



ANNUAL OFFERING

MARCH
14
2020

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Dear Colleague in Ministry:

Wisam belonged to a powerful Muslim family. When he converted to Adventism, they tried to stone him to death. Years later, when he returned as a pastor, his cousin—in a moment of rage—grabbed a butcher knife and plunged it into Wisam's back. Miraculously, the knife bent, tearing his shirt but leaving Wisam unscathed . . .

God is still working powerful miracles in the present day, and stories like Wisam's—which we hope you will share with your church on March 14 during Adventist World Radio's Annual Offering—attest to that fact!

In your church family, there may be members who are not familiar with AWR's unique ministry. In conjunction with the annual offering on March 14, your assistance is crucial in educating members about the power of radio and AWR's success in carrying the gospel message directly into people's homes and hearts. Just to give you a brief overview:

- As the radio ministry arm of the General Conference, AWR seeks to penetrate into places no missionary can reach, in addition to covering the rest of the "reachable" world.
- The ministry has always sought to go "wherever air goes" with its more than 1,000 stations and 100+ languages broadcasting via AM/FM and regional shortwave radio worldwide. But the broadcasting doesn't end there! AWR also shares messages via cell phone evangelism, Godpods, social media and global podcasts. Through it all, the ministry connects listeners with local pastors and churches.
- Plus, AWR's outreach extends beyond broadcast outlets, including humanitarian efforts through AWR360° Health, and evangelistic meetings in partnership with Total Member Involvement (TMI). Watch incredible mission videos at awr.org to learn more about this worldwide ministry.

We hope that you will find the enclosed materials useful in promoting the March 14 offering. You may also download these items at awr.org/offering:

- Poster for your lobby bulletin board or other high-traffic area.
- Series of bulletin announcements.
- Bulletin insert master sheet for duplication.
- Sabbath School reading (which may also be used in church, if desired).
- Pulpit offering appeal.

Thank you in advance for your help! Your congregation's prayers and support are vital as we seek to reach every corner of the earth with the gospel.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,

Duane McKey, D.Min.
President

cc: Head Elder & Church Treasurer

P.S. Visit awr.org/offering to download a short video featuring Wisam to accompany the offering appeal.

"NO MAN DID THIS!"





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TO THE BULLETIN COORDINATOR

Thank you for what you do! You may think you're just placing these announcements in your bulletin, but thanks to your help in spreading the word about the ministry of AWR, lives will be changed.

Please feel free to edit these announcements or combine them. You may also create a bulletin insert by using the master sheet included in this packet. Or you may print directly from the PDF on our website at awr.org/offering.

..... Bulletin Announcement #1 — March 7, 2020

Hannah is an Adventist World Radio producer in an undisclosed country. Every night for the past 15 years, she has quietly slipped into her closet where she records new broadcasts. Hannah will be arrested if the police learn of her activities. She said, "As long as AWR exists, as long as I live, as long as I am free, and as long as I am not imprisoned, I will continue to do it."

AWR producers risk their lives to spread the Good News in places closed to the gospel. Plan now to thoughtfully support AWR's annual offering next week on March 14, so voices like Hannah's can continue to be heard in more than 100 languages around the world. For a closer look, visit awr.org/videos.

..... Bulletin Announcement #2 — Annual Offering Day — March 14, 2020

Wisam's Muslim family tried to stone him when he became an Adventist. Then his cousin tried to stab him after he became a pastor—but a true miracle took place! Don't miss the rest of the story during today's offering, and watch it again at awr.org/wisam.

God is using Adventist World Radio's many broadcasts and platforms to bypass harsh governments and hostile cultures, and beam the love of Jesus directly into homes and hearts. Today, we invite you to partner with AWR in this vital ministry! [Mark your offering envelope "AWR," or give directly at awr.org or by calling 1-800-337-4297.]



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AWR ANNUAL OFFERING READING

Text for Churches Showing the Wisam Video

NOTE: We recommend you play the video found at awr.org/wisam before reading the AWR offering message below. If you will not be able to play the video, please see the next page.

..... [ SHOW WISAM VIDEO]

This incredible story about Wisam comes to us from Adventist World Radio, which is filling a unique role on the front lines of church outreach. These broadcasts bypass harsh governments and hostile cultures, beaming hope directly into people's homes and hearts. To give you just a few examples:

- In the past year alone, entire villages of communist rebels—including many generals—in the Philippines have put down their guns and made decisions for baptism.
- Some of the most notorious hitmen in an undisclosed country are listening to AWR's broadcasts.
- And AWR programs are penetrating into countries like North Korea as the gospel message reaches behind closed doors.

The ministry broadcasts on more than 1,000 stations in 100+ languages via AM/FM and regional shortwave radio, in addition to cell phone evangelism, Godpods, social media and global podcasts. And through it all, the ministry connects listeners with local pastors and churches.

The ministry also engages in humanitarian efforts through AWR360° Health, and evangelistic meetings in partnership with Total Member Involvement. Watch incredible mission videos at awr.org to learn more about this worldwide ministry.

To support the work of Adventist World Radio on this special offering Sabbath, just write "AWR" on the offering line of your tithe envelope.

..... **IF YOU ARE NOT SHOWING THE WISAM VIDEO, PLEASE SEE THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THIS PAGE.**

AWR ANNUAL OFFERING READING

Text for Churches **NOT** Showing the Wisam Video

Wisam belonged to a powerful Muslim family. When he converted to Adventism, they tried to stone him to death. Years later, when he returned as a pastor, his cousin—in a moment of rage—grabbed a butcher knife and plunged it into Wisam’s back. Miraculously, the knife bent, tearing the shirt but leaving Wisam unscathed. You can watch the rest of this incredible story at awr.org/wisam to find out what happened next!

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“NO MAN DID THIS!”



SABBATH SCHOOL READING — MARCH 14

Wisam was born into a powerful Muslim family in Nazareth, where his father was the chief and his uncle was the imam, or Islamic religious leader.

As a young man, Wisam was taught to hate Christians and their pork-eating and alcohol-drinking ways. So, when he learned that his sister—who had gone to Europe to pursue her studies—had become a Christian, he was irate, and immediately told his family.

A tribal council was called, and his uncle told Wisam, “You must go to Europe and kill her!”

Soon, Wisam was on a flight to Europe. Hoping to change his sister’s mind, he called her and said, “I have been sent by the family to kill you.”

Much to his surprise, his sister remained calm and asked Wisam to give her a year. He agreed to wait, and she then suggested that he stay at the Bogenhofen Christian school in Austria and study German. (What he didn’t know then was that the school was Adventist and his sister was engaged to an Adventist pastor!)

Wisam liked this idea. He was sure that Allah was opening doors for him to convert Christians to Islam!

But as time passed, the opposite happened. There grew in Wisam a desire to know the Jesus who raised the dead and forgave sins. The concept of a loving God who wanted a relationship with him was new to Wisam. By the time the year was up, Wisam had accepted Jesus and was baptized. Instead of killing his sister, he attended her wedding!

..... **“Stone Him!”**

When Wisam returned to Nazareth, eager to share his newfound faith, he was received with suspicion and questioned about his loyalty to the Muslim faith. His uncle was angry when he learned that Wisam had not killed his sister. And when Wisam boldly asked the council if they knew Jesus the Creator mentioned in the Quran, his uncle shouted, “Stone him!”

The men picked up rocks and hurled them at Wisam until he fell to the ground, unconscious. His father, moved to compassion, ordered one of Wisam’s brothers to rescue him and take him to the hospital, where he eventually recovered from his injuries. But when he returned home, the hostility continued, and a few days later, he was stoned again! This time, his parents suggested he leave Israel.

Wisam returned to Bogenhofen, where he studied theology. Through an incredible set of circumstances, he found his way to America and attended Southern Adventist University in Tennessee. Eventually, he married Adri, a beautiful Adventist girl from South Africa, and together they pastored several churches throughout Europe.

Then an amazing thing happened: Wisam was asked to pastor in the Israel Field—right in his hometown of Nazareth! His mother was thrilled! She told him that his uncle was dead, and if Wisam returned, he would be safe. Wisam said, “Mother, if I return, no one can stop me from preaching the truth.” She not only agreed, but offered him a special place in the family business.

..... Stabbed!

If you think Wisam's conversion story couldn't be more riveting and miraculous, it's only because you haven't heard the rest of the story! The real adventure of faith began when he started working for Jesus—and it's been one miracle after another.

Last year, my wife Kathy and I visited Wisam and Adri in Nazareth. Adventist World Radio delivered a supply of Godpods for them to share with their community. We personally had the privilege of giving these special solar-powered audio devices to Wisam's family—his mother, brothers and sisters (his father had since passed away). These Godpods contain the whole Bible in Arabic and Farsi, plus Bible studies and children's stories.

While in Tel Aviv a few months ago, Wisam and Adri shared with us something that shook the Muslim community and showed how God continues to protect Wisam and guide his ministry:

Not long before we arrived, two of Wisam's cousins, angry at his Christian influence in the community, rallied a mob and went to Wisam's house to attack him. One of his cousins carried a large butcher knife, and when Wisam came out of the house, they rushed him, screaming insults.

Adri heard the commotion, and when she looked out the window, she knew her husband was in serious trouble. She fell on her knees and began to pray. These cousins were the same ones who, years before, had actively participated in his stoning. Their father, the imam, was now dead, but his sons continued his legacy of hatred.

As Adri prayed, Wisam faced his aggressors. Unwilling to fight, and finding they would not be appeased, Wisam turned to go. In that moment, one of his cousins charged, stabbing him with enough force to plunge the sharp blade deep into his back.

Well, at least, that was their plan, but what really happened is a different story: the blade of the thick knife bent at a 90-degree angle!

The cousin holding the knife dropped it in confusion, unable to understand what had happened. Wisam's brother picked up the now-useless knife and shook it in the air as he shouted after them, "Now try to kill the man of God!"

In the confusion and bewilderment, the crowd quickly dispersed, but as they were leaving, one of the cousins turned and shouted, "Wisam, you will not know how or when or where, but I will kill you!"

After the mob left, Wisam's family checked him for injuries. There were only two small tears on his shirt where the knife had entered and the bent blade had exited. The only mark on his skin was a red scratch—the knife had not penetrated his back!

Wisam's family vowed revenge on the cousins, but he said, "No, we will not attack them. God will fight for us."

As Wisam recounted the story to Kathy and me, he shared what had happened two weeks before we arrived. The two cousins who had threatened Wisam were riding their motorcycle, and as they came around a corner, they hit a truck head-on. One cousin was killed instantly, and the other died a week later from his injuries.

..... The Rest of the Story

This made a huge impact in the Muslim community. Wisam's family is prominent in the city, and it was a well-known fact that his uncle's family had vowed to kill him for being a Christian. People were amazed at his refusal to fight back and at his trust in Jesus. Now they were in awe of his deliverance.

Wisam's influence grew by leaps and bounds in both the Muslim and Jewish communities, and last year he was asked to be board chair of the largest school in Nazareth. When he told them, "But I'm a Christian!" they replied, "We know, and we don't care. We still want you to head our board."

Wisam has now opened a center of influence in the heart of Nazareth, where he teaches English straight from the Bible—and there is a waiting list to attend his classes!

..... **But There's More!**

Recently, Wisam needed to translate our *Revelation of Hope* sermons into Arabic, so he approached a translator, Jamil, who agreed to do it. As he worked on the translations, Jamil was greatly moved by the Adventist message. He even felt compelled to share what he was reading with a close friend from an Arab Baptist church in Nazareth. This friend, in turn, was so impressed that he shared the messages with his pastor.

It was now the pastor's turn to be impressed by the solid Bible-based presentations. He contacted Wisam and asked him to come to his church to share the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the prophetic end-time message.

They loved the presentations and Wisam became a regular guest at the church. He went through the whole sermon series, and at their insistence, continued with more in-depth subjects—including our health message and Ellen White's writings.

To make a long and interesting story short, the pastor and most of his congregation decided to be baptized in the Jordan River and join the Adventist Church, and I had the privilege of witnessing it!

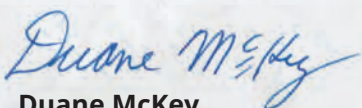
There is no greater joy than leading others to Jesus—even if we only play a small part in guiding their journey. We may not all be called to face peril like Wisam, but God is calling all who are willing to play a part in proclaiming His last-day message.

Adventist World Radio not only broadcasts into all the predominantly-Muslim countries in their own languages, but the ministry works with people like Wisam, helping to share the gospel message in countries that still need to hear the story of Jesus.

If you would like to hear Wisam tell his story and learn additional details, please visit awr.org/wisam. And if you'll be attending General Conference Session this summer, be sure to stop by the AWR booth, where you will be able to meet Wisam and see the knife and shirt for yourself!

To support the work of Adventist World Radio on this special offering Sabbath, just write "AWR" on the offering line of your tithe envelope. Thank you!

Yours in the Blessed Hope,



Duane McKey
President, Adventist World Radio

"NO MAN DID THIS!"



“NO MAN DID THIS!”

Wisam's story bears evidence to God's miraculous intervention.

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See it here: awr.org/wisam



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AWR360°
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