

The Paradox of Purging Plastic Products

Rabbi Yehuda Spitz

Is Plastic Kasherable?

One of the remarkable debates of contemporary times concerns whether or not “new age polymers” such as plastic or Teflon[1] can be *kashered*. Not simply a theoretical question, with the abundance of Tupperware and Rubbermaid products (for storing hot soups etc.), as well as plastic parts and handles and Teflon coating as part and parcel of many of our ubiquitous pots and pans, this *halachic* classification issue affects us all. Quite interestingly, this is an issue that authorities in America seemingly rule more stringently than many *Poskei Eretz Yisrael*. Additionally, there might also be a distinction between *kashering* from non-kosher to kosher and from *chometz* to kosher *L’Pesach*. But to properly understand these nuances, a bit of background is in order.

Kashering Keilim

The Biblical source for requiring the kosherization of used pots from a non-Jew is in *Parshas Mattos* (*Bamidbar* Ch. 31: 21 - 23) after the War with Midian, when *Klal Yisrael* was commanded to *kasher* their spoils of war that were used for food preparation. “This is the rule that Hashem commanded Moshe: As far as the gold, silver, copper, iron, tin and lead are concerned, whatever was used over fire must be made to go through fire and purged...”

The principle underlying the methodology of *kashering* is found in the phrase, 'whatever was used over fire must be made to go through fire...'; that is to say, the manner in which a utensil was being used when the forbidden food entered it determines how it will be *kashered*: Utensils which came into direct contact with fire are *kashered* by direct contact with fire; utensils which were placed on the fire with liquids in them are *kashered* by boiling liquid.[2]

Yet, we see that the only materials that the Torah actually explicitly mentioned as *kasherable* are six types of metals. In fact, regarding the *Korban Chataas*, the Torah states (*Vayikra, Parshas Tzav* 6: 21) that earthen vessels in which it was boiled must be broken, as opposed to a metal vessel which can be *kashered*.^[3]

According to the *Gemara*, what is clear is that the Torah meant to exclude these '*klei cheres*', ceramic or earthenware vessels, the other prevalent types of utensils available,^[4] that they cannot be *kashered*.^[5] Although they do absorb, and as opposed to metal utensils, the act of purging will not actually remove the *bleeyos*, absorbed taste, imparted into the walls of a '*kli cheres*'.

Non-Mentionables

The question then arises, what would be the status of vessels made from materials not mentioned in the Torah? Would they be classified as metals and thereby deemed *kasherable* or like earthen vessels which cannot be *kashered*?

We may glean an answer from several precedents of *Chazal*. We find that the *Gemara* in *Pesachim* (30b; statement of Rav Huna *brei d'Rav Yehoshua*) clearly states that wood can be *kashered*. Similarly, in *Chullin* (25b; statement of Rav Nachman) albeit regarding the *halachos* of '*Mekabel Tumah*', that a vessel made of bone is akin to one of metal. Many *Rishonim* cite the above examples among others, and rule that both are indeed *kasherable*. They further advance the logic that a stone utensil as well shares similar status as metal and therefore may be *koshered* as well.^[6]

Although not every *Rishon* agrees,^[7] nonetheless, the bottom line is that all of the above, wood, stone, and bone, are *kasherable* and are *halachically* considered akin to metal in this aspect.^[8]

Smooth As Glass ?

The one exception to the rule is glass. Glass's status is a major debate among the *Rishonim* with no clear cut consensus.[9] The reason for this disagreement is based on how they view glass. Is it considered a sort of earthenware as it is essentially made from sand heated to extreme temperatures? Or do we look at the final product, which is smooth and non-absorbent? Perhaps its status is somewhere in the middle?

The *Shulchan Aruch* rules that glass is '*shiya*', smooth, and thereby non-absorbent; therefore, he rules that it does not need to be *kashered*, even for Pesach. This is the general *Sefardic minhag*, as well.[10] However, the *Rema* argues that glass is considered akin to a *Kli Cheres* regarding Pesach use,[11] and therefore it cannot be *kashered*. [12] He adds that this is indeed the *Ashkenazic minhag* - to consider glass akin to ceramic and thus non-*kasherable*.

Pondering Plastic

With these varying *halachos* as precedent, how do contemporary authorities view plastic utensils? As with many issues in *halachah*, plastic's *kasherability* status is debated.

Several contemporary authorities maintain that plastic is non-*kasherable*. [13] They explain that since it is essentially a new material, it is impossible to determine if *haga'alah* will actually work to purge *bleeyos*; therefore one may not *kasher* plastic. Some add that since plastic is more fragile than a metal utensil, we are worried that it will not be *kashered* properly, and therefore advise caution. Additionally, some maintain that since plastic et al. was not around in the times of *Chazal*, we must be stringent regarding its *kasherability*.

However, in stark contrast to this, many contemporary decisors make the exact opposite deduction. They explain that *Chazal* singled out *Klei Cheres* as the one material that cannot be *kashered*. Therefore, all other materials, as long as they do not contain elements of *Klei Cheres*, should be able to be *kashered*. [14] Additionally, they cite precedent from '*Klei Adamah*' (vessels made from earth; i.e. bricks that were made and dried in the sun as opposed to a kiln) as although non-mentioned by *Chazal* or even *Rishonim*, nevertheless many *poskim* maintain is

kasherable, and has the status of stone utensils.[15] This should equally apply to plastic, as it is essentially petroleum and coal based and not related to ceramics.

Moreover, plasticware is generally not used directly on the fire, but rather only via pouring or the secondary transmission of *Kli Sheini*; if so, it by and large never had real deal absorption of *bleeyos* to be stringent regarding its *kashering*. Therefore, the vast majority of contemporary authorities maintain that plastic is indeed *kasherable*. [16] Indeed, in their annual *Madrish HaKashrus*, the *Badatz Eidah Chareidis* of Yerushalayim follows the ruling of their *Av Beis Din*, the *Minchas Yitzchok*, that plastic is indeed *kasherable*, and even for Pesach use (as long as it did not absorb *bleeyos* of *chometz* directly on the fire).[17] This is also the conclusion of many *sefarim* written on the topic of *kashering*. [18]

A third approach is that although plastic may indeed be *kasherable*, and one may do so year-round, nevertheless, regarding Pesach with all of its inherent stringencies, it is preferable not to *kasher* it. [19]

American Psak

The question remains that if most contemporary *poskim* allow *kashering* plastic, why would American rabbis be more stringent than their counterparts in *Eretz Yisrael*? The answer lies in a responsum of the *gadol hador*, Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l. In his *Shu"t Igros Moshe (Orach Chaim vol. 2: 92 s.v. uvadavar kli)* while discussing the *kasherability* of rubber, Rav Moshe seemingly sets a far-reaching rule: although natural rubber is harvested mainly in the form of the latex, a sticky, milky colloid from certain trees, and is therefore analogous to wooden utensils and thus *kasherable*, on the other hand synthetic rubber that is derived from petrochemical sources, *'which is a new item that was not extant among early authorities, [20] 'ain lehatir l'hagilam, we do not allow them to be kashered'*.

It is this principle, seemingly set by Rav Moshe, which is the reason why there is general notion that plasticware may not be *kashered*. In fact, this is cited by many as the reason to be stringent that plastic, and de facto any 'New Age' product, may not be *kashered*.

However, and although it may come as a surprise to many, and especially to those who quoted Rav Moshe this way,[21] history has since proven that this was not his true *shitta*. First of all, several of Rav Moshe's leading *talmidim*, including the *Yesodei Yeshurun*, Rav Shimon Eider, and Rav Avrohom Blumenkrantz, in their *sefarim* pertaining to *kashering*, make no mention of their *Rebbi* being *machmir* regarding *kashering* plastic year-round. In fact, Rav Eider writes that Rav Moshe told him that he personally was only *machmir* regarding *kashering* plasticware for Pesach. However, regarding *basar bechalav* and year-round use, he held that plastic **may** be *kashered*. Indeed, in his recent *Mesores Moshe*, Rav Moshe's grandson, Rav Mordechai Tandler relates that Rav Moshe told him that his rule was only applicable regarding *kashering* for Pesach.[22]

This further bears out from the actual stringent *teshuva* itself, which is dated the 6th of Nissan, right before Pesach, and is published in his responsa on *Orach Chaim*, where the *halachos* of *kashering* for Pesach are detailed and not in a section on *Yoreh Deah*, where year round *kashering* is discussed.

But the real clincher is that Rav Moshe actually later wrote a specific *teshuva* explicitly stating this. However, since his ruling was actually an addendum to a much larger *teshuva* on a completely separate and complicated issue, many did not realize it even exists. In *Shu"t Igros Moshe (Even Ha'ezer vol. 4: end 7 s.v. uv'inyan)* Rav Moshe writes regarding 'vessels made from Teflon (and) plastic, *haga'alah* works to *kasher* them after 24 hours, as it is a *safek derabbanan*.' In other words, regarding year-round use, as long as it is 24 hours after the last use, and the *bleeyah* is *pagum* (rendered unfit for consumption), and thus the *kashering* is only Rabbinically mandated, *kashering* does indeed work on plastic and Teflon. This proves that his stringent 'New Age product rule' was only meant to be applicable pertaining to purging plastic for Pesach.

Postscript: Although Rav Moshe's son, Rav Dovid Feinstein, was quoted as only allowing *kashering* plastic for year round use *b'shaas hadchak*,^[23] this author asked Rav Baruch Moskowitz, Rav Dovid's *talmid muvhak* and author of *Shu"t Vedibarta Bam*, to clarify his *Rebbi's* and his father's *shitta*. Rav Dovid replied that undeniably, as his father detailed in his second *teshuva*, plastic is indeed *kasherable*. However, since this *kashering* is permitted *m'toras safek sfeika*^[24] and not *m'toras vaday*, as plastic was not in existence at the times of *Chazal*, therefore one should only *kasher* plastic '*le'ais hatzorech*', at a time of personal need. In other words, one should not rely on *kashering* plastic *lechatchilla*, i.e. purchasing used plastic products from a non-Jew and then *kashering* them, but if someone had a *kashrus sheilah* on his plastic product, he need not throw it out, but may indeed *kasher* it.

Note: This article is not intended to serve as an exhaustive guide, but rather to showcase certain aspects of the intricate and myriad *halachos* of *kashering keilim*. One should be sure to ask a knowledgeable *halachic* authority for practical application.

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For any questions, comments or for the full *Mareh Mekomos* / sources, please email the author: yspitz@ohr.edu.

Rabbi Yehuda Spitz serves as the *Sho'el U' Meishiv* and *Rosh Chabura* of the Ohr Lagolah Halacha Kollel at Yeshivas Ohr Somayach in Yerushalayim.

[1] Plastic was first invented in 1907 by chemist Leo Baekeland (and dubbed Bakelite), whereas Teflon was actually accidentally discovered in 1938 by chemist Roy Plunkett, while working for DuPont.

[2] *Mishnah* and accompanying *Gemara* (*Avodah Zarah* 75b). This paragraph was paraphrased from the introduction to the English version of Rabbi Tzvi Cohen's "*Tevillath Keilim*". This *halachic* rule is known as '*k'bolo kach polto*', meaning the method by which it absorbed (cooked in) the taste or flavor of the non-kosher food determines the process needed to purge the utensil of it, and thus rendering the utensil fit for kosher use.

[3] According to the *Abudraham* (pg. 372), and cited *Iemaaseh* by the *Levush* (*Orach Chaim* 428: 4) and *Elyah Rabbah* (ad loc. 5), the reason why *Parshas Tzav* generally falls out on *Shabbos Hagadol*, the Shabbos immediately preceding Pesach, is that it mentions the *halachos* of *Kashering Keilim* (*Vayikra*, Ch. 6: 21), albeit regarding the *Korban Chata'as*, as '*haga'alas keilim chometz lamud m'Korbanos*'. Although in a leap year *Parshas Metzorah* is usually read directly before Pesach, it is also in sync, as it mentions '*kli cheres yishaver*', which is quite apropos for Pesach as well.

[4] See *Beis Yosef* (*Yoreh Deah* 122: 8 s.v. *kasav*) who writes a general rule that standard vessels mentioned without any distinguishing characteristics, are ceramic.

[5] *Gemara Pesachim* (30b) and *Avodah Zarah* (34a), and codified by the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 22). However, *Rabbeinu Yoel*, cited by the *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch* (ad loc. 21) maintains that if a ceramic vessel was only used for cold, then it can actually be *kashered* for Pesach via *haga'alah*. See *Biur HaGr"a* (ad loc. 22 s.v. *aval*).

[6] For example, the *Rambam* (*Hilchos Chometz U'Matzah* Ch. 5: 25) explicitly rules that stone has the same *halachic* properties as metal for this issue. The *Ravya* (*Pesachim* 464 s.v. *v'kaaros* and *v'raisi*) rules the same regarding wood and stone vessels. The *Rif* (*Pesachim* 8b in his pages), *Rosh* (*Pesachim* Ch 2: 7), *Mordechai* (*Pesachim* 553), and *Tur* (*Orach Chaim* 451: end 8)

all rule this way as well, as do the *Ramban*, *Rashba*, and *Ritva*, in their commentaries to *Pesachim* ad loc. The *Beis Yosef* (ad loc. s.v. *ain chiluk*) concludes *'v'chein nahagu olam'*.

[7] For example, regarding vessels made from bone and *'keren'*, the *Mahari Weil* (*Shu"t* 193), the *Sefer Hamanhig* (*Hilchos Pesach* 30; cited by the *Tur*, *Orach Chaim* 451: 7), and *Maharil* (*Hilchos Haga'alah* 14; pg. 23) exhort caution, as they were worried that due to its more delicate nature, one may not actually *kasher* it properly. Although the *Kol Bo* (48; pg. 9, 4th column) cites this opinion, he adds that many disagree with this assessment. On the other hand, the *Bach* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 9 s.v. *mah shekasav* and *v'Rav*) concludes that *'divrei Baal Hamanhig ha'ikar, v'hachi nahug'*. Quite contrary to this, *Rabbeinu Yechiel* of Paris (*Psakim* 84; cited approvingly by the *Ohr Zarua*, *Piskei Avodah Zarah* 297; and by the *Mordechai*, *Pesachim* 582 - who however argues) holds that bone is entirely non-absorbent and therefore does not need *kashering*. *Rashi* (*Shu"t Rashi* 76) however concludes that bone is indeed *kasherable*. Regarding stone, several early authorities have differing opinions. For example *Rav Hai Gaon* (*Otzar HaGaonim*, *Pesachim* pg. 28; cited by the *Tur*, *Orach Chaim* 451: 8) is of the opinion that stone should be akin to *klei cheres* and thereby non-*kasherable*. At the other extreme is the *Ri ben Malki Tzedek* (*Maseches Keilim* Ch. 10: 1) [cited by the *Ravya* (*Pesachim* 464 s.v. *v'raisi*), and the *Ran* (*Pesachim* 8b in the *Rif's* pages s.v. *nakut*); his *shittah* is based on a *Tosefta* in *Zavachim* (Ch. 10: 6)], that stone does not absorb *taam* at all. However, it should be noted that others (see *Ravya*, *ibid*; *Ohr Haganuz* on the *Tosefta* ad loc. 6; and *Minchas Bikurim* ad loc. s.v. *ela*), including the version generally printed in our *Gemaros*, have a different *girsah* in the *Tosefta*, implying that *'klei even'* and *'klei adamah'* can and must be *kashered* and only *klei cheres* need to be broken.

[8] See *Shulchan Aruch* and *Rema* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 8), citing several of the aforementioned *Rishonim*, including the *Rif*, *Rambam*, *Rosh*, and *Mordechai*. See also *Levush* (ad loc. 7; although the *haghah* adds that there are those who are stringent with boneware), *Shach* (*Yoreh Deah* 99: 3), *Taz* (ad loc. 1), *Magen Avrohom* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 4) *Pri Megadim* (ad loc. *Mishbetzos Zahav* 31 s.v. *klei etzem*), *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 25), *Chayei Adam* (vol. 2: 125, 3), *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (116, 2), *Aruch Hashulchan* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 8 and 20), and *Mishnah Berurah* (ad loc. 57; however, similar to the *Levush* and *Pri Megadim*, he rules against *kashering* utensils made of *'keren'* due to their delicate nature, based on the *Sefer Hamanhig* cited above) who all list these materials, including bone, as completely *kasherable*. However, the *Yad Yehuda*

(*Yoreh Deah* 69, *Pirush Ha'aruch* end 81 and *Pirush Hakatzer* 117) and the *Darchei Teshuva* (*Yoreh Deah* 121: 25) distinguish between utensils made out of whole stones and those formed from crushed or ground up stone; in the latter case, they rule that *lidivrei hakol* they cannot be *kashered* as they are comparable in both makeup and process to '*klei cheres*'.

[9] There are three essential opposing *shittos* of the *Rishonim* on how to view glassware: *Rabbeinu Yechiel* of Paris' opinion (cited by *Haghos Maimoniyos*, *Hilchos Chametz U'Matzah* Ch. 5: 25 and the *Mordechai*, *Pesachim* 574) that since glass is formed from sand it has the status of a *kli cheres* and cannot be *kashered*. This is also the opinion of the *SMA"G* (*Lavin* 78), *SMA"K* (*Mitzvah* 222), *Agur* (736), *Terumas Hadeshen* (vol. 1: 132 and vol. 2: 152), and *Issur Vehetter* (58: 50; he maintains that we take on the *chumros* of both *cheres* and metal and therefore both *kashering* and *tevillah* are required for glassware). However, the majority opinion is that glass is '*shiya*', smooth, and is non-absorbent; therefore no *kashering* is required. This is the opinion of *Rabbeinu Tam* (*Tosafos* in *Avodah Zara* 33b s.v. *konya* and *Kesuvos* 107b s.v. *hani*), the *Ran* (*Pesachim* 9a in the *Rif's* pages s.v. *ki*), *Rashba* (*Shu"t* vol. 1: 233), *Rosh* (*Pesachim* Ch. 2: 8), *Rabbeinu Yerucham* (*Nesiv* 5, vol. 2, pg. 40a), and *Ravya* (*Pesachim* 464); as the *Beis Yosef* concludes (*Orach Chaim*, end 451), '*v'chein anu nohagin*'. There is also a third minority opinion, that of the *Rambam* in his *Pirush Hamishnayos* (*Avodah Zarah* Ch. 5: 12 s.v. *halokeyach*) and *Ra'ah* (cited by the *Ritva*, *Pesachim* 30b s.v. *li'avad*; the *Shibolei Haleket*, *Seder Pesach* 207, implies this way as well) is that glass is akin to metal, that it can absorb and is *kasherable*. However, the *Ra'ah* and *Ritva* conclude that even so, one may not rely on this, as due to its delicate nature one may not actually *kasher* the glassware properly.

[10] *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 26), *Beis Yosef* (ad loc.), *Pri Chodosh* (ad loc. 26), *Haghos Mahar"A Azulei* (on *Levush* ad. loc), *Shu"t Yabea Omer* (vol. 3 *Yoreh Deah* 11: 5 and vol. 4 *Orach Chaim* 41), *Shu"t Yechaveh Daas* (vol. 1: 6), *Shu"t Ohr L'Tziyon* (vol. 3: Ch. 10: 12), *Chazon Ovadia* (*Hilchos Pesach* pg. 78), and *Yalkut Yosef* (*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 451: 39). However, there are several *Sefardic poskim* including the *Ben Ish Chai* (Year 1, *Parshas Tzav* 14 and *Shu"t Rav Pe'alim* vol. 3 *Orach Chaim* 29) and his followers (see *Rav Mordechai Eliyahu's Darchei Halacha* glosses to the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 116: 17) who ruled like the *Rema* and maintain that glass cannot be *kashered*. See next footnote.

[11] It is interesting to note that the *Rema* only explicitly argues on the *Shulchan Aruch's shitta* regarding glass's *kasherability* in *Hilchos Pesach*. Curiously, in *Yoreh Deah*, he makes no mention of a disagreement. This led many authorities to maintain that the *Rema* only meant to argue regarding *kashering* for Pesach due to the stringencies of *chometz*; however, for year round, such as issues regarding *bassar b'chalav* use, he would have agreed, that glass is non-absorbent and does not need to be *kashered*. These include the *Knesses Hagedolah* (*Yoreh Deah* 121 *Haghos* on the *Tur* 25; quoted by the *Kehal Yehuda*; both cited by the *Sdei Chemed, Asifas Dinim, Maareches Hei* 29), *Minchas Yaakov* (85: 12), *Pri Megadim* (*Orach Chaim* 451 *Mishbetzos Zahav* 31 s.v. *da* and *Yoreh Deah* 105 *Mishbetzos Zahav* 1 s.v. *v'im*), *Ya'avetz* (*Mor U'Ketziyah* end 451), *Yad Yehuda* (69, *Pirush Ha'aruch* 81, and beg. 105), *Aruch Hashulchan* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 9), Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (*Halichos Shlomo, Moadim* vol. 2, *Pesach* Ch. 3, footnote 75), the *Minchas Yitzchok* (*Shu"t* vol. 1: 86; he adds that certainly *haga'alah* would work on glass for *shaar issurim*; this is also the opinion of the the *Badatz Eidah Chareidis* in their annual *Madrich HaKashrus, Kashrus Habayis l'Pesach* Ch. 3: 9; 5775, pg. 190; via *haga'alah*), and Rav Eziel Auerbach (*Piskei Rav Eziel Auerbach on Hilchos Haga'alas Keilim* 3; sent to me by Rabbi Yaakov Skoczylas; he adds that *lechatchilla* it is still preferable not to use the same glassware for both *milchig* and *fleishig*). However, the *Biur HaGr"a* (*Yoreh Deah* 135: 28) seemingly equates the two, implying that the *dinim* should be the same. Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky was *machmir* as well (*Emes L'Yaakov* on *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 451: footnote 443) that according to the *Rema*, glass is always considered a *Kli Cheres*, absorbent and non-*kasherable*.

[12] *Rema* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 26) and *Levush* (ad loc 26). However, several *Ashkenazic poskim*, including the *Rema* himself, in his *Darchei Moshe* (ad loc. 19) maintain that this ruling is only *lechatchila*; ergo, *b'dieved* it would be permitted. The *Taz* (ad loc. 30) and *Elyah Rabbah* (ad loc. 54) maintain that in a *b'dieved* situation we may rely on the *Shulchan Aruch's* opinion and *kashering* is not required, whereas the *Magen Avrohom* (ad loc. 49), *Chok Yaakov* (ad loc. 68), *Pri Megadim* (ad loc. *Mishbetzos Zahav* 30), *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (ad loc. 73), *Chayei Adam* (vol. 2, 125: 22), and *Mishnah Berurah* (451: 155) maintain that *b'dieved* only if it were actually *kashered* would glass be permitted for Pesach use. On the other hand, the *Gr"a* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 26 s.v. *v'yesh*), *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (116: 13), and *Aruch Hashulchan* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 50) understand that according to the *Rema*, *kashering* would not help a glass utensil, even *b'dieved*. The *Mishnah Berurah* concludes that *b'makom hefseid merubah* and after the glass *kli* is

aino ben yomo one may rely on the *Shulchan Aruch* and *Taz*, that no *kashering* is needed, especially as the *Pri Chodosh* (ibid) and *Ya'avetz* (*Mor Uketziah* ad loc s.v. *v'ra'isi*; also citing his father the *Chacham Tzvi*) hold that it is *ikar*. The *Minchas Yitzchok* (*Shu"t* vol. 1: 86) maintains that technically speaking *haga'alah* should work on glass even for Pesach, based on the *Ritva's* opinion; however, since this is not cited *lemaaseh* by the codifiers, one should only rely on it *b'shaas hadchak*. However, regarding year-round use, he concludes that one may indeed rely on *kashering* glass. This is also the opinion of the the *Badatz Eidah Chareidis* (in their annual *Madrich HaKashrus, Kashrus Habayis l'Pesach* Ch. 3: 9; 5775, pg. 190).

[13] These include the *Pe'as Sadechah* (*Shu"t* vol. 1: 78 s.v. *uklei plastic*; who holds they are similar to *klei keren* and one will not *kasher* it properly), Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (cited in *Shevus Yitzchok* vol. 6, Ch. 5: 4, pg. 53 and *Ashrei HaIsh, Orach Chaim* vol. 3, Ch. 53: 16; however, he does allow *kashering* if the plastic *kli* absorbed *taam* via *kli sheini*), Rav Shmuel Halevi Wosner (in *Kovetz M'Beis Levi* vol. 1, ppg. 33 - 34 and vol. 3, pg. 20; however, he does allow *kashering* if the plastic *kli* absorbed *taam* via *kli sheini*), the Strasbourger Rav (*Shu"t Kinyan Torah B'Halacha* vol. 2: 84), Rav Nissim Karelitz (*Chut Shani, Hilchos Pesach*, Ch. 10, pg. 127), the *Shaarim Metzuyanim B'Halachah* (vol. 3, 116: 3 s.v. *ode*), Rav Nosson Gestetner (*Shu"t Lehoros Nosson* vol. 6: 69 and 101), Rav Menashe Klein (*Piskei Mishnah Halachos* on *Hilchos Haga'alas Keilim* 8; sent to me by Rabbi Yaakov Skoczylas) and Rav Ezriel Auerbach (*Piskei Rav Ezriel Auerbach* on *Hilchos Haga'alas Keilim* 8; sent to me by Rabbi Yaakov Skoczylas; however, he does allow *kashering* if the plastic *kli* absorbed *taam* via *irui kli rishon* or *kli sheini*). There is an interesting story told about Rav Elyashiv and his *shittah* on *kashering* plastic, as heard from *MV"R* Rav Yosef Yitzchok Lerner. Apparently, Rav Levi Yitzchok Halperin of *Machon Technologia V'Halachah* proved to Rav Elyashiv that scientifically *haga'alah* does indeed purge *bleeyos* from plastic. Unimpressed, Rav Elyashiv replied, 'but can you prove that it removed all of the *bleeyos*?'

[14] This *klal* was first set by the *Maseis Binyomin* (*Shu"t* 94), and seconded by the *Pri Megadim* (*Orach Chaim* 451 *Mishbetzos Zahav* 31, end s.v. *klei etzem*). This is also seen regarding those who permitted *Klei Adamah* for *kashering* (see next footnote), as the *Machatzis Hashekel* (ad loc. 4 s.v. *din klei adamah*) writes that its *din* is not explained elsewhere. In other words, although there was no precedent for allowing it to be *kashered*, yet, the majority of *Acharonim* ruled that

it nevertheless may be. This rule regarding plastic's *kasherability* was later used by several contemporary authorities including the *Cheishev Ha'eifod* (*Shu"t* vol. 1: 117 s.v. *umayhei*), and Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin (*teshuva* printed in *Kovetz Am HaTorah* vol 1, pg. 5; 5739).

[15] *Magen Avraham* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 4), *Knesses Hagedolah* (*Yoreh Deah* 121, *Haghos* on the *Tur* 18), *Chok Yaakov* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 12), *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (ad loc. 12), *Pri Megadim* (*Sifsei Daas* ad loc. 4), *Aruch Hashulchan* (ad loc. 8), and *Mishnah Berurah* (ad loc. 18). See previous footnote. However, several *Acharonim*, including the *Yad Yehuda* (*Yoreh Deah* 69, *Pirush Ha'aruch* end 81 and *Pirush Hakatzer* 117), *Darchei Teshuva* (*Yoreh Deah* 121: 25), and the *Chazon Ish* (*Orach Chaim* 120: 2 s.v. *M"A*) argue that *Klei Adamah* should share the status of *Klei Cheres* and are therefore non-kasherable.

[16] Including the *Minchas Yitzchok* (*Shu"t* vol. 3: 67), Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin (*teshuva* printed in *Kovetz Am HaTorah* vol 1, pg. 5; however in Rav Shimon Eider's *Sefer Hilchos Pesach*, II A 2: 3, he quotes Rav Moshe Feinstein as saying that Rav Henkin held that plastic does not need *kashering* as it is smooth), *Shu"t Seridei Aish* (vol. 2: 160; and in new print vol. 1, *Orach Chaim* 46: *Inyan Rishon*), *Shu"t She'eilei Tzion* (vol. 2: 23), *Shu"t Cheishev Ha'eifod* (vol. 1: 117 s.v. *umayhei*), *Shu"t Chelkas Yaakov* (vol. 2: 163; and new print vol. 3, *Yoreh Deah* 45), *Shu"t Tzitz Eliezer* (vol. 4: 6), *Shu"t Eretz Tova* (*Orach Chaim* 39; though he maintains to do it 3 times), the Tzhelemer Rav (cited in *Netei Gavriel*, *Hilchos Pesach* vol. 1, Ch. 64: footnote 17), Rav Moshe Aryeh Freund (*sefer Mara D'Shma'atsa*; cited in *Ohel Yaakov*, *Kitzur Hilchos Kashrus L'Pesach* pg. 77; though he maintains to do it 3 times), *Shu"t Yeshuas Moshe* (vol. 3, 46: 4), *Shu"t Vayeishev Moshe* (vol. 1; 45 and 46), Rav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul (*Shu"t Ohr L'Tzion* vol. 3, Ch. 10: 13), Rav Ovadia Yosef (*Chazon Ovadia*, *Pesach* vol. 1, pg. 151: 9 and footnote 39), *Yalkut Yosef* (*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim* 451: 38), Rav Mordechai Eliyahu (*Darchei Halacha* glosses to the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 116: 17), and Rav Yisroel Belsky, citing this as the *shittah* of Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky (quoted in the OU's *Daf Hakashrus* vol. 22, No. 7, 5774 / 2014; pg. 3: footnote 3). The *Tzitz Eliezer* (*Shu"t* *ibid.* s.v. *v'yesh*) adds that if one is worried that the plastic *kli* might get ruined when being *kashered*, it may be *kashered* in a *Kli Rishon* that was just taken off the fire, as mentioned by the *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (*Orach Chaim* 451: 14) and Rav Yitzchok Elchanan Spektor (*Shu"t Ein Yitzchok*, vol. 1 *Yoreh Deah* 13: 7) regarding utensils that absorbed *taam*, but not from direct heat from a fire.

[17] The *Badatz Eidah Chareidis'* annual *Madrich HaKashrus (Kashrus Habayis l'Pesach Ch. 3: 8; 5775 pg. 190)*.

[18] For example *Shaarei Halacha* (Efrati; 5), *Yesodei Yeshurun* (vol. 6, *Ma'areches Haga'alas Keilim* ppg. 170 - 173), *Netei Gavriel* (ibid.), *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (Pfeiffer; on *Bassar Bechalav*, vol. 2, pg. 36: 6), *Sefer Haga'alas Keilim* (Ch. 13: 301 and footnote 271), *Shu"t Minchas Chein* (vol. 1: 28, Ch. 5: 10; first published in *Minchas Chein on Hilchos Pesach*), and *SeferHakashrus* (Ch. 3: 56).

[19] *Shu"t Ba'er Moshe* (vol. 2: 53), *Shu"t Minchas Yitzchok* (ibid; who is more stringent regarding Pesach), *Shu"t Igros Moshe (Orach Chaim vol. 2: 92 s.v. uvadavar kli)*, Rav Moshe Sternbuch's *Lekutei Teshuvos Vehanhagos (Hilchos Pesach; cited in Ohel Yaakov, Kitzur Hilchos Kashrus L'Pesach pg. 77)*, Rav Shimon Eider's *Sefer Hilchos Pesach* (ibid.), Rav Avrohom Blumenkrantz's annual *Kovetz Hilchos Pesach* (2006, pg. 88 and 92) and Rav Ezriel Auerbach (*Piskei Rav Ezriel Auerbach on Hilchos Haga'alas Keilim 8; sent to me by Rabbi Yaakov Skoczylas; as long as it was heteira bala. SeferHakashrus* (Ch. 3: 56) maintains that it is preferable not to *kasher* plastic for Pesach. Even Rav Elyashiv (ibid.), who although is *machmir* altogether with plastic, nevertheless allows year-round plastic to be *kashered* 3 times as long as it was '*heteira bala*'.

[20] In fact, Frenchman Gustave Boucharda created the first form of synthetic rubber in 1879.

[21] These *sefarim* who quote Rav Moshe as ruling stringently include *Shaarim Metzuyanim B'Halacha* (ibid.), *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (Pfeiffer; ibid.), *Netei Gavriel* (ibid.), *Sefer Haga'alas Keilim* (ibid.), *Shu"t Kinyan Torah B'Halacha* (ibid.), *Shu"t Yeshuas Moshe* (ibid.), *Shu"t Lehoros Nossan* (ibid.), *Shu"t Vayeishev Moshe* (ibid.), *Shu"t Minchas Chein* (ibid.), as well as Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky's *Kovetz Halachos (Hilchos Pesach pg. 110)*, Rav Moshe Sternbuch's *Lekutei Teshuvos Vehanhagos (Hilchos Pesach)*, and the Dirshu edition of the *Mishnah Berurah* (vol. 5, 451, *Biurim U'Musafim* 131; which actually makes a 3-way *stirah* in Rav Moshe's *shittah*). Several of them are coming to agree with their understanding of Rav Moshe's assessment,

whereas many of them are coming to argue based on the *klal* of the *Pri Megadim* (see footnote 14) et al. that *Chazal* only specified *Klei Cheres* as non-*kasherable*; all other *keilim* should be *kasherable*. Several *sefarim* that this author has seen that quote Rav Moshe as only being stringent for Pesach include Rav Shimon Eider's *Sefer Hilchos Pesach* (ibid.), *Mesores Moshe* (ibid.) and *Sefer Hakashrus* (ibid.).

[22] *Yesodei Yeshurun* (vol. 6, *Ma'areches Hagaalas Keilim* ppg. 170 - 173), Rav Shimon Eider's *Sefer Hilchos Pesach* (II A 2: 3), Rav Avrohom Blumenkrantz's annual *Kovetz Hilchos Pesach* (2006, pg. 88), and *Mesores Moshe* (pg. 138: 269)

[23] See Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Frankel's *Kuntress Yad Dodi* (*Hilchos Hechsher U'Tevillas Keilim*, Question 19).

[24] Since plastic was not mentioned by *Chazal* or *Rishonim*, perhaps its status is similar to *Klei Even* and *Adamah* and deemed *kasherable*, or perhaps similar to glass. If it is considered similar to glass, perhaps it does need to be *kashered* at all. Hence we hold that *haga'alah* should indeed work.

Disclaimer: This is not a comprehensive guide, rather a brief summary to raise awareness of the issues. In any real case one should ask a competent Halachic authority.

L'iluy Nishmas the Rosh HaYeshiva - Rav Chonoh Menachem Mendel *ben* R' Yechezkel Shraga, Rav Yaakov Yeshaya *ben* R' Boruch Yehuda.