

1927 July 13 Jiryes to Suleiman – earthquake in Palestine – t

Ramallah, Palestine

Earthquake in Palestine - Greetings, etc. It's been a long time since we've heard from you. It seems you have begun to get lazy. But you know that writing is half seeing. We are in good health. What happened in Palestine in general is before yesterday Monday, the 11th at 3:05 a major, momentous earthquake took place. It was like thundering; houses were hitting each other and the mountains were moving like sea waves. People were running to escape death, holding their children, obsessed with fear. Nobody would dare stand next to a building. This all took only one minute, and if it took a few more minutes, the people of Palestine would have been underground. But God has protected us. In our town, we had only one death. A boy of 11 from the Ajluny family, age 11. His father was killed in America recently. The second death was Shehadeh Ibrahim Muhawi, may God have mercy on them. The latter died because the bell of the Latin church fell on Shehadeh while they were building in the house of Jiryes Salam. All houses in the town have been affected. Some had major damage. It is said that fixing them will cost 50,000 pounds. This, in addition to the houses which a govt. engineer has ordered demolished. On our part, we experienced damage in the old house in the East. Because the 'crescent' of the house has cracked and it is dangerous. For that, you have to send us 40 pounds so that we construct next to it a room to reinforce the house so that we will not lose the house. If you don't send it, we will be compelled to borrow money in order to fix it. As for others, every person has been affected. Many will be forced to demolish their houses and news about the neighboring areas indicates major damage. Many people were buried under the debris, many people died, especially in the Eastern areas. Lots of people are still sleeping in the fields and are afraid to go home. In Nablus alone, 75 people died; in Ramallah more than 100. I don't have the total numbers I am sure you will read about this in the newspapers. We thank God that He spared us. Now I tell you that the title deeds in the *tapu* (land administration) which are necessary to complete the transfer of the properties in the name of your children are now held and will not be released until we pay 30 pounds to complete them. I have written you many times about this, but you have not answered. It is imperative that you pay attention to this, and send us at least 100 pounds so we can release the title deeds and construct the room. And to stop the leakage which causes more danger to the house now that we are about to enter the next winter season. Answer me immediately and reassure me about your health, and tell us what to do at this end. Your mother blesses you and your sister and her children greet you and kiss your hands.

Your father who misses you,

Jiryes Suleiman Farhat