



Kashering with Liquids (Continued)

The method of kashering utensils that were used with hot liquids is known as *hag'alah* (immersing in boiling hot water). There is a dispute regarding kashering with other liquids (known as *sh'ar mashkim*). According to later authorities, only water may be used for *hag'alah*. In cases of need, other liquids may be used. This article examines the complex halachic issues of kashering with *sh'ar mashkim*.

Water mixed with other liquids

For earlier authorities the *sh'ar mashkim* generally consisted of fruit juice or other basic liquids that were commonly

available. The *Ran* (on the *Rif*, *Chulin* 44:a) cites a case in which water mixed with additional liquids is considered as *sh'ar mashkim*. When many utensils are being kashered through *hag'alah* and the color or consistency of the water starts to significantly change (as a result of minor residue or rust from the utensils), the *Ran* rules that the water is now considered *sh'ar mashkim* and new water must be boiled to continue the kashering process. The *Rema* (OH 452:5) quotes the *Ran*, and all later authorities accept this ruling.

Later authorities debate regarding at what point a water mixture becomes *sh'ar mashkim*. Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (as quoted in *Siddur Pesach Kehilchato* 7, footnote 7) explains that as long as the consistency of the water remains the same, it is still considered water for kashering purposes. However, Rav Belsky rules that if the water remains clear and not discolored, it is still considered water for kashering purposes. The rulings of Rav Elyashiv and Rav Belsky do not necessarily contradict but rather view the subject from different angles. In practice, only when both the color and consistency of the water have changed, it may not be used for *hag'alah*. If utensils were kashered in water that was colored and of a different consistency, the kashering process should be repeated with new pure water (*Pri Chadash* OC 452:5

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and *Sefer HaKashrut* 3, footnote 60). Even though *sh'ar mashkim* may be used in cases of need, the OU or a local orthodox Rabbi should be contacted.

Which liquids?

Which liquids are considered *sh'ar mashkim*? Fruit juice, wine and milk are examples of liquids that poskim classify as *sh'ar mashkim* (see *Ran* Ibid, *Rashba* 1:503 and *Rebi Akiva Eiger* 1:83). The *Chatam Sofer* (OH 1:108) was asked if whisky could be used for kashering. He ruled that even in cases of need whisky is not acceptable, since the liquid must be naturally occurring. Whisky is manufactured through cooking barley and is not considered to be one of the *sh'ar mashkim*.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (*Igrot Moshe* YD 1:60) ruled that liquid fat cannot be used for kashering even *bediavad* (ex post facto) arguing that it is not considered a liquid because it remains a solid at room temperature. This reasoning would also apply to the use of liquid chocolate to kasher machinery; since chocolate does not remain liquid when at room temperature, it is not considered *sh'ar mashkim*. When kashering chocolate machinery such as a Macintyre conch, it is harmful to use water, so other solutions must be found. Some kashrut certifications use liquid chocolate in order to kasher chocolate lines from

dairy to parve or from year-round use to Pesach production. The OU generally does not approve such a form of kashering.

In summary:

- Kashering with *hag'alah* should only be done with water.
- Other liquids (such as fruit juice or milk) may only be used in dire cases and the OU should be contacted in order to determine if each specific case is considered a severe need.
- Water that has been used to kasher many utensils, may not continue to be used, if its consistency and color have changed.
- Liquids that are not naturally occurring such as whisky, may not be used to kasher.
- Liquids that are solids at room temperature may not be used to kasher.
- When kashering a chocolate conch, certain certifications use chocolate to kasher. Other solutions should be found if possible. ■

Kashrut Questions in Israel?

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