

The Phuan of Thailand

Nok stopped operating her traditional hand loom, feeling rather tired. “My eyes and health are not as they once were,” she muttered to herself. The **Phuan** widow sighed as she entered her living room. The house was quieter ever since her son, Pai entered the monastery two weeks ago. He would have to remain there for at least three months. It is a must for all Buddhist men and will earn merit for the monk’s parents. Nok glanced sadly at the photo of her late husband, killed in a horrific accident a year ago. Such a premature death must have had been the work of evil spirits. Hopefully Pai’s three months as a monk would earn good merit for his deceased father.

The **Phuan** are originally from Laos. During the early 19th century, the small **Phuan** kingdom was decimated and depopulated by order of the Siamese court in Bangkok. Many **Phuan** were carried off to Bangkok as slaves. Later that century, bandits from China plundered the **Phuan**. At this point, most **Phuan** abandoned their traditional homeland on the plains and moved to the lowlands near the banks of the Mekong River. With their close proximity, the Siamese officials once again invaded their villages and took them as slaves.

Today, about 203,000 **Phuan** live in Thailand, mainly in Lopburi. These hardy people have managed to survive. They are rice cultivators and fairly self-sufficient. They have also developed a strong silk industry.

Although Theravada Buddhists, their animistic view of the world includes many spirits, both good and bad, that must be placated in order to receive blessings and avoid curses. Only a few (1.5%) profess Christianity.

- Pray for more culturally-sensitive evangelistic teams that will share with the **Phuan** about the One who promises them freedom from sin, fear and eternal condemnation.
- Pray that the **Phuan** may find freedom and restoration in the Person of Christ.
- Pray for the small minority of **Phuan** believers.

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/>