

# The Rashi Database Project

**GOALS:** \* Show that all Rashid comments are spontaneous, instant, effortless reactions of a native speaker to the biblical text.

\*This is accomplished by skillful English translations instantly suggesting the Rashi comment to the reader

**PUBLICATION:** [www.Rashibyomi.com/The\\_Rashi\\_Database\\_Project.htm](http://www.Rashibyomi.com/The_Rashi_Database_Project.htm) from the Rashi website [www.Rashiyomi.com](http://www.Rashiyomi.com)

**MAIN BIBLIOGRAPHY:** DT = Doctoral Thesis ([www.Rashiyomi.com/Rashibook.htm](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/Rashibook.htm),

MG=Modern Grammar with Applications to Rashid ([www.Rashiyom.com/Rashibook2.htm](http://www.Rashiyom.com/Rashibook2.htm) )}

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## VERSION NUMBER: Version 4

### **PESHAT: THE SPONTANEOUS REACTION OF NATIVE SPEAKERS FAMILIAR WITH WORD NUANCES**

#### **WHAT IS NEW IN THIS ISSUE**

- This parshah begins the legal portion of the Torah. We start off easily. We analyze the variety of ways of how laws may be inferred from repeated verses

**VERSES:** Ex12-21a, Ex12-21b, Ex12-22d

**Biblical text:**

Ex12-21a, b	Verbs used	Remainder of verse
First half	Drag (i.e. designate) or(1)	
2 <sup>nd</sup> hand	acquire (literally <i>take</i> )	Herd animals by your families and slaughter the Passover offerings

**Rashi text:** (1) The biblical hebrew uses the prefix *vav* which normally indicates *conjunction* but can also refer to other connectives such as *disjunctive*. Rashi rejects

Drag (designate) and acquire herd animals by your families and slaughter the Passover since it violates sequence: First you acquire and then you designate. Grammarians call this the *sequential and*. Hence the Rashi text interpreting it with an *or* instead of an *and*:

Drag (designate) herd animals (For the Passover offering) *provided* you own such animals;  
If you don't so own, acquire them

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Biblical text: Ex12-22b

	Verb (Activity)	Indirect argument
First half	Take a hyssop bundle and dip it into	the blood in the vessel(1)
Second half	And touch it to the lintel and two doorposts from	the blood in the vessel (1)

Rashi Text (Notes): (1)Rashi explains why the phrase *from the blood in the utensil* is repeated

- If the verse stated it only once, I would think that it suffices to have one dip and then 3 placements (on the lintel and two doorposts)
- By placing the phrase twice in the verse, there is emphasis that each *placement* should come from a separate dipping of the hyssop into the utensil with blood.

VERSE ID	Text of Biblical Verse	Hebrew Word	Figure of Speech	Brief Explanation
Ex10-01b	<i>I hardened Pharaoh's heart in order to establish (lit. place) these miracles in his mind</i>		Hypernymy	<i>Rashi translates the Hebrew word used in the text as meaning place. But place is a parent category (hypernym) of which place in foundation (i.e. establish) or root is a child category (hyponym). Rashi tends to translate children (hyponyms) using parents (hypernyms) since he was addressing a population with poor language ability</i>
Ex10-02a	<i>So, you can tell your children how I teased Egypt</i>		Conjugations	<i>The root <b>Ayin Lamed Lamed</b> in the active conjugation means to abuse (Rashi cites several verses). In the hitpa'el conjugation it means to tease: Teasing means more than abuse since teasing implies to respond to any screams with the exact opposite (Rashi brings the teasing of Bilam of his donkey in Nu22-19 as an example)</i>
Ex10-03a	<i>How long will you refuse to be responsive to me</i>		Root meaning	<i>The root <b>Ayin Lamed Hey</b> has a fundamental meaning of answer and respond. As in English (using synecdoche) we obtain an additional meaning of responsiveness connoting responding positively. God says to Pharaoh how long will you refuse to be responsive positively to My demands</i>

<b>Ex10-05a</b>	<i>The locust will cover the land; you won't be able to see the land's form</i>	Metonymy	<i>From the Hebrew word used meaning eye we obtain (by Metonymy) items associated with seeing such as the sight of something or the form of something.</i>
<b>Ex10-08a</b>	<i>Moses and Aaron were returned to Pharaoh</i>	Conjugations	<i>The Hebrew word in the text is conjugated in the Hafal conjugation a very rare conjugation. The Hafal conjugation means passive vs. active and is the passive form of the hifil conjugation. The root used <b>Shin-Vav-Beth</b> means to return; in the hifil conjugation which refers to causation, the root means to bring someone back to return them. Therefore, in the Hafal conjugation the root would refer to someone being brought back, to being returned. Rashi explains this passive by noting "In other words some (unknown) messenger returned them "</i>
<b>Ex12-12a</b>	<i>God commanded Moses to tell Aaron to waive his rod over Egypt for Locust</i>	Prepositional Connectives	<i>The prefix Hebrew letter Beth usually means in but can also mean by, for, on,</i>
<b>Ex12-12b</b>	<i>The east wind brought the locust</i>	Synecdoche	<i>The compass position east is named prior because it is the prior place of the sun's arrival every day (The sun rises in the East and sets in the West). The verse speaks about the prior wind and Rashi translates this phrase as meaning the East wind</i>
<b>Ex12-15a</b>	<i>The locust ate everything: There was no verdure left in Egypt</i>	Synecdoche	<i>As in English vegetation is called by its color greens). This uses synecdoche since vegetation is a good example of the color green.</i>
<b>Ex12-22b</b>	<i>There was darkness in Egypt for a triplet of days</i>	Construct	<i>Rashi explains that since the Hebrew is in the grammatical construct the phrase means a triplet of days not three days</i>

<b>Ex12-21a,b</b>	<i>There will be darkness in Egypt, a night darkness</i>		Grammar	<i>The Hebrew root Aleph-Mem-Shin means yesterday night. In this verse the verb functions adjectivally describing the type of darkness, a night darkness. Rashi also points out some technical points about verb conjugation: Because the aleph letter in the root is silent it sometimes drops in the conjugations. Rashi gives other examples where letters drop. Rashi cites an alternate approach to this verb from the Midrash which however is ungrammatical, unnecessary, and an exaggeration. The midrash views the root as Mem-Shin, to grope, or to feel and explains that the darkness was so thick it could be felt. (However, darkness can't be felt, and this is a homiletic exaggeration)</i>
<b>Ex11-02a</b>	<i>Please speak to the Jews</i>		Synecdoche	<i>Rashi explains that the Hebrew na whose primary meaning is roast, also means please. This is similar to the English idiom butter him up referring to asking someone something by first flattering and pleasing the person asked. The corresponding Hebrew idiom is to roast yourself well-done to the person asked.</i>
<b>Ex11-01a</b>	<i>Pharoh will let you go completely</i>		Denominatives	<i>Technically denominatives refer to a noun becoming a verb. In this verse a verb becomes an adverb. The verb to complete is used by the verse to mean completely.</i>
<b>Ex12-21c</b>	<i>take by <b>families</b></i>		Specification	<i>Rashi explains that <b>by family</b> means by <b>father household</b> (i.e. <b>patrilineal descent</b>)</i>
<b>Ex12-22a</b>	<i>take a bundle of hyssops</i>	<i>ayzov</i>	Form	<i>Rashi explains that <b>ayzov</b> means <b>hyssop</b>. The root <b>zayin-beth</b> primarily refers to an <b>oozing of liquid</b>. In the word <b>ayzov</b> it refers to a plant, the hyssop, which appears to ooze out on walls, that is, a plant that just pops up wherever there are other trees.</i>
<b>Ex12-22b</b>	<i>take a bundle of hyssops</i>	<b>agudah</b>	Specification	<b>Agudah</b> means <b>bundle</b> ; Rashi quantifies this numerically: <b>At least three</b>

<p><b>Ex12-22c</b></p>	<p><i>dip (the bundle of hyssops) into the (slaughtered blood in the ) utensil</i></p>	<p><b>saf</b></p>	<p>Reading literacy</p>	<p><b>Saf</b> is a word meaning utensil (Rashi cites other verses using it). Most probably the meaning of this word comes from its root, <b>Samech-Vav-Pay</b>, which means <b>end</b>. Thus, the <b>saf</b> indicates the end of a long process of obtaining the animal, prepping it, slaughtering it, and gathering the blood in a utensil. In this verse, Rashi engages in reading literacy; although the slaughter of the animal is mentioned, the gathering of blood in a utensil is not explicitly mentioned (and has to be inferred from context). The distinction between inference and explicit fact is important for reading literacy and Rashi makes explicit that <b>saf</b> refers to the utensil thereby making the reader aware that a utensil gathered the blood of the just-slaughtered animal even if the verse did not explicitly mention it.</p>
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