

Pray

FOR THE BUDDHA BELT

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WHAT IS THE BUDDHA BELT?

You may have heard the term “Bible Belt” used to describe a region in the Southern United States that is highly influenced by conservative Christianity. On the exact opposite side of the globe, a group of nations stretching across South and Southeast Asia is similarly dominated by the religion and culture of conservative Buddhism—Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Tibet (an autonomous region within China), and Bhutan. Each of these nations is majority (over 50%) Buddhist, and for most of them, Buddhism is either the official or unofficial state religion. We are referring to these nations and their 180 million residents as the Buddha Belt. Will you join us in praying for a mighty move of God there?


COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

1. Buddhist Stronghold

Most of these countries follow Theravada Buddhism (Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos), while Tibet and Bhutan follow Vajrayana Buddhism (Tibetan Buddhism).

Monastic life is highly respected; temples are central to community life.


Many people engage in Buddhist rituals from childhood and see religion as part of their national identity.

 **Prayer Focus:** Pray for spiritual openness, revelation of truth, and encounters with Jesus in dreams or through loving believers.

2. Strong Cultural Identity and National Pride

These nations value tradition, family, honor, and heritage.

Conversion to other faiths can be seen as betrayal to culture or family.


 **Prayer Focus:** Pray for culturally sensitive witness and for movements to Christ that affirm identity while transforming lives.

3. Limited Access to the Gospel

Some areas are unreached or restricted (e.g., Tibet, Bhutan, parts of Myanmar and Laos).

Few Christians and limited church infrastructure.


In some countries, laws and social pressure limit evangelism.

 **Prayer Focus:** Pray for boldness and protection for local believers and for creative access and favor for missions.

4. Rural Populations and Poverty

Many people live in remote villages, relying on subsistence farming or small trade.

Education, healthcare, and infrastructure are limited in rural areas.


 **Prayer Focus:** Pray for holistic missions—meeting physical needs along with spiritual ones.

5. Political Instability or Authoritarian Governments

Myanmar has experienced coups and civil war.

Tibet is under tight Chinese control; Bhutan has strict cultural preservation laws.


In some nations, the government suppresses religious freedom and monitors Christians.

 **Prayer Focus:** Pray for peace, righteous governance, and religious freedom.

6. Youthful Populations Open to New Ideas

Many nations have large numbers of young people who are curious and digitally connected.


Exposure to global ideas through social media, tourism, or education.

 **Prayer Focus:** Pray for young hearts to be touched by the gospel, and for discipleship movements among youth.

7. Influence of Spiritual Darkness & Animism


Despite Buddhism, folk beliefs, ancestor worship, and animism are common, especially in rural areas.

Fear of spirits or karma often shapes daily life.

 **Prayer Focus:** Pray for freedom from fear and that the power of Jesus would be demonstrated over spiritual darkness.

8. Rise of Technology and Digital Mission Opportunity

Technology is transforming the region in profound ways, especially through smartphones and internet access. Social media and digital tools are shaping how people think, relate, and explore spiritual questions. Mobile phones have quickly become widespread, even in rural villages, serving as the primary device for internet use.

 **Prayer Focus:** Pray that mobile phones and the internet will be used to spread the gospel. Pray for protection and creativity for those producing and sharing Christian digital content. Pray that spiritually curious people would encounter Jesus online and for online discipleship tools to take root and grow strong, multiplying believers in hard-to-reach places.

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