

The Shan of Myanmar

Ngein sat outside the temple overlooking his village and gazed towards the moonlit night sky. The **Shan** man then glanced towards the entrance of the temple and saw his mother and wife inside the main hall prostrating before the large image of the Lord Buddha. This almost daily evening ritual for both women seemed to give them the assurance of divine protection over their village. Years back, the Myanmar Army launched an offensive against **Shan** separatist rebels resulting in **Shan** villages being looted, girls and women raped and men forcibly conscripted as army porters. Ngein's entire village fled from their valley and resettled in their present, remoter location. Ngein instinctively fingered the amulet round his neck, wishing for the sure assurance of their safety. He would have joined many of his peers fleeing to Thailand for refuge but hesitated due to horror stories of **Shan** refugees being exploited by corrupt Thai officials and forced into prostitution and slave labour.

Also known as the 'Tai Yai', the 4.6 million-strong **Shan** live in northern Myanmar. They are a cultured people who take pride in their ethnic identity. The brutality of the Myanmar military upon the **Shan** has caused much suffering, forcing many **Shan** to flee to neighbouring Thailand where they face further exploitation and abuse by unscrupulous locals. Steeped in Theravada Buddhist beliefs with a strong emphasis on spirit worship, the **Shan** are generally unreceptive to Christianity. Only a few (0.9%) are Christians.

- Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send labourers to share the Gospel message of Christ with the **Shan**.
- Pray that the hearts of the **Shan** will be softened to the Gospel amidst the adversities affecting the people,
- Pray against the strongholds of Buddhism and witchcraft over the **Shan** that their spiritual eyes may be opened.
- Pray for the few known **Shan** Christians that they will remain tenacious in their faith.

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/>