

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 from the Rashi website www.Rashiyomi.com

MAIN BIBLIOGRAPHY: DT = Doctoral Thesis (www.Rashiyomi.com/Rashibook.htm,

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

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT: (c) Rashiyomi.com 2026, Dr. Russell Jay Hendel, www.Rashiyomi.com/copyrights.htm

ACCESS: The materials on this website are free; We accept no donations from anyone. Citation with Attribution is required.

DATE/AUTHOR: Apr 10, 2026, Russell Jay Hendel DSJS, Ph.D.

VERSION NUMBER: Version 4

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

WHAT IS NEW IN THIS ISSUE

- We have settled on a final form for these Rashi digests: Each issue will have *quickies* which are Rashi comments that can be explained in a few lines and one non-quickie Rashi which will typically be a controversy of Rashi and Ramban, a study of Rashi and Midrash, for psychological analysis of a passage.
- Today's non-quickie Rashi examines the 3 passages dealing with the death of Aaron's sons. These three verses outline 6 stages of depression. This analysis should be very informative not only to counselors, psychologists, and pastors, but also to you, the person in the street who seeks guidelines on how to cope with causes of depression. This week's Rashi comment is taken from my doctoral thesis and from a 40 page follow up article discussing Rashi's unique approach to exegesis.

RASHI ID: *Lv10-02a Lv16-02a Lv16-02b Lv09-07b, Lv09-07c, Lv09-07d, Lv09-07x, Lv09-11a, Lv09-12a, Lv09-15, Lv09-15b, Lv09-16a, Lv09-17a, Lv09-17b, Lv09-22a, Lv09-22b*

Rashi ID: *Lv10-02a Lv16-02a Lv16-02b*

The following, part of my doctoral thesis, and published in my article, *Enhancing Pedagogy and Biblical Exegesis with Emotional Intelligence*, which appeared in the, **Journal of Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics** (2024) 22(6), 78-112, may be accessed at <https://doi.org/10.54808/JSCI.22.06.78>

Sometimes the bible will communicate hierarchies of principles by providing multiple accounts of the same incident. This delivery method is found in the three biblical passages depicting the

death of Aaron, the High Priest's sons, who died on the very day that the Temple was inaugurated. Notice the disparate emphasis in these different passages which are not listed together but are in fact in two different books of the bible.

- **Lev. 10:1-11:** Aaron's sons die at the hands of God after offering incense voluntarily. The next biblical paragraph prohibits priests from serving in the Temple while drunk.
- **Lev. 16:1-2** describes their death as due to overfamiliarity with the Divine; approaching the Divine in the Temple with offerings cannot be done at all times but requires proper preparation.
- **Nu 3:4** emphasizes that Aaron's children who died left no children.

There are several approaches to such *collections* of alternate reports. Some secular bible scholars view the bible as coming from multiple sources and later unified. They point to these *collections* of disparate texts with alternative emphasis as supporting evidence. Modern scholars, not necessarily taking sides on the source nature of the bible, emphasize plurality of opinion. The multiple sources justify multiple perspectives and such multiple emphasis illustrating plurality of approach is intrinsically good and welcome.

However, plurality while normally praiseworthy can be bad if the multiple opinions obscure the underlying unifying theme and stages. This particular case is illustrative. The disparate passages and descriptions naturally give rise to a six-stage description of depressive episodes presented in the Table below.

As in the other examples presented in this section, the hierarchy of stages presented in the Table below facilitates the pastor, the psychologist, and the counselor from avoiding blame and being constructive when dealing with clients. A simple hypothetical example is illustrative: A person who comes to a pastor with an alcoholism problem is not blamed; rather the pastor skillfully explores Stage I and II activity as presented in Table 9: *Are you over ambitious? Even if you have elevated expectations have you sought friendship in a group that supports your ambitions?* The emotional intelligence, the sensitivity to where the person is at and a desire to relate to the person where they are, emphasizes and encourages constructive practices; the avoidance of blame is blatant, welcome, and a direct consequence of the biblical hierarchy. For the Bible and the pastor who follows the Bible's advice is not interested in blame but rather in classification. What stage is the person at? Can we avoid advancement to the next stage? Can the person after examining his goals and circumstances perhaps lower the stage which he currently occupies.

Table: Six Biblical Stages Connected with Depression

Stage	Brief Description	Supporting Verses
I	Over ambitious; elevated expectations	All 3 texts refer to Aaron's sons both by name and as <i>Aaron son's</i> emphasizing a nuance, they wanted promotion after their father's retirement or death.
II	Haughtiness - lack of socialization	The excessive brooding on elevated expectations (Stage I) can lead to social isolation. This is nuanced in Nu. 3:4 which mentions their lack of children (apparently because they didn't attempt to get married; no one was good enough for them!)
III	Depression	Depression is a natural consequence of voluntary social isolation (Stage II)
IV	Alcoholism	Depression often leads to substance abuse such as alcoholism. This is nuanced in Lev 10:1-11 (Immediately after the death of Aaron's sons we are given the biblical prohibition that priests who are drunk should not serve in the temple).
V	Unwanted behavior	As is well known, alcoholism often leads to unwanted behaviors. This is nuance in both Lev 10:1-11 and Lev 16:1-2 which mention offering inappropriately.
VI	Deleterious consequences	Unwanted behaviors frequently have deleterious consequences; in this case, it was their sudden death.

QUICKIES

QUICKY?	VERSE ID	Text of Biblical Verse	Hebrew Word	Rashi Rule / Figure of Speech	Rule Support	Brief Explanantion	Notes
Quicky	Lv09-07b	Moses said to Aaron: Go to the altar and make <i>your sin offering</i>	<i>Cha-Tau-The-Chah</i>	Cross Reference	Lv09-02	Aaron in Lv09-07 is told to do <i>his sin offering</i> which cross references Lv09-02 describing his sin offering	

Quicky	Lv09-07c	Moses said to Aaron: Go to the altar ...and make <i>your elevation offering</i>	<i>O-Lah-The-Chah</i>	Cross Reference	Lv09-02	Aaron in Lv09-07 is told to do <i>his elevation offering</i> which cross references Lv09-02 describing his sin offering
Quicky	Lv09-07d	Moses said to Aaron: Go to the altar ...and make <i>the nation's offering</i>	<i>Kor-ban Ha-Am</i>	Cross Reference	Lv09-03	Aaron in Lv09-07 is told to do the nation's offering which cross references Lv09-03 describing the nation offering
Quicky	Lv09-07x	...Take a goat for a sin offering and a <i>one-year old calf</i> and sheep for an elevation offering	<i>e-gel va-cheves ben shana</i>	Rabbi Ishmael		The Rabbi Ishmael style rules are guidelines on how to interpret details in paragraphs: Are they one time details, or are they universal details applicable to all cases. For example, if a book in one place speaks about the <i>red ball</i> but every other place speaks about <i>the ball</i> , the Rabbi Ishmael rules explain that from the one passage we infer that <i>all balls are red</i> . In this case, <i>calves</i> vs. <i>oxen</i> are mentioned frequently in offerings. This is the only verse where the phrase <i>one year old calf is mentioned from which we infer that calf throughout the bible means a one-year old calf</i> .
Quicky	Lv09-11a	The flesh and skin [of the sin offering] were <i>burnt outside the camp</i>	<i>Mi-ChuTz La-Ma-Cha-NeH</i>	Cross Reference		Rashi performs a data query obtaining every sin offering mentioned in the Bible. He points out that the sin offering mentioned in Lv09 is the only sin offering in the entire bible where the skin and flesh were burnt outside the camp
Quicky	Lv09-12a	He slaughtered the elevation offering and Aaron's children <i>extended</i> to him the blood	<i>Va Yam Tzi U</i>	Conjugations	Causative	<i>Va Yam Tzi U</i> from the root <i>mat-zah</i> to find is conjugated in this verse in the causative and means to <i>extend something to someone</i> . The idea is that when you extend an object for someone to take you are causing that person to find it.
Quicky	Lv09-15a	He [Aaron the High Priest] took the nation's offering...he slaughtered it <i>and sin-offeringed it</i>	<i>Va Ye Chat Ay Hu</i>	Denominative		Just as from <i>hospital</i> we obtain the activity <i>to hospitalize</i> , so too, from the noun-phrase <i>sin-offering</i> , we obtain the verb <i>to sin-offering</i> that is to offer a sin offering.
Quicky	Lv09-15b	He [Aaron the High Priest] took the nation's offering...he ... <i>sin-offeringed it</i> like the first one	<i>Ka-Ri-ShoN</i>	Cross Reference	Lv09-02,08:11	Lv09-15 says that the sin offering of the nation was done like the <i>first</i> sin-offering. Rashi clarifies that the <i>first</i> sin offering refers to the one mentioned in Lv09-02, 08:11
Quicky	Lv09-16a	He [Aaron the High Priest] took the elevation offering and processed it <i>according to procedure</i>	<i>Ka-MiSh-Pat</i>	Cross Reference	Lv01	Lv09-16 says that the elevation offering was done <i>according to procedure</i> . Rashi clarifies that <i>procedure</i> refers to Lv01 which describes these procedures.
Quicky	Lv09-17a	He [Aaron the High Priest] took the Minchah offering <i>and filled his fist with it</i>	<i>Va-Ye-Ma-LaY</i>	Cross Reference	Lv02-02, Lv05-12	Lv09-17 speaks about <i>filling one's hand with the Minchah</i> . Rashi explains this phrase as referring to the ritual of <i>filling one's fist with the incense of the minchah offering</i> . Rashi bases this interpretation on Lv02-02 and Lv05-12 one of which uses the word <i>fill</i> also.

Quicky	Lv09-17b	He [Aaron the High Priest] took the Minchah...and offered it <i>after</i> the morning offering	<i>Mil-le-Vad</i>	Prepositions	<i>Mil-le-VaD</i>	The verse says that certain offerings were offered <i>after</i> the morning offering. Rashi clarifies that the <i>biblical word used for after</i> , Mil-le-Vad, which normally means besides here means after
Quicky	Lv09-22a	Aaron lifted his hands towards the nation and <i>blessed them</i>	<i>Va-Ye-Va-Re-CheM</i>	Cross Reference	Nu06-22:27	The verse simply says that Aaron blessed them without telling us the content of the blessing. Using a cross reference to Nu06-22:27 Rashi conjectures that Aaron blessed them with the Priestly blessing.
Quicky	Lv09-22b	Aaron...blessed them [the nation] [and then] <i>went down</i> from [the place] of the sin offering, elevation offering, and peace offering	<i>Va-Yay-Red</i>	Reading Literacy		This is the type of inference tested on reading literacy tests. It is similar to a paragraph speaking about a child walking in a puddle and then changing his socks; you have to infer without explicit statement, that puddles are wet and therefore the socks need change. So too in this narrative: You have to know that altar service was done on the altar top which was several dozen feet above the ground. Hence when the officiating priest completes the service he <i>goes down from the altar</i> .

