

## **Tevilas Kelim - Immersion of Utensils in a Mikveh:**

*Please note: When discussing the laws of Immersing utensils in a Mikveh, the Mikveh must be a 100% Kosher Mikveh that could also be used for women. That could be the very Mikveh that people use, a lake, or special smaller Mikveh that is designated strictly for utensils.*

### **Criteria for Immersing Utensils in the Mikveh. These may be classified according to:**

#### **1. TYPES OF UTENSILS:**

1. Eating and drinking utensils, and utensils used for cooking, frying, making or other food preparation, all require tevilah [immersion in a Mikveh] if they were manufactured or purchased from a non-Jew.
2. The aforementioned utensils must be immersed in the Mikveh, whether they are brought to the table or not; whether they are new or old; or whether they are used for hot or cold food.
3. Utensils used in the initial stages of food preparation; e.g., kneading utensils, meat grinders, etc, are immersed without a blessing.
4. Only utensils that come into direct contact with food or drink require tevilah.
5. Disposable utensils, utensils manufactured from aluminum foil, do not require tevilah.
6. Storage bottles/containers require tevilah (if food or drink stored in them is unwrapped). If these containers are not normally brought to the table, no blessing is said.
7. Utensils manufactured from metal: aluminum, tin, iron, gold, silver, copper, steel, lead, etc., and glass utensils require tevilah with a blessing.
8. Utensils manufactured from plastic, marble, porcelain, formica, or china do not require tevilah. (Antique china does require tevilah with a blessing.)
9. Utensils Manufactured from wood, bone, stone, earthenware, and ceramics do not require tevilah.
10. Utensils manufactured from Pyrex, enamel, and Duralex, Corningware, Corelle, and Teflon coating require tevilah, but no blessing is said.
11. Utensils that are glazed will depend on the type of glaze it has. They often require Tevila without a blessing.

#### **2. SOURCES OF UTENSILS:**

1. Utensils manufactured in a factory owned by non-Jews require tevilah with a blessing.
2. Utensils manufactured in a factory owned by a Jew do not require tevilah.
3. Utensils manufactured in a factory owned jointly by a Jew and a non-Jew require tevilah with a blessing.
4. When a utensil is purchased from a Jewish retailer, you must determine where it was manufactured. If that is not possible, tevilah is required. If the majority of factories in a given country are at least partially owned by non-Jews, a blessing is also said.
5. Utensils imported from Japan, China or Europe all require tevilah with a blessing.
6. Utensils imported from Israel do not require tevilah.

#### **3. MODES OF ACQUISITION OF UTENSILS:**

1. Utensils purchased or received as a gift from a non-Jew require tevilah with a blessing.
2. Utensils purchased or received as a gift from a Jew, but manufactured by a non-Jew require tevilah with a blessing.
3. Utensils owned jointly by a Jew and a non-Jew do not require tevilah.
4. A Jew who borrows or rents a utensil from a non-Jew may use it without tevilah (but it must be kashered when necessary).
5. A Jew who borrows or rents from a Jew utensils that require tevilah may not use them without tevilah.
6. When in another person's house, one should avoid eating or drinking from utensils requiring tevilah that have not been immersed.
7. Food served from or cooked in utensils that require tevilah may still be eaten.
8. Utensils that were owned by a non-Jew before he converted to Judaism:
  - a. Do not require tevilah if he immersed them properly before his conversion.
  - b. Do require tevilah if he did not immerse them before conversion, but no blessing is said.

#### **4. USING UTENSILS BEFORE TEVILAH:**

1. Utensils may be kept in the house before tevilah.
  2. Before tevilah, they may not be used for eating and/or cooking, even on a temporary basis – even once.
  3. Food cooked in a utensil that has not been immersed should be removed from the utensil as soon as possible, and may then be eaten.
  4. Even though a utensil has already been used many times without tevilah, it may nevertheless not be used again until it has been immersed.
  5. It is unnecessary to remove the contents of cans, jars and bottles that were purchased from a non-Jew, even after the containers were opened. One may eat directly from these containers. Leftover food may be returned to these containers.
  6. Even after those containers are emptied, new food may be placed in them without tevilah.
  7. Electrical appliances that come in direct contact with food [e.g. toaster] should be immersed without a blessing. [Wait 36 hours before using them and there will be no damage to them.]
  8. When tevilah is not possible (in the short-term) or practical, the utensil may be given to a non-Jew as a gift, and then borrowed back from him.
  9. Whenever there is a doubt as to whether a utensil has undergone tevilah, or whether it requires tevilah, the utensil should be immersed without a blessing or immersed together with other vessels that do require a blessing.
  10. If one or more utensils that require tevilah became mixed up with utensils that do not require tevilah:
    - a. They do not require tevilah if they are mixed up with many utensils and it is a great bother.
    - b. All the utensils should be immersed and a blessing said in the plural form, if the utensil got mixed up with a few others.
- ★ If an item that had already been to the Mikveh became treif (not kosher) and then it went through the koshering process and became kosher again, it does not require tevilah a second time.

#### **5. Removing Chatzitzos [intervening substances]:**

1. A chatzitzah between the utensil and the water invalidates the tevilah.
2. Dirt, rust, seals, and black spots [caused by fire] that can be removed – should all be removed. Sticker Tags should be removed at home before taking them to the Mikveh, as they are difficult to remove.
3. Labels that are not usually removed [e.g. labels on crystal] need not be removed.
4. Limestone accumulated on the inside of a kettle is not considered a chatzitzah.
5. A utensil that was immersed with a chatzitzah must be immersed a second time after the chatzitzah is removed.
6. A chatzitzah that is attached to a minority of a utensil, and is a kind that neither the owner nor most people are particular to remove, does not invalidate the tevilah.
7. Handles and other parts attached to a utensil do not have to be removed before immersion.
8. A utensil that needs to be kashered, should be kashered before tevilah.
9. Dairy and meat utensils may be immersed at the same time.

#### **6. Tevilah on Shabbos and Yom Tov:**

1. Utensils may not be immersed on Shabbat and Yom Tov. Tevilah enables a utensil to be used; consequently it is a way of “repairing” the utensil, and repairing is an act forbidden on Shabbat and Yom Tov.
2. A utensil that is needed for Shabbat or Yom Tov may be immersed with a blessing during the twilight period before Shabbat and Yom Tov.
3. If a person forgot to immerse a utensil before Shabbat or Yom Tov, he has a number of options: The easiest may be to give the utensil to a non-Jew as a gift, and then borrow it from him. This should be done after consultation with your Rabbi.
4. If it was not possible to perform tevilah before Yom Tov, and the utensil is needed for enjoyment of the holiday, tevilah may be done on Yom Tov with the blessing in the normal manner.

## **7. WHO MAY IMMERSE A UTENSIL?**

1. Anyone -Jew, non-Jew, minors- may immerse a utensil.
2. A Jew may delegate another adult Jew to be his agent to immerse his utensils on his behalf.
3. Minors and non-Jews should immerse the utensils with adult Jewish supervision.
4. A minor may recite the blessing; a non-Jew may not.
5. A Jew cannot recite a blessing over tevilah performed by a non-Jew; however, if the Jew is immersing other utensils, he may recite the blessing over those utensils, with the intention that the blessing includes the utensils immersed by the non-Jew.
6. Tevilah that was performed without the owner's knowledge is effective.
7. A Utensil purchased for a gift should not be immersed before it is presented.
8. One who receives a gift of food that is inside a utensil that requires immersion, must empty the contents from the utensil before eating from it.
9. Jewish storeowners should not immerse dishes (that he acquired from non-Jewish sources) before selling them to Jewish buyers.

## **8. RECITING THE BLESSING OF TEVILAH:**

1. It is recited before performing the mitzvah.
2. When immersing one vessel, the blessing is "Al Tevilas Keli." When more than one utensil is immersed, the blessing is "Al Tevilas Keilim" (plural form of the noun). If the wrong blessing was made, it is still valid and need not be repeated.
3. If you are uncertain whether you made the blessing, you should not recite it.
4. An omitted blessing may not be recited after tevilah.
5. When there is a doubt as to whether or not a utensil should be immersed, a blessing is not said.
6. It is preferable that the aforementioned doubtful utensils should be immersed with other utensils that do require a blessing (with the intent that the blessing should discharge the doubtful utensils as well.) The Bracha will then be "Al Tevilas Keilim" under all circumstances, even if you only have one utensils that definitely requires a blessing.
7. Utensils should be held in the right hand during the recitation of the blessing.
8. When there is a bath in the Mikveh room, the blessing is recited outside. The utensil is then immediately brought into the room and immersed.
9. When two people are immersing utensils, it is recommended that one of them recites the blessing.
10. One should not speak between the blessing and the tevilah.
11. When more than one Utensil is being immersed, there should be no interruption between immersions.

## **9. METHOD OF TEVILAH:**

1. Water must reach all part of the utensil, inside and out.
2. The entire utensil must be immersed at the same time.
3. The utensil should be held loosely during tevilah.
4. If you wish to hold the utensil tightly, you must either:
  - a. Change your grasp on the utensil while it is under water.
  - b. Place your hand in the water, and then rest the utensil on it.
  - c. Moisten your hands with water from the Mikveh, and then hold the utensil with your wet hands.
5. Utensils may be placed inside a netted sack, basket, or other utensil, and then immersed. A number of utensils may be placed in the sack or basket next to one another, but not on top of one another.
6. When part of a utensil that requires tevilah is made from material that does not require tevilah, the whole utensil should be immersed.
7. Utensils which are receptacles-e.g., glasses- should be immersed sideways or face up.
8. Utensils with narrow openings-e.g., bottles- should be left in the Mikveh long enough to become filled with water.
9. It is sufficient to immerse a utensil once.
- 10. It is proper to fulfill the mitzvah of tevilas keilim with one's full concentration, understanding its purpose and intending to remove the non-Jewish impurity from the utensil**