



# American Friends of Kehillas Shivtei Yeshurun

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## תשובה מאת הרב Dipping a Shaker

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### Question:

Does a glass saltshaker require *tevilla*?

### Answer:

A saltshaker that has a glass container to hold the salt and a glass cover with holes in it needs *tevilla* with a beracha.

Salt is considered a food item, and since it comes in direct contact with the glass, it requires *tevilla*. A glass container that is used to **store** salt and is not brought to the dining table needs *tevilla* **without** a beracha. A dish used for salt at the table requires *tevilla* with a beracha. However, if it has a glass or metal cover that is a separate unit and does not come into contact with the salt, the cover does not need *tevilla*.<sup>1</sup> The cover of a saltshaker will always come in contact with the salt and requires *tevilla* with a beracha (provided it is made of material that requires a beracha).

If the cover of a saltshaker is made of glass or metal and is screwed on to a plastic base, it still needs *tevilla* with a beracha, but the plastic base does not need *tevilla*. Since the cover is a separate unit and it comes into contact with the salt when shaken, it is judged independently of the base.

A single item made of two materials, one of which requires *tevilla* and the other does not, sometimes requires *tevilla* with a beracha, sometimes require *tevilla* without a beracha, and sometimes does not need *tevilla* at all. If the material requiring *tevilla* is essential to the functioning of the item and comes in contact with the food, the item needs *tevilla* with a beracha. A thermos may be made of plastic but it also has a glass container that is crucial to the functioning of the thermos; therefore, it should be immersed in a *mikve* after a beracha has been recited.

A ladle in which part of the handle is made of metal but the spoon and part of the handle are made of plastic does not need *tevilla*. Since the ladle can still function without the complete handle and the food does not come in contact with the metal, the ladle is regarded as being made of plastic and does not need to be immersed.

If the material that requires *tevilla* is not essential to the functioning of the utensil but comes into contact with the food (such as a utensil made of porcelain and coated with glass or plated with metal) it should be immersed in a *mikve* without a beracha.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A pot cover, however, does need *tevilla* since the vapors rise during cooking and it is therefore considered to have had contact with the food (Aruch Hashulchan Y.D. 120:32).

<sup>2</sup> Darkei Teshuva (Y.D. 120:28) states that if the utensil is completely covered with glass or plated inside and out with metal for aesthetic reasons it should be immersed **without** a beracha. If, however, the utensil is completely plated with metal (inside and out) for some functional purpose, a beracha should be recited. The Pri Megadim (O.C., Mishbetzos Zahav 551:6) seems to indicate that plated vessels should be immersed without a beracha under all circumstances.

Many people immerse porcelain and china, even though these materials do not need *tevilla*. (Ceramic, porcelain, wood, stone, paper, and plastic vessels do not need *tevilla* [see Rambam *Ma'achalos Asuros* 17:6]). This error may be a remnant of a time when china and porcelain were covered with glass. Nowadays the smooth finish and glassy appearance is the product of baking at an extremely high temperature. No glass is added to standard china anymore, and thus porcelain mugs, china dishes, and the like need no *tevilla* whatsoever (see Aruch Hashulchan Y.D. 120:29.) Besides, glass is actually made from sand. Utensils made of sand and earth do not require *tevilla* according to Torah law. The only reason glass is

required to be immersed is because when broken it can be melted and formed into a utensil again just as metal. Therefore, the Chachomim regarded it as metal instead of stone, sand or porcelain that do not require *tevilla*. Porcelain glazed with glass when broken cannot be melted and remade into a usable utensil, therefore it follows that despite the glass on it, the dish does not need *tevilla*. (Rav Moshe Feinstein). Painted vessels, in which the item is made of metal or glass but the food comes into contact with the paint, still require *tevilla* with a beracha, since the paint is considered *tafei* (insignificant) to the vessel.