

Friday May 22nd to Saturday, May 23rd
Shabbat at Kibbutz Ketura
David's Birthday!!
Written by Ben Jacobson

Friday night we enjoyed the up-beat Kabbalat Shabbat services with the kibbutz and the eighth graders from Texas that are on their Israel trip as well. Shabbat dinner consisted of delicious local chicken in red pepper sauce with white rice and green beans; along with carrot cake for dessert. After dinner, one of the main visiting group educators on the Kibbutz, Leah, explained to us how everything on a Kibbutz works. Even more specifically how things on Kibbutz Ketura work. We were all quite exhausted from our trip to Eilat that morning, and some of us were quickly fading away into a not quite so restful sleep. As we were all starkly awakened by the end of the informative discussion about how Kibbutz works, we made our way back to our rooms where we were pleasantly surprised that we did not need to be at services until 9:30 the next morning.

Saturday morning, we all got to services roughly on time and listened to our first torah service in Israel. We acknowledged publicly both David's birthday and the anniversary of Daniel's Bar Mitzvah at morning services. After this, we went with Sara, known as the Mayor of Kibbutz Ketura, and participated in an activity that involved debating and resolving potential issues that are presented to the executive council in a Kibbutz. We were split into three groups and each given a scenario of an issue that is posed, and then asked to discuss it within our group and come to a consensus and present our decision to the rest of the groups. This was exciting and allowed us to think critically in the spirit of a kibbutz as to what was the best decision for the whole.

As we gave our thanks to Sara, we went off for a few hours of free time for Shabbat. Some of us slept and some of us played. Some of us rested, and others exerted. Midday we gathered by the pool to study *pirke avot* and to celebrate David's 18th birthday with a tasty brownie cake and soda. We had some free time before our tour of the Kibbutz. Then we met with two teenagers from the senior class here at the Kibbutz that guided us on our tour. Dinner was quite eventful. After eating, Rabbi Seltzer and soon the rest of the group, broke out into song. We sang our hearts out all the way back to our rooms where we did Havdalah. Then we all went to the pool for a night swim before bed time. Exhausted, we all are looking forward to the early morning of bike riding.