

GREAT AND BITTER CRY!

BS'D, I have come to inform you, that I am a Sofer Stam who wrote Parshios and Mezuzos for many years on the parchment of ----- that has no Rabbinical supervision whatsoever. I became aware of the significant problems and the prohibition of the Badatz to write on unsupervised parchment, but I relied on the middle-man, as I heard from many Sofrim that they write on this parchment. I subsequently asked three great Rabbonim about the matter.

These Rabbonim responded: Since a customer pays you large sums of money for Parshios and Mezuzos, he relies on you that you have thoroughly verified that what you are giving him is 100% kosher. If the parchment is not kosher, what are all of the immersions worth that you immerse before the writing, as all of the immersions and all of the waters in the world do not purify you since you are "immersing whilst holding an impure creature". The immersion has not achieved anything as if you have written on parchment without supervision, you immerse and the impure creature is inside it!

Have you not heard about what happened in Monsey with this man that was known to be faithful and G-d fearing and one who spreads Torah, as well as one who blows the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah and leads the prayers and cries whilst praying on the Yamim Noraim. He was the one who for 12 years fed the entire city unslaughtered meat as well as forbidden fats and

blood.

Did you not hear that they bring parchment from Gaza, China, Japan and other places? All of this was publicised in all of the newspapers and information that came from the Badatz of the Eidah HaChareidis!

Therefore, you must reimburse all of those that bought from you (all of the years that you have written, or at least in the last three years since there has been supervised parchment available), or write new Parshios or Mezuzos for them on kosher parchment.

I asked one Rav whether I am required to sell my house in order to return the money to all of my customers? But I do not have money in the bank and I learn half-day in Kollel! Surely these parchment sellers have a good name of being who are G-d fearing? So how am I guilty in this matter? And furthermore, all of my friends who are Sofrim, and even the older Sofrim write on this unsupervised parchment?

The Rav answered me: Look at what HaRav Chaim Vital writes in Eitz Chaim on Shaar Hahakdamos, about the Dor Hahaflogah "Let us make a name for ourselves"; and this unsupervised parchment falls into the category of the Dor Hahaflogah of the mixed multitude, as this person has made himself a name, exactly like the Dor Hahaflogah. You should know also that I heard from a Rav who checked that not only does this unsupervised parchment come from the aforementioned places, but it is even greased with pig fat; (and if you still think that this middle-man is G-d fearing, why does he not have supervision)? - (See also in Kav Hayoshor Part 120).

How could you have entertained these thoughts, as you know that in our holy land, the poverty is so great

that people do not have food to eat. A Jew had the self-sacrifice to borrow large sums of money for many years to acquire outstanding Tefillin and you did not properly clarify the situation and gave him Tefilin over which one cannot Halachically make a Brochah!

You should know that aside from the prohibition of theft, you have prevented your customers from fulfilling these important mitzvos and have caused them to stumble daily with Brochos in vain rch"l. What will you reply on the Day of Judgement when they will ask you about that which you learned in Keses HaSofer (1:1), "You must be careful in your work which is Heaven's work etc. ...you destroy the entire world."

And the words of Chasam Sofer have been fulfilled in our days (Collected Responsa, end 83) All the more so that the Sofrim of our generation are not well versed, that in our great sins they cause many to stumble, and as a result, there are many hundreds of Jews who have never worn kosher Tefilin on their heads (Yalkut Sofer). You should also know, that all of the Mezuzos and Parshios that you wrote on unsupervised parchment did not protect those people and their families, and through this sin (Heaven protect us) many became orphaned rch"l. I am not saying that your guilt in this was deliberate ch"vsh, but certainly you will be required to give a reckoning for inadvertantly causing it. (See the Introduction to Sefer Nidchai Yisroel by the Chofetz Chaim zt"l).

Therefore "Listen to my voice, I will advise you, and Hashem should be with you"...Since you have stumbled in such a serious transgression by causing many to stumble in this great sin, if you will bring this matter to the attention of all of the Sofrim and all of Israel, "All

you shall warn them, and inform them of the way upon which to go and the action to take, then Hashem will be with you" and he will forgive you, as you did as you were commanded.

This Rav also told me to publicise that each and every Jew that wishes to purchase Tefilin, Mezuzos, Sifrai Torah or Megillos should verify thoroughly whether the Sofer writes on supervised parchment, as if not, he is literally wasting his money, as aside from not fulfilling the mitzvah, he is placing himself and his household in great danger. And if he bought a Sefer Torah that was written on this unsupervised parchment, he has caused many to stumble with Brochos in vain and not fulfilling their obligation to hear the Torah reading. And if the Sefer Torah was written in the merit of a deceased family member, not only has the soul of the deceased not been merited, but upon each Torah reading, he has sent his parent or grandparent to the depths of Gehinnom and it is from there that they are crying out a loud and bitter cry without rest. This man will be required to give a reckoning for all of this.

I have therefore decided to inform all who have purchased Parshios and Mezuzos from me that I am prepared to reimburse them or to rewrite for them those Parshios or Mezuzos.

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