



ShalomBaby

Baby Naming

Traditionally, a baby girl is named in synagogue on the day of the first Torah reading following the day of her birth. This usually takes place on a Monday, Thursday or Shabbat. Her parents announce their daughter's Jewish name at an *aliyah* during the Torah ceremony, where they are called upon to recite a blessing. The timing is traditional; the ceremony can take place at any time convenient to the new parents.

Simchat HaBat

In an effort to mark the complete equality of boys and girls in our era, many non-Orthodox families conduct a ceremony related to the religious significance of the *brit milah* (ritual circumcision ceremony for a boy). Many families create a naming ceremony that is highly personalized and conducted by the parents. The ceremony and celebration can take place any time in the days, weeks or even months following the baby's birth (or adoption).

Hachnasat Bat Labrit

A new tradition that has been created is the *hachnasat bat labrit*, a covenant service for a daughter. This service incorporates many of the aspects of the *brit milah* including participation by *kvaterim* (godparents), a symbolic physical application such as wrapping the daughter in a tallit by the sandak (one of the baby's grandfathers), special prayers, and the baby's Jewish name being given.

Celebrations for girls can provide an opportunity for your own Jewish learning and commitment to grow. Consult your rabbi for appropriate prayers and passages to read at the ceremony. More information on each of these ceremonies is available online or from Jconnect at (301) 348-7356 or (703) 286-1022.

