



Jeff & Diane Brown ..... working to lengthen the list of tribes, peoples, and languages that worship God

We have accepted a new, very different assignment this time around. Jeff is what is called a Strategy Coordinator for an "unreached" semi-nomadic Muslim tribe of south-central Asia, numbering about two million. A Strategy Coordinator is somebody who is responsible to develop and implement a strategy for presenting a culture with the option, in their own language, to know God and follow His Son, with the objective of seeing reproducing congregations of Followers spread quickly throughout that culture. This means two new languages for us: a national language at a survival level and the tribal language at a more fluent level. We have landed initially in Thailand to do some preliminary work before getting into some serious language and culture study and research.



Their Lands



Typical Thai Buddhist house altar

One of the interesting things about Diane's walks in the early morning is seeing the Buddhist monks from the nearby temple come to receive food from some of our neighbors. The people bring these offerings to their front gates, and Diane has heard the monks praying for those who give. It's a very peaceful process, and quite interesting to observe. When we first got here we would remark to each other that there had been another monk sighting. Now, we are so accustomed to seeing them everywhere, it's not quite so novel. But it is still an intriguing lifestyle. We're told that women must never touch a monk, not even by accident. In fact, if a woman is about to back up into a monk while waiting in a line, for example, other people will push her out of the way so she can avoid touching the monk.

The Thai people are not the focus of our work. But we are living here, at least for now. We want God to use us for His glory and honor right here where we find ourselves, even though we are focused hundreds of miles away on a Muslim tribe. If we will love – love God and love the people around us – God can do miracles we might never know about.

Ying is a Buddhist Thai woman who speaks a little English, married to a reclusive US man. They lived directly across the street from us during the fall of 2003.

Monday, October 20th, she told Diane she "read" the Book we gave her a few days earlier. Bless her heart. She said again she would like to know who "be" God, but her friends and family will be mean to her if she doesn't continue to believe in Buddha. This is from a woman who a couple weeks ago told Diane that sometimes she wants to take all her pills because she is so sad. Now she is thinking that these friends and family members, who have caused her so much pain and grief in the past, are more valuable than learning who "be" the I AM.

Diane knows a woman named Ann who leads a Book Study at 12:30pm on Tuesdays. The study is in Thai and attended by several Thai women who are searching for the truth. When Diane invited Ying to it, she kept saying, "I'm sorry Diane, I can't." She asked if Diane were mad at her, since she wasn't able to go to read the Bible with other women. She started talking about other things, not related, and she apologized again. When she came back, with egg rolls, she brought it up again, looking around the neighborhood, as if someone would

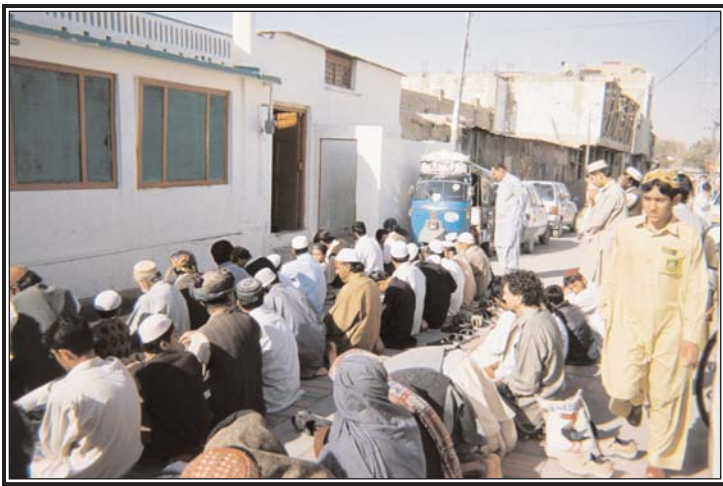
see her talking to Diane. She seems like she genuinely wants to go to meet the other Thai seekers.

The next day, a half hour before the study, she came over to our house. She sat and explained why she couldn't go. Ying is very much afraid of what other people will say. She doesn't want to have conflict with any one. She doesn't want Diane to be mad at her either, and she apologized again that she couldn't attend the Book Study. Diane asked her if she wanted to drive over to Ann's house with her to drop off our video camera and a blank videocassette. Ann's husband had said that he would transfer what we've got on Hi-8 tape from our camera, and this seemed like a very convenient time to deliver it to their house, because the study would just be getting underway and Ying could at least meet Ann and see real live Thai Buddhist women gathering to study the Book. Ying was willing to go along. They arrived at Ann's house just as the other ladies usually were arriving. Ying, Ann, and Diane talked for over an hour. It was so nice to hear Ann's fluent Thai, listening to Ying pour her heart out to Ann in her own heart Thai language. Diane was greatly encouraged that they got to meet, and that Ying also got to briefly meet two of the women who regularly attend Ann's study. It was a very pleasant conversation, and Ying was able to express her difficulties in comprehending that Buddha is good and Jesus is good, yet they teach some very different things. For Thai people, to be Thai is to be Buddhist, and it's a very difficult concept to grasp that you can still be Thai and not be Buddhist. Ying is willing to read the Book when she is alone in her home, for now. But she doesn't want anyone to get mad at her, so she is keeping a low profile about reading it. She really values her relationships. But when she dies, her relationships won't save her.

They left Ann's house and Ying showed Diane where she goes to get Thai foot massage. It's at a tiny government hospital facility for the poor. They both got a foot massage, that lasted an hour, and cost a whopping \$1.50! She was translating for Diane, who thought, "Ying is like my own personal Thai Ambassador!" getting her deeper into the flow of the culture. As Diane lay there on the mat on the cement floor, watching the dozens of ants in the florescent light overhead, she thought with some surprise, "I love Thailand." The breeze felt good, there was a woman gently applying perfect amounts of pressure to her very sore feet, and her friend Ying seemed so happy to have brought her to this local haven. Ying was laughing easily with the woman who was massaging her feet, as well.

Ying & Diane





Jeff at Friday mosque service

When Jeff visited the tribe in August/September, he had the privilege, and pleasure, of meeting and spending the better part of three days with one of the first blvrs in this tribe of about two million people. This man has been active in reaching out to his people for several years. He covertly trains people from three language groups.

His last words to Jeff, before Jeff returned to Thailand were, "I will Ask that you come and work with my people."

## Ramadan

The lunar month of Ramadan began October 27th 2003. You can read an overview of it at [www.holidays.net/ramadan](http://www.holidays.net/ramadan).

The five daily prayer times that the Muslims observe all year round:

- 1) Early Morning Pr – any time after dawn but before sunrise;
- 2) Noon Pr – any time after noon until halfway to sunset;
- 3) Mid-Afternoon Pr – any time from halfway to sunset until sunset;
- 4) Sunset Pr – any time during twilight;
- 5) Evening Pr – any time from last light until dawn.

You can learn more about Islam at many denominational websites, including our Company's website (.org). Some congregations have intercession guides to help you, including our home congregation in Lincoln, which has a stack of 'em.

*News from Jeff & Diane*

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