

## The Tai Khun of Myanmar

A festive atmosphere filled the spacious house as little Wani's family carefully arranged plates of boiled pork, chicken, rice and fruits on the special altar. Vases of flowers added colour to the altar. "Is the food for grandfather and grandmother?" she asked curiously. "Oh yes," answered her mother. "Will they appear and eat the food?" asked Wani. "Well..we can't see them," explained her mother. "Their spirits will come to taste the food." "What if their spirits have been reincarnated to living beings?" persisted Wani, following her mother around. "How will they eat the food?" "Oh, I won't know, child," exclaimed her mother, half crossed and half amused at her questions. "We observe this ritual every year to remember and worship our ancestors. Run along now. Go, look at the nice full moon in the night sky."

The 131,000-strong **Tai Khun** live in northeast Myanmar. The town of Kengtung and its surrounding countryside is their heartland. They differ slightly from other ethnic groups in the region by their mother tongue and the traditional attire of their women. The **Tai Khun** are also said to be slightly taller in stature than their ethnic neighbours.

Although Theravada Buddhists, the **Tai Khun** also practise spirit worship and ancestor worship. A few spiritual breakthroughs have occurred with a small minority (2.3%) coming to faith in Christ. The majority however remain in spiritual darkness.

- Praise God for the small breakthroughs. Pray that the **Tai Khun** believers in Christ will grow in their spiritual walk with Jesus and will draw others to Christ by their transformed lifestyles.
- Pray that the **Tai Khun** will be set free from the spiritual deceptions of Buddhism, spirit worship and ancestor worship.
- Pray that the outreach to the Tai Khun may continue unhindered despite restrictions by the government of Myanmar.

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