

Pshats for Shots

A project of JewishDrinking.com



Welcome

Welcome to the second 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 did Noah do with planting a vineyard?

Upon disembarking upon dry land for the first for being out to sea for many weeks, the Torah describes Noah's action as "וַיִּחַל נֹחַ אִישׁ – אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה – וַיִּטַּע כֶּרֶם" – And Noah, man of the earth, [did something] and planted a vineyard." So how should we translate וַיִּחַל?

Quoting from רש"י, בראשית רבה, רש"י understands וַיִּחַל negatively, as in חל, the opposite of קדש, in that Noah sought to debase himself upon hitting dry land in simply drinking and getting drunk.

However, other medieval exegetes, such as רמב"ן and רד"ק, take it as להתחיל – that Noah began planting vineyards, as no one had done so before. This seems to derive from Noah being אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה, a man of the earth, which could mean that he was knowledgeable about the earth and was in a position to become an agricultural innovator with planting vineyards.

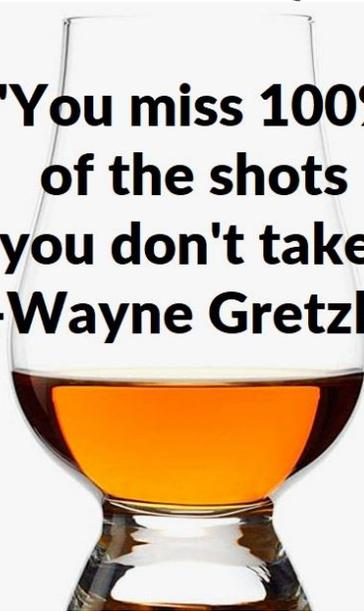
This could also explain why he got drunk – since no one had ever planted vineyards before, no one had ever consumed wine before, and, thus, no one even knew of the possibility of what happens when you consume wine – whether a little or a lot. It may just have been that Noah was naïve about the consequences of alcohol-consumption, since no one had ever experienced it before.

Thus, in his agricultural innovation, he stumbled upon drinking! In approaching וַיִּחַל as *beginning*, one need not understand Noah's actions in a negative light.

Curious for an expanded discussion on this text? Check out <http://rebdre.ws/noahplanting>

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

**"You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."
-Wayne Gretzky**



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Thoughts? Questions? Ideas?
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