

**Buddhism.** Buddhists believe that one must do “merit” in order to better one’s life. They know that people have sin, so each person tries to do “merits” to cover over their sins. But they know that their sins are too great. This is especially difficult on poor people, because they know that to do “merit,” one needs money. The way to get money is to be a powerful person, but many powerful people steal and are not just. Often they are corrupt and abuse their power. Money received by doing sin to others is not acceptable merit money. So sins continue because no one is able to have enough merit to take away sin . . . unless someone was perfect He could have enough merit for Himself and others. It is interesting that in the Buddhist Scriptures of Cambodia, a prophecy regarding a “Holy One” would come, One who would lead people away from the old way and introduce a new way.

*“When Buddha was traveling and living in this world, there was an old Brahman priest who wore white robes who asked the Buddha, “How will all men and all Brahman continue in their merit-making so as to escape the results of sin?” The Buddha answered, “Enough though all of you give alms according to the 5 precepts, the 8 precepts, the 10 precepts or the 227 precepts for 9 trillion years and you raise your hands and offer yourselves as a burnt offering, or you pray 5 times a day, you will still not escape the results of your sins. If you do this every day, your merit gained will only be equal to the smallest strand of hair of an unborn infant extremely small. You shall not enter heaven’s doors.”*

*The old Brahman priest asked further, “What are we going to do to be saved?” The Buddha answered the old Brahman priest, “The results of sins and Karma are very great, heavier than the sky, thicker than the earth; and so high that it would be like an angel dusting the corner—posts at the temple compound with a cloth-post that are worn down, that’s how long it would take to end your sins.” The Buddha said further, “I have given up my high position and entered the priesthood. I considered that even though I am good, I would have only a very small amount of merit at the end of the year. If I was given this same amount of merit for 100,000 epochs and live 10 more lifetimes, I would not be saved from sin’s results even once.”*

*The old Brahman priest asked further. “So what should we all do?” The Buddha answered, “Keep on making merit and looking for another Holy One who will come and help the world and all of you in the future.”*

*Then the old Brahman priest asked. “What will the characteristics of the Holy One be like?” The Buddha answered him, “The Holy One who will keep the world in the future will be like this: in the palm of his hands and in the flat of his feet will be the design of a disk, in his side will be a stab wound; and his forehead will have many marks like scars. This Holy One will be the golden boat who will carry you over the cycle of rebirths all the way to the highest heaven (Nirvana). Do not look for salvation in the old way; there is no salvation in it for sure. Quit the old way. And there will be a new spirit like the light of a lightning bug which will come down from the sky above to live in all of your hearts and you will be victorious over all your enemies. Nobody will be able to destroy you. If you die, you will not come back to be born in this world again. You will go to the highest heaven (Nirvana).”*

Permission was granted to copy these Buddhist Scriptures from Wat Phra Sing in Chiang Mai Province. The person who gave permission was Phra Sriwisutthiwong in Bangkok. It is guaranteed that this copy is accurate according to the original, that there is no error in transmission, which is in the book of the district headman, the religious encyclopedia volume 23, book #29. This inquiry was made on October 13, 1954 A.D. (Buddhist era 2497).

Buddha was correct about the uselessness of trying to earn merit. It is impossible. The Holy One Buddha said would come has come. About five hundred years after Buddha left this world, the prophecy was fulfilled. When Jesus Christ died on the cross to take away human sin, each hand and foot was pierced with a large nail leaving a disk shape (John 20:20), His side was pierced with a spear (John 19:34); and His forehead had many marks on it from the crown of thorns the Romans put on Him (John 19:2). Jesus Christ opened up a new way of faith to relate to God so that the old ways of merit could be left behind. Through Jesus alone, one can find escape from the impossibility of doing merit. Through Jesus alone, one can find perfect assurance that the highest heaven is opened by God's grace.

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### **Definitions:**

- **Karma (1): EASTERN RELIGION Eastern philosophy:** the Hindu and Buddhist philosophy according to which the quality of people's current and future lives is determined by their behavior in this and in previous lives.

- **Karma (2): destiny:** destiny or fate in general.

- **Epoch: start of a historically significant period:** the beginning of a long period of history considered particularly significant.

- **Nirvana: RELIGION spiritual enlightenment:** in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, the attainment of enlightenment and freeing of the spiritual self from attachment to worldly things, ending the cycle of birth and rebirth.

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