



Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

كلية اللاهوت المعمدانية العربية

www.abtslebanon.org

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COMMISSIONED BY A HEAVENLY KING

As our virtual graduation ceremony approaches, we thank God for leading us through an academic year like no other. We thank Him for the journey of our graduating students over the past years and their different ministries across the region. Due to pandemic restrictions, we could not hold a graduation ceremony for the 2019-2020 cohort last year, so by God's grace, we will be celebrating their journey with this year's graduating students. In this newsletter, we invite you to read about some of our 2021 graduating students as well as a few 2020 graduates in their ministry contexts.

Awad from South Sudan Bachelor of Theology



I am leading a church that my ministry team and I planted on December 6, 2020, and by the power of God, new believers continue to

join. On Wednesdays, we have Discovery Bible studies. On Saturdays, we have door-to-door gospel work in the morning and children's ministry in the afternoon. I would like to cultivate a piece of land, so that we yield crops and provide for the ministry needs and for the needs of those who work alongside us. We would then distribute grain to widows and poor families in the community. This would be a seasonal project.

My vision is that my ministry reaches

Kuru, Deim Zuber, Raga and then Wau among other South Sudanese cities so that people turn back from idol worship and worship Jesus as Lord and Savior. Knowing Christ is the essence of all good things in life. This is the only way people can change completely and communities can experience true peace.

Studying at seminary made my thinking more Christ-like. To have the mind of Christ is to seek the salvation of the lost. Many are asking me to change my ministry location because the area I serve is filled with ancestor spirit worship and witchcraft, but at seminary, I learned that we all have the same value in God's eyes. If I give up on the people I am serving, would I not be disobeying God? My heart aches for the people here because they don't know how great God's work is. I have learned to serve them humbly. I wash their clothes, for instance, which according to their culture, is disgraceful work for men. I am trying to change some of their misconceptions through Christ-like servanthood.

Abukanidy from Sudan Bachelor of Theology



Currently, I teach biblical languages at a Bible school and at the International Hope

University in Sudan. I am also a certified evangelist in the Sudanese Presbyterian Evangelical council and a deacon at my local church. I would like to plant churches in the unreached areas of Sudan, especially in the Nuba Mountains and Darfur. My vision for ministry is that Christ is glorified in Sudan through the people I serve and that God's Kingdom extends to every part of the country.

Cognitively, theological education taught me many things such as biblical languages and sound hermeneutics. Affectively, I

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learned to accept those who are different from me and to love them unconditionally as God loves me. Behaviorally, I let go of several old habits that go against Kingdom values, and I replaced them with Christ-like habits. I have gained many ministry skills; for instance, I can now deliver the message of the gospel with ease. This has been a life-changing experience.

**Demyana and Awney from Egypt
Diploma and Bachelor of theology
(respectively)**



Ministry in Egypt has been challenging in the past year or so since both the Baptist convention and the government

requested the total closure of churches due to the spread of the coronavirus. Now that the restrictions have loosened, we are serving Sunday school kids from third grade to sixth grade. Demyana’s vision is to serve with Sunday school kids and to follow up with girls who are distant from Christ.

We are planning to start mission work in our country, and if God leads us, in other Arab countries as well. We want to be missionaries and go to those who need to hear Christ’s message of salvation. God used theological training to mature us in all areas. It broadened our thinking and made us see ministry, society and culture in a new way. After leaving the seminary, we found ourselves choosing the same missional direction as that of the seminary. We learned to seek the mind of God and to join His mission, to spot and evaluate the changes in our community through a God perspective.

“ *I came to Lebanon after extremists burnt down the church where I had served for six years and destroyed our homes.* ”

**Mohammad from Syria
Certificate in Ministry**



I am a Syrian Kurdish Christ follower from Afrin, Syria. My vision is to share the gospel with the Kurdish people, to

disciple and train those who accept Jesus and to make true disciples and send them to the mission field. In 2018, I came to Lebanon after extremists burnt down the church where I had served for six years and destroyed our homes. Today, I preach and disciple believers at the Kurdish Evangelical church in Lebanon led by pastor Nihad Hassan [ABTS graduate].

I am currently discipling and training believers at church to send them to unreached groups of Syrian Kurds in Lebanon. We would like to plant small churches in these areas, and in all, we would like to expand our mission work in Lebanon.

Studying theology taught me to be a disciple who imitates his teacher, the Lord Jesus, in every area of my life – in my actions, in my manners, in my speech



Mohammad and Nihad praying with a ministry team

and in my service. I learned to be teachable and to grow daily in wisdom, grace and holiness into the likeness of my Lord and Savior.

**Dalia from Lebanon
Certificate in Ministry**

I serve God in the Light of the World Evangelical church, and I lead the Ruth women’s ministry. We constantly reach out to women through sharing and teaching the word and through living by it. My vision is to share the gospel with all people and to glorify the Lord Jesus.

Studying theology has caused me to change in many areas of my life. Spiritually, I have matured greatly, and this directly impacted the growth of my ministry. My thinking changed completely, and this changed my interactions with others. I now encourage people to grow in the Spirit and love God. I am more compassionate, helpful and supportive when times are dark.

“ *Studying theology changed my character for the better.* ”

**Media from Syria
Certificate in Ministry**



My husband Yaser [current ABTS student] and I serve the Lord at our local church in the Chouf district. I am a member of the relief work

committee. My home groups and Bible studies ministry is currently on hold due to lockdown, but we continue to visit families, offer food packages, and pray for them. My vision for the future is that people see Jesus in my character.



My husband had the greatest influence on my ministry due to his challenging yet fruitful ministry with non-Christian groups. He inspired me to study theology when he enrolled at seminary. Both Yaser and I had done extensive research on the Christian faith, as we come from a non-Christian background, and we saw the need to study theology because it would help us understand our faith deeply. We would be able to share the gospel and answer questions more effectively.



Media while visiting a family

Studying theology changed my character for the better. I became more thoughtful, loving and forgiving, and my desire to know about the life of Christ increased. My ministry is a chance for me to keep changing my behavior, learning to expect no reward or validation and to serve God selflessly.

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I learned how to share the gospel better, and I learned to be a better steward of what God gave me.
 ”

**Wafeek from Egypt
 Certificate in Ministry**

I am in full-time ministry with a local church in a Middle Eastern country. I am part of the worship and praise team. I also disciple believers and lead Bible studies. For the future, I am praying to train those I serve so that they, too, could

form discipleship groups. My vision is to see those I disciple grow socially, emotionally and spiritually so that they may be a light to others.



Wafeek studying online

Studying at seminary nourished my mind with sound biblical knowledge. We learned how to study and interpret the Bible faithfully. We learned a lot about the Old Testament, the New Testament and Church history. It also helped me manage my emotions, and that reflected on my life and ministry. I learned how to share the gospel better, and I learned to be a better steward of what God gave me. I learned to disciple others better and to give them a panoramic view of the Bible, which helps the learner connect the dots, especially between the two Testaments.

**Tim from Belgium
 Master of Religion (MRel) in Middle Eastern and North African studies**



A few months ago, I joined a research initiative, [Action Research Associates](#), that aims to pursue peace and reconciliation in Lebanon through research-driven action. I contribute as a researcher based on my prior experience as a researcher in Artificial Intelligence and on my new research skills acquired through the [MRel](#). Besides this commitment, I serve

Syrian refugees and increasingly local Lebanese in the Lebanese Beqaa valley.

I have a clear dual calling to work with both intellectuals and the marginalized of society. Currently, that expresses itself in my research on the one hand, and ministry to the poor and refugees on the other.

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Through the MRel, I have made great leaps as a researcher, as an immigrant to the Middle East, and as a follower of Jesus.
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The MRel has significantly added to my research skills from the exact sciences with equivalents from the humanities. Furthermore, the program has helped me seriously reflect both on research methods as well as research content (politics, economics, culture, religion, etc.) in a theological and Jesus-centered way. Through the MRel, I have made great leaps as a researcher, as an immigrant to the Middle East, and as a follower of Jesus.

These are only a few of our graduating students. Please keep them in your prayers as they hold on to their calling and reach out to many with the light of Christ.



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Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.
I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws.
Psalm 119:105-106

We cordially invite you to our
Virtual Graduation Ceremony

LIVE on our Facebook page facebook.com/ABTSLebanon
On **Saturday, June 19** at 7:00 pm Beirut Time

Follow our weekly IMES blog!



[Love Your Neighbor, Be Political!: A Reflection From Lebanon About Faith in Politics](#)
By Martin Accad and Caleb Hutcherson



[Palestine, Evangelicalism, and the Problem of Power](#)
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[What's in a Name?: A Case for Using 'Isa in Arabic Translations of the Bible](#)
By Martin Accad



[When You Want to Leave but Love to Stay: Reflections on Faith, People, and Place in a World of Migration](#)
By Brent Hamoud

Pray with Us: Prayers from Some of Our 2020 Graduates and 2021 Graduating Students

Awad from South Sudan | 2020 Bachelor of Theology

Please pray for my current ministry in South Sudan and for victory over evil spirits. I broke my right arm in a road accident on May 20. Please pray for full recovery so I can serve without any hindrances.

Abu Kindy from Sudan | 2020 Bachelor of Theology

Please pray that God grants me and my wife wisdom to resolve the small conflicts that may grow if our eyes are not on God. Please pray for Sudan as it goes through economic, security and political challenges so that its people may be at peace.

Mohammad from Syria | 2021 Certificate in Ministry

Please pray that I am a servant and a disciple according to the Lord's heart, and that I am faithful to the end in my ministry and relationship with Him. Please pray that the Kurdish people hear the Lord's voice.

Dalia from Lebanon | 2021 Certificate in Ministry

Please pray for my ministry, that those we are serving remain rooted in the faith. Pray that we constantly heed the leading of the Spirit and bear fruit for the Lord.

Media from Syria | 2021 Certificate in Ministry

Please pray for my country of residence, Lebanon, and pray that peace prevails globally. I also ask you to pray that I discern the Lord's will for my life, and that I always remember that He is in control.

Wafeek from Egypt | 2021 Certificate in Ministry

I truly need prayers that I remain in God's will by the help of the Holy Spirit to fulfil what He wants me to do.

