

מדרש Midrash

ON GENESIS 9:20

A person's title can rise or fall based on their deeds

Bereshit Rabbah 36:3

Noah, entering the vineyard rather than planting something constructive, descended from the dignity of being called a "righteous man" to the lesser status of "man of the soil" — a decline shared by Cain and Uziyahu, each enthusiastic about the soil yet ultimately unproductive. By contrast, Moshe (Moses) rose in stature, moving from "an Egyptian man" to "the man of God," showing that one's ultimate designation reflects one's deeds. The planting of the vineyard itself was fraught with spiritual danger, as the demon Shemadon warned Noah against trespassing into his domain, foreshadowing the peril of wine that follows. [AI SUMMARY](#)



"Noah, man of the soil, began, and he planted a vineyard" (Genesis 9:20). "Noah, man of the soil, began [vayahel]" – he became profaned and unholy [hulin]. Why? "And he planted a vineyard." Should he not have planted something else, that was constructive, a fig tree branch or an olive tree branch? Instead, "he planted a vineyard." From where did he have it [the grapevine shoot]? Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said: He brought in [to the ark] vine branches and saplings, fig branches, and olive branches. That is what is written: "Gather it for you" (Genesis 6:21) – a person gathers an item only if he needs it.

"Man of the soil" – there were three people who were enthusiastic about the soil, but ultimately nothing constructive came from them. They are: Cain, Noah, and Uziyahu. Cain – "Cain was a tiller of the soil" (Genesis 4:2); Noah – "a man of the soil"; Uziyahu – "he had farmers and vine growers in the mountains and on the fertile lands, as he was a lover of the soil" (II Chronicles 26:10). "Man of the soil" – he remade the surface of the soil; because of him the

soil was watered; he filled the entire surface of the soil. "Man of the soil" – he was a farmer, [called "man of the soil"] after his farming activities.

Rabbi Berekhya said: Moses was more beloved than Noah. Noah, after he was called "a righteous man" (Genesis 6:9), was called "a man of the soil." But Moses, after he was called "an Egyptian man" (Exodus 2:19) was called "the man of God" (Deuteronomy 33:1).

"He planted a vineyard" – when he was about to plant a vineyard, the demon Shemadon encountered him. He said to him: 'I have a partnership with you. However, be careful that you do not enter into my domain, and if you enter my domain, I will harm you.'

