



December 2018

### Family News

School here starts a bit late by the beginning of October. Of course, our kids were very happy with this as were we, as this gave us the opportunity to visit our family in Egypt at the end of September. It is very hot making such trip during the summer. We had a great time to see the family and for our kids to meet their cousins. It is not always easy to arrange such trip, as their cousins have different school schedules.

It was very important for Nathaniel to visit the pyramids and to ride a camel. For Timothy, it is more important to ride a felucca on the Nile. Of course, grandpa and grandma were very excited to see the boys after a long time. For Almess and me it was great to reunite with the family again. I feel obligated to see my parents (Emad) more often as a way of honoring them, and give them also the opportunity to enjoy their grandchildren. This is the value I am trying to teach my kids: family comes first and we are responsible toward each and every one of them. I love my family, and this is what I am trying to pass on to my kids.



Almess has been very busy with her niece, Marcylya, to finish some paper work since she came to live with us for over a month ago. Timothy and Nathaniel are excited to have their cousin staying with us. Marcylya, who finished her medical school from Russia, was living in Jordan alone for over three years, with the hope that she could join her family in Californian as a Iraqi refugee through the

UN. Unfortunately, after a long process they suspended her application until “further notice”! So, Marcylya decided, with Almess’ encouragement, to move to Lebanon, to live with another family member. Almess identifies strongly with Marcylya’s situation as she was in her place few years back when she lived in Jordan. Almess knows well that it is very hard for a young woman to live alone in Jordan for safety reasons. As well, Marcylya is unable to practice as a physician in Jordan or here in Lebanon! In her profession as a physician, it seems that Marcylya will have no future here in the Middle East. We are therefore praying for immigration opportunities for Marcylya in USA to join her family or in Canada. Meanwhile, Marcylya is at the stage of looking for opportunities within Lebanon to continue graduate medical studies. **We really appreciate your prayers for Marcylya.**

### IT IS CHRISTMAS

I think Lebanon is the only country in the Middle East where you can see the Christmas spirit alive.

We have been enjoying some Christmas events. This year, we thought it would be fun to let you know what we like the most about Christmas: Nathaniel: baking Christmas cookies and having fun with the family; Timothy: decorating the Christmas tree; Almess: Christmas lights and carols; Emad: shopping during Christmas season.



**We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thank you for all your support this past year.**



## **Middle East Consultation (MEC) 2019: Thinking Biblically about Muslims, Muhammad, and the Qur'an: Practical Implications for the Church Today**

As you all know, ABTS holds an annual international consultation that aims towards *equipping participants to respond in prophetic and Christ-like ways to the many challenges facing Christians and Muslims in and beyond the Middle East*. This year, we will focus on the church's engagement with Muslims. There are a number of unconscious assumptions that significantly impact our ministry among Muslims. Such assumptions influence the outcome of fruitful and biblically faithful Christian ministry in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) context, as well as in the global church. Consider, for example, the practical implications of the following questions:

- *What is Islam and who are Muslims?* Varyingly, the Islamic faith has been described by Christians as a socio-political movement for the pursuit of justice and peace, a religion akin to Old Testament faith and practice, a sectarian but spiritually hollow identity marker, a realm of demonic spiritual bondage, and a belligerent civilization.
- *Who was Muhammad?* Some might say that he walked the path of Old Testament prophets like David or Moses or that he was a charismatic political reformer; others might consider him a deceptive heretic or warlord; while revisionist scholarship casts serious doubt on the fundamental reliability of Muhammad's traditional biography.
- *How are we to make sense of the Quran?* Is it possible to see in it a compass pointing Muslims toward the Jesus of the Gospels? Or does it lead astray and work against the purposes of the gospel?

Through MEC, we want to explore how our perceptions of Muslims, Muhammad, and the Quran practically impact the Church's witness to Christ in and beyond the MENA.

### **Stay Connected**

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Thank you so much for your support of our ministry. Your prayers and financial support mean so very much and help make this work possible. If you would like to become a partner in mission with us, please contact Barb Keys at [bkeys@cbmin.org](mailto:bkeys@cbmin.org) or 905-821-3533.

*Therefore, we would like to invite you to participate in Middle East Consultation 2019* (17-21 June). Participants at MEC 2019 come from across the region and the world, providing the unique opportunity for a global reflection upon the central building blocks of Islam and the church's theology and ministry.

*Each year, CBM organizes a 2-weeks SENT team to Lebanon to not only participate in the consultation, but also to learn about the Syrian refugee relief efforts and other ministries*. For more information, you can contact Adrian Gardner at [agardner@cbmin.org](mailto:agardner@cbmin.org) or 905-821-3533 ext. 161. We too are happy to answer whatever questions you have. COME AND VISIT US. WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU IN LEBANON!

### **Praise and Prayer**

- We praise God for the safe arrival of Almess' niece. Almess is very happy and excited to spend more time with Marcyliia.
- We praise God for the two courses Emad has taught this semester. Here is a comment from a Lebanese student: "the course opened my eyes to how rich, valuable, and important the OT is. This course created passion towards the readings of the OT, and I have the feeling that I will enjoy my reading of the OT from now on."
- Emad is in the middle of writing his dissertation. Pray for enthusiasm, strength, and inspiration as he writes. He also at the stage of reading the final script of the Genesis commentary. We praise God
- Pray for Timothy and Nathaniel as they move to new seasons in their lives (Timothy turned 13 and Nathaniel turned 11 this year).
- In the middle of a busy life, we ask for your prayers for us as a family: protection from harm and evil, unity through prayers, and being an example as parents for our children.

**Emad, Almess, Timothy & Nathaniel**

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