

## Year 8 Knowledge Organizer 4 –Brit Milah, Bar mitzvah and Shabbat

### BIRTH IN JUDAISM THE BRIT MILAH OR CIRCUMCISION CEREMONY

Jews circumcise their male children on the 8th day after birth which remembers the promise or COVENANT ABRAHAM, the founder of Judaism, made with God. God promised Abraham a land to live in, a son and to be the father of a great nation. Abraham promised to God that he would leave his home town of Ur, worship only one God and circumcise himself and all the men who went left with him. This has come to be a way Jews can show their identity. The Brit Milah usually takes place in the child's home and is treated like a celebration with friends and relatives there. A man called a MOHEL performs the circumcision. The father reads out the COVENANT of ABRAHAM and asks the mohel to circumcise their son. Men will take the child into another room and one called the SANDEK holds the baby while the circumcision is done and a chair is left empty to symbolize the prophet ELIJAH watching over the ceremony. The foreskin is taken for a burial in a Jewish grave yard. The boy is then named. For more information watch.



[Brit Milah: Jewish Traditions for Welcoming a Baby Boy - Bing video](#)

### BAR MITZVAH INITIATION IN JUDAISM

A Jewish boy becomes BAR MITVAH when he is 13 years old. Up until then any sins he commits fall upon his father. Sins are any actions against the 613 MITZVAHS or rules found in the TORAH. For months before his 13th birthday the boy has to attend classes to understand what it means to be Bar Mitzvah and learn the HEBREW language as he has to read a portion of the TORAH during the Bar Mitzvah ceremony. The boy will wear his TALLIT or prayer shawl for the first time as well as his TEFILLIN black leather boxes and straps worn on the arm and forehead. The father starts by thanking God that he is no longer responsible for his sons sins. The boy reads from the Torah and makes a speech and a party follows. From then on a boy is a man and can be one of the MINYAN the 10 men who have to be present for a service to take place. Girls in less strict Judaism also have a BAT MITZVAH but in OTHODOX Judaism they have a BAT CHIYAL which is a home ceremony indicating they know how to play a women's role in keeping a Jewish home. For more information watch.



[https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEBnpxhb0rc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEBnpxhb0rc)

### Shabbat

Shabbat is the Holy day for the Jews. Shabbat begins at sunset on Friday and goes on till sunset on Saturday. This fulfils one of the 10 Commandments found in the TORAH “Keep the Shabbat Holy”.

Jewish RABBIS then explained what keeping the Shabbat Holy meant. They started by saying Jews should do no work. 39 MELACHOT were drawn up which explained what was counted as work. These included tying and untying knots, making fire, tearing paper and combing raw fibres.

Jewish men go to the synagogue on the Friday evening. Jewish women light the shabbat candles and say a blessing to welcome the shabbat in. The whole family will attend the synagogue on the Saturday morning but in Orthodox Judaism only the men will take part in the service as the women will watch from a balcony.

At the end of the shabbat on the Saturday evening men will return to the synagogue and then go home and carry out the HAVDALLAH ceremony where sweet spices are sniffed to hope the sweetness of the shabbat will remain with them through next week. They also light a triple wicked candle to show they can now make fire in all its forms.

[A Family's Shabbat - The Jewish Museum London](#)

