

Pshats for Shots

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Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of "Pshats for Shots", a one-page resource for helping providing brief, drinking-related *divrei Torah* for each parashah. Wonderful for kiddush clubs, Shabbas meals, or any other gathering in which you need to turn to *al regel ahat* parashah-related *divrei Torah*, "Pshats for Shots" is a project of JewishDrinking.com.

What was the "forbidden fruit" that Adam & Eve ate?

What did Adam & Eve eat that got them kicked out of *Gan Eden*? A *beraisa* that appears in *Berakhos* 40a & *Sanhedrin* 70a-b offers a few opinions:

תניא רבי מאיר אומר אותו אילן שאכל אדם הראשון ממנו גפן היה שאין לך דבר שמביא יללה לאדם אלא יין

רבי יהודה אומר חטה היה שאין התינוק יודע לקרוא אבא ואימא עד שיטעום טעם דגן

רבי נחמיה אומר תאנה היה שבדבר שקלקלו בו נתקנו שנאמר (בראשית ג, ז) ויתפרו עלה תאנה

It was taught: Rabbi Meir says: "The tree from which Adam the first man ate was a grapevine, since nothing else brings wailing upon a person, except for wine."

Rabbi Yehudah says: "It was wheat, since an infant knows not how to call 'Mommy' or 'Daddy' until the infant tastes grain."

Rabbi Neḥemiah says: "It was a fig, since the thing that they messed up with, they repaired it, as it is said, 'and they sewed a fig leaf' (Gen. 3.7)."

While it seems as if Rabbi Neḥemiah's suggestion of a fig tree seems to be most reasonable, we're discussing it here due to Rabbi Meir's wine assertion. Does Rabbi Meir mean to say that wine could be something that would help reveal knowledge, as wine helps uncover morality, reality, and other wisdom, or does he mean that wine-drinking could be discovering and learning something totally new, even if that ultimately brings upon crying about a sad, new reality? A further possibility could be that sometimes when knowledge is discovered, it's not always the most exciting, and can actually be quite hard to hear. A very different approach is taken by Rashi, who suggests that simply their consumption of the fruit caused death and wailing upon the world (רש"י על סנהדרין ע, ד"ה שאין לך דבר שמביא יללה על אדם (רש"י על ברכות מ. ד"ה שהוא הביא יללה and אלא יין).

Whatever it may be, it is certainly a fascinating possibility advanced by this early sage of our tradition. For an expanded discussion on this text, see <http://rebdre.ws/adamevewine>

Thoughts? Questions? Ideas?
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