

STORIES FROM THE MISSION FIELD

SOUTHEAST ASIA: BURMA

Greetings, my name is Path Path Htoo, and I'm delighted to share a glimpse into my life's journey. I'm 15 years old and enrolled in the 7th grade at the Sunshine School, conveniently just a few minutes walk from the Shekinah Home. I come from the village of K4 in Phaung Taw, Burma.

In my family, I'm the youngest of nine siblings—five brothers and three sisters. It's a unique story because some of my brothers and sisters remain in Burma, while others have found refuge in Thailand. My parents, aged 56, toil as farmers in the mountains, cultivating rice and tending to vegetable gardens.

I was born into a loving Christian family, and our village is predominantly Christian, with only a few Buddhist families. My early schooling took place right within the heart of my village.

Growing up, the echoes of conflict often reached our ears. We'd hear the distant sounds of gunfire, and while we didn't have to abandon our village, the proximity of the fighting was unnerving. Many neighboring villagers sought refuge in our community due to the turmoil in their areas.

The situation was dire after February 2021, when the junta assumed control. Roads closed, shops shuttered, and the simple act of buying food became a challenge. We had to ration our supplies and tread carefully beyond our village boundaries. The peril was palpable, with clashes between Burmese soldiers and KNU fighters posing a constant threat. Leaving our village in search of work or sustenance was a perilous endeavor.

Then, in January of this year, our lives became even more perilous as several villages near ours were set ablaze. This devastation struck too close to home. As a result, our school also closed down since we needed to be ever-ready to flee. The intensity of the war and the ceaseless conflict left me with no opportunity to continue my education.

Hope found me through a family connection. My brother, who has a relationship with Shekinah through Mommy Paw, suggested I come here and bring another relative. So, we embarked on a remarkable journey. We traveled by truck, first to Dawei, then to Hpa, and eventually reached K7, just across from KT. The two-day journey was uncertain, especially as we navigated Burmese checkpoints. Miraculously, upon inspecting our Burmese IDs, we were granted passage. This was indeed a blessing, considering that many others were detained, forced into labor as porters, or used as human shields.



15 years old, Shekinah KT

First and foremost, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to God for guiding me to this remarkable place. Here at Shekinah, I've been given a priceless gift—I don't have to worry about financial burdens, and this blessing surrounds me daily. I love the peaceful atmosphere. I can feel the presence of God here, which makes this place so special.

In my village, educational opportunities have dwindled, and the pursuit of knowledge has become increasingly elusive. However, my time here has opened up a world of possibilities. I'm actively involved in the church's programs, where I learn new melodies, share the profound devotion of my heart, and even contribute by teaching fresh Burmese worship songs. Each day, I find immense joy in being here, and the blessings bestowed upon me are truly immeasurable.

Once I complete high school, I aspire to continue my educational journey, specifically by attending a Bible school. My ultimate goal is to use the knowledge and faith I acquire to serve the wonderful people of Burma, providing them with hope, guidance, and support.



Burned village near Path Path Htoo village.

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