

שמחת בת
“The joy of a daughter”

The Covenant
and
Naming Ceremony
for
Talia Anne Feshbach

לשמחת חיים
In Celebration of Life...

July 22, 2001
2 Av 5761

In conformity with Jewish Tradition
and in keeping with the egalitarian spirit of this age

Talia Anne Feshbach

was welcomed and blessed and given the Hebrew name of

טליה חנה בת מנדל מיכאל ועליזה

Tal'ya Chanah bat Mendel Micha'el v'Aliza

July 22, 2001

2 Av 5761

Julie A. Novick, mother

Michael L. Feshbach, father

Morton B. Novick, grandfather

Murray Feshbach, grandfather

Ruth Novick, grandmother

Muriel J. Feshbach, grandmother

Gina Beth Novick, *kvatterin*
(godmother)

Lori Gail Karbel, *sandeket*
(honored guest)

Covenant and Naming Ceremony Songs of Celebration

הנה מה טוב ומה נעים
שבת אחים גם יחד

*Hinei Mah Tov u'Mah Na'im
Shevet Achim Gam Yachad*

Look around! Behold how good and how
pleasant it is, for all of us to come together.

הללו הללו הללו
כל הנשמה תהלל יה
הלי הלילויה

*Hal'lu, Hal'lu Hal'lu (2x)
Kol Haneshama T'hallel Yah.
Halei, haleiluyah.*

Let all that breathes praise God.

Welcome and Introduction

Candle Lighting

As Ruth Novick lights the candles, Michael and Julie read:

Michael: There is a new light in our hearts and in our home.

Julie: These candles celebrate the birth of our child.

Michael: Out of the creative darkness of the womb she has come.

Julie: These candles celebrate her emergence into light.

Michael: Blessed is the woman who mothers a child, for she knows how love covers pain.

Julie: Blessed is the man who fathers a child, for he makes a bridge between earth and heaven.

Both: Child of light, you know not yet the love and joy overflowing from our hearts.

The baby is brought into the room and welcomed by the waiting family

The *kvatterin* (godmother), Gina Novick, brings Talia Anne Feshbach into the room. As the baby is brought in, all rise. The *kvatterin* gives him to the *sandeket* (honored guest), Lori Karbel, who then gives her to Julie and Michael.

Candle Lighting: The lighting of candles as part of the *b'rit milah* (the covenant service for eight-day old boys) is a common practice in many Jewish communities around the world. The custom may have its origin in times of persecution, when the practice was banned, and candles in the window may have signaled friends and neighbors to come to the secret ceremony. We include this practice now as part of our naming service for a baby girl. The candles we are using this afternoon come from Talia Anne's great-grandmother, Morton's mother Ada Novick.

Godparents: Among the honored participants in the *b'rit milah* are the *kvatterin* and the *sandeket*, the godmother and the honored guest, respectively. These terms come from Eastern Europe. The role is strictly ceremonial, and is limited to carrying the baby. (The *sandek*, the male equivalent, is the one who holds a baby boy during the circumcision.) We have chosen to honor Julie's sister, Gina Novick, who, as a midwife, was present at the delivery and helped bring Talia into the world, and Michael's first cousin Lori Karbel, who has welcomed Michael to participate in all of her children's life-cycle events.

Michael and Julie:

ברוכה הבאה בשם יי

Brucha'ah ha-ba'ah b'sheim Adonai.

Blessed is she who comes here in God's name.

Those who can return to their seats.

Michael: My daughter, my child, you are as dear to me as my own breath. May I hold you gently now with the love to keep you close and with the strength to let you grow.

Julie: My daughter, my child, a piece of my life is yours. You have grown to life apart from me, but now I hold you close to my heart, and cradle you in my arms with my love.

Birkat Gomel

Blessing for the passage through danger

Julie:

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם
הגומל לחיבים טובות שגמלני כל טוב

*Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu, Melech Ha'Olam,
HaGomeil L'Chayavim Tovot,
She'gmalani Kol Tov*

We praise the Source of Life,
the power of the universe,
for opening our eyes to our blessings,
for safe passage through times of danger.

All: May the graciousness you felt in your time of need remain with you in the goodness that is yet to come.

The Gomel Blessing: This prayer of thanksgiving is traditionally said after being called to bless the Torah during a synagogue service, after having escaping injury, recovering from a serious illness, or returning home after a lengthy journey or other potentially life-threatening experience. Some people say this prayer once a year, reflecting back on the dangers of daily life, such as driving in the snow or flying on an airplane. It is especially appropriate recited by a new mother following a birth, which, although life-giving and fulfilling, involves mystery and risk even in this day and age.

Covenant Ceremony

The chair of Elijah

Michael:

זֶה הַכִּסֵּא שֶׁל אֵלִיָּהוּ זָכוֹר לְטוֹב

Zeh hakisei shel Eliyahu zachor latov.

This is the chair of Elijah, whose spirit is in us. May his remembrance be for good, bearing the promise of God's redemption.

All: *We rejoice! A child has come into the world. We rejoice as we bring this child into the B'rit, the Covenant between God and the Jewish people.*

Michael: "God said to Abraham, 'You shall keep my Covenant, you and your children after you.'" (Genesis 17:1)

All: *Children are a heritage of God; the fruit of the womb is a precious reward.* (Psalm 127:3)

Michael: Our God, and God of all generations, we thank you for all blessings.

All: *For the mystery of creation, for Torah and mitzvot, for companionship and love, for the warmth of family, for the joy and sacred privilege of parenthood.*

Parents:

- If a child lives with tolerance, the child learns to be patient.
- If a child lives with encouragement, she learns confidence.
- If a child lives with praise, she learns to appreciate.
- If a child lives with security, she learns to have faith.
- If a child lives with approval, she learns self-love.
- If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, she learns to find love in the world.

As our generation is beginning to do for the first time, we joyfully bring our daughter into the Covenant of the Jewish people. Eternal God, You have given a Teaching to Israel, instructing our ancestors to pass it on to their children, to forge their own links in the chain of the generations.

The chair of Elijah: A special chair is used in the covenant ceremony, the *Kisei shel Eliyahu*, the chair of Elijah. Elijah is a prophet who is said to have never died; he ascended directly into heaven. Because he stands in the nether realm, he is a figure of liminality ever since, present for Jews at all moments of transition, during the ceremony at the end of Shabbat, which is part of neither the sabbath nor the working week, at the Passover seder, and here, where a child passes from a state of undifferentiated existence into a new identity, as part of a particular people and a caring community. The decoration of the chair of Elijah is a custom practiced by Jews all over the world.

זכר לעולם בריתו
דבר צוה לאלף דור
ברוך אתה יי כורת הברית

*Zachar L'Olam B'rito, Davar Tziva L'elef Dor.
Baruch Atta Adonai, Koreit HaBrit*

God remembers the Covenant forever, the word commanded to a thousand generations. We
We praise you, O God, who establishes the Covenant.

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וציונו
להכניסה בברית עם ישראל

*Baruch Atta Adonai, Eloheinu Melech HaOlam, Asher Kiddishanu B'mitzvotav,
v'tzivanu l'hachnisah bivrit Am Yisrael.*

We praise you, Adonai our God, Sovereign of Existence, who hallows us with *mitzvot*,
and who commands us to bring our daughter into the Covenant of our people Israel.

B'rit Tallit **Wrapped in the Covenant**

Talia is handed to Mort Novick,
who sits with her in Elijah's Chair.
We call forward Murray Feshbach,
Muriel Feshbach and Ruth Novick,
to wrap Talia in Julie's tallit.

Mort then stands, and returns Talia to Michael and Julie.

The Symbolism of the Tallit

Sandak: At a *Brit Milah*, the *sandak* is the one who assists the *mohel* by holding the baby, or helping the baby to drink wine, during the circumcision. At this service for the naming of our daughter, the role involves both holding Talia as she first arrives for the ceremony, and holding her now and wrapping her in the tallit. Lori Karbel filled the first role; our parents, Morton and Ruth Novick and Murray and Muriel Feshbach, fill this second function on this day.

B'rit Tallit: The *tallit*, the large, fringed prayer shawl, is traditionally seen as a reminder of God's commandments, the *mitzvot*, or sacred obligations incumbent upon every mature Jew. Wrapping ourselves in the *tallit* is an act which is more than a reminder of particular commandments, however. It is an acceptance of the totality of Jewish life, a surrounding of the soul, an embrace of commitment, an awareness that we are tied together through the choices we made, with a common past, a connected present, and a promise to persevere and preserve a Jewish future. The symbolism of connectedness, of commitment, and of awareness of what we are tied to in our lives, as well as the fact that the *tallit* was customarily worn only by men, but is now being embraced by Jewish women as well, make the *tallit* an ideal image to introduce as part of these newly created covenant-entry ceremonies for baby girls.

Michael:

ברכי נפשי את יי
יי אלוהי גדלתה מאד
הוד והדר לבשת

*Barchi nafshi et Adonai,
Adonai Elohai gadalta me'od,
hod v'hadar lavashta...*

Our souls yearn for a sense of the Eternal, clothed in glory and majesty.
Wrapped in light like a garment, You unfold the heavens like a curtain.
You send forth Your spirit and there is creation,
You renew the face of the earth.

based on Psalm 104:1-2, 30

Julie:

Talia, my daughter, time winds its way together in the weave of this tallit.
In the beat of a heart, yesterday, today and tomorrow are one.
May you ever be connected through the threads of time,
bound to the heritage of your ancestors,
tied to and fully present in the world around you,
committed to shape the face of the future.

P'ri HaEtz
The Fruit of Promise

The Orange on the Seder Plate.

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם
בוראי פרי העץ

*Baruch Attah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech HaOlam,
Borei P'ri HaEitz*

We Praise the Source of Blessing, Creator of the Fruit of the Tree.

The Orange on the Seder Plate: The orange on the seder plate is a contemporary custom which developed as a result of a particular incident. Susannah Heschel, a Jewish scholar and feminist writer, during an appearance in Florida, was speaking about women becoming rabbis, when she was interrupted by an angry elderly gentleman who shouted that a woman belonged on the pulpit like bread -- strictly forbidden during Passover -- belonged on the Passover Seder plate. Quick-witted and creative, using the imagery of native flora, she responded that no, women on the pulpit were not like bread on the Seder plate. They were more like... an orange on the Seder plate. It was new, it was different, but there was nothing forbidden about it. Since that incident, a growing number of Jewish families committed to egalitarian principles have been including an orange on their seder plates. This is the first use of which we are aware of an orange at a *Simchat Bat*, the Celebration of a Daughter. We include the orange here as a hope and a prayer that in her life our daughter will find all the doors of the world open to her, regardless of traditional roles or expectations.

The Naming Ceremony

Rebecca Kagan:

There are three names by which a person is called:

One which her father and mother give her.

And one which other people call her,

And the one which she earns for herself.

The best one of these is the one that she earns for herself.

based on *Midrash Tanchuma, Parashat Vayikhal*

Shelly Kagan and Gina Novick:

אלוהינו ואלוהי אבותינו ואמותינו,
קים את הילדה הזאת לאביה ולאמה
ויקרא שמה בישראל

טליה חנה בת מנדל מיכאל ועליזה

ישמח האב ביוצאת חלציו
ותגל אמה בפרי בטנה
זאת הקטנה, גדולה תהיה
כשם שנכנסה לברית, כן תכנס
לתורה, ולחופה, ולמעשים טובים

Our God, and God of our mothers and fathers, sustain this child, and let her be known in the house of Israel as **Tal'ya Chanah the son of Mendel Michayel and Aliza**. May her name be a source of joy to her, and bring happiness to her parents. May Michael and Julie rejoice in her growth of body and soul, and with love and wisdom may they be privileged to teach her the meaning of the covenant into which she has entered this day. May they inspire her to seek truth and the ways of peace. May Talia Anne grow into adulthood as a blessing to her family, friends and community. As she has entered the covenant, so may she enter into the study of Torah, a marriage worthy of God's blessing, and a life of good deeds. And let us all say: *Amen*.

Hebrew Names: The ritual bestowal of a Hebrew name upon a baby boy is part of the *B'rit Milah* ceremony. For girls, the custom had been for the father to appear at a synagogue service sometime during the first month after the birth of a daughter, and formally receive a blessing and the Hebrew name for his daughter at that time. The mother and baby were often not present, and the celebration was far less elaborate than in the case of a baby boy. Today, naming ceremonies for girls that are equivalent in importance are now being created by the Reform movement and other creative elements within modern Judaism. The custom in Ashkenazic communities -- among Jews who originated in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe -- is to name a child after deceased relatives. The giving of a Hebrew name to be used throughout life in Jewish religious observance -- especially in settings in which these names were *different* than "everyday" names -- has been a significant factor in the survival of Jewish identity throughout the ages, from the slavery in Egypt down to the present day.

The Significance of the Name

Michael, on the significance of the name Talia, and Anne.

Julie, on the significance of the name Anne.

Michael and Julie:

We dedicate our daughter to *Torah*, to never ending fascination with study and learning. With a book she will never be alone.

We dedicate our daughter to *Chuppah*, a loving relationship, and to never-ending growth as a human being, capable of giving love as well as receiving it. With loving family and friends, she will never be alone.

We dedicate our daughter to *Ma'asim Tovim*, an ethical life, to a never ending concern for family and community, justice and righteousness. While she cares for others, he will never be alone.

Muriel Feshbach:

Let this cup of wine, from the Kiddush cup Michael and his brother David purchased for us on our silver anniversary, symbolize the spiritual nourishment that Talia Anne will receive in her new home. As this cup overflows with sweet wine, so may her life be sweet.

בוראי פרי הגפן
ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם

Baruch Atta Adonai, Eloheinu Melech HaOlam, Borei P'ri Hagafen

We Praise You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of Existence,
who creates the fruit of the vine.

Ari Kagan, helping Benjamin and Daniel Feshbach:

Let this *challah* symbolize the physical nourishment that Talia Anne will receive. May she never know want.

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם
המוציא לחם מן הארץ

Baruch Attah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech HaOlam, HaMotzi Lechem Min HaAretz

We Praise You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of Existence,
who brings forth bread from the earth.

Elana Kagan:

At my naming almost thirteen years ago, my mother read these words to me. I have read them at both Benjamin and Daniel's naming, and I read them now for their sister Talia. This comes from the Talmud:

May you live to see your world fulfilled.
May your destiny be for worlds still to come.
And may you trust in generations past and yet to be.

May your heart be filled with intuition
and your words be filled with insight.
May songs of praise ever be upon your tongue
and your vision be on a straight path before you.

May your eyes shine with the light of Torah,
and your face be radiant with the brightness of the sun.
May your lips speak words of wisdom,
and your hands be filled with the goodness of your heart,
even as you yearn to hear the words
of the Holy Ancient One of Old.

Babylonian Talmud, Tractate *Berachot* 17a

Julie:

With all my heart, with all my soul, with all my might
I thank you, God, for the gift of this wonderful child.
I thank you for a healthy pregnancy, a natural delivery,
a speedy and ongoing recovery.

With all my heart, with all my strength, with all my might,
I pray for the continued health of this child,
for her to be strong in mind and body,
to grow steadily and sturdily in a home filled with joy,
for her to become a person who greets the world
with passion, courage, humility, honor and patience.

I pray for the ability to love and nurture this child,
to provide for her and educate her,
to understand her, and allow her
the freedom to grow.

Priestly Blessing

Michael:

יברכך יי וישמרך
יאר יי פניו אליך ויהונך
ישא יי פניו אליך וישם לך שלום

*Y'varech'cha Adonai v'Yishmerecha.
Ya'eir Adonai Panov Eylecha, v'Y'chunecha.
Yisa Adonai Panov Eylecha, v'Yaseym L'cha Shalom.*

May God bless you and keep you.
May God always smile on you, and through you.
May God's light always shine upon you, and may you come to know
the greatness of blessings: the blessing of wholeness,
of completeness, of peace,
of Shalom.

All:

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו מלך העולם
שהחיינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

*Baruch Atta Adonai Eloheinu, Melech HaOlam
Shehechyanu V'kiymanu V'higiyanu Lazman Hazeh*

*Holy One of Blessing, we give thanks to You,
for enabling us to celebrate together, to reach this special occasion of joy.*

Siman Tov uMazel Tov

L'chi Lach

L'chi Lach, to a land that I will show you
Lech Lecha, to a place you do not know.
L'chi Lach, on your journey I will bless you.
And you shall be a blessing,
You shall be a blessing,
You shall be a blessing, *l'chi lach*.

L'chi Lach, and I shall make your name great
Lech Lecha, and all shall praise your name.
L'chi Lach, to the place that I will show you.
*L'simchat chayim, L'simchat chayim,
L'simchat chayim, L'chi Lach.*

And you shall be a blessing,
You shall be a blessing,
You shall be a blessing, *L'chi Lach*