



Ron & Cheryl Myers

GOD'S WORD FOR ISAN NEWSLETTER

September, 2015

## “PREPARING TO PUBLISH THE ISAN NEW TESTAMENT”

(Nearing the Conclusion of a Long Journey)

By Ron Myers

Greetings In the Name of Christ,

**HEALTH UPDATE, ETC:** I saw Dr. Freeman, my orthopedic surgeon on Monday, Sept 28, for a scheduled checkup on my hip replacement. Everything was fine, so, by the time you read this letter, I'll be packing and on my way back to Thailand. I fly on Japan Airlines out of San Diego on Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. The 19 hour flight stops for a 1.5 hour layover in Tokyo, Japan and lands in Bangkok around midnight, Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup>—losing a day crossing the Int'l Dateline. I'll be in Northeast Thailand for a two-month stay (60-day visa), returning to San Diego on Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. That's just in time for my birthday on December 7<sup>th</sup>, and to celebrate Christmas with family.

**NEARING CONCLUSION:** I vividly recall the elation we felt welling up in our hearts when Pastor Pitak and I realized we were only days away from completing the translation of the Isan (*E'Sahn*) New Testament... which marked the conclusion of many years of effort. That was two years ago, on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Tiring as it was at times, it was not tedious in the least, especially when we considered the importance of what we were doing... providing God's Word to a huge, albeit little-reached, people group in their own heart language for the very first time... something that had not been attempted previous to our work.

**PREPARING TO PUBLISH:** The question you might be asking is: "Okay, if you've finished translating the Isan New Testament over two years ago, why then haven't you already printed it and placed it in the hands of the waiting Isan populace?"

That's a reasonable question, and something I was really tempted to do, since there were those who were ready and able to give a sizable contribution towards printing costs at that time. I only hope they understood why I didn't go to print at that juncture. It was because the Isan translation—fluent and accurate as it may have been—wasn't quite ready. Even though we had conducted checks for accuracy all along the way, I needed to conduct a crucial, in-depth final review, checking various important aspects. Things can be overlooked in the translation process. Also, difficult-to-translate passages needed possible reworking.



Example: Have you ever written a letter and sent it off prematurely, without a second thought? Then, later discovered it needed one last glance before sending, perchance to come upon an overlooked typo, or whatever? (*We all have!*) In fact, some Bible translations have suffered the same fate; spending large amounts of God's resources while hurrying them to print, only later to discover oversights that needed correcting. Whereas, a final check could have prevented all that. We do not want that to happen with the Isan NT, with a potential readership of over 25 million at last count. Therefore, during the final review process (*presently over 82% complete*) Pastor Pitak and I have been checking for the following:

- **Content accuracy:** A comparative check of the Isan New Testament text lined up against the original Greek text, word by word, verse by verse, and passage by passage. This assures there is completeness and integrity, with nothing missing (*left out*) and nothing superfluous (*left over*).
- **Grammatical accuracy:** A check of each verb used in the Isan NT, as being an accurate reflection of the tense, voice and mood of their corresponding Greek verbs. For instance, not turning a factual statement Paul made about our eternal position "In Christ" (*Grace*), into a must-do command (*human works*), an inexcusable error which most Thai Bibles are fraught with.
- **Concordance of terminology:** Descriptive terms that are used throughout the New Testament need to be brought into concord or harmony. We field-tested a variety of terms as we progressed. For instance, we tried various possibilities for Priest, Tabernacle, Church, Salvation, Savior, Angel, *et al*, to name a few. After comparative analysis, we found that some terms we tried proved better than others. Therefore, we need to locate and assign the best possible term in each case. Computer searches on the corresponding English text to locate terms make this a fairly simple process.
- **Natural, spoken fluency:** We strive for accurate, straight-forward communication of God's Word to meet the goal of correct understanding of God's truth in the hearts of the Isan masses. Because, "...*faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*" (Romans 10:17)

As you can see, this final review process is necessary and cannot be rushed. The good news is, we are almost finished and closing in on a printing date. Your interest, prayers and sacrificial partnership over the years are sincerely appreciated, since together, we are meeting an essential spiritual need. On behalf of the Isan masses, who will soon be reading God's Word in their own language, we say: Thank You!

By God's Grace and for His Glory,

Ron and Cheryl Myers

[www.IsanBible.org](http://www.IsanBible.org)

Pastor Pitak and wife Sri have recently graduated from Bangkok Bible College & Seminary. Cheryl and I have been privileged to have had a part in sponsoring them.

