

# **Baylor student's Middle East mission a lifetime in the making**

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**By Rebekah Hardage**

*Communications Intern*

WACO—Sara Phillips has embarked this summer on a journey that she has been preparing for her whole life—missions in the Middle East.

The winding path Phillips has followed has led her to a place where she believes God has been calling her all along. “God had missions written all over me since he first claimed me,” Phillips said.

The child of Mexico missionaries, Phillips hoped God would one day call her to serve south of the border as well. But that wasn't in the cards.

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Sara Phillips  
and friend  
Maria  
Spellings at  
the Go Now  
Missions  
appointment  
service.

Phillips attended Guilford College in Greensboro, N.C., for a year where she was surrounded by non-Christians with a passion for social justice. As she studied the Middle East conflict for a class, she became fascinated with Middle Eastern culture.

After transferring to Baylor University the next year, she decided to major in international studies. While home for vacation during her junior year, her father recommended she read No god but God by Reza Aslan, which discusses the past, present and future of the Islamic faith.

“I was floored,” Phillips said. “Muslims believe in the virgin birth. They believe Jesus was a prophet. They revere him almost as much as Muhammad. In so many ways, they come so close. How could they miss it?”

After much prayer, she felt God calling her to serve women in the Middle East. “In Islam, Allah has 99 names, but none of them are Father. I want to see Muslim women come to know God as Father,” Phillips explained.

This summer she and nine other college students are sharing the gospel with Muslims in the Middle East through Go Now Missions, the student missions program of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

To help the students prepare, missionaries serving in the Middle East e-mailed the team members homework, posing theoretical questions Muslims

might ask. For example: “Where in the Bible are all three parts of the Trinity found?”

As she prepared earlier this summer to immerse herself in Muslim culture, Phillips discovered some unusual challenges.

“I’ 5-foot 9-inches, so finding skirts that are long enough to cover my ankles has been a fun little challenge,” she said.

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