



# **A Jewish Ceremony for Newborn Girls: The Torah's Covenant Affirmed (HBI Series on Jewish Women)**

*Sharon R. Siegel*

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This engaging book offers the first in-depth analysis of the history, philosophy, and social trends that underpin modern welcoming ceremonies for newborn girls in the Jewish community. Sharon R. Siegel traces the arc of these ceremonies from their emergence in the 1970s until today. She also delves into the history of how Jewish girls have been named over the centuries and explores how this history can shape contemporary welcoming practices.

Siegel builds on the notion that modern ceremonies should focus on a newborn girl's entry into the covenant between God and Israel and examines classic Jewish texts that speak to the critical question of women's inclusion in the covenant. A bold new perspective on the relation between the covenant and male circumcision reveals why the covenantal status of Jewish women stands independent of this male rite.

Siegel formulates a vision for the next phase in the development of Jewish rituals for newborn girls by placing these new rituals within the context of Jewish law (halacha) and synthesizing a vast array of pertinent customs, imagery, and texts. Bridging traditional Jewish beliefs and modern feminist ideals, Siegel's powerful insights draw on her experiences and personal feminist philosophy. *A Jewish Ceremony for Newborn Girls* is an erudite and thought-provoking narrative that will inspire wide-ranging discussions about how and why to commemorate the birth of Jewish girls.

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