

## The Khorat Thai of Thailand

“Hold the incense sticks carefully now,” Pratum said to her young daughter, Prisana. “We are going to pay our respects to the brave Lady Mo.” The **Khorat Thai** woman led her daughter towards the gilded Buddhist altar built at the base of the statue of Lady Mo. “Who was this Lady Mo?” asked Prisana. “Her real name was Khun Ying Mo and she was the wife of the governor of Nakhon Ratchasima,” explained Pratum. “During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the King of Vientiane in Laos invaded this region and captured many Siamese troops and civilians. Lady Mo and the women were forced to cook for the Lao invaders. She tricked the Lao invaders into giving her and the women knives to cook and secretly handed the knives to the captured men. The Siamese men attacked the Lao invaders. The invaders fled, and our Siamese Army managed to drive them away.” Prisana gazed at the statue in awe. The **Khorat Thai** girl and her mother proceeded to kneel reverently before the statue in worship.

The **Khorat Thai** (population: 541,000) live in northeast Thailand’s Khorat region. This region has traces of Khmer influence as it was formerly part the Khmer Angkor Empire prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> century AD. After repelling the Lao invasion of 1826, the King of Siam resettled thousands of Siamese troops, farmers and craftsmen along with their families in the region. Over time, these settlers started developing a distinct identity. Their form of spoken Thai is also slightly different from standard Thai.

The **Khorat Thai** practice a mixture of Theravada Buddhism and spirit-worship. It is not clear as to how many of their people are followers of Christ.

- Pray against the prevailing spirit of idolatry and religious deception over the **Khorat Thai**.
- Pray for an expansion of outreach among the **Khorat Thai**, particularly among the rural villagers.
- Pray for more workers to be raised and sent as well as for more open doors to reach the **Khorat Thai**.