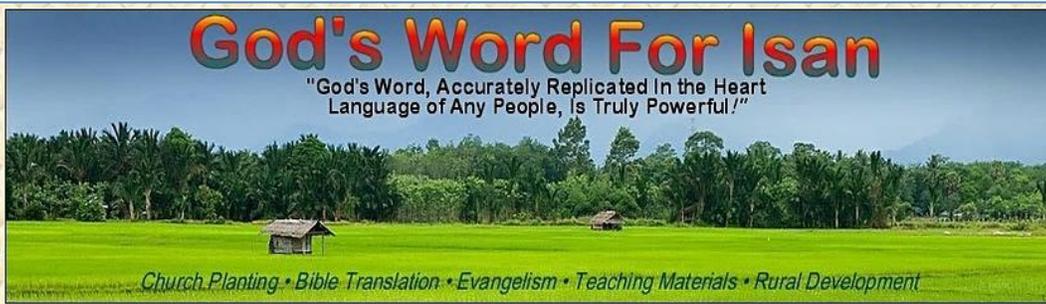




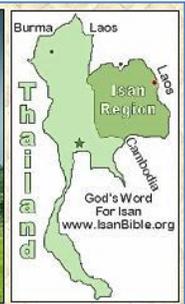
Going Into All the World  
With the Gospel  
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# God's Word For Isan

"God's Word, Accurately Replicated In the Heart  
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Ron & Cheryl Myers

GOD'S WORD FOR ISAN NEWSLETTER

March, 2016

## "IN WHAT OR WHOM DO YOU PLACE YOUR TRUST?"

### Misplaced Faith – Part III

By Ron Myers

Greetings in Jesus Name,

In my January communiqué, *Misplaced Faith-Part I*, I wrote to you about the mundane or worldly things the Thai place their hopes in, like becoming wealthy by winning a lottery jackpot. By this many would feel that they're being rewarded in response to the good deeds they have amassed in their present or past lives... *accumulated merit*.

In my February communiqué about *Misplaced Faith-Part II*, I spoke of how all of Thai society abides under core beliefs that control and guide every aspect of their lives. That's the belief in a parallel unseen world where malevolent spirits dwell... entities they must live alongside, be in fear of, venerate, appease, and appeal to; evidenced by the various types of spirit shrines that dot the landscape, from the most opulent to the most destitute, and all in between. Even invoke for guidance and protection from their enemies during war. (Animism)

In this month's communiqué, *Misplaced Faith-Part III*, I want to address the beloved state-ordained religion of Thailand; Buddhism. The *Theravada Order*, known as the teachings of the elders, is the more orthodox sect. The young Prince Siddhattha Gautama—born on the borders of Northern India and present-day Nepal, circa 623BC—later became known as "The Lord Buddha" or *Enlightened One*.

**The Naga; Enter the Serpent:** The noble young prince, after many days of meditation while sitting in the forest under a *Poh* tree, finally received "enlightenment." There, surrounded by a myriad of kindly forest animals, he searched for answers as to the cause for all the pain and suffering he saw in the lives of people around him. When it began to rain, a many-headed serpent that was present spread its Cobra-like hooded heads over the Buddha to protect him from the falling rain.

When the rain subsided, the *Serpent* said, "Please allow me to enter your religion." The Buddha answered, "You can't enter my religion because you're only a crawling reptile." Whereupon, the Serpent responded, "At least allow my name to be associated with your religion." Hearing this, the Buddha acquiesced. That's why, today, every Thai male who enters the Buddhist priesthood must first pass through a ritualistic ceremony called "Enter the Serpent." Scary, huh?

Does all this sound creepily familiar? Compare Revelation 12:9; "And the great dragon was cast out, **that old Serpent**, called the Devil, and Satan, **who deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.**" These fallen angels are clearly the malevolent spirits behind their animistic beliefs that I described in February's *Misplaced Faith Part II*.

As a result, the Thai people have both dismissed and avoided the Gospel in favor of the impossibility of attaining *Nirvana* through a personal works-based system. They have been blinded by the Enemy's scheming and deceitful lies, so that they cannot understand... "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

This deceitful system of belief offered to them by the Enemy ranges from <sup>1)</sup>degrading the true identity of Jesus Christ—Creator and Lord over all—to <sup>2)</sup>reassuring them that their beloved Buddhism is far superior; being five centuries older than the advent of an "unsophisticated" Christianity, of whom they presume Jesus as the founder of the foreigners lesser good-works religion. The Thai Buddhist calendar year is 2559 (2016 + 543).

Does this old theme also sound familiar? **First:** *minimizing* the Deity of Jesus Christ to being a mere man (*taking away from the Gospel*). And **Second:** *compounding* human works to the free gift of Forgiveness and Eternal Life (*adding to the Gospel*), offered through trust in the death, burial, and bodily resurrection of the Son of God. Sadly, this second point has been a plague to many Thai who call themselves Christians (in the Evangelical sense) in that they are not immune to this Grace-plus-works mentality. Why; because many have never properly been taught the foundational truths of the Gospel message. For this I fault missionaries, not the Thai, who never bothered to lay a firm foundation or never truly understood it themselves—favoring activity-oriented meetings over solid teaching. For this reason, I conduct foundational seminars when possible, which are very eye-opening for searching hearts.

This is what Grace-based missionaries to Thailand must face on a regular basis, not just from the unsaved, but also from some Thai Christians who don't fully understand Grace, having been fed a semi-works rendition. Apart from the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, along with the enlightening power of the Word of God, none of these would be able to truly perceive their need and accept the *bona fide* Good-News message we proclaim: The Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

May You Have A Meaningful Easter,

Ron & Cheryl Myers

Concerning my return to Thailand to print and distribute the newly finished Isan New Testament, I now have my ticket in-hand, leaving April 20<sup>th</sup> and returning June 16<sup>th</sup>. However, my Thai visa is still being considered in lieu of new, more stringent rules laid down by the Thai Military regime now in power. Therefore, I'm asking you to PRAY for the granting of my visa, for protection and good success for this *vitaly-important* trip. Lastly, Cheryl and I want show our gratitude for your prayers and partnership, without which this would not be possible.



Golden Buddha statue depicting the time of his enlightenment. Note the *Serpent* shielding him from the elements; the effigy of a revered Buddhist saint sitting in front; and, a red spirit shrine showing from behind the tree leaves. (*Syncretism*)