



The Islamic religion is lived out according to five main “pillars” which are obligatory religious practices for all adult Muslims:

1. Reciting the Creed (shahada) “There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.”
2. Prayer (salat) - Five times each day.
3. Almsgiving (zakat) - Both obligatory and voluntary giving to the poor.
4. Fasting (saum) - Especially during the “holy” month of Ramadan.
5. Pilgrimage (hajj) - At least once in a lifetime to Mecca, known as the Hajj.



Day 14

City Population: 10 million

The official Muslim population of Bangkok, Thailand is 262,023 people (2000 est.) but some estimate the number to be closer to one million. Over 160 officially registered mosques are located in the city. Many Muslims live along canals which were historically important transportation corridors (there were few or no roads into many areas until 30 years ago). The mosques and temples were all built along the canals for easy access, yet today many of the canals have disappeared.

Muslim communities: Muslims have lived in Bangkok for generations, often forming homogenous communities, largely closed to non-Muslims. The size of each community differs, but on average it is about 150 - 200 households. These communities have been able to develop their own mosques and religious schools and maintain their social and dietary customs. Muslims tend not to move into areas where the residents are primarily Buddhist. However, because Bangkok has become such a huge city, there are many places where Muslims mix with non-Muslims - even though they prefer to both live and work together with fellow Muslims. While large areas in the eastern part of Bangkok used to be primarily Muslim, they are now a minority in these districts. However, in some areas Muslim students still form the majority in public schools.

Language: Thai is the only language most of Bangkok’s Muslims speak, but occasional words of Malay are also used. Muslim sermons on the radio include Arabic and sometimes Malay readings. Some religious schools teach Pattani Malay as well as Arabic, and many students from Bangkok study at religious schools away from the city.



Most emigration of Muslims into Bangkok has come from the southern part of Thailand, but there have also been sizeable groups from Cambodia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, India, Burma and Iran, as well as China.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- ▶ *Pray that many Muslims in Bangkok will realize that life is not about religion; it is about having a relationship with God through the living and reigning Messiah (John 17:3).*
- ▶ *Pray that Thai believers will be able to build positive and beneficial friendships with Muslims.*