



February 2022

Dear Friend,

Winter is here. **As I write this letter, the rain is pouring down and what a blessing it is. Even as we feel the damp cold and have to bundle up before we go outside, the rain reminds us to look to the heavens and thank G-d for His blessing.** And the rain is not the only blessing we are grateful for. Thank G-d, we have our health, our families, our jobs. We can thank G-d for so much.

But I would also like to thank you. As 2021 drew to a close, you were so generous with us. You sent marvelous donations, heartfelt holiday greetings and blessings for the new year. It made me realize how dear our friendships are – **you have been there for us for so long and you continue to stand with us and reach out to us each year and throughout the year. Thank you for truly being a friend.**

And as the year drew to a close, **I was personally blessed with a new grandchild.** I was able to be with my daughter and son-in-law for two weeks following the birth, to cuddle with my grandson and help my children as they welcomed their first child into their family. **I cannot tell you how much joy I felt in those weeks.**

Just a few weeks ago, we celebrated Tu B'Shvat, a holiday that enables us to rejoice in G-d's blessing in bringing forth fruit from the land. **Normally, we plant trees on this day but because of the Shemittah year, we are giving the land a rest this year.** But we are enjoying the fruits of the land – the figs and dates for which the Land of Israel has been known since Biblical times, and the avocado, strawberries, oranges, lemons and persimmons that are so plentiful during this season.

Take a moment and think about the ways that G-d has blessed your lives this season. I hope He has. Sometimes, when we are immersed in our frustrations and difficulties, we forget about the blessings in our lives. And sometimes, just sitting back and remembering those blessings, brings a smile to our faces and changes our whole perspective on life.

You have blessed me with your friendship and support. G-d has blessed me with my family and community. I hope that you can find similar blessing in your life. May G-d bless you richly.

Sincerely,

Sondra Oster Baras
Director, Israel Office

P.S. **Enclosed you will find the most recent edition of our Nahala newsletter.** We share encouraging stories of Christians who support Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria and stories of Jews who are settling the heartland of Biblical Israel. We also share some exciting news about community projects that you have helped! So I hope you'll take a moment and read through the enclosed newsletter and know you are a vital part of making this happen. **If you would like additional copies of Nahala, to share with your family, friends or congregation, call Kim at 800-647-3344** and she will be glad to send you additional copies.