BERIT MILA: Should the father himself perfom the circumcision?

18 of Sivan, 5771

In the Torah says that **Abraham circumcised his son** Isaac. Accordingly, the performance of the circumcision is incumbent **directly** upon the father.

The Sephardic tradition is that when the father performs the circumcision by himself, a different *berakha* is said. Normally the Mohel (circumcision surgeon) says: *'al hamila* "…that You commanded us the performance of the circumcision…". But when the father himself circumcises his son he should say: "**that You commanded us to circumcise one's son"**.

The question is: since it is a greater merit for the father to perform the Berit, should the father **himself be encouraged** to circumcise his son?

Some modern Rabbis discourage the father from doing the circumcision (see Penine Halakha, Mishpacha, 3, pg. 166) especially since there have been some cases where, God forbids, **tragedies have occurred** because of that. Rabbi Melamed also says that *"rob gedole Israel"*, most **prominent rabbis had always preferred to let the Mohel to perform the Berit**. After all, the Berit Mila is a delicate procedure, for which one should not take risks (*chashash sakana*).

"The task of the mohel is not taken lightly. The mohel is required to study Jewish law, be familiar with the ancient traditions included in the circumcision ceremony, and must have expertise in the surgical process. For that, he undergoes intense training, learning the latest hygienic and medical techniques needed for the circumcision. He also receives instruction for evaluating the infant's health prior to the circumcision, and for providing post-procedural care".

The general custom, then, is that the father formally appoints

an expert Mohel to circumcise his son.
The exception, of course, is when the father himself is a Mohel or a doctor.

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