

# Invalid Sefer Torah & the Torah Reading

**A mistake is found** – Check if the error requires a new Sefer to replace it.

**Doesn't Require New Sefer**

- If the mistake invalidates the Sefer, it should be fixed as soon as possible<sup>1)</sup>.
- If the mistake doesn't invalidate the Sefer, it is permitted to perfect and improve the letters (through a qualified Sofer STa"m) at any time, especially if delaying this adjustment will cause another to invalidate it.

**Requires New Sefer**

**There is another Sefer Torah that can be used**

**There is no other available Sefer Torah**

## Between Aliyot:

Where only some of the Olim have been called, the reading should continue in the new Sefer from the place of error (i.e. the place that they stopped) and complete 7 aliyot including the ones from the invalid Sefer. Preferably, it is desirable to call 7 new Olim from the place of error until the end of the Parasha.

## After 7 Olim have been called:

And the last Oleh already said the concluding Bracha, but the Parasha is not finished – They should read with Brachot from the new Sefer, and they can add extra Olim.

## The error was found after concluding the Parasha:

A new Sefer is not required, we rely on the opinion that validate the reading from an invalid Sefer (Acharonim). Regarding the Maftir and Haftarah:

- **If Kaddish hasn't been said** – The last Oleh should say the Haftarah and then Kaddish afterwards.
- **If Kaddish has been said** – An Oleh should be called for Maftir, without Brachot, and no Kaddish should be said after the Haftarah.

## In the middle of the reading<sup>5)</sup>:

- If 3 verses have been read, and there are more than 2 before the next paragraph – the concluding Bracha should be said and then a new Sefer taken out (Rema).
- If 3 verses haven't been read or it's 2 or less verses until the next paragraph (and similarly on Rosh Chodesh where we can't add more than 4 Aliyot) – the reading should be concluded in the new Sefer with the concluding Bracha (Rema<sup>6)</sup>).

## During Maftir :

- Normal Shabbat – Finish the reading without a concluding Bracha.
- Yom Tov or one of the 4 Special Parashiyot – Bring out a new Sefer to read the Maftir.

During the 7<sup>th</sup> Aliyah – the same as every other Aliyah<sup>7)</sup> (Many Acharonim).

## ■ In the First Instance:

- If one of the 5 Books in the Sefer is complete, one can be lenient and read from that book (according to all opinions).
- If there is no complete book, or the required portion is in an invalid book:
  - Some say one can read from it in public and make the appropriate blessings. (Kol Bo, Avudraham)
  - Some invalidate [the blessings] (Rashba, Shu"t, the Acharonim concluded that initially it should not be taken out to be read from.)

## ■ Ex Post Facto:

- **Before** the concluding Bracha has been said: all the Aliyot should be read, with the Oleh in whose portion the mistake was found standing there keeping concentration and reading together silently with them, and at the end he should say the concluding Bracha and the Haftarah with the Brachot. (Dagul Mervava, Sh"E)(Some say the Haftarah should be read without the Brachot)<sup>2)</sup>.
- **After** the concluding Bracha has been said<sup>3)</sup>: the Reader should finish the Parasha without the Brachot.<sup>4)</sup>

\*From **Shulchan Aruch & Mishna Berura** O"Ch 143

1) **Ketubot** 19b, **Shulchan Aruch** Yoreh De'ah 279:1, **Rambam** Laws of Tefillin, Mezuzot & Sifrei Torah 7:12, **Biur HaSofer** 19:1 "שאינו מוגה" write that it's forbidden to leave (without burying) a Sefer Torah that is not examined longer than 30 days. However, **Da'at Cohen** writes in Inyanei Yoreh De'ah 274 that this is all because it may be used by mistake, therefore as long as this is not the case and the pasul Sefer is marked out, it's proper to place it in the Aron HaKodesh and not to bury it.

2) It's brought in the **Mishna Berura** that some say that the 7 are completed with Brachot and the Maftir should be Shevi'el and Kaddish should be said after the Haftarah (**Magen Avraham**, **Maharam MiLublin**), however the **Mishna Berura** sides with the opinion mentioned above.

3) The **Mishna Berura** mentions this with regard to Shelishi or any later Oleh because since he has said the concluding Bracha, there is no difference whether the rest is read

before him or someone else. However, if this occurs during the Cohen or Levi aliyah, then the rest should be read before a Yisrael.

4) According to **Pitchei Shearim** it's good to read the rest in front of the current Oleh, but according to the **Mishna Berura** one is not obliged to do so.

5) The **Mishna Berura** also brings the following opinions: **Mahari Bei Rav** – Initially one shouldn't read from the invalid one, but if one did then they fulfill their obligation and should finish in the new one, and if the concluding Bracha wasn't said, whether the reading was finished or not, 3 verses should be read from the new one with the Bracha. **Mordechai** – If 3 verses were read, they should stop, say the concluding Bracha and bring out the new Sefer for the other Olim. If 3 verses weren't read, the error should be said orally and the reading should be concluded in the invalid Sefer with the concluding Bracha. However, according to the **Mishna Berura** it is proper to act according to the **Shulchan Aruch** and the **Rema's** additions (as written

above), and so concludes the **Levush**, **Shach**, **Eliyahu Rabbah**, **Nahar Shalom** and **Magen Gibborim**, as long as there is no Minhag of that community to the contrary.

6) The **Shulchan Aruch** agrees in this case.

7) **Magen Avraham** – finish in this Sefer and it also counts for Maftir, afterwards say the Haftarah with Brachot. According to **Magen Gibborim** one should act as above unless there is a specific Minhag to act according to the **Magen Avraham**, and so agrees the **Mishna Berura**.

## Mistakes that Require a New Sefer

- ✳ Missing letter or word (If it changes the meaning of the word or sentence).
- ✳ A Kri U'Chitiv where the word is written the way it should be said instead of the way it should be written.
- ✳ Paragraphs that are supposed to be closed and are open and vice versa.

✳ The absence of a new paragraph when there should be one, or a new paragraph where there shouldn't be.

✳ Two words that look like one or vice versa.

✳ If the stitches are torn and less than 5 or 6 are left. (The other books are still Kosher to read from).

✳ If two letters are touching in the beginning or middle in a way that they were completed whilst touching. (Although if there's no Kosher Sefer then one can rely on the opinions that validate this.)

✳ There are many other mistakes that require a new Sefer, and a qualified Magiha should make the decision. As a general rule, any mistake where there is a Halachic dispute regarding it, one can be lenient and continue reading from the Sefer.

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