**Yadayim, Chapter One, Mishnah Two**

**Introduction**

Today's mishnah deals with what kind of vessel can be used to pour water over one's hands.

**Mishnah Two**

1. Water may be poured over the hands out of any kind of vessel, even out of vessels made of animal dung, out of vessels made of stone or out of vessels made of clay.
2. Water may not be poured from the sides of [broken] vessels or from the bottom of a ladle or from the stopper of a jar.
3. Nor may one pour [water] over the hands of his fellow out of his cupped hands.
4. Because one may not draw, nor sanctify, nor sprinkle the water of purification, nor pour water over the hands except in a vessel.
5. And only vessels closely covered with a lid protect [their contents from uncleanness].
6. And only vessels protect [their contents from uncleanness] inside earthenware vessels.

***Explanation***

**Section one**: Any kind of vessel can be used for the ritual washing of hands, even vessels that are not susceptible to impurity such as vessels made of dung or stone (see Kelim 10:1). In other words, one might have thought that since these vessels are not susceptible to impurity they do not count as vessels, therefore the mishnah teaches that they do count as vessels and can be used for handwashing.

**Section two**: All of these objects do not count as "vessels" and therefore cannot be used for handwashing.

**Section three**: Cupped hands are also no good (I'll fess up—I've tried this a few times when I couldn't find a cup).

**Section four**: The mishnah now lists water rituals that require a vessel. Most of these involve the purification ritual of the red heifer ashes.

The first is drawing water from a live spring to be used in the red heifer ritual.

The second is putting the ashes into the water—this must be done in a vessel.

The third is sprinkling the waters of purification (the water which has the ashes of the red heifer) on the impure person.

The fourth is handwashing.

**Section five**: If an earthenware vessel with a tight-fitting lid is found in a tent with a corpse in it, the vessels contents are not defiled (neither is the vessel). However, only a real vessel acts in this manner.

**Section six**: Furthermore, if there is a vessel with food in it and it is in an earthenware vessel in which there is also a sheretz (a creepy crawly defiling thing) the vessel protects the food inside it from becoming impure (see Kelim 8:3). But this protection is only if the inside vessel is really a vessel.