

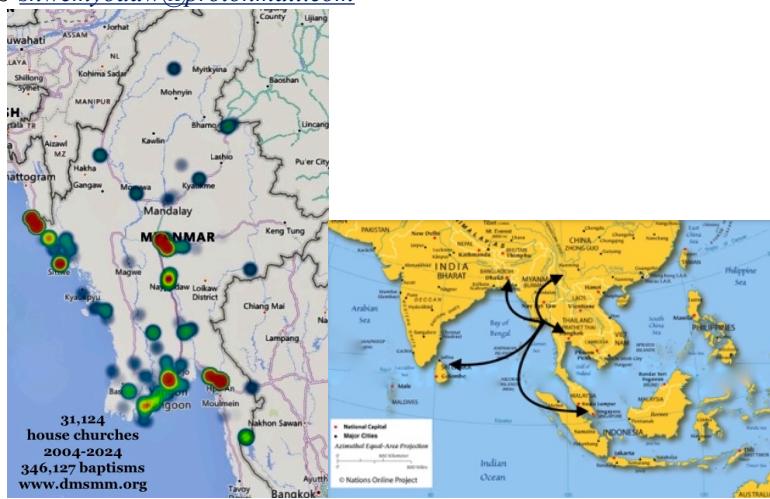
## Barriers that Hinder Buddhists understanding the gospel and bridges discovered by a Buddhist Background house church movement.

by Jay Judson and Major TKO of Burma (Myanmar) cannot use without permission.

Over the past 22 years, well over 31,124 new churches have been planted throughout 38 unreached people groups of Myanmar with 346,127 baptisms<sup>1</sup> This movement planted 1,216 new churches in 2023 with 3,402 baptisms and 14,000 Professions of Faith. This movement was assessed by Dr. Bill Smith in 2015 with forty-years' experience in training and assessing house church movements among the unreached.

<https://obedience.life/summary-of-myanmar-movement>

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Dhama Mate Swe Association of house churches Myanmar catalyzed in 2004, is now spreading to surrounding countries. [www.dmsmm.org](http://www.dmsmm.org)



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The Buddhist world is one of the remaining giants in global evangelization. There

have been thousands of breakthroughs among Nominal Christians such as Filipinos, Ukrainians, Latinos, as well as hundreds of thousands of house churches multiplying among Han Chinese, hundreds of movements among Hindus of India and Nepal, even the Muslim world is seeing tremendous gospel breakthroughs with an estimated 15 million sons of Ishmael who have turned to Christ in the past 50 years, but the world's 500 million Buddhists, in 238 people groups, have seen little breakthrough by comparison.

This paper explores the missiological insights that my Buddhist Background team and I have come to understand that helped us scale the virtually insurmountable barriers of the Buddhist World. Why are there many more breakthroughs in harder fields such as the Muslim world compared to the seemingly "easier" Buddhist world? I propose that there are three reasons: First, unified vision, secondly unified indigenous forms of worship and thirdly unified terminology. (Judson 2022c: 42).

The gospel workers in the Muslim world have a unified vision to catalyze multiplying networks of house churches, this is simply not the case in the Buddhist context. In the Muslim world, cross-cultural workers are forced to multiply underground house churches because if they do not then they are often killed. Secondly, most mission workers use local forms of worship such as sitting on floors and lifted hands open towards God in a semi-circle where participation and discussion are encouraged as Paul directed in I Cor. 14:26. Thirdly, most house church worship meetings use terminology that is readily understandable by the communities they are serving. Most mission efforts use *Isa* and *Allah* for divine names, some take this too far in my opinion, but they tend to use terms for concepts that correspond with the ultimate reality of the culture and religions they are aiming to reach. This is not the case in the Buddhist world, and in this paper, I assert that this is one of the reasons why there have been such little breakthroughs in the Buddhist world.

There is a tremendous need for indigenous terminology enlightened by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of Buddhist Background church leaders. Cross-cultural workers in the Muslim world are light years ahead of those in the Buddhist context. My friends in Burma (Myanmar) are an indigenously led house church movement of Buddhist Background church leaders who are also pioneering a Bible Translation Movement. This Church-Centric Bible Translation Movement is currently translating the New Testament into 32 languages of Burma. This movement is comprised of tens of thousands of Buddhist Background Believers who are self-theologizing the Scriptures into their Buddhist cultures. Their effort is not contextualized but indigenous. In Acts 17, contextualization is what is done by outsiders like Paul to reach the indigenous peoples. Indigenization is most clearly seen in the numerous, "Christ in you" references in scripture i.e. Col. 1:24-29; Rom. 8:10, etc. How Christ is revealed in one person may often be very different than how Christ is revealed in another. Indigenization, therefore, is the goal of missions not, contextualization. Contextualization often becomes a ditch of endless theorization, but indigenization happens when local believers are in the driver's seat of localizing Christ from the beginning of the mission effort, as much as possible. This localization has been occurring in Burma and this is what I intend to present.

In Burma (Myanmar) I taught the Buddhist Background house church leaders, how to multiply underground house church movements, which I learned for over 25 years, from the recognized father of Church Planting Movements, Dr. George Patterson, (Judson 2022a:16) and these leaders, now called the DMS Association, taught me how to share Christ with Buddhists. The DMS association of house churches did not exist before I came to Myanmar. Most mission workers partner with existing established churches. The DMS is a completely new move of God in Myanmar. Foreigners, including myself, have had little input into the choice of most key terms. Foreigners should take a behind-the-scenes role, mentoring as Christ modeled in Luke 10:17-24, yet never let the indigenous churches feel that they are abandoned as some CPM models tend to portray (Garrison 2004: 60). I did not first agree with much of the terminology that the new house church leaders used to express the gospel. Due to multiple language barriers, it took a few years before I learned enough Burmese language to understand how different their expressions of the gospel were to their Buddhist audience. I then began to compare their choice of key terms with the existing Burmese Christianese that first developed by famed American Baptist missionaries Dr. Adoniram and Ann Judson. Judson is venerated by Burmese Baptists and other Christians because he translated the scripture from the original languages into the majority language of Burma called *bamar zaga*. The Christianese Burmese that was developed has helped various Christianized peoples to communicate with each other from opposite sides of the country. Many Burmese animistic tribal Christians from the highlands hate the majority Buddhists and readily admit this hatred due to the heavy persecution they have experienced from Buddhists. A Burmese historian pointed out the tremendous animosity that developed during the British colonial rule that led to a three-tiered political/cultural system with the foreign rulers on top, Christianized tribals in the middle, and Buddhist Burmans on the bottom of the social ladder (Thant Myint-U 2001:18).

Buddhists tend to learn intuitively and do not readily know references from their *Tripitaka* scriptures. In this paper, I will rely heavily on commonly known stories and pictures from Buddhism. Most Christians wrongly assume that this makes Buddhists ignorant of their worldview. This may be the reason that most cross-cultural mission workers and evangelists readily ignore Buddhism. If this method of ignoring Buddhism was successful, then it would have worked by now and there would be mass movements of Buddhists turning to Christ. The DMS association of house churches in Burma (Myanmar) chose the direct approach to carefully and patiently discuss the Buddhist story, compared with God's story and their own story of finding peace and salvation in Christ. The terms that the DMS network leaders have chosen took 20 years to develop. DMS founder, the Major spent many months discussing appropriate terminology with respected Buddhist monks, some with PhDs in Buddhism. He then took these terms and practiced sharing Christ with uneducated Buddhists in villages. This going back and forth hammered out clear communication in discussion-based group evangelism that was modeled by Dr. George Patterson.

There is a precedent in missiology for alternative translations of the majority language in a country. Bangladesh was created after Dr. William Carey's team of indigenous Hindu pundits translated the New Testament into Bengali. The Carey translation, was the most popular translation of the Bangladeshi Bible until the translation of American Swedish Baptist medical physician, Dr. Viggo Olsen, of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelization in the 1980s. Ironically, it was a Baptist missionary from a very conservative mission agency who helped produce and publish one of the most forward and cutting-edge translations of the Bible in the Muslim world called the Kitabul Muqaddas. The Kitabul Moqaddas uses Islamic Arabic terms for Jesus rather than the Hindu Sanskrit terms that the Carey Bible uses. Thanks to Dr. Olsen and the ABWE Hospital that was the base for such a groundbreaking translation in the Muslim world. Most of the amazing church growth and multiplication of house churches in the 250 million Bengali people group is related to this translation. On a related sidenote, the DMS house church movement does not hold to the C5 philosophy of ministry that Dr. Phil Parshall wrote about in his writing of ministry among Bengali and other Muslim people groups. The DMS holds to C4 on the Contextualization Scale that was first developed in Muslim dominated Indonesia. The founding leader of the DMS, Major Tun Kyaw Oo, often encouraged Buddhists to flee Buddhism, leave Buddhist monks, and give no merit to Buddhist teachers because Christ commanded us to "bow before no man" and "Do not call anyone teacher, *saya*, in Burmese, Matt.23:10. The reason the Major gave was because many Buddhist monks are corrupt, and they are sinners just like we commoners. DMS Buddhist Background Believers are called "God's children" *payatha thamidaw* or *luk prajiao* in Thai and Laotian. Monks have a ceremony when they are ordained into the Sangha monkhood who are then referred to as "children of god." Of course, Buddhists are referring to Buddha as a god.

The following comparison of 10 Barriers and Bridges can be viewed in a video  
<https://www.dmsmm.org/single-project>

## 10 BARRIERS

- 1. Terms for Heaven
- 2. Sacrifice terms
- 3. Terms for Eternal Life
- 4. Born Again
- 5. Term for Love
- 6. Terms for Sin
- 7. God's Wrath in Chrono. Bible Storying.
- 8. Buddha's preminence
- 9. God's grace vs Merit "Free salvation!"
- 10. Fables vs Historical stories.

## 10 BRIDGES

- 1. City of Nirvana
- 2. Life Offering *Jivita Dana Pali/Sanskrit Rabbit King*
- 3. Permant Eternal Life (Imperiance is Reincarnation)
- 4. Born from the holy city
- 5. Compassionate Love
- 6. Kilesha (unintentional sin) Mt. 6-7.
- 7. UnChronological Bible Storying Mission Theme
- 8. Jesus claimed to come before Buddha (Dan. 6)
- 9. The Merit Christ earned on the cross.
- 10. Clarifying that Christ Stories are historical fact.

**The DMS church leaders point out that one of the biggest barriers to overcome when expressing the gospel to Buddhists is appropriate terminology of Biblical Heaven.** As previously mentioned, Dr. Judson translated one of the first Bible translation into Burmese. He translated Heaven into Burmese as *kaungkin* meaning sky. Judson's method of translation can be described as a wooden literal translation and not so much a meaning-based or dynamic equivalent translation. Adoniram's wife, Ann Judson, translated Heaven into the first Thai version of Matthew as *sawan*. In Buddhism, Satan and other demons<sup>2</sup> resides above the sky or *sawan*, *tian* in Chinese, *tengoko* in Japanese. The sky is at the top of our world, also called the *manussa* level, and thousands of demons live in the six levels, *liu dao* in Chinese, *sawan jit* in Thai, and Lao above this world (See diagram on p. 9) Buddhists translate these six or seven levels the higher abodes. These six to seven higher abodes are the middle tier of the 31 abodes which are filled with Buddhist angels, demons and other creatures who often sin. According to Buddhism if a person arrives to these higher abodes, and then sins again then they will fall down the 31 levels of existence. King Lithai summarized the 31 levels in the Thai Buddhist commentary *Tribhum*, as the Three realms (Chakrabongse.1960: 29). When Christians say that Jesus is the way to the sky or a higher realm, Buddhists assume that Jesus and his followers are still caught up in the cycle of reincarnation inside these 31 abodes. Buddhists tend to understand Christians to be also working their way out of samsara, the cycle of sin and suffering. The DMS network emphasizes that the main meaning that our Buddhist friends need to understand is that Jesus came from a place of no sin and no suffering, and He promises to take His disciples to this same place. In Buddhism, there are 40 words to describe this place. Scripture commands believers not to argue about mere words, 2 Tim. 2:14, but to contend for the faith, Jude 1:3.

In this paper, I am merely defending the use of terminology that the Rakhine/Burmese Buddhist Background translator of the *Thamma Pitakadaw Version* of the New Testament chose to use. *Thamma (Samma)* in Pali means Perfect or Righteous. *Pitaka* as in *Tripitaka*, term for the three baskets of scriptures. The terms used in TPV-RV translation are not my ideas, but the choice of indigenous Buddhist Background led house church pastors and translators. The TPV-RV is the *Revised Version* of the DMS network's founder Major Tun Kyaw Oo.

Some have asserted that the Buddhist Background translator of the TPV was not doing proper cultural exegesis but committing eisegeses, that Nirvana as a place and not the annihilationist view (De Neui/Smith: 2015). Anthropologist, Milford Spiro There are three definitions of Nirvana accepted by most Burmese Buddhist scholars. First, the annihilationist view is the largest. This view is that Nirvana is complete extinction. A second group says that although we cannot say what nirvana is, it is not extinction or annihilation. This is the view of Sri Lankan Buddhist monk Sri Wahulphula in his influential book, "What the Buddha taught." This view also seems to be anchored in the scripture Milindapanha that we'll discuss later. Thirdly, the is the view of a small group

says that short of experiencing nirvana, nothing can be said about it (other than that it entails that absence of suffering)

*Sawan* in Thai or *kaungkin*, sky, in Burmese, is inserting a Biblical worldview into terms that do not fit Buddhism's ultimate reality and goal which is Nirvana. In Rev. 21, Jesus showed his disciple John, that He is preparing a Golden City in which there are no more tears and no more sin. *Sawan* derived from Pali *sagga* is ruled by the king of the devas called Indra, *Phra In* in Thai, the Jade Emperor in Chinese, and *Thagyamin* in Burmese. Indra in Buddhism is known for throwing lightning bolts to earth when he is filled with rage, *dosa* in Pali. Indra is also known as a war strategist between the good and evil devas, called *Asuras*. Indra is also known to have 500 fairy mistresses to his right and 500 to his left and therefore has lust, *raga* in Pali. *Sagga*, or *sawan* is filled with both good and sensual pleasures. Chinese Buddhists are encouraged to earn merit to attain a life in *Jingtu* but they are also further encouraged by monks not to get lazy and settle for *Jingtu*, but to press on towards the goal of Buddhism which is Nirvana.

In light of the debate by some about the appropriateness of using Nirvana for heaven, the DMS house church leadership has recently decided to merely use the term Golden City “shwemyodaw” about heaven in their TPV-RV of the New Testament. This Burmese term *shwe myodaw* leaves the interpretation open for both Burmese Buddhist and Burmese Christian audiences. It is common to view pictures of a city floating on a cloud in Burmese comic books on Buddhism. It is common to hear Christian evangelist to reference *kaungkin shwe myodaw*.

There is a precedent in Bible translation for using non-literal translation of heaven. The German Lutheran translator Deilitsch used the Rabbinical Jewish term *gan eden* for heaven in the Hebrew New Testament used in Israel. *GanEden* refers to the Garden of Eden which is to be restored at *Tikkum ha Olam*, the restoration of all things, Acts 3:21, in Rabbinical Judaism and is notably very different from the Old Testament term for heaven which is *shamayaim*.

The basis of the TPV translation is rooted in the Buddhist Tripitaka canon. This scripture is considered Buddhist canon in Burma but not in other Buddhist countries. A Buddhist scripture, *Milindapanha*, records the story of a monk named Nagasena and a Greco-Persian (westerner) king Milinda. Upon the king's inquiry as to the nature of Nirvana, Nagasena describes Nirvana as a sinless city with walls, gates, and streets but without any suffering. The original Pali that this scripture was written in, used the term Nirvana Nagar (Nirvana City) In Thai *Nakor(n) Nippen* နକ୍ର ନିପନ୍ନ but many Buddhist translators tend to hide the original meaning when translating into English of Burmese Buddhist scholar U Pu's translation of Milindapannha

Hate (dosa), liberated from Delusion (moha), liberated from conceit (mano), liberated from Speculative Views (ditthi), and by that does he cross the Round of Rebirths (samsara), and stem the current of

Craving (tanha), and exterminate the threefold Defilements, and by killing all Defilements, enter the **City of Nibbana**

Hate (dosa), liberated from Delusion (moha), liberated from conceit (mana), liberated from Speculative Views (ditthi), and by that does he cross the Round of Rebirths (samsara), and stem the current of Craving (tanha), and exterminate the threefold Defilements, and by killing all Defilements, **enter the City of Nibbana**

which is free from Defilement, where the dust of Greed is absent, which is purified, which is clean-white. where there is no Rebirth, where there is no Old Age, where there is no Death, which is blissful”

“And the Buddha’s **city of “The Dharma**“, O king, has Morality for its rampart, Moral Shame for its moat, and knowledge for the battlement over its city gate, and Zeal for the turret above that, and Devotional Faith for the pillars at its base, and Mindfulness for the watchman at the gate, and wisdom for the terrace above and Discourses (suttanta) for the streets, and Transcendental Doctrine (abhidhamma) for its road-junctions, and Discipline (vinaya) for judgment indicators, and The Four Applications of Mindfulness (satipatthana) for its principal highway. And on that highway, O king, these markets are open - a flower market, and a scent market, and a fruit market

(U Pu. 2006: 221). [https://archive.org/stream/Milindapanha\\_eng/Milindapanha\\_by\\_U\\_Pu\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/Milindapanha_eng/Milindapanha_by_U_Pu_djvu.txt)

I first came across the English translation in Sri Lankan scholar (De Silva. 1975: 71). [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-349-03729-2\\_7](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-349-03729-2_7)



The fact that ancient Buddhists referred to Nirvana as a City and not the annihilationist view is shown in an inscription in Burma's ancient city of Bagan.

By this gift, whatever reward I seek,  
It is the best of rewards to profit all;  
But this abundant merit I desire  
Here or later no angelic pomp or splendors of a monarch, no, not even  
To be a pupil of a conqueror.

But I would build a bridge straight across  
The river of Samsara, and all folk  
Would speed across it until they reach  
**The Blessed City.** I myself would cross,  
And drag the drowning over.

King Alaungsithu of Burma 112-1167 AD. (Hattaway 2004: i)

**The movement in Myanmar distinguishes God's wrath from God's justice.**  
When Buddhists hear how God killed the Egyptians in the Red Sea and how He killed Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5, they are repulsed. The reason they turn away from this story is because from a very young age Buddhists are taught "Do not kill."

Many monks teach that it is even wrong to kill insects and fish, however, all Buddhists do this, and it leads to tremendous guilt. Christians should be aware of this barrier to find the appropriate bridges. Different barriers call for different bridges. DMS suggests that it may be advisable to say that the evil Egyptians chased God's children into the Red Sea and then the water killed them. We can let new believers understand God's wrath after they understand His magnificent compassionate love, *maha metta kuruna Anatta* known as agape love in Greek.

The DMS network also recommends not starting with many stories from the Old Testament. Many Storying Experts ignorantly urge their students to do Chronological Storying, although emphasizing this method runs directly into the Buddhist

misunderstanding of the Scarlet Thread, or the blood sacrificial theme in the Old Testament. The DMS practices “unchronological” storying of the Bible.

**The next term that the DMS association’s translation team chose to highlight is the Biblical concept and appropriate term for Sacrifice.** A Buddhist man once asked, “Why did your God die such a terrible death on the cross? Was it because of his sin in his previous life?” In Buddhism, if bad things happen to you, it is because you have committed sin, and if bad results come it is because of your bad karma. The DMS association carefully explains through the gospel story that Christ was sinless. Christians should be encouraged to say that Jesus gave His “Life Offering” *jivit dana* in Pali on the cross for our sins. Most Burmese Buddhists understand Judson’s term *yetpuzo* as offering blood to a hungry ghost. Since offering blood sacrifices to hungry ghosts is common in Buddhism, they wrongly assume that Christians are offering blood to a bloodthirsty god. “Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.” Heb. 9:22 needs careful wording to differentiate between sacrifice to a hungry ghost and a sacrificial appeasement to an Almighty, Holy Creator God (Tsiring.1988/2005: 11).

Most Burmese Buddhists know the Jataka Tales story of the Rabbit King or the Rabbit in the Moon. Buddha was once a rabbit in a previous reincarnation and offered to feed a starving Arahant monk his flesh in a fire. Just before he jumped into the fire the monk revealed himself to be Indra *Sakra*, the king of the devas. He rewarded the sacrificial Life Offering of the Buddha with an image of the rabbit in the moon. The Buddhist background believers in Burma compare this story to Christ who gave his life on the cross of Calvary for the salvation of the world. Buddhists in Japan are also familiar with this story called *kon-jaku monogatari* in Japanese (Nesbit 2023: 433). Chinese revere the story so much that they named part of their space program after the Jade Rabbit, *yutu* lunar rover and rocket. Ironically this story is providentially located in Jataka Tale 316 and is a very similar meaning to John 3:16.

<http://www.dmsmm.org/moonrabbitbridge>



**Eternal Life is often misunderstood by Buddhists, so the DMS movement added a qualifying term Permanent to differentiate eternal from endless suffering in the cycle of reincarnation, *samsara* in Pali.** Christians meet this barrier when they offer Jesus as the way to eternal life. Most Westerners are erroneously taught through the media that reincarnation is good because we get a second chance at life. This is contrary to all branches of Buddhism. Buddhists are slaves to religion because they want to get out of the endless cycle of reincarnation. The DMS team has found that clarifying that Christians mean Permanent Eternal Life, *nicca* eternal life or, *nitya*. Impermanence or *anicca* in Pali or *anitya* in Sanskrit is what Buddhists hear when they hear eternal life, not permanence. Jesus is the God of freedom. He is Freedom from reincarnation. We waste time trying to argue with Buddhists that reincarnation isn't logical. It may take years of discipleship for new Buddhist Background Believers to understand that reincarnation doesn't exist.

**DMS church uses the term born from above and avoids using born again.** In John 3:3, the term born-again is not in any of the original Biblical texts. The Greek term *anothen* does not mean "again" but "from above." The Burmese Thamma Pitaka daw Version (TPV) translated by the team led by the founding Apostle of the Dharma Mate Swe house church movement, the Major, chose to use "born from above" rather than "born-again." If Thai or Burmese Buddhists, ask you "do you want to be born again?" It means in colloquial Thai, "do you want to die?" negatively meaning I am going to kill you.

**Another objection to Christianity is the perceived preeminence of Buddha.** Christ claimed several times that He existed before the world was created. He also is the creator of the Golden City of Heaven. He said, "before Abraham was, I am (I existed)", John 8:48-59. DMS evangelists point out that the prophet Daniel was thrown into the lions' den around the same time Gautama was born. Historian, Karl Jaspers called this era the Axial Age. When the King of Persia saw how Daniel's God saved him from the hungry lions, he made a decree. "Every ethnic people in my kingdom must worship the God of Daniel" Dan. 6:24-28. Daniel's God is the God of Israel. The Persian kingdom stretched from North Africa to India, see Esther 1:1 to the borders of Myanmar and possibly to Bali, Indonesia, 600 years before Christ came. The DMS association teaches Buddhists that 600 years before Christ, all of Asia learned, "Don't murder, don't steal, don't commit adultery."

Sociologist Dr. Thom Wolf of the University Institute and Dr. Samuel Larsen of Reform Theological Seminary both point out that this is the message that Daniel preached just up the southern Silk Road from Prince Siddhartha Gautama (Judson, 2018:18). Prince Gautama probably preached what he learned from Daniel during this turning point in world history, what Karl Jasper entitled, the Axial Age. Gautama proclaimed, "Don't kill, don't steal, don't commit adultery." He also told all his disciples that just before the world ended with fire, the Savior, whom Buddhists tend to call,

*Maitreya* would come. Therefore, Buddha learned the truths of God and His coming Savior through the Persian King and Prophet Daniel in 544 BC. (Shah 1973/1997: ed. Thom Wolf. 20-33, 53-74). Wolf also applied Anthropologist Anthony F Wallace's "revitalization theory" that monk Ashvagosha first developed Mahayana Buddhism in the Buddhist university of Taxsila, 20 miles northwest of Islamabad, Pakistan in the year AD 70. It is ironic that the Apostle Thomas proclaimed the message of "Salvation by Grace through faith by no merit of our own." It is highly probable that Ashvagosha's merger of messages is evidence of early Christianity's influence on, at that time, a new form of Buddhism (Wolf:2007. Chapter 6).

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**The DMS churches clarify God's grace verses Merit for Buddhist audiences through the use of popularly known Buddhist stories.** When Buddhists hear Christians say that Salvation is free of charge they are repulsed. They exclaim, "Salvation cannot be that easy! We have to suffer a lot and pay a lot of money to earn our merit." Christians can emphasize the tremendous sufferings that our Savior endured to earn our Salvation. Our salvation was not free. It was costly, Christ prayed, "Lord if it is possible let this cup pass from me."

The Buddhist scripture story that illustrates grace instead of earning merit for salvation is the story of *Angulimala*. A corrupt teacher told his student Angulimala that he would need to present him a garland of one thousand fingers for him to pass the test. In his ambition, Angulimala could only provide nine-hundred and ninety-nine fingers to his teacher. When he saw his mother, he decided to take her life to provide the remaining finger. Upon Buddha's intervention, murderous Angulimala fell to the Enlightened One's feet and repented of his gross sin. Buddha promised salvation in Nirvana, without merit, and Angulimala became a disciple of Buddha. At first hearing this story compared to Christ, the Major, clarified that this is not promoting Buddha as Savior because he has already departed for Nirvana and according to Buddhist scripture this is no longer the age

of Buddha but the age of Indra, *Sakra*. According to Buddhism, for someone to reach Nirvana there must be a living teacher to guide the student to Nirvana.



**The DMS house church evangelist clarifies the Biblical term sin versus crime.**

Sin is often described by Buddhists as *aphyit* in Burmese *bap* and *pid* in Thai, *tsumi* in Japanese, and *tsway* in Chinese. This term is used when describing the actions of criminals. Buddhists claim that only criminals commit crime, *aphyit*, however, they readily admit that even the holiest man has committed *kelisa tanha* (evil desire) in his heart. *Loba, dosa, moha* are the first 3 of the ten fires of *kelisa*. Gautama described these evil desires as a black fire burning in the hearts of all people. Jesus describes sin the same way in Matthew 5:7. Both intentional sin and unintentional sins are to be punished in the eternal fire of hell. Mark 9:43-45.

**The DMS network has chosen terms to express holy compassionate love vs. love that conveys a sensual, worldly love.** Buddhists ask, “How can God love the world?” Love is considered a sensual desire in Buddhism and therefore is a sin or demerit. Buddhists prefer to use the term *metta-karuna*, compassionate love when describing their ideal virtue that conquers evil. The DMS chose to translate John 3:16 Maha metta-karuna ananta (Great compassionate eternal love.)

**In conclusion, the choices of terms used by the DMS house churches are a key, although not the only component of their success.** The DMS association of house churches affirms that another key to success is their vision to multiply house churches, as well as demonstrations of supernatural healing and a logical rationale to stay in the faith and not return to Buddhism. This is not their method but simply their vision which does not originate from a missiological fad or method but from the Bible. The Book of Acts expression of church is what God is using to lead other worldviews to Christ. The gospel is exploding in the Chinese, Tribal, Nominal Christian, Hindu, and now even Muslim worlds and the DMS aim is to see similar acceleration in the Buddhist world.

Much of what has been written about Church Planting Movements or Disciple Making Movements has ignored the importance of researching appropriate terminology and assumes an existing relevant Bible translation that is readily understood by the

unreached or unengaged masses. The DMS house church movement of Burma is not only reaching Buddhists with the good news of salvation but also has catalyzed a Bible Translation Movement in the Buddhist world that is making waves for Christ.

When Jesus saw the crowds He had compassion on them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd. He instructed his disciples to therefore beseech the Lord of the Harvest to thrust out laborers into His harvest field.” Matthew 9:35-38.

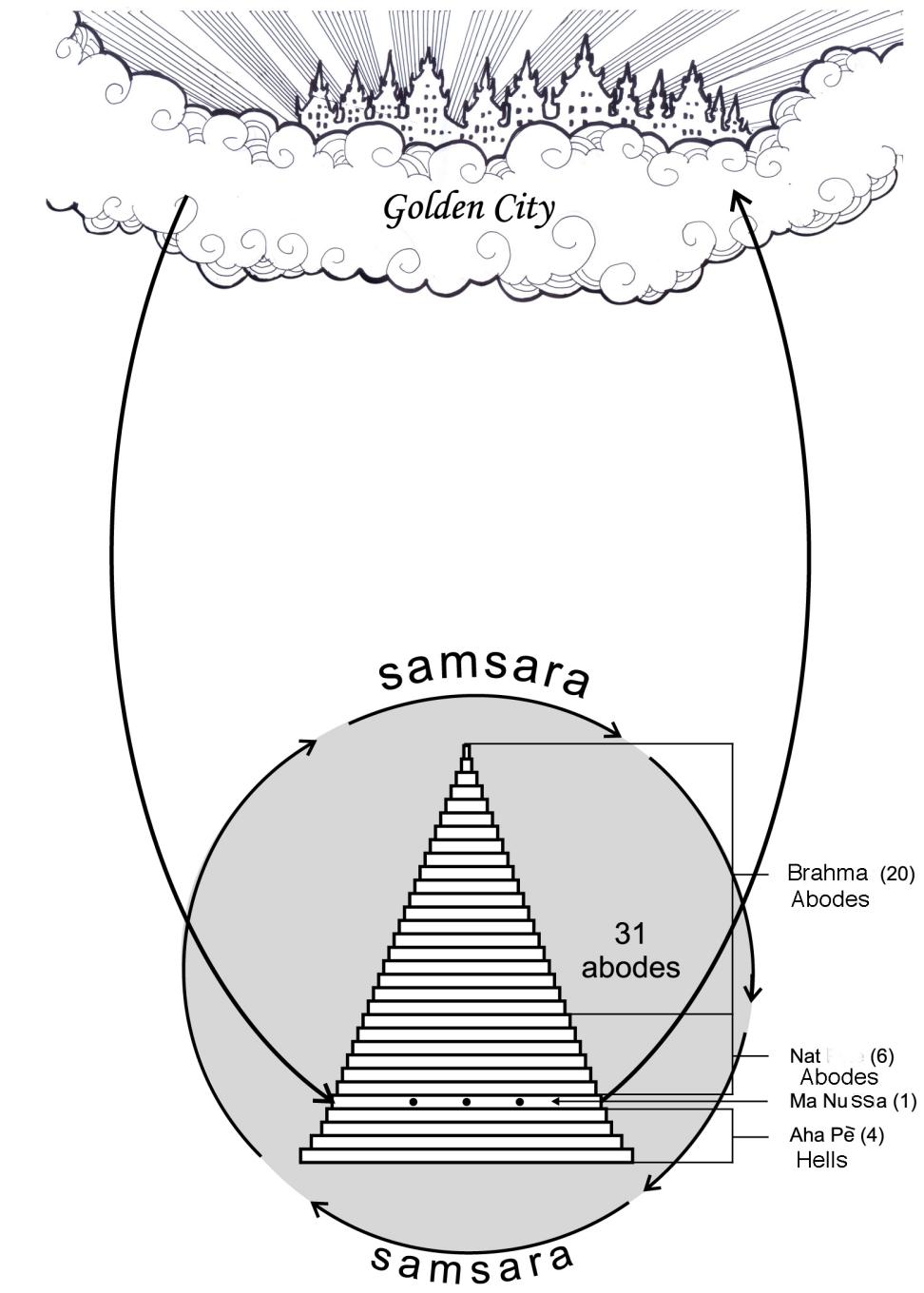
To view a movie by the DMS network see

<https://youtu.be/QQx95MpJxy0?si=gTSw0PCMwUXfnigC>

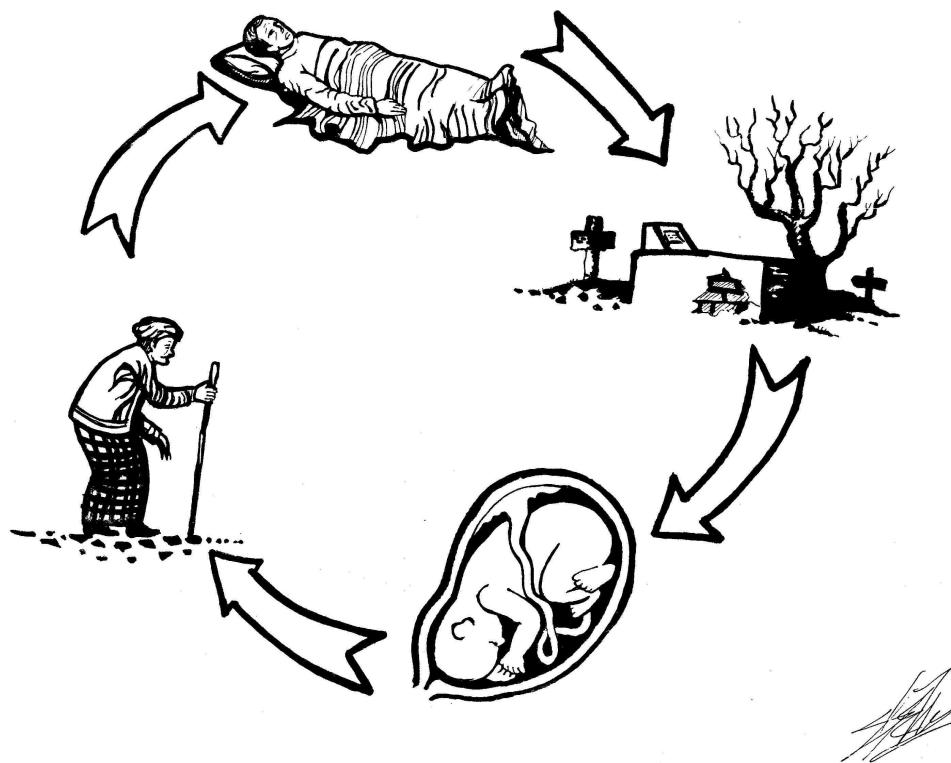
**Questions for consideration**

- 1. What other barriers hinder Buddhists from turning to Christ?**
- 2. What terms did you agree with?**
- 3. What practical steps can be taken in your field of service.**

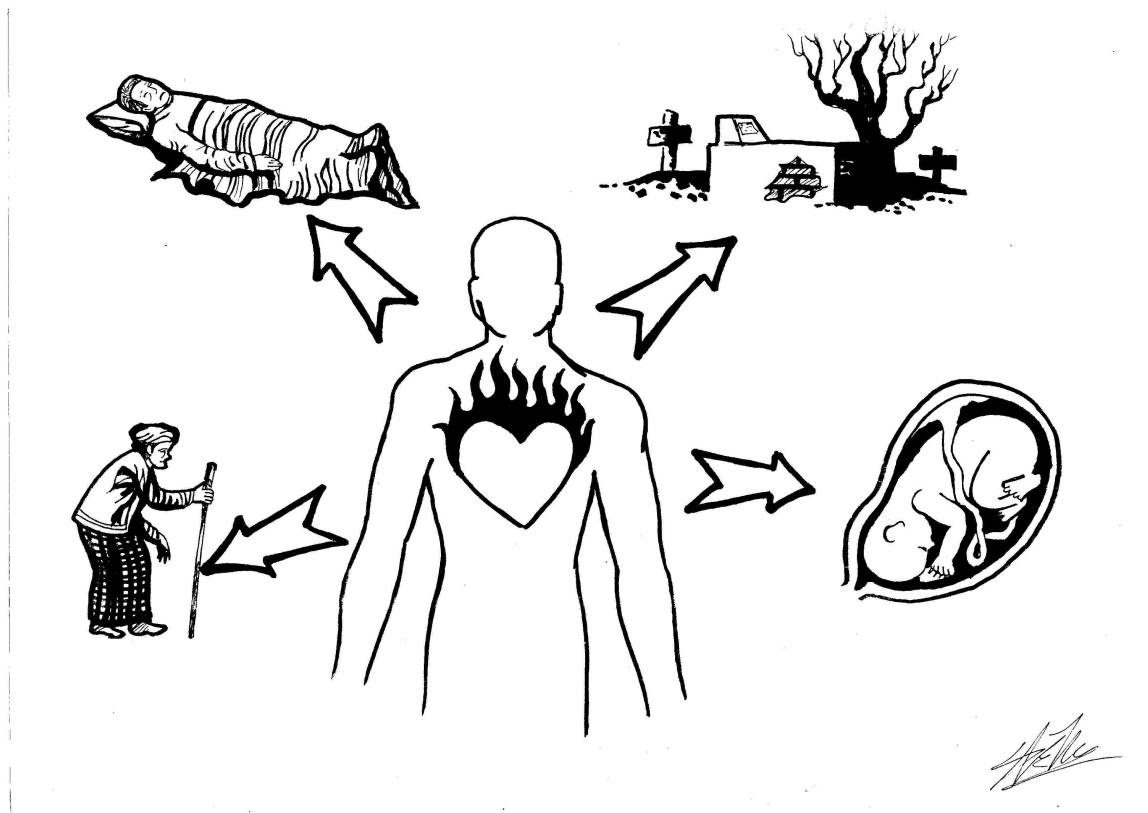
## **A Theravada Buddhist's view of the Cosmos and understanding of Salvation**



2006. drawn by Jay and Major T.K.O. Samsara means the cycle of reincarnation. It is caused by sin, resulting in death.



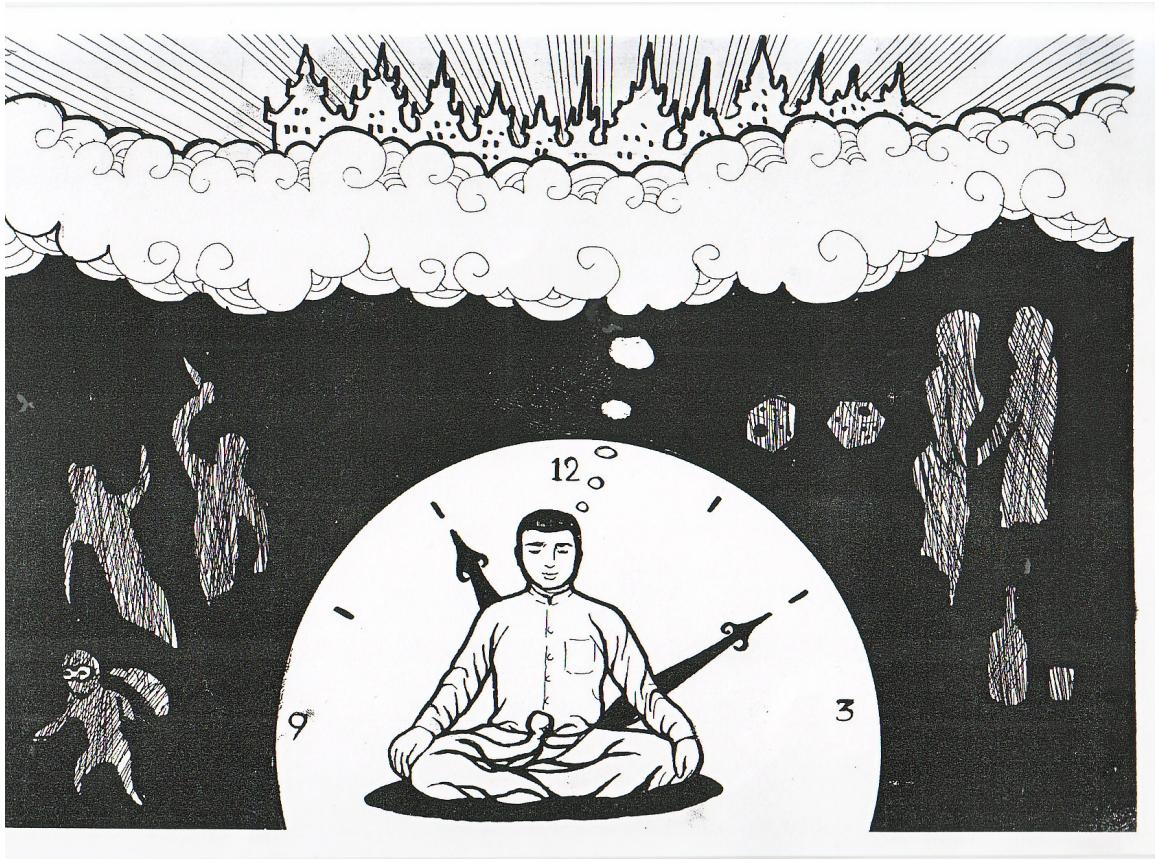
**Second is that the cause of death and suffering is sin (Buddha described this as a black fire)?**



**Third Law: Your goal as a Buddhist is to go to Nirvana? *Ni* means no, *vana* means fire or burning.**



**Fourth Law: The Way out of Sin and Suffering towards Nirvana is to do eight things (The Eightfold Path). Basically, Buddhists must not think about sin and become 100% perfect?**







## **Sources**

See Myanmar movement assessment summary and longer version authored by Dr. Bill Smith at <https://obedience.life/summary-of-myanmar-movement>

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