



AFRICA INLAND MISSION  
INTERNATIONAL / ASIA-PACIFIC

# AFRICA *news*

*“Christ-centred churches among all African peoples”*

www.aimint.org

FEB-MAY 2013

## MORE **2** MUSLIMS

### STORIES FOR LOVE AND PRAYER – A FOCUS ON NORTH AFRICA



**S**tories in this issue of *Africa News*, about North Africa, are taken from an independent public website, **More2Muslims.com**.

This website is designed to encourage prayer and understanding of the work being done to reach Muslims with the Gospel. See this site for more stories.

Stories are used with permission. Also see AIM’s prayer site, [www.prayafrica.org](http://www.prayafrica.org). Select “prayer resources” for more information.

AIM believes God loves Muslim people, and so do we. We believe that every Muslim, every person of any religion, has the right to hear the good

news about Jesus Christ. We believe they have a right to decide on Jesus’ offer of forgiveness and reconciliation to God our creator, all made possible by Jesus’ sacrifice of his own life. They have the offer of eternal life through Jesus Christ!

Please pray that eyes will be opened to Jesus and His amazing love.

# PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE OF NORTH AFRICA

**N**orth Africa is rapidly changing politically and culturally. AIM has seen an increasing number of Christians and their families mobilised to live and work in these Creative Access Nations (CANs). The gospel is reaching every sector of society through medical professionals, educators and businessmen. Their goal is to establish churches with solid local leadership, who can pastor their own flocks and reach out to their fellow countrymen, despite persecution.

*Praise the Lord for new believers, baptisms, and disciples. Pray the church of North Africa will grow strong and wise in the face of persecution.*

New believers struggle with suspicion and fear, and isolation from society. They are often secretive about their decision to follow Christ because of the dangers they face. Pray that they will find courage and refreshment in the body of Christ.

## 7 days of prayer for North Africa

- 1. Pray for new believers** who face acute persecution within their families and communities. Pray that the church will overcome fear, so they will be able to meet together and exercise their gifts for the edification and growth of the body of Christ. New believers typically seek to leave these countries. Pray that God will establish a solid foundation of Biblically-sound leaders to organize and train the Church of North Africa.
- 2. Pray for governments** and leaders who hold the keys to access and opportunity for the gospel. Pray that a tolerant view toward Christians would increase in N. Africa, so that the message of the kingdom can reach every tribe and nation. Pray for the salvation of leaders that will have influence to remove the chains of fear and lead their people to spiritual transformation and freedom in Jesus. Pray for the salvation of men as heads of households. Their influence over extended family can initiate many decisions for Christ.
- 3. Pray for women** to be open and eager to learn about the Jesus of the Bible through loving friendships with Christian women. They may be afraid to surrender their lives to Christ and face separation from their communities, families, and even their own children. Pray that they will know the comfort of the presence

of Christ in their lives. Pray they will come to the Lord in such great numbers that their communities will be changed.

- 4. Pray for university students**, facing little chance of employment after graduation in depressed economic climates. Pray for Christian movements among youth that will spread throughout the nations. Pray for Christian educators who daily demonstrate the love of Christ and share truth with this eager and spiritually hungry generation.
- 5. Pray for the sick and handicapped** who are often without hope or help in a society that prefers to ignore weakness. Pray that those with access to Christian doctors, nurses and therapists will respond to the gospel message and place their trust and hope in Jesus, the Great Healer. Pray that Christian medical workers will have increased opportunities to shine Jesus' light.
- 6. Pray for healthy businesses** to serve local communities and help Christians build relationships in the workforce. In a work week, countless points of contact are established with local vendors, clients, and government officials. Pray these relationships will bear fruit and that workers will boldly share the gospel and speak truth into the lives of their friends.
- 7. Pray for the needs of workers and their children.** North African cultures are steeped in centuries of fear and suspicion. Pray for open, loving relationships that will bind our workers to the people they are called to serve. Pray for the education and social needs of worker's children. Pray for health and healing as sickness is often a source of discouragement. Pray for fluent language acquisition.



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# ABOUT MORE **2** MUSLIMS

Her skin is five shades towards the night — mine, the color of the moon. English is her third language and she spoils me by speaking it with perfect pentameter. Her house has three rooms for her family of seven. Mine has seven for my family of four. She wears a veil over her face. Mine is draped loosely over my heart. Her culture is deemed the villain for their terror. Mine, for its materialism. But we are the same.

We lose ourselves in books and colour our nails in shades of brown. We love to eat. We love to laugh. We love shoes. We crave the tender touch of our husbands. We grieve the faults of our parenting. The opinions of our mothers ravish our self-esteem. Our guilt preaches relentlessly about our faith, our family, and our failures. Depression is a cyclical visitor to us both. Guilt, a rogue assailant on our day. *We long to be known* by our friends, our fathers, and our God.

## SAMIRA'S STORY

The ladies in our group are unique and pure joy to be around. I'm still amazed by their cultural idiosyncrasies. I often stare at them as they speak. My eyes fester in each detail of the headscarf they've chosen that day and how it complements their hijab. "Why," I wonder, "do they work so hard to turn black polyester into a fashion show?"

Samira is the honest one. I just can't help but have a special affection for her. "Those of us who live in the cities like this," she explains candidly, "interact with other cultures and feel left out of fashion".

When I gaze at Samira I can see she's conflicted. Recently we discussed the hopelessness of the law and how it's impossible to be right with God through

She is Somali — I am American. But we are the same.

*It is our foundational similarities that make us qualified to love one another.*

It is these similarities that make you qualified to pray for her, and the millions like her, from wherever you are.

This site is dedicated to you, but it's my journey. It is a journey in story. A journey designed to exploit our misconceptions; putting them at the end of our noses until we must either choose to look through them (my personal

the law. She quietly said "Yes, but there is Jesus". The upward inflection of her tone begged a question. I gently smiled at her and said "yes I know. Do you?" She laughed at me for cornering her but I knew she heard the answer she was looking for.

What I appreciate most about Samira is her scepticism. She is probably the most educated of all the women around here. Her mother married a German general. Life in Germany gave Samira a western education and interaction with Catholicism. Moving back to Africa pressured her to return to the ways of her blood relatives. It doesn't surprise me that she jumped in with full commitment — that's how she is. She knows her Koran. Women of the Metropolis aren't forbidden to



prayer) or turn our eyes to focus on them.

These stories beckon you to **become involved through prayer**. Please understand the characters in each anecdote are real people who can be given Hope and Peace as a result of your prayers for them. You either believe that, or you don't. But the truth of our authority is written plainly for us:

*"Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him."* (Mark 11:22-23)

Pray for them — and all those working to reach them with His love, because, we are the same. Sinners



read as the women of the village are, so Samira studies. She knows the Bible too. She battles on the side of Mohammed, and yet I can see she reserves her heart's allegiance, waiting for sincere conviction.

What's fascinating to me about Samira is just how much God is doing in her heart. Clearly, He is preparing her, quietly. I feel there will come a day when she will not be able to resist Him any longer. How I would love to be there to see that!

*“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel”.*

*Genesis 3:15*

## HER HEEL

A story from “The Desert”

**N**adia, a refugee from Ethiopia, is the oldest of eight children. Her family came to The Desert four years ago when their government tried to expel them to Eritrea. No one from her family had stepped foot there since her grandfather. But according to the Ethiopian officials Nadia’s whole family were to be considered Eritreans. The problem was Eritrea didn’t want them either. So they became stateless people and ended up here.

I met Nadia when I treated her mother.

*Both of her parents are ill making her, as the eldest, the primary caretaker for them and her siblings.*

Her kindness toward me and gentleness with her mother always impressed me.

Recently Nadia appeared in my office alone. Language and cultural facades made it difficult to understand exactly why she had come. Finally out of desperation, I suppose, she spilled her story quite bluntly. With unwarranted poise she explained that she was working as a housekeeper for a local family and had been raped by their 18 year-old son. She informed his mother who promptly fired her, furious that a “dirty Ethiopian” would dare accuse her son who “would never do such a thing”.

Not wanting to pose herself as a sob story, Nadia quickly explained why she had come to see me: her period was late. A urine test confirmed her fears; she was pregnant.

Panic painted her face with questions I couldn’t answer: Where would she go? What would she do? There was no way she could tell her parents. If the shock didn’t kill them in their feeble condition, they would certainly disown her. In this culture,

rape is not a crime. It’s simply fallout for a woman’s wiles. For Nadia, injustice had plucked her virginity, her honor, her job, and probably her family all in one day. She sat in my office and wept.

*Satan seems to have a special hatred for women.*

According to Genesis 3:15 there will be constant enmity between Satan and Eve’s offspring. A brief survey of the world’s societies reveals widespread female suffering, and oppression. This is particularly true in poor and traditional societies like The Desert.

Think about Nadia: an obedient young woman trying to care for her family and generate a meager income. Now, she will be accused of immoral behavior, ostracized from her family, perhaps even killed. Her job is lost. Her prospects for marriage are shot. Her assailant? He gets off scot-free. And Satan laughs ...





A few days later Nadia agreed to come to my home and meet two of my Ethiopian friends ... believers. She politely rejected every option they proposed for her. She had given up hope. The only real solution to her was suicide. We asked if we could pray for her. She shrugged in agreement and we prayed, asking The Father to open a way of hope for her. As my friends escorted her home, she toiled with her promise to visit my office again very soon.

*Three days later Nadia came to me, smiling.*

She had met again with my friends, and decided to go back to her home town in Ethiopia. An aunt there would accept her, take care of her, and has the wisdom and family authority to explain the situation to her parents. Nadia is not a Sister to us (she wears the full veil, a “ninja” in local parlance). But she told me that

something had happened when we prayed. All of a sudden the clouds of despair broke, and she could imagine a future again. Hope.

So Nadia is off ... she called me from Ethiopia, halfway home.

*She thanked me many times and told me that she loved our faith.*

She promised to join us when she arrives back in The Desert. And that is the last news I have.

I don't know what the future holds for Nadia, her family, and her baby. But I have hope for her too because Genesis 3:15 has a promise in it: that the “offspring of Eve” (our Master) will crush the head of Satan. It began at the cross, and continues to this day.

May it be true in Nadia's life!



# BLEATING HEARTS

At 5am the mournful call to prayer began quietly, in the distance at first, but soon engulfed me from all sides with the long drawn out “Allah akbar”.

From thousands of minarets the loudspeakers goaded the faithful from their slumber and onto nearby prayer mats. As the call slowly began to fade away the din of an awakening city filled the quiet spaces. What struck me on this particular morning, however, was that the usual noise of the city was competing with the distinct sound of bleating sheep.

*I had become used to this sound while living among nomadic shepherds.*

But here in the middle of an ancient city it seemed out of place. Normally sheep are not welcome in these cities, but this day was different; it was the celebration of Eid. On this day across the Muslim world 100 million sheep would be sacrificed in commemoration of a story familiar to Christians, but changed significantly in the Muslim retelling. This is the story of Abraham and his willingness to trust God with the life of his only son.

In their rendition, the son is not Isaac but rather Ishmael. And the celebration is not for God’s provisional atonement, but rather a tribute to Abraham’s complete submission. In Islam submission holds the only key to potential salvation (which can never be assured). The end result is a people longing to know God but forever outside of relationship with Him.

During Eid, businesses are closed and normal life comes to a standstill as families gather to celebrate together.

*I gathered with my friends as well, but we chose to celebrate communion.*

It was an amazing contrast to be gathered with my friends singing worship songs, all the while competing with cries of dying sheep just outside the windows. As we took the cup and the bread in hand, symbols of His ultimate sacrifice, the final cries of sheep outside filled us with a deeper appreciation for the certainty that God’s sacrifice affords.





# LIVING WATER

*“This is the first time I have ever seen or read an Injil (The Gospel).”*

Such tragedy and such hope in one sentence, I thought. Amina came to work yesterday and saw my Arabic Bible sitting on the kitchen counter. She asked if she could see it so I opened to where I had been reading in John chapter 4 — the story of the Samaritan woman at the well.

She started reading the story to me out loud. “I just don’t understand what he means by living water,” she inquired suddenly. I told her that the Samaritan woman was confused at first too. She kept reading while I watched her fingers slide from right to left under each phrase. When she was finished, we talked about the beauty of Jesus revealing Himself to this woman who, like us, didn’t even deserve the Living Water.

I pointed out for Amina how Jesus knew this strange woman intimately; every detail of her life. Finally I sat quietly searching her face. I could see the wheels began to turn.



*“According to the Koran,” she said confidently, “the Bible has been changed and is therefore unreliable”.*

I told her that one thing I love about our Book is that it is not a collection of rules or facts to be argued; it is a story ... one story from the front cover to the back. I explained the prophetic imagery of the Passover, the Lamb, the blood on

the door, and the spared lives. She asked about the final judgment day,

“What will happen to Muslims at that time?” It was hard for me to look her in the eye as I prayed for an easier answer. Finally, I told her the truth.

I shared with her about the hope of heaven because of His atonement. I told her that we must believe in Our Master and how He died and rose; we need the blood on our heart’s door like that day so many years ago.

*She listened.*

Pray for Amina. Pray that the seed that has been planted will take root.

Pray that the Word will penetrate deep into the corners of her heart — where it will find the need for His Living Water.





# STRIKING A CORD

## *a miracle in North Africa*

*Miracle: 'an extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs' (merriam-webster.com)*

Unfortunately, in the Western mind, very few things fall into the “miracle” category. Scientific thought can be the cancer of our faith. But outside the Western world, outside the Western mind, “extraordinary events” are readily accepted for exactly what they are; Divine intervention in human affairs. Provoking side effects of an inexplicable work deep inside their heart, miracles become a virus for a Muslim mind. But they play a crucial role for The Great Physician. Miracles carve a small opening in the soul — a crack — which affords Him the opportunity to deliver The Antidote: Jesus Christ. Sometimes over tea, sometimes in a foreign book, and often times in a dream or vision. But sometimes, God can offer miraculous healing...through a song.

Yusef's sad eyes testified to the longings of a child's heart. No matter the culture or upbringing, inside every young body is the desire to run; to feel the freedom of escaping a darkened room, an elder's scorn, or a pursuing opponent. A violent fever in infancy rendered Yusef unable to walk, stand, or even sit up on his own. For seven long years, he lay in wait. Like chalk on a sidewalk, his dreams turned to dust; carried away by a brutal breeze.

In October, a calico team of international visitors came to conduct a

prayer walk at the treatment center. When they arrived in Yusef's room his eyes questioned the foreigners. Unable to draw him out through conversation, some of the group members began to sing in their native tongue.

*“Jesus loves you, this I know for the Bible tells me so ...”*

Yusef listened intently and allowed a smile to hide behind his eyes.

*“Little ones to Him belong they are weak ... but HE is strong ...”*

Their strange language whispered the lyrics of his life, and Yusef began to giggle at the tune.

*“Yes, Jesus loves you Yes, Jesus loves you Yes, Jesus loves you — the Bible tells me so”.*

As the words penetrated the little boy's body, the hope of the music summoned his strength. Raising himself to his elbows, he began to sit up. Elated by sudden progress, the national staff members observing the scene broke into their own song. But their Arabic lyrics held no wonder. Yusef began to cry and begged for more from the calico choir.

Again, in their language, the members began to sing a Psalm.

*“I lift my eyes to the hills, where does my help come from?”*

*My help comes from the Lord  
He will not let my foot slip”*



When I imagine those visitors sharing this story with their congregations around the world my heart celebrates. Certainly, like me, they wept when imagining Yusef standing, jumping and dancing to the words of God's promises for him:

*“He will not let my foot slip”.*

Perhaps their scientific minds dissected the story for days, looking for some explanation. But as I consider the Muslim staff who witnessed this Miracle, I praise Him for the small crack it created. Because I know ...

*There is no explanation for the Wonders of His Hand.*

*So they will proclaim His glory  
To every distant land.*



# RESPONSE FORM

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# OPPORTUNITIES

AIM has opportunities for you to serve God in Africa. Experience Africa, make new friends, experience mission, but above all, show God in your life and help make disciples of Jesus Christ.

- Short-term — for 3 to 12 months
- Short-term teams: usually 4-8 weeks
- Medical Training Electives: 4-8 weeks
- Full-term: more than 1 year.

## Experience Mission In A Team

In 2013 join a short-term TIMO Quest Team.

For one month, serve among one of Africa's least-reached people groups. Minister alongside one of AIM's two-year outreach teams. This short-version of AIM's TIMO (Training in Ministry Outreach) program gives you first-hand experience of cross-cultural ministry. (For more on TIMO see [www.timo-aim.com](http://www.timo-aim.com))



## TIMO Quest 2013

- Vanilla Island (Indian Ocean)  
15 May-18 June
- Dar es Salaam, Tanzania  
7 June-13 July
- Northwest Tanzania  
13 December-18 January 2014

*"TIMO Quest was an amazing opportunity. A privilege!"*

*Viv Tibbs and Kylie Reynolds, TIMO Quest in Tanzania, 2012*

For more information on opportunities to serve:

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