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ASKing for Israel and the Middle East

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ASKing Point

is a bi-monthly communication on behalf of ASK Network International. It is an invitation to join the network of prayer throughout the nations, ASKing and agreeing regarding key issues on God's heart. It is a tool for prayer, a place for testimony to God's faithfulness in answering, and a gift of worship to the Living God.

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Why did God choose Jerusalem to reveal His Name and His Salvation?

The story of the Redemption of mankind does not start in the Matthew 2 but in Genesis 1. Our faith is the most ancient faith in the world, starting before the Creation of Man, as described in the first verse of Scripture: *"In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth."* Note the emphasis on and. Everything that God created He wishes to unite and reconcile. It was God's heart to bring Heaven on Earth and Earth in Heaven. His plan of redemption began in the Middle East where He will also complete it.

Genesis reveals Man was placed in a Garden named Eden, containing the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. We know the outcome of Man's disobedience to the only commandment with a condition given by God: *"You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die"* (Genesis 3:3).

Where the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was is not known, but the boundaries of the Garden of Eden were four streams of the same river. They are named: the Tigris (or Ahidekel); the Euphrates, located in Mesopotamia (now Iraq and Syria), east of Canaan; the Pishon, being the blue Nile; and the Gihon, the white Nile in Egypt and Sudan. The map of the area was much different from the one we have now. There was not yet the dividing of the continents that happened later during Peleg. (Genesis 10)

Imagine the Arabian Peninsula still connected to Egypt and Iran! The geographical center of these four rivers was in Canaan. According to Jewish tradition, Mount Moriah in Jerusalem is the place of the Creation of Man. Called *"even hashtiyah"* or "stone of beginnings". There Adam failed and sin entered the world, but God provided the first decent covering for man: lambskin for fig leaves. God's plan was to redeem mankind in exactly the same place where Adam failed. Adam and Eve were escorted out of the protected Garden and placed 'East of Eden'. (Genesis 3) The borders of the Middle East had been established.

Then in Genesis 12:1, God called Abram (aged 75) to follow His leading *"to a land that I will show you"*. Abram ("exalted father") had his name changed to Abraham ("father of many nations"). He lived in Ur, in the land of the Chaldeans, (now south Iraq), just at the gates east of the Garden of Eden. No coincidence with God. Later Abraham was led back along the Euphrates, (now Iraq, Syria and Turkey), where God gave to him and his descendants, forever, the narrow strip of land between three continents, the Land of Canaan, Israel.

In chapter 14 the city of Salem (now Jerusalem) is first mentioned. Its king, Melchizedek (King of Righteousness), was priest and King, a type of the Messiah (see Hebrews). He offers bread and wine to Abraham, a sign of submission, who in turn gives a tithe back (Genesis 14:20). Here God is named: *"The possessor (Konei —the one who bought) Heavens and Earth."*



God asks Abraham to offer Isaac. Abraham's faith is demonstrated in Genesis 22:5. After traveling many days, approaching Moriah, he tells his servants: "Stay here ... the lad and I will go ... and worship, and we will come back ..." On Mount Moriah Abraham builds an altar. Isaac asks him, "I see the altar, I see the wood but where is the sacrifice?" Abraham answers: "ADONAI JIREH –the Lord will provide or see to it ... on the mount of the Lord (Moriah) it shall be provided."

Spiritual eyes still watch over Jerusalem to see when God's unfolding plan of Redemption will end with Yeshua's appearance to the world, when "every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that is He is truly the Lord of Lord and the King of Kings."

Satan's purpose is to stop or further postpone Messiah's coming, launching his last weapons of destruction and lies in and around Jerusalem. Scripture says he is the father of lies who steals, kills and destroys.

The statement written in Arabic inside the Dome of the Rock mosque: "Allah is God and he has no son!" There, right where Abraham offered his son Isaac. Where our Lord, the son of God came to this world to become the "Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world". 1 John 2:22-23 warns that he who rejects the son is from the Antichrist. But who can stop the return of the Lord in Glory?

Also in Jerusalem Yeshua will reveal Himself to His Jewish brethren, who rejected Him, ("look to Me whom they have pierced" and "mourn as they mourn a firstborn child") and to all the children of Abraham, including the descendants of Ismael, the southern Arab nations (Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Emirates, Kuwait). A spirit of grace and supplication will be released to His natural brethren, Israel. (Zechariah 12:10) Also Isaiah 19 speaks of the redemption of Israel's neighbours, Egypt and Assyria, serving God in the end times, strong allies of Israel ("there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria ... Israel will be the third (triumvirate team, "shlishia" in Hebrew.) "Blessed be Egypt my people and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my Heritage."

God wants to save Israel and its neighbour countries. If you love Israel you must pray for its enemies and its neighbours. Yeshua's is returning to Jerusalem, the place of all beginning. There will end the plea and longing for the victory of the Kingdom of God. The "cloud of witnesses" will include Lebanese, Jordanians, Turks, Syrians and Iraqis, Egyptians and all other nations of the garden of Eden (Middle East) saying, "Maranatha, Come Lord, quickly!"

We thank Tony Sperandeo of Hamaayan Congregation, Kfar-Saba, for this article.

ASK Network News

Upcoming gatherings that need your prayers!



USA National Conference
Kansas City, September 15-17, 2016



West Africa Gathering
Daipong, Togo, October 19-22, 2016



ASKing for Europe
Oxford, England, November 26, 2016



International Summit
the Negev, Israel, January, 24-27, 2017

*Save us, Lord our God, and gather us from the nations,
that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise. –Psalm 106:47*

ASKing for the Nations



Unreached People Group:

Colombia, known as a “gateway country” between Central and South America, is bordered by the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean. The Spanish arrived in 1499 conquering and colonizing the original indigenous people. In 1819 independence was gained alongside other nations comprising modern day Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela.

A high percentage of the population of 48 million are Roman Catholic, but all citizens whether Christians or not have been subject to the conflict which has raged for decades between armed groups of left-wing guerrillas, drug cartels and government forces. These violent conflicts have resulted in gross human rights injustices, making Colombia one of the world’s worst humanitarian hotspots. Three million people have been forced from their homes and tens of thousands killed. Inequities between the rich Spanish descent families who own most of the land, and the majority mixed-race population who mainly inhabit the remote rural areas have fueled much of the enmity.

In 2012 the administration of President Juan Manuel Santos began talks in Havana, Cuba between the government of Columbia and the guerrillas of FARC-EP endeavoring to find a political solution to the hostility. After almost four years of peace talks, the Colombian state and the FARC have recently hit a snag since a majority of the population is not in favor of the concessions made to FARC. The coming months will determine what kind of peace will materialize in Colombia in days ahead.

ASK for:

- The church to be an example to the nation in forgiving those who have threatened, murdered or displaced them from their homes. *Repay no one evil for evil...as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.... do not avenge yourselves...if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink...do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good”* Romans 12:17-21
- Enmity between the rich and the poor to be dealt with through God’s love. *Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God...Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.* 1 Timothy 6:17-18
- Wisdom for President Santos to broker a lasting peace agreement. *The wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. And those who are peace makers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.* James 3:1-18

KOGI OF COLOMBIA

Population:	12,000
Primary Religion:	Ethnic Religions
Language:	Kogi

Background

The Kogi live isolated atop northern Colombia’s Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the world’s highest coastal mountain. They worship the earth, known “Aluna” or “The Great Mother.” Their mountain, known as the “Heart of the World,” is a microcosm of earth, with every ecological zone represented. The Kogi consider themselves “elder brothers” of the earth and caretakers of creation. They came out of isolation briefly in 1989 to film a BBC documentary warning humanity against actions, like deforestation, that would severely damage the earth. “Mamas” are Kogi’s spiritual leaders, acting as liaisons between Aluna and the people. There are very few known Christians among the Kogi.

Pray... thanking God for the deep love instilled in the Kogi to care for the earth. Ask that God would enable the Kogi to view creation through the eyes of the Creator God, made manifest through Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 40:25-31, Romans 8:18-30)

ASKing for the Nations



Unreached People Group:

TAMIL OF NEW ZEALAND

Population:	9,200
Primary Religion:	Hinduism
Language:	Tamil

Background

Tamils, a primarily Hindu people group from South Asia, number around 74 million worldwide. A small number of Hindu Tamils, traditional seafarers and traders, emigrated to New Zealand as early as the 14th century. In recent years, Tamils have emigrated to New Zealand to escape persecution of their people group in Sri Lanka. Tamils are known for their love of the arts: literature, dance, painting, sculpture, folk music, theatre and film. New Zealand is host to several Tamil cultural associations that exist to promote the Tamil way of life to future generations. As Hindus, Tamils worship a host of deities, the most popular of which is Murugan, the patron god of Tamils. There is a small fellowship of Christian Tamils in New Zealand.

Pray... that God would encourage and strengthen in faith the Christian Tamils in New Zealand, giving them boldness to share their faith with their fellow Tamils. (Zechariah 4, I Peter 3:8-22)

New Zealand is a small country composed of two larger and several smaller islands, approximately 990 miles long and 250 miles at its widest point. Its 9300 miles of coastline are surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and home to 4.5 million people and 29 million sheep. It is a tourist mecca because of the natural beauty and vast contrast in terrain. In recent years, several movies have been filmed here, including the highly successful "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Maoris are the native people of New Zealand. In 1840, British settlers signed the treaty of Waitangi with the Maoris and established British Crown law in New Zealand. (Current government remains a parliamentary system with an elected Prime Minister.) At that time, English missionaries had a strong impact within the Maori population. In recent years, protests about the Treaty have resulted in land being returned to Maori tribes. Protestors continue to demand that more land be given back which has caused some unrest between Maori and Pakeha (white) people.

The popular culture is described as rugby, racing (horse) and beer. Long considered a Christian nation, New Zealand now officially calls itself a secular country. For the first time since 1901 Christians are not a majority in the country. Four out of ten New Zealanders call themselves "non-religious" putting this among the most secular nations. Even so, churches are still allowed by the government to teach Bible in public schools once a week. But with the steady decline of the church volunteers are not as numerous as in earlier years. One bright spot in education is Bethlehem College, originally founded in 1988 as an elementary school. Today classes range from preschool to Teachers' Training College, and students attend from all over the world. In addition, New Zealand has consistently sent a higher ratio of missionaries overseas than most countries.

While not a socialist country, New Zealand has a wide ranging welfare system. The country struggles with a high suicide rate, domestic violence and high rates of cancer. Helen Clark, a former Prime Minister is one of 12 people being considered for next Secretary General of the United Nations. Currently Ms. Clark (a liberal in every sense of the word) is head of the UN Development Program.

Ask for:

- Peace and understanding between Maori and Pakeha in land disputes. No outside interference stirring up trouble on this issue. Proverbs 4:7, 6:18-19.
- The Church and the next generation. A turning back to God and that the next generation would be taught of the Lord. Jeremiah 31:15-17, 33-34.
- For godly Government. Restoration of hope, purpose and jobs for many who are on welfare. Deuteronomy 1:13, Romans 5:1-5. 