

9. Reading the *Maftir* and *Haftarah*

דִּינֵי מַפְטִיר וְהַפְטָרָה

1. After the reading of the Torah, and before calling the *Maftir*, *Chatzi Kaddish* is recited.¹ While reciting the *Kaddish*, the most recently read Torah scroll should be on the table, as well as the second scroll if the *Maftir* is to be read from it, as in the case on Rosh Chodesh, etc. When the readings are from three Torahs, you need not return the first Torah (whose reading was finished) to the table.

2. When called for *Maftir*, you should not begin saying the *berachot* for the *Haftarah* until the Torah has been bound up and wrapped in its mantle.

3. The *berachot* said before the *Haftarah* do not end with “*HaNe’emarim be’emet*,” therefore you should not say *Amen* until after “*vatzedek*,” which concludes the *berachah*. This also applies to the first *berachah* said after reading the *Haftarah*. You do not say *Amen* after “*Emet vatzedek*” as the blessing does not end there, but continues with “*ne’eman atah*.” Since some mistakenly respond with *Amen* in these places,

1. **Kaddish After the Torah Reading** As a rule, whenever the Torah is read, a *Chatzi Kaddish* is said afterward, except at the *Minchah* on Shabbat, and at the *Minchah* on a Fast Day, when the *Kaddish* said before the *Amidah* is meant for the Torah reading as well.

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it is advisable that you recite the *berachot* without pausing there, so as to indicate that the *berachah* is not yet concluded.

4. No one may talk while the *Haftarah* is being read.²

5. The *Haftarah*³ should be read⁴ out loud only by the one who is called up to *Maftir*;⁵ the congregation reads it along with him quietly.⁶

2. **Origins of the *Haftarah* and the Respect It Is Due** The enactment to read from the *Nevi'im* was in response to a decree which forbade the Jews from reading the Torah in public. Thus, the reading of the *Haftarah* is, among other things, a testament to the *mesirut nefesh* and dedication our people have shown the Torah throughout the generations. As such, every Jew who values the Torah should take the reading of the *Haftarah* very seriously. You should not leave the synagogue for the *Haftarah*; even more so to leave for the purpose of eating and drinking. There is hardly a greater show of disrespect for Torah, prophesy, and Jewish sacrifice than leaving *shul* during the *Haftarah* to attend a social gathering.
3. ***Haftarah* Readings Designated for Sefardim** References in the *Chumashim* to *Haftarah* readings according to the custom of the Sefardim do not apply to those who are not Sefardim, but have only adopted the Sefardic *nusach* in prayer as established by the Ari. Such congregations should read the *Haftarah* according to the Ashkenazic custom of which reading is in conjunction with the Torah reading.
4. **Reading the *Haftarah* From a Scroll** The practice in most synagogues where the worshipers read along silently is that the *Maftir* reads the *Haftarah* from a *Chumash* or from a book containing the individual *Haftarah* readings. In some synagogues, however, it is the custom to read the *Haftarah* from a scroll of the Prophets. In the latter case, the *Maftir* alone should read the *Haftarah*, while the congregation listens.
5. **Calling Someone to *Maftir* Who Only Says the *Berachot*** In order to avoid embarrassment and controversy it is permissible to call to *Maftir* one who will only say the blessings, and the *ba'al koreh* will recite the *Haftarah*.
6. **Everyone Reading the *Haftarah* Out Loud** In some congregations the worshipers read the *Haftarah* aloud. According to *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (79:4) and *Be'ur Halachah* (284, ר"ה תרי קלי, 284) this custom is one that should be abolished. There are also some people who are slow in reading the *Haftarah*, and they continue reading it after the *Maftir* has already concluded and has begun to say the *berachot*. They are acting improperly, because if they continue reading it out loud, they do not hear the *berachot* and in all likelihood prevent their neighbors from hearing them as well. And even if they lower their voices, they still do not hear the blessings themselves. Therefore, it is best that when the *Maftir* has finished reading the *Haftarah* and begins the *berachot*, you should remain silent until the *berachot* are concluded, and afterwards you may finish reading the *Haftarah* yourself. The *Maftir* should also take care not to begin saying the *berachot* until the voices of the congregants have entirely subsided. However, some *poskim* are of the opinion that the custom followed in

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6. On a Shabbat when you read two *parashiyot* jointly, you read the *Haftarah* of the second *parashah*, except when *Aharei Mot* and *Kedoshim* are joined, in which case the *Haftarah* read is “*Haloh kivnei kushi'im*” (*Amos* 9:7-15). In some *Chumashim* it is erroneously noted that the *Haftarah* of *Parashat Vayishlach* is “*Vayivrach Ya'akov*” (*Hoshe'a* 12:13-14:10). This *Haftarah*, however, is read in conjunction with *Parashat Vayetzei* while the *Haftarah* of *Vayishlach* is “*Chazon Ovadiah*” (Book of Obadiah).

7. On Rosh Chodesh which occurs on Shabbat, the *Haftarah* is “*Hashamayim kis'i*” (*Yeshayahu* 66:1-24). If, instead, the *Maftir* reads the regular *Haftarah* for that week and becomes aware of the error before reciting the concluding *berachot*, he should also read “*Hashamayim kis'i*” and then say the *berachot*. But if he becomes aware of the error after saying the *berachot*, he should read “*Hashamayim kis'i*” without repeating the *berachot*. When *Rosh Chodesh* occurs on Sunday, the *Haftarah* “*Machar Chodesh*” (*I Shmuel* 20:18-42) is read. If the *Maftir* erred, he should follow the same procedure as on *Shabbat Rosh Chodesh*. When *Rosh Chodesh* occurs on both days, the *Maftir* reads “*Hashamayim kis'i*” that Shabbat.

8. On *Shabbat Chol HaMoed Pesach* no mention of Pesach is made, neither in the middle nor at the end of the concluding *berachot* of the *Haftarah*, which is the usual “*Mekadesh haShabbat*.” However, on *Shabbat Chol HaMoed Sukkot*, when complete *Hallel* is recited, and the sacrificial offerings in the *Beit HaMikdash* differ each day, we do make mention of Yom Tov, and the *berachot* conclude “*Mekadesh haShabbat veYisrael vehazemanim*,” just as when the first days of Sukkot fall on Shabbat.

9. A child who has reached the age of *chinuch*, and who can pronounce the words distinctly, may be called to *Maftir* on Shabbat and Yom Tov, except on the Shabbat of *Parashat Zachor*, *Parashat Parah*,⁷

some synagogues where the worshipers join the *Maftir* in reading the *Haftarah* out loud serves to keep those who are unable to read the *Haftarah* with its traditional intonation and melody from embarrassment, and need not be abolished.

7. **Calling a Child to Maftir on the Four Special Shabbatot** Some *poskim* are of the opinion that a child may be called only when the Torah portion that is read for the *Maftir* is a repetition of what was read for the previous *aliyah*. According to this

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and *Shabbat Shuvah*. The custom is also to refrain from calling a child to *Maftir* on the seventh day of Pesach, when the *Haftarah* reading is the Song of David (*II Shmuel* 22:1-51, and on the first day of Shavuot, when the *Haftarah* reading is the *Merkavah*, the chariot of Yechezkel (*Yechezkel* 1:1-28, 3:12). On these occasions it is customary to call an adult, who is also a learned man. It is, likewise, customary to call the Rabbi to *Maftir* on *Shabbat Chazon*, when the *Haftarah* reading is “*Chazon Yeshayahu*” (*Yeshayahu* 1:1-27).

10. The *Haftarah* was instituted to be read with its *berachot* only after the Torah has been read with its *berachot* for the required number of people that are to be called.⁸ But, if the Torah scroll is found to be defective on an ordinary Shabbat, even in the reading for the seventh *aliyah*, and there is no other *Sefer Torah* available, and the man called to the Torah has therefore not said the concluding *berachot* over the Torah, the *Maftir* does not say the *berachot* for the *Haftarah*.⁹ Neither does the

view a child should not be called up to *Maftir* on any of the four *Shabbatot* (*Arba Parashiot*) when a special section of the Torah designated for that Shabbat is read for the *Maftir*. This would mean that, in addition to *Parashat Zachor* and *Parashat Parah*, a child is also not to be called to *Maftir* on the Shabbat of *Parashat Shekalim* and *Parashat HaChodesh*.

8. **Haftarah Reading on the Occasion of Two Bar Mitzvahs** In the event there are two boys in the synagogue who are celebrating their *Bar Mitzvah* on Shabbat, it is not permitted to read the *Maftir* and *Haftarah* twice, that is, to call the first *Bar Mitzvah* to read the *Maftir* and the *Haftarah* and to recite the *berachot*, and then call the second *Bar Mitzvah* to repeat the readings and the *berachot*. They should be advised to schedule the *Bar Mitzvah* celebrations on different weeks; if they did schedule them on the same Shabbat, they should divide the honors, one to be called for *Maftir* and the second for another *aliyah*, or the congregation can form separate groups and read the Torah and *Haftarah* in two places. If this arrangement is not acceptable, and it is necessary to avoid discord and recriminations, some *poskim* permit individual consecutive readings for each *Bar Mitzvah*, provided a *minyan* of people resolve not to fulfill their obligation with the first reading. They should leave the synagogue and return for the readings by the second *Bar Mitzvah*. The Torah scroll should not be raised and rolled up, but only covered, in the interval between the readings.
9. **Haftarah Berachot After Torah Reading from a Defective Torah Scroll** In the view of some *poskim*, where the Torah is found to be defective and no other scroll is available, the concluding *berachot* over the Torah are said, and the *Haftarah* is read with its blessings as well. See Chapter 8, paragraph 9, and notes.

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Maftir say the *berachot* for the *Haftarah* on a Shabbat when it is obligatory to read a special portion for the *Maftir* on that day, even if the defect is found in the portion read for the *Maftir*. In these instances, the man called for *Maftir* reads the *Haftarah*, but without the *berachot*. However, if on an ordinary Shabbat the defect is found after seven people have been called and they said the *berachot* over the Torah, whether the defect was found in the reading for the additional people called up, or in the reading for the *Maftir*, the *Maftir* should read the *Haftarah* with its blessings.