

YEDA-Kiryat Bialik Celebrates the “Sigd” Ethiopian Holiday

On November 11, 2015 the Ethiopian Jewish Community celebrated the “Sigd” holiday. Traditionally celebrated 50 days after Yom Kippur, Sigd is a pilgrimage holiday of renewal and purification which like Yom Kippur, is honored by a fast. Sigd marks the renewal of the vow between G-d and the people of Israel. Whereas Yom Kippur focuses on self-examination, the essence of the Sigd holiday is communal reflection in which the community prays for the continuity of faith and redemption for the return to Zion.

In Israel today, the holiday has additional significance as it commemorates the journey of the Ethiopian Jews to the land of Israel. The journey began with strong faith and love for the land of Israel, continued with a challenging journey which for many Ethiopians involved a trek through the desert, to finally the arrival in Israel where they continue to face the social and economic challenges of absorption into Israeli society.

Today, there are only 52 Ethiopian teachers working in Israel, and we are very proud that three of them work at YEDA-Kiryat Bialik. We are the only school in Israel with this many full time Ethiopian teachers. This year, the YEDA-Kiryat Bialik School honored the rich tradition of the Sigd holiday with all of its students and staff. Rachel, one of our teachers, organized a festive and exciting ceremony for the holiday, during which the students read passages discussing the holiday. Following the readings, students wearing traditional Ethiopian clothing performed a traditional dance.

Yours,

Eran Dubovi
YEDA-Leo Baeck Israel CEO
leobaeckhaifa.org/yeda/

Itai Karin
YEDA-Kiryat Bialik School leader

