

The Bamar (Burmese) of Myanmar

Ye Hlaing Aung stood outside the house, gazing at the stars in the night sky. His heart was shattered. An astrologer, consulted by his parents, had forbidden him to marry San San Lwin, the girl he loved. "The marriage will be short-lived because the boy was born on a Wednesday, and the girl on a Tuesday," the old, white-haired astrologer warned gravely. Neither family from both sides wanted to see this happen, so their parents forbade the marriage. They were confident that the astrologer could not be wrong.

Buddhism came to Burma, now known as Myanmar, over 1,000 years ago. The new religion absorbed elements of the animism previously practiced by the **Bamar** who are Myanmar's main ethnic group with a 30.91 million strong population. Astrology was an important part of pre-Buddhist **Bamar** religion, and it continues to dominate people's lives today. Few **Bamar** would think about doing anything important, such as making a business deal or getting married, without first consulting an astrologer. Even Myanmar's political leaders are known to depend on the advice of personal astrologers in making key decisions.

Theravada Buddhism remains heavily entrenched among the **Bamar**, who see it as their only means of security amidst the political repression and economic downturn in their nation. The worship of 'nat' or spirit beings features prominently. Few **Bamar** (0.35%) are committed followers of Christ.

- Pray that the **Bamar** will soon embrace the One who created the stars and the heavens. May the Light of Christ dispel the demonic powers of deception and death over their lives.
- Pray that workers may be raised to show the **Bamar** that Jesus is the Way to God, the Creator.
- Pray that members of the small, struggling **Bamar** church may draw strength and wisdom to share their faith in a culturally relevant way with their countrymen.

This is a series of useful prayer profile compilations to pray for people groups collated from various online sources. Please click on the links below for more info:

<https://joshuaproject.net/>, <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>, <http://asiaharvest.org/people-group-profiles/>