

The Daoud Kuttab 2020 family  
Christmas newsletter:

# The good and the not so good

2020 has seen sad and happy news for many, including our own family. The year saw the engagement of Bishara and Zohra as well as the passing away of the Kuttab's maternal queen Frosina. But in between there were many other details that happened to our family.

Bishara's engagement to Zohra Saibi took place in Philadelphia and was broadcast on Zoom with families of the couple watching from Amman, Palestine and Algiers, as well as friends from other parts of the world. Daoud learned a few words of the Amazigh language prevalent mostly in south Algeria, to ask for Zohra's hand from her parents. Zohra's sister Saloua did the translation from English and Arabic to the Amazigh language. We are very happy to have Zohra as a new member of our family. The covid-19 pandemic forced Bishara to relocate his restaurant. The new Bishos at 7950 Oxford Avenue opened on December 7<sup>th</sup> and one of its first clients was Bishara's grandmother



Frosina, who gave Bishos and the new couple the thumbs up. If you are in the Philadelphia area and miss home-made *saj* bread, shawarma, hummus and falafel you must stop by Bishos for authentic Middle eastern cuisine.

Tamara and Alaa decided in early 2020 to return to Jerusalem after six years in Chicago.

God opened up doors for them in regards to their move, and so despite the coronavirus and its many challenges, they were able to move in the fall of 2020.

Alaa is enjoying working with the [Bethlehem Bible College](#) as a teacher in History, Geography and Archeology of the Bible. Tamara and Alaa along with Yasmeen and Dalia have decided to live in Jerusalem in the family apartment neighboring Tania and Samuel. Tamara is homeschooling Yasmeen and Dalia while she continues to study online for her Master's degree in Clinical and Mental health counseling.



[Tania and Samuel's children, Saleem and Karam](#), are growing quickly but alas their grandparents (from Tania's side) and extended family are unable to see them due to the coronavirus and lockdowns. Saleem, who is four, joined the Friends school in Ramallah and is doing great in Kindergarten according to his teachers. Tania has changed jobs and is now working with the German GIZ foundation. She is doing a lot of work from home. The coronavirus has largely minimized the need for Samuel to wake up early in the morning to go to Jerusalem and purchase produce for their family store, and the Friday/Saturday closures has meant much more time with the family.



In March, and due to surge of the virus, Dina had to make a quick exit from her Princeton University campus. While her plane home was en route, Jordan decided to close the borders and ordered all incoming passengers to be quarantined at hotels in Amman and the Dead Sea. Dina spent two weeks at a nice hotel overlooking pools and the dead sea but she was unable to leave her hotel room. Salam sent her a few tasty meals and many called Dina on the phone to ease her two-week quarantine.

[Dina has been with us](#) since then, taking her University classes remotely, and her stay with us has been a blessing especially due to the

long hours of being stuck at home. Dina is looking forward to going back to Princeton in January, but she will miss Jordan and the quality time with family.

Daoud's media work both individually and institutionally has grown. [Radio al-Balad](#), the [radio station that](#) Daoud established in Amman, has been through a few difficult years but has now stabilized. Daoud continues to write in [Al Monitor](#), [Arab News](#) and occasionally in [the Washington post](#). In September, Daoud caught the coronavirus and soon transferred it to Salam. Since they were living at Salam's mother's house at the time, [Maha \(Im Suheil\) and Dina](#) along with Katie Madanat (Salam's niece who was visiting from the UK), left to stay in a separate apartment until the end of their quarantine. Salam and Daoud are doing well and are thankful for their continued health.



Daoud has been active with the [Amman Cosmopolitan](#) Rotary club and even took [Dina with](#) him to meet the Minister of Health. He has also been active in the [Jordan Evangelical Council](#). He also started an endeavor to set up an NGO to support Christian Tourism in Jordan along with his friend [Rev. David Rihani](#).

Salam was also busy with her volunteer efforts with the senior citizen's project. The project was forced to go virtual due to the coronavirus, and now consists of a weekly day-long virtual program, made up of messages and engagements. Salam also sits on the board of the [Alliance Academy](#) which has been a leader in the merging of disabled children with regular children.

In addition to her voluntary duties, the Kuttab home in Deir Ghbar finally became available this year and Salam was busy most of the summer and fall in making it ready to move into. Salam gained a few more grey hairs working with various contractors who were not always up to par. Daoud, Salam and Dina finally [moved](#)

[in the house](#) in November on the eve of a four-day lockdown which was spent unpacking some 150 boxes of house items.

December brought the news of the passing of Daoud's mother Frosina. Days earlier she had visited the newly opened [Bishos restaurant](#). She also spoke to our family and others on Monday December 14<sup>th</sup>. She came across with clear voice and before she hung up, Dina told her in a loud voice, we LOVE YOU TATA.

Two days later, on December 16<sup>th</sup>, we received the news that [Tata Frosina](#) passed to be with the Lord whom she was eager to see. A family organized celebration of [her life took place](#) largely on zoom after a restricted funeral on Saturday December 19<sup>th</sup>.



As we celebrate the birth of our Lord and usher in a new year, we would like to wish all of you a [Merry Christmas](#) and a happy, safe and prosperous [new year in 2021](#). As per Im Youna's (Daoud's mother) wishes and the biblical calls we have all agreed to continue to celebrate her life and to focus on the biblical verse which Dina and Danny's son George read in Arabic and English during the celebration of her life:

*"Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope."*

*1 Thessalonians 4:13, NIV*

*Wishing you all a happy and healthy new year in 2021*