

# HALACHIC AND HASHKAFIC ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

## 138 - TEVILAT KELIM AND MODERN TECHNOLOGY

### PART 3 - ELECTRICAL ITEMS OU ISRAEL CENTER - SUMMER 2019

In this final shiur in the series on tevilat kelim, we will examine the very problematic area of electric and electronic items in the modern kitchen. Many of these items are made (at least in part) from metals which require tevilat kelim. The issues are as follows:

- In almost all cases, the manufacturers clearly state that they may not be immersed in water. Such use will clearly void any warranty.
- In many cases, tevilat kelim WILL cause damage to the item, but not in every case.
- Common kitchen equipment that raises these questions includes: kettles and urns, mixers and blenders, waffle makers, sandwich makers, the George Forman grill, coffee making machines (such as the Keurig).

#### A] THE PROBLEM

- We have seen in previous shiurim that metal and glass utensils which are used as 'kli seuda' in contact with food require tevilat kelim.
- Use of ANY electrical equipment while still wet is extremely dangerous and will almost certainly destroy the item.
- Items with heating elements which have been immersed in water will normally not be compromised once they have fully dried.
- Items with electric motors which have been immersed in water will often cease to work, even when fully dried.
- Items with electronic components, including chips, superconductors etc, will almost always be ruined if immersed in water. This would include digital displays, computer technology etc.

#### B] THE SOLUTIONS

- We will look at 17 potential solutions. Some are more robust in halacha, others minority opinions and yet others very weak. Sometimes however, even the weaker arguments can be put together as 'snifim lehatir' in order to create an arguable halachic case.<sup>1</sup>

#### B1] DETACHABLE COMPONENTS

- If the metal component is detachable (eg the blade in a food blender, or the grills in a toaster oven) then it should be removed and toveled separately. It will be considered a separate kli and the other parts of the equipment will not require tevila.
- Also, if metal parts do not touch the food (eg the heating element around a crock pot), that will not require tevila.
- But in many cases metal parts will require tevila and will not be detachable.

#### B2] DON'T BUY IT!

1. (ג) ואשר שאלת בענין דוד שמבשלים בו מים ע"י אלקטרי האיך להתנהג בזה בענין טבילת כלים כי חלק האלקטרי שבו יכול להתקלקל על ידי המים בשעת טבילה.  
 כבר נשאלתי ע"ז וכיו"ב הרבה פעמים. ופשוט דאם הוא קדרה שמבשלים בו או שאר כלי סעודה ... אין שום היתר לפטור מטבילה מחשש קלקול חלק האלקטרי! ושכיחי היום מחבתות ברזל שצולים בהם בתוכם ע"י רשת חוטי האלקטרי שבתוכו שבודאי יתקלקל ע"י המים. לא ראיתי שום עצה להשתמש בו רק אם יקבעו החוטים אחרי הטבילה ....

שו"ת שבט הלוי חלק ב סימן נו

*Rav Shmuel Vosner rules that if an item which requires tevila will be ruined by the water, a Jew should not buy it!!! The Torah gave us a mitzva to tovel our metal food utensils. This cannot be ignored just so that we can have a Keurig coffee machine or a waffle maker!*

1. Similar to the situation in secular legal reasoning. Sometimes there is a powerful line of argument which stands on its own and proves the case. At other times there are multiple arguments, each of which is too weak to stand on its own, but which together raise sufficient evidence to meet the required burden of proof.

**B3] TOVEL IT, LET IT DRY AND HOPE FOR THE BEST!!**

- For items with simple heating elements, immersing them in water will usually not ruin them permanently. If they are left for sufficient time for all the water to dry and evaporate<sup>2</sup>, they normally<sup>3</sup> work afterwards<sup>4</sup>.
- Care must be taken to ensure that the item is FULLY dry (this can sometimes take over a week).
- However, many (and an increasing number of) utensils WILL be ruined or partially broken by immersion.

**B4] ELECTRICAL ITEMS WHICH WILL DEFINITELY BE RUINED DO NOT REQUIRE TEVILA AT ALL**

- Rav Willig and Rav Schechter are quoted by a number of senior talmidim as ruling that an item which will DEFINITELY be ruined by tevila need not be toveled.
- Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz<sup>5</sup> suggests that the logic behind this position is that, whilst the positive mitzva to tovel is min haTorah, the prohibition of using a kli which has not been toveled is rabbinic<sup>6</sup>. In a unusual situation where the kli will be ruined by the tevila, the Rabbis did not make such a gezeira.

2. ... והנה המרדכי [בהל' קטנות סי' תתקמ"ד] כתב דבשבת אין איסור ללבוש טלית בלא ציצית כיון שאסור לעשות ציצית אז מותר ללבוש בלא ציצית. כיון שאין איסור ללבוש בלא ציצית רק מצוה, וכשאינו יכול לעשות המצוה לא נאסר בזה הלבישה. ולפי זה בטבילת כלים נמי כשאינו יכול לטבול מותר להשתמש בלא טבילה

שו"ת אבני נזר חלק אורח חיים סימן תיח

- This seems to be a minority position<sup>7</sup> and is rejected by most poskim<sup>8</sup>.
- Also, it will only apply if the item will definitely be ruined. If one is not sure, it will require tevila.
- Even if some parts of the utensil will break due to the tevila (eg a clock) but the appliance will otherwise be functional, then presumably it would still require tevila.

**B5] ELECTRICAL ITEMS DO NOT REQUIRE TEVILA SINCE THEY ARE ATTACHED TO THE GROUND**

3. בענין כלי העשוי לחמם טהה וקפה בכח החשמל שבו, ואי"א להטבילה  
 בדבר שאלתנו בנוגע לטבילת כלי. כשרוצה להחם לעצמו טהה או קפה יש כעת כלי שמחמם ע"י כח החשמל. ומהותו כך הוא - יש חתיכת מתכת ארוכה חלולה ועבה ובתוך המתכת נמצאים חוטי חשמל שעל ידם נתחמם המתכת. וכשרוצין לבשל או לחמם איזה תבשיל תוחבין מתכת הנ"ל לתוך קדרה. ובצד השני של המתכת מחובר חוט ארוך קלוע מחוטי החשמל ואותו החוט תוחבין לכותל. ובאופן כזה כשהמתכת מחובר להכותל נתחבר לכח החשמל ומחמם או מבשל. והשאלה אם המתכת הנ"ל צריך טבילה כדן כלי סעודה, אבל דא עקא שאי אפשר להטבילו ולתחבו לתוך מים כי על ידי שנכנסין מים לתוכו מתקלקלים חוטי החשמל שבתוכו. ....

ג) אכן לפע"ד יש היתר ברור להשתמש אף בלא טבילה, לפי המבואר בתשו' שבות יעקב סי' ל"א מובא בהג' יד אפרים .... בקדרה של נחושת הקבועה בתנור בית החורף שנהגין שאי"צ טבילה. ונתן טעם למנהג כיון שקובעין אותו בתנור והתנור קבוע בקרקע ולא נעשה לכתחילה להשתמש בהם אלא במחובר בקרקע, ואין מטמאים בשום טומאה. .... וא"כ בני"ד כיון שמתכת הלזה נעשה לכתחילה רק להשתמש כשהוא מחובר לכותל .... ואף דבשעה שאין משתמש בו אינו מחובר לכותל, מ"מ כיון שנעשה רק להשתמש כשהוא מחובר אין מקבל טומאה, ומכל שכן טומאה זו וכסברת השב"י הנ"ל ....

.... לא כן במיחם שאפשר להשתמש גם כשהוא תלוש

שו"ת חלקת יעקב יורה דעה סימן מא

*R. Yaakov Breisch (20C, Switzerland) discusses the case of a portable immersion heater, which would be ruined by tevila. He rules that it does not require tevila since it is usable only when attached the wall (ie by the plug). Since anything attached the ground is not susceptible to tumah, he rules accordingly that it would not require tevila.*

2. Rav Belsky would recommend this, including the use of a blow dryer.

3. No promises given!!! Evidently different people are prepared to accept different levels of risk. Rabbi Alfred Cohen writes in his comprehensive RJJ article - "Even if the appliance smokes a bit the first time it is used, it will last just as long and work just as well as any other"! The article is available in full at <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/735803/rabbi-alfred-cohen/tevilah-of-utensils/>

4. Although the warranty may well be invalidated.

5. <https://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/747744/rabbi-aryeh-lebowitz/avoda-zara-shiur-30-tevila-on-disposable-and-electric-keilim/>

6. This is also subject to dispute, with some poskim ruling that the prohibition to use non-toveled utensils is min haTorah.

7. But see a 2007 article by Rav Reuven Genzel (of Yeshivat Hesder Yerucham) in Techumin 27 p.457. Rav Genzel brings other opinions in support of this position, partly in conjunction with the question as to whether the mitzva of tevila is min haTorah or miderabbanan. He also brings other creative suggestions to exempt electrical appliances from tevila, and his conclusion is that people who chose not to tovel electrical appliances have on whom to rely halachically. This position is rejected by most poskim, certainly in Israel, although we have seen that some of the senior YU poskim do rule this way.

8. See <https://zomet.org.il/?CategoryID=253&ArticleID=137> where Zomet reject this opinion as halachically unacceptable.

- Note that there are a number of important qualifications to this teshuva:

(i) It assumes the equation between tuma/tahara and tevilat kelim<sup>9</sup>. As we discussed in the previous shiurim, whilst many poskim do accept this correlation, others do not<sup>10</sup>.

(ii) Rabbi Breisch explains that the basis for the heter is that the immersion heater is ONLY useable once it has been plugged in<sup>11</sup>. This is important. An cold immersion heater is totally useless as a kli if it is not plugged in. This is in contrast to an urn, which IS useful as a kli - eg to store and dispense cold water or cold drinks - even though its intended use is for hot drinks. As such, the immersion heater has no identity as a kli<sup>12</sup> unless attached to the ground.

(iii) Given this, it is NOT possible to extend the heter to other electrical items unless they too are effectively useless unless plugged in - eg food mixer, sandwich maker<sup>13</sup>.



- Most poskim reject this heter entirely.

4. .... ואל ישיאך לבך להתיר עפ"י מי שרצה לומר דכיון דמחוברים ע"י החוט לכותל נקרא כלי המחובר לקרקע שפטור מן הטבילה. דלענ"ד זה הבל ורעות רוח! דהא גופא דכלי תלוש שחברו לקרקע דפטור מן הטבילה ג"כ מפוקפק. ... והא דידין פשיטא דעפ"י הלכה לא נקרא מחובר לענין זה לפטרו מטבילה ואין להאריך בפשוט!

שו"ת שבט הלוי חלק ב סימן נו

*Rav Vosner rules that it is nonsense<sup>14</sup> to suggest that something plugged into the wall is 'attached the ground'. Leaving aside the reality of whether a plug and wire could render something 'attached' in any meaningful halachic way, he raises the halachic question of utensils which are made independently and then fused to the wall or ground. Even if a pot were to be concreted to the floor, there is a halachic question as to whether this is considered to be 'mechubar lekarka'. Our case of the plug is obviously not!*

5. יש פוטרין טוסטער כיון ששימוש כשמחובר לקרקע. ודבריהם תמוהין! כיון שהדיוט מכניס ומוציא ועומד לכך אין זה חיבור גמור ליהוי כקרקע, וצריך טבילה כדן, כנלענ"ד.

תשובות והנהגות כרך א סימן תנ

*Rav Sternbuch also rejects this heter and points out that anything which is regularly attached and detached cannot be considered 'mechubar lekarka'.*

- Also, many appliances could be used with a battery pack or in a car, which would certainly not be considered 'mechubar lekarka' so clearly these appliances CAN be used in a way which is not attached to the ground.

## B6] ONLY SOME PARTS OF THE ITEMS MAY REQUIRE TEVILA

- The usual halacha is that ALL of a kli must be immersed in the mikva at the same time for the tevila to be valid<sup>15</sup>.
- Even if a metal utensil has a plastic handle, the handle must be toveled since it is part of one kli and is 'batel' to the metal part.

6. בכלי' שמבשלים בעלעקטרי שבשוליהם יש מכונת עלעקטרי שא"א לטבול מקום העלעקטרי שתקלקל. ער"ח אייר תשט"ז ...  
ובדבר הכלים שמבשלים בעלעקטרי שאי אפשר לטבולם משום שמקום העלעקטרי אין להביא במים שיתקלקל. הנה אם הם כלים שאין נותנים עליהם המאכל עצמו אלא נותנין שם קדרה אחרת שיש בו המאכל להתבשל א"צ טבילה אלא אותה הקדרה שבה המאכל .... ואם הוא כזה שנותנים בו המאכל עצמו צריך טבילה. אבל כיון שכלי זה עושה שני דברים - למטה הוא מקום שמונח המאכל להתבשל ולמעלה חוטי העלעקטרי שהוא האש המבשל - צריך טבילה רק חצי התחתון שמשמין שם המאכל. ומקום העליון ששם חוטי העלעקטרי א"צ טבילה וצריך לטבול רק חצי התחתון ולא העליון. ואף שכלי אחד הוא א"צ לטבול כולו, דלא נבטל העליון להתחתון להחשיב גם העליון לכלי סעודה כיון דמשתמש הוא למקום האש שהוא תשמיש אחר, והן לענין התשמיש כשני כלים המחוברים.  
ונשאר רק מה שמקום החבור לא יוטבל במים, הוא בדין בית הסתרים שאינו חוצץ בכלים ....

שו"ת אגרות משה יורה דעה חלק א סימן נו

9. We saw in the previous shiur that this is the position of the Shav Yaakov.

10. Such as the Minchat Yitzchak 2:72.

11. Even though one puts it in the tea after it is unplugged, the key operation of the kli is only when plugged in.

12. There is a separate question as to whether the immersion heater is actually a 'kli' at all, since it does not hold anything. Maybe it is simply analogous to a piece of hot coal or a hot iron rod.

13. It does hold bread when cold, but is that considered a bona fide 'use'?

14. The Hebrew expression of 'hevel veraot ruach' is not one that Rav Vosner normally uses!!

15. Unlike kashering kelim where different parts of the kli can be kashered at different times.

Rav Moshe rules that where there is an electric component to the item, this should be seen halachically as a separate kli since it has a separate function - eg heating, rather than containing food. As such, although normally ALL of the kli requires tevila, in this case the electrical components do not. This leaves one more issue for Rav Moshe to resolve, which is that the electric parts now act as a 'chatzitza' - blockage - stopping the water from contacting the kli. He answers this by claiming that the part blocked is considered 'beit hasetarim' - hidden parts - and, for kelim, a chatzitza in beit setarim does not invalidate the tevila.

• To elucidate this heter:

- All of an item, or person, must be immersed under the water for the tevila to work.
- But if there is a chatzitza - something blocking the contact of the water to the item/skin, the tevila may still work.
- According to the Torah law, a chatzitza only invalidates the tevila if it BOTH covers most of the item/person - rov - and the person is also bothered - makpid - by it and would want to remove it.
- According to the Rabbinic law, a chatzitza will invalidate if it is EITHER rov or the person is makpid.
- Therefore, normally<sup>16</sup>, a chatzitza will not cause a problem if it covers a minority of the item/person AND they are not makpid to remove it - eg nail polish or a wedding band that is never removed.
- Beit Hasetarim are the parts of the body that are normally hidden - eg inside the mouth, under the arms etc. With tevila for people, water does not need to reach the beit hasetarim, but it must be capable of reaching it - ie there are no chatzitot.
- With kelim, the halacha is that a chatzitza will not invalidate when in beit hasetarim.

• As such, even though a part of the kli which DOES require tevila (ie the food receptacle) is covered by the motor mechanism, Rav Moshe rules that this will not invalidate the tevila.

• Some poskim reject this heter and claim that where the two parts of kli are interdependent, as here, this will be considered one item and will all require tevila.

7. Do Keurig machines require tevilla?

Unlike most other hot water urns that can withstand being dunked in water, so long as they are properly dried, the Keurig machine has a digital component that will not survive getting wet. Additionally, even if one were to attempt to toivel a Keurig machine, the inner chamber will not fill with water. Water will only enter the inside chamber if it is pumped through. So tevila is not really an option.

Rav Belsky holds that we may view the Keurig machine as a plastic kli, which is exempt from tevilla. This is because the entire visible machine is indeed plastic. The metal receptacle and element which are in the recesses of the machine are not accessible. Although there are two pins that pierce and inject hot water into the K-cup, it is not clear that these pins require tevilla. It is possible that they are like a can opener. If one wishes to remove the pins and toivel them, with some cajoling they can be removed (at least in some models).

<https://oukosher.org/blog/kosher-professionals/lo-basi-ella-lo-er-keurig-coffee-makers/>

B7] COVER THE OUTSIDE ELECTRICAL PARTS WITH A TIGHTLY ATTACHED PLASTIC

8. לחילופין, ובמיוחד במיחמי-תרמוס עם פיקוד אלקטרוני זו האפשרות היחידה הסבירה: להכניס את המיחם לתוך שקית ניילון ולהדביק את שולי (קצוות) השקית בסרט דביק, כך שמי המקוה יגיעו רק לתוך המיכל הפנימי (שבו ימצאו המים החמים). כיוון שמיחם התרמוס הוא 'כלי בתוך כלי', ניתן לסמוך על הטבלת החלל הפנימי של הכלי הפנימי בלבד, שכן חלקו החיצוני (של המיכל הפנימי) לעולם הוא 'נסתר'. האפשרויות הנ"ל מבוססות על תשובת האגרו"מ (יור"ד ח"א סי' נז) לפיה יש להחשיב מתקן כזה כשני כלים נפרדים, ורק הפנימי הוא הטעון טבילה. החיצוני הוא לא 'כלי מאכל' אלא מכשיר החימום וההרתחה.

<https://zomet.org.il/?CategoryID=253&ArticleID=137>

Another solution recommended by Zomet (for urns) is to cover the outside of the appliance (presumably the electrical areas at the bottom) with a tightly attached plastic bag so that the water only goes inside the appliance. This solution is based on the psak of Rav Moshe (above) that the electrical parts are halachically considered to be a separate kli and do not require tevila.

16. For tevilat nashim, the halacha is more stringent and even a miyut ve'ayno makpid would invalidate the tevila.

## B8] TAKE IT APART AND GET A JEW TO REMAKE IT

9. (א) כלי סעודה כתב צספר חכמת אדם כלל ע"ג דין י"ג היורות הגדולות שמצולין בו שזכר נ"ל דלריכיס עזילה ואף על פי שקובעין אותם ומחזרין לקרקע מ"מ דינו ככלי ואין להם תקנה אלא שיטבילם או ינקוב צהם נקב גדול שיחצטל מתורת כלי ואח"כ יתקן אומן ישראל

פתחי תשובה על שולחן ערוך יורה דעה הלכות הכשר וטבילת כלים סימן קכ סעיף א

*In the mid 19th Century, the Pitchei Teshuva address the question of industrial sized tanks for brewing beer, which required tevila<sup>17</sup>. It was impossible to transport them to a mikva, so he suggested making a large hole in them and then getting a Jew to repair it, rendering the tank a kli made by a Jew.*

- R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach recommended this as an option for electrical items.
- How 'broken' does it need to be such that it is considered to be made by a Jew?

10. .... ויש עצה לפרקו ולבטלו מתורת כלי לגמרי ונעשה מחדש על ידי אומן ישראל, ואז לא נקרא כלי עכו"ם. והיינו כיון שאין הדיוט בקי להחזירו נראה שבטלה מינה תורת כלל, וכשישראל מתקנו נעשה כלי חדש אצל הישראל ואין עלה חיוב טבילה. אבל במפרק מכונה באופן שהדיוט יכול להחזירו לא נפטר ....

תשובות והנהגות כרך א סימן תנ

*Most poskim require it to be broken to the point that a professional is required to put it back together. So taking off the plug, or simply unscrewing a small part, would not suffice.*

- Many modern appliances are however manufactured as a single unit in such a way that they do not have detachable parts<sup>18</sup>.

## B9] GIVE IT TO A NON-JEW AND BORROW IT BACK

11. אם שכח ולא הטביל כלי מערב שבת או מערב יום טוב, יתננו לעובד כוכבים במתנה ואחר כך ישאלנו ממנו, ומותר להשתמש בו. הגה: וכן יעשה אפילו בחול, במקום שאין לו מקוה

שולחן ערוך יורה דעה הלכות הכשר וטבילת כלים סימן קכ סעיף טז

*Tevilat kelim is not permitted on Shabbat.<sup>19</sup> If one forgot to tovel a utensil that one needs for Shabbat, and Shabbat has come in, the Shulchan Aruch permits giving the item to a non-Jew (so that it will not require tevila) and then borrowing it back. (Borrowed utensils also do not require tevila). The Rema adds that one can also rely on this heter if there is no nearby mikva.*

12. (יח) יתננו לעובד כוכבים במתנה כו'. נ"ל דהאי תיקונא אינו אלא לפי שעה דהיינו לאותו שבת או בחול כל זמן שאין לו מקוה. אצל לאחר השבת או שיזדמן לו מקוה כיון שישתקע עולמית ביד ישראל ודאי הוי כלקוח בידו ...

ט"ז על שולחן ערוך יורה דעה הלכות הכשר וטבילת כלים סימן קכ סעיף טז

*The Taz rules that this is a temporary heter (ie for that Shabbat or until a mikva is available). One cannot rely on it as a permanent fix since, for all intents and purposes, the item is in permanent ownership of the Jew.*

- On that basis, this does not appear to be a strong heter, although some poskim rule that in a situation of need it could be taken into consideration as a 'snif lehatir'.

## B10] MAKE IT HEFKER

- If you do not own the kli, then it does not require tevila.
- This would have to be done properly, preferably in front of three people, and taken seriously.
- Rav Aharon Lichtenstein recommend that a person should have kavana when buying it that one is not acquiring the kli, and maybe even say this to the clerk! It is said that Rav Aharon's electrical kitchen utensils were hefker.<sup>20</sup>

17. Although he also questions whether they do indeed require tevila given their use earlier in the processing stage when the beer may not yet be drinkable.

18. Also, even if the appliance can be broken up, this will also invalidate any warranty.

19. It is rabbinically prohibited as similar to tikun kli.

20. There is a story that one of the bachurim who knew this took away Rav Aharon's toaster on Purim! Afterwards, when he apologetically tried to return it, Rav Aharon would not take it back, insisting that the item had been hefker and the bachur had made a good kinyan on it and owned it fully!

**B11] MAKE IT HEFKER AND THEN ACQUIRE IT BACK**

- Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach suggested that one could make it hefker and then acquire it back from hefker. Since it was not acquired from a non-Jew it will not require tevila.
- Many poskim reject this as a ha'arama (see below).

**B12] MAKE A PARTNERSHIP IN THE ITEM WITH A NON-JEW**

- An item owned in partnership with a non-Jew does not require tevila.<sup>21</sup> So perhaps someone could make a kinyan with a non-Jew to part-own the item.

13. If one sells a portion of the Keurig machine to a non-Jew, this would alleviate any question of tevilla, because even a kli that is owned bi'shutfos (partnership) with a non-Jew is exempt from tevilla. The proper way to accomplish such a sale, would be to accept some money as payment (kinyan kesef) and have the non-Jew pick up the Keurig to show that he is taking partial ownership (kinyan hagba'a). Likewise, if an office has a coffee service contract that supplies and owns the Keurig machine then there is no chiyuv tevilla, so long as the service company is at least partially owned by non-Jews.

- This would have to be a real transaction and you would need the non-Jew's permission to throw it away etc. Many poskim are unhappy with this suggestion.
- Also, if the non-Jew does not really understand what is happening, the 'partnership' is a sham and will not help!
- Other poskim are unhappy with partnerships of this nature since, according to some opinions, a partnership does not exempt the item from tevila, but prevents one from performing the mitzva. Thus, one is still not performing the mitzva of tevila!

**B13] BLOCK UP THE HOLES WITH SOMETHING SEMI-PERMANENT**

14. (ו) ובאופן כשהאומנים יאמרו, דאף לחלוחית מים כזה יכול לקלקל המכונה (מה שאין השכל מחייבו), יש עוד עצה לסתום תוך החור שלתוכו יוכל לבא המים להמכונה ולקלקל, בסתימה מעלייתא ע"י דבק או שעווה וכיו"ב, ולבטלה בשם לכל הפחות על שבעה ימים (ועל שבעה ימים האלו, ייחדה לשארי תשמישים לא לחמם ולא לבשל בחיבור החשמל) .... א"כ במבטלו לשבעה ימים מקרי מיעוט שאינו מקפיד ואינו חוצץ.

שו"ת חלקת יעקב יורה דעה סימן מג

Another solution of Rav Breisch is to block up the holes with wax or glue for 7 days, use the item for another purpose which does not require electricity, and then tovel it. The wax inserts will then be considered a מיעוט ואינו מקפיד and the tevila will be valid. Afterwards, they can be removed.

- Again, the practical use of this solution may be limited. Many appliances cannot be used in any meaningful way without being plugged in. Others may be damaged by wax or glue inserts.

**B14] FILL THE KLI WITH REGULAR WATER AND QUICKLY MAKE A 'HASHAKA' WITH THE MIKVA WATER**

15. טבילת מיחם חשמלי  
על פי ההלכה, מיחמים המיוצרים בחו"ל חייבים בטבילה. ניתן לבצע זאת כדלהלן:  
1. כדי לקצר את שהות המיחם במי המקווה, ניתן למלא אותו במים לפני טבילתו, ולטבול במהירות כך שמי המקווה ייגעו במים שבמיחם. לאחר מכן, יש להניח את המיחם ליבוש (בצורת עמידתו הרגילה; לא הפוך!) למשך מספר ימים. ניתן להדביק סרט דביק על החורים הנמצאים בתחתית המיחם, וכן לסתום בצמר גפן וכד' את שקע הכבל החשמלי, ולהדביק עליו סרט דביק.

<https://zomet.org.il/?CategoryID=253&ArticleID=137>

Zomet recommend that the appliance can first be filled to the top with regular water and then very quickly immersed in the mikva. The water in the appliance will make an immediate 'hashaka' - connection - with the mikva water and the tevila will be valid. This will enable the appliance to be kept underwater for a very short time, to avoid water flooding into the electrical parts. They also permit covering the holes underneath the appliance with scotch tape to stop the water getting in.

21. Rema Y.D. 120:11.

**B15] TRY TO COVER THE HOLES WITH A WET FINGER OR COTTON WOOL**

16. לא תאחוז בה חבירתה בידיה בשעת טבילה אלא אם כן רפתה ידה, כדי שיבואו המים במקום אחיזת ידה. ואם הדיחה ידה במים תחלה שרי, שמשקה טופח שעל ידה חבור למי המקוה.

שולחן ערוך יורה דעה הלכות נדה סימן קצח סעיף כח

*If a woman is nervous to walk down into a mikva (which could have been in a cave!) another woman can hold her hand loosely inside the mikva such that the water can get through. Alternatively, the other woman can wet her hand with mikva water and then take her hand, since the water between their hands will then make a 'chibur' with the rest of the mikva water.*

17. צריך שיהא הכלי רפוי בידו בשעת טבילה, שאם מהדקו בידו הוי חציצה. ואם לחלח ידו במים תחלה אין לחוש. ודוקא שלחלה ידיו צמי מקוה חזל לא צמים תלושים

שולחן ערוך יורה דעה הלכות הכשר וטבילת כלים סימן קכ סעיף ב

*The same holds true for tevilat kelim. A person should not hold them tightly inside the water, or should wet their hand with mikva water and then hold the item.*

18. .... א"כ בני"ד נמי יש עצה כזו או להדיח אצבעו או שני אצבעות במי מקוה בטופח להטפיה, ובהנהו אצבעות יסתום הסדקים, לא דוחק ממש רק קרוב לריפוי כמבואר שם בטו"ז. ובאופן כזה אף אם יבא איזו לחלוחית מים בשם, לא יתקלקל המכונה. או יעשה כזאת ע"י מטלית או חתיכת צמר גפן לטבלו במי מקוה מקודם, ויסחוט קצת שיהי' נשאר על המטלית או חתיכת צמר גפן רק בטופח להטפיה, דלא יופסל מטעם חציצה כיון שמחוברין למי המקוה. וגם לפי השכל אין טופח כזה יקלקל המכונה - וכן נוהגין בעצה כזו לענין טבילת נדה שיש לה מכה באזנה, ואסור לבא בשם מים עפ"י עצת הרופאים ....

שו"ת חלקת יעקב יורה דעה סימן מג

*Rav Yaakov Breisch recommends this as an option for electrical items. One could wet one's hand in the mikva water and hold it over the cracks or holes which would let in water. Alternatively, one could wet some cotton wool and then insert it into the relevant holes. The water on the hand or in the cloth would form a 'chibur' with the rest of the mikva water.*

• This solution was probably more useful when the only significant hole was where the electrical wire entered the appliance. Modern appliances have multiple holes and cracks which would let in water and it may not be possible to cover them in this way.

**B16] TOVEL IN SOFT SNOW**

19. יט כבר כתבנו שצריך להטביל במעיין או במקוה. וצריך שיהיה בהם שיעור ארבעים סאה, שהוא שיעור מקוה אמה על אמה ברום שלוש אמות. .... ונראה לי דבשעת הדחק מותר לטבול כלי זכוכית בשלג אם הוא במקום אחד, דטבילתו ודאי רק מדרבנן, אבל לא כלי מתכות, דלהרבה פוסקים הוא מן התורה. (סימן ר"א סעיף ל' ובאורח חיים סימן ק"ס במגן אברהם שם ס"ק ט"ז ובסימן קנ"ט סעיף ט"ז עיין שם ובמגן אברהם)

חכמת אדם שער איסור והיתר כלל עג

*The Chochmat Adam (R. Avraham Danziger - 18/19C Poland/Lithuania) rules that, in a sha'at hadechak, one can use snow<sup>22</sup> to tovel glass (which is obligated on a rabbinic level).*

• Some poskim recommend this for electrical items, although it is not agreed on by all poskim<sup>23</sup>.

20. .... ואם כן לכאורה בימי השלגים יש עצה כאמור להטבילה בשלג. ... אכן היתר זה אינו מספיק ומעלה ארוכה, חדא דהח"א אינו מתיר רק בזכוכית דהטבילה רק דרבנן אבל במתכת דרוב השיטות שהיא מן התורה לא, ועוד מה יעשה בזמן שאין השלגים מצויין ומצוה לחפש איזה היתר.

שו"ת חלקת יעקב יורה דעה סימן מא

*The Chelkat Yaakov, in his teshuva concerning the immersion heater (above) considers the possibility of tevila in snow, but regards it as too weak a heter to use one its own.*

22. The snow must be soft (so that the utensil can be pushed in) and must contain the volume of 40 sa'ah, like a kosher mikva. There is a discussion as to whether the air spaces in freshly-fallen snow will count towards the 40 sa'ah volume. It seems that they will not - see <https://library.yctora.org/lindenbaum/snow-for-tvillat-keilim/>

23. This debate stems from a discussion in the Rishonim concerning whether a woman may use snow as a mikva. There is a debate as to whether the snow flakes can be considered to be sufficiently 'connected' to qualify as one body of water. Some poskim require the snow to have melted and understand that the chidush of using snow would be that the snow could be transported and allowed to melt, and would not be considered to be 'mayim she'uvim' - piped water - which is invalid for a mikva. Ultimately, use of the snow for rabbinic mitzvot (including netilat yadayim) is acceptable in a situation of need. For a metal kli however, where the requirement is min haTorah, this would not be acceptable. As to whether one could construct a 'sfeik sfeika' on the basis that there are opinions that tevilat kelim is rabbinic - see <https://library.yctora.org/lindenbaum/snow-for-tvillat-keilim/> by Rabbi Dov Linzer. There is also a discussion as to whether the snow is considered 'attached to the ground' (a necessary requirement for mikva) since the snow above the woman's head would remain in its shape even when she left.

B17] DOES IT REALLY NEED TEVILA?

21. טאסטר /טוסטר/ אם צריך טבילה. .... כ"ג שבט תשל"ו  
 בדבר הטאסטר לע"ד אין צריך טבילה. דהרי איתא בע"ז (ע"ה) דכלי סעודה אמורין בפרשה. .... אבל הטאסטר שמייבשין שם פת אפוי בטוב וראוי לאכילת כל אדם, אין להחשיבו צורך הסעודה בשביל מה שיש שרוצים לייבש הפת, שנעים להו קצת יותר מאחר שלא חסר כלום להפת גם בלא זה! ...

שו"ת אגרות משה יורה דעה חלק ג סימן כד

*In a 1976 teshuva, Rav Moshe Feinstein ruled that a regular old fashioned toaster for bread does not require tevila since the bread is totally edible before and is simply dried out by the machine. This would not be considered a 'kli seuda' since it does nothing meaningfully to the bread, but merely changes the taste for fussy people!*

22. והראו לי תשובה מהגאון רבי משה פיינשטיין זצ"ל בקובץ לתורה והוראה ח"א, שבשעת הדחק שיש חשש קלקול המכונה שמיקל בכלי טאסטר דלא נחשב ככלי סעודה דלא נחוץ [עשיית הצנימים] כ"כ. ולא מצאתי בדבריו שום הכרח להקל בחיוב דאורייתא, וכיון ששימושו לכך זהו חשיבותו.

תשובות והנהגות כרך א סימן תנ

*Most poskim do not agree with Rav Moshe's heter for toasters. Here, Rav Sternbuch rules that, since the toaster is designed for that use, it is obviously considered a significant use. He does not see how one could be lenient on this with a Torah obligation.*

- Many (most?) people today would also regard toast as a very different food to bread.
- Another possible exemption would be the argument that utensils bought from a corporate entity are NOT obligated in tevila, since they are were not owned individually by a non-Jew. This is not accepted by most poskim, but is regarded by others as a 'snif' to be lenient.

C] METAHALACHIC AND HASHKAFIC ISSUESC1] TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM MITZVOT!

- We also need to consider whether some of the halachic suggestions outlined above are effectively a way to avoid mitzvot, which is not an appropriate hashkafic attitude<sup>24</sup>.

23. ובאמת יש לתמוה קצת על פיסקא דין דלשעה מותר ליתנו לעכו"ם במתנה מהא דע"ז (כ"א). דאין משכירין להן שדות משום דמפקע להו ממעשרות. .... וא"כ הכ"נ כשנותן מתנה לעכו"ם גם כן מפקיע מצות טבילה מכלי שהוא משתמש בה. ....

שו"ת חלקת יעקב יורה דעה סימן מג

*Rav Breisch brings a proof from the prohibition of renting fields to a non-Jew in order to avoid giving ma'aserot. One is not allowed to find creative solutions to avoid mitzvot! So too, finding ways to avoid tevila (eg by giving it to a non-Jew and borrowing it back) would be inappropriate.*

- There may be a significant difference in this case since (unlike the case of ma'aserot) one will not be doing the mitzva of tevila in any event without a creative solution!

C2] HA'ARAMA

24. .... וחוף לזה, הרי דעת רוב הראשונים דטבילת כלים מן התורה (ע"י סוף ע"ז ובראשונים) ובדאורייתא לא מהני הערמה ...

שו"ת חלקת יעקב יורה דעה סימן מג

*Rav Breisch also questions whether some solutions are effectively a 'ha'arama' - a halachic 'loophole'. This could work in a rabbinic mitzva but will not in a Torah mitzva.<sup>25</sup>*

24. A story was once related to me concerning mezonot bread. The person involved had eaten at a Jewish dinner at which a local vicar was present. When he picked up his mezonot bread without washing, the priest questioned how this was permitted since he knew that halacha required washing for bread. The Jew enthusiastically explained that it was mezonot bread which avoided the need to wash and to bench. The priest was shocked that we should take pride in inventing creative ways to avoid Torah mitzvot!

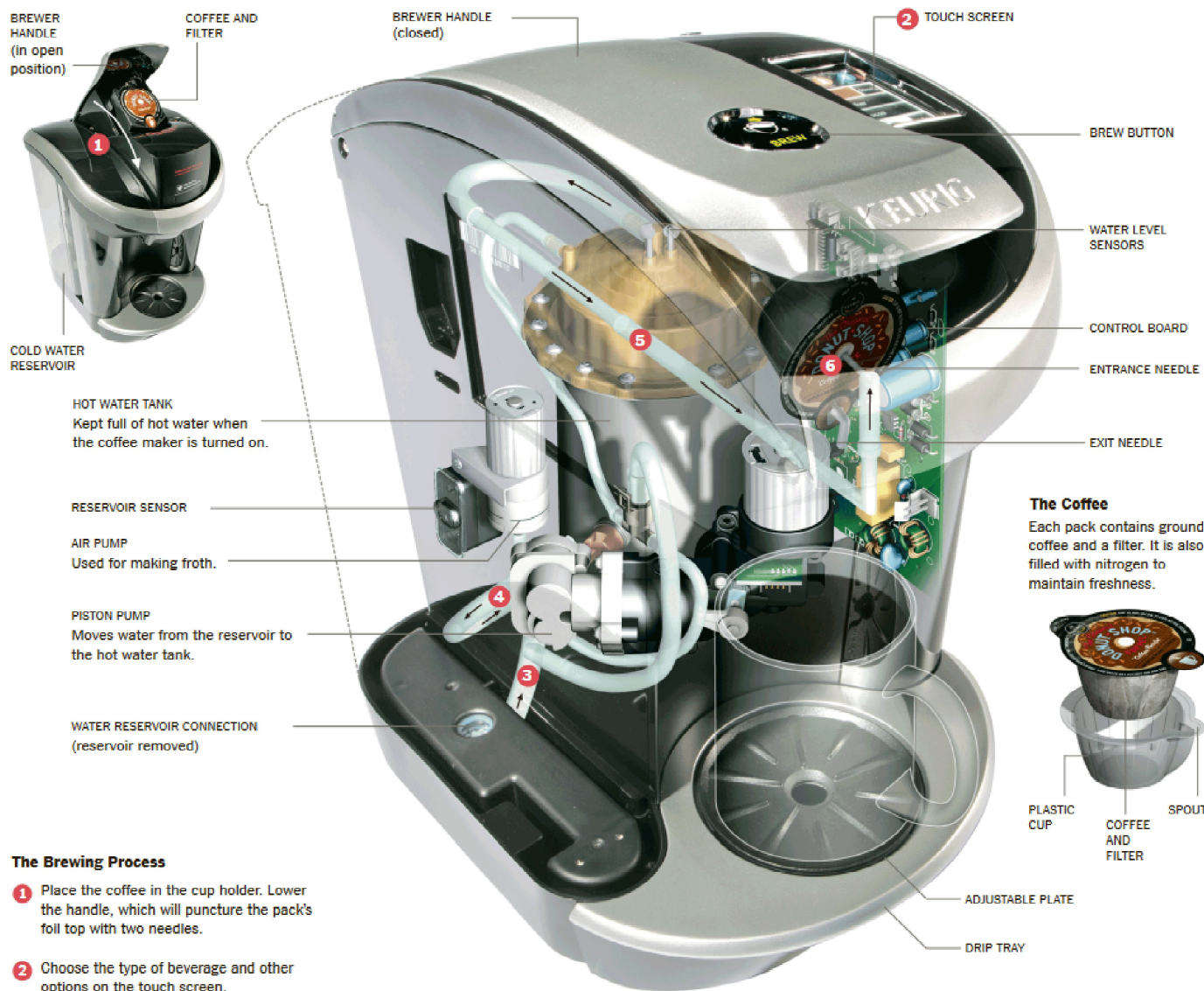
25. This is a much bigger topic which requires more analysis. A rabbinic mitzva is an obligation on the person to ensure that they are aware of a certain issues (whether as a fence to protect a Torah mitzva or in order to achieve a certain religious goal). One could argue that a ha'arama achieves this perfectly well - it is just another way to achieve personal awareness. However, a Torah mitzva is a 'metziut' in the spiritual reality of the object. Ha'arama cannot circumvent this reality.



TOOLKIT

## Inside the Keurig Vue V700, a Single-Serve Coffee Maker

Sometimes, a single cup of coffee is just enough. And that is when a Keurig single-serve coffee machine can come in handy. First introduced in 1998, Keurig's machines run water through small packs to make one cup of coffee — or other beverages, including hot chocolate and tea. The idea has been popular among consumers. In the most recent quarter, the company that owns Keurig, Green Mountain Coffee, said it sold nearly 1.4 million single-cup brewers. Last year, Keurig introduced a new brewing system, Vue, that lets users adjust for the size of a cup and change the drink's temperature. The top home model in the Vue line, the V700, shown below, costs \$199.



**The Brewing Process**

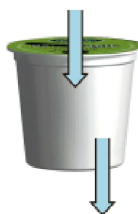
- 1 Place the coffee in the cup holder. Lower the handle, which will puncture the pack's foil top with two needles.
- 2 Choose the type of beverage and other options on the touch screen.
- 3 Press the "Brew" button and a piston pump draws water from the reservoir...
- 4 ...and sends the water to the bottom of the hot water tank, where it is heated and kept under low pressure.
- 5 Each stroke of the piston pushes a small amount of water into the bottom of the already full tank, forcing hot water at the top to flow to the entrance needle.
- 6 The water flows into the pack where it mixes with the ground coffee in the pack and is dispensed.

**Original System vs. New**

The systems use different methods to inject water through the packs.

**K-CUP PACK (ORIGINAL)**

Water enters through the foil top, flows through the coffee and exits through a hole punched in the bottom of the plastic cup.



**VUE PACK (NEW)**

Water enters the foil via the entrance needle and leaves through the foil punched in the bottom using the exit needle, keeping the cup intact.



To accommodate puncturing without cracking, the K-Cup pack uses seven layers of different plastics. The Vue Pack uses a single layer of polypropylene that can be recycled at sites accepting No. 5 plastic.

- The two main metal components are the water tank and the needles which puncture the pod.
- As seen above, some poskim regard the needles as effectively can-openers which do not require tevila. Even though water flows through them, this is ancillary to their function to puncture the pod.
- The water tank could be regarded as beit setarim (see above) which may not require tevila.
- Additionally/alternatively, other potential heterim outlined above could be employed where relevant and possible.