



November 2020

Dear Friend of Israel,

We have just completed the fall holiday season, generally a time of spiritual uplifting and family bonding. It was a time of reflection and rejoicing as always but it was strangely different because of the restrictions and social distancing that pervade everything these days. We prayed in small groups instead of in the usual large synagogues, we had small family meals instead of large ones and we stayed home. A very quiet time.

As I emerge from this holiday time, and look back upon it, though, I realize that so much of what we did and thought about revolved around COVID. We prayed for health, for ourselves and for humanity and we prayed for a return to normalcy. We are so immersed in the threats presented by the situation, however, that we don't necessarily remember how much we have to be grateful for. **It is this sense of appreciation that I want to dwell on today. I am grateful that I am alive and healthy, that I have not been ill with COVID, that my children and grandchildren are healthy** as are most of my neighbors and friends. I am grateful that my husband and I and my children are all working, unlike so many who have lost their jobs. And I am grateful that I live in Israel where we live among good people who share so many values - we are able to pray on street corners when the synagogue buildings close because everyone on my street prays.

But it is also a time to say thank you to you, our precious supporters and friends. I realize this is a difficult time for all of us. **But you continued to support the communities in Judea and Samaria throughout this challenging time.** You had your own concerns and fears and yet you never forgot the needs of those in Israel who have come to rely on your generosity.

Enclosed is a small booklet that tells the stories of just a few of the communities that you and people like you have helped. **Please read the stories, study the photos and know that you play a starring role in each and every one of these stories. I wish I could host you in my own community and introduce you to the people you have helped in person.** But for now, this small collection of stories will have to suffice.

I pray that G-d will grant health to all His children on this wonderful earth, that He will bring wisdom and clarity to people everywhere who are drowning in confusion, that He will bring quiet amidst the chaos, and that He will bring sustenance to those who are in desperate straits. And **may G-d give you the strength and the means to continue doing the wonderful work you are doing, to bless, strengthen, and encourage the people living in the biblical heartland, Judea and Samaria. We have truly been blessed by you.**

Sincerely,

Sondra Oster Baras
Director, Israel Office

P.S. Enjoy the enclosed special booklet that shows just a few of the many communities you have helped, lives you have touched, and people you have blessed. Thank you for standing with Judea and Samaria.