

FJMC's Sefer Haftorah

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Sefer Haftorah?

The FJMC's Sefer Haftorah is a collection of every Haftorah read during the year, including those from holidays and Rosh Chodesh. The Haftorot are scripted by a *sofer* on a parchment scroll in the same manner as a Torah. In fact, when rolled up and covered by its mantle, the Haftorah scroll looks exactly like a Torah scroll but not as thick. But unlike a Torah, the Haftorah scroll contains vowels and the *trop*. In addition, there are dedications of the various Haftorot in English and Hebrew.

Where is the Sefer Haftorah used?

It is read from at the FJMC's international convention and at its Leadership Development Institute. The rest of the year it travels from region to region and is featured in Shabbat and holiday services of congregations just like yours.

How is it used?

At services, it is treated very much like a Torah. It is housed in the Ark, undressed and redressed like a Torah, and carried around the congregation in the Torah procession. The Sefer Haftorah scroll usually arrives at a synagogue by overnight carrier on Wednesday and is often shown to students in the Religious School, although some congregations have been quite inventive in their uses for it. On Monday morning it is picked up to be sent to the next stop in its journey.

How can we get the FJMC's Sefer Haftorah scroll at our synagogue?

First contact your regional president to see when it will next be in your region and whether there is a week that you could have it. The Haftorah scroll is booked into the various regions for a period of weeks for the next year, although it might not yet be assigned to individual synagogues. If no slot is immediately available, you should contact the FJMC's Sefer Haftorah chairman, Dave Gerstein at gerstein1@verizon.net. Give him some possible dates, including a few that are more than a year off, and he will try to arrange for you to get the Sefer Haftorah. He will want to know the address of your synagogue and a contact person to receive the scroll and put it in a secure place.

How can we dedicate one of the Haftorot in the FJMC Haftorah scroll?

Most have already been dedicated, but there are a few that have not. The dedication can be by a Men's Club, a congregation, or even an individual or family, and the inscription can be in English, Hebrew, or both. The cost of a dedication is \$500, and you should contact the FJMC's Executive Director, Rabbi Charles Simon, at rabbisimon@fjmc.org for further information.

Our synagogue would like to have a Sefer Haftorah scroll of our own to use year-long. How do we go about securing one?

Several synagogues have recently taken this step and are using the purchase of a Sefer Haftorah scroll as a congregational fund raiser. For more information, contact Jennifer Gersch in the FJMC Office at jgersch@fjmc.org.

Is there a way to get a scroll of a single Haftorah?

Yes. In fact, many parents and grandparents are doing that in order to give a memorable gift to a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Once again, you should contact Jennifer Gersch at jgersch@fjmc.org.