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the settlement

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The Beginning

**The beginning of the colony of
Mazkeret Batya in the “crazy thing”
of one man, Rabbi Shmuel
.Mohliver**

Disturbances in Russia from 1882 to 1881 led to the establishment of the Hovevei Zion Association, which Rabbi Mohliver was one of its founders. The members of the association had hopes for settlement in the Land of Israel and believed that if Jews come to it, who will work the land, they will prove to the world that the land is suitable for agriculture and the Jews .are suitable to be farmers



In accordance with this approach, Rabbi Mohliver went to Paris to try to convince the leadership of “All Israel Friends” to support his idea. He failed this mission but managed to be

accepted by Baron Rothschild. The meeting between them took place in 1882 and could be called historical, because it brought the Baron to the idea of support for settlement in Palestine. At that meeting, the Baron disagreed with the issue of settlement, but agreed to support a group of Jews, if one found, who are land workers from their youth and would be willing to go up to Palestine voluntarily and at their expense.

In accordance with this conclusion, Rabbi Mohliver went out to look for a suitable group of Jews. The search was dropped on Yechiel Brill, editor of the newspaper "Lebanon" in Mainz, Germany and he arrived at a Jewish peasant village called Pavlovka, near the city of Rozhinoi in the Grunda River, Poland (today – White Russia). A general assembly was held in which 10 families were elected, who signed an agreement that stipulates: first, the men will rise at their expense, undergo training in the Mikveh of Israel, the first agricultural school, and if they prove themselves to be farmers, the Baron Hashuva will establish for them. So they can raise their families, too.

Shortly after, the 11 men (one more of the original ten) left on their way to Palestine. After many hardships on the way and on the shores of the country, they descended on the Jaffa coast on December 14, 1882 and reached Mikveh Israel, where they stayed for about 10 months. At the same time, they began to search for proper land for the establishment of a colony. The searches continued for about a year and in October 1883, 2,660 dunams of the Arab village of Akir were purchased. It was heavy plain land, suitable for the seed, as they were accustomed to in their land of origin.

Immediately upon the purchase of the land, on November 7, 1883, Z. Cheshvan TARMAD (reputed as the day of the settlement), the men left Mikveh Israel, rented houses in the Arab village, began to cultivate their land and build

their homes. So they brought their families, who joined 7 other families and began to live in the colony.

Origin of the name

They called it Ekron, because they thought it was the place of the biblical city of Ekron. After a few years, the name of the colony was changed to Mazkeret Batya, after the Baron's mother. The colony was managed by the Baron's officials and this fact brought many frictions between them and the peasants of the colony, on issues such as: the type of agricultural crops, the methods of work and the nature of life in the colony. The climax reached the conflict in 1889, the year of Shemitah, when the officials ordered the land, despite the resistance of the peasants, being devout in their religion. The residents stood against the Baron's officials and did not surrender until the end of the year of Shemitah. And the murky relationship continued after that.

The people of Mazkeret Batya lived a simple and hardworking life of landworkers. The newspapers of the period describe: "In general, this moshav will make a very good impression on all its seers, for it is the one moshav in the holy land, whose inhabitants are simple and innocent peasants and work their land willingly and seriously, and enjoy their mighty, and will show all the people of the world that are talented, our brothers are our brothers in every hard work in the field, and talented is our ancient land to satisfy its workers, the herds and the deaf and the sow its land without heart."

They copied to the colony all the community institutions, which existed in the Diaspora: benevolence, Kadisha, the Knesset, the cold of the sick, hospitality, a member of the accommodation and managed a city social life. For many years, the people of Mazkeret Batya struggled with difficulties, the natural disasters,

which destroyed crops and foreign rule. Only in the 30's did the colony achieve economic establishment, which allows for agriculture

In the War of Independence

Mazkeret Batya played an important role, as a basis for organizing the convoys on their way to besieged Jerusalem. The people of the colony took care of the soldiers and the ministerial drivers, entertained them in their homes and tried to make them as much easier as they could. The Jewish local police, whose station was in Mazkeret Batya, secured the roads in the area and especially the road, where the convoys passed through them to the capital. In addition, the community served as a field hospital for victims of the battles in the area, especially the battles for Latrun. However, a small settlement was left, the number of which has not changed for decades

Preservation of the historical sites of Mazkeret Batya



The expansion of the community began with the waves of immigration, in the 50's and 60's and the development momentum was cut

down in the colony in recent years, in the absorption of new residents and in the expansion of community services, all while maintaining the unique rural character of the colony.

At the initiative of the local authority, a museum was established in the community whose purpose is to preserve and document the history of the colony, to restore and take care of the existing sites and to illustrate to the younger generation and to visitors the life of the colony pioneers in the Land of Israel. Mazkeret Batya, won, most of whose historical buildings remain to this day and maintained their original character.

This is one of the few colonies in the country, which remains a complete complex of a settlement between the first aliyah. Cooperation between the local authority and the Council for the Preservation of Buildings and Settlement Sites has yielded comprehensive conservation activity in the colony. A city building plan has been prepared, which includes detailed regulations for preservation. A large part of the historical sites has been restored and preserved and the others – at different stages of the process.

The main street received special treatment: the wooden fences, street furniture and light lamps were restored that have restored its character since then. A visit to the colony today allows you to experience a visit to a pioneering colony of Israel – unique and fascinating.