



Who is Permitted to Immerse Utensils?

There are two factors to consider in determining who may immerse utensils. Firstly, by classifying the status of the mitzvah as biblical (*deorayta*), it would require a higher level of fulfillment. The second factor is regarding intent, which is not required for the proper fulfillment of the mitzvah of *tevilat keilim*. These two factors are essential in determining who is permitted to immerse utensils.

Relying on others to immerse utensils

Most authorities rule that immersing utensils is biblical. As such, one may not send a child (below the age of bar or bat mitzvah) to immerse utensils. This is the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch* (YD 120:14) and all later authorities (see *Sefer Hakashrut* 4:39). The *Pri Megadim* (OC 451:6) and other authorities

discuss whether a child may immerse glass utensils. While metal utensils are considered *deorayta* (biblical), the Gemara (*Avodah Zara* 75:B) states that the immersion of glass utensils is rabbinic. The basis of the Sage's additional requirement to immerse glass is based on the similarity of the melting and fusing process to the manufacture of metal utensils. If immersing glass utensils is classified as a rabbinic obligation, logically a child should be permitted to do so. However, the *Pri Megadim* states that even for glass utensils children are not to be relied upon for immersion. As long as the utensil hasn't been immersed, it is considered a prohibited object (*chezkat isur*). As the act of immersion permits its use, a child may not be entrusted with halachically changing its status, even when the obligation is rabbinic. Many authorities bring proofs against the *Pri Megadim's* claim. As many later authorities (*Pitchei Teshuva* 120:14, *Aruch Hashulchan* 120:13) are lenient and permit children to immerse glass dishes, one may follow that halachic ruling. Children above bat and bar mitzvah are fully permitted to carry out the mitzvah of *tevilat keilim*.

In addition, one may not rely upon a non-Jew to immerse any utensils on his behalf (*Biur HaGra* YD 120:39), even glass utensils.

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Immersion with supervision

Regarding intent, halachic authorities discuss whether a child or non-Jew may immerse utensils in the presence of a Jewish adult. Early authorities bring proof from the Talmud that since intent is not required for immersion, a non-Jew or child may immerse utensils in the presence of a Jew who is obligated in the mitzvah. However, certain *poskim* (see *Ben Yisrael L'amim* 12:30) rule that one should preferably not have a non-Jew or child immerse even with adult supervision, as no *bracha* may be recited in such a situation. Ideally, the owner of the utensil should perform the mitzvah himself. However, in a case where it is difficult for an individual to immerse his own utensils, he may be helped by a non-Jew to immerse utensils in his presence. In order for a *bracha* to be recited, the owner should immerse the first utensil himself and the remaining utensils may be immersed by the non-Jew.

In a case where a Jew is unable to leave his house to immerse, a Jewish religious adult should be sent to perform *tevilat*

keilim on his behalf.

To summarize:

Children who are not yet obligated in *mitzvot* are not permitted to immerse metal utensils. However, one may be lenient to allow a child to immerse glass utensils.

A non-Jew may not perform the mitzvah of immersion without being properly supervised by a Jew.

Under a Jewish adult's supervision, a child or non-Jew may immerse utensils. However, it is preferable for the supervisor to immerse the first utensil in order to enable the *bracha* to be recited.

If an individual needs assistance to immerse his utensils, ideally he should immerse the first utensil with a *bracha* and then a non-Jew or child may immerse the remaining utensils in his presence.

Someone who is restricted to his home or is unable to immerse his utensils should have a religious adult Jew immerse the utensils on his behalf. ■

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