



Ron & Cheryl Myers

GOD'S WORD FOR ISAN MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

September 2022

*A Faith-based Ministry Sustained Through the Prayers, Gifts, and Partnership of God's People*  
**The Need Is Truly Great, but Our God Is Even Greater**  
*Over 33,000 Villages in NE Thailand Are Still without the Gospel*  
**A BURDEN FOR THE LOST IS OUR CALLING!**

by Ron Myers

I've titled this newsletter "*The Need Is Truly Great, but Our God Is Even Greater*," following Jesus' statement, "*The harvest is truly great, but the laborers are few... Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest*" (Luke 10:2).

**A BURDEN FOR THE LOST:** In the scope of *World Evangelism*, I spoke of Thailand's dire spiritual condition in my last communiqué. Namely, most Isan villages (98%) remain unreached. God has laid that burden on my heart – a new and more challenging phase of my ministry. That of planting Gospel seeds among the masses residing in the 33,217 unreached villages spread across Thailand's vast Northeastern hinterlands – the Isan region. God yearns for these unreached village dwellers to hear the Gospel too. He is longsuffering toward us, the Church, often pew-bound and delinquent. The fact remains, "*God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*" (1 Peter 3:9), not a select few! It's not only our calling but our duty to take the Gospel to the uttermost reaches throughout the length and breadth of the unreached world until Christ returns. Jesus was obviously speaking of Himself in His parable of the Nobleman who went to a far land to receive a Kingdom. He called his servants together and commanded them, "*Occupy till I return*" (Luke 19:13). Do we grasp Jesus' implication? Jesus' final words to His disciples were, "*Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15). Both these verses are commands, not convenient suggestions if we feel so inclined.



**THE FACTS:** *Joshua Project's* most recent demographic reports there are 34,003 peasant farmer villages in Northeast Thailand. The Northeast is the largest, most populated, yet least-reached region of Thailand's four regions – *North, Northeast, Central, and Southern*. Only 2% or 786 of these 34,003 villages have the Gospel. Yet the millions of inhabitants dwelling in the remaining 98% or 33,217 villages are still unreached. They remain utterly lost and without hope unless someone goes to tell them (Romans 10:15). They know nothing of a Creator-God or His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ, who came to save them *by Grace, through faith, without works* (Ephesians 2:8-9). These all adhere to Thailand's three-part, state-ordained religious tradition – syncretized and congealed under a culturalized form of folk Buddhism, as follows:

- **BUDDHISM:** Life is plagued with suffering caused by desires. Suffering ceases when desires cease through right conduct and meditation, which gives wisdom and enlightenment. That opens the state of *Nirvana*, where reincarnation ceases, with its cycle of pain, sickness, suffering, and death.
- **BRAHMANISM:** Magic curses and chants, along with wearing amulets, give protection from harm (*from ancient Indian Hindu beliefs*).
- **ANIMISM:** Feared malicious spirits reside throughout nature's surroundings. These spirits must be fed and appeased by animal blood sacrifices and temple offerings to keep them from causing misfortune, calamity, sickness, and death. Witch doctors are consulted for answers and remedies.

**THE CIRCUMSTANCES:** These lost ones didn't choose their place of birth or lot in life, yet they do their best with what they have. Missiologists, mission-minded churches, and faithful, committed Christians are mindful of the need to reach those living in the *10/40 Window* with the Gospel. This wide band encompasses the globe from the 10th parallel latitude to the 40th north of the equator. It comprises parts of North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. The significance is most unreached, or partially-reached people groups reside there. Thailand is also in this window with its little-reached Isan region – where the greater majority have not heard the Gospel.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Cheryl and I gave our lives to serve Christ in Isan. We, and our young family, lived among unreached Isan peasant farmers dwelling in Thailand's Northeastern hinterlands – befriending and leading many villagers to Christ with their centuries-old customs, cultures, and dire living conditions. We have the training, skills, stamina, and experience to do the job. We've seen firsthand the utter lostness of these people for whom Christ died. He paid their sin debt, then rose again victorious over death and the grave to give them eternal life.

**THE KEY:** All Thai and Isan people love nature yet have zero knowledge of its origin, nature's Creator. Nor do they know Jesus Christ's true identity as their Creator, Savior, Lord, and coming King. That's where my Considering Creation booklet, "*Do You Like Nature?*" works amazingly well. Committed Buddhists tell how me they love it and pass it on to fellow Buddhists, friends, and relatives to read. They often comment, "*I never thought about it before, but you're right; there must be a Creator.*"

**THE CHALLENGE:** Where and how do we begin? We have a secret weapon; selectively distributing my pocket-size Intelligent-Design, Considering Creation booklet, subtitled *Do You Like Nature?* It's highly regarded by the Thai and will work great as a friendly icebreaker. Passing out the Isan New Testaments *en masse* would be premature. I envision seeking out and befriending respected village elders as the best way to establish beachheads. No more than one or two villages per subdistrict so as not spread ourselves too thin. We'd do follow-ups to answer questions, provide guidance, and teach simplified fundamental truths. Understanding the culture as we do is a plus. The goal is to generate interest and invitations to return to address larger groups to present the Gospel, hoping to see spiritual fruit in terms of souls saved, leaders recognized, and new churches established.

I don't believe money ever saved anyone, yet used judiciously it can be very helpful. This project will require significant financial backing to reach these unreached souls – for the Glory of God and the cause of Christ. It's a sizable endeavor, yet doable if approached wisely. I envision much planning and work, bathed in prayer as we seek God's direction. We'll begin small and cautious, then further our outreach as things take shape, making adjustments as needed. Isan encompasses a vast area, so we'll be doing extensive travel, requiring a dependable vehicle, like a late-model dual cab pickup.

**PROJECT NEEDS:** The most critical item we couldn't do without is the *Considering Creation* booklets I described above to plant Gospel seeds in these villages. Excuse the expression, but it'd be like hunting without ammo if we lacked materials. There are other expenses like travel, food, and lodging. The Isan region is vast, comprising one-third of Thailand's total population and landmass, or 170,870 sq. km. (65,973 sq. mi.). As mentioned, we will need a dependable late-model used vehicle. Something shiny-new off the dealership lot would give the wrong impression and not bode well with poor villagers.

**THE PROPOSAL:** This new and most-important phase of ministry cannot happen without your partnership and involvement. It's a monumental task that can only be accomplished by reliance on God, much prayer, His wisdom, our planning, and your financial support. It also means forming a pilot team of committed, like-minded Thai and Isan Christians working together in fellowship toward this common goal. My coworker, Baaw Ter, will have a significant role. His leadership qualities are evident, combined with his communication skills as a gifted speaker, a former radio personality with a call-in talk show. Local believers taking leadership roles from the onset is best, leaving me free to guide and mentor them, which avoids transitioning later.

**APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES:** Missionaries once stood on crates in open-air marketplaces, singing hymns and preaching the Gospel – lost souls passing by. One Isan shop owner said for amusement when he was a kid, he would listen to the foreigners standing on boxes singing. He couldn't understand the strange *religion* they promoted. That approach seemed right to the missionaries; however, interest in the Gospel was nil – unless a person is searching for deliverance from the guilt of personal sin, which occurs. To a Thai, salvation means deliverance from reincarnation by escaping to *Nirvana* – a state of nothingness gained by doing good. *Nirvana* is where one ceases to exist, leaving nothing to reincarnate. If missionaries try to use Western *soapbox* methodologies to reach the Thai, all the Thai mind hears through their Eastern religious filter is the *foreigners spreading their religion*. Jesus, a good and kind person, went around teaching westerners to do good, like Buddha.

Christianity is not a *religion* but faith in the *Living One*, who conquered death to become our Savior, restoring our broken relationship with God the Father. That's what we need to get across, but how? Certainly not by recreating the broken wheel of failed Western methodologies. That's where dialoguing with them about the nature they all love comes into play. We've learned that preaching Christ without their having a Judeo-Christian worldview dramatically impedes their ability to grasp the Gospel message.

How can we attain that? Think outside the box! We must begin teaching where they are before we introduce Christ. I start teaching at the beginning, filling in the blanks about Creation. It's the origin of everything, including the nature they adore. I've dialogued with others about aspects of Creation that reveal Intelligent Design. They listen, mesmerized, gradually concluding there *must* be an Intelligent Designer. It's exciting to see their response as the lights turn on. At that point, I tell them of the ancient sacred writings about the Creator (the Bible), then Creation, the Enemy, Temptation, Fall, Curse, Banishment, and restoration by the Living One who was sent to save them. Then and only then can we present the Gospel, naming Jesus' true identity as their Creator, Savior, and Lord. The results? Lost souls get saved!

My prayer is you will join me in this exciting new endeavor. Be a part! I'm not ashamed to say we need your help.

*Ron Myers*  
Ron Myers  
God's Word for Isan





# Isan Region Topographical Outreach Map



Ministry Headquarters, Nakhon Phanom City



The Isan Region's Outer Perimeters



Mekong River (2700 mi., Tibet to South Vietnam)

Picture yourself trying to make 43,003 pinpricks inside the perimeters of this Isan region map. That's the number of Isan villages here – 33,217 of which remain unreached by the Gospel.

