

1932 July 27 Jiryas to Suleiman – come back to your land

Ramallah, Palestine

Our dear son, may God preserve him,

It's been a long time since I heard from you, I hope everything is well, daddy. I sent you a registered letter in which I told you what you need to do to your wife Katrina so she would abandon her folks and follow her family [us]. Be careful about what I have told you [that the letter is not seen], do not allow her to challenge you. That's better for you. Please let me know if the registered letter has arrived or not.

My son, I tell you about the trees. The sight of your gardens lightens the heart. The new vineyard is better than Ein Minjid [a plateau in Ramallah]. It almost makes people stand there and sing. The quince trees will yield six or seven *pintars* (tons). The pears would yield three pintars and the apples will yield the same. Apricots would yield one pintar. I have grafted in the upper vineyard forty apricot trees. In the Mojeh [name of a piece of land] I have grafted seventy Frankish apple trees and regular apple trees. And when it matures it will yield six or seven pintars of apple, the same for pears. Grapes this year would yield six pintars and next year, probably 10. My son, I am an old wasted man and your mother is old. I can't sit anymore in the vegetable market to sell the produce. We are no longer able. God bless you, my son. Manage your affairs in whatever way and come back to your land. The olives alone produce 28 jarra [vats] of oil. We produce five pintars of dried figs. I should be sitting at home. Between the olives and the figs, if it wasn't for the donkey taking me back and forth, I wouldn't know what to do. Manage your affairs in whichever way and come back here. If you don't come, I am going to die like a dog. Nobody would care for me if I fall from the donkey and am killed. Your sister's children are in school and do not leave it for one hour. They do not come and help me, even during their vacations. About Issa, he is number one in his class in school and Khadra is number one in her class. I am telling you, who would leave his folks for 13 years. We don't need money. I want to see your children and you before we die because both your mother's and my soul are connected to you. What I have left for you would be sufficient for you. You promised to go for three years but now it's been 14 years. For the love of Christ, finish your work and come back, and give my greetings to Mary and Fuad and Julia and peace to your lovely soul and greetings to all people by you.

Four hundred young people have come from America to the homeland. Answer me immediately.

Wishing you a long life,  
Jiryas Suleiman Farhat

P.S. I tell you that I will not allow Issa to go back to school. I want him to help me. I placed him with a shoemaker to learn the trade.

P.P.S. Answer me immediately, even with a bird.

(dictated to someone who is not named, but written with an educated hand.)

Translated by Salim Tamari