

COMMENT: A year ago (Summer 1989), *HAVRUTA* published a letter from Dennis Gura '82-'83, in which he told the touching story of how he learned to live with the tension caused by his baby daughter's battle with leukemia. At that time, Rebecca was near the end of two years and three months of treatment and the prognosis was positive. Dennis wrote, "A children's cancer ward is exactly where those most painfully involved have to believe, have to force themselves to believe, otherwise there would be none of those little steps that daily get one to tomorrow."

For Dennis, Pardes played an important role in enabling him to take "those little steps," by laying the foundation for him to become part of a Jewish community. Inspired by his example, I wondered whether there might be other Bonei Pardes willing to share their stories with us. Each of the two families interviewed here, the Konigsbergs and the Simkins, are engaged in the Herculean task of raising a severely handicapped child at home.

Volunteering at Jerusalem's Alyn Orthopedic Hospital for children I've had occasion to spend time with handicapped children of all ages whose parents were either unwilling or unable to care for them at home. Although they receive truly remarkable care at Alyn, these children grow up bereft of a home-life and thus without benefit of the constant love and devotion taken for granted by most children. What makes one family willing to undertake the burden of raising a handicapped child and another feel totally incapable? How many of us are able to say what we would do if faced with the choice of devoting our lives to the physically fatiguing and emotionally enervating tasks involved in the care and treatment of such a child, or of leaving him or her to be cared for institutionally?

For Both Rachael and Yehuda Konigsberg, and Elana and Shlomo Simkin, not only was abandonment never an issue, but parenting a handicapped child at home became a creative challenge. They speak about this challenge with candor and poignancy. There are, however, aspects of this challenge which they do not address.

As mother of a handicapped child, I would like to share some of these with you. One is the sense of isolation you feel when you realize that your friends with normal



Rachael Konigsberg and daughter, Chava

children cannot possibly understand what you are going through and that you can never really be certain what feelings your child arouses in them. Are they secretly repulsed by your child's affliction? How do they feel about their normal child playing with your disabled one? And how realistic is it to expect a busy parent to invite a child that requires special care to come over and play? Another aspect is the balancing act parents of a disabled child often have to undergo between a desperate need for privacy—a modicum of time and space in which to escape from the seeming endlessness of care-giving—and the certain knowledge that survival often depends upon continuous involvement with a staff of professionals and semi-professionals, invading even the homefront.

There is hardly time to meet a friend for coffee when you have to be at the physiotherapist, the doctor, the orthopedic appliance specialist. And as for taking a vacation alone with one's spouse, finding and training a stand-in for parents can be truly daunting. The paperwork and

bureaucracy necessary to receive welfare payments or to garner the range of support and services which might be available seem to fill every spare minute. In place of pride in your self-reliance, one begins to realize that survival depends increasingly upon reliance on others for support, services and intervention.

And finally, one is continually on an emotional roller coaster, identifying with one's child as he or she moves from joy at achieving each new goal, to despair and anger on realizing the enormity, or impossibility, of attaining others, and all the while, as a parent, feeling constantly compelled to provide a positive, stable and nurturing environment.

Levi asked me what Gary's article on women and *brit mila* has to do with the stories of these two unusual families facing unusual problems. *Pardes Revisited* has never been offered specifically as a *drosch* on the feature story, nevertheless his question is a provocative one. The relationship, I believe, may be found in the subject of suffering and the dimensions of motherhood revealed in these interviews.

Gary's thesis is that, beginning with Sarah, women are included in the Avrahamic *brit* through their role as purveyors of Jewish status via motherhood, with the sign of the *brit* their womb. Interestingly, however, as we learn from his article,

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Parenting a Handicapped Child

Shlomo '82-'83 and Elana '81-'83 Simkin grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia where they were high school sweethearts. Elana received a B. Mus. from the University of British Columbia and an M.Sc. in early childhood education from the Bank Street College of Education in New York. She taught piano for eight years, kindergarten and first grade in a Jewish day school in Manhattan, and kindergarten in Jerusalem. Shlomo has a B.A. in English literature from the University of British Columbia, took a course in computer programming at New York University, and worked 2-1/2 years in New York as a programmer. Since making aliya in August 1986, he has worked for Telrad, a manufacturer of telephone and communications systems. Their son, Michael, was born in December 1985 and daughter, Haya Bruria, in August 1988. Haya was born with a midline cleft defect, a type of facial anomaly so rare that there are perhaps six cases like hers in the world. She was born without a nose, and with severely underdeveloped eyeballs, eyelids and upper jaw. She is blind.

Elana: Haya came into the world screaming her lungs out. The next voice I heard, however, was that of the doctor saying, "There's something wrong with the baby. She has no nose, no eyes and I've never seen anything like it. Do you want to see her?" I replied that I wanted to see my husband first. Shlomo had run out to tend to Michael.

Shlomo: I handed Michael over to a nurse and went to see the baby. She was in a warming tray and I thought she was very cute. I went back to Elana and assured her that the baby looked okay and that I thought she should see her.

Elana: By this time twenty minutes had passed since she had been born. I had been afraid to look at her. When they brought her in, I saw that she had eyelids and lashes and a small bump for a nose. In fact, she looked more normal than I expected. In the APGAR evaluation of her physical condition at birth, she received high scores. I said yes, she's okay. By the next day I had fallen in love with her.

Shlomo: A couple of neonatologists from Shaare Zedek Hospital were called in. They looked Haya over and

said that usually a face so deformed was an indication of severely limited brain development. Their prognosis was that she would die within a couple of days. But I too had fallen in love with her from the first moment I saw her—her cuteness, her smallness. I held her a lot as soon as they would let me and I noticed that no matter how hard she screamed, she would quiet down if I sang to her. So right away I sensed a connection between us. I felt this child was not about to die. But when two experts make such a pronouncement, it weighs heavily and I started to prepare myself. I told Elana what they said.

Elana: On the evening after Haya's birth, I was looking through the window of the nursery at the babies who were fortunate enough to be there. Haya wasn't. She had been placed in intensive care. It was Shabbat, and the frantic atmosphere of the hospital had subsided into one of unexpected serenity. Next to me was a woman who had just had a miscarriage. We stood there, the two of us, looking at the babies who weren't ours. She asked me where my baby was and I told her she was not expected to live. She responded with a story in which the Ba'al Shem Tov said that sometimes a soul comes into the world just to drink milk from its mother's breast for a few days, and that's all it needs to achieve completion.

Her words spoke to my heart. During those first days I was living in a

world where previous assumptions about what was possible no longer held. I was to experience an ultimate contradiction. By bringing forth life, I was to experience death. That shattered my conception of the laws of nature and the framework of my day-to-day life. It opened to me a dimension, wherein reincarnation, which I had never seriously considered, made as much sense as anything the doctors were telling me. Here, I had a baby without a brain. Why shouldn't it be all soul?

Shlomo: We began to bring Michael to see Haya every day. It was important to us to have him get to know her and for friends to come and see her. By word of mouth, news spread and by Shabbat more than fifty friends, mostly from Pardes, came to visit. It meant a lot. We didn't know how long we were going to have her, but we had to treat her as part of the family, to celebrate her for as long as we were given.

Elana: We named her Haya, life, in the hope that she would live; Bruria, because we prayed we could accept her loss with the kind of faith with which her Talmudic namesake accepted the death of her two sons. I felt a kinship with Bruria, not only in the loss for which I was preparing, but in the confidence that we would survive that loss. It would be hard, but we would cope.

Shlomo: Then, four days old, the neonatologists decided to do a

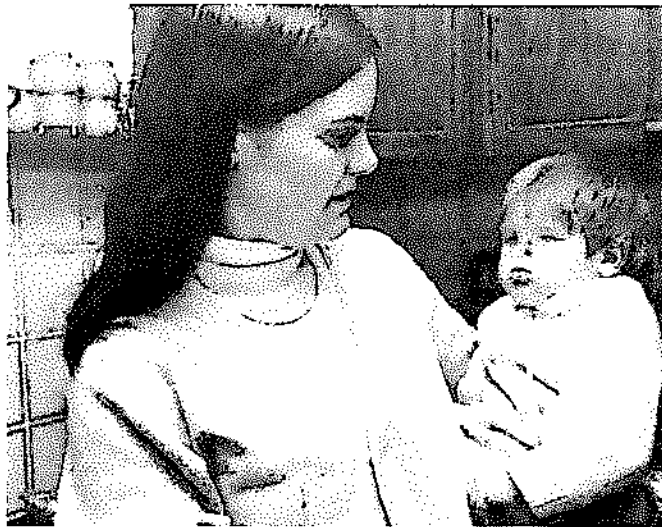


CATscan to confirm their original diagnosis. Contrary to what they expected, it showed a normal size brain.

Elana: Still in a state of shock, I wasn't able to react to this news as offering even a glimmer of hope. I couldn't feel or think, let alone absorb. Still, each day I became increasingly attached to her.

Shlomo: Haya kept living. Two weeks later I asked the specialists whether we should still regard her as dying. "She's proving that she's viable by being viable," they answered. Until this time, intervention had been minimal, a tube inserted down her throat to her stomach so food could be injected with a syringe. The tube also enabled her to breathe by keeping her lips parted. When Haya was six weeks old, doctors at Hadassah surgically opened a nasal passage. A month later she finally came home. We were extremely fortunate during that period to have the live-in help of our parents. Mainly they took care of Michael because Elana was gone all day, every day, to be with Haya. I came to the hospital after work to stay until the middle of the night.

Elana: During that period feeding Haya was a nightmare. The food tended to go into the tube from her nose, so I had to aspirate her while feeding. Even worse, we had to take out the tube daily to clean and then replace it, causing her so much pain that each time it almost destroyed me. This went on for two and a half months. Finally a better solution was found. I hoped to begin a normal family life with my two children. But it was not to be. Haya requires a tremendous amount of medical intervention. To date she has had a total of six operations and has spent six months in the hospital. She'll need continual reconstructive surgery to shape her face as she grows. When she's home, her scheduled therapy and doctor appointments number between three and seven a week, in addition to unplanned trips to the hospital. Many different doctors care for her, each with his own vision of what treatment she requires. Very little is predictable. I go to a clinic for a regular visit and can be kept for surgery, or rush to the emergency room with a crisis only to be asked, "Is she breathing? Then why did you come?" One scheduled clinic appointment ended with her admission for a ten-



day, intravenous antibiotic treatment that turned into a nine-week hospitalization including two operations in different hospitals.

Shlomo: At three months she started having physio-therapy and sensory and visual stimulation which she still receives three times a week. We're pleased with the results. Despite so many obstacles, Haya has reached all the developmental milestones on schedule, and doesn't need to be measured against the adjusted scale usually used for blind kids.

Elana: I've been thrilled to see her development, particularly in the emergence of a happy personality. I feel my greatest challenge is to preserve her outgoing sunny disposition in spite of all she has to go through. Haya is obviously of at least average intelligence, even seems to be way above average. There is no reason she won't go to school with regular kids.

Shlomo: Our experience with Haya has definitely changed my religious feelings. Questions of good and evil and their relationship to suffering were once interesting theological problems which didn't prevent my having basic faith in an omnipotent and benevolent God. Not an entirely untroubled faith, however. My father died when I was young, after a battle with cancer that began before I was conceived. While I've never been able to declare with confidence that the agonizing death of a young man, leaving behind a widow and small child, was necessary for the realization of a divine plan, I usually managed to live with the contradiction. Most of the time it was enough to acknowledge the limitations of my finite human brain. I could trust that God, some-

how, knew what He was doing. This faith has been shaken after spending so much time in pediatric wards.

There are certain expressions of faith people have offered us: "God never sends you more than you can handle." "You must have been very righteous to have been entrusted with such a special mission." Whatever their intention, the impact estranges me even more from the belief system. There are times when Haya is in the hospital and we're in the middle of it, that observance, particularly prayer, becomes a real burden. Then God's the last person I want to talk to. What keeps me going at those times is the great kindness we've experienced at the hands of our community in Givat Ze'ev.

Elana: For example, when Haya was in the hospital for two months this last Fall, I was there all day, every day, and slept there four nights a week. Shlomo slept there the other three, including Shabbat. Friends took care of Michael, sometimes from 6:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M., did my banking, paid my bills, shopped for food, cooked everything we ate, drove me to and from the hospital, dropped things off at the hospital. The community even hired someone to stay overnight with Haya in the hospital so we could have one night at home together. All this, in addition to having Michael and me for Shabbat, visiting Haya, and relieving me in the hospital.

Shlomo: We're talking about a special group of people who would be special anyway, but whom the Torah has inspired to an exceptional level of lovingkindness. Experiencing this *hesed* has increasingly brought me to regard God as the source of moral

and spiritual demands, while my hospital stays have weakened my ability to see this hand in the ongoing running of the world. It is an insult to His dignity and to my sensibility to ascribe to Him the pain I have seen, or to claim that it is really for the good. After each hospitalization, to my great surprise, the burden of observance gradually lifts, and Shabbat begins to feel like Shabbat again, a time of spiritual renewal.

Elana: My experience with Haya has totally changed my life. It is now clear that I am not going back to my career for a long time. The pace may let up, but there will always be something until she's an adult. Therefore, I need the freedom and spontaneity to be able to drop everything when I have to, more than I need the distraction provided by a career. I derive a tremendous satisfaction and considerable strength from learning to cope with hospitals and doctors. When I reach a point where I say, "If one more thing happens I think I'll fall apart," and then I don't, it keeps me going. The greater the challenge, the more I feel I've accomplished.

Shlomo: A difference between the two of us is illustrated by the fact that if we have a night where both kids are in bed and we can read for a few hours, I'll head for a mystery and Elana for a volume of clinical pharmacology. Her way of coping is to gain as much mastery of the situation as possible. Mine is to escape. My father's death has a great deal to do with this. On the one hand, I've always known that terrible things really can happen to anyone, so I never went through a period of "Why did this happen to me?" I've read that most parents of handicapped children experience a paralyzing guilt at some time in the early life of their child. I certainly understand that, but I haven't felt it. The earlier tragedy removed many of the barriers to accepting what had happened, which was especially important in the first few weeks, when Elana was totally numb. On the other hand, I grew up hearing stories of my father's heroism in the face of his illness, and always wondered whether, faced with a similar challenge, I would respond as bravely. Looking inward, I never found evidence of that kind of greatness. Now the challenge has come, and I know that I'm meeting it extremely well. I even know now that my father could not have felt as brave and strong as he acted.

Elana: I enjoy the fight and the feeling of competence it gives me, but it took me a while to achieve this. For

the first ten weeks, while Haya was in the hospital, I couldn't do anything, but sit and hold her. But now my coping skills and intellect are growing all the time. Before this I was a total arts person, never having gotten beyond high school biology.

In terms of faith and religion, this experience has had only a neutral or negative effect on me. For a number of years before Michael was born, I davened every day. I enjoyed it and got a lot out of it. From the day he was born, I stopped. I found having a baby too demanding and only davened occasionally. Therefore, while I was pregnant with Haya, I very rarely prayed for a healthy, normal child. Does that mean I got a healthy Michael because I davened properly and a damaged Haya because I didn't? I get about that far in my questioning and stop. The High Holy Day liturgy that I used to find beautiful and inspiring is very difficult for me now, especially the part about who will have a good life, who will be stricken. I cannot see any good reason for this having happened to Haya. So I back away, because all I can get from the liturgy is that someone must have done something awful for her to have been born like this. This is probably a superficial understanding, but I have enough other things to do right now that I don't feel the need to deal with it. I always enjoyed the praising parts of davening and the descriptions of the wonderful things God does. Now that I've seen the other side, I can't look at either anymore.

Shlomo: There is no doubt that everything we are going through, and the tension it produces, affect my relationship with Elana. We are more tired, spend less time together and are usually preoccupied when we do. Living with this amount of stress, we have to work hard to avoid getting grumpy with each other. In addition, before Haya, when I would be feeling my worst, I could always go to Elana and expect her to help me. But now, when I know she's only holding on a few notches above me, I can't share my worst nightmares with her, for fear of bringing her down. Instead, I call a friend.

Elana: When I'm at that stage I call someone who's been through it. I find I have an affinity for other people with handicapped children. But no matter how difficult things are, underlying all our concerns about Haya is the love that Shlomo and I have for this child who brings such joy and who continues to amaze doctors right and left.

Rachael Zook Konigsberg '80-'82, grew up in Queens, N.Y. She attended Queens College where she received her B.A. in education and Jewish studies. In May, 1980 she married Yehuda Konigsberg. Rachael and Yehuda have three daughters, Chava, Shira and Tzipora. Chava, the oldest, is brain damaged in her motor and vision centers, probably a result of lack of oxygen to her brain around the time of her birth or during the eight weeks of intensive care that followed. Chava has been diagnosed as having hypotonic cerebral palsy, cortical blindness and retardation. In response to the difficulties of living with and raising a handicapped child, Rachael has initiated a project designed to provide support services for families raising disabled children at home. The project is called SHALVA.

Yehuda and I came to Israel right after we married. I went to Pardes knowing I wanted to be more traditionally observant. I had studied briefly in more traditional yeshivot and found in them too much pressure to conform. At these yeshivot it was very important that I look and act in accordance with their definition of a married religious woman. Pardes enabled me to discover for myself which path I would follow and how my religious observance would develop.

During my second year at Pardes I became pregnant. I had an easy pregnancy and tremendous energy. I remember feeling that everything was going my way. However, when Chava was born four weeks prematurely, my whole life changed. Chava was immediately transferred to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (N.I.C.U.) at Hadassah Hospital. Having delivered by Caesarian section, I remained in the ward for women who have given birth. Yehuda shuttled between the two wards, trying to find out what was going on.

During this time, my worst fear was that my baby had died. Only twelve hours after I gave birth, did I get my first view of Chava in the N.I.C.U. She was hooked up to ten different machines. The medical staff tried to reassure me she just needed a little extra oxygen, that the tests they were doing were standard. They encouraged me to rest and regain my strength.

Chava remained in N.I.C.U. for eight weeks during which she neither opened her eyes, cried, nor ate. She was continually sedated so she wouldn't pull out any of the tubes.

At the same time and in the same hospital that Rachael Konigsberg was giving birth to Chava, my wife, Zahava, was giving birth to our son, Asaf. Elana Simkin was not only my student at Pardes but also my daughter's best piano teacher. For these and other reasons it is impossible for me to relate to their daughters, Chava and Haya, on a purely intellectual level. Nor do I feel that philosophical speculation can alleviate the personal pain of a wounded parent. I can offer only my personal reflections, realizing that what I say cannot do justice to the real issues and challenges facing these parents. Chava and Haya are fortunate to have such wonderful and devoted parents. When God says *ישראל אשר בך אתפאר* (Israel, I am proud of you), He has, in these families, children of whom He can be proud.

The religious statements of Rachael and of Shlomo and Elana are entrenched in Jewish tradition. Rachael follows the halachic approach as expressed by my teacher, Rabbi Josef Soloveitchik. Shlomo and Elana's position is a continuation of another halachic tradition, of protest, developed by figures such as Moses, Hannah, Elijah and R. Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev. My father says that a Jew should pretend in his prayer that he is holding an axe and banging on the closed gates of Heaven. The axe, he adds, should be ciled with tears. I think I learned well this lesson of prayer as protest.

My father tells me that my first religious experience occurred in *shul* one *erev* Yom Kippur during the Shoah when I was about three years old. I suddenly broke into tears and cried so loudly it interrupted the service. When they tried to calm me I explained that I was crying out to God, asking why He allowed Hitler to kill the Jews. Apparently I imbibed this form of protest from my parents, a protest which imbued my earliest vocabulary of prayer. Consequently I learned never to expect human suffering to be averted by God's overt intervention, at least not until the coming of the Messiah, when God's intervention in nature should be apparent. As a result, I find not only that belief in Messiah is intrinsic to my faith, but also that my faith in God co-exists with full awareness of the presence of human suffering.

Rabbi Soloveitchik writes that we cannot really explain suffering in theological terms. As finite beings, we cannot understand the system of the infi-

nite. Soloveitchik compares this system to a carpet, only one side of which is visible and comprehensible. What we can and should do, he says, is follow the prescription of *Masekhet Ta'anit* which calls us to spiritual elevation and self-improvement, by striving for increased sensitivity to another's plight, praying with more *kavanah* (focused attention), and helping perfect the world physically and spiritually. In contrast, another teacher of mine, Rabbi Chaim Zimmerman, claims that although we cannot presume to find all the answers, each of us should strive to become his own theologian, developing and defining for himself a personal understanding of such painful issues.

When I look at the *Tanach* and *Midrashim*, I find several messages which help me function and live with these problems. After the flood, God promised Noah that He would no longer curse the earth because of human deeds. This means that from that time on, laws of biology and agriculture would be fixed independent of man's behavior, with the seeming exception of *Eretz Yisrael*, in which the system linked economic success to moral behavior. A second time God determined the world would be governed according to natural laws occurred at *matan Torah* (the giving of the Torah at Sinai). A midrash states that all the maimed Israelites present were cured. After the sin of the golden calf, however, this cure was rescinded, and from then on, the problems of physical disability remained with us. These sources teach us that the laws of nature dictate a cycle of bounty and drought, the existence of medical problems, the fact that a certain percentage of babies will be born deformed. The laws of nature are indifferent to human needs. Maimonides maintains that very few people merit the grace of divine providence on the personal level. The majority of humankind are under a general divine providence subject to the laws of nature. Yet it seems to me that even if one reaches the level of the *tzaddikim* (the righteous), who, according to Maimonides, merit direct personal divine providence, this does not guarantee earthly success and happiness. The greatest *tzaddikim* experience suffering known as *יסורים של אהבה* (suffering that comes as an expression of divine love), a concept I find very difficult to comprehend.

It is needless to state that not every suffering is punishment and not every sufferer a sinner. Most

of the biblical *tzaddikim* were also great sufferers, and no doubt reached their level of piety by the way in which they dealt with their anguish. The greatest sufferer of all, and the greatest *tzaddik*, is the Messiah, who feels the need for redemption even more than we do. He suffers not only his own pain but empathetically feels the suffering of the world. His realization that he has the potential of redeeming the world only increases his frustration and pain.

The sages of the Kabbala distinguished between two aspects of the divine. One is the transcendental, the *ein sof*, or infinite which remains always in its perfection. The other is the *Shekhina* (divine presence), who suffers with us, cries with us and yearns for redemption with us. Whenever a Jew cries and suffers, he has a *havruta* (partner). Thus, Israel's redemption is the *Shekhina's* redemption, and Israel's return from exile, the *Shekhina's* homecoming.

The Holy One, blessed be He, has a place and its name is "secret" (*bamislalim*)—where God is weeping. Yet in the outer chambers there is no grief before the Almighty; honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. (*Haggigah* 5b).

This passage is expounded by Rabbi Kolanimus Shapira, the last hasidic rabbi of the Warsaw Ghetto, in his advice to a fellow suffering Jew. "If you cry only because of your personal pain, you will be broken. But if you include in your crying the sufferings of others, then you find yourself in the inner chamber of God, crying with the Almighty." He suggests that someone whose personal suffering enables him to engage and empathize with others, and with the *Shekhina*, becomes part of the divine entourage.

The *Zohar* says a process of *tikkun* (restoration) is underway and predicts that with the arrival of the Messiah, all diseases and deformities will be cured. This *tikkun* is ongoing and is accomplished with acts such as those performed by these two families, not only through their *g'milut hasadim* (acts of loving-kindness), but also with their prayers, tears and protests. According to Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, all the prayers, hopes, joys, and frustrations of Jewish souls blend together to create a melody which not only sustains and nourishes the world, but without which it could not exist.

ARIE STRIKOVSKY

Gone were my plans to nurse my baby. I could only look at her, *daven*, express milk and wait. In all the technological hubbub that surrounded her, somehow this made me feel needed. My Lamaze classes had not prepared me for this strange type of mothering.

After two weeks, it was decided that Chava needed an operation to close a valve between her heart and lungs. During the operation, I made a decision to go to the *kotel* rather than stay at the hospital. I wasn't yet feel-

ing really connected to Chava. I had not gotten any response or feedback from her, and therefore had no sense that she was really my baby. By going to the *kotel*, I think I was seeking healing for myself, attempting to connect with God to beg Him to end this nightmare and heal my baby. At the *kotel*, Yehuda and I saw a group of young men of army age praying and swaying in a large circle. Yehuda was told they were maintaining all-night vigils, saying *Tehilim* (Psalms) for the soldiers in Lebanon. They showed us

which *Tehilim* we should say for our baby. At that moment I knew I was in the right place.

After the surgery, the doctors gradually stopped the sedation. Chava began having crying and waking periods. The nurses showed me how to care for her. It was horrible seeing the intravenous needle puncturing different parts of her body, as all her veins were exhausted. Now that she was awake a bit, we began singing to her. Both of us have always loved music and through music found a

way to transcend some of the agony in the N.I.C.U. The staff encouraged us to change the pictures surrounding her, to talk to her and bring in toys. At five weeks old, we photographed Chava for the first time. A bond was definitely developing.

I remember two feelings from this period. One, a deep sense of security that Chava was receiving the best of care owing to the dedication of the medical staff. The second, a tremendous appreciation I felt for the sense of community that enveloped us, from Pardes and from Yehuda's *ye-shiva*. Friends cooked our meals, did laundry, washed floors, and listened when we needed them. Many friends told us that their children's classes were saying *Tehilim* for Chava because the power of a child's prayer is particularly strong. Aside from this, the whole period remains only a blur.

With no preparation for the end of this hospitalization period, the day came, after eight interminably long weeks, when we were allowed to bring Chava home. I began nursing, but Chava didn't gain weight and cried incessantly. She was capable of remaining awake for thirty hours at a stretch. There was no night and no day. We learned to care for her in shifts. Later I learned that erratic sleep patterns and incessant crying can be indications of an immature nervous system, and also of cerebral palsy.

We were fortunate that among our friends was a wonderful breastfeeding counselor who, after visiting and hearing that things weren't progressing, insisted that "there are times a mother has to know when to stop breastfeeding for the sake of the baby's health, or for the sake of the family's mental health." At that point I gave in. There were two dreams that weren't to be realized through Chava: the dream of having a healthy, normal baby, and the dream of breastfeeding my baby. The counselor legitimized my feelings and gave me the strength I needed to stop nursing. The lack of sleep, however, continued taking its toll and I felt numb for weeks without end.

The numbness turned to anger when we realized we weren't getting answers to our question, "What exactly is wrong with our daughter?" It took many months and a trip to the States to get a clear if debatable diagnosis, owing to Chava's far from typical condition. Fortunately, we were guided by wonderful, knowledgeable friends and began a series of therapies giving Chava proper care right from the start: physical and occupational therapy, visual stimulation and

Feldenkreis lessons. Even so, her physical development seemed at a standstill.

One of the less well-known therapies we have kept up with is Feldenkrais. When Chava was eight months old, a friend, a Feldenkrais practitioner who had just made *aliya*, came to us for Shabbat. He observed Chava crying incessantly as she appeared to be locked into painful and awkward positions. He asked if he could "play" with her and began to massage her neck, head and back. She seemed to really enjoy it and began calming down. He continued to visit a few times a week, refusing all payment. After returning from our trip to the States, he set us up with a Feldenkrais practitioner who continues to work with her to this day.

Receiving the diagnosis when Chava was eleven months old was a turning point for us. We had always *known* there was something very wrong with our child, but wanted to believe that everything would be O.K. The reality of placing a label on her was devastating, but it was also a relief to face it and begin dealing with it.

Facing our situation also meant finding a way to ease our pain. We each mourned in different ways, while responding to the same trauma. I found, for instance, that taking myself away for a day or two helped immensely, perhaps because I am in the house more than Yehuda. It wasn't long before I began to realize that when I'm feeling down and want to avoid a point of real depression, going out to help someone else gives me a boost. At least it usually produces observable results and helps alleviate some of the frustration I experience when my efforts with Chava do not prove very beneficial. In any event, I find this time away from my family, helping others, to be truly therapeutic. Yehuda, on the other hand, finds his escape playing guitar and singing, watching video movies or jogging.

I became pregnant when Chava was a year old. The pregnancy was filled with symptoms which had no physical cause. My doctor felt it was stress causing premature labor symptoms, and I was confined to bed for the last trimester. During that time I was filled with worry about having another handicapped child. In addition, I had all the normal worries about how I would share my love and attention with two small children, one of whom had special needs. All this stress did not make for an easy pregnancy, but fortunately everything went well.

From the time Shira was born, I

felt my life blossoming again. I appreciated every detail of her normal development, and was ecstatic. Having Shira, and then Tzipora two years later, made me more relaxed with Chava, especially when I realized what she gained from having siblings—their stimulation, attention and continual input. Once, all we talked about was Chava. Having other kids helped put our lives in a different perspective.

Yehuda and I have brought our individual talents to this special situation. I take Chava to various private therapies, keep up with medical and developmental aspects and directly engage in therapy with her. Yehuda fills our home with music, laughter and joy. I am the one who constantly struggles with the larger issues. Whereas, at times, I have had to withdraw from the intensity of day-to-day living to maintain a positive attitude, Yehuda always seems to be totally accepting of Chava just as she is, at any given stage.

Chava is calm, non-demanding, and content. I attribute this to the love and reassurance we've given her. There are so many things we've been told that she would never do, which she does—because of constant hard work, devotion and encouragement. We refuse to give up because we feel we have no alternative. We try to maintain as normal a family life as possible, which includes disciplining her when appropriate. Now that Chava is eight years old, we have to



make compromises as a family. We simply can't go out as often with Chava, or "shlep" her up lots of stairs to go visiting on Shabbat, as we used to. We find it helpful to brainstorm with other families in similar circumstances.

My faith in Torah goes hand-in-hand with a belief that what happens is good even though we don't always see that good. I believe there is a purpose to everything, including Chava's being here and our being her parents. Having Chava has refined my personality, the way I treat others. I have become particularly careful when giving advice. I have also learned to really listen when someone in pain honors me by sharing their problem or their sorrow. I have learned to seek out a larger picture in each day's trials. While I still can't understand the relationship between sin and punishment and a seeming unfairness of things, I do resonate with those who "turn their fate into destiny," changing laws, creating programs, raising money, educating others.

So, I developed a non-profit organization, SHALVA, to provide relief for families of handicapped children who are raising their children at home. Its services include training and coordination of a network of volunteers to help those families; development of an information clearing house and a lending library; creation of parent support groups; establishing a summer camp for multiple-handicapped children and an all-year afternoon

center open seven days a week. In short, SHALVA attempts to fill the gaps where educational and presently available social services end.

My very first experience with someone handicapped was through my volunteer project at Pardes. I worked with an eighteen-year-old girl who was blind, retarded and had cerebral palsy. I had a wonderful relationship with her and felt that though she had not come anywhere near reaching her potential, she had so much to teach me. This was six months before Chava was born and proved tremendously helpful. It made me more sensitive to the many handicapped children and adults I've since met. This first positive experience enabled me to get rid of my own negative stereotypes of handicapped people and to search for the beauty within each of God's creations, no matter how physically or mentally deformed.

I once asked a *rav* how I can pray for a "*refuah shlema*" (complete recovery) for Chava, considering that we don't pray for miracles and that her condition is permanent. I was told that my idea of a full recovery may be different from God's. For God, a full recovery might involve all the aspects of how Chava affects us, how she forces us to grow, mature, and appreciate the most minute details of the miracle of human development. My personal challenge is to make God's will my will, to really trust and believe—in spite of the pain that Chava must feel, and that Yehuda and I will always feel—that this has happened for the best.

Before Chava was born, I had just begun to *daven* and understand parts of the prayers, but was actually quite passive in my relationship with God. Raising a handicapped child, and believing that this is all for the best, I now have a personal agenda with God. I talk, demand, tell Him I'm putting in my effort and that He can help me on His end. I used to think this was *chutzpa*, but I don't demand what's impossible. I talk to Him all day, reminding Him I'm doing the best I can, that He needs to give me more strength and the wisdom to make the right decisions. Some days I ask Him for help to get out of bed to face a new day.

Sometimes, when I feel exhausted and overwhelmed, I think it's just not fair, and I even feel anger towards God. At such times I think that after all I've put in, I deserve a kid who can do more, a kid for whom we can have some hope for partial independence in the future.

Time truly heals. Once I was afraid I would never be able to be happy

with a full heart. Now, thank God, I can finally celebrate at other people's *simchas*. Having two healthy children has helped put things in perspective, as has involving myself with other people's difficult situations. Time has given me greater clarity of purpose. I now have an ability to reach out to those who feel isolated by their grief, because I've been there myself. I find I can clarify for other parents what their needs are, and help them. I try to focus on what I consider the priorities—God's will, *shalom bayit* (peace at home), self-esteem and mental health, as opposed to trivialities such as what others will think of me or my daughter, Chava's IQ, the cost of extra therapy or special equipment, and whether she could be getting better education and rehabilitative care outside of *Eretz Yisrael*.

I used to think that life is fair; that if I were good and honest and tried hard, nothing bad would happen to me. Is there reward and punishment? Does God create the good and the evil? Do we suffer because we sinned or because our father or grandfathers sinned? I don't propose any brilliant answers to age-old questions, but I feel a mature person learns to live with questions and accepts that there are many things we don't understand. One can choose to be devastated by a situation, or to take on the situation as challenge, trusting that there is good to be found.

I have had the opportunity to meet many people struggling with these unfair situations. I have noticed it is often those same people to whom I look up. From them I have learned to establish values and priorities and to focus on the really important things in this world.

Chava has now finished her sixth year at Keren Or, a rehabilitation institute for blind, multi-handicapped children. She requires hours of daily therapy and special care. At age eight she is just beginning to walk with support and to communicate with the aid of a talking computer. She is my daughter and I love her. I take great pride in her achievements, small as they might seem to outsiders. She is the oldest of our three daughters, and a beloved member of our family. Even though a small private part of me will always mourn the loss of our normal child, I have learned much from Chava. I have learned what it means to give without always receiving in return. I have learned to be patient and optimistic, to search for opportunities to create something positive out of a painful situation. And most of all, I have learned to take each day as it comes.



Following are excerpts from conversations with students over the course of the 1989 Pardes Summer Session.



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5



Carroll Coosner (1) teaches Jewish history at the Herzlia Jewish Day School in Capetown, South Africa. "Being at Pardes has given me a deepening sense of spirituality and the feeling that I would like to lead my life in a more observant way. If I can bring home some of the wonder I've learned here, my trip will have been worthwhile."

David Jaffee (2) was raised in a Reconstructionist home just outside of New York City by parents deeply involved in Jewish communal activity. His B.A. in history is from Cornell (1987), and he has taught American history at the Dwight School in New York City. He is currently working with the homeless in San Francisco. "For the first time I'm feeling a sense of Jewish destiny related to Israel and it comes directly from the teachers. I feel the importance of marrying a Jewish woman. I see marriage now as not just my relationship with a woman, but as putting me within the context of community. This comes from the teaching, the texts, the Jewish environment and from being in Israel. The students here are amazing. They are intelligent and stimulating, from such different backgrounds. I think this says something about Pardes."

Leah Parzen (3) comes from Milwaukee. She received her B.A. in psychology and sociology at the University of Wisconsin in 1987, after which she decided to make *aliya*. She is doing a master's degree in business administration at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, a program offered in conjunction with Boston University. "I like Pardes because no one pressures you to enter into religious observance, yet studying here does make you want to know more. My parents gave me a rich background in the thinking and culture of Judaism, but I never realized until coming to Pardes, just how rooted my background was in Jewish religious sources."

Aaron Freedman (4) grew up in Pittsburgh, went to Hebrew school three afternoons a week and was involved in Young Judea. It was there that he met halachically committed people and started to become observant. A creative writing major at Oberlin College, he became involved with Jewish learning at Oberlin through the Hillel rabbi. "I'm very pleased with my classes at Pardes. The more I learn, the more I realize that while secular learning excites me, I value Jewish education more. College in the States is ultimately a means to finding a job and earning a living. It is valuable and necessary, but religious learning provides meaning and content. By understanding my relationship to God, I feel that what I strive for seems to have more purpose."

Wendy Bass (5) grew up in Milwaukee, received her B.A. from Brown University in chemistry in 1986 and her M.A. in education from Northwestern University. She has taught high school math and science, and is starting on her Ph.D. in biochemistry at the University of Chicago. "Courses at Pardes are taught within the Orthodox tradition, but Orthodoxy is not imposed on you. The teachers' breadth in both Jewish and secular sources enables them to take a simple question and go way beyond it, incorporating material from a variety of texts. Furthermore they do not shy away from either controversial subjects or the diverse opinions expressed here. I'm impressed with the level of the students and by the fact that so many decided to devote their summer vacations to study. Because I came to Pardes with a strong background and a sense of where I belong in the spectrum of Jewish practice, I find I can incorporate the old and the new without making a big change, just a greater commitment."



6



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Julie Howard (6) is from Melbourne, Australia and earned her B.A. in English and history in 1983 from Melbourne University. She grew up in a Reform ("more nearly Conservative") home, and was involved in a Reform Zionist youth movement at university, which she says was her entry into Jewish and Zionist awareness. She has been teaching in a school for girls, but says she plans to move into Jewish education. "I wish we had something like Pardes in Melbourne. I think the quality of teaching here is wonderful and the teachers some of the best I've ever had. Pardes reaffirms the path I'm on to integrate more observance into my life without forfeiting participation in the modern world."

Chantal (Shoshana) Nejar (7) was born in Tunisia and lived there until she was six years old, when the family was forced to leave in haste after the Six Day War. Chantal and her family settled in Paris, where she attended a Talmud Torah school. She received her dental degree from the University of Paris and did her thesis in immunology, a field she hopes to continue with in Israel. "My choice of immunology is related to the lack of opportunity for me as a woman to study Gemara formally in France. I believed that if I couldn't find God through the study of Talmud, I would try to find evidence of God's hand in the natural world, and so I arrived at immunology. Now at long last, at Pardes I am learning Gemara. It is very exciting, taking every word and analyzing each sentence. What I have come to realize, however, is that it is such a great pleasure that it is difficult to stop learning."



8

Daisy Ben Chimol (8) was born in Tangier, Morocco, but did her growing up in Canada. She received her B.A. in 1984 from the University of Toronto in liberal arts and taught English as a second language in Toronto. She came to Israel in 1989, where she has been working on a magazine published by the Foreign Ministry and teaching English. "At Pardes, one is expected to examine the sources on one's own instead of learning second hand through someone else's interpretation. I can find out directly what the Talmud says on topics such as women's role in Judaism or laws on marriage and divorce — areas of interest crucial to me as a Jewish woman. It is refreshing to be in a place where intelligence and independence are respected, including women's, and where although the teachers are firm in their beliefs, one is not expected to take them as given, but to question them on one's own."

RABBINIC STUDENT SEMINAR INCLUDES FOUR DENOMINATIONS

Rabbinic students from four "denominations" have completed a six-month seminar organized by Pardes Assistant Director Eddie Abramson. Designed to expose students from different rabbinical denominations to the structures of ethics and practice crucial to all of them, the seminar attracted nine rabbinical students (three Orthodox, two Conservative, two Reform and two Reconstructionist). The course was taught by Pardes faculty member, Danny Sinclair, and focused on the relationship between *halacha* and ethical issues.

According to Danny, "We hope this will provide an impetus for the participants to view each other with mutual respect so they can eventually sit together in their professional lives. I want the Orthodox student to understand that there is more to *halacha* than black-letter law; the Conservative student to understand that juristic development of *halacha* has always been part of the rabbinic tradition; and Reform and Reconstructionist rabbinic students to realize that concerns of an ethical and moral nature have infused *halacha* through the ages."

Course evaluations were positive. In the words of one student, "However serious the differences that divided us, and they are considerable, studying in an interdenominational setting gives ideologies a human face and enhances the motivation to bridge differences...The seminar was excellent."

The seminar is being offered again this year and will focus on rabbinic *responsa* in the areas of Jewish identity and medical ethics, i.e. conversion, relations between Jews and non-Jews, euthanasia, and modern reproductive techniques.

OUR NEW ADDRESS

After 18 years at Rehov Gad 10, Pardes moved on August 20 to 22 Shivtei Yisrael, approximately a five-minute walk from the Central Post Office. New telephone numbers are: (02) 895-155/6, and new FAX number is (02) 895-189.

For information on programs please contact Beth Newmark, 111 Ocean Street, Lynn, MA 01902. Telephone: 617-592-4542; FAX: 617-592-5759.

Checks for tax-deductible contributions should be made out to American Pardes Foundation, Box 58, Roseland, NY 07068.

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Dear Levi,

I was hurt and surprised by your rejoinder in the most recent issue of *Havruta*. I was surprised by your apparent insensitivity to issues faced by Bonei Pardes and hurt by your misreading of their soul-searching reflections.

Allow me to address your piece point for point:

1. How can you say these pieces lack theology? I certainly discuss my views on revelation and the degree to which I believe God is involved in the halachic system. Jeff describes his relationship to God, his discomfort with mere belief and the importance of his prayer belief. Perhaps we do not express the theology you endorse but your dismissal is unwarranted.

2. Do you really believe that these students are living in the *galuta d'galuta*. The Upper West Side? Philadelphia? Most of the writers are living in the center of Jewish life in America, a testimony to the fact that they have searched for and perhaps have not found what they seek.

Moreover, your notion that Yerushalayim is the solution to our problems seems unfounded. Bonei Pardes in Jerusalem express, in my experience, similar discontent: where can they find community? where is intelligent and serious but openminded Orthodoxy being practiced? Their communities, like ours, focus for the most part on Shabbat meals with a few friends. For many who have not stayed within the yeshiva world or chosen to live on moshav or kibbutz, learning and observance taper off.

3. What makes you think that we don't have *havura*-style communities? We do! And yes, Pardes, even you, have taught us that that which is all-encompassing and intense is, *prima facie*, better!

4. Your notion that we are merely lazy is insulting! I never found Pardes students eager to "dodge" *mitzvot*, to take the easy track. If "community" did not motivate people to take on more responsibility or to involve themselves more fully in the life of the community, what would be the higher purpose of community? Groups like Alcoholics Anonymous (להנדיל, but you get the point) succeed because they are social and communal. It is literally impossible to follow AA's program on one's own. Why should Jewish observance be different? Levi, it feels more like your accusation is a "dodge."

5. In conclusion, I believe that Pardes grossly underprepares its students for life outside its walls no matter where those students reside. Pardes is "summer camp" except that no one tells you that in September we go back to school. Students leave Pardes believing that the

community they have found exemplifies Jewish communal life. And they believe that the sophisticated brand of Orthodoxy which Pardes preaches will be found in other, if not all, Jewish institutions—Lincoln Square, JTS, Drisha, communities in Jerusalem. Students are unprepared for the task of living as an observant Jew in a secular world which makes many demands on one's time and entices with its options. They are disheartened to learn that enlightened Orthodoxy is a rare commodity.

I am not sure how Pardes can better prepare its students. I remember being warned that I would be a misfit outside of Pardes but I also remember not fully being able to understand what that would mean—nor did I believe it then! Perhaps there is no way that Pardes could prepare its students better, and perhaps our sense of sadness and loss is, after all, not a bad thing. We have left the cradle of our infancy, the choices are much harder now, but growing up is a good and necessary process. What is definitely not helpful, however, is for the parent to induce guilt in the child for having left home. It's very Jewish but also dysfunctional.

Levi, I read your words and wonder to myself: Is life in Israel so hard now that you need to criticize those of us who dwell in America so harshly in order to justify your own sacrifice? I hope not. I would hope that Israel means more to you than the "negation of the galut," and that you could invite us home with less guilt and more compassion.

Rona Shapiro, Hillel Rabbi
University of California, Berkeley

Dear Rona,

I am grateful for your letter, especially as some of what you write is a helpful correction, appropriately strident in tone. Particularly, I would concede that my comment about a lack of any theological component is mistaken.

There are other contentions you make that I am not so ready to accept. The Jew living without intimate relationship with a viable, practicing and learning community is decidedly living in *galut*. It is of course true that many living in Jerusalem, even on streets named for the righteous who gave their all to try to save a larger community, also live in *galut*. I confess that I am one who has placed priority on needs other than the development of sustaining communities and suffer the implications of that choice. To complain about it, however, is testimony to badly ordered priorities, or lack of conviction, not a statement of the way our world must be.

The Upper West Side and Philadelphia are not Jerusalem, even on their best and our worst days. Crucially that means that in Israel issues of the histori-

cal and contemporary community are at stake in a way unrealizable anywhere else. Our successes are, hence, more profoundly encouraging and our failures more lastingly devastating. That is the exhilaration and difficulty of living here and probably why too few do. "Intelligent, serious and open-minded Orthodoxy" is not sufficiently practiced because we who depend on it don't do enough communally to sustain the demands of Talmud Torah, ritual observance, and the acceptance of responsibility for the well-being of others. It isn't that there are so few of us, but that there are far too few willing to make the compromises of finances, time or ego necessary for community building.

The *havura*-style communities are one answer to this. Why haven't our respondents joined them? And if they have, why are they so unhappy? In part, I wrote as I did because the respondents gave expression to such considerable feelings of inadequacy, lack of fulfillment — even guilt. If they want to be taken at their word — and why not — why do they not manifest the actions that would lead to greater adequacy, satisfaction and positive self-evaluation?

You misunderstand my position with reference to dodging *mitzvot*. Give me a little more credit; laziness is the last thing of which you are to be accused. Rather, I am commenting on the fact that the articles make no reference to acceptance of God as divine commanding authority or to a disbelief in that understanding. One reason, perhaps the essential one, that halachic discipline is inconsistent for us is that we do not truly believe that God demands it of us. If, as indicated, a community is to replace God as the ultimate source of halachic authority, how much more important is it that people be part of one — or say it straight: "We don't want to submit to any externally imposed ultimate authority." To do none of the above is a "dodge."

How Pardes should better prepare us for dealing with these challenges is a subject that remains to be put on the agenda. Rest assured that *שליילת הגולה* (negation of the diaspora) is not what compels me, but rather *שליילת הגלות* (negation of the exile), the existential exile that shapes our reality, where we refuse to face hard questions or live out the conclusions of difficult answers — here and there.

And permit me this, too. It has become increasingly difficult to "invite home" with compassion and/or guilt those many, fine students and friends who come to play so important a role in my life and do not remain to become part of it. Much regret, some sadness and even a little bitterness enter here. I guess it showed through, but I've never prided myself on being guarded, even when it was, by all accounts, the best thing to do.

LEVI LAUER

ELUL PROGRAM

A year-long program in Jewish studies for observant and secular Israelis, offered in Hebrew, has been meeting four mornings a week. Supported in small part by Pardes, the Elul program is unusual in that the participants themselves not only organized it, but also raised money for it from public and private sources. Twenty full-time and fifteen part-time students, women and men, are currently enrolled. The students differ greatly in levels of background. According to Pardes faculty member Dov Berkovits, who has been teaching in the Elul program, "Those with a secular orientation are looking for a deeper connection with the sources of their culture and their religion; the traditionally observant are looking for broader perspectives on the sources they're used to learning."

EVENING CLASSES

The Pardes evening class program proved a considerable success and is being repeated this Fall. The three-term program attracted 249 students—more than half from the larger community, in addition to Bnei Pardes and current students. Among the most popular courses were *Chumash* and Beginning Talmud, which are being taught again this year, in addition to courses on *Hasidut*, *Taharat haMishpacha*, Zionism and Intermediate Talmud.

STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Eddie Abramson is beginning his second year as Assistant Director, responsible for staff and curriculum development, admissions procedures, student counseling and special programs. He initiated Pardes' successful program of evening classes and the rabbinic student seminar (see stories). A graduate of Yeshiva University, Eddie received his ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary. From 1983-1987, he was Director of Jewish Studies and rabbi for The WUJS Institute in Arad, and from 1987-1989 he was a Jerusalem Fellow. Prior to making *aliya*, he was principal of the Westchester Day School in Mamaroneck, N.Y., and the Rockland Hebrew Day School in Monsey, N.Y. He served as rabbi of the Jewish Community Center in Saratoga Springs and as advisor to the Jewish Student Union of Skidmore College.

Pardes has expanded its overseas activities with the appointment of Sharon Levinson as Director of North American Activities and Beth New-

mark '83-'84, as American Pardes Coordinator. Both come to Pardes with a strong background in Jewish communal service. Sharon has an M.S.W. from Yeshiva University's Wurzweiler School of Social Work, was National Field Consultant for Amit Women and worked for six years for the Greater Hartford Jewish Federation as Director of Human Resources Development. Her role will be to represent Pardes to the North American Jewish community, engage in development/fundraising, program planning, and leadership and board development. Beth has a master's degree in Jewish communal service from Brandeis University's Benjamin S. Hornstein Program. She has worked in the National Hillel Foundation in Washington, D.C., at the Philadelphia Federation and as Director of the Women's Division and Community Relations at the Jewish Federation of North Shore in Marblehead, MA. She will manage the Pardes office, engage in recruitment, alumni-outreach and fund raising.

Linda Beltz '86-'87, American Pardes Coordinator for the past three years, resigned this Spring. She married Philip Glazer '89-'90.

PARDES/CLAL SEMINAR SUCCESS

Three week-long seminars, jointly sponsored by Pardes and CLAL (The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership), were offered this year in Jerusalem. The seminars, which drew hundreds of registrants from both the Pardes community and beyond, were offered on the following subjects: Public and Private Lives of a Jewish Woman: Halachic Perspectives; Jewish Sovereignty: Dilemmas and Responsibilities; The Persistence of Evil and Suffering in God's World. Speakers included Pardes faculty as well as noted scholars from both here and abroad.

MOSS HAGGADAH

The David Moss Haggadah has been called, "the most handsome, the most original, and the most imaginative Haggadah of the twentieth century." This one-of-a-kind work of art makes a unique gift for a special occasion and also benefits Pardes. Fifty per cent of the purchase price is a tax-deductible contribution to Pardes. The price in Israel is \$210, which includes VAT, postage and handling, and \$185 in the United States, Canada or Europe.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND GIFTS

Contributions to Pardes in recent months include the following:

1. A \$400,000 Jewish Agency grant for 1990-1991, arranged in part through the good offices of the New York Federation-U.J.A. The grant is designed to provide temporary assistance following the World Zionist Organization's termination of Pardes' funding. It comes with the stipulation that any subsequent grant, if offered by the Jewish Agency, will not exceed \$180,000 and will be reduced by 20% per year thereafter.

2. A \$100,000 gift from Joy Unglerleider-Mayerson to be used for financial aid for students and for faculty salaries.

3. A permanent loan of 1700 volumes from the Louis Miller ז"ל Judaica collection. These Hebrew and English texts greatly enhance Pardes' library. The gift was made by his widow, Yetta Miller of London, England.

4. A permanently endowed library fund of \$30,000 from Abe, Hy and Henry Nutkis in memory of their parents, David and Fannie (רב וצפורה). The income will be used to help defray the cost of a part-time librarian, purchase shelving, repair books and maintain the library collection.

Yes, I too want to make a contribution to Pardes.
Enclosed is my contribution for \$_____ (or its equivalent).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

I am making this contribution in honor/memory of: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

(Checks may be written to Machon Pardes, or for a U.S. tax deduction, to American Pardes Foundation, P.O.B. 58, Roseland, NJ 07068)

Sarah's spiritual perfection and eligibility as a foremother existed prior to giving birth to Yitzhak. In this view, motherhood transcends specific utilization of the womb. It is a status achieved not necessarily through the birth process itself, but rather by striving for completion and perfection in the sight of God. That this role is fraught with suffering as well as joy, is also apparent in the life of Sarah, whose motherhood faced its supreme challenge at the time of the *akeda* (sacrifice of Isaac). Sarah's vision and pain which qualify her to share in the *brit* of Avraham are mirrored in the lives of Rachael and Elana. For them too, the supreme test of mothering is maintaining the vision that enables them "to take those little steps that daily get one to tomorrow."

Rebecca Gura underwent a relapse in July, 1989 and has just completed a year of intensive chemotherapy. We wish her a heartfelt *רפואה שלמה*.

Jane Kimchi

FOUR PARDES STUDENTS SERVE IN ISRAEL DEFENSE FORCE

"I'm excited, nervous and scared," said Asher Zeiger '88-'90, from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, describing his feelings about his decision to join the Israel Defense Force (IDF) this year. He and Ken Quinn '89-'90 from Brookline, Massachusetts, are making *aliya* and entering NAHAL, a branch of the IDF that combines army duty with work, and possible settlement, on kibbutz. "I came with the idea of making *aliya*, am interested in kibbutz life," declared Asher, "and NAHAL is a good one-year program for people my age. It's a strange step for someone from a stereotypical, American, upper-middle-class, Jewish life, but I must say I am getting a lot of support from my family." Also beginning their military service this year are David Shire '88-'90, from Scotland, and Isaiah Rothberg '89-'90, from Highland Park, New Jersey.

PARDES YISHUV IDEA GAINS GROUND

A nucleus of families has been meeting since January to explore the possibility of establishing a *yishuv* (community), to be populated by Bonei Pardes and their friends. Among the various points of agreement reached so far are that the community's population be religiously diverse, but large enough to enable the unpressured halachic living of the Jewish calendar and that it be established within the "Green Line." Various sites are currently being explored.

THE PARDES CONNECTION

news of classmates and staff...

Francis Ronald Berry '86-'87, received his ordination in London and was appointed Rabbi of the Bristol and West Progressive Jewish Congregation.

Yochanan Lorwin '85-'87, finished his clerkship in law at the National Labor Court in Jerusalem and in the firm of Ernst, Koren and Benjamin, and has passed the Israel bar exam.

Rona Shapiro '82, '84-'85, has been appointed rabbi of the Hillel Foundation at the University of California at Berkeley.

Danny Sinclair's new book, *Tradition and the Biological Revolution* is available from Edinburgh University Press, 22 George Square, Edinburgh; Columbia University Press, 562 W. 113 Street, New York; and in Israel at Ludwig Meyer Ltd.

Ellen Singer '77-'78, American Pardes Coordinator 1984-1987, has written *A Companion Study Guide to Jewish Marital Status*, a program and resource guide, published by Hadassah.

and their weddings...

Ann Angel '84-'85, to Paul Fertig. They are living in Haifa.

Linda Beltz '86-'87 and **Philip Glazer** '89-'90. They are living in Washington, D.C.

Stephanie Ellman '82-'84, to Moshe Sherman. They are living in Toronto where Stephanie is working as an attorney.

Marc Friedman '86-'87, to Rhiana Marsak. They are living in Jerusalem.

Annette Greenbaum '85-'86, to Charles Lebow. They are living in Jerusalem.

Adina Kling '74-'75, to Judah Levine. Adina is an Assistant Attorney General for the State of New York.

Miriam Mandel '87-'88, to Daniel Levi. They are living in Toronto.

Karen Morritt '87-'88, to Jonathan Berlinger. They are living in the Boston area.

Andy Moses '84-'86 and **Rivka Webb** '89-'90. They are living in Jerusalem.

Gary Narin '85-'86, to Sherelle Lea Laffer. They are living in New York City.

and their babies...

Rachel Adelman-Stone '88-'89 and husband, Graeme Stone, are the parents of a son, Eitan Adelman-Stone. They are living in Jerusalem.

Jeff Allon '79-'80 and **Shelly Rifkin-Allon** '82-'83, are the parents of a daughter, Ashira Eli. They are living in Jerusalem.

Mark and Josepha Banschik '85-'86, are the parents of a son, Gabriel Dov. They are living in Goldens Bridge, New York.

Yonatan Barnhard '78-'80 and **Shari Rosenfeld** '82-'83, are the parents of a son, Gavriel Matan. They are living in New York City.

Kathye Simon Baruch '83-'85, and husband, Aaron, are the parents of a daughter, Edda Simone. They are living in Jerusalem.

Noga (Wendy) Brachman '83-'84, and husband, Warren Fisher, are the parents of a son, Elad Emanuel. They are living in Efrat.

Arthur Braunschweig '77-'78, and wife, Monika, are the parents of a daughter, Leonie Anat. They are living in St. Gallen, Switzerland where Arthur is general secretary of The Association for Ecologically Conscious Management.

Anne '84-'86 and **Aryeh Breslow** '81-'83, are the parents of a daughter, Amira Charlotte. They are living in Jerusalem where they direct the Jerusalem School of Tai Chi Chuan.

Miriam and Jonathan Fine '77-'78, are the parents of a son, Ephraim Oren. They are living in Jerusalem.

Claudia Dreifuss '80-'81, and husband, Philippe Bollag-Dreifuss, are the parents of a son, Jonathan Mordechai. They are living in Zurich.

Eliezer Finer '77-'78 and **Maya Batkin** '86-'87, are the parents of a son, Raviv. They are living in Jerusalem.

Bruce Gabel '86-'87 and **Susan Glazerman** '86-'88, are the parents of a daughter, Miriam Etta. They are living in Jerusalem.

Shira (Bar) Goodman '87-'88, and husband, David, are the parents of a daughter, Esther. They are living in Beit Zayit.

Daniel Kahn '81-'82, and wife, Joan, are the parents of a son, Michael Doron. They are living in Beersheva.

Andy Levitan '85-'87, and husband, Ezra Korman, are the parents of a daughter, Leav Rotem. They are living in Australia where they are on *shlichut*.

Hannah Melchior '87-'90, and husband, Michael, are the parents of a son, Amit. They are living in Jerusalem.

Dafna Stolper Renbaum '82-'85, and husband, Pincas, are the parents of a son, Yakir Lippmann. They are living in Jerusalem.

Meir and Malka Schweiger are the parents of a son, Yechezkiel Shai.

Michael Stein '83-'85, and wife, Rachel, are the parents of a daughter, Aliza Miriam. They are living in Chicago.

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