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Kibbutz Yizrael



**Great sadness has descended upon our home
with the passing of our dear friend**

Shimona Matalon

1935 - 2026

Kibbutz Eulogy for Shimona Matalon, of blessed memory –

Limor Griman, Mazkira.

Shimona was born in 1935 in London, to a Zionist family that dreamed of the Land of Israel. Her father, Isaac, was a physician, and her mother, Dora, a teacher. Her childhood home was one of learning, curiosity, and responsibility. Her early years unfolded in the shadow of the Second World War — years of bombings, separations, and wandering, years that shaped in her an inner resilience, independence and strength of character, even at a very young age.

At the age of fourteen, the family immigrated to Israel. The move was far from simple; it demanded effort, sacrifice, and starting anew. Shimona adopted a clear principle: to be Israeli. She refrained from speaking English — her mother tongue and the language of her childhood — out of conviction and a deep desire to belong. Her Zionist and Israeli identity was a great source of pride for her.

In Jerusalem she studied at the High School by the Hebrew University, was educated in the United Kibbutz Movement, and absorbed values of responsibility, co-operation and communal life. Guided by these values, she joined Garin Kinneret and chose the path of fulfillment on a kibbutz. In 1954 she arrived on Kibbutz Yizrael — a kibbutz only six years old and still in the process of building itself, yet to Shimona it already felt like a well-established kibbutz.

On Yizrael she met Eliyahu Matalon, from a family that had immigrated from Beirut, and together they built a home and a family. They had four children — Roni, Arnon, Hadas, and Yiftach. Shimona's family life was interwoven with kibbutz life, with work, and with a deep sense of responsibility toward her children and toward the community around her.

Shimona worked for many years in agriculture — first in the vineyard and later in the orchards. She grew pears, pecans, and other fruit trees, and was part of a generation that established Jewish agriculture through hard physical labour, perseverance and love of the land.

At the age of forty she plucked up the courage and asked permission to go out to study. She studied biology at Oranim, and later worked at the regional high school in Ein Harod — first as a biology teacher and later as a librarian. Many students were fortunate to learn from a thorough, serious teacher who loved knowledge and saw learning as a value in itself, not merely a means.

Alongside her professional work, Shimona filled a long list of roles on the kibbutz: work organiser, culture coordinator, coordinator of the Economy and Work Committee, coordinator of the Trips Committee, and coordinator of the Audit Committee.

In 1980, with the opening of the new dining hall, she took a year's break from her school work to manage the daily routine of the dining hall. In this role she set clear, sometimes strict, rules, aimed at creating order, calm, and respect — an expression of her direct character and her belief that communal life requires a clear framework.

Shimona was a busy and diligent woman, working from morning until night. Even after retirement she set herself the rule of always being occupied, filling her time with action alongside learning, volunteering alongside culture and travel. She greatly enjoyed performing on stage and took a regular part in plays and performances on Jewish holidays, especially on Purim and at Chag HaMashek.

The sea was for her a source of joy and freedom, and she made a point of travelling there whenever she could. She was the prime force behind the regular kibbutz trips to the beach.

After being widowed from Eliyahu, and at the age of sixty, she decided to obtain a driving licence — another decision that reflected independence, courage, and a desire to remain active and self-reliant.

Throughout her life she devotedly cared for Roni, her eldest daughter. This was her life's mission, which she carried with love, dedication, and great inner strength.

Shimona was very proud of her life story — of immigrating to the country out of Zionism, of coming to the kibbutz out of pioneering spirit, and of the many years of modest yet meaningful contribution to the community. She loved Yizrael deeply, believed in the cooperative kibbutz, and in the possibility of living together through mutual responsibility.

Shimona is survived by four children, nine grandsons and one granddaughter, and five great-grandchildren. Her extended family is a direct continuation of her life's path — a path of perseverance, loyalty and quiet endeavour.

To Arnon, Hadas, Yiftach, and David, to the daughters-in-law and son-in-law, to the grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and to the entire family — Kibbutz Yizrael mourns with you on the passing of a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, friend and partner.

May her memory be a blessing.

Our Mother - Hadas

This morning you completed the journey of your life. You held on to life for more than ninety years; at times it required great strength.

In the past two years you told me that your whole life was lived amid wars. At the age



of five you were separated from your father—our grandfather—who enlisted as a doctor in the British Army during the war, and from your mother—our grandmother—who remained in London during the Blitz with David. You were sent to a village in southern England.

Later, after the War of Independence, when you were a soldier and wanted to go with your garin to a young kibbutz (Nahal Oz), the movement required that you come to Yizrael, a veteran kibbutz (six years old). In the past two years you often reminded me that you were tired of wars. You wanted a life of peace—for all of us, for the country, for the kibbutz.

You had a strong work ethic, modesty, Zionism, and the vision of the collective kibbutz. These are the values that shaped your life.

Dad passed away many years ago. It seems that after losing him, you set out on a new journey—of independence and of deep commitment to our sister Roni. You reminded us constantly that your father was a doctor who worked until the age of ninety, who lived a long life. Your father and our father were models for you of a love of books. In recent years you could no longer see to read, but you wanted the books that accompanied you—together with the magazines and newspapers, to remain in the house, to continue to be part of the landscape of your life.

You told us again and again that family is the most important thing. You expressed deep gratitude that we were by your side, that we were all together, and how fortunate we were to lead the lives we lead. For your inspiration we give thanks.

In recent years you also tended the potted plants and the garden. Agriculture, which flowed in your blood, reached right up to the doorway of your home. You loved to tell stories of the time you ran Yizrael's orchards.

The last years softened you greatly. You made a heroic effort to remember, to stay sharp, not to give up. You thanked us repeatedly for supporting you and accompanying you. It brought us very close to you, and perhaps made up for what had been missed when we were younger.

You tried to give each of the grandchildren personal attention: through our shared journey to Scotland and England; through helping grandchildren with university studies and caring for those travelling abroad right up to Ofer's bar mitzvah two weeks ago, in Karkom.

On Sunday, I came to visit you after you fell. You were very reconciled and serene, without the pains and battles that had accompanied you in the recent period. I wrote down your words, spoken in a quiet, slow, and peaceful voice.

You said, "It was a long trip, a beautiful trip." And I did not know whether you meant the journey of your life. Then you added that you had taken a long walk with Yifti around the kibbutz; you said the kibbutz is a good place—that there is a dining hall, that there is a moadon. In your words there was much gratitude and acceptance.

Then you spoke about the rain that had fallen; you said it was good for the fields. Again and again, you said that everything is green and beautiful.

So today the green is very green, in your honour, and the sky is clear—and we are now looking over the valley together with you, at the end of your life's journey.

We thank you for the great richness with which we were blessed in our lives through your life. We believe that you are in a good place now.

I wish to end with personal words. I want to thank the kibbutz for the home that was mine and was my mother's home for more than seventy years in good times and hard times alike. To Liran and the clinic team, to the Health Committee, the Veterans Committee, and to Inbal, Noa, and Talia.

A final, personal thank-you to Danny, Imma's caregiver, for her devoted care. Danny accompanied Imma for three and a half years and did not leave her side until her last breath.

Thank you all.
Hadas

Sa'ar

Safta, today we are saying goodbye to you.
You reached a good old age and passed away peacefully.
You were a very significant presence in my life.



This is an opportunity to say to you here, in front of everyone, once again, a big thank you for all the help you gave me with my studies – from primary school all the way through to completing my degree in 2019. You had more patience with me than anyone. You would sit and test me, mainly in English and biology. You saw in me, the continuation of Grandpa Eliyahu of blessed memory, when I chose to work in the dairy and study animal sciences.

Thank you for the Friday night dinners, when we would sample your wonderful range of cooking – mac and cheese, halloumi, and more...

Thank you for taking the whole family on an unforgettable roots trip to England and Scotland. Before the trip you taught us Scottish etiquette – it didn't help you...

Thank you for the traditional candle-lighting on Hanukkah, and for the surprises for the grandchildren and later the great-grandchildren.

Thank you for the chance meetings during the day around the kibbutz, or sitting together in the dining hall, which always made my day a little happier.

I love you and already miss you, Sa'ar



Someone on the H



Alon 2145 - 09.02.24

An Interview with Shimona Matalon

Zohar Assaf

Zohar: *Hi Shimona, thank you for inviting us to your home. Let's start, as always, from the beginning. When were you born?*

Shimona: 1935, Soon I will be 89 years old.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in England. During my early years we were in London. Those were the years before World War II, which broke out in September 1939. My father was a doctor and my mother a teacher. Fairly close to the beginning of the war, my father enlisted in the army. He enlisted as a military doctor, and for six years,



until after the ceasefire in the summer of 1945, he was not home. At first, he was recruited in England and then moved to Northern Ireland. After that, in 1942, they were told that they were going to be transferred overseas. They asked him where he wanted to go? He said - Palestine! Because the truth is, many years before, at the time of the Zionist Congress in Zurich in 1929, my mother and father planned to elope to Palestine and write home to their parents: "Hello! We went to Palestine and got married!". But my father was the youngest of six children so they took pity on his elderly



mother. They gave up on the idea. In the end, they arrived in Palestine only in 1950, when, of course, there was already a State of Israel.

You said he was drafted into the British army, how was he treated as a Jew?

He had an important role, he was a doctor and he was the kind of person who didn't let people treat him differently just because he was Jewish. There was certainly anti-Semitism, but I don't know of anything special. ***Was there antisemitism in England?*** Yes, but not like in other places, my parents had both Jewish and non-Jewish friends.

You were born in London, but it was really badly bombed in World War II, and then you had to move? In 1940 London was bombed, I was sent to a good school in a town which was about 100 kilometers from London. They told the parents - "Whoever wants to send the girls can send them there" (it was a girls' school). Mother, who was then without father and was with only me and my brother, said she wanted me to go and be educated there. And in fact, a few days before my fifth birthday, she took me to this town where the school was, and she told me "Sit with the students in class", then she said good bye and immediately left. It was very, very difficult! I cried a lot after that, because I didn't understand that this was what was going to happen.

You didn't realise that you were actually going to be away from your mother for such a long time and be left completely alone at the age of 5... Do you really remember that feeling?



I remember going and banging on the door and begging her to come back. Although I had "foster parents", the school took care of that, but it's not like being with my mother of course. My foster parents were two women not even married and they didn't know how to treat children. But there were two other girls there who were older than me and they helped me. In the end, after some time, they opened a boarding school, where we would go to activities in the morning and study in the afternoon.

Was the British education system really as harsh as in the stories?

Not where I was, because my mother, who was a teacher herself, made sure I went to good schools, where they knew how to treat children fairly and not cruelly.

In 1943 the situation was better, because the Germans could no longer bomb southern England and the school returned to London. I couldn't go back to London, because my mother was already in another town in the south west of England with my brother. I

went to another school there. When we returned to London at the end of the summer of 1945, I returned to the first school, it was the school I attended until I immigrated to Israel.

Do you only have one brother? Yes, he is a member of Kibbutz Hamadia.

What year did you immigrate to Israel? Father came first because he got a job with the Ministry of Health. He immigrated to Israel to arrange things so that we would not come and have to sleep on the street... The Ministry of Health was then in Tel Aviv. When we arrived in Israel - David, my brother, and I went to live with friends in Kfar Ata. Father and mother lived in a studio apartment in Tel Aviv and there was no room for us.

We arrived by ship to Israel on Shabbat, and they didn't let us get off the ship because it was Shabbat. For a whole day we stood on deck and stared at the promised land. We disembarked the following day. It was Sunday and it was Purim. On Monday we planned to go to friends in Haifa but their child was sick and they were afraid that I would get infected, so we stayed with a family of immigrants from England in Kfar Ata.

We were there for 3 months, then mother heard that Ben-Gurion was moving the government from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. She thought this was the opportunity to move to Jerusalem, because father worked in the Ministry of Health. It was in the early 1950s and my father, thanks to his work, was given the opportunity to rent an apartment which once belonged to Arabs who had abandoned their home.

In Jerusalem I had a friend who later became a famous singer - Nechama Handel. She was responsible for helping me to adjust in the class because, already, in the 8th grade, she spoke English fluently. She was talented in all the languages and in all the subjects we studied.

What school did you attend in Jerusalem? I studied at the high school that today is called the "High School near the University", the best school in Jerusalem to this day, in my opinion anyway.

How old were you when you arrived in Israel? 12 or 13 years old.

And did you know Hebrew? I had already learned Hebrew in the last year of the war when we were in Scotland. I would go to Hebrew lessons at the synagogue on Sundays. When we arrived in Jerusalem, I continued to study Hebrew. But how much can you learn already? I would go shopping in Jerusalem and in the store, I would say I want this, the sellers would tell me the name of what I asked for, whether it was bread or milk or anything else. I deliberately did not speak English when I came to Israel, it was

very difficult for me, but I had a principle that I would not speak English. Even when I arrived on Yizrael, I refused to speak English and did not tell people that I knew English. Even when volunteers came to Yizrael after the Six Day War and they didn't speak Hebrew, I insisted on not speaking English with them. I motioned to them with my hands and told them in Hebrew what I wanted. There was one volunteer who had to work an evening shift on Saturday in the dining hall. I was on the morning shift and they told me to explain to her what to do. I tried to explain to her in Hebrew and she didn't understand anything, so in the end with tears in my eyes I spoke to her in English and told her to boil the water and prepare the bread... I didn't want to speak English, but in the end, I had no choice.

You mentioned Scotland, when did you go Scotland?

Mother was born in Scotland and father came from Latvia to Scotland when he was 3 years old. He was the youngest son of the family, his elder brother still remained in Latvia and fought in World War I as a military doctor. On Passover of 1944 we went to visit family in Glasgow to celebrate the holiday. After the holiday we didn't return to the south until after the armistice and the end of the war in August 1945. Then the situation was safe enough to go to London.

You were talking about a ship when you came to Israel, where did the ship leave from? Students, and young people in England, often traveled overseas to France and Spain. Mum heard that you can get to Israel by ship from Italy. So, we went to Paris one day, walked around Paris and saw almost all of it with a guide friend. We ran all day in Paris, and my brother, who was 8 at the time, remembers it as a nightmare. Then we went to Venice, we traveled in Venice for 4 days because that's how it was with my parents, you have to see the world. Then the ship arrived. It was falling apart. At the beginning of March, when the Mediterranean Sea was very stormy, we sailed to Tel Aviv.

You started talking about the first years in Yizrael. What do you remember, how did you get to Yizrael? Our garin was in training (Hachshara) on Kibbutz Ma'agan as a conscripted garin and then we had to decide where we would go to settle permanently. I said - "I want to go to Nahal Oz, which was a young kibbutz only, one year old. I didn't want to go to Yizrael. It was a 6-year-old kibbutz. Already an old kibbutz in my eyes! Apparently, God was on our side and we did not choose Nahal Oz. When we arrived on Yizrael, it was exactly Yizrael's 6th anniversary. An old kibbutz...

Is there anyone from your garin who remained here? Yes, Avinoam, Mirik, Michi and Nissim Albucher, may they rest in peace.

How did you meet Eliyahu, your husband? There were many singles on the kibbutz. The girls came to the kibbutz first. The boys were in advanced training. The bachelors of the kibbutz played football where the lawn is today, below the dining room. There were huts all around, and in the middle, they played football. The boys would come home from work at four and play soccer. The girls can't play football (that's how it used to be...) so we would sit and watch. The guys saw that a group of girls had arrived, so they came and sat with us on the grass.

Where did Eliyahu come from? Originally, he came from Beirut. His father arrived in Palestine in 1937 to arrange a place for the family and start working so as to have some kind of income. And in 1939 he brought his family, which, knock on wood, included 10 children. Eliyahu was the second son.

Tell me a little about your different jobs. All the girls wanted to work in the vegetable garden that was on the east side of the spring. The girls arrived before the boys and they worked in the vegetable garden. They worked with Moishele Orion, may he rest in peace. They didn't want to move to another branch because Moishele was really charming. He was full of life and knowledge, but also serious. He really cared about us. But I wanted to work in the orchards, because in a work camp at the end of the 11th grade we were in a kibbutz in the south and I worked in a vineyard. After some time, I was allowed to work in the vineyard. The vineyard and the orchard had just been planted. There was an olive orchard that was planted on Tu B'Shvat of that year. We also grew grapes and then we planted pears, mainly pears, 'give me pears even if they are unripe ' there is a song like that.

Do you consider yourself a feminist? Because you worked in a lot of physical jobs. Yes, but when I was on maternity leave or before giving birth, I would go to work in the kitchen, so I also worked in the kitchen for periods of time. We didn't refer to it as feminism, but I also did a lot of manual labour.

What did you do after the orchards I worked in the orchards for many years. I had already reached the age of 35 when I stopped working there. Before that I did not dare to ask to go to study. I worked in the orchards. I planned, one day, to work in a place that researched tree cultivation. I asked to go to study and got permission to study biology in Oranim. When I was studying in Oranim, I suddenly realised that I could not leave the children and work from six in the morning until six in the evening in some plantation research institute. I realized that my future was probably in teaching biology and that's how it started. I was a biology teacher at the Ein Harod High School. Little by little we developed and expanded the biology department.

Let's jump a long way forward, I knew you as 'Shimona the wave breaker'. Have you always loved hiking and the sea? When I arrived in Israel and we lived in Jerusalem, I think it was the end of eighth grade, we went on a trip with the biology teacher to the sea. The Jerusalemites did not know what the sea was. They could not swim. But I jumped into the water and immediately swam. Because I learned to swim back in England at the age of 3 or 4. I swam there in the sea and froze. My parents didn't take me out of the water until I was blue in the face. It was very cold, not like here.

So, you went to the sea on the school trip and that's where you fell in love with the sea?

The house in Jerusalem was something very special, it was actually the abandoned property of a rich Arab who left for East Jerusalem. Even the apartment we had in London before World War II was rented. My parents never owned a house. Mother wanted us to have our own house. We had the option to buy a plot in Beit Yanai. So that's how we had a house for weekends to go to the sea. We would go to Beit Yanai. Yizrael is not near the sea, so this is how the tradition of going to the sea regularly began.

Now a little about the children, how many children do you have? I had four and today I have three. Ronni passed away. She was the eldest. Ronni was born with a deformity; she was probably born prematurely. If it happened today, she could certainly have been treated.

When I was due to give birth to her, I went to the hospital in Afula. The maternity ward was a huge room with about 30 beds. Arnon was also born in roughly the same conditions. When Hadas was born, there was already a smaller room and there were only 5 beds. Yiftach was born during the Hanukkah vacation from school when I was about to finish my studies in Oranim.

What are your children doing today?

Arnon works in the marketing department at Maytronics. Hadas is an occupational therapist and also a teacher for struggling students. Yiftach works in a company that develops varieties of vegetables, doing experiments with crops that grow in the southern Negev.

How many grandchildren do you have? I have 8 grandsons and one granddaughter, and I also have two great-grandsons on Yizrael, Sa'ar's sons.

What do you like about our kibbutz and what would you change?

I think it's important how people are received, that they feel at home and not thrown in some corner and be expected to manage by themselves. I am happy that we are still a cooperative kibbutz. It is very important to me. I love the view, it's nice to walk among the anemones in the spring and that you don't have to travel far to see flowers...

At the age of 65 I had to stop teaching and retired from the Ministry of Education. I continued to work at the school in the library and also started working in our library. That was at the beginning of the development of the library and we really continue very faithfully to take care of the library to this day.

Tell me about a significant trip you remember. I remember very well the trip to China. I heard from a laboratory technician from Kibbutz Mishmar HaEmek, that they were taking a trip to Japan and possibly to China for a few days. I got excited about this subject of China, because at that time there was no tourism there. At that time on Yizrael, members would wait a long time for their turn to go on a trip abroad. Eliyahu was a veteran, finally it was our turn to go on the trip and it was clear that we would get the turn so I told him - "I want us to go to China". It was one of the first trips to China. But Eliyahu didn't want to. So, the kids put on a show for him - they went to the phone and pretended it wasn't them and they were talking from somewhere else, they told him - "We want to book you two places for the trip we are organising to China". In the end he gave in. But the truth is that he suffered a lot there. He couldn't eat the food and he lost about 10 kg. I told him they eat rice! But he said it's not like the rice my mother makes. Then on the way back from China we travelled in England for some time, because we were allowed to go on a 6-week trip.

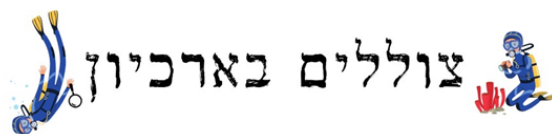
Was there anything you regret not doing? Maybe I could have been a better mother. ***(I'm sure you were a great mother!)***

Is there a message you want to convey? I hope that our kibbutz will be liked, that we will be able to go far, while maintaining limits and that there will always be controls, that we will not ask for things that we know in advance are impossible, that we will know how to maintain our modesty.

Tell me about the painting by Menashe Kadishman in your home. Kadishman would come to visit Tiyoche, they were very good friends from the garin days. He arrived and wanted to stay the night. Eliyahu and I went to his parents for the weekend, so Kadishman slept at our house. He was a very large man, fat and heavy, and the bed broke... Tiyoche quickly repaired the bed. Kadishman knew Eliyahu well from the years he lived on Yizrael. When he lived on the kibbutz, he had a hut to himself. He didn't want to live with other people. My uncle was also a well-known artist and a

famous sculptor. There are two statues in my house of me as a child, that my uncle sculpted.

Thank you very much for telling us about your fascinating life story. I enjoyed talking with you.



Delving into the Archives

Meeting with Shimona Matalon

Interviewer: Nitzan Rivlin-Feldman

(From: *Agriculture Bulletin* No. 3, 22.08.2008)

In which years did you work in the orchards?

I worked in the orchards almost from the moment I arrived on Yizrael, in the autumn of 1954, until I left to study in 1972, a total of about 18 years all in all.

What was grown in the orchards when you arrived here?

West of the spring there was a vineyard, and in the winter of 1955, we planted about 30 dunams of olives on the area below the hill, if I remember correctly. We planted pomegranates between the rows of olives, and we also began planting pears west of the vineyard. When the vineyard was uprooted, we planted pears there as well. When the youngest pear trees were planted, we also planted pecan trees between the rows of pears. This was on the suggestion of the late Eliyahu Matalon, with the idea that if the pears were uprooted, the pecans would take their place, already bearing fruit.

What problems did you encounter?

Shimona bangs on the table. Water was, of course, in short supply, and I remember myself travelling with the late Tollie Sloman to some senior official at Mekorot in Haifa and banging on the table, demanding that they give us more water. We did not have enough tractors. Often, I could not put the children to bed (in the communal children's house), because tractor allocation took place at eight-thirty in the evening, together with work scheduling, and I had to be there to fight for tractors for the orchards, so Eliyahu took over the bedtime routine.

How was the work in the orchards conducted?

There was a great deal of manual labour: tending the trees, thinning the fruit, pruning, trimming, searching for leopard moth larvae inside the trunks, tying the fruit, and of course harvesting, grape-picking and olive-picking, each in its season. One should remember that the orchard branch included the vineyard, the olives and the deciduous orchards. In principle, there were no hired workers, so we relied on mobilising members, work camps and various groups. A headache in itself. Everything was self labour.

How did you and Eliyahu manage as a couple in the same branch?

Generally we managed all right, but sometimes it was simply dreadful. Once we had a terrible quarrel over orchard matters, until I got up and left the place.

So, what then? You climbed the ranks until you became orchard coordinator?

When we arrived at Yizrael, the branch was coordinated by Davidik Kushnir, and after him by Niss Albucher. Eliyahu had been coordinator before, and when he was elected farm manager, I replaced him. I did this for five years and then passed the torch on to Akiva Greenberg, perhaps when I was elected to co-ordinate the culture committee.

Tell me how the work was organised, what did your day look like in those days?

Working hours were as follows:

In winter, 06:30–16:00.

In summer, we started at four in the morning, worked until after breakfast, and then returned in the afternoon to complete the day.

Try to characterise the difference between then and now, for example in communication.

There were not even walkie-talkies. When, at the end of a harvest day, we needed to report how much fruit we were sending to the packing house, we had to drive by tractor to the mazkirut, queue for the single telephone there (outside the mazkirut Hut), and call the packing house.

And another thing, apropos communication: when the Six-Day War broke out, we went down to work at five in the morning and did not understand why no food had been brought to us. By midday we were already hungry, and we walked back to the kibbutz and discovered that everyone was in the bomb shelters. The food was usually brought to the field, where we sat to eat in a tin shed. The work scheduler was responsible to organise for the food to be brought to us, and sometimes he forgot.

How do you induce a birth? One day Tyochka forgot to come and take me home from the orchard, and I walked back on foot. Two days later Arnon was born...

During the grape harvest period the night watchman would wake all the pickers, and at four, as mentioned in the song “Good morning, get up already...”, we would go down to the field and pick until eight am, because grapes must be harvested before the heat. We placed the grape bunches in wooden crates, which were then loaded onto a cart harnessed to a mule. The late Moishitz Kaplan would lead the mule to the spring, where there were tables on which we packed the grapes. Packing was a whole procedure. The pickers returned to the kibbutz after work, and the branch workers often stayed until six in the evening to finish packing. Later, a packing shed was built.

With the pears it was basically the same. The pear varieties we grew were Gentil, Costia and Spadona. At first, we packed the fruit on Yizrael, and then Kibbutz Ginnegar suggested that we come and pack there at night. Later, the packing house of “Mishkei Yizrael Valley” was built, which still exists in the same place today.

We were about six or seven people in the branch: Benjie Skolnick, Patchi, Dina Weinbaum, Tzufi Weinbaum, Nis Albucher, Yonchi Pundak, and perhaps also Zamir Ronen, and of course Akiva Greenberg, the late Shaul Ephraim, Eliyahu and me, and perhaps a few others who came for short periods and those who left the kibbutz. Each garin brought new workers to the branch. This is how the late Jimmy Shapira and Gidon Teltch arrived, (from the “Tzameret” garin).

At midday we would go into the spring pool to cool off... with our clothes on, and then, in the pump house (when it still had walls...), we would wring out the clothes and put them back on.

Of all the crops you mentioned, nothing remains today. Why is that?

The main problem was that the area was not really suited to these crops. As far as grapes were concerned, we could not be early or late producers. Our fruit ripened in mid-season, when prices were not good. The yields were also not great. As for pears, most of the plantings were in the 1950s, when people in the country quickly set up nurseries and did not always use proper propagation material. When the trees began to grow, we saw that they were not at all what we had ordered. Among the pears there

were quinces, which are the rootstock onto which the desired variety is grafted, and other varieties that were not suitable for the area.

Rest in Peace, Shimona

Reut's Editorial: When Shani Levin and I took on responsibility for the library, it was Shimona who taught me how to use the book-lending system. She taught me with great patience and spoke with deep pride about her father's rich library, from which books were donated to the Yizrael library. She continued to come by and help in the library after the renovation. The Steimatzky staff and the Agron staff, who help when needed with the lending system, asked about Shimona for a long time. They were sorry to hear that she had left the library. I was very glad that she came to help whenever she could.

For me, and I am sure for many others, the library complex was not only the building in which all the Yizrael libraries were brought together under one roof, not only the books, the counter, and the carpeted floor, but in truth the library was Shimona herself, along with Mirik Yuval and Hanaleh Levin. Taking over the role from those who came before us gave me the feeling that I bear a great responsibility to preserve the dignity of the place, to love it at least as much as they did.

The library, the trips to the sea, which until a few years ago were organised by Shimona through the Trips Committee, and of course the junction near her home, known as "Shimona Junction," will remain with us even now that she is no longer here

My Second Nature – Rotem Agmon

Longing for the Upper Dam of old

"The Backyard Bird Count"



The annual backyard bird count is part of a broad international initiative carried out in Israel through cooperation between the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel and the Israeli Centre for Citizen Science. Its aim is to collect data on bird populations for conservation purposes, while engaging the general public in documenting species in their local surroundings. The project takes place as part of the "Great Backyard Bird Count," an annual event usually held in January, during which citizens are asked to report short observations

(about ten minutes) of birds in a garden, park, or near their homes, helping to create a vital database for ecological research.

For the past three years, I have been counting the birds at the Reshafim reservoirs.

A dam that is considered “interesting” for bird counting or observation is usually one that is in advanced stages of emptying, with a significant shoreline and areas of aquatic vegetation, such as reeds. In such bodies of water,, wading birds (shorebirds) tend to gather, feeding on the invertebrates found in the mud. The “Ruff” shown in the photograph ® is a fine example of such a wader.



In addition to shorebirds, we count gulls, terns, herons, ducks, and other bird families that are strongly associated with water sources such as reservoirs.

On Kibbutz Yizrael, the upper dam was, for many years, one of these dams and until the construction of the solar project, it was a seasonal dam that would empty towards autumn (October). At that stage it truly merited the title of an “interesting” dam. In autumn, shorebirds arrive in the country from Europe, where weather conditions make finding food increasingly difficult. Back then, it was possible to see a wide variety of shorebirds at the upper dam, and every visit there carried with it excitement and the possibility of an ornithological surprise.

About the lower dam (the neglected one) and other nostalgic memories, I will tell another time. Shabbat shalom. Rotem Agmon

Summary of the Community Management Meeting – 1. 11.01.26



Participants:

Erez Peleg, Talia Arad, Yifat Segal, Yishai Levy, Maor Parsai, Noga Harpaz, Naomi Amit, Shlomo Levy, Tami Penn, Tamir Blass, Limor Griman.

1. Payments by New Members to the Long-Term Care Fund..

Background:

In 2015, the General Assembly adopted a decision regarding the Long-Term Care Fund (Bituach Seudi), whereby any member beginning the absorption process would be required to complete the sum needed to cover long-term care insurance in the insurance policy, as if they had joined the insurance programme at age 30.

In practice, since the Assembly decision in 2015, no long-term care payments have been collected from any absorbed families. In 2021, the level of absorption fees was discussed in the Assembly, and the amounts were raised significantly, but long-term care payments were not discussed at all. About a year ago, a process began to update the long-term care procedure, during which calculations were carried out regarding how to collect payments from new members.

According to the actuary, the amount of the completion payment to the Long-Term Care Fund should be calculated as follows: each member is to complete an amount of NIS 109 for each month from age 30 until their age at the start of the absorption process.

The Absorption Committee wishes to begin implementing the 2015 Assembly decision and to use the actuarial calculation prepared in April 2024 to calculate the amount to be collected from new members for the Long-Term Care Fund. To this end, it prepared a new calculator for absorption fees, which also includes the cost of completing the long-term care insurance (hereinafter: long-term care fees).

In the summer of 2026, four families are expected to begin absorption, having started the screening and familiarisation process with the kibbutz more than a year ago. Adding long-term care fees at this stage constitutes a significant change to the amounts initially presented to them and may harm trust and the process itself.

In light of this, the Absorption Committee requests that collection of long-term care fees from new members apply only to absorption processes beginning in 2027 onwards.

Discussion:

- An additional payment demand (which could reach tens of thousands of shekels per family) would at this stage be perceived as unfair and could harm the trust of new members in the system.
- There is doubt as to whether this collection is truly necessary. The fund is not “personal”; new members who leave will not receive their money back, which makes the collection resemble a “bluff” or a tax intended merely to fill a fund that long-standing members need.

- Concern that the high costs of absorption fees will affect the kibbutz's attractiveness and deter potential candidates.

Decision:

Payment of long-term care fees will apply only to new members from the 2027 intake onwards.

The term "absorption fees" will be changed to "admission to membership fees," which will include both the entry fee and completion of the Long-Term Care Fund. As part of a discussion to be held in the coming year in Community Management regarding the long-term care procedure, the need for completing long-term care payments will be re-examined.

2. Distribution of Profit Bonuses to the Younger Generation

Background:

The decision to distribute bonuses to sons and daughters in the younger generation was taken by the Secretariat in 2017, as part of a discussion on how bonuses are distributed to members and non-members, and was linked to a decision to distribute bonuses to candidates and absorbed members. Young people receive 10% of a member's bonus, calculated proportionally to the number of months they were in a bonus-qualifying track: budget, pre-military service year, army service, landing track, or study track. Young people on a financial independence track do not receive a bonus.

The issue was discussed and also reviewed by the Young Generation Committee. The committee recommended discontinuing the distribution of the bonus to young people. The main argument was educational: it was claimed that the money does not promote genuine appreciation of the kibbutz or values of independence among the young.

Discussion:

- The bonus (this year approximately NIS 9000) is a symbolic amount that expresses a sense of belonging and recognition by the community of its sons and daughters, especially those serving in the army or in work tracks on the kibbutz.
- Discontinuing the bonus at this time would be perceived as a petty move stemming from financial distress and would generate antagonism.
- The bonus could be capped, given as a gift rather than cash, or allocated towards joint activities of the younger generation.
- There is room to discuss the issue as part of a broader discussion on the goals of working with the younger generation on the kibbutz.

Decision:

Profit bonuses for the year 2025 will be distributed to young people according to the procedures that have existed to date.

By the end of June, a principled and in-depth discussion on future policy (for 2026 onwards) will be held, in cooperation with the Young Generation Committee and the young people themselves.

3. Support for Candidates Ahead of the Membership Vote

This is the third discussion on the issue, which first arose in September 2025, when it was decided to deepen the examination of the matter and define the roles of the Members Committee (Vaadat Chaverim), and to complete the discussion so that by the summer of 2026 a team would operate within an agreed framework. In the second discussion, in November 2025, two alternatives were examined: establishing a sub-team of the Members Committee or a separate team. An additional option was raised, whereby the entire absorption process, up to the Assembly and ballot stage, would be under the responsibility of the Absorption Committee. It was decided to examine this option with the Absorption Committee before making a decision.

The Absorption Committee is willing to take full responsibility for the process but requested that the decision be made by Community Management.

Decision:

The Absorption Committee will assume full responsibility for accompanying candidates up to the stage of acceptance to membership.

The matter will be removed from the responsibility of the Members' Committee, and no separate team will be established for this purpose. *(Back to the original system – Ed)*

4. Increase of the Kitchen Renovation Budget for 2026

When the community investment plan was presented at the meeting with the Management Committee (05.01.26), a request was raised, in light of the condition of the kitchen and the urgency of preventive maintenance, to increase the implementation budget to the extent that the Public Buildings Fund can allow.

The preventive maintenance plan was presented, divided into three stages independent of one another, according to urgency, and a request was submitted to approve Stage A in its entirety, amounting to approximately NIS 990,000.

Decision:

The request to approve Stage A of the preventive maintenance plan for the kitchen will be attached to the 2026 investment plan that will be brought to the Economic Council.

Limor Griman and Erez Peleg.

Summary of the Community Management Meeting – 2 18.1.26



Participants: Erez Peleg, Talia Arad, Yifat Segal, Yishai Levi, Kinneret Govrin, Maor Parsai, Noga Harpaz, Naomi Amit, Shlomo Levi, Tami Penn, Tamir Blass, Limor Griman.

1. Service Year on Kibbutz Yizrael

(Guests: Service Year team – Nachem Levin, David Boitler, Nir Baor, Uri Ayalon; guest: Hanan Shaliv)

Background:

At the end of 2021, a decision was taken by the General Assembly to continue the Service Year on Kibbutz Yizrael. Over the past year, several members requested a re-examination of that decision and of the relevance of the Service Year to Yizrael at this time. Since a significant period had passed without the issue being presented to a public body, it was brought for discussion to the Community Management, following a presentation and discussion in the Education Council.

Presentation by Nachem Levin:

The Service Year has been operating on the kibbutz for approximately eight years and is an educational-voluntary framework. Its main goal is to create a setting in which young people, prior to military service, engage in education for industriousness, personal and group empowerment, through connection with the land, agriculture and work in a carpentry workshop.

Voluntary activity in the region – the Service Year participants operate in around ten different centres:

- Work with special-education children at the “Shevilim” and “Yad Lachamisha” schools, and with adolescents at a lower secondary school in the Harod Valley.
- Work with at-risk youth at the “Beit Ruth” girls’ residential school, “Beit Singer” residential school, and in Youth Advancement – the “Hila” programme for youth who have dropped out of educational frameworks.
- Welfare work at the “Adi” centre (formerly AKIM) in Prazon for people with disabilities, and at “Merhav Neshima”, providing treatment for post-traumatic individuals and their families.
- The Boitler Gardens Project: a weekly initiative in which Service Year participants bring accessible planters to elderly residents throughout the valley, care for their gardens, and alleviate loneliness through personal conversation.

The work with children emphasises hands-on engagement with materials. The use of carpentry and agriculture in schools and residential frameworks allows children and at-risk youth to experience satisfaction from creation, to face challenges, and even to fail and succeed within a supportive environment that does not involve exams or homework.

Integration into kibbutz and community life:

The Yizrael model is unique in that most activity is outward-focused volunteering, whereas in other kibbutzim Service Year participants mainly work in economic branches. Within Yizrael they are integrated on several levels:

- **Work branches:** work in the dairy, in the “Geppetto” carpentry workshop, rugby instruction in schools on behalf of the club, and in the education system (early childhood, Tlatonim, and with our youth).
- **Social interface:** the participants are accompanied by host families (there is high demand among kibbutz families to host Service Year participants), do mid-week evening shifts in the dining hall, and take part in organising holiday events.

Economic and administrative aspects:

- All mentoring and training work is carried out by kibbutz members, partly on a voluntary basis and partly as part of their work obligation. The total work of members in the Service Year programme amounts to 1.1 full-time positions.
- The annual financial turnover of the Service Year is approximately 350,000 NIS, with most income deriving from the participants’ work in various branches. In addition, there is financial support from bodies where volunteering takes place. The kibbutz subsidises the activity in the amount of approximately 30,000 NIS per year.

Discussion:

- The programme empowers the Service Year participants and helps turn them into better citizens and soldiers.
- The programme contributes to the kibbutz’s reputation as a contributing community.
- The participants serve as an auxiliary workforce in branches and can reduce the need for hired labour.
- Their presence adds value for our children and youth.
- Hanan Shaliv presented an opposing position, objecting to the continuation of the Service Year during wartime, arguing that the army’s needs for defending the state take precedence and that 18-year-olds should enlist immediately.
- In addition, in Hanan’s view, the issue should in any case be brought back for renewed discussion in the General Assembly.
- Members questioned whether the maintenance fees paid by the Service Year to the community (1,000 NIS per participant per month) genuinely reflect the real costs of food, laundry, and housing maintenance, and requested that the presentation of the

programme's cost to the kibbutz also reflect any discounts or subsidies on various expenses.

- There is no need to bring the matter to the General Assembly, but it is appropriate that from time to time the issue be presented and examined publicly.

Decision:

The Community Management supports (by vote: 10 in favour, 2 against) the continuation of the Service Year on Kibbutz Yizrael.

A discussion and re-examination will take place in the Community Management once every three years.

It was decided to work towards improving budgetary transparency and increasing members' familiarity with the Service Year's activities.

2. Request by Anna Gavrilov for temporary residency for her mother

(Invited: Anna Gavrilov)

Background:

In the summer of 2023, the Community Management held two discussions regarding bringing parents to the kibbutz. It was decided that Kibbutz Yizrael would not continue to accept parents of members as residents, but that special cases for limited periods would be discussed and decided individually. In light of this, Anna's request was brought to the Community Management for discussion.

Anna's mother, aged 73, is a war refugee from Ukraine, currently in Israel as a tourist (without social rights) with a temporary visa valid as long as the war in Ukraine continues. She cannot be recognised as a new immigrant and is not entitled to any social rights from the State of Israel. Over the past three years she has lived in a rented apartment in Haifa, creating a heavy financial burden on the Gavrilov family and logistical difficulty in caring for her. Anna is an only child, and there is no other factor or family member who can assist in caring for her mother.

Accordingly, Anna requests to bring her mother to the kibbutz as a temporary resident, to ease her care and reduce the financial burden.

Discussion:

- This is a unique case of a war refugee without permanent legal status, justifying an exception to the general policy of not bringing parents to the kibbutz.
- There are currently vacant apartments in the parents' housing area, so there is no technical obstacle to her acceptance.
- It is a fair and justified act towards kibbutz members who have no other way of coping.

- The Residents' Committee will need to determine the mother's residency track, taking into account her special status as a war refugee.

Decision:

The Community Management approves the acceptance of Anna Gavrilov's mother as a temporary resident on the kibbutz. Further handling of the matter will be carried out by the Residents' Committee and the Housing Committee.

Recorded by: Limor Griman

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Update regarding the Nanikashvili family – Zivit and Yuval.

Note from Edi-tor: the following update is an AI generated translation. The original Hebrew announcement in the Alon is the official version! (See Disclaimer at the end of "The Yizraelite".

As you know, at the end of 2023 the General Assembly voted to terminate Zivit's membership in the kibbutz.

Zivit and Yuval filed a claim against the kibbutz in the District Court in Nazareth, seeking to annul the decision to terminate her membership.

At the outset of the proceedings, the kibbutz agreed to the granting of a temporary injunction, prohibiting it from discontinuing various services from which the family had benefited prior to the termination of Zivit's membership, without prejudice to the kibbutz's right to claim financial damages at a later stage.

Last Wednesday, an evidentiary hearing in the claim (which has been ongoing for two years) was scheduled to take place. However, Zivit and Yuval failed to appear for the hearing. As a result, the judge struck out their claim and ordered them to pay costs. The kibbutz's financial claim continues to be heard, and a judgment in the financial matter is expected to be given in approximately two months.

With the striking out of the claim, the temporary injunction granted within it also expired, and Zivit and Yuval currently have no right to receive any service or payment whatsoever from the kibbutz.

We are acting together with the kibbutz's lawyers to bring about the physical departure of the family from the kibbutz, while continuing the legal proceedings in relation to the substantial debts that have accumulated, due to many years in which

Yuval's expenses and the children's expenses were not paid – years during which the family lived at the expense of the kibbutz and its members.

As can be understood, these are processes that take a long time, and patience and perseverance are required until the will of the members is also expressed in practical terms. Limor Griman and Jeremy Perling

Summary of the Economic Council - 19.1.26



Summary of the Economic Council

19.01.26

Participants: 20 council members

Chair of the Assembly: Uri Gilad

Council Secretary: Shlomo Cohen

1. Community Operating Budget for 2026

The budget was presented as a balanced budget, amounting to NIS 52 million in both income and expenditure. This represents an increase of approximately NIS 2.4 million compared to last year's actual performance.

- **Income:** There is a decrease in the amount transferred from holdings' profits (expected to stand at only NIS 7 million in 2026). The budget is balanced through an increased withdrawal from the Reserve Fund to NIS 9 million (an increase of NIS 4 million compared to 2025). Income from work remains stable at approximately NIS 27 million.

- **Expenditure:** The increase in expenditure compared to the 2025 budget is mainly due to a 2.5% increase in personal budgets (in line with the index), manpower standards planned according to need (particularly in education and the food branch), an increase in food input costs (approximately 8%), and rising tax and National Insurance costs.

2. Investment Budget for 2026

Investments and Funds: The community is planning total investments of approximately NIS 19.8 million.

- **Housing:** An investment of approximately NIS 18 million, **the vast majority of which (NIS 16.9 million) is earmarked for completion of Phase B of the “Rugby neighbourhood”**. As the allocation to the Housing Fund has been reduced to only NIS 1 million, the community will need to take loans totalling NIS 17.5 million.

- **Public Buildings:** NIS 1.6 million, **including urgent renovation of the kitchen (Phase A) to prevent collapse of the steam system and to comply with Ministry of Health requirements.**

3. Credit Framework for 2026

The community's total level of debt is expected to reach NIS 36 million in 2026.

Members' Reservations and Responses from Branch Managers

1. Budget of the Social Involvement Committee (Donations):

- **The reservation:** Elad Ilan presented a reservation from Adi Goldstein Ilan regarding the fact that no budget had been allocated within the 2026 community budget for the committee's activities. Adi requested an allocation of NIS 30,000 for social activity, arguing that failure to budget for contribution to the wider community is a disgrace for Kibbutz Yizrael.

- **The response:** Limor Griman explained that at the end of 2025, the Donations Fund, designated for the Social Involvement Committee's activities, had a remaining balance of NIS 24,000. Since the committee has moved from a model of distributing funds as donations to one of practical social activity, the existing amount is considered sufficient at this stage, and there is no justification for breaching the budget framework.

2. Cancellation of Budgeting for Maintenance of the Rugby Field:

- **The reservation:** Asi Mor proposed cancelling the NIS 216,000 item allocated for irrigation and maintenance of the field. He argued that the rugby association has high revenues and profits and should therefore bear these costs itself rather than imposing them on the kibbutz.

- **The response:** Erez Peleg, Community Manager, replied that the field is kibbutz infrastructure and is also used for other purposes; as such, it is the kibbutz's responsibility to maintain it. The high cost of water stems from non-agricultural tariffs. It was clarified that the association pays high usage fees (NIS 6,000 per month), which have increased significantly over the past two years.

Idan Zilas, in his role as Chair of the Rugby Association, added that the association pays the kibbutz for every service it consumes – use of vehicles, coaches' accommodation, meals from the food branch, and more. Overall, the association purchases services from the kibbutz worth approximately NIS 370,000 per year.

3. Cancellation of Subsidy to the Vehicle Branch:

- **The reservation:** Asi Mor and Shimon Zelas proposed cancelling the NIS 494,000 allocation to the branch. They argued that the branch should operate as a “closed economy,” in which the per-kilometre price covers all costs, and that there is no need to subsidise travel within the shared vehicle arrangement, which serves only some of the members.
- **The response:** Ofir Griman, Coordinator of the Vehicle Committee, and Erez Peleg, Community Manager, explained that the presented “subsidy” is in fact accounting for depreciation required for purchasing new vehicles and renewing the ageing fleet. This prevents high maintenance costs and avoids inequality for members who do not own a private vehicle. It was also emphasised that a shared vehicle branch has community and environmental value and is important to preserve, while ensuring accessibility (through subsidy) for members who wish to use it.
Data show that many households on the kibbutz make full or partial use of the shared vehicles.

Voting Results

At the end of the council meeting, votes were held on the three reservations:

1. Allocation of NIS 20,000 to the Social Involvement Committee: rejected (4 in favour, 8 against, 7 abstentions).
2. Cancellation of the rugby field maintenance item: rejected (4 in favour, 13 against).
3. Cancellation of the vehicle branch subsidy: rejected (0 in favour, 18 against).

Subsequently, votes were held to approve the 2026 budget:

- **Approval of the community budget (NIS 52 million): approved by a majority of 19 in favour, with no opponents.**
- **Approval of the investment programme (approximately NIS 19.8 million): approved by a majority of 19 in favour, with none against.**
- **Approval of the community credit framework (NIS 36 million): approved by a majority of 19 in favour, with no opponents.**

Submitted by: Limor Griman

Update from the Absorption Committee

Farewell to Dagan and Shimrit Meir and Family

At this time, we are taking leave of the **Meir** family – Dagan, Shimrit, Omer, Shachar and Shir – who have decided to conclude their absorption process and their stay on the kibbutz, and to set out on a new path.

The connection between the kibbutz and the Meir family was born out of the complex reality of the war. They came to us as evacuees in search of an anchor, and opened their hearts to us, just as the kibbutz opened its gates to them. We were glad and deeply moved when, after the initial period of stay, they chose to remain and to try to put down deeper roots among us as a family in absorption. We saw this as a significant expression of trust in our community.

Dagan and Shimrit, during the time we shared our lives together, it was a pleasure to see you become part of the kibbutz landscape and its daily rhythm – in everyday encounters in the dining hall, in our shared holiday celebrations, in general meetings, and of course through the children, who took an active part in the education system.

Life paths and absorption processes are dynamic, and at times the right choice is to move on. We respect your decision and thank you for the time you were part of our social fabric – in the holidays and along the paths of the kibbutz.

We wish you, from the bottom of our hearts, that in the place you are heading to, you will find a warm home, stability, calm and security. You will always remain part of the shared story of this period for us, and our door will be open to you for visits.

Wishing you every success on your way,
Absorption Committee

Message: Evyatar Assaf

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Call for Applications – Early Childhood Director

Ahead of the conclusion of **Yael Oster's** term as Early Childhood Director in **06.2026**, this is a call for applications for the position.

Applications may be submitted until **06.02.26**. Please note that Yael has expressed her wish to continue for a second term, and the process will begin in the coming days.

Members who would like to speak with us about the matter are invited to contact **Noga Harpaz** or **Kinneret**

Summary of the HR Management Meeting - 18.01.26



Participants: Peter Pezaro, Eddie Solow, Navot Assaf, Shlomo Cohen, Limor Griman, Erez Peleg, Kinneret Govrin

1. Change in term lengths of the Reserve Fund

As part of the audit of the Reserve Fund, it emerged that there is a contradiction between the term lengths of office of the Chair of the Reserve Fund and the members of the Fund Committee as stated in the Fund Charter (Takanon), and those appearing in the kibbutz's organisational structure document. The Charter specifies a three-year term, whereas the organisational structure document specifies four years. A request was submitted by the Chair of the Reserve Fund to update the organisational structure document in line with the Fund Charter.

Points raised in the discussion:

- All terms of office on the kibbutz are four-year terms, and this is why the same appears with regard to the Reserve Fund. However, in practice, decisions concerning the Reserve Fund should be made by the Reserve Fund Assembly and not by the Kibbutz Assembly. Since it is complex to change decisions in the Fund Assembly, there is a request to make the change in the organisational structure document.
- There is logic in the standardisation that has been created over the years for the terms of all office holders on the kibbutz, and therefore it is preferable to amend the Reserve Fund Charter rather than the other way around.

Decision: Consultation will be held with the new auditor upon their entry into the role, to determine where it is preferable to make the change.

2. Reorganisation of the work-registration system

Significant chaos has arisen in the work-registration system following manpower problems. In addition, it became clear that beyond the fact that data have not been entered on an ongoing basis for approximately six months, there are many errors in the database, such as incorrectly updated employee files, incorrect employment

agreements, many workers who were not frozen or not absorbed into the system, meals of salaried workers that were not charged, duplicate costing charges, reporting errors, and more.

Out of an understanding that extensive work is required in order to reorganise the system anew, from the ground up, Tze'ela Baran-Shkolnik responded to Kinneret's request to assist with the matter, and currently the main HR resources are being devoted to this issue.

The work requires rapid handling of day-to-day matters, as well as engagement in several projects that will require more time. The implications of the chaos include labour costs, support and implementation costs from the software provider, and the sidelining of HR matters that are not part of the daily routine.

At the same time, there is an opportunity here for a reorganisation of the work-registration system, including raising awareness of the issue among members, managers, and salaried employees. There is room to examine the allocation of appropriate employment agreements to members and salaried workers, the manner of work reporting, and more.

Points raised in the discussion:

- Despite the situation, the examination of non-compliance with the work obligation for 2025 should not be neglected, and that the matter should be addressed as quickly as possible, so that the members concerned are informed of their status as close as possible to the end of the year.
- Regarding the reporting method, it is important to find a solution that provides the most accurate reporting possible and serves all workers. A proposal will be brought as soon as possible to the HR Management, including costs and additional implications.

3. Update on management-pipeline development

Kinneret updated that the first management-development workshop has begun. Seven members are participating in a series of several sessions dealing with topics such as strengths and motivations for management, managerial identity, the costs and implications of management, and of managing "at home" in particular, vision and values – "Why me," conflict management, work plans, time management, and more.

Over the course of the year, the identification team will continue to recruit additional members to take part in such training and processes, in order to create future options for filling roles on the kibbutz. Kinneret Govrin

From the Desk of the Committee Appointments Committee

The Committee Appointments Committee issues a **call for nominations** and invites members to submit their candidacy for the following committees:

- **Education Cluster** – one representative (selection by ballot)
- **Higher Education Committee** – one representative

Candidacies may be submitted to any of the committee members until **05.02.26**.

Kinneret Govrin, Albert Rosilio, Liran Penn, Navot Assaf, Dotan Savir, Sheli Edelstein, Hedva Sharabani

***Request from Edi-tor:** If you can suggest a better name for this committee (Vaadat lyush Vaadot), I would be grateful. The name sounds strange to my ear. In Hebrew too, but that is someone else's problem – Ed*

Announcement from the Environmental Quality Committee



What do you do with the oil left over after frying?
Please do not pour oil onto the ground and do not pour it down the sink.

Oil hardens inside the sewage system, causes severe blockages, and harms the environment by polluting the soil, vegetation, and groundwater.

- Therefore, as part of our effort to encourage proper recycling and environmental protection, a yellow jerrycan for recycling used oil has been placed in the following locations:
- The refuse area by the Drums Shelter (near the clover patch)
- The refuse area near Oscar and Patricia
- The refuse area in the Nof neighbourhood

The oil will be transferred to a company specialising in oil recycling.

Thank you very much for your cooperation,

The Noi Branch and the Environmental Quality Committee

Thank you to the committee. For 55 years I have been polluting the environment with cooking oil and feeling bad about it. No Longer. Yea! – Ed)



The “Harvest” Festival Day is approaching!

Did you know? The Food Branch purchases new utensils every year at a cost of tens of thousands of shekels!

Have you also forgotten to return utensils you borrowed from the dining hall?

No worries! The Environmental Quality Committee is mobilising to collect everything and return it.



During the coming week, a neat box will be placed next to the rubbish stations in your neighbourhood.

Please place the utensils there, and we will come by and collect them on Saturday, 31.1.2026.

Many thanks in advance –

Environmental Quality Committee



Message from Tamar Sankar

Meeting between the “We Are All One Living Human Fabric” Team and a Team of Social Activists in Muqeibleh

As part of the goal we set for ourselves, to create an infrastructure for human connections through open, attentive and respectful dialogue, we met on Sunday, 18.01.26, with a team of social activists established in Muqeibleh. The team includes women and men of various ages. It was formed to address local issues that concern the residents of Muqeibleh, as well as issues affecting Arab society in Israel, with the most urgent being violence and crime, which are leading to murders on an almost daily basis (by 18.01, approximately 15 people had been murdered since the beginning of 2026).

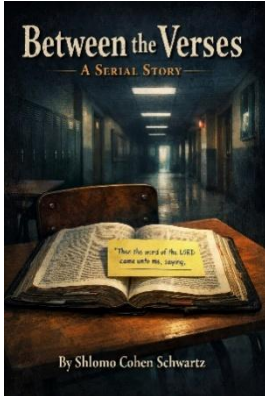
Each participant introduced themselves and their field of activity, and the discussion was very pleasant and interesting. We spoke about future meetings, and ideas were raised for joint activities going forward.

Recorded by: Tamar Sankar, on behalf of the “We Are All One Living Human Fabric” team

Between the Verses – A Serial

by Shlomo Cohen-Schwartz

Chapter Two: Hints Between the Lines



Summary of previous chapters:

Jeremy, a Bible teacher at a high school in the north of Israel, begins finding notes and precise quotations from the Book of Jeremiah in the teachers' room. At first, he assumes it is a student prank, but the exact choice of verses and their timing create a sense of unease. Something in the teachers' room has begun to shift beneath the surface.

In the days that followed, Jeremy began to notice small details that had previously slipped past him: the teacup that had been moved from where he had left it; the notebook opened to precisely the page he planned to teach the next day; the computer that had gone into sleep mode, even though he knew with certainty that he had shut it down.

On Tuesday, when he entered the teachers' room after fourth period, he found Michal sitting in his place. Not intentionally, she said at once. "Your chair was free," she added, as if that were explanation enough. He nodded, but something in her eyes betrayed discomfort. Not guilt. Alertness.

A printed sheet was waiting for him on the table. Not a note. Not handwriting. A uniform, clean font:

"For from a little while, and it shall be hidden."

He read the line twice. Not a verse from the Bible. A modern rendering. Someone who knew the text, but allowed himself to play with it. This was not imitation. It was interpretation.

"Did you get one too?" asked the English teacher, her voice too quiet.

"Get what?"

"Never mind," she said, and fell silent.

At the staff meeting, the principal spoke about declining student motivation. About adolescence. About boundaries. No one mentioned what everyone knew: that the

atmosphere in the school was tense. It was hard to put a finger on who was responsible. Was there still anyone willing to be responsible?

Later that afternoon, while marking exams, Jeremy noticed something repeating itself. Not in the answers, but in the margins. Thin lines, like erasure marks. Beside the question on Chapter 11, again and again. Only after putting on his reading glasses and switching to stronger light did he see that someone had traced the paper lightly in pencil, in tiny handwriting:

“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore, choose life.”
(Deuteronomy 30:19, KJV)

He tried to laugh. Told himself it was a psychological game. That someone was enjoying mixing verses with fear. But when he lifted his head, he realised he was alone in the building. The children had already gone. And yet, he heard footsteps in the corridor.

He opened the door. Empty. He returned to the desk. On his notebook appeared a new sentence, in red pen that had not been there before:

“How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?”
(Psalm 82:2, KJV)

Jeremy sat down slowly. It was not a threat. It was a question. And what troubled him more than anything was the precision. This was not chosen at random. Whoever had done this was not trying to frighten him. He was trying to provoke. Like a prophet. Or like someone pretending to be one.

That evening, as he switched off the light in his bedroom, a thought crossed his mind that he did not like:

Perhaps the problem is not those who try to prophesy and rebuke.
Perhaps the problem is how quickly we have all grown accustomed to it—and learned to ignore the signs.

To be continued next week.



Guide to the perplexed – regarding “Between the Verses”

Edi-tor: Chat, can you give me the biblical background and explanations like you did for me and my readers last week please

ChatGPT: Of course. Here is the **biblical background and textual map** for **Chapter Two**, done in the same restrained, source-focused way as last week: identification, context, and why each citation matters **without literary over-interpretation**.

Primary Background Text 1 – “Choose Life”

Book of Deuteronomy 30:19

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:” (KJV)

Biblical context:

This verse appears near the end of Moses’ final address to Israel. It is not a rebuke but a **summons to moral responsibility**. The people are not being threatened; they are being asked to *choose* consciously, with full awareness of consequences.

Why it matters in the story:

- The verse appears **in the margins**, not in the body of the text, mirroring its biblical role: a quiet but decisive hinge.
- It shifts the tone from *being warned* to *being accountable*.
- The act of writing it lightly, almost caressingly, echoes the verse’s intent: persuasion rather than coercion.

This marks a movement from **Jeremiah-style prophecy** to **Mosaic choice**.

Primary Background Text 2 – “How long will ye judge unjustly?”

Book of Psalms 82:2

“How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?” (KJV)

Biblical context:

Psalms 82 is addressed not to the people, but to **leaders, judges, and authorities**. It is one of the most severe psalms because it assumes:

- Knowledge of justice already exists.
- Failure is not ignorance but *abdication*.

The psalm later warns that those entrusted with judgment will fall “like one of the princes” if they fail.

Why it matters in the story:

- This is not a threat; it is a **mirror**.
- The verse asks “how long”, implying delay, complacency, and silent consent.
- Its placement in red ink heightens urgency, but the content itself remains interrogative, not violent.

This verse directly addresses **those who know better and do nothing**.

Secondary Background – “From a little while, and it shall be hidden”

This line is **not a biblical quotation**, but it draws on prophetic diction found repeatedly in Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Habakkuk, especially phrases like:

- “yet a little while”
- “it is hidden”
- “the vision is for an appointed time” (Habakkuk 2:3)

Why this matters:

- It signals a transition from citation to **midrashic voice**.
- Someone is no longer quoting Scripture verbatim but **speaking in its cadence**.
- Biblically, this is the moment when prophecy stops being safely external and becomes internalised.

This is dangerous territory in biblical terms.

Structural Shift from Chapter One to Chapter Two

Chapter One	Chapter Two
Jeremiah’s call (Jer. 1)	Human choice (Deut. 30)
“Do not say, I am a child”	“Choose life”
Unease begins	Responsibility is named
Signs appear	Silence is questioned

Biblically speaking, the story has moved:

- from **prophetic initiation** to **ethical confrontation**

Key Biblical Insight for the Chapter

In Scripture, **the most serious moment is not when God speaks**, but when humans realize they can no longer claim they did not know.

Chapter Two lives exactly in that space

Note from Edi-tor: Dear readers, please let me know if the Biblical background interests you, because if not, I will discontinue it and let you all just enjoy the story.

Important Message from the Library

The “Dedications” exhibition at the library will be taken down at the end of January.

If you haven't yet had a chance to come and see it, hurry before the exhibition is removed!

Reut Shaliv



Star of David Mandala Workshop

Facilitated by Shlomit Fink



Three hours in which we will learn to draw the template, colour and decorate using acrylic paints, with brushes and the dotting technique.

Suitable for beginners and more advanced participants alike.
Hours of calm, creativity, and great enjoyment.

Price: 250 ₪, including materials

Sunday: 01.02.26

Time: 16:30–19:30

Location: Kibbutz Yizrael

Registration: 050 6570029



Tu B'shvat Celebrations

Friday 06.02.26 | 18:45

Tu B'shvat ceremony and Friday evening meal in the dining hall.

Saturday 07.02.26 | 10:30

Planting in the Butterfly Garden,
and creative stations, hot tea, and cakes.

Tu B'shvat team:

Hanan Shaliv, Tali Brauman,
Noam Grinshpon, Tzach Sassi, Shulamit Wittelson



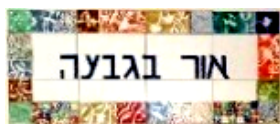
The Return of the old Tradition

Restoring the crown to its former glory!

Birthday celebration in the moadon

For those born in the month of January

Friday 30.1.26



Beacon on the Hill

Day and Date	Time	Activity
Sunday 25.01.26	07:00	Walk with Shlomit and Peter
	16:00	January children's birthday celebrations – a new tradition
Monday 26.01.26	08:00	Pedicure with Limor Moalem (appointment required)
	09:00	Gathering with coffee, cake, conversation and board games
	09:00	Sweet treats with Noa and Monica
	10:00	Workday at ORBA
Tuesday 27.01.26	09:00	Gathering with coffee, cake, conversation and board games
	09:30	Lecture: The Art of Painting with Chas Broadhurst
Wednesday 28.01.26	09:00	Gathering with coffee, cake, conversation and board games
	10:00	Interesting places and creators around the world with Noa
Thursday 29.01.26	09:00	Gathering with coffee, cake, conversation and board games
	10:00	Film with Galia Shemi
	10:00	Open ceramics room guided by Ziv Ben Bassat
	17:15	Chair-based exercise with Michal Shaanan

ENGLISH IS FUN with Rahel

Twenty Modern-Day Proverbs (continued)

- Blessed are the content creators.
- There is a time and podcast for everything.
- Do not judge clickbait by its cover.

- A WhatsApp a day keeps your mother at bay.
- All's well that trends well.
- Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day: teach a man to phish and you pheed him for a lifetime.
- Every cloud has a data centre.
- Spam tomorrow and spam yesterday – and always spam today.
- The end justifies the memes.

Subject: CHIASMUS

(a rhetorical device in which the structure of a phrase is reversed in the second part, to create a mirror-like effect.)

+ Never let a fool kiss you *or a kiss fool you.* (Dorothy Parker)

+ Ask not what your country can do for you - *ask what you can do for your country.* (John F. Kennedy)

+ It's not the men in my life, *it's the life in my men.* (Mae West)

+ You forget what you want to remember, *and you remember what you want to forget.* (Cormac McCarthy)

+ When the going gets tough, *the tough get going.* (Joseph P. Kennedy Sr.)

+ By failing to prepare, *you are preparing to fail.* (Benjamin Franklyn)

+ We shape our buildings, *and afterwards our buildings shape us.* (Winston Churchill)

+ You can take the girl out of the country, *but you can't take the country out of the girl.* (traditional proverb)

- + *She has all my love; my heart belongs to her. (The Beatles)*
- + *To be kissed by a fool is stupid, to be fooled by a kiss is worse. (Dorothy Parker)*
- + *Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. (Martin Luther King)*
- + *Fair is foul, and foul is fair. (Shakespeare)more next week*

Credits:

Editor of Hebrew Newsletter: Reut Shaliv

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Proofreader: Chazz Broadhurst

Office staff: Irit Cohen, Danit Duvdevani Kirshberg and Hedva Shaharabani

Disclaimer 1: The Edi-tor and translator does his best to provide an accurate reflection of the Hebrew Alon. Please be warned that it is not a direct translation. The original Hebrew text is the official version. This is of particular importance when it comes to decisions and procedures! Not all the material published in the Hebrew newsletter appears in "The Yizraelite". Considerations of length, readers' interest and the Edi-tor's ability to grapple with the subject matter, determine what is included.

Please take into account that we use AI when translating. We proofread and correct the texts but errors may be overlooked. Be warned!

Disclaimer 2: "English is Fun": At the request of the author, this column is not proofread or edited in any way. Content and format are at the discretion of the author.

Note: *The readers are encouraged to submit for inclusion "letters to the editor", photos and material that does not appear in the Hebrew Alon.*