

Tuesday, May 18th
Lynn's Birthday!!

This morning we woke up, packed up our luggage and stored it for the day & night. We just took our backpacks and an overnight bag in preparation for tonight's *Mifgash* with students from Ashkelon.

The first thing we did was set off for Tel Gezer, where we learned about early Semitic settlements, and how they built their cities on top of one another to form a Tel. We saw the structure of early fortifications of the cities. The fortifications of one of the cities is the same as two other cities all mentioned together in the *Tanakh*. We also looked at the connections of these ancient structures to the *tefillot* that we read on a daily basis.

After exploring Tel Gezer, we moved on to gleaning potatoes. Though this may seem a strange activity while here in Israel, we were working with the organization Table to Table to harvest for charity. The organization provides food to shelters and soup kitchens, that is often left as excess in fields. When farmers have more crops than they can sell, they often leave them in the field to rot, but Table to Table gets permission to come into the fields with volunteers to pick the crops and give them to the needy in Israel.

We enjoyed a brief lunch break at the mall in *Rechovot*, where we shopped a little and ate a little. Many of the stores were similar to the American ones, but the signs were in Hebrew.

This afternoon, we went to Ayalon Institute where we learned about a secret factory where people made bullets in preparation for the establishment of the State of Israel. This factory was in operation from 1945-1948. It was so secret that most members working above the factory in the kibbutz, didn't even know that it existed. During the time it was in operation, the secret workers manufactured over 2.25 million bullets.

We are off to our *Mifgash* with students from Ashkelon, and we'll let you know tomorrow how that went!