

September 6

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

My mother was a great cook. Growing up in a family of eight, my mother cooked meals using the largest pots. I was amazed how she could create big meals from a very small pantry. I called my mom the miracle chef.

As a boy, I was often intrigued how Jesus performed the miracle of the five loaves and two fish. One of the lessons I learned from this story was not about the miracle, but why Jesus chose to focus on the generosity of the little boy who gave up his lunch! The disciples didn't coerce the boy or purchase his lunch. The boy freely gave his lunch to Jesus. (John 6 NKJV).

Now, Jesus could have performed the miracle from nothing, but instead He chose to use the boy's lunch offering to multiply it into a feast to feed thousands of men, women, and children. God looks at our willingness to give. This is the basis Jesus performs His greatest miracles...our willingness to give!

Today's offering is for the local church budget. Let's share with the Lord our five loaves and two fish. Our willingness to share gives God an opportunity to bless! Let's pray...

September 13

World Budget (Radio Ministries)

We recommend playing the video at awr.org/offering, but if you can't, feel free to use this reading!

Imagine learning about God through a message in a bottle! That's exactly what happened to a devout Muslim in Israel, who found a bottle containing a flyer for Adventist World Radio's video Bible study series. It made him curious, so he, his wife, and their 10 children decided to watch. His daughter Sarah gasped during one of the videos. She'd recently started having dreams where she was learning about the Bible, and she exclaimed to her family, "The woman in this video is saying exactly what the man in my dream told me!" After watching these videos, the entire family decided to get baptized.

This wasn't an isolated incident. AWR's radio station in Nazareth has started broadcasting programs in Israel, the West Bank, Palestine and beyond, and hundreds have been contacting the station and studying the Bible as a result.

But the Middle East isn't the only supposedly "impossible" place being reached with the gospel! Last year, in Europe, 1,530 churches across 38 European countries participated in AWR and Total Member Involvement's *Christ for Europe* initiative. Attendees included everyone from refugees in Ukraine to people who found out about the meetings during Coronation celebrations in London.

We thank you for giving generously to support all the radio ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Let's pray...

September 20

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

My favorite fruit is mango. A mango boasts an exotic and captivating flavor. The richness and complexity of a mango's taste make it a truly indulgent fruit! The initial taste is a burst of luscious sweetness, followed by a slightly tart undertone that provides a perfect balance.

Psalm 34:8, “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him.” This verse invites me to not just believe in God's rich goodness, but actively experience it in my life.

Just as we use our sense of taste to savor and appreciate different flavors, we are called to savor and appreciate a relationship with God in a deeply personal and intimate way. It means opening our hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit and allowing God's word to nourish and guide us.

Today's offering is for the local church budget. As we step out in faith to give back to God we will “taste and see” one of the many ways that the Lord is good. Let's pray...

September 27

Wisconsin Conference Budget

Nature has so many lessons for us! For example, consider the ants. Like humans, ants exhibit social behavior, thriving in meticulously structured societies known as colonies. The unity within these ant colonies is so profound that they collectively work towards the shared goals of survival, growth, and reproduction, functioning much like a unified entity or a "superorganism."² Worker ants often use teamwork to move larger objects, coordinating their movements to ensure successful transportation.

Once a month, a Sabbath is set aside for the Wisconsin Conference Budget offering. These offerings help to fund educational and life-changing programs which are only possible because individual members choose to contribute to the larger task. The offering may be used for local evangelism to finance programs local churches cannot shoulder on their own. Elementary education, youth evangelism, academy operation, summer camps, the Lamp Letter and Lake Union Herald magazines...these are all supported by the conference budget offering.

Like the ants – together we are an effective team for God's kingdom! Let's pray...

² Heather Campbell & Benjamin Blanchard, *Ants: A Visual Guide*, Princeton University Press, 2023.