

Rituals
Practices
Festivals
Symbols

Brit Milah

- ✧ “The Covenant of Circumcision”
- ✧ 8 days after birth
- ✧ Performed at home or at the synagogue
- ✧ *Mohel* – performs the ceremony (trained)
- ✧ Child officially given his name





Brit Milah

Please join us to celebrate
the bris of our beloved new son

JACOB

Saturday, October 20, 2012
12noon - 2pm

Congregation Anshei Shalom
472 Hempstead Avenue
West Hempstead, New York

Refreshments will be served
following the ceremony.

Sarah & Noah Weinstein
rsvp: sarah@email.com by Oct 1



Brit Ha-bat



- ✧ The naming ceremony for a daughter
- ✧ A modern celebration done mostly in Reform synagogues

Bar Mitzvah

Bat Mitzvah

- ✧ Son or Daughter of Commandment – the child officially becomes an adult in the Jewish community
- ✧ Takes place at the synagogue
- ✧ The child prepares by learning Jewish history
- ✧ Reads (in Hebrew!) and comments on the Torah
- ✧ The Bat Mitzvah ceremony is modern and is not done in Orthodox communities
- ✧ Boys age 13, girls age 12

Bar Mitzvah



A Bar Mitzvah at the Wailing Wall,
Jerusalem



Bat Mitzvah





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcMeYfjJqzk>

Weddings



Before the marriage, the bride and groom sign the Ketubah to show that they are both willing to enter into the marriage.



It sets out the promises that the couple make to each other for a long and happy marriage. They sign it in front of the rabbi and witnesses, who also sign the Katubah.



Jewish weddings usually take place on a Sunday. They are not allowed to be held on a Saturday because this is the Shabbat, or holy day.



May be held indoors (synagogue) or outdoors

The marriage ceremony takes place under a canopy, the Chuppah (pronounced “huppah”). It is symbolic of the home that the couple will establish together and the tents ancient Israelites lives in. It has a roof but no walls to show that family and friends will always be welcome



On the table are a bottle of wine and a glass.

The rabbi blesses the wine and gives it to the bride and groom to drink, as a symbol of their shared joy.

Wrapped up in a napkin is another glass, which the groom will stamp on and break. Meaning = no vessel can hold all the love that the couple have for each other.



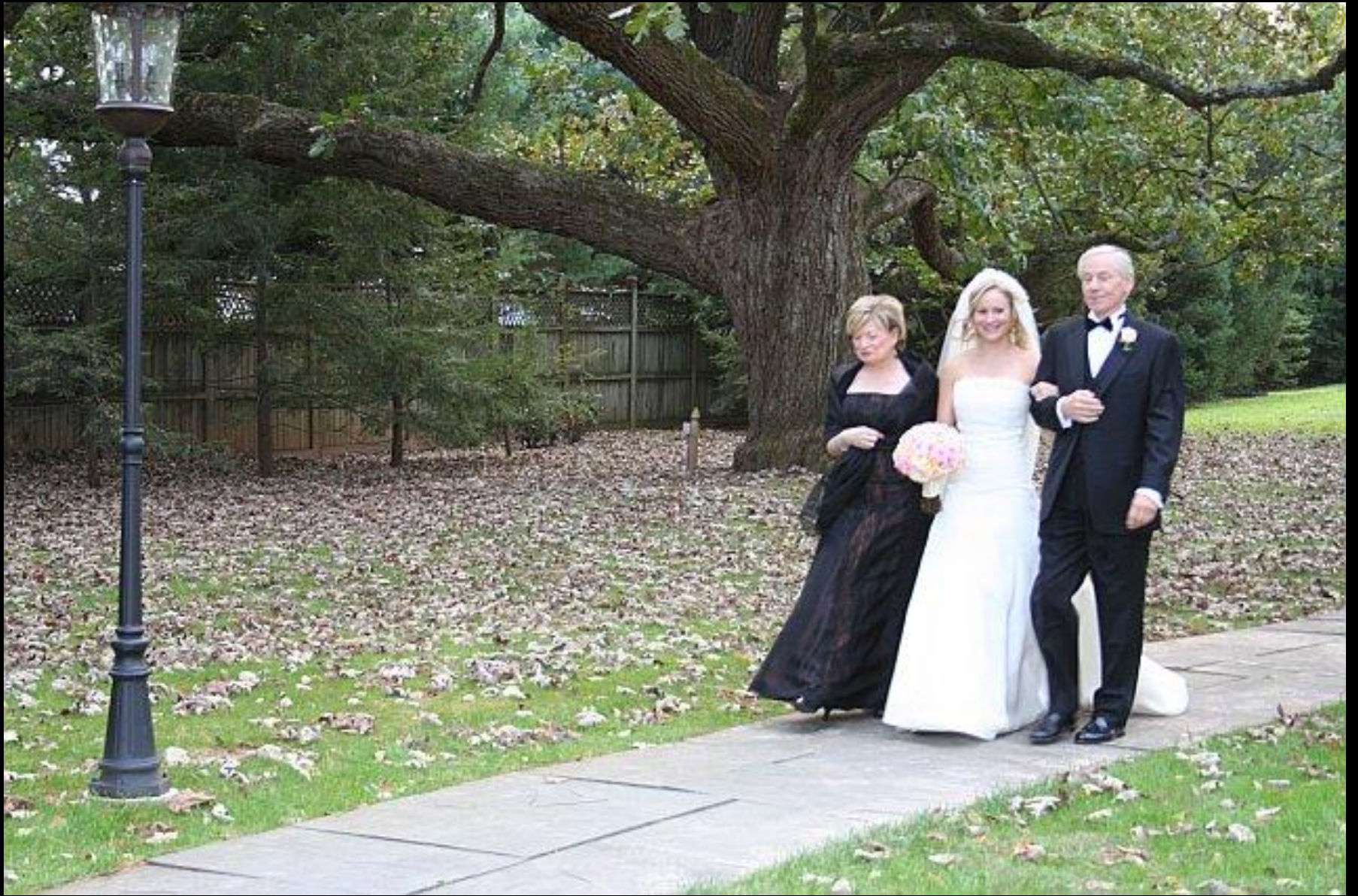
The groom arrives escorted by his parents.



The bridesmaids and groomsmen arrive.
They will stand with the best man at the front on either side of the Chuppah.



The men all wear a Kepah (Yarmulke in Yiddish), a head covering worn as a sign of respect and to remind us that there is always something higher than ourselves.



The bride walks down the path with her mother and father on either side.



Her parents hand her over to the groom.
Both sets of parents then stand on either side of the couple while the ceremony takes place.



The wedding begins with a reading from the scriptures. Then the groom and bride exchange rings. The rings are a symbol of marriage and the hope for an unbroken union. At the end of the ceremony, the groom breaks the glass.



The ceremony is over. The couple are now husband and wife. The congregation call out in Heberw, "Mazal Tov! Mazal Tov!" which means 'good luck and congratulations'.



At the reception after the ceremony, everyone holds hands and dances the Hora, the circle of life.



Many of the dances are traditional. Here the bride is seen dancing with her father.



The bride and groom are lifted onto chairs and paraded around the room. Everyone claps. Speeches and toasts take place. Couple cuts the cake.

**Judaism does not encourage marriage
outside the faith**

**Most Jewish rabbis will not officiate at inter-
faith weddings**

Divorce

- Highly discouraged but not prohibited
- Last resort
- Husband gives wife certificate of divorce - GET.
- Only husband can initiate GET
- Witnesses and Rabbi involved
- If the GET not issued, marriage not considered to be dissolved
- Once GET issued, each is free to remarry again in the Jewish religion
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJm9uN023Rs>

Death

☆ After Death

- Body is not left unattended
- “Shomer” (watchman) stays with body until funeral and burial

☆ Preparation of Body:

- Washed and dressed by members of a funeral society
- Placed in a plain wood casket surrounded by a linen shroud
- Never embalmed
- Never cremated

Visitation:

- Not a Jewish custom
- Considered disrespectful to look at a person who can not look back

The Funeral Service:

- 20 min
- Prayers, scripture readings, eulogy

Internment:

- In a Jewish cemetery or mausoleum
- Ceremony presided over by the Rabbi and attended by only closest friends and relatives
- No flowers
- All graves face Jerusalem



Shivah (Mourning)

✧ 7 days after death of a family member

- Remain at home except for going to synagogue
- Wear black or black ribbon with a symbolic slash (cut) in it
- No work
- Men don't shave
- People visit
- Prayers are said

✧ Shloshim

- 30 day mourning period for a close family member
- Return to work or school but not other activities
- For a parent, spouse or child mourning continues for a year (no parties, celebrations)

✧ Yahrzeit

- 1 year anniversary
- Special synagogue service
- Unveiling of the tombstone



Visiting the Grave

- Custom to leave a rock
- Excessive grief is not to be shown



Jewish Festivals



Rosh Hashanah = *New Year's*

- Falls in September or early October
- 2 days
- Commemorates God's creation of the world



- The traditional greeting on Rosh Hashanah is “*shana tova*,” Hebrew for “a good year”
- Rosh Hashanah meals often include apples + honey, to symbolize a “sweet new year”
- After the commencement of Rosh Hashanah, Jews spend 10 days concentrating on an assessment of conduct & behaviour in the previous year.

- The sounding of the *shofar* (ram's horn) signifies the beginning of this 10 day period of repentance.
- Intended to awaken the listener from his/her “slumber” and alert them of the coming judgment.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1creh_yyAk



Yom Kippur

Day of Atonement

- 10 days after Rosh Hashanah
- Period of self reflection & asking for forgiveness from God



- Marked by 24-hour fast and intensive prayers of repentance.
- Signs of comfort and luxury are not allowed
 - women often do not wear makeup
 - sexual relations are not permitted
- No food or drink allowed in order to demonstrate that this day is better spent on prayer.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0BewJfSwNU>

Hanukkah

Festival of Lights



- Celebrates a time in history when Maccabees (group of Jews led by Judas Maccabee) won a battle against Greeks to practice their religion freely
- Greeks = man is centre of everything
- Jews = God is centre of everything
- Celebrates the lighting of the Menorah in the Temple

- *Legend* – after the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by Greeks, the Jews tried to light the sacred lamp, there was only enough oil to last 1 day, but it burned for 8 = God was with them
- 8 days in December
- A candle on the Menorah is lit each night
- Each night, special prayers and blessings are said



Hanukkah Today

- Dreidel: children play with a 4-sided spinning top, each side engraved with different Hebrew letter
- Latkes: potato pancakes cooked in oil to remind them of the importance of the oil lamp
- Presents given
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tws_uMAEOs



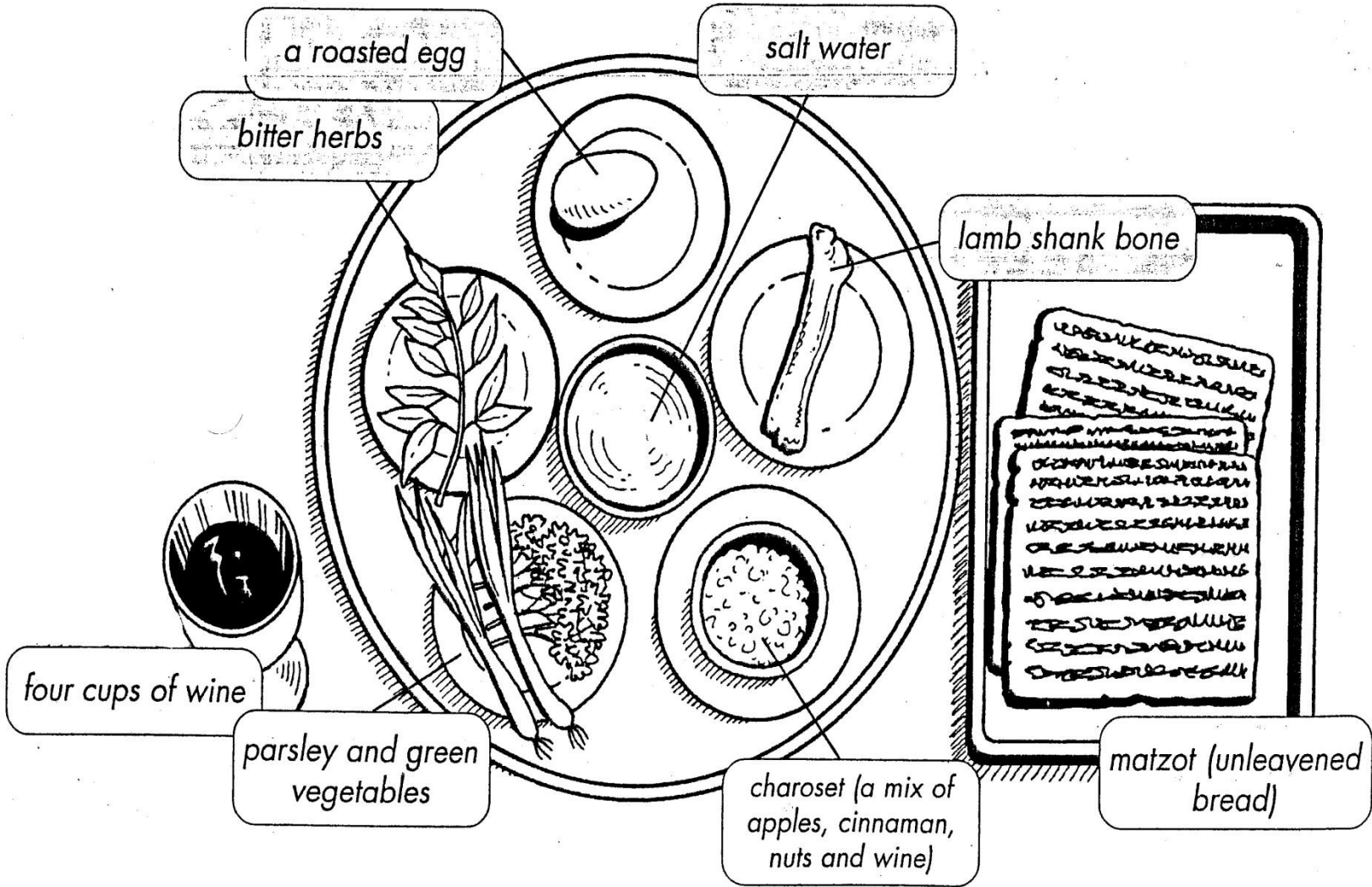
Pesach (*Passover*)



- April, over 7-8 days
- Family event of the year
- Commemorates Exodus story -
 - freeing Israelites from slavery
 - Angel of death passing over the houses of the Jews when killing the firstborn of Egypt

Seder Meal

- Seder = order, arrangement
- Ritual meal follows a fixed pattern and symbolism
- Haggadah – book explaining the story of Exodus and steps of Pesach and Seder
- During entire week, Jews do not eat anything leavened to commemorate the haste in which the Hebrews had to flee from their oppressor.



Seder Plate

- Bone:
 - sacrificial lamb during Passover
- Egg:
 - cycle of life, offering, traditional food of mourners
- Bitter Herbs/Horseradish:
 - harsh suffering, bitter times endured as slaves
- Mixture of Apples, Nuts, Wine:
 - Ground up together, resembles bricks and mortar used by slaves
- Parsley/Onion/Potato:
 - Dipped into salt water resembling salty tears cried by slaves
- Lettuce:
 - Bitter times as slaves
- 4 cups of wine: God promises to redeem the Jews 4 times
- Salt water: tears cried by slaves
- Unleavened bread: fast departure of Israelites during Exodus



Seder Plate:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfWtBpR1VzA>

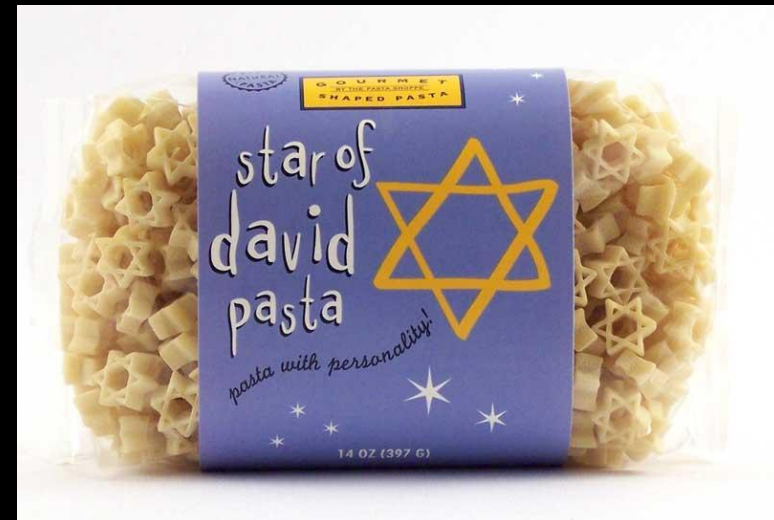
Seder Meal Celebration:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQIDfUEpk10>

Symbols: Star of David



- Six pointed star (triangles = equality)
- Thought to be shape of King David's shield
- Symbol of universality of God (six sides represent north, south, east, west, heaven and hell)



Kippah

- Head covering
- Worn out of respect and fear of God
- Sign of humility, acknowledging what's "above"



Tallit

- Prayer shawl
- Symbolic fringes



Tefillin

- 2 square black leather boxes with black straps
- Jews are called to bind words to hand and mind



Menorah



- Menorah = ancient source of light
- Temple in Jerusalem, light lasted 8 days
- One branch for each day of creation
- Symbol of Israel and Judaism having mission to be light to the world – by spirit, not physical power



Shofar

- Ram's horn
- Symbolizes the need for believers to be responsible and ask for forgiveness for their sins
- Used most during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur



The Western Wall

- Holiest place for the Jews in Jerusalem
- All that remains of Solomon's temple
- A.K.A. Wailing Wall - coined by European travellers who witnessed mournful prayers being recited there
- During the years of Jewish exile, the wall has stood as a symbol of the indestructibility of the Jewish people
- A place for prayer and pilgrimage
- Prayers are also written on pieces of paper, which are then placed between the stones of the wall
- Considered spiritual centre of the world for Jewish people and constant reminder of God's presence

