, however He desires.



Draw a picture from the story

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU

1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False:
 We are all sinners, but God wants us to be His people so much that He just overlooks our sins.
 Answer: False! It is only because Jesus paid for sins on the cross that any of us can be His people!

2. Crack the Case Questions:
a. What was the Merciful Message? Who came to believe it?
 Answer: That the Lord, though He is perfectly holy, loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to take the punishment for all who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus. Through Him, we have forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

b. What was so remarkable about how merciful it was?
 Answer: Because it came from God, who is holy, and was made to sinners who deserved His punishment, not His mercy.

3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse:
Isaiah 6:1-3
 "I saw the Lord seated on a ____, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above him were ____, each with six wings...and they were calling to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole ____ is full of his glory!'"
 Answers: throne, seraphs, earth.

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy
PFI NIV Songs 4, Tracks 18,19

Verse 2
 Holy, holy, holy!
 All the saints adore Thee,
 Casting down their golden crowns,
 Around the glassy sea;
 Cherubim and seraphim,
 Falling down before Thee,
 Who wert, and art,
 And evermore shall be.

Verse 3
 Holy, holy, holy!
 Tho' the darkness hide Thee,
 Tho' the eye of sinful man
 They glory may not see;
 Only Thou art holy;
 There is none beside Thee,
 perfect in pow'r,
 In love and purity.

Words: Reginlad Heber Music: John B. Dykes

This song is a picture of God in His splendid holiness in heaven. One day, God's people will come before Him and at last see Him upon His throne in His perfect holiness, just as this song describes.

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY

A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication

A God, we praise You for being purely holy and full of love.

C God, we confess that like Adoniram Judson, we have heard that God is holy, yet we sin against Him. We need Jesus to be our Savior.

T God, we thank You for Your great patience with sinners, like Adoniram Judson and like us. Thank You for sending Jesus to save all sinners who turn from their sins and trust in You as their Savior.

S God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to tell others about God's great love shown through Jesus, that they might be saved, too.

BIBLE VERSE SONG

I Saw the LORD
PFI NIV Songs 4, Track 20

I saw the Lord,
 Seated on a throne,
 High and exalted,
 Seated on a throne,
 Above Him were seraphs,
 Each with six wings,
 They were calling to one another,
 "Holy is the Lord,
 Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.
 Holy, holy, holy is the Lord."
 Isaiah Six, one through three.

Words: Isaiah 6:1-3 NIV 1984 Music: Constance Dever ©2012

These verses are a picture of God's holiness. The LORD is so high and exalted because of His perfect holiness and He is to be worshiped. He is so holy that the seraphs repeat to each other how holy He is. He is so holy that even the whole earth is filled with the glory of His holiness.