

EMPTY CROSS! ... EMPTY TOMB!

“Why do you seek the LIVING ONE among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!” Luke 24:5

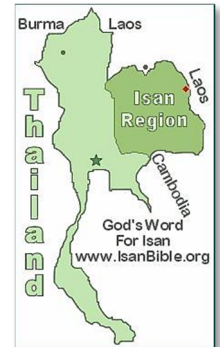
Greetings in the Matchless and Powerful Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (The Living One),

It's interesting how this world's humanistic view of Easter has trumped the Biblical message with a message of cute little rabbits, chicks, ducks, and Easter egg hunts. It all seems so nice and appropriate, yet many do not realize that it is actually a clever throwback to the old pagan religion of fertility and rebirth. Meanwhile, the focus on Easter's real *Passover* theme is blurred: The *Empty Cross* and the *Empty Tomb*! ...Christ having purchased our redemption by His Blood, and secured our justification by His Resurrection. May these wonderful eternal truths be at the forefront of our thinking on a daily basis, not just once a year.

Concerning our work, there is a common misconception held among missions-oriented Christians that all major people groups already have God's Word translated into their own heart language. And, that those left to reach with God's Word are only small, remote tribal minorities. This typically means populaces from a few hundred to a few thousand maximum. These smaller groups are important in God's Eyes as well, and cannot be neglected. Some from *every* tribe, tongue and nation will be in attendance at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, as recorded in Revelation 5:9b. This is the very reason Christ commanded us, His Church, to engage in world evangelization, that *all* may have a chance to hear about the *empty* cross and *empty* tomb... and believe!

In reading Romans 10:17, we realize how important God's written Word is in bringing people to a clear understanding of the need for faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Otherwise, why emphasize the need for Bible translation in world missions? Furthermore, upon reviewing surveys done by organizations such as the *Joshua Project*, we discover that there is still one very large people group yet without God's Word translated into their own heart language. That major people group is the Isan people who inhabit the vast hinterlands of Thailand's Northeastern Region – twenty-four million strong and growing—a full third of Thailand's total population. In fact, the actual Christian populace among the Isan is extremely small; believed to be between 0.1% to as few as 0.01%. Since “*faith comes by hearing the Word of God,*” this relatively minuscule amount of believers can be directly attributed to the absence of God's Word in their heart language, especially after the Gospel having first entered Thailand around 200 years ago.

This neglected task—due to a longstanding socio-cultural bias against the Isan people on the part of Thai society—was begun by missionary couple Ron and Cheryl Myers, pioneer church-planting missionaries to the Isan people during their second term. At that time, the only scriptures available among the Isan was the Thai Bible, which posed numerous communication problems, Thai not being their heart language. Also, as committed Buddhists, they have no concept of Creation or a Creator God. Thus, the first book completed was Genesis, which reveals Creation and the foundations of Redemption's story, formerly unknown to them.



The Isan New Testament translation has now been completed and we are presently in the final review process with the help of qualified Isan translation assistants (like Pastor Pitak) and an Isan proof-reading review committee. If all goes as planned, Lord willing, we hope to meet a completion goal of spring 2015, whereupon the Isan New Testament will be printed and distributed.

Meanwhile, through the sponsorship of *Bearing Precious Seed Global*, we are distributing a second wave of John-Romans books, printed in Isan and Thai dual column format. These are presently being distributed to key locations throughout the Isan Region, where they will be further disseminated. Pastor Santisuk of Korat Baptist church wrote me today; he writes:

“Dear Pastor Ron Whom We Love in Christ; Thank you so much for the ten boxes of John-Romans Bible books that Brother David Kaewpila brought to us. I received them this morning. These will be very useful for distributing to the many people who still don't know of God's Love. May God bless your ministry, that it will produce abundant fruit. Love in Jesus Christ, Santisuk PawSawan”

God has been at the helm of this vital task from the beginning. And, we are thankful for the sacrificial investments many of you have made. We remain confident that He will supply for the printing of the Isan New Testament, hastening it into the waiting hands and hearts of the twenty-four million Isan people. The goal being to see God glorified as the number of Isan believers increase, including an increase in solid leaders, and in self-supporting, -governing, and -propagating churches, by having God's Word in their own Isan language.

Your prayers are greatly appreciated to help see this review process expedited...

- That fluency in the Isan vernacular will be achieved
- That terminology will be harmonized throughout
- That any problems will be uncovered and corrected
- That textual accuracy to the original will be maintained
- That printing and distribution funding will be supplied
- That many souls will receive Christ as their Personal Savior
- That the Isan people will cherish God's Word in their own language
- Finally, that God will provide strength and good health for this task



I (Ron) return to Thailand in early May to continue the final review process with the assistance of Isan Pastor Pitak and our Isan review team. Pastor Pitak, who is presently studying for his Bible degree, will be available starting May 13. Meanwhile, I have been working with Brother Chat-Chai (“*Ek*” for short) and other conservative Thai and Isan pastors. Brother Ek, a close friend, popular speaker, pastor of a church in Bangkok, and is a former teaching professor at Bangkok Bible College & Seminary (where Pitak is studying). We are organizing a one-day leadership seminar for Isan pastors, focused on understanding and teaching the Gospel of Grace. This is a very present need among Christians throughout Thailand.

By God's Enabling Grace and for His Eternal Glory,

Ron & Cheryl Myers

Ron (& Cheryl) Myers

www.IsanBible.org

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” Psalm 19:7-8