

"Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works!"

Psalm 105:1-2

**THIS MONTH** millions of people in the United States will celebrate Thanksgiving Day. Last month our Canadian brothers and sisters did as well. No matter where you live, we as believers can testify of the goodness of the Lord. On Thanksgiving Day, we will feast on good food, enjoy our families and thank God for His blessings. Some may say that we don't have so much to be thankful for this year. The world has experienced a pandemic, riots and racial unrest, which, in many cases, have led to job and income loss. It seemed like one barrage after another.

Even so, my heart is full of gratitude to the Lord and His people around the world. Though we have been struck with challenges on every side, it is in the midst of the chaos that God has been with us—and so have you. Our work in Israel has continued without pause. In fact, we are helping more people as the needs have become greater.

Patrick Verbeten, our Israel operations director, interacts with those we help regularly. Listen to what he says. "I consider myself greatly privileged to interact with Israelis on a daily basis. If you ask me what I believe the pulse of the people is and what the narrative is I am hearing regularly, the answer would be: 'Thank you!' So many people are so thankful that we are standing with them during these desperate times.



Patrick Verbeten

"These desperate times call for creative measures, and the operations teams have been diligently working to come up with innovative ways to continue blessing the people we serve. Due to the lockdown and limited transportation, new immigrants are finding it difficult to make their way to our

offices to pick up their Immigrant Gifts. The kitchen sets, school kits, blankets and Bibles are just as important now as ever to these new immigrant families.

"Our team decided that if they can't come to us, we'll go to them. And that's exactly what we did. For the last month, we have brought these gifts—along with a smile and a message of love and hope from Christians around the world—directly to the people in several communities in the north of Israel. Their response is always the same: 'Todah rabah' (Hebrew), 'spasibo' (Russian), 'thank you!'



"The economic challenges here in Israel are presenting us with many needs on a daily basis. I was recently introduced to Na'ima Perl, who is on our Adoption Program. Na'ima asked if she could share something with me. The words that came out of her mouth were: 'Thank you, thank you, thank you' for the assistance we had given her. It wasn't the words that moved me so deeply, but rather the expression I could read in her eyes above her mask. It is not easy to mistake big, wet tears streaming down the face of a grateful and appreciative member of the community."

As I write this, Israel is again in lockdown, with voices in the health ministry and government saying we will most likely stay in some form of lockdown until the end of January. This is crushing news for the poor and newly poor. Many people will have been out of work for most of a year. Most people in Israel simply don't have a year's worth of savings. About 20% of the workforce have been managing on a much smaller percentage of income from government programs like unemployment or stimulus packages. The self-employed and small business owners have often received nothing. Soup kitchens are overwhelmed with the needs, as are organizations like Bridges for Peace.

As you feast on the bounty the Lord has given you, will you help us continue to feed the people of Israel in their time of need? Together we can show God's love in practical ways.

We are so thankful to have partners like you. Thank you, todah rabah, spasibo! Every day I am praying for your health and well-being. May you experience the miracle-working power of God in your life, home, church, school and community.

Blessings from Israel, Rebecca J. Brimmer International President and CEO

## BRIDGES FOR PEACE Your Israel Connection...

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