

The Ancient Path

By Forrest McPhail

(A gospel tract originally written for a Cambodian audience,
here translated from Khmer to English)

From the beginning, the traditions of mankind have changed. In the early days of Cambodia, the Khmer forefathers played the buy-aw (a kind of flute), certain tree leaves, the chapuy (a Khmer version of a guitar with three strings), and the ksay diew (another kind of guitar). Later other instruments were introduced which are now the instruments used for playing traditional Khmer music: the truw-sao and truw-oo (two similar versions of a violin), the tahkee (a hammered dulcimer), and the khum (a zither). Modern musicians now play the guitar, keyboard, and use western drum sets.

Religion has made similar changes. In the early days of Khmer culture, before the era of the Angkor Empire, the people of Cambodia followed ancestral religion. They worshipped the spirits of the dead, territorial spirits, and nature. Later on Indian traders came from the West because of trade and spread the doctrines of the Buddhist religion. Today, most Cambodians adhere to a religion that is different from that of their forefathers. Khmer music and religion have both changed. This kind of change takes place in every country and among every people. Some people do not like change, but everyone knows that from one generation to the next, many things change. If someone does not believe that this is true, all they have to do is ask some of the old folks if these days are the same as they were young. Some kinds of change are good, others are not. If something is good, then it should not be changed. However, if something is bad, then change is good.

Have you ever considered which religion was first? Have you ever wondered, out of all the religions in the world, which God or way of faith was first?

The Scriptures of the True God tell us that the God that created the entire universe is the Creator of all things. Who then is the Creator of mankind? It is this very same God, the Creator of all.

The first people that God created were perfect and without sin. At that time, the earth was perfect as well. There was no death or suffering because they worshipped the One True God, the Creator. The first man was called "Adam" and the first woman was called "Eve," which means, "the mother of all living." So Adam and Eve are the ancestors of all mankind. They were before all others. They are the ancestors for the peoples of all the nations of the earth.

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These first ancestors of ours worshipped only one God, the Creator of all things. The Creator God has many names in the Scriptures, such as ***“The Ancient of Days”***, ***“The Most High God”***, ***“The Eternal God”***, and ***“The Almighty God.”*** Our first ancestors all worshipped this God for He is the One True God. God has another name, a special name: ***“The Beginning and the End”***, or, ***“The First and the Last.”*** The One True God who is eternal needs nothing from anyone. The living God is all-powerful.

Adam and Eve worshipped the One True God, but a day came when they sinned by not following God’s commands. They listened to the temptations of evil spirits and chose to sin against God. What happened as a result? Because God is full of holiness and justice, God had to condemn them. As a result of their sin, corruption came into this world causing the world to come under the curse of God. This curse brought death, suffering, and destruction to mankind.

From that day until now, Adam, Eve, and all of their descendants have sinned against God—including us. The holy Scriptures teach us that ***“There is no one righteous, not even one.”*** Not only this, but all life on earth suffers affliction because of this sin.

When we look at all the people of the earth today, we see that there are not many who worship the Creator. Instead, most worship gods that they have made with their own hands or from their own minds. Most do not show gratitude to or love for the Creator of all things. Instead they follow after their own desires. Because of this, the sins of mankind are very great.

After Adam and Eve sinned, God made a promise to them that one day God would send mankind a Savior. The Savior would set mankind free from sin and destroy the power of evil spirits. From the beginning of mankind until now, there has always been a remnant, a number of people who have believed and worshipped the Eternal God. For thousands of years, most of those who worshipped the Ancient of Days lived in Western Asia. Today there are millions of believers who are found in most countries of the world. However, this number of believers is still small when compared to the huge population of the earth.

The Scriptures tell us that God condemned the people of the world because they went astray by refusing to worship and honor Him. God allowed them to follow the wicked desires of their hearts as an act of judgment. God’s Word tells us that mankind has gone far away from their Creator, just like sheep or goats that so often stray away from their shepherds. God pictures Himself as a Great Shepherd that takes care of our souls.

Most of mankind continues to worship gods made by their own hands or from their own thoughts. Many worship things that the True God has made. They worship the sun, the moon, the earth, angels, or the spirits of the dead. These gods and spirits are not the One True God. Some of these do have power, but they do not have the power of the Creator. There is only one Most High God who is all-powerful.

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About 2,011 years ago, the Most High God fulfilled His promise to mankind by sending the Savior. It did not matter that most of mankind still refused to worship or seek Him, for God was faithful to His promise. God is full of love, mercy, and grace. For this reason God sent the Savior to set us free from sin just as He had promised. God's Word says ***"In times past you were dead in trespasses and sins, but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath He made us alive."***

There is only One True God, but God has three persons. These three persons of God are: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three persons are only One True God. God the Father sent God the Son from heaven in order to be the Savior of mankind, the One that He promised would come. The Son of God humbled Himself, left heaven, and became a man in order to save mankind from their sins and from the power of evil.

The Son of God was conceived in the womb of a virgin of the nation of Israel, which is in Western Asia, just as the prophets foretold in the Scriptures. When the Savior was born, He was born both God and man. God the Savior had no sin, for He was the holy God who came from heaven. The Savior took the name ***"Jesus"***, which means "God saves." From the day of His birth, Jesus, the Son of God, fulfilled all of the law of God. Because of this, He was not like us, for He had no sin.

When Jesus was 30 years old, He began to tell the good news of the kingdom of God to all those who claimed to worship the Creator. He taught them to repent of their sins and to believe on Him as God the Savior so that they would enter the kingdom of God. Jesus performed many signs and miracles to show that He was indeed the promised Savior.

At that time, some believed on God the Savior, but the leaders of religion and the political leaders hated Him. Jesus did not follow their religious traditions that were not in the Word of God. He claimed that He was God. They were jealous of Him so they decided to kill Jesus.

When the time came, they captured Him, but Jesus did not resist them. Why did He not resist them? If Jesus was really the Son of God, why did He not use His power as God? The reason why He did not resist them is that He is God the Son who came from heaven to give up His life to save mankind from their sins. There was only one way to save mankind and that was for the Savior to fulfill the law of God as a man in our place. Only by doing this could he earn the right to offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind. Jesus was holy and perfect. He did not deserve death or sin's curse of suffering like we do. He was indeed the perfect sacrifice that could ransom us from the penalty of our sins.

The Word of the Lord concerning God the Son, Jesus Christ, is ***"Jesus Christ...He offered Himself without sin to God...He has now once been revealed to put away sins"***

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by the sacrifice of Himself.” The Scriptures explain to us the reason that God came from heaven. Jesus ***“came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.”***

The Son of God allowed them to afflict Him and cause Him to suffer on the cross. The Scriptures tell us very clearly that when Jesus died on the cross that He did it for us: ***“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the cross...it is by His stripes we are healed.”***

The condemnation for sin that we deserve is suffering, death, and separation from God forever in the lake of fire. But God the Son received our suffering upon His body. Whoever believes on Him and receives His sacrifice, God will forgive them because Jesus has paid the penalty for their sins.

The Scriptures tell us that ***“we are redeemed...by the precious blood of Christ.”***

After they buried His body, three days later, Jesus rose again from the dead, both body and soul. Death could not defeat God, for God is holy. When Jesus had already died on the cross and ransomed mankind from its sins, He rose again from the dead. Over 500 of His disciples saw Him, studied with Him, touched Him, and ate with Him for 40 days. On the 40th day, God ascended up into heaven before them all.

God promised them that ***“Jesus...will come again in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.”*** When Jesus comes again, all those that believe on Him will be raised up, both body and soul, to be with Him. All those who do not believe on God the Savior will be raised both body and soul as well, but will be raised up in order to receive judgment from God. The Scriptures teach us that at the last day, God the Son will rule over the entire earth. Later God will make a new heaven and new earth where there is no suffering, death, sin, or tears, just like at the very beginning. Only those who believe on the Savior will see that kingdom of God, because all of those who stand condemned in their sins cannot see the kingdom of God.

At the last day, all those who have not received God the Savior will receive punishment for their sins. On the day that God the Son, Jesus, comes again to judge, all will worship Him, but for many it will be too late. They must receive eternal punishment in the lake of fire because they did not seek to know the Creator, they did not repent, nor did they receive the sacrifice of God on their behalf. The most wicked sin that can be committed is to refuse the love and mercy of God by failing to believe in Jesus Christ. If we do not believe, we will receive the wrath of God instead of salvation.

God tells us ***“Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else.”*** The Scriptures teach us that one day ***“Every knee in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”*** All who receive the salvation of God, when they die, they will have peace in heaven with God forever. All who reject Him, on the day of the resurrection,

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they will bow and worship Him also, but it will be too late, for they must now receive the penalty of their sins in the eternal lake of fire. Why? Because they have no Savior.

The above Scriptures tell us that the religion that all will believe at the last day is the very first religion. All will worship and honor the Most High God just as at the beginning. The One True God has the name ***“The Beginning and the End”***, or, ***“The First and the Last.”*** Our first ancestors worshipped that God because He is the first God. At the last day, all will worship Him because He is the God who lives when all other powers have ceased to exist. Whoever is the first God, whoever is the last God, He is the True God. At the last day, the True God will rule over all things with all His enemies under His feet. The Scriptures tell us ***“Then cometh the end, when He shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet.”***

All of you who have read this book, please consider these truths and receive salvation! Please repent of your wrong thoughts and failure to believe the truth! God tells us ***“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*** Do not forget this name of God: ***“The Beginning and the End.”***

God loves you very much. Right now He is calling you to come back to the old path of God. The Scriptures tell us ***“Stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.”*** Please believe the Word of the Lord.

**To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty,
dominion, and power, both now and forever. Amen.**