



May 2018

Dear Friend of Israel,

Passover is a wonderful time with family, but just before the holiday it is a very stressful time. I usually have a large Seder with anywhere between 15 and 25 people around the table and although my sister-in-law helps with the cooking, it is a big job to bring it all together. And it's like that for everyone – **Jewish families every where, are cooking, cleaning and setting things up non-stop, getting ready for the big evening.**

However, there are some families who experience a totally different kind of stress before the holidays. Parents who struggle to cover their regular expenses for food and clothing are confronted with the extra expenses of a holiday. There are the extra expenses of matzah and wine, requirements for the Passover Seder meal. It is customary for Jewish communities all over the world to help their needy neighbors at this time and that is a huge help for these families. It is a recent phenomenon to have non-Jews assist Jewish families with their unique needs during a specifically Jewish holiday. Yet you, **our Christian friends responded when we asked for help. We asked you to provide food for Passover Seder meals and you gave generously!**

So you can well imagine how excited I was to be able to write a check for tens of thousands of shekels to give to the Samaria Family Assistance Program just before the Passover holiday. **When I phoned Anat and told her about the funds that had come pouring in for this need in the weeks prior to Passover, she was speechless. She thanked me over and over, overwhelmed with the joy of knowing that she could help so many families. But it wasn't me she was thanking. It was you.** I told her about the money that had come in – small amounts and large, online and by mail. Literally, money coming in from Christians all over the world to help Jewish families in Israel feed their children on Passover. What an amazing miracle!

Right before I left the office for the holiday, Chaim phoned me, and his first words were, *“You can't imagine what a wonderful Passover you have given us at Bat Ayin!”* **Thanks to wonderful Christian friends and donors, the Bat Ayin yeshiva is going to be able to start construction work on their new study hall.** By faith, Chaim had started planning and had engaged contractors but he had no idea how we was going to pay for it. And then the check arrived from CFOIC Heartland. He went home singing with joy to celebrate the holiday, knowing that he could celebrate without worrying about his construction plans.

Thanks to the generosity of CFOIC Heartland donors and friends everywhere, thanks to you and people like you, I get phone calls like this all the time. I want you to know the excitement and joy that your donations have brought to their lives. As we savor the warm sun that shines upon us in May, as we rejoice in G-d's blessings upon us all, may G-d grant us the wisdom and generosity to share our blessings with those less fortunate than us. May we never forget the smiles, and the joy, on the faces of those we have helped. **Thank you for being an answer to a mother's prayer for help, Chaim's step of faith and many other daily miracles.**

Sincerely,

Sondra Oster Baras
Director, Israel Office

P.S. Everywhere in Judea and Samaria, there are people who are smiling today because of you, because of the wonderful support that is being provided by caring Christians just like you all over the world, who love Israel, who love the Jewish people, who are active participants in G-d's land.