

The Saek of Thailand

“Who lives in this spirit house, Father?” Nai asked as they both approached the massive brick structure. His father, Tik bowed respectfully before the spirit house and signalled to Nai to do likewise. Tik then explained: “The great ‘Ong-Mu’ Spirit dwells here. This is the spirit being that led our ancestors out from Laos into our present location. The ‘Ong-Mu’ is the guardian and protector of our village. We must revere the ‘Ong-Mu’ as much as we revere the Buddha. This spirit being watches over you at all times.”

Nai and Tik are members of the 13,000-strong **Saek** ethnic group in Thailand. History records that many of them were exiled from their original homeland in Laos during the mid 19th-century when the victorious Siamese invaders took them as war captives to present-day Thailand. The **Saek** of Thailand live mainly in Nakhon Phanom Province. While most are farmers, an increasing number are civil servants and traders.

The **Saek** are Theravada Buddhists. Spirit worship is widespread. Apart from worshipping the ‘Ong-Mu’ spirit, they also worship the spirits dwelling in the land, rivers, trees and mountains. Ancestors are also venerated. It is not known if there are any **Saek** believers in Christ.

- Pray for spiritual breakthroughs among the **Saek** in Thailand. Pray that the barriers of false religion and unbelief may be torn down.
- Pray for open doors for workers to be sent to the **Saek**. May Christians in both Thailand and abroad respond to God’s call to reach the **Saek**.

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