

EIS RATZON – AT A BRIT (BRIS (for the Ashkenazic))

The time of the *Brit Milah* (circumcision) provides “a direct line” for the prayers that are recited at the moment the baby cries. One Jewish sage explains that everyone should (pray and) have in mind their own pain and sufferings. At the time the child cries from the pain of the *Brit*, his (the child’s) voice goes up (to heaven) without obstruction and will be the conduit for all other prayers.

This concept – that pain in this world increases the flow of mercy from heaven – is similar to the cosmic effect of the mitzvah of *shiluach ha’kein*, sending away the mother bird and taking the young chicks. The pain the mother bird suffers when she is sent away and forced to abandon her young “awakens the forces of mercy” in the world and releases an outpouring of mercy from the heavens, which alleviates all kinds of human suffering. Thus, the effect of the mitzvah is to intensify the Almighty’s mercy on His creations.

The time of a *brit* is particularly potent for prayers for healing, as a Jewish sage explains that *Brit Milah* is a major force for drawing healing into the world. One of the Jewish books of the *Talmud* (part of the Oral Teachings) teaches that the Men of the Great Assembly made the blessing for healing the eighth blessing of the *Shemoneh Esrei*, because the *mitzvah* of the *brit*, which draws down the Almighty’s power of healing, takes place on the eighth day of a child’s life. Thus, the day in which a *brit* occurs is a time for praying that the Almighty send complete recovery to a sick person.

Little does the tiny child understand, as he joins in the covenant of our forefathers, the power conveyed in his cries. His family and neighbors stand nearby, praying that he recovers, thrive, and take his place among his people – Israel. Scores of other sincere prayers are being recited too, and the infant’s cries carry them all, unimpeded, right to the Almighty’s listening ear.

POINTS TO PONDER

The baby’s cries during his Brit Milah ascend straight to heaven, unimpeded.

Prayers that are said during the moments the baby cries attach themselves to his cry and are thus conveyed to heaven as well.

A Brit is a particularly propitious time to pray for someone’s recovery from illness, since the baby’s cry awakens the Almighty’s mercy.

***Isaiah 25:8 He will destroy death forever. My Lord GOD will wipe the tears away from all faces and will put an end to the reproach of His people over all the earth -
- For it is the LORD who has spoken. (TNK)***