

TSU Semester Missionary Recounts Experiences in Northern Africa

By Raashanda Turner, Texas Southern University's Baptist Student Ministries intern



"The mosquitoes, the diet, the poverty! Can I really survive? What am I doing here? God what are you trying to teach me?" were among my first thoughts in Northern Africa.

It's been a month and a eleven days since I have returned back from Northern Africa. On returning it can be difficult to explain the many transformations and experiences that take place on the field. Immediately people ask "how was your trip?" and you most likely respond "good." A month later every sentence begins with "I remember in Northern Africa...."

There are so many different aspects of the trip I could share -- the traditions, religion, people -- but a big piece of my heart remained at a low-income, private elementary school by the name of Destiny Academy.

My original assignment in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was to teach young professionals English, but God had other things in store. Before I knew it I was spending every day at Destiny. I could have never imagined the impact God allowed me to have on the children, and how much the children impacted me.



On every mission trip God reveals things about himself to me, this trip was different. By me getting closer to Him, he revealed things to me about me. For years I sought God on questions dealing with purpose, gifts and desires He had placed in my inmost being. They were questions I contemplated consistently and I knew an answer would help me move forward closer to His destiny.

God had everything in place when I began working at Destiny Academy. God had given me favor with the founder Hareg. I had freedom to teach and share with the children creative methods of learning and much more. Every day I felt that the Lord stretched me, and I felt Him unfolding gifts within me.

Through being at Destiny He began to answer life-long questions. I felt like He was giving me hope and solutions. It was what I most needed from God at the

timing in my life. He reminded me that He had intended on answering those questions in due season.

God poured wisdom, creativity and strategy on a daily basis. He revealed my passions, gifts and desires and because of that revelation I was able to leave precious memories in children's lives. I taught children how to read. I help to choose books that soon will fill up a community library I co-founded.

Kids experienced a carnival for the first time in their lives. God used me to bring a smile to children's faces. He used gifts He placed in me to glorify His kingdom. God blew my mind and literally showed me He can use whoever He wants to accomplish His will.

Through this experience I have received many mental victories. Doubt about God's people and who God has created them to be has been demolished. Once again God has proved me wrong.

As for my future plans, God has also shown me that I have a passion for children across the nations, and how that will fit into His future plans. I definitely have a desire to share Destiny Academy with the world. I hope to one day to partner with schools to provide better resources for the children. My next service project is a shoe drive for the students.

Raashanda is December 2006 graduate from TSU and BSM President Fall 2006. She traveled to North Africa under the auspices of GoNowMissions and raised her own support with the generous support of area churches, individuals, and TSU staff. To contact Raashanda, email raashanda123@yahoo.com or phone 832-704-8288.