It is a pleasure to write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Ms. ??? for a scholarship from the Foundation for ???. ??? is a brilliant student who is currently writing her MA thesis in the department of Biblical Studies at Tel Aviv University under my supervision. I am certain that this scholarship would make a significant contribution to the important research she is carrying out for her MA, and that it would further help her advance to the next level of scholarly work at the PhD level.

I first became acquainted with ??? as a BA student in several of my classes in the Department of Biblical Studies. The written work she submitted already at the undergraduate level was highly impressive, and she distinguished herself early on as an exceptionally intelligent and bright student. I would certainly rank her in the top one percent of students I have taught, both with respect to her broad knowledge of biblical scholarship and her analytical abilities. In order to expand her philological and literary-critical expertise, ??? spent time during the last several years studying classical Greek, Septuagintal Greek, as well as elementary Akkadian and German. In all of these languages, her achievements have been of a very high level. The philological capabilities she has acquired during these years, and particularly her knowledge of Greek dialects, have equipped her with essential tools for her MA research, which is related to the Hellenistic period.

???’s MA thesis, tentatively entitled “Day of YHWH Prophecies in Second Zechariah (Zech 12–14) and Their Place in Biblical Thought,” is dedicated to one of the most interesting phenomena in the prophetic literature. There is general agreement among biblical scholars that the book of Zechariah contains two distinct parts: chapters 1-8 contain the prophecies of a prophet from the Persian period, while chapters 9–14 constitute a separate collection of prophecies which differ tremendously from the former part in style, language, and subject matter, as well as ideological and theological concepts. While the first part of Zechariah has received extensive scholarly attention alongside studies that discuss the Persian period in general, the second part remains obscure and is studied to a lesser extent. Many questions remain open, such as the chronological placement of the prophecies, whether they belong to the Hellenistic period (after Zechariah of the Persian period) or to an earlier prophet, as well as the circumstances under which they were produced. ???? seeks to shed light on these questions through her work on the “day of YHWH” prophecies in Zechariah 12–14, clarifying their message and their background in light of the knowledge we possess today regarding the history of biblical worldviews. This research is of great importance not only for understanding Zechariah and the prophetic literature but also for the study of the beginning of the Hellenistic period in the Land of Israel, which is regarded as “black hole” in biblical scholarship. Her research will thus shed new light on these central questions, giving us a clearer insight into and understanding of the literary facts and evidence.

Since Tel Aviv University does not have the financial resources to fully sponsor MA students in the humanities, a scholarship from the Foundation for ??? would enable her to make serious progress towards completing her MA thesis and continuing on to the next level of her studies. I thus recommend Ms. ??? strongly and without any reservation for this scholarship. If I can be of any further assistance in your decision, please feel free to contact me.