

# Simchat Bat

30<sup>th</sup> Tishrei, 5770



## Welcoming the Family

*Prior to ceremony MOM, DAD and BABY are in a room together privately. As ceremony begins the Godparents, bring them in. When they arrive we begin with text below. MOM's grandmother is seated in the Prophetess' chair honoring Serach Bat Asher.*

### KOHENET:

בְּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יי  
*Baruch haba b'shem adonai*

Blessed are you who come in the name of the Holy One

### DAD AND MOM:

We give thanks for the opportunity to join together with our family and actively welcome our daughter, BABY NAME, into the community of Israel. She would be Jewish whether or not we take this action, but each generation must actively choose to *live* as Jews. It is our hope that this will set a good foundation for our daughter and our family to live a Jewish life.

*DAD and MOM pass BABY to Godparents who stand with BABY by the prophetess' chair.*

### KOHENET

The chair GRANDMOTHER/GODPARENT is seated in, is a traditional place of honor during a Simchat Bat. At a Brit Milah, there is always a place of honor reserved for the Prophet Elijah—just as at the Passover seder we reserve a special cup for him. And just as many Passover seders now include a second cup to honor the prophetess Miriam, at a Simchat Bat we include a place of honor for a prophetess. Often this is Miriam, but MOM and DAD have chosen to name this seat in honor of a lesser known prophetess; Serach Bat Asher. She was the granddaughter of Jacob who is said to have soothed him in his grief over the loss of Joseph, and for her goodness was granted eternal life. She is listed among the generations that both entered and exited Egypt and is said to walk among us to this day. She is the keeper of memories and so we invite her presence to add this moment to the memories she holds for the Jewish people.



## *Blessings for BABY*

**KOHENET:**

Here we are  
Energy,  
Mass,  
Life,  
Shaping Life,  
Mind,  
Shaping Mind,  
G!d,  
Shaping G!d.  
Consider -  
We are born  
Not with purpose,  
But with potential.<sup>i</sup>

The covenant between G!d and the Jewish people is dynamic. We received it, but we also accepted it. The covenant is G!d's promise to us, yet it requires our active participation in the practices that are integral to Jewish life. We are partners with G!d in every aspect of daily existence, the great and the commonplace. The active acceptance of our side of this partnership helps to elevate what is mundane to the realm of the holy.<sup>ii</sup> This is why we are here today. BABY NAME would grow into a beautiful woman without this ritual, but all of our lives are enriched are by participating and marking the creation of this family and their commitment to Jewish life.

We are born not with purpose, but with potential. It is potential that grows under the watchful eyes of parents, family, and friends. Our potential flourishes when we know others believe in us. Today is the first of many times that you will have to offer your blessings to BABY NAME throughout her life.

*Grandparents hold BABY during individually offered blessings. During reading below, Godparents will pass BABY to GRANDPARENT.*



**ALL:**

**A Blessing for My Daughter<sup>iii</sup>**

*Myrna Rabinowitz*

May you walk through life as a person with other people,

May you walk through life as a person kind and just and caring.

May you walk through life as a woman with other women,

May you walk through life as a woman proud and strong and sharing.

May you walk through life as a sister and a daughter and a mother

May you walk through life as a sister nurturing and giving.

May you walk through life with Shekhinah guiding you.

May you walk through life with Shekhinah and know the joy of living.

**FAMILY:**

We welcome you into our family. You are the latest chapter in the unfolding of our lives. You are brand new; a symbol of today and of tomorrow. Your life is a new and clean slate upon which people and events will leave their impressions. You are a bridge over which we who welcome you can gaze from this day into future days, from our generation into your generation. You are the newest link in the endless chain of our people's history. We welcome you into the covenant of the Jewish people with love. <sup>iv</sup>



## *Entering BABY into the Covenant through Awakening Senses (Havdalah) <sup>v</sup>*

### **KOHENET:**

For thousands of years the Sabbath has been a sign of covenantal commitment that has inspired generations of our people with the drive to creativity and the values of human dignity. Creativity and human dignity are not achieved in the moments of high anxiety, but in the quiet, the relaxation, the peace and the love that are fostered by the Sabbath. The time during which we permit ourselves the luxury of leaving our daily labors and concerns is vital to our own well-being and to the well-being of our families. We hope that BABY NAME may learn this most important concept of Shabbat and understand how to relax from her toils to appreciate and enjoy the beauty of life around her. It is appropriate, therefore, that on this Saturday night, remembering the Sabbath that is ending, that we bring her before this community that she may be linked to the covenant of the people of Israel.<sup>vi</sup>

### **MOM AND DAD:**

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו  
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִכָּנִיֵּס אֶת בְּתוּלָתָנוּ בְּבְרִית עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל

*Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu  
lehachnis et bitayu b'orit am Yisrael.*

Blessed are you Holy One, your Presence fills creation, forming the holy teachings that connect us through the generations and guide our lives, giving us the responsibility of initiating our daughter into the covenant of the people of Israel.



## KOHENET:

In every transition, blessed is the beginning ... As we separate from a Shabbat of peace to begin a new week; as we separate ourselves from the last year to begin a new one; as we separate from our original families to begin a new one; as we remember dear departed loved ones while we sanctify new life; we joyfully, yet seriously, recite this havdalah service.

## *Awakening Sight*

### MOM:

Jewish women have traditionally been guardians of the light, kindling the spiritual flames every Shabbat and holiday. Let the mesmerizing light of these candles remind us of our connection with the past and the obligations of the present. As I kindle this light, I joyfully bring my daughter into the covenant of Israel, a covenant with G'd, community, ancestry, Torah, and with life.

*Blessing over the candles as Havdalah candle is lit*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצּוֹתָיו  
וְצִוָּנוּ בּוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ

*Baruch Atah Adonia Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam borei m'orei ha'eish.*

Holy One of Blessing, your Presence fills creation, forming the light of the fire

*The light of the candle is shown to BABY.*



## *Awakening Taste*

**DAD:**

As MOM and I shared a cup of wine at our wedding, today we share this cup of sweetness with our daughter, and enter her into the covenant of Abraham and Sarah. Take your first sip of wine, BABY NAME, and taste the drink that is the holy link between people and G!d, used to sanctify all Jewish celebrations.

*Blessing over the wine:*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן

*Baruch Atah Adonia Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.*

Holy One of Blessing, your Presence fills creation, forming the fruit of the vine.

*A few drops of wine are touched to BABY's lips.*

## *Awakening Smell*

**LANDIS GRANDPARENTS:**

The fragrance of the spices arouses our most astute sense, hinting at the sweetness in the world. BABY NAME, may the sweet scent of the spices help you to always find the joy in life.

*Blessing over the spicebox*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מִיְיָ בְּשָׂמִים

*Baruch Ata Adonai, Eloheynu Melekh Ha'olam, boreh minei b'samim.*

Holy One of Blessing, your Presence fills creation, forming the scent of the fragrant spices.

*The spice box is passed beneath BABY's nose so she can awaken her sense of smell.*



## *Awakening Touch*

### LOEWENGART GRANDPARENTS:

Be embraced by the tallit, the wings of Shekhinah, as your family and community embrace you.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו  
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִתְעַטֵּף בְּצִיצִית

*Baruch atah adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitvotav v'tzivanu  
l'hitatef batzitzit.*

Blessed are you Holy One, your Presence fills creation, forming the holy teachings that connect us through the generations and guide our lives, giving us the responsibility of wrapping ourselves in tzitzit.

*BABY is wrapped in a tallit and embraced by parents and grandparents & returned to her parents' arms.*

### KOHENET:

מִי אֲדִיר עַל הַפֶּל  
מִי בְּרוּךְ עַל הַפֶּל  
מִי גָדוֹל עַל הַפֶּל  
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת הַמְּשִׁפָּח

May the source of all power, blessing, and greatness bless this family<sup>vii</sup>



## KOHENET:

We now move from the liminal time of the Sabbath into the active time of the week. We give thanks for the Sabbath day that is now ending. We are grateful for its many blessings: for peace and joy, rest for the body, refreshment of the soul, and connection to our people everywhere. May we take the meaning and message with us into the week, and may this child take this message and meaning into her life. May all that we do be lifted to a higher plane of holiness and may this inspire us to work with renewed purpose.<sup>viii</sup>

Blessed are you Holy One, your Presence fills creation, and separates sacred from profane, light from darkness, the awake from the asleep, and the seventh day of rest from the six days of labor.

Blessed are you that separates the Sabbath from the week.

*The candle is extinguished in cup of wine.*



## *Naming Ceremony*

### **KOHENET:**

Holy One, You separate the Sabbath from the week: separate this child now, from all others in the world, and let her receive the name by which she will be known in the House of Israel. Let this child be counted among the myriads of the Children of Israel, as keeping with the promise made to our ancestors:

וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶת-זַרְעֲךָ, כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם

*v'hirabeyti et-zara'ach c'chochvey hashamayim*

“and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven” (Gen 26:4)

### **BABY'S COUSINS:**

#### **There are Three Names**

*Adapted from Midrash Tanhuma, Parshat Vaykahal*

There are three names by which a person is called:

One which her father and mother call her,

And one which people call her,

And one which she earns for herself.

The best one of these is the one that she earns for herself.<sup>ix</sup>



## KOHENET:

May the Holy One who blessed our ancestors, bless and protect this child. Let her name be called in Israel, Peninah Gurit daughter of MOM and Michael. May these parents rejoice in their offspring and the fruit of her mother's womb. Let your parents be happy. Let she who bore you rejoice. Give thanks to Shekhinah; Her mercy is constant. May this little one, Peninah Gurit, live a life of good fortune and prosperity, and may she be brought up in health, peace, and tranquility. As she has entered into the covenant, so may she enter into a life of Torah, loving relationships and good deeds<sup>x</sup>

**MOM AND DAD:** *Explain name*

## GODPARENTS:

### **May You Awaken**

*By Nancy Scherer*

May you awaken amid sunbeams and dance to the melody of life, rest in the celestial embrace of moonlight, and let nature's symphony be your lullaby. Hear the sweet harmony of birdsong, take comfort in the gentle whisper of a breeze, see the promise in a raindrop. Raise your head that the heavens may smile upon you, and may you rejoice in each new day.

Oh beautiful baby, full of light and love and all things pure...Welcome! The miracle that is you has just begun.



## *Closing Prayers - Blessing the Family*

**KOHENET:**

יְבָרֶכֶךָ יְהוָה, וַיִּשְׁמְרֶכָּךְ

Yivarechecha Adonai v'yismerecha

May the Holy One bless you and keep you that you may grow together and as individuals.

יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחֲנֶנֶךָ

Ya-er Adonai panav aleilcha vichuneka

May the Holy One shine on you and show you grace that you may be gentle and patient with one another.

יֵשָׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וַיַּשִּׁים לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yisa Adonai panav aleichca v'yaseim l'cha shalom

May the Holy One shine on you, and grant you wholeness and peace that your family may know a life of happiness and love



ALL:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהִגַּעְנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה

*Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech haolam, shehechianu, v'kiamanu v'higianu lazem hazeh*

Blessed are you Holy One, your Presence fills creation,  
keeping us alive, sustaining us, and enabling us to reach this moment!



## NOTES

Ceremony crafted from original materials and those drawn from sources below.

With much love, 30<sup>th</sup> Tishrei, 5770

Carly Lesser (Ketzirah)

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- <sup>i</sup> *Parable of the Talents*. Octavia Butler. Seven Stories Press, 1998. Page 7
- <sup>ii</sup> *Celebrating your New Jewish Daughter: Creating Jewish Ways to Welcome Baby Girls into the Covenant-New and Traditional Ceremonies*, by Debra Nussbaum Cohen (Location 352, Kindle Edition)
- <sup>iii</sup> *Celebrating your New Jewish Daughter: Creating Jewish Ways to Welcome Baby Girls into the Covenant-New and Traditional Ceremonies*, by Debra Nussbaum Cohen (Location 1018, Kindle Edition)
- <sup>iv</sup> *Celebrating your New Jewish Daughter: Creating Jewish Ways to Welcome Baby Girls into the Covenant-New and Traditional Ceremonies*, by Debra Nussbaum Cohen (Location 1186, Kindle Edition)
- <sup>v</sup> Parts of this section are original material and parts were taken from several sources including <http://www.ritualwell.org/lifecycles/babieschildren/babynamingsimchatbat/sitefolder.2005-06-07.5117027380/AwakeningTheSenses.xml>, *The New Jewish Baby Book: A Guide for Today's Jewish Family* by Anita Diamant, and *Celebrating your New Jewish Daughter: Creating Jewish Ways to Welcome Baby Girls into the Covenant-New and Traditional Ceremonies*, by Debra Nussbaum Cohen
- <sup>vi</sup> *Celebrating your New Jewish Daughter: Creating Jewish Ways to Welcome Baby Girls into the Covenant-New and Traditional Ceremonies*, by Debra Nussbaum Cohen (Location 1464, Kindle Edition)
- <sup>vii</sup> Based on a traditional blessing often said at the beginning of traditional Jewish weddings
- <sup>viii</sup> Based on traditional blessing found in *Gates of the House*, The New Union Prayer Book. Central Conference of American Rabbis, New York, and Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues, London. 1983. Page 63
- <sup>ix</sup> *Celebrating your New Jewish Daughter: Creating Jewish Ways to Welcome Baby Girls into the Covenant-New and Traditional Ceremonies*, by Debra Nussbaum Cohen (Location 1576, Kindle Edition)
- <sup>x</sup> Naming formula crafted from two traditional sources:  
<http://www.ritualwell.org/lifecycles/babieschildren/babynamingsimchatbat/sitefolder.2005-06-07.6236203311/primaryobject.2007-01-08.1069679421> and  
<http://www.ritualwell.org/lifecycles/babieschildren/babynamingsimchatbat/sitefolder.2005-06-07.6236203311/TradnamingREV.xml>