On Kasherri ng Glass Vessels

RABBI HOWARD HANDLER

This paper was adopted on January 17, 1990 by a vote of seven in favor, eleven opposed and no abstentions (7-11-0). Members voting in favor: Rabbis Ben Zion Bergman, Elliot N. Dorff, Dov Peretz Elkins, David H. Lincoln, Mayer E. Rabinowitz, Joel Rembaum, Seymour J. Rosenbloom. Members voting in opposition: Rabbis Kassel Abelson, Amy Eilberg, Richard Eisenberg, Jerome M. Epstein, Arnold M. Goodman, Herbert Mandl, Lionel E. Moses, Avram I. Reisner, Joel Roth, Steven Saltzman, Gordon Tucker.

ешעלת

Must glass cooking utensils be kasherred?

משוב

There were three opinions among the Rishonim on kasherri ng glass utensils:
1) Rinsing is sufficient even if the utensils had been used to cook food in them.1
2) Glass utensils may not be kasherred.2
3) Glass utensils may be kasherred by immersion in boiling water (הנשלת).3

Joseph Karo and Moses Isserles wrote as follows:4

כלי תכשיט אפיל מחסיין ליקוח ואפיל מחממי בים בחמי איצ שומ הבשר שארם בולעים ובשיטפא עלמה כליה. הנה: ריש מחמימי ואפורים לכל
כדרכיה אפיל הנשלת לא מחתי לוה כי המנה בכסנכי כסנכייה ואל [סמיק
ואנגר].

Glass vessels even if used for storage or used to cook hot food, do not require kasherred for they do not absorb. Simply washing suffices. However, there are those who are more stringent and hold that glass vessels may not be kasherred even by immersion

The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly provides guidance in matters of halakhah for the Conservative movement. The individual rabbi, however, is the authority for the interpretation and application of all matters of halakhah.
in boiling water. This is the custom of the *Ashkenazim* which is prevalent in these areas.

Although the Ashkenazic custom has remained stricter in that it requires immersion in boiling water (מצל), there is no reason for us not to follow the more lenient approach of the majority of *Rishonim* and Sephardic *Aḥaronim* as well. This decision was already given by Seymour Siegel as follows: “Glassware (including ovenproof ceramics) when washed is considered as new.” Likewise Ovadiah Yosef (Resp. Yabiah Omer vol. IV OH 41) has permitted this:  

It is apparent that we should be lenient with using and soaking. There is no need for immersion in boiling water. For the *Poskim* (Rabbinic authorities) have explained that when used for hot food there is neither absorption or discharge. It is clear that there is no difference whether boiling fluids are poured from the original vessel, or whether the vessel is directly on the fire [we are speaking of Pyrex vessels]. The reason is that Pyrex is smooth and hard and does not absorb anything. It is clear that to kasher it for Pesah, it is sufficient to just rinse or soak pyrex.

In 1983 there appeared a new Sephardic commentary, *Shevuot haMorah*, to the Kitzur Shulḥan Arukh which tries to show exactly what the Sephardic practice is when it differs from the Ashkenazic. Here is the section on this issue:
On Kashing Glass Vessels

Our custom is to kasher glass vessels by rinsing and soaking. Thus is the law for Pyrex and Dorlex which can be used for cooking on a fire. There are some of our communities who were stringent in the kashering of glass vessels but in the land of Israel they can be lenient and change their custom. Ashkenazim are permitted to kasher Pyrex and Dorlex by immersing in boiling water.

CONCLUSION

In short neither Pyrex nor Corningware absorb and therefore it is only a matter of cleaning the surface. Some have raised the objection that if glass dishware can be so easily converted from dairy to meat or from מצה to מצה (non-Passover to Passover use), what is to stop someone from converting dishware even from one meal to the next. We do not permit this because it is not the custom of Israel המנה ישראל to do so. However to convert Pyrex, Corningware, and the like from dairy to meat or from מצה מצה (non-Passover to Passover use) washing and rinsing are sufficient.8,9

NOTES

3. רות וע Lucifer "כשם ל’ בשת רחא’; אור ועת פסהמ ר”ח; ב”ודא” ר”ח; ש’א"ו ר”ח; כ”ו.
4. רות וע Lucifer "כשם ל’ בשת רחא’; אור ועת פסהמ ר”ח; ב”ודא” ר”ח; כ”ו.
5. This issue and many more sources pertaining to it are discussed by Solomon Zalman Grossman, Siddur Pesah KeHilkhato, (Jerusalem 1979) and R Ovadia Yosef, Responsa Yabia Omer IV, #41 (second edition Jerusalem 1986). Both assume Pyrex to have the status of glass for all purposes.
6. The Jewish Dietary Laws, revised and expanded edition, 1982, p.94. Professor Siegel gives the following footnote. “In regard to glassware, the Shulḥan Arukh (Oraḥ Hayyim 451:26) states: “Glass utensils do not require any ‘heksher’ because they do not absorb.” There
are differing views, however, Rabbi Moses Isserles (ad. loc.): “Even purging (glass) is ineffective.” Rabbi Abraham Danzig (Hayei Adam 124:22) writes that the proper method to kasher glassware is to soak it in clear water for 72 hours, changing the water every 24 hours.”


8. This is the opinion of Isaac Klein who in speaking about glass utensils concluded as follows, “It is my opinion, therefore, that when an individual question comes up where a milk dish was used for meat or vice-versa, we should follow the lenient attitude of requiring just rinsing, but we should definitely discourage the regular use of one set of dishes for milk and meat.

9. I want to thank Professor Mayer Rabinowitz who assisted me in the final version of this paper.