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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.

[www.ASKnetwork.net](http://www.ASKnetwork.net)

## Gathering to ASK

**Gathering** is the first word in our vision statement. It describes the key action required to fulfill the vision to **ASK for all nations**. We need a “theology of gathering”—a clear understanding that gathering is integral to the character and concerns of God and to the purposes of His people. A spiritual gathering cannot be just another meeting. What should be experienced and expressed, matured and multiplied through the gatherings of ASK Network? Hundreds of scriptures describe gathering: God gathering (Ps.147:2; Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34:13; Matthew 23:37); God telling others to gather (Psalm 50:5; Joel 2:16); leaders gathering people for God’s purposes (1 Chronicles 23:2; Ezra 7:28; Acts14:27,15:30)

The most essential divine purpose of gathering is not for church or city, nation or need, mission or ministry purposes, but for Him. We usually have meetings “unto something”, such as decisions or plans. But Genesis 49:10 says: *“unto Him shall the gathering of the people be”*. The psalmist says we are gathered around Him, enthroned (7:7). Gathering is always first “unto Him”. And He wants us together! That word “together” is rooted in the old words for “gather”. You cannot be together unless you gather! The lack of togetherness is the result of the lack of gathering. God says through His servants: *“gather the people... gather the assembly... gather the congregation... gather the leaders... gather the elders... TO ME!”* The prophets acknowledge the work of His Spirit is to gather.

So what are God’s purposes in gathering us?

- Isaiah 66 to see His glory. Out of gatherings from nations, people will go “proclaiming my glory among the nations”, they will bring those “from all nations” to “gather on the Lord’s holy mountain.” The sequence is: gathering-going-glorifying-gathering. God’s work begins and ends in gathering!
- Zechariah 10 to do His redeeming work among us and through us.
- Deuteronomy 4 to hear His words to us.
- Deuteronomy 31 to take spiritual possession of the geography.
- 1 Samuel 7 to fast together and to repent.
- Joel 1 to cry out to Him.
- Ezekiel 20 to witness, to be proved holy through us in the sight of a watching world.
- Acts 6 and Acts 15 to take counsel together, to think strategically and to problem-solve biblically.
- Acts 14 to hear the reports and testimonies of what God is doing among us, and around us, to better inform our faith and instruct our mission.
- 1 Corinthians 5 to know the power of the Lord Jesus who is present. Wasn’t there always a gathering where Jesus was? And did he not promise to be present when we gather in his name?

As ASKers, we are called to be gatherers; we need gatherings to engage these purposes together, both prophetic and pastoral; what Paul describes as the “eternal purpose” (Ephesians 3:12). At the recent ASK gathering in Israel, we stood at the “gates of hell” in Baniyas (Caesarea Philippi), a huge cave believed to be a door to Hades, where sacrifices were made to the god Pan. It was here (Matthew16:18) that Jesus declared He would build his Church (His gathering) and that those gates could not prevail or defend themselves against it. The tenacity of His power through us, against the enemy’s power as we gather in His name to ask, cannot be underestimated—even when it is just two or three. Spiritual gathering is mighty to the pulling down of strongholds for ALL nations. An ASK gathering can never be just another meeting! 

*Abbreviated excerpts from a message by Stuart McAlpine, Ginosa, April 23rd*



# ASKing in Israel



When God does “immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, by his power at work within us” (Ephesians 3:20) we are often amazed. As our recent international gathering in Ginosar ended, we were again amazed by grace.

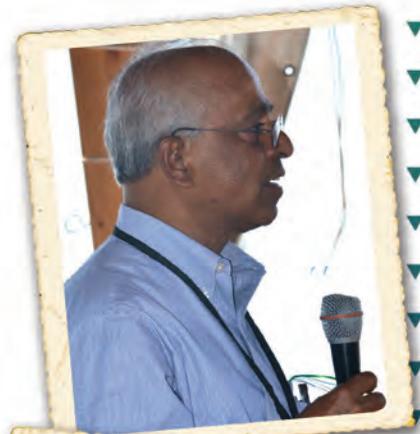
Faithful ones had prayed, fasted and given generously for months. Many had agreed to travel miles and give of themselves to attend, gathering from four continents. Two organizations had agreed to join in unity (thanks ISRS for your humility!). Many, like Paul, “had planned... but been prevented” from coming, reducing our numbers but not our fervency. The worship was anointed (thank you team!). The speakers God gave us from within Israel were exceptional (teachings will be posted on the website shortly). The ASK sessions focusing on the Continents were rich and encouraging. The Lord took these “loaves and fishes” and, in His grace, multiplied them. This was our portion: the presence of the Lord and a quickening of faith that He was answering our prayers by His power and for His glory.

The Prayer Drive is a wonderful example of how God had gone ahead of us, beyond anything we had foreseen. We visited four sites, at each location sightseeing briefly, then finding quiet, secluded places where we could have deep and extended times of prayer. All the while, we sensed God’s listening ear and answering hand. First, we drove from our hotel on the shores of the Sea of Galilee a few miles to Capernaum. There we visited the Ancient Synagogue and the nearby site of Simon

Peter’s mother-in-law’s house (Luke 1). We gathered under a rectangular canopy standing at the four corners, symbolizing the four friends that had let their paralyzed friend down through the roof in this very town. We ASKed Jesus to **restore to Israel the signs, wonders, healings and deliverances that He had performed there** long ago.

A few miles away on the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus taught us to ‘Ask..Seek..Knock’ (Matthew 5-7), we ASKed in agreement **that the teachings of Jesus would be heard throughout the land**. After a forty-minute drive northwest we arrived at Baniyas (Caesarea Philippi). We drove it, but this was a long walk for Jesus and the disciples—a most intentional detour. This was a site of demonic practice, mostly likely a place of child sacrifice (the Canaanite practice of Molech). Here Peter pronounced: ‘You are the Messiah, The Son of the Living God’ (Matthew 16). Then Jesus declared He would build His Church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. Perhaps Jesus went to serve notice on demonic forces before setting His face toward Jerusalem and the Cross. Here we ASKed **for the Body of Christ in Israel, but also for the Choice of Life** in a nation where abortion is epidemic, likely with roots in the old pagan rituals.

Lastly, we traveled a little east into the Golan Heights where we looked down from Mount Bental into the Valley of Tears (Yom Kippur War, 1973) at the Syrian border. Here we ASKed **for supernatural protection at all six of Israel’s borders** (with Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Territories: West Bank, Gaza Strip). By God’s grace, this simple itinerary enabled us to pray into the land in key areas. Such was our entire time in Israel, including the final days in Jerusalem. We returned home sure in the confidence that God took the little we offered and graciously gave the increase. God has done great things. Thanks be to Him! 🌍



# ASKing for the Nations



## ETHIOPIA

### Unreached People Group:

#### TOPOSA OF ETHIOPIA

Population: 12,400

Primary Religion: Ethnic Religions

Language: Toposa

#### Background

The Toposa are a tribe of roughly 264,000 living in East Africa. They have been known as fierce warriors and cattle thieves, having been armed with AK47's during the civil war in Sudan. While the Toposa people of South Sudan and Northern Uganda have embraced the good news of Jesus, the Toposa of southwest Ethiopia remain unreached and continue to follow spirit doctors. Most Toposa shun schools, preferring to train their children to tend livestock and work in the garden. Sexual practices among men have contributed to rampant AIDS and venereal disease. Alcoholism keeps Toposa families impoverished. Toposa marriages are polygamous, and the demand of high dowry prices encourages cattle raiding.

ASK...that the God would show Himself strong to the Toposa of Ethiopia, and that Toposa followers of Jesus in neighboring countries would hear God's call to "go and make disciples" of their near neighbors. (John 10:1-18)

**The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**, located in the Horn of Africa, is landlocked and bordered by 5 nations. With a population of 93 million, it is the most populous landlocked country in the world, and the 2nd most populated and poorest nation in Africa. Some of the oldest evidence for human existence is found in this geography. It was one of the great world powers of the 3rd century and the first major empire in the world to officially adopt Christianity as a state religion. Its ancient Ge'ez script, also known as Ethiopic, is one of the oldest alphabets still in use in the world.

Because Ethiopia never lost sovereignty, even against European colonial powers, many African nations adopted the colors of Ethiopia's flag following their own struggles for independence. However in 1974, a communist military backed by the Soviet Union took control. Since the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front has held power. Ethiopia became the first independent African member of the League of Nations and of the UN. Many global NGOs focused on Africa are headquartered here.

Ethiopia hosts 80 ethnic groups and is a multi-lingual society. Today, the majority of the population is Christian and a third is Muslim, and it is the spiritual homeland of the Rastafari movement. Many Ethiopian Jews resided here until the 1980s, but most of them have gradually emigrated to Israel. Despite being the main source of the Nile, the longest river on earth, struggles against recurring famine and geopolitical forces have devastated the land. The country has begun to recover recently, and now has the largest economy in East and Central Africa. Even so, about 90% of the population live below the poverty line, with more than half deprived of adequate schooling. Only about 43% of those above age 15 can read and write. Violent outbreaks against Christians are on the rise by an Islamic extremist group known as al-Shabab.

Please ASK God for the future of this great nation:

- For salvation and deliverance among the youth of this nation; for God's favor and the ancient roots of faith to be revived throughout the land. *Do not hold against us the sins of past generations; may your mercy come quickly to meet us, for we are in desperate need. Help us, God our Savior, for the glory of your name..." Psalm 79:8-9, Isaiah 61:4*
- For believers—that they may grow in grace, wisdom and courage in the midst of many obstacles and oppositions to Christianity. *That they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, with the full riches of understanding, to know ... Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2-3, Joshua 1:8-9* 

# ASKing for the Nations



## Unreached People Group:

### ARAB BEDOUNS OF JORDAN

Population: 780,000

Primary Religion: Islam

Language: Arabic, Bedawi

#### Background

Bedouins traditionally live a nomadic lifestyle, migrating seasonally to seek out good grazing conditions for herds of camel, sheep, goats and cattle. They define themselves by tribe and family, and are divided into social classes, depending on ancestry and profession. Modernization has made the traditional Bedouin lifestyle less attractive, due to the convenience and consistency of services available in urban areas. Today, it is not uncommon to find a Bedouin building a house and settling down in it. The prophet Mohammed was born and raised in the Bedouin tribe of Quraish. Subsequently, Islam is deeply rooted in the Bedouin culture, as they were the first converts to this religion.

ASK...that God would use urbanization to expose Bedouins to the good news of God's kingdom, that they would find stability, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 43:8-21)

**Jordan** has an old and rich history. In Old Testament times, Edomites, Moabites and Ammonites lived here. The mountain where Moses viewed the Promised Land is believed to be in present-day Jordan. From ancient times, Jordan has been a crossroads of the Middle East, connecting Asia, Africa and Europe as a conduit for trade and communication.

Since 1948, Jordan has received a large influx of refugees from Palestine and Iraq. Today, Jordan is also home to over 580,000 refugees from Syria, with more arriving daily to escape the conflict there. Jordan is one of the most culturally diverse nations in the Middle East, creating both tensions and opportunities. With a population of 6.6 million, and ongoing growth, Jordan's struggling economy is strained. Unemployment is 22%, and roughly 25% of families live in poverty.

The state religion in Jordan is Islam. Though most Jordanians are Muslim (roughly 94%), there are about 70 evangelical churches in Jordan, mainly in Amman and other larger cities. These churches are alive and growing, enjoying the government's strong commitment to religious freedom. This commitment has made distribution of Bibles and other Christian literature possible, and has also opened doors television and radio evangelism.

Because of its relative stability, Jordan is becoming a strategic location for discipleship and training of Christian leaders to the Arab world. There is a new openness among Muslims toward the gospel. Twenty years ago, it was unheard of for Muslims to come to Christ. Now, Christians no longer ask, "How we can reach Muslims?", but "How can we disciple new believers?"

- an increase in hunger and thirst among Jordan's diverse population to know Jesus, that many would follow Him as the way, truth and life. (*Matthew 6:25-33*)
- peace to prevail in the hearts of King Abdullah II and Jordan's leaders as they play a critical role in Middle East politics. (*Proverbs 21:1-8*)
- an increase in creative movements to Christ among Muslims, that the impact of the gospel would reverberate throughout the Arab world. (*Isaiah 40:3-5*) 