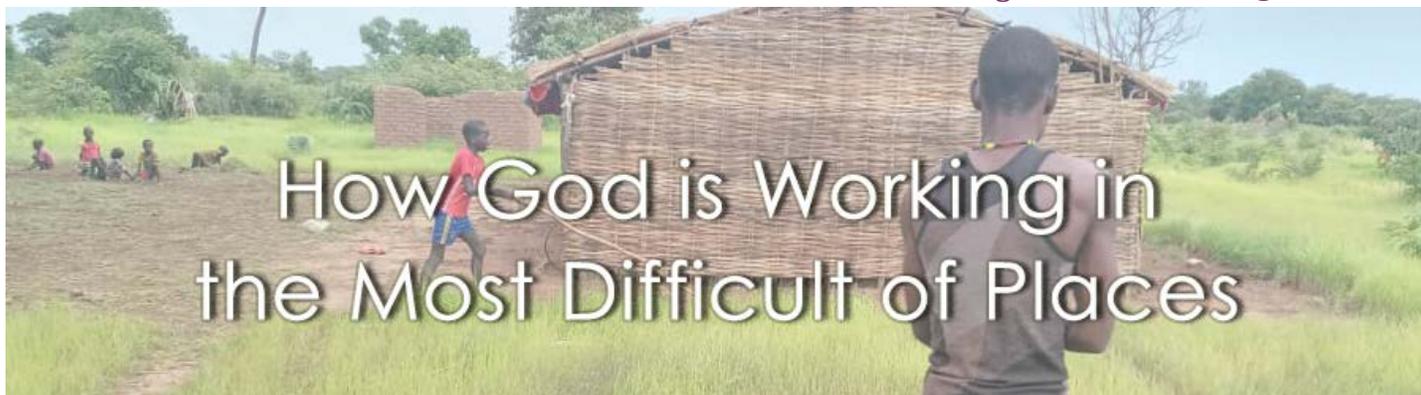


Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

كلية اللاهوت المعمدانية العربية

www.abtslebanon.org

August 2022



During his time at ABTS, Awad, our 2020 graduate from South Sudan, was often a source of encouragement to his fellow students and to staff and faculty alike. Today, serving in one of the most unreached areas of South Sudan, where witchcraft and ancestor worship are common practice, Awad continues to reflect Christ and act as a source of encouragement, not only for the community in his village, but also for us here at ABTS.

Awad first came to ABTS in 2017 wanting to deepen his relationship with Christ and grow into a more effective minister. When we transitioned to the hybrid Integrated Theology Program in early 2020, Awad faced some obstacles in continuing his education while serving in South Sudan, especially with the lack of internet connection in his village and with how difficult transportation is in his area. Still, through the Lord's grace and Awad's perseverance, he was able to finish his degree and graduate later in 2020. Speaking about his time studying theology, Awad shared:

My experience studying at ABTS changed my life for the better. Before I went to seminary, I had difficulties with public speaking, which impacted my ability to serve with groups, and so I used to stick to outreach to individuals or small groups. At seminary, I learned how to lead services, give sermons, and tailor what I say to be relevant and suit my context. I've also learned to be gentle and empathetic when I approach others.

What Awad learned at seminary would later help him in his ministry. Awad had always felt called to reach out to others

with the love of Jesus. When he began serving in his village after graduating, Awad had a vision to share the gospel with the unreached people in his community. "These areas do not have any churches," shared Awad, "and people rely heavily on evil spirits." He first started out by sharing the gospel with his family. Awad shared:

My father had initially been resistant to God. He would resort to witchcraft and praying to our ancestors for healing, but he experienced the healing power of Christ and changed. Now, he leads worship when I am away. My family used to pray around a pagan alter every day after dinner. When they came to Christ, I helped them learn how to pray. Now, after dinner, we pray to Christ and have a Bible study together.

Between May 2020 and June 2021, Awad and his ministry team carried out many home visits and shared the gospel in the area. As they sat with the people and prayed with them, many would experience Christ and come to faith. Soon, the ministry team began holding Bible studies, discipleship sessions, outreach meetings, and a children's ministry, all



under the trees in the fields of the village. Awad shared:

It was difficult at first, especially since people were so used to resorting to their gods and to black magic. With time, however, the Lord began to work miracles among the people. A lady who lived near the field where we gathered told us that the bird the sorcerers kept used to annoy the people in the area by making noises all night long, but since we started praying for the community, the bird stopped bothering them. The son of one of the elders in the area was sick and had almost gone blind. His father had tried all the sorcerers and witches but to no avail. We prayed for his son, and he experienced complete healing! The son is now one of the best singers in the worship team! I praise the Lord for His mercy!

On December 6, the ministry officially announced the founding of the church. By July 2021, a congregation was growing in Awoda village, and several members of the community wanted



to be baptized, but the church did not have access to an outlet from the Nile River. “We waited till the rain came and filled up the ponds so we could have our baptisms,” shared Awad.

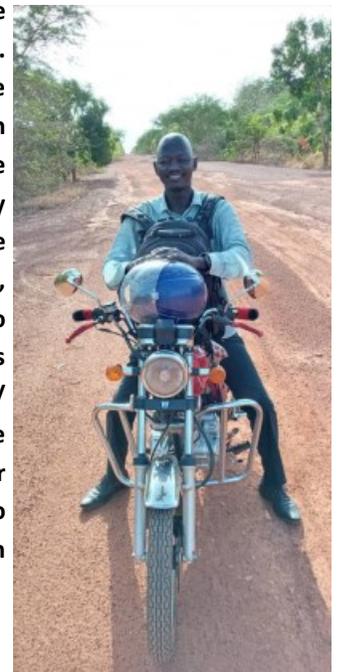
When Awad and his ministry team began to serve the community in Awoda village, they had reached out to the authorities and informed them that they intended to plant a church in the area. The authorities had welcomed the idea and gave the church a field in the village where they could gather and build their church, but the church could not afford to build a church building, so the congregation met under the trees. The Lord continued doing miracles among the community, and,

through His grace, the congregation was able to build the first church in the area in early 2022! Talking about how the Lord has grown the ministry in Awoda village, Awad shared:

I thank the Lord for His providence and guidance. The past year has been full of blessings, despite all the hardships we have gone through. We recently began a children’s ministry for orphaned children who live in an orphanage in the village. We support their education and help them with clothes and relief aid. We began training and discipling young ministry leaders earlier this year so that they can take on ministerial responsibilities more effectively. We have also been focusing on outreach to five different areas around my village. We carry out the outreach ministry by gathering people and showing them a movie about Christ, which creates opportunities for us to share the gospel with them.

Of course, serving in South Sudan is not without its challenges. Telling us about the challenges, Awad explained:

Because people are so used to worshipping idols, it is not easy for them to transition to worshipping Christ as the only Lord and Savior. It takes a lot of prayer from the ministry team, and it takes time for the people to change their worshipping habits. Still, God is good and has been working miracles in the community. Another difficulty is the economic situation in the area. Many are underprivileged. This is why we launched a farming project where the crops we produce go to the families in the community. Anything we do not use we sell for extra funds when needed. The last challenge we face is with the literacy of the population. Because of the poor living conditions, many do not know how to write or read. So, we rely as much as possible on audio/visual Bible resources. The movie about Christ, for example, is a good way to communicate the gospel in this community.





We thank the Lord for using Awad to show His love to people in South Sudan and for allowing us to play a small part in Awad’s formation as a minister for the Kingdom.

We ask you to lift up Awad and his ministry with us in prayer:

Please pray that the Lord works among the people in my village. Pray that He makes their hearts receptive to the gospel. We need to know how to help them become familiar with church worship. Pray also for the economic situation. Many children here go without education. Finally, pray for the ministry team, that we continue to grow in His grace as effective and purposeful servants of His will.

Out of Dry Bones He Makes an Army Two Years Since the Beirut Blast

...Today, even though the situation remains difficult because of the economic crisis and the different challenges Lebanon is going through, we continue to see the life changing hand of God at work in the lives of those we were able to support. We have seen the focus of many of them shift from their circumstances towards Christ, His goodness, and His promises for their lives. Below are some stories of change that our church partners have shared with us. These are the result of multiple churches and Christian organizations, including ABTS and our friends and partners, coming together for one

purpose. We pray that you are encouraged by them as we are.

Joe from a church in Beirut - A lot of the homes have been fixed, but the crisis continues, and the situation is dire. Yet we are always thankful because we know that we are not alone, that our God is sovereign, and that His mercies endure forever. I thank the Lord for allowing us to support 75 families that were impacted by the explosion. But what we praise God the most for is the relationships that He helped us develop with these families. People have a deep thirst to know more about God. We learned how great it is to get to know

people and to love them like Jesus did. Our visitation team continues to follow up with these families, checking in on them, sharing the gospel with them, and answering any questions they might have about God. Several now come to church on a regular basis. Please continue to pray for these families as they still face many challenges. Pray that the Lord continues to touch their hearts and give them peace....

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MIDDLE EAST CONSULTATION 2022 مؤتمر الشرق الأوسط



Peace I Leave With You:
Theories and Practices for Peace Ministry in the Middle East

سلامًا أترك لكم:
نظريات خدمة السلام وممارساتها في الشرق الأوسط



كلية اللاهوت المعمدانية العربية
Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

انضموا إلينا عبر الإنترنت - Join us online on

SEPTEMBER أيلول/سبتمبر

21, 22, & 23

6pm-9pm Beirut time
من الساعة السادسة إلى التاسعة مساءً
بتوقيت بيروت



- Pray with Us -

Prayer Requests from Integrated Theology Program Students

Daniel | Iraqi

I ask you to pray for me, my fellow students, the people at ABTS, and the members of the greater Arab Church. May we constantly place ourselves under His will for our lives, and may He use us as His hands and feet, seeking the Kingdom on earth.

Elias | Syrian

Please pray that the Lord helps me mature in His word and find healing from past trauma. Please pray that He helps me as I strive to be faithful and qualified to help others find healing, including the youth I serve. I hope to see them become qualified disciples for the growth of the Church and the extension of God's Kingdom.

Anthony and Stephanie | Lebanese

Please pray for our family as we strive to reach out to others with the gospel. The enemy "prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8 NIV)", so may we be alert and stand firm in the faith. Please pray that God continues His work through the ministry center where we serve and that, through us, the Lord plants a church that is rooted in Him.

Michel | Yemeni

Please pray for Yemen, that the Lord may bring peace and an end to this war. Also, please pray for my wife. Her cancer returned recently, and she has been struggling with it a lot.

Shiar | Syrian

I ask you to pray for the Arab church in Canada that it grows into a living community of believers. Pray for the Kurdish

church, as there is a large need among the Kurdish community. Pray for my family, that the Lord uses all of our resources in service of His Kingdom.

Zineb | Moroccan

Please pray for all those who contact us through our online ministry seeking the Truth. May we be a cause of blessing in their lives so that they may know the Lord. Please pray for my husband and kids. May we live together in the love of Christ, and may our daughters know Christ from a young age. Pray also that my parents accept Him before it is too late.

Haroun | Sudanese

Please pray that the Lord grants me grace, wisdom and energy to continue relaying His message to those who do not know Him. Please pray that the Lord helps me form a ministry, which by God's grace, will make a change through equipping future leaders in the Al Jazeera State.

A Prayer for Lebanon

We invite you to pray with us for Lebanon. Our country is deeply wounded, and many can barely make it through the day. Not very long-ago Beirut suffered from a horrific explosion, but if we look closely, we see God's mercy extended to countless individuals and families who had lost so much. It is in this God that we place our trust and hope. We know that He has been working here when He seemed to be most absent. So, let us be united in prayer, as members of one Body, for He who sees all things also listens and answers according to His unsearchable wisdom.