

# Pshats for Shots

## A project of JewishDrinking.com



### Welcome

Welcome to the seventh 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](http://JewishDrinking.com). An archive of Pshats for Shots is available at <http://jewishdrinking.com/pshats-for-shots-parashah-sheets/>



### Why Is Yaakov's First Wedding Feature the Only Drinking Party for a Marriage in the Book of Genesis?

In this week's Torah portion, we read of Lavan making a *משתה* drinking-party upon Yaakov marrying his daughter: "וַיֵּאָסֵף לָבָן אֶת-כָּל-אֲנָשֵׁי הַמְּקוֹם, וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֵּה" And Lavan gathered all of the men of the place and made a drinking-party" (Gen. 29.22), which is somewhat curious. While it's not unusual to find this *משתה* term in the book of Genesis, as it appears three prior times and one further time later on in the book, it is the only time that it occurs in relation to a wedding.

While the celebration of a wedding through the throwing of a drinking event is not unusual, it does stand out, as it is not the only time we see someone get married in the book of Genesis. Actually, it's not even the only marriage of Yaakov to one of Lavan's daughters. So how come there is no drinking-party mentioned when Yaakov marries Lavan's other daughter?

Although it could simply be that

Lavan is excited for his older daughter to get married and somehow less excited for his other daughter to get married, or even possibly that the text highlights the excitement of the marriage of the first one, that maybe it's taken for granted that there is a drinking-party for the second daughter's getting married. But there's another possibility suggested by Rabbi Yizhak Karo (1458-1535).

Rabbi Karo writes that "שקביעותו עשה" על היין כדי לשכר אותו בעבור שלא ידע אם היא רחל או לאה that he set up the drinking-party around the wine in order to get Yaakov drunk so that he wouldn't know whether it was Rahel or Leah" with whom he was spending his first wedding night (תולדות יצחק). This is a fascinating assertion by Rabbi Karo because it is the deploying of

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wine in the service of sexual coercion. Of course, we first see wine deployed in for sexual confusion with Lot's daughters plying their father with loads of wine, so it's not surprising to see wine used in this way in the book of Genesis.

This makes a great deal of sense, especially considering the immediately subsequent verse: "וַיְהִי בְעֶרְב־וַיִּקַּח אֶת-לוֹאֵה בִּתּוֹ, וַיָּבֵא אֹתָהּ אֵלָיו; וַיְבֹא, אֵלֶיהָ [Yaakov], and he [Yaakov] came upon her" (Gen. 29:23), that amidst the festivities and drinking, Lavan was able to swap his daughters and Yaakov - in an excited and potentially drunken state - was not aware of which of the sisters he was spending that first night.

All due to Lavan's cleverness in setting-up the situation with a drinking-party 🍷🍷🍷

### Drinking Halakhah of the Week

“אם קבע לשתות לפני המזון אין צריך לברך על יין שבתוך המזון דייקן” שלפני המזון פוטר וכן יין של קידוש פוטר יין שבתוך המזון וכן המבדיל על השלחן פוטר היין שבתוך המזון If one is having a drinking session prior to a meal, one does not need to bless upon the wine within the meal, since the wine before the meal exempts it. And similarly, kiddush wine exempts wine within the meal; and, similarly, one who makes havdalah at a table exempts the wine within the meal of that comes afterwards” (שו"ע או"ח קע"ד:ד)

This *halakhah* certainly makes things simpler for drinking sessions, especially those that have meals going on around them, in that one need not keep worrying on needing to make further blessings on the wine one's drinking.



### This Week's Weekly Podcast/Video Episode 🎧🎥



This week's podcast/video episode is "Wine in the Mishnah" featuring Prof. Rabbi Avraham Walfish, available at

<http://jewishdrinking.com/beverages/wine/wine-in-the-mishnah-with-rabbi-dr-avraham-walfish/>

If you are or know of someone who struggles with alcohol abuse, alcoholism, or other substance abuse, there are resources out there to help. You can check out <http://jewishdrinking.com/alcoholabuse/>

## “Because man does not live on bread alone” (Deut. 8.3)

JewishDrinking.com is a new project, begun in the fall of 2019 to serve as the #1 resource for texts, wisdom, and more on drinking in the Jewish tradition. With source sheets, weekly parashah sheets, weekly podcast/video episodes with guests, articles, and more, JewishDrinking.com seeks to shed light on this human activity. If you have comments, questions, suggestions, on either this parashah sheet and/or the website, please email [Drew@JewishDrinking.com](mailto:Drew@JewishDrinking.com) – ideas are welcome! *Le'chaim!*