

Grade

Tu BiShvat

5



ERETZ YISRAEL THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



The Second Aliyah

DANIEL ROSE





THIS PROJECT WAS MADE POSSIBLE
THROUGH THE VISION AND GENEROSITY OF
EVELYN AND DR. SHMUEL KATZ OF BAL HARBOUR, FLORIDA
AND REFLECTS THEIR GREAT LOVE AND COMMITMENT
TO JEWISH EDUCATION AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL
AND WAS LOVINGLY DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
JACOB DOV KATZ Z”L
AND SARAH ROHR A”H



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TU BISHVAT

THE SECOND ALIYAH 1904 - 1914

GRADE 5

DANIEL ROSE



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Developed by The Lookstein Center, Bar Ilan University. The syllabus outline for this series was initially based on a curriculum development project which The Lookstein Center was commissioned to develop and implement by AMODS, Yeshiva University.

We acknowledge with gratitude the following sources of photographs and maps listed below:

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Hashomer Hatzair Archives, Yad Yaari, Givat Haviva (page 41 [top])

JNF (pages 9, 35)

National Photo Collection, Government Press Office, Jerusalem (pages 16, 39 [top])

The Jewish Agency for Israel (page 43 [middle])

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The Second Aliyah

1904 - 1914

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	7
Lesson 1	
Who They Were and Why They Came	8
Lesson 2	
Challenges and Hardships: Everyday Life for the Chalutzim	20
Lesson 3	
The Achievements of the Chalutzim of the Second Aliyah	34
Lesson 4	
Revival of the Hebrew Language	46

This booklet is filled with lots of interesting information. If you only have time to study certain sections in class, we invite you to look at the others in your free time.



INTRODUCTION

Dear Student,

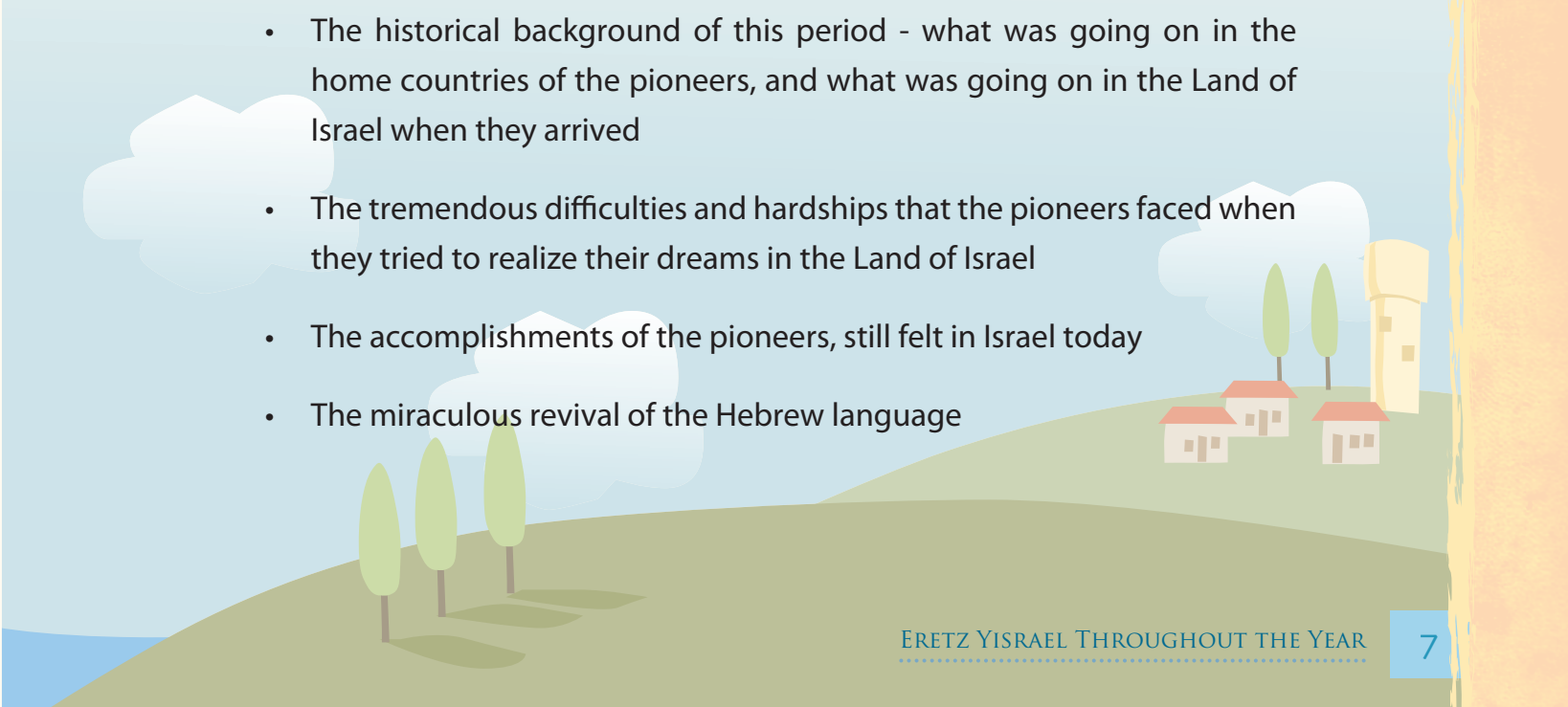
In a previous unit we learned about the First Aliyah. It began in 1881 and ended in 1903. In these lessons we will be learning about the Second Aliyah. It began in 1904 and ended in 1914.

Architects will tell you that the most important part of any building is the foundation under the ground. When the building is complete you can't even see the foundation, but you know it is there, because otherwise the building would fall down.

The State of Israel came into existence on the 5th of Iyar 5708 (14th of May 1948), but many of the foundations of the state were built during the Second Aliyah.

The ideas that were important to these pioneers were central to Israel and Israeli society in later years. We are going to examine this period to understand just how important it was for the future state.

We will explore:

- The historical background of this period - what was going on in the home countries of the pioneers, and what was going on in the Land of Israel when they arrived
 - The tremendous difficulties and hardships that the pioneers faced when they tried to realize their dreams in the Land of Israel
 - The accomplishments of the pioneers, still felt in Israel today
 - The miraculous revival of the Hebrew language
- 

LESSON 1



WHO THEY WERE AND WHY THEY CAME

.....

Between the years 1904-1914, about 40,000 Jews, mainly from Eastern Europe, especially Russia, arrived in Eretz Yisrael. Historians call this period the Second Aliyah.

In the following lessons we will try to understand these people and explore the reasons they came as well as their accomplishments.

Did You Know?

While it is estimated that the number of immigrants during this period reached 40,000, we cannot be sure because accurate records were not kept, and many of these immigrants did not remain in the country due to the terrible hardships they encountered (more on that later!). Many returned to their countries of origin or moved on to other countries that offered economic and physical security, such as the United States.

Your aims for this lesson are:

- To understand who these pioneers were, where they came from and why they came
- To explore their ideology (beliefs)
- To meet A.D. Gordon, an important personality of the Second Aliyah



Did You Know?

The term "*Aliyah*" means to "go up" and is used when Jews move to the Land of Israel. A possible reason is that the Land of Israel is considered to be in a higher state of holiness than all other lands, so when immigrating there, one is "going up" in holiness.

Activity 1

Do you know anyone in your family, community or school who has "made *aliyah*"? See if you can think of three people or families. Write their names, how you know them, which city/country they came from and where in Israel they live.

Who Were the Pioneers of the Second Aliyah?



Hi there. My name is Rebecca. I am in the 5th grade, and I am doing research about my family for a Jewish history project. My grandparents are making *aliyah* next month, and I am helping them clear out their attic. I have found some really interesting stuff for my project and I thought I would share it with you.

Many years ago, when he was a young child, my Saba Aaron used to live in Israel. In fact, he was one of the first children to be born on Kibbutz Degania, the first kibbutz. This is a photograph of him in front of the children's



house on the kibbutz. His parents moved to the Land of Israel during the Second Aliyah. They were pioneers, *chalutzim*.

Activity 2

Look up the word "pioneer" in the dictionary. Write the definition. Can you think of three examples of pioneering? Write them too. Now explain why we describe the *olim* (people who made *aliyah*) during the Second Aliyah as pioneers.

Saba Aaron's parents made *aliyah* in 1913 from Pinsk, a small town in Russia. They were both 22. They were childhood friends and married a few years after they arrived in Eretz Yisrael. Look at what I found in the attic – dried sheaves of wheat and barley. At her wedding, my great-grandmother Rivka Fruma (I am named after her) held this wheat and barley from the kibbutz fields, instead of flowers.

"Why didn't she have flowers?" I asked my Saba. He told me that she didn't want flowers. "The crops of the kibbutz were more important to her than flowers."

Most of the *kibbutznikim* were young and from Eastern Europe, from countries like Russia. They were very different from the other Jews who lived in Eretz Yisrael at the time.

The Jews who had previously been living in the Land of Israel can be divided into 2 groups:

- a) The Jews of the old *yishuv* (the old settlement). They had been living in the Land of Israel for many generations. They were deeply religious and pious Jews who mainly lived in the four holy cities (Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed). These Jews spent much of their time learning Torah and were supported by donations (*chaluka*). They were not engaged in farming or in other jobs.

- b) The *olim* of the First Aliyah. They were mostly families and were generally religious. Some built new farming communities and some settled in the cities.

On the other hand, my great-grandparents and their fellow *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah were mainly young (in their early twenties or even younger) and single when they came. Most of them were secular and not religious (more on that later) and they were fiercely independent, refusing any offer of financial help. They preferred to learn how to farm and build their own settlements and kibbutzim. They were setting the foundations for what would one day be the State of Israel, and they knew it!



Why Did They Come?

For my project I had to interview my Saba and ask him all about his parents and his childhood. My favorite part of the interview was when he explained why his parents made *aliyah*. Would you like to read it?

"My Family" Project – An Interview with Saba Aaron – Part 1

Rebecca: So why did your parents choose to leave Russia, leaving behind their families and friends?

Saba Aaron: Well, whenever people decide to leave their country, there are things that push them away and things that attract them to their new home. It was very hard to be a Jew in Russia at that time. There was terrible anti-Semitism, pogroms all the time. My father's cousin Beryl was killed in the infamous Kishinev pogrom.

Rebecca: What is a pogrom?

Saba Aaron: A pogrom is when a Jewish *shtetl* or neighborhood was attacked, often by the police or the army as well as by the local people. Many Jews were killed and their property was stolen or destroyed. Forty-seven Jews were killed in the 1903 Kishinev pogrom in Russia. Both my parents experienced terrible



suffering, just because they were Jews. The *olim* of the Second Aliyah dreamed of living in a place where they would be accepted for who they were. But they also dreamed of living in Eretz Yisrael the Jewish homeland, where they could build a better life for themselves and their children. They hoped that one day, with the foundations that they would build, Eretz Yisrael would be the home for the entire Jewish people.

Meet the Yemenites

During this same time period another group of Jews made *aliyah* and realized their age-old dream of living in the Holy Land. By the end of this period 4,500 Yemenite Jews had made the long and dangerous journey from Yemen to Israel (although they already began coming earlier than this during the 1880s). Deeply religious, the Yemenite Jews heard that Jews were returning from Europe to Eretz Yisrael and hoped that this heralded the coming of the Messiah. They came to settle the Holy Land.

The Jews from Yemen had different customs and a completely different culture from the Ashkenazi Jews

of Europe. These two very different communities found it difficult to interact and remained quite separate.



A pogrom



Activity 3

Using an atlas, determine the distance between Russia and Israel, and between Yemen and Israel. This is the distance “as the crow flies” that the *olim* traveled. Note that in reality, the route was much longer, as they had to travel overland and by sea - not in a straight line.



A Question for You

During this period (1904-1914) when about 40,000 Jews from Europe made *aliyah*, more than **one million** Jews immigrated to the United States. The 40,000 *chalutzim* could have gone to the US instead. Why do you think they didn't?

“My Family” Project – An interview with Saba Aaron – Part 2

Rebecca: I still don't understand. If the *chalutzim* could have chosen the safety of America, why did they choose the more difficult option of Israel? It would have been so much easier for them.

Saba Aaron: Well my child, you have to understand what made them tick: their passions and their ideology. They came from a world where there was tremendous inequality between people. The rich were very rich and the poor were very poor, and the King of Russia, known as the Czar, ruled the people ruthlessly. The *chalutzim*, like many in Russia at the time, longed to build a new world where everyone was equal, and where everyone was cared for. However, the *chalutzim* knew that the only place where Jews would truly be looked after would be in a country of their own, in Eretz Yisrael. So they dreamed of building a utopian society where everyone was equal and shared everything, no one being richer or poorer, stronger or weaker.

Rebecca: What does a utopian society mean?

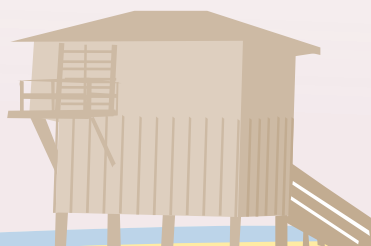
Saba Aaron: Utopia is a perfect place, where everything is ideal and everyone is happy. The *chalutzim* dreamed of creating that perfect place in Eretz Yisrael. Just like their non-Jewish friends in Russia, they felt that socialism was the best way to achieve this. Socialism is when everyone shares all their material wealth, and so everyone is equal. The *chalutzim* built kibbutzim, small farming settlements where everyone together owned the land, the animals and the machines, etc. Your great-grandparents Yehuda Leib and Rivka Fruma settled on the first ever kibbutz, Degania, in 1913, three years after it was established.

Activity 4

Close your eyes. Imagine yourself lying on the grass by a stream on a beautiful spring day with the warm sun shining on your face. You are about to have an out-of-body experience.

Feel yourself floating away above your body, higher and higher until you can hardly see your body by the stream. You arrive at a new place where you have never been before. It is called Utopia, the perfect place. Everything about this place is perfect, just as you wish the world was. Take a good look around, and pay attention to what makes this place so wonderful.

Search for a souvenir that represents this utopia for yourself and that you can share with your friends. When you return write down five of the ideas and things that made your utopia so special and perfect, and explain the souvenir that you chose to bring back and why.



What Do You Think?

Without spending any money (because the pioneers were often quite poor) how could you improve your class or your school? What kind of things could you change to make it the perfect school? Could these same things be used to make society better as well?

Now we will examine how the *chalutzim* tried to create a utopia in Eretz Yisrael, but first we will meet one of the leaders.

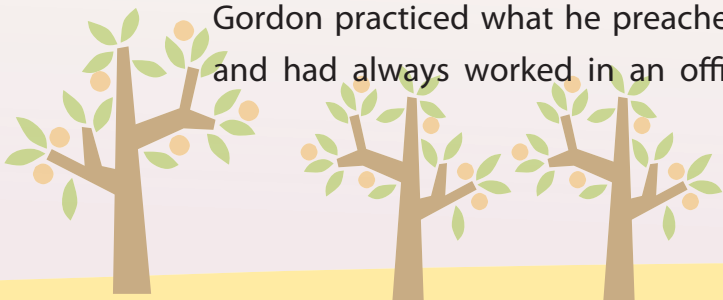
Meet A. D. Gordon

Aharon David Gordon (1856-1922), usually called A.D. Gordon, was one of the leaders of the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah. However, in many ways he was different from the *chalutzim*. He was 48 when he came on *aliyah* - much older than the average pioneer - and he was also an observant Jew for most of his life, only becoming secular towards the end. Yet, the ideas he wrote about inspired a whole generation of *chalutzim* to work the land on *kibbutzim*.



His basic principle was that all nations are attached to their land and its soil, and that because Jews had been a landless people for two thousand years, they had lost the soul of their nationhood. It was necessary, therefore, for the Jew to return to the Land of Israel and to work its soil. In doing so, the soul of the Jewish nation would return. And so, he was the inspiration for Labor Zionism and one of the founders of Kibbutz Degania and the kibbutz movement, whose members worked tirelessly to restore the land.

Gordon practiced what he preached. Even though he was not a young man and had always worked in an office, when he made *aliyah* he insisted on



leading by example and working in the fields and orchards. He refused to accept a less physically challenging job.

Gordon was also a man who refused to take favors from people. When he was young and living in Russia, parents often paid a bribe to prevent their children from being drafted into the Russian army. He would not allow his parents to pay that bribe. He said that if he was not drafted, the army would take someone else in his place, and that was unfair. He also refused payment for articles he wrote and classes he taught, using the *mishnaic* principle: "Do not turn the Torah into a source of income." Furthermore, when he moved to Palestine and became ill, friends provided for his medical care. He insisted on paying back all their expenses.

A.D. Gordon died in 1922.

Building the New Jew

When I was exploring Saba's attic I came across this photo. It is Saba Aaron's father working in the fields of the kibbutz with a rifle across his shoulder, and on the back of the picture, the words, "The New Jew, April 1914." When I asked Saba what that meant he showed me a really scary poem written by Chaim Nachman Bialik. He was one of the first ever modern-day poets who wrote in Hebrew, and inspired many of the *chalutzim* to make *aliyah*. We will learn more about Bialik in another unit.



The poem Saba showed me is called "In the City of Slaughter" and it is about the Kishinev Pogrom in 1903. My Saba told me that the *chalutzim* were shocked that Jews could be attacked like this and be so helpless. If Jews living in Russia could be treated this way, then we needed to build a new type of Jew who would be different in every way. This idea is part of a concept called the "New Jew."



Excerpts from *In the City of Slaughter*, Chaim Nachman Bialik

Arise, go forth to the city of the slaughter, and come to the courtyards,

And with your own eyes you will see, and with your hand you will feel on the fences,

On the trees, on the stones, and on the plaster on the walls;

The congealed blood...

You flee and come to the courtyard; in the courtyard is a heap.

On this heap, two are beheaded: A Jew and his dog.

One axe beheaded them, and on to the rubbish heap they were thrown...

They (the Jews who hid) lay in their shame and they saw; they didn't move or budge;

They didn't gouge out their eyes; they didn't go out of their minds.

Perhaps a man even prayed, to himself, in his heart...

Now go, and I will bring you to all the hiding places: Outhouses, pig-pens, and other filthy places.

You will see with your eyes where they were hiding,

Your brothers, the sons of your people, descendents of the Maccabees...

Like scampering mice they fled, they hid like fleas

And died the death of dogs there where they were found.



Funeral of the Sifrei Torah which were damaged in the Kishinev Pogrom

What Do You Think?

Bialik wrote this poem after interviewing survivors of the Kishinev Pogrom.

1. What disturbed Bialik most, the death or the reaction of those who lived?

2. How does he describe those who died and those who lived? Are there any similarities?
3. Why do you think he described the victims as descendents of the Maccabees?
4. What is Bialik's overall message from this poem?
5. Can you think why this poem inspired the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah?

The *chalutzim* were inspired to leave the *galut* and become New Jews who had dignity and autonomy and control over their destiny.

Activity 5

Spot the Difference

Compare the two photographs Rebecca found in the attic. The first photograph is of Saba Aaron in the kibbutz fields, and the second is of his grandfather, Zayde Mendel. How many differences can you spot?



Did You Know?

While the stereotype between the "New" and "Old" Jew was very powerful, the following clarifications must be made:

In many instances, including in Kishinev and even in the Holocaust, the Old Jew did fight back.

The situation in which the Jews of Europe found themselves was very difficult. It was almost impossible to fight back and it is unlikely that had any New Jews been in these pogroms, they would have fared any better than the Old Jews.

It is because of this impossible situation, that many New Jews realized that they had to leave Europe. They understood that the only place that the Jewish people could protect themselves was in the Land of Israel. It was only there that the Jew could fight back.

In this lesson we met Rebecca who introduced us to her Saba Aaron, born on the first kibbutz, Degania. We began to understand why her great-grandparents moved to the Land of Israel from Russia during the Second Aliyah.

In the next lesson we will explore some of the difficulties and challenges the *chalutzim* faced.

LESSON 2



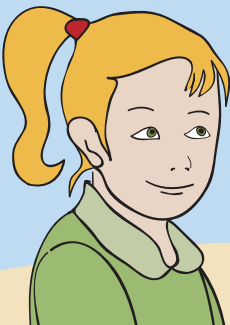
CHALLENGES AND HARDSHIPS: EVERYDAY LIFE FOR THE CHALUTZIM

In the previous lesson we met Rebecca and began to understand some of the reasons why her great-grandparents made *aliyah*.

In this lesson we explore some of the difficulties and challenges of everyday life that they and the other *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah faced.

Your aims for this lesson are to:

- Understand how difficult *aliyah* can be, leaving behind family, friends and the culture in which you grew up
- Explore the difficulties the *chalutzim* faced trying to farm a barren and uninhabited land
- Learn about the security dangers faced by the kibbutzim and the settlements and how the *chalutzim* defended themselves
- Meet a very famous pioneer poetess



Hi again. Saba Aaron collected journals and writings from this period, and I have been looking through them all. From these we can get an idea about what everyday life was like for the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah.

Activity 1

What is the hardest thing you have ever accomplished? Passing an exam? Running a race? Starting in a new school?

Write a few sentences describing how it felt while you were tackling the challenge, and then how it felt once it was over.

Now we will try to understand the enormous challenges that the *chalutzim* faced and how they must have felt looking back at their eventual success.

There were three major challenges that the *chalutzim* faced:

- A. The challenge of making *aliyah*
- B. Everyday challenges and hardships – agriculture and disease
- C. Security challenges

We will examine each challenge and will read testimonies of people who experienced them. Your teacher may prefer to divide you into three groups, with each group reviewing a separate challenge.

A. The Challenge of Making *Aliyah*

Aliyah must be hard at any time - leaving your friends and family and the place where you grew up, for a strange country with customs and a culture that are unfamiliar to you. Here is a diary entry that I found in Saba's collection. Natan

Chofshi, who made *aliyah* in 1908, wrote:



This was Eretz Yisrael? How few were the Jews that we met, among the multitude of Arabs on the shore and in the streets of the town. How strange to see a camel, how odd to see the veils of the Arab women, and how hot it was...

The dining area was full of young men and women. The noise was great and it grew even more as several of the youngsters got up to greet us, the newcomers, and to make space for us to sit. From every side questions rained down on us, mostly in Yiddish... my neighbor at the table was a tall and square-shouldered boy by the name of Hershel Steiper, a guard in the vineyards of Rechovot...

He turned to me with a very strange and difficult question. "Why did you come? Have you still got money in your pocket? Today from Yaffo a boat is sailing back to Russia and you can still make that ship and return before you stay here without a penny in your pocket."



What Do You Think?

What do you think were the major challenges for the *chalutzim* when they first arrived in Eretz Yisrael? Are these the same challenges that *olim* face today when they leave their birthplace to make *aliyah*? Do you think it is any easier to make *aliyah* today than it was in 1908? Why?

Activity 2

If you made *aliyah* today, what do you think you would miss most about your life? Make a list of six things you would miss and rank them in order of priority.

B. Everyday Challenges and Hardships – Agriculture and Disease

Saba told me that the biggest challenge for the *chalutzim* was learning how to be good farmers, and struggling to turn the marshy and rocky neglected land of Eretz Yisrael into land that could be farmed. He read this excerpt from the travel diaries of the famous American author Mark Twain, when he visited Eretz Yisrael in 1869:

So ends the pilgrimage. We ought to be glad that we did not make it for the purpose of feasting our eyes upon fascinating aspects of nature, for we should have been disappointed... it truly *is* "monotonous and uninviting," and there is no sufficient reason for describing it as being otherwise.

Of all the lands there are for dismal scenery, I think Palestine must be the prince. The hills are barren, they are dull of color, they are unpicturesque in shape. The valleys are unsightly deserts fringed with a feeble vegetation that has an expression about it of being sorrowful and despondent.

The Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee sleep in the midst of a vast stretch of hill and plain wherein the eye rests upon no pleasant tint, no striking object, no soft picture dreaming in a purple haze or mottled with the shadows of the clouds. Every outline is harsh, every feature is distinct, there is no perspective - distance works no enchantment here. It is a hopeless, dreary, heart-broken land...

Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies.

Mark Twain, *Innocents Abroad*, Chapter 56, 1869



What Do You Think?

This is very different from the land that is described in the Bible as "flowing with milk and honey." Why do you think Eretz Yisrael became so desolate? How do you think the *chalutzim* reacted when they arrived to see the state of the land? What do you think were the first most pressing challenges for those building the agricultural settlements and kibbutzim?

I found this diary entry from my Saba Aaron's father, Saba Yosef. There he describes an average day on the kibbutz. How does it compare to your daily schedule?

May 3rd 1913

Dear diary, today was crazy busy. But that's life! I'm now getting used to this kibbutz. Here is an idea of the things that we are doing.

05:00 Wake up, coffee in dining tent

05:30 Milk cows

06:30 Harvesting in the fields and orchards

09:30 Communal Breakfast

10:00 Maintenance work around the kibbutz including assisting the building of the new dining room

1:00 Communal Lunch

2:00 Rest

5:00 Committee meetings



6:00 General members meeting in dining tent

8:00 Communal Supper

9:00 Kumsitz - hora dancing and storytelling

11:00 Guard duty

1:00 Bed



Activity 3

Write out the schedule of the busiest day of your week.

- How many sleeping hours?
- How many working hours?
- How many recreation hours?
- How many rest hours?
- How exhausted are you at the end of the day?

Now compare it with Saba Yosef's kibbutz schedule.



I also found this diary entry by the famous poetess who was simply known as Rachel. Saba told me that Rachel wrote beautiful poetry that captured the emotions of the *chalutzim* during the Second Aliyah. This piece shows how difficult life was:

How did the day pass at the Kinneret? The dawn would see us rise for work. There were fourteen of us. Blistered hands, bare feet, sunburnt and scratched, determined

faces, and burning hearts. The very air rang with our song, our talk and our laughter. The hoes rose and fell ceaselessly. For a moment you stop and wipe your sweat from your brow with your kaffiya, steal a loving glance at the sea. How glorious. Blue, a deep blue, a bringer of peace, soothing the soul. A gull wheels above the water. Soon, the small steamboat which brings passengers from Tzemach to Tiberias, will puff its smoke skyward.

At noon, we returned to the farm. Still the sea is with us. Its sky-blue eye glancing at us through the windows of the dining room. The more spartan the meal, the more joyful our voices. We longed to sacrifice ourselves, and by so doing to sanctify the name of the homeland.

I remember that we planted eucalyptus trees in the swamp, at the place where the Jordan divides off from the Kinneret and flows southward, flecking the rocks with its foam, and overflowing its banks. More than one of us would afterwards shake from fever on our narrow beds. But not for a moment did we cease to be thankful for our fate.

What Do You Think?

What were the difficulties facing the *chalutzim*? Why didn't they consider giving up? What do you think Rachel means by "sacrifice ourselves"? How did they do this? Why do you think Rachel and her friends were "thankful" for their fate?

Did You Know?

Eucalyptus trees were used to drain the swamps that were found in the valleys where many of the early kibbutzim were located. Eucalyptus trees absorb a tremendous amount of water from the soil. Draining the swamps was vital for two reasons.

First, it reclaimed the swamp for farming land, and second, it reduced the number of mosquitoes, which thrive on swamps. This was extremely important, because mosquitoes spread the potentially fatal malaria disease from person to person. Many *chalutzim* lost their lives to malaria.



Meet Rachel

Rachel Bluwstein (1890-1931) was a famous Hebrew poetess who made *aliyah* from Russia in 1909. At the age of 19, Rachel visited Eretz Yisrael with her sister en route to Italy, where they were planning to study art and philosophy. They decided to stay on as Zionist pioneers. She inspired the hearts and imaginations of the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah with her writings. She was one of the first members of Kibbutz Kinneret. She was later encouraged by A. D. Gordon, her mentor, to travel to France to study farming. She became trapped in Europe when World War I broke out, and decided to return to Russia and work with Jewish refugee children. It was there that she contracted tuberculosis, which would eventually claim her life. She returned to Eretz Yisrael at the end of the war and joined Kibbutz Degania.



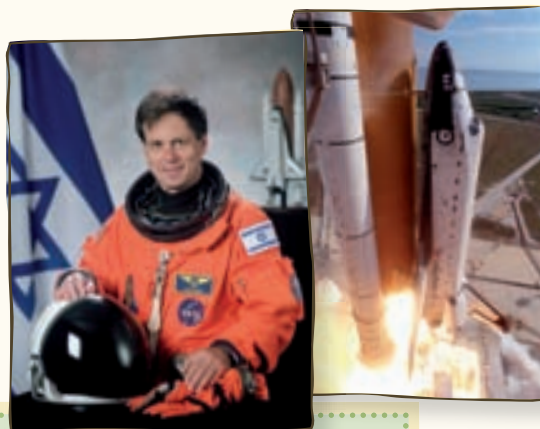
Kibbutz Kinneret today

However she became too ill to remain on the kibbutz and lived out her remaining days in Tel Aviv and then in a hospital in Gadera. Rachel died on April 16, 1931, at the age of 40. She is buried in the Kinneret cemetery in a grave overlooking the Lake of Kinneret.

Anthologies of Rachel's poetry remain bestsellers to this day. Many of her

poems were set to music, both during her lifetime and afterwards, and are widely sung by Israeli singers.

One of her poems, *HaTishma Koli*, "Do You Hear My Voice," became a very popular Israeli song. Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, was awakened by this song, which was dedicated to him by his wife, as he orbited the earth. The lyrics say:



Do you hear my voice
so far away from me
Do you hear my voice
wherever you are

A strong voice
a voice crying softly
Over time
sending a blessing

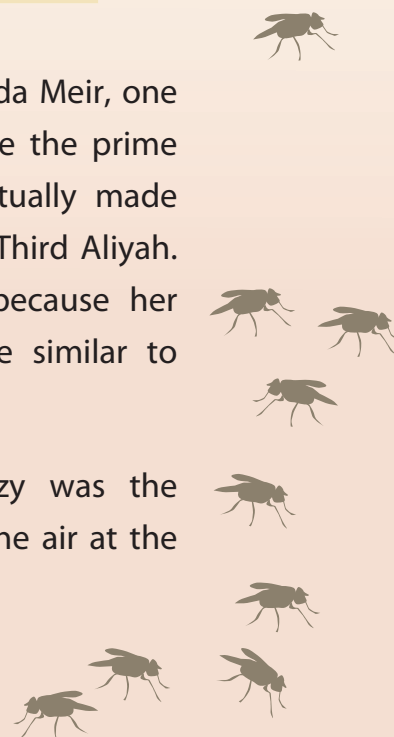
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קוֹל קוֹרָא בְּעֵז
קוֹל בּוֹכָה בְּדַמִּי
וּמַעַל לְזָמָן
מְצֻוֶּה בְּרָכָה



Look what I just found, a memoir of Golda Meir, one of the *chalutzim* who eventually became the prime minister of the State of Israel. She actually made *aliyah* from Wisconsin, USA, during the Third Aliyah. We bring the following quote here, because her experiences on Kibbutz Merhaviva were similar to those of the Second Aliyah.

"The only thing that drove me crazy was the *barhash* (the miniscule flies that filled the air at the



beginning of the summer)... I was convinced that the day would come when the marshlands would be dried out and we would no longer fear malaria, but I had difficulty seeing how we would rid ourselves of these damned flies. In the summer we would begin working at four in the morning since as soon as the sun rose it was impossible to remain in the fields because of the flies. We would smear ourselves with Vaseline (when we had some) and would wear long sleeved shirts with high collars and would wrap our heads in scarves. When we would go inside, we did not have less *barhash* in our eyes, ears and nostrils. Even the cows deserted the fields when the flies invaded them. I succeeded in finding solutions to all my problems – except for that of the *barhash*...

"The most widespread disease that raged throughout the country during this period was malaria... it was a source of despair as much as the *barhash*; a high

temperature, severe headaches, the total loss of appetite to the extent that you could not even tolerate the idea of food. I was in charge of the hen house and of the incubator that we had just acquired (the "gigantic" incubator for five hundred eggs, if I am not mistaken was the first of its kind in the country) when it was my turn to catch malaria. I remember that while I was lying in bed, burning with fever, no one had thought about giving the chicks water to drink,

so that when my fever diminished and I was able to get out of bed, I discovered that some had died of thirst. Then my fever rose again and I had hallucinations in which I saw the room filled with dead chicks."

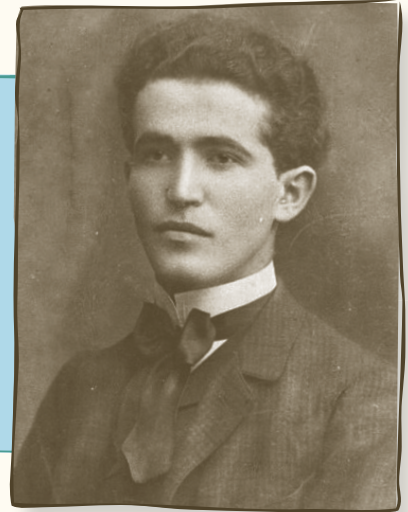


What Do You Think?

Although Golda didn't die from malaria, many *chalutzim* did. What impact do you think this had on the *chalutzim*? Do you think their work was worth risking their lives?

Did You Know?

David Ben-Gurion, another future prime minister of Israel, was a *chalutz* of the Second Aliyah. He also caught malaria and received medical advice to leave the country until his health was restored. In true character, he chose to ignore the advice!

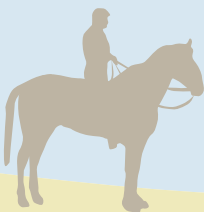


C. Security Challenges

There were other risks to the lives of the *chalutzim*. The kibbutzim and settlements were small and isolated. Often people worked by themselves or in small groups in the fields. They were constantly vulnerable to attack. Saba told me that he personally remembers when kibbutz members were attacked in the fields and the kibbutz was robbed. This excerpt from the memoirs of Arthur Ruppin, another leader of the Second Aliyah, described the loss of life in Degania's early years.

"During the first years, Degania lost many of its most valuable members, victims of treacherous acts of murder or accidents. On November 25, 1913, I received the following telegram: *Moshe Barsky of Degania was murdered on Shabbat. Joseph Salzman of Kinneret was murdered yesterday. Come.*

"Moshe Barsky was a young man of eighteen years of age who was, in general, greatly appreciated because of his cheerful disposition. His tragic death was a shock to all of us. His father showed that the spirit of the Maccabees was still



alive in Israel: when he received the news of his son's death, he decided to send his second son in place of his first. The news quickly spread throughout the country."

What Do You Think?

Why do you think these *chalutzim* were being murdered? What do you think Ruppin means when he speaks of the "spirit of the Maccabees"? Earlier we saw another reference to the Maccabees. Can you remember where? Compare the two references? What do you think of Moshe Barsky's father's reaction? Can you understand it? Do you agree with it?

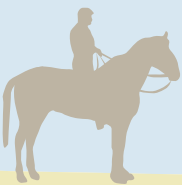
Meet Hashomer

Hashomer was an organization founded by the *chalutzim* in 1909 to defend the kibbutzim and the settlements of the *Yishuv*. The members were assigned to various communities to protect them. Until then, Jewish settlements had relied on local Arab guardsmen to protect themselves from attack and theft. These guards had more experience in the use of firearms. However, this was against the ideology of the *chalutzim* who believed in using only Jewish labor. It also became apparent that the security of the settlements could not be trusted to these Arabs.

The Jew who could protect himself was also an important part of the ideology of the "New Jew." The Jewish fighters of Hashomer gained legendary status, adopting the dress and customs of the local Bedouins and Druze watchmen, as they proved themselves brave Jewish fighters. Hashomer was later upgraded to the Haganah (in 1920), the underground army of the *Yishuv*, which then became the Israel Defense Forces (in 1948).



Hashomer



Saba told me the story of a very famous *chalutz* who was one of the guardsmen of *Hashomer*. His name was Yosef Trumpeldor. He was a decorated Russian Jewish soldier who made *aliyah* in 1911. He helped establish Jewish military units including *Hashomer*. He was killed in the battle for Tel Hai, in 1920. We will learn about this battle when we study the Third Aliyah, but his dying words were typical of the New Jew. When the doctor told him that there was nothing he could do for him, he said:



אין דבר, טוב למות בעד ארצנו

Never mind, it is good to die for our country

These words inspired the *chalutzim* and became an important motto in Israeli society for years to come.

What Do You Think?

What do you think Trumpeldor meant by these words? Isn't it better to live for one's country? Is there anything worth dying for? Is anything worth killing for? What Jewish values can help us make sense of this difficult debate?

Activity 4

Make a list of the most important things in your life. What would you do or give up to protect them?

Reflections

You may have asked yourself at some point since we met, if my Saba was born on Kibbutz Degania and was the child of the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah, what is he doing in America? Why isn't he still in Israel? Well the answer is that Savta Miriam caught malaria like so many other *chalutzim*, and they decided to join her sister here in New York to recover. They were two of the many thousands of pioneers who chose to leave because of the hardships encountered in Eretz Yisrael. Some estimate that as many as half of the 40,000 immigrants of the Second Aliyah returned to Europe or continued on to America. Since then it has always been Saba Aaron's dream to return to Israel and make *aliyah* himself, and soon he will fulfill this dream.

Activity 5

Whether or not you agree with the risks taken or the hardships experienced by the *chalutzim*, you have to agree that their dedication and commitment to what they believed in is inspiring. Find a way of artistically expressing how inspiring their stories are to you, through art, poetry or prose.

In this lesson we learned about the tremendous challenges and hardships encountered by the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah, including leaving their place of birth for an unfamiliar land, challenges from farming and disease, and finally, issues of defense and conflict.

In the next lesson we will explore the many wonderful achievements of these *chalutzim* in Eretz Yisrael.

LESSON 3



THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CHALUTZIM OF THE SECOND ALIYAH

In the previous lesson we saw some of the challenges that the *chalutzim* faced.

In this lesson, we will explore some of the successes of the *chalutzim*. These achievements served as the foundations for many of the institutions of the future State of Israel. We will examine them in the following four areas:

- A. Hityashvut – Settling Eretz Yisrael
- B. Defense
- C. Social Welfare
- D. Politics and Leadership

While some of the institutions that we will study were actually established later on, the people and ideas that inspired and built them were mostly pioneers from the Second Aliyah.

Your aim for this lesson is to learn about:

- Some of the settlements that were built by the Second Aliyah *chalutzim*, including the first modern Jewish city, Tel Aviv
- Hashomer and how it grew from a defense group to an underground army called the Haganah
- The Histadrut union and how it protected workers, created jobs and helped develop industry
- The Jewish Agency and how the Jews of Eretz Yisrael were governed

We will also meet Dr. Arthur Ruppin and Meir Dizengoff and learn about their impact on Jewish settlement.

Hello. I have been going through Saba Aaron's attic once again. This time I found a real gem. It is a photo album of all the pictures that Saba Aaron took during his trip back to Eretz Yisrael when he was younger. He and his family wanted to see what became of the *chalutzim* and their ideas. We can learn a lot about their achievements just by looking through these photos. Come and see.

A. Hityashvut – Settling Eretz Yisrael

Their first stop was to see what became of Kibbutz Degania. By then, Degania had grown so much that it split into two kibbutzim, Degania *Aleph* and Degania *Bet*. This was to keep the kibbutz small, intimate and manageable. Ironically, Saba told me that today each Degania has about 500 people living there, which isn't really small or intimate.



About 40 settlements were established by the immigrants of the Second Aliyah. Not all of them were kibbutzim and not all of them were even agricultural.

Activity 1

Below you can find some of the settlements that were established by the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah. Using the internet, place all the settlements on a copy of the blank map that your teacher will give you.

Degania, Kinneret, Tel Aviv, Kfar Saba, Tel Hai, Kfar Oriah, Ben Shemen

Which of these have remained small settlements, and which have grown into big towns and cities?



Meet Arthur Ruppin



Dr. Arthur Ruppin (1876-1943) was born in Germany to a rich family that lost all its wealth. He had to leave school at the age of 15 in order to work and help them. Yet he still managed to continue his studies and eventually went to university and earned degrees in law and economics. In 1907 he was sent by the World Zionist Organization (WZO) to Eretz Yisrael to study the condition of the Jews there. He came on *aliyah* the following year.

Ruppin opened the “Eretz Yisrael Office” on behalf of the WZO. His mission was to take the dream of Zionism and turn it into a practical Zionism, so that Jews could settle the country successfully and prepare it for statehood.

In so doing, he identified specific areas for Jews to settle, and helped secure loans to buy the land and build settlements, kibbutzim and cities. He soon became known as “the father of the Zionist settlement,” as he helped buy the land which was to become Tel Aviv and other settlements.

In addition, Ruppin was also well known for his academic research. He was a famous sociologist (he studied society) and established the sociology department at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the first university in Eretz Yisrael.

Subsequently, he became the head of the Jewish Agency and helped large numbers of Jews emigrate from Germany in the 1930s during the Fifth Aliyah.

A street in his home town in Germany is named after him. Many Israeli cities also have streets named in his honor and the city of Haifa awards a prize in his name for extraordinary works in thinking, philosophy and politics.

Ruppin died in 1943, just 5 years before the State of Israel was born, and is buried in Kibbutz Degania.



Focus on Tel Aviv – The First Modern Hebrew City

Not all the immigrants during this time wanted to be farmers and build kibbutzim. Many wanted to engage in industry such as banking and factory work, in or near the cities. They were from the middle class (economically comfortable, not very rich yet not poor) and had always lived in cities in Europe. They wanted to settle in cities in Eretz Yisrael. The trouble was, there weren't that many, and they were very over-crowded.

In 1909, some of the inhabitants of Jaffa decided that they had enough of the cramped and crowded life there and bought a piece of land on the sand dunes just north of Jaffa. They planned to build a suburb of Jaffa where every house would be surrounded by a garden and

the quality of life would be much better. This sand dune became

Tel Aviv, the first new Jewish city in over 2,000 years.

In 1909, Tel Aviv consisted of 60 houses on 12 acres (0.02 square miles) of land. Today the city has almost 400,000 people living on 20 square miles. Look at the picture that Saba Aaron took of Tel Aviv about 15 years after it was established.

Tel Aviv continued to grow rapidly during the years of the Second, Third and Fourth Aliyah. We will learn more about Tel Aviv when we examine the Fourth Aliyah.



*Laying the foundation
stone of Tel Aviv*



Did You Know?

The name "Tel Aviv" symbolizes the re-birth of the Old/New Land. A "Tel" is an archaeological site that covers layers of previous civilizations. "Aviv" means "spring" – renewal. Therefore, the name "Tel Aviv" represents renewal of the ancient civilization of the Jewish people.

Theodore Herzl's book *Altneuland* (German for "Old/New Land") is called "Tel Aviv" in Hebrew. In the book, Herzl describes his vision for a **new** Jewish State in the **old** Land of Israel.

Meet Meir Dizengoff

Meir Dizengoff (1861-1936) was born in Russia and made *aliyah* in 1905, having come into contact with several Zionist thinkers and leaders such as Herzl, Pinsker and Ahad Ha'am. He settled in Jaffa, and was very involved in buying the nearby land which ultimately became Tel Aviv.



Dizengoff Square

He became head of town planning in 1911 and was elected as the first mayor in 1922, when Tel Aviv became a city. During his tenure as mayor he encouraged the expansion of the city.

After his wife's death in 1930 he moved out of his large spacious house and donated it to the city of Tel Aviv, requesting that it be turned into an art museum. In 1948, David Ben-Gurion chose this location to declare the establishment of the State of Israel. The building is today a museum, and is



known as Israel's Hall of Independence.

A major thoroughfare and a plaza in Tel Aviv are named in memory of him and his wife.



Did You Know?

In 2009, Tel Aviv celebrated its centennial – 100th birthday. The municipality of Tel Aviv arranged a year-long “party,” with many exciting events, including a marathon, exhibitions, concerts and performances, the opening of new walking routes, as well as celebrations throughout the world, including the recreating of Tel Aviv beach in New York’s Central Park, Chicago, Copenhagen in Denmark, and Vienna in Austria. The festivities culminated in a massive water and light show next to Tel Aviv’s historic lighthouse.

We see that the *chalutzim* were very successful in building the land. We will now see that they had achievements in other areas as well.

B. Defense

Do you remember I told you about Yosef Trumpeldor, one of the guardsman of Hashomer, who lost his life defending Tel Hai? Well look at this pictures that I found of the *Shomrim*. Notice how Arab-looking they dress! Saba told me that he met all the founders of Hashomer, including Israel and Manya Shochat, Yitzhak and Rachel Ben-Tzvi, and Alexander Zeid.



What Do You Think?

As we saw, Hashomer and Jewish defense was an important part of the character of the New Jew. What is it about the photograph and the way these people are dressed that tells us they are New Jews? Why do they look like Arabs? Do you think it is a little strange that some of the founders of Hashomer were women? Why or why not?

The truth is that by the time Saba came back to visit, Hashomer had disbanded and a much more important organization called the Haganah had been established in its place. The Haganah became an unofficial Jewish paramilitary organization that would protect the settlements and kibbutzim and repel the increasing number of Arab attacks. You can see from this photograph in the album how different the soldiers of the Haganah look compared to the *Shomrim*. They have uniforms and look regimented like soldiers in a real army.



Ultimately as the conflict grew more intense, the Haganah found itself functioning as a secret underground army. In a future unit we will learn how the Haganah even fought against the British in order to drive them out and create an independent Jewish State. The Haganah eventually became the core of the Israel Defense Forces.



C. Social Welfare

I also found these posters that were once hung all over the streets of Israel, publicizing the important work of the Histadrut, the workers' union. Saba told me that he was fascinated by the efforts of the *chalutzim* to protect each and every worker in both agriculture and industry.



Histadrut membership card

He said that the Histadrut is still the largest union in Israel today, looking after the rights of 650,000 workers in Israel. It was founded in 1920 by the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah. The *chalutzim* organized themselves according to the principles of socialism (everyone having equal rights), with the Histadrut making sure that workers received sick pay, a decent minimum wage, employment for as many Jews as possible, and job security for all its members.

Saba showed me this text from the opening resolution of the first Histadrut conference in 1920:

It is the aim of the General Federation of all the workers and laborers of Eretz Yisrael who live by the sweat of their brows without exploiting the toil of others, to promote land settlement, to involve itself in all economic and cultural issues affecting labor in Eretz Yisrael, and to build a Jewish workers' society here.

What Do You Think?

What do you think a "Jewish workers' society" means? What do workers need from the society? From what do they need to be protected?

Activity 2

Take a closer look at the posters on pages 40-41. Can you see how the ideology of the Second Aliyah is expressed through the artwork, as well as the role of the Histadrut in the building up of the State of Israel? Make up a caption for each poster explaining its message.

Did You Know?

The word *Histadrut* means “organization” and comes from the root *SeDeR*, as in *Siddur* or *Pesach Seder*, or *Beseder* - something that is organized and well run.

Activity 3

Ask your parents about unions that exist in your country. What have been some of the accomplishments of the union and what are some of the disadvantages?

The Histadrut also wanted to ensure that all the *olim* who arrived in Eretz Yisrael would have jobs. Therefore, they established different companies and initiatives in order to create as many jobs as possible.



This included a bank (*Bank HaPoalim* – The Bank of the Workers), a construction company (*Solel Boneh* – “Paving and Building”), a department store (*HaMashbir*), an insurance company (*HaSneh*) and a health fund (*Clalit*). These companies still exist today and have played a major role in developing Israel’s industry, economy and health care.

D. Politics and Leadership



Clalit health care

By 1920, the *yishuv* (the Jews living in Eretz Yisrael) numbered over 200,000. The *chalutzim* realized that they needed to create a governing body, that would coordinate the building of settlements, hospitals, schools, roads, organize an army, create jobs, encourage and support immigration, etc. So in 1923, they established the Jewish Agency. Even though there was not yet a Jewish state, the Jewish Agency acted as a government for the *yishuv*.

The Jewish Agency then became the official voice of the Jews of Eretz Yisrael, implementing policy and representing the *yishuv* to the British controllers of Eretz Yisrael and to the rest of the world.



Consequently, when the State of Israel was born, there was a smooth transition of power from the Jewish Agency to the Israeli government, because many of the institutions of government were already in place. For example, as soon as the State of Israel was declared, the leader of the Jewish Agency, David Ben-Gurion, became the leader of Israel, until elections were held.



Among Saba's photographs, I found this one. These are some of the leaders of the Second Aliyah. Can you guess who is the man in the center? David Ben-Gurion! There aren't

many photographs of him when he was this young. This was taken at the beginning of his political career in Eretz Yisrael. Sitting to the right of him is Yitzhak Ben-Zvi who was later to become Israel's second president. Together with many others, they were instrumental in setting up

the first political parties, even before there was a state or a Jewish government in Eretz Yisrael. In 1919, *Ahdut HaAvodah* (Labor Unity) was formed with David Ben-Gurion as its leader. This was the forerunner of Israel's famous Labor Party which won every election until 1977, and continued to be one of the main parties during Israel's first 60 years.

Did You Know?

When the State of Israel was established there was a debate as to whether the Jewish Agency should continue to exist, since almost all its functions were taken over by the government. It was decided that the Jewish Agency would continue to exist, but with a different role. Today, its primary role is to promote Zionism. It does this by helping Jews immigrate to Israel and by providing Israel education to Jews

Activity 4

Put yourself in the shoes of the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah. Choose five of the journal entry titles below and write a 5-10 sentence entry in your journal as if you were the *chalutz*. You may want to research some of the items in more depth.

18th Elul 5670/September 22, 1910: *The Day I Decided to Leave Russia for Eretz Yisrael*

4th Cheshvan 5671/November 6, 1910: *Setting Sail for Palestine*

1st Kislev 5671/December 2, 1910: *Arriving at Jaffa*

27th Kislev 5671/December 28, 1910: *My First Day on Kibbutz*

15th Shvat 5671/February 13, 1911: *The Kibbutz Celebrates Tu BiShvat*

9th Adar 5671/March 9, 1911: *Life with Malaria*

29th Nissan 5671/April 27, 1911: *Enlisting in Hashomer*

22nd Sivan 5671/June 18, 1911: *A.D. Gordon... in Person!*

9th Tammuz 5671/July 5, 1911: *Day Trip to the First Modern Jewish City*

23rd Av 5671/August 17, 1911: *Postcard Home – My First Few Months in Palestine*

In this lesson we saw some of the incredible achievements of the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah and how they built the foundations for the future State of Israel.

In the following lesson we will learn about another amazing achievement: The revival of the Hebrew language.



LESSON 4



REVIVAL OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE

In this lesson we will help Rebecca with her Ivrit homework and learn about the revival of Hebrew as a modern vibrant language.

Your aims for this lesson are to:

- Understand how Hebrew was used throughout the generations
- Understand that the revival of Hebrew was central to the ideology of the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah
- Meet Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and understand his role in the revival of Hebrew
- Learn how Ben-Yehuda created new Hebrew words and learn some examples of them

Hi there. Or should I say Shalom Shalom! I'm so happy that you came. I have some Ivrit homework to do and I need your help. Saba is coming by later and I want to show him my work so he can be proud that I am also learning Hebrew.

The last time I chatted with him he told me how important Hebrew was for the *chalutzim*. He explained how Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and others revived Hebrew from an ancient holy language to a bustling modern-day language. I'll tell you all about it if you help me with my homework!

Are you ready?



Hebrew: The Ancient Language of an Ancient People

For 1300 years, from biblical times until the exile, Jews spoke Hebrew, the language of the Bible. After the Bar Kochba revolt against the Romans and the exile from Eretz Yisrael, Jews spoke Hebrew less and less. They struggled to fit in to the countries of their exile. This meant learning new languages, or sometimes combining Hebrew with other languages. For instance, Yiddish is a mixture between Hebrew and German and Ladino is a mixture of Hebrew and Spanish.

When Jews met Jews from countries with different languages, they were still able to communicate in Hebrew. Nevertheless, for a period of almost 2,000 years, Hebrew was mostly a holy language. It was reserved for prayer, religious ritual and religious writings such as biblical commentaries, and *Halacha* (Jewish legal rulings).

This all changed with the advent of modern Zionism and with the dedication of the *chalutzim* of the First and Second *Aliyot*.

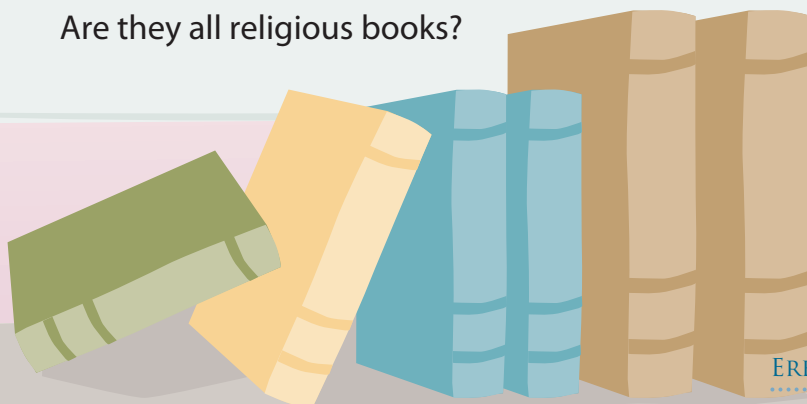
Activity 1

Librarian for the Day

Take a look at the books in your house. Count how many books you have that contain some Hebrew in them. How many are there?

Now categorize them (you may need to ask for help from your parents). What types of books are they? Write down the types of books you found (e.g. siddur/prayer book, Passover Haggadah, Chumash/Bible, novel, poetry).

Are they all religious books?



The Revival of a People and Its Language

The Jewish people were one people even though they were spread all over the world and spoke many different languages. However, an important ingredient to nationhood is having a common language. Therefore, in order for the Jewish people to support their claim to the rest of the world that they were indeed one nation, they had to return to their language as well as to their land.

Therefore, many Zionist authors and poets in Europe began writing in Hebrew, while the *chalutzim* in Eretz Yisrael started speaking in Hebrew for the first time in 2000 years!

In the early 1900s only a handful of people in Eretz Yisrael spoke Hebrew. Today, millions of people speak Hebrew. Hebrew is the official language of the State of Israel and can be heard in the streets of many cities all over the world. The revival of Hebrew can be considered to be a modern-day miracle. One of the main inspirations behind that revival was a man named Eliezer Ben-Yehuda.

Meet Eliezer Ben-Yehuda

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858-1922) is widely regarded as the father of modern Hebrew. Ben-Yehuda was deeply influenced by other national movements in Europe at this time, such as those of the Bulgarians and Italians who were all fighting to have their own countries. He thought that if they deserved their own country and independence then so much more so did his people. He therefore became one of the first people committed to Zionism, even 20 years before Herzl!

He felt that the Jewish people would regain their independence in Eretz Yisrael if two things happened:



- They move to Eretz Yisrael and set up self-sufficient communities there.
- They begin to speak their own language once again.

Ben-Yehuda's name was originally Eliezer Perlman. He Hebraized it to Ben-Yehuda, meaning the son of Yehuda (his father's name). He was born in Lithuania to a deeply religious family who wanted him to become a rabbi. He was extremely gifted intellectually and was able to master a vast wealth of Jewish religious literature. This gave him a huge Hebrew vocabulary, including many obscure words, that he would soon use to revive the Hebrew language.



In 1881, at the young age of 23, he realized the importance of Jewish nationalism and came on *aliyah* to Eretz Yisrael. This was even before the First Aliyah. At that time, the Jews of Eretz Yisrael did not speak Hebrew. Ben-Yehuda decided that he would change that. He became a teacher in a school and insisted that some of the subjects be taught in Hebrew. The more he thought about the national revival of the Jewish people, the more he realized how important it was that the language of the Jewish people also be revived.

He led by example and decided that Hebrew would be the spoken language in his home. He also founded a Hebrew newspaper and began work on a Hebrew dictionary. It eventually became his most famous work. He also established

the Hebrew Language Committee, which today is called the Academy of the Hebrew Language. One of its responsibilities is to coin new words for concepts and inventions that did not previously exist. We will soon see how Ben-Yehuda developed this process.

He suffered for most of his life from



tuberculosis and died in 1922 at the age of 64. Thirty thousand people attended his funeral. A month before he died, the British declared Hebrew the official language of the Jews of Palestine.

Ben-Yehuda is buried on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

Did You Know?

- Ben-Yehuda's son, Ben-Zion, was the first child raised with modern Hebrew as his mother tongue. To ensure this, his father refused to allow any other language to be spoken in their home. If visitors who could not converse in Hebrew came to his home, Ben-Yehuda asked his son to go to his room.
- Ben-Yehuda once got upset with his wife for singing a lullaby in Russian to their son.
- Ben-Zion only began to speak at the late age of four. This was mainly due to the fact that he had very few opportunities to speak with anyone other than his parents, since he only spoke Hebrew!

Activity 2

Ben-Yehuda Street

In Israel, many streets are named after people who have made significant contributions to Jewish history and the development of Zionism and the State of Israel.

One of the most famous streets in Israel is Jerusalem's Ben-Yehuda Street. It is in the heart of Jerusalem's commercial center, and is called the "*midrechov*," a pedestrian "Main Street." There are also many other Ben-Yehuda streets



throughout Israel.

Using the Internet, find as many as you can.

Hebrew in the Home, Hebrew in the School, and Words, Words, Words

In order to revive Hebrew, Ben-Yehuda concentrated on three main areas: Hebrew in the Home; Hebrew in the School; and Words, Words, Words. He felt the need to be a role model for spoken Hebrew and decided to speak to fellow Jews only in Hebrew.

This insistence forced everyone who interacted with him and his family to grapple with speaking Hebrew, and proved that it could be done.

However, since up until then Hebrew had only been used as a language of prayer and study, it lacked many words needed to navigate the modern world. In fact, this became most obvious to Ben-Yehuda as his son grew up and needed words for his everyday life that didn't yet exist in Hebrew, such as train, bicycle, doll, and ice cream etc.

He therefore embarked on his most ambitious project, *A Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew* where he defined and analyzed Hebrew terms already in existence and created those that he felt were lacking. The project was such a large one that he could not complete it before his death. It ultimately became a 17-volume dictionary, completed by his wife and son.

Before his death, he realized that the battle to revive Hebrew would only succeed if the younger generation spoke it freely. To this end, he toiled endlessly, trying to convince teachers and principals to use Hebrew as the language of instruction across the country. As we saw, he personally modeled this goal, by teaching in Hebrew in a school in Jerusalem.

However, not all schools were prepared to teach in Hebrew, and the battle

over Hebrew in the schools came to a head in 1913 with the Language War.

The Language War of 1913

Prior to the Second Aliyah, most Jewish schools taught in the native language of the teachers and the people who set up the schools. Hence German, French and other European languages were the language of instruction at that time.

The Hebraization of the school system became a high priority for the *chalutzim*. Hebrew was used in all new schools established from the time of the Second Aliyah onwards and many of the older schools agreed to switch to Hebrew. However, in 1912 the campaign for Hebrew took a big blow when a new Jewish engineering university in Haifa, called the *Technion*, planned to have German as its official language.



The Technion

What Do You Think?

The Language War of 1913 split the Jewish community of Palestine in two. Most Jews did not speak Hebrew as their first language at that time, and German was the cultural language of international study. Most of the professors and students would find it hard to teach and learn in Hebrew. The textbooks were written in German, and if German was the official language of the *Technion*, it would help the fledgling school establish itself in international academia.

The Zionist leaders opposed this plan.

They felt that while it may be hard for the teachers and students of this generation to learn Hebrew, if the language war were to be won, then all

future generations would speak Hebrew as their first language, and the revival of their ancient language and this ancient people in its homeland would be complete.

A “Language War” broke out, led by the Hebrew Teacher’s Association, which vowed to fight with all its energy against the teaching of subjects in a foreign language. They called for a teacher and student boycott of the *Technion*, and protests and student strikes were held. This delayed the opening of the new university. By the time the *Technion* eventually opened in 1924 it was an all-Hebrew institution.

Today the *Technion* is one of the world’s leading science and research universities.

What Do You Think?

Is it important for Jews throughout the world today to understand and speak Hebrew? Why?

Activity 3

Ben-Yehuda for the Day: Rebecca’s Homework

When Ben-Yehuda needed to coin new words, his first source was the Tanach. He then searched Talmudic literature (*Mishnah, Gemara and Midrash*). His next source was Jewish medieval commentaries and responsa. If he still could not find the appropriate word, then he would look into other languages.

This is Rebecca’s homework assignment for her Hebrew studies. Can you help her with it?

Take a look at the list of the modern Hebrew words in the word bank below. Each one is a word that either Ben-Yehuda or the Academy for the Hebrew





Language coined. Each word originates from the Bible. Match the word from the biblical source that was used to build the word.

Modern Hebrew Word Bank



Kitchen
מטבח

Train
רכבת

Umbrella
מטריה

Glasses
משקפיים



Calculator
מחשבון

Restaurant
מסעדה

Library
ספריה

Refrigerator
מקרר

Police Force
משטרה

Gloves
כפפות

Watch
שעון



Source	Biblical Verse
בראשית י"ח:ה Bereshit 18:5	וְאָקַחְהָ פֶת לֶחֶם וְסַעְדוּ לְבָבְכֶם I will take a morsel of bread, and sustain your hearts
שמות ה"י:ד Shmot 5:14	וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׂטָרֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל פַּרְעֹה לֵאמֹר לָמָּה תַעֲשֶׂה כֹה לְעַבְדֶּיךָ So the officers of the children of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you do this to your servants?"
בראשית מ"א Bereshit 40:11	וָאֵתֵן אֶת הַכּוֹס עַל כַּף פַּרְעֹה And I placed the cup on Pharaoh's palm
בראשית י"ט:כ"ח Bereshit 19:28	וַיִּשְׁקֹף עַל פְּנֵי סְדֹם וְעִמֹרָה He looked over the face of Sodom and Gomorrah

<p>בראשית נ:כ Bereshit 50:20</p>	<p>וַאֲתֶם חָשַׁבְתֶּם עָלַי רָעָה אֶל־לִהְיִים חֲשָׁבָה לְטֹבָה</p> <p>You intended evil against me, [but] God intended it for good</p>
<p>שמות ו:י"ז Shmot 6:17</p>	<p>וַיִּקַּח שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת רֶכֶב בַּחֹר וְכָל רֶכֶב מִצְרַיִם</p> <p>He took six hundred select chariots and all the chariots of Egypt</p>
<p>דניאל ד:ט"ז Daniel 4:16</p>	<p>אָדִין דָּנִיֵּאל... אֶשְׁתּוֹמֵם כְּשָׁעָה חֲדָה</p> <p>Then Daniel...was bewildered for some time</p>
<p>שמואל א ט:כ"ג I Shmuel 9:23</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל לַטָּבַח תֵּנָה אֶת הַמָּנָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָךְ</p> <p>Shmuel said to the cook: "Bring the portion which I gave you"</p>
<p>שמות ט"ז:ד Shmot 16:4</p>	<p>וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה הִנְנִי מְמַטֵּיר לָכֶם לֶחֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם</p> <p>So the Lord said to Moses, "Behold! I am going to rain down for you bread from heaven"</p>
<p>בראשית ח:כ"ב Bereshit 8:22</p>	<p>וְקָרָוּ חֹם וְקִיץ וְחֹרֶף</p> <p>Cold and heat, summer and winter</p>
<p>שמות כ"ד:ז Shmot 24:7</p>	<p>וַיִּקַּח סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם</p> <p>He took the Book of the Covenant and read it within the hearing of the people</p>

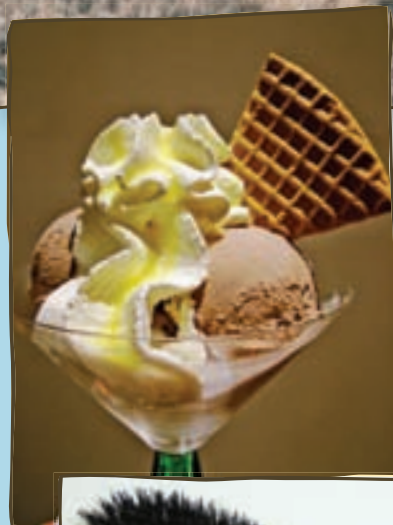
Did You Know?

There are no rhinoceroses in the Bible. So how do we say "a rhinoceros" in Hebrew? Well, a rhinoceros has a horn on its nose. So the words קרן (horn) and אף (nose) were put together - קרנף - and a karnaf was born!

Targum Onkelos, an ancient Aramaic translation of the Bible, translates the strange texture of the manna as גלידה (gelida). Ben-Yehuda used this word for ice-cream.

The word מברשת - a brush, comes from... English!

Ben-Yehuda created a Hebrew word for the telephone - שח-רחוק (literally, distant talk), but it never caught on and Israelis use the international word, טלפון.



Activity 4

Enjoy this Hebrew crossword puzzle. All the answers are words found in this lesson.

Across

2 - we are here to keep the order

5 - use me for 20-20

7 - watch my hands to know when to go

8 - when the rain is here, do not fear, for I am here

In this lesson we met Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and saw some of the successful efforts he and the *chalutzim* made to revive Hebrew and turn it into a modern everyday language.

Throughout these lessons we have learned about the *chalutzim* of the Second Aliyah, and have seen the sacrifice and achievements they made to help settle and rebuild the Land of Israel.

They laid the foundations for the future generations to build and develop the State of Israel into the beautiful and flourishing country that it is today.





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