

**The 10 RashiYomi Rules**  
***Their presence in Rashis in a Special Passover Issue***  
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**GOALS**

*The goal of the Weekly Rashi Digest is to use the weekly Torah portion to expose students at all levels to the ten major methods of Rashi's commentary. Continual weekly exposure to these ten major methods facilitate the acquisition, familiarity, and facility with the major exegetical methods.*

*Hi*

*The RashiYomi Corporation wishes a joyful and happy Passover to all its members. In this special issue we review sweet Torah nuggets useful for your Passover Sedarim and Meals. We hope you find them useful.*

*The Rashi Newsletter is pleased to resume publication Parshat Acharay-Moth*

*I will continue to send out the Parshah over a week in advance.*

*Russell Jay Hendel, President, Rashiyomi*

*As usual, when making transitions in the Rashi Newsletter we welcome positive and negative comments as well as requests. Please send all comments to [RashiYomi@GMail.Com](mailto:RashiYomi@GMail.Com).*

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Verse Code	Verse text	Rashi Rule	Rashi Subrule	Rashi Rule code	Derivation of Rashi Comment from Biblical Text Using the Rashi Rule and Subrule
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## Database *Daily Rashi* Ex10-01a The Ten Plagues - Passover 2019

**Background:** The Bible describes the 8th plague, locusts.

**Biblical Text:** *We present below the introduction to the first 9 plagues. This ticktacktoe matrix is due to Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch and will be used to explain the Rashi.*

Plague Numbers	Verses	R. Hirsch, Link to Gn15-13	Phrase 1	Phase 2	Phrase 3
#1,4,7 Blood, mixtures, hail	Ex07-15 Ex08-16 Ex09-13	[God to Abraham] Your children will be non-citizens	Go to Pharaoh morn Get up at morn Get up at morn	He goes out towards the Nile He goes out towards the Nile	Stand towards him Stand before him Stand before Pharaoh
2,5,8 Frogs, Plague, Locusts	Ex07-26 Ex09-01 Ex10-01	They will be enslaved	Come to Pharaoh Come to Pharaoh Come to Pharaoh	And tell him And tell him For I have hardened his heart	Thus says God Thus says God So you can tell how I played with Egypt
3,6,9 lice, boils, darkness	Ex08-12 Ex09-08 Ex10-21	They will be tortured	No intro No intro No intro	No intro No intro No intro	No intro No intro No intro
10 First born plague	Ex12-29:36	I [God] will judge the nation enslaving them			

For purposes of presentation, this table is abridged. For example, in plagues 1,4,7 the phrase "Thus says God" is present. However, for purposes of *this* Rashi the above table is sufficient.

**Rashi Text:** God told Moses and Aaron to *come to Pharaoh* in order to warn him.

**Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter:** We owe this entire explanation to Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch. The sole contribution of the Rashi Newsletter is to make explicit that the **Database method** is used. The **Database method** consists of multiple parallelisms where a theme, in this case the plagues, is traced through the Bible in several verses. The theme is then compared for commonality and differences.

## Contribution of the Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch: R.

Hirsch points out that plagues 3,6,9 never have an introduction. R. Hirsch concludes that these plagues were given without warning. R. Hirsch further formulates this as *these plagues were given to inflict pain on the Egyptians as punishment for the way they treated the Jews*.

Contrastively, plagues 2,5,8 begin with a *come to Pharoh* and a warning *Thus says God*. Furthermore, in the 8th plague there is an elaborate passage (truncated in the table above). The elaborate passage says *for I have hardened his heart....in order you tell your children and grandchildren how I played with Egypt*.

Thus, indeed, not only plague 8, but plagues 2,5,8 have an element of warning with the phrase *Thus says God*.

Although not the subject of this Rashi, plagues 1,4,7 confront Pharoh by "the water" which we have translated as the Nile in the above table. As is well-known, the Nile was the Egyptian god. Plagues 1,4,7 also use the phrase *stand to him, stand before him* emphasizing a conflict of the Jewish God and the Egyptian god.

**Comments:** The **Rashi Newsletter** emphasizes the raw **Database method** and the contrastive commonalities of plagues 2-5-8, 1-4-7 and 3-6-9. This is sufficient for explaining the Rashi. When Rashi says *warn him*, he is not only referring to the 8th plague but

- He is referring to the 2nd and 5th plague
- And contrasting to the 3rd, 6th and 9th plague.

Thus, R. Hirsch has made a solid contribution to the simple meaning of the text. However, R. Hirsch as usual goes further. He points out that

- Plagues 3,6,9 emphasize pain, punishment without warning
- Plagues 1,4,7 emphasize a confrontation with the Egyptian god, an emphasis that the Egyptians do not own their land but are sojourners before God
- Finally, plagues 2,5,8 emphasize a coming into Pharoh's house, an invasion of privacy and resultant humiliation.

R. Hirsch then ties this to the famous biblical promise to Abraham in the treaty of covenants, *sojourners will your descendants be in a strange land, they will be slaves (humiliation) and tortured. I will judge the nation they are enslaved to; And afterwards they will go out with great wealth (Gn15-13)*. So, Rabbi Hirsch sees the 10 plagues as retaliation for the Egyptian servitude. Each of the stages that Egypt put the Jews through – *non-citizenship, humiliation, pain* - were responded to with a triplet of plagues.

Brilliant? But is this the simple meaning of the text? It is certainly ingenious. I think the emphasis should be that Rashi uses the **Database rule**. However, Rashi never gives the definitive answer on how the parallelisms and contrasts *should be interpreted*. Perhaps there is no definitive answer. But the *fact* of the **Parallelism method** and **Database method** is nevertheless objective and the basis of the Rashi comment.

If one understands this last paragraph, one immediately understands that Rashi and even R. Hirsch are giving the straightforward meaning of the text. True, *R. Hirsch adds some added speculations* but let us not forget that he also gives the simple meaning.

As a final thought, I emphasize that R. Hirsch's approach to Rashi is correct. Rashi was not just giving comments, he was giving method. R. Hirsch correctly extended these methods to all 10 plagues. This gives richer understanding of Rashi and is how all Rashis should be approached. If you really understand this beautiful and deep R. Hirsch, then you should take each Rashi and attempt to generalize it.

## **Database *Daily Rashi* Ex13-5d:8a,b:9a:14b The Four Sons - Passover 2017**

**Background:** Everyone is familiar with the famous passage from the Passover

Haggadah, *The Torah speaks about 4 tendencies in children: wisdom, cynicism, simplicity and apathy*. This famous passage occurs in the Jerusalem Talmud and the Mechiltah, a midrashic compilation on Exodus. Notice the three underlined words in the italic citation: tendencies, cynicism and citation.

Two of these translations are due to Rabbi Dr. Soloveitchick. So, let me share with you what he said (We will then derive it from the verses).

- The usual translation is *the son who can't ask*. But if that is the case, the *simple* son and the son *who can't ask* are the same. It doesn't make sense that the Torah would speak about four children two of whom are the same.

Fortunately, in Hebrew, the word *know* also means *care* and *appreciate*. Consider the Biblical *know* which refers to *appreciation and caring* not cognitive knowledge. Thus, we translate, *who can't ask* as *who doesn't care to ask, apathetic*.

- Let us probe deeper. Are there only four types of children. Aren't there an infinite variety of children. I therefore suggest that the Torah was not listing children types but children tendencies. That is the Torah advises us that each child has some type of mixture of these four tendencies, *wisdom, simplicity, cynicism, apathy*. So, a particular child may have wisdom in thinking, but simplicity in social matters, and may have mixtures of *apathy* and *cynicism* towards certain types of authority. The child is understood as a *mixture* of these tendencies.

- The translation *cynicism* instead of *wicked* is due to me. Why? Because the verses seem to say it. See below

**Biblical Text:** *We present below the four biblical verses discussing the requirement to tell children about the Exodus on Passover. For each biblical text we mention four parameters. These parameters will be used to classify the child type.*

- Is singular vs plural language used?
- Is there a question asked?
- What word designates the question: ask or say?
- What words does the child use to describe laws?

Verse	Son	Text of Verse	Ask	Mitzvoth	He / They
Dt06-20:21	Wise	And when your son <u>asks</u> you in time to come, saying, What do the <u>testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments</u> , mean, which the Lord our God has commanded you? Then you shall say to your son, We were Pharaohs slaves in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand;	Asks	Testimony, statutes, judgments	He
Ex12-26:27	Cynical	And it shall come to pass, when your children when <u>they</u> shall <u>say</u> to you, What do you mean by this <u>service</u> ? That you shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lords Passover, who passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians, and saved our houses. And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.	Say	Service	they
Ex13-08:09	Apathetic	And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did to me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign to you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes, that the Lords Torah may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand has the Lord brought you out of Egypt.			Him
Ex13-14	Simple	And it shall be when your son <u>asks</u> you in time to come, saying, What is <u>this</u> ? that you shall say to him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of slavery;	asks	this	he

Using this table we see the following two dimensions:

- **Respect-cynicism:** This is indicated by *saying* vs. *asking* vs. *apathy* (silence)
- **Wisdom-simplicity:** This is seen by the choice of words indicating expertise in the subject matter of Jewish law. A child who uses pronouns *this* is simple; a child who uses detailed words like *service, testimonies, statutes and civil ordinances* is wise.

Using these dimensions, we can classify the children types as follows:

- **Wise son** - i) Wisdom as indicated by detailed words + ii) Respect
- **Cynical son (Wicked)** - ii) Wisdom as indicated by detailed words + ii) cynicism (says, vs asks, question)
- **Apathetic son (Who can't ask)** -i) Lack of wisdom (no question) +ii) lack of respect (as indicated by no interest in questioning)
- **Simple son** - i) Lack of wisdom indicated by use of pronoun, *this*, + ii) respect

In my article, *The Educational Pedagogy of the Four Sons*, **Shofar**, Summer 2004, 22(4), I show that the Bible proposes a student two-dimensional personality model similar to the four-dimensional personality model of Myers-Briggs. The Myers-Briggs personality model is widely used in the workplace and gives rise to 16 personality types. The Biblical student personality model is two-dimensional and gives rise to four student types. You may access the above article at [www.Rashiyomi.com/thefoursons.pdf](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/thefoursons.pdf)

## **Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter:** The Rashi Newsletter

contributes to the five Rashis on the four sons by explaining that Rashi was using the **Database method** which seeks **parallelism** between multiple verses. These parallelisms create nuances which indicate student-type. Thus, for example:

- Two of the children *ask* their question; one child does not ask; one child (cynically) *says* his question. Upon seeing such a distinction, one naturally is led to classifying the children either as respectfully asking, cynically saying, or apathetically not asking.
- Similarly, a comparison of the four children shows various levels in use of words indicating laws. We know today that one of the strong attributes of subject matter experts is the wealth of language available. Thus, the children using detailed words like *service*, *testimony*, *statutes*, *civil ordinances* are classified as wise; the child using *this* is classified as simple.

One notices that the wicked/cynical son is the only son who uses the plural vs the singular: *when they ask*. The Bible is indicating that one of the problems of the wicked son is their belonging to a group that influences them.

We have left to do two things: Discuss the Rashi text and discuss the language of the Passover Haggadah. Here are the points in the Rashi text:

- Rashi identifies the above four verses as describing the four sons
- Rashi identifies the texts above as referring to the *wicked*, *who can't ask* / *who doesn't care to ask*, *simple and wise son*. (Notice: I have changed *wicked* to *cynical* to be more consistent

with the biblical *says his question*. However, Rashi followed the language of the Jerusalem Talmud and Mechiltah.

- Rashi spends time on the apathetic son. Rashi identifies the biblical approach to respond to the apathetic son as outreach through symbolic means. For example, Rashi interprets the biblical *because of this God did for me when I left Egypt* to refer to the *Passover lamb, the matzoh and the bitter herbs* which are on the table. Here Rashi uses the **Meaning-Pronoun** method: Whenever the word *this* occurs Rashi says it refers to some specific pointing, here it points to what is on the table. Notice that what is pointed to - the Passover lamb, the matzoh and the bitter herbs - are all symbolic commandments. Also, notice that Rashi interprets the biblical *And it shall be for a sign on your hand* to refer to the Tefillin which contains the story of the Exodus. Thus, we see that Rashi interprets the response to the apathetic son as referring to outreach through symbolic commandments.
- Rashi also makes some points on responses to the other children. Instead of focusing on them we shall explain the Haggadah text.

The Haggadah Text: It is well-known that the Haggadah text does as follows:

- Simple son: The Haggadah advises to responding to him with the Biblical answer: *With a strong hand God took us out of Egypt*.
- Apathetic son: The Haggadah advises responding to him by *opening up to him*. This is consistent with the gentle symbolic approach in the Biblical text that we outlined above.

So far so good. But three well-known problems emerge with the other two sons.

- (1) Wicked son - The Haggadah identifies him as the wicked son because they ask *what is this service to you*. The Haggadah continues *to you* vs. *to us*. If he had been there, he would not have been redeemed.

But this creates a problem. The wise son also says *What are the testimonies, statutes and civil ordinances that God has commanded you*. So, the wise son and the wicked son both use the

pronoun *to you*. Why is one son called/classified as wicked, but the other is not?

However, this problem goes away when we inspect the Table at the beginning of this Digest. The wicked son chapter is in the plural reflecting his belonging to a group that corrupts him. Thus, when the Haggadah focuses on the word *to you* the emphasis is *not on the word itself* but rather *on the grammatical category of the word, the plural*. In other words, the Haggadah classifies him as wicked because of the cynical group to whom he belongs.

- (2) What about the answer to the Wicked son: *Tell him because of this God did to me when we left Egypt, to me and to you, if you had been there you wouldn't have been*

*redeemed*. But the underlined verse comes from the chapter on the apathetic son. What is it doing with the wicked son chapter?

But this is not a problem if we recall the two-dimensional analysis we gave. Both the wicked and apathetic son belong to the *cynical* category. So, the verses in each of them are shared and apply to each other. Let us use parallelism on the verses in the wicked and apathetic chapters. The parallelism is summarized in the table below.

<b>Ex12-27</b>	Wicked (cynical)	<i>When God smote the Egyptians</i>	<i>And saved us</i>
<b>Ex13-08</b>	Apathetic (who doesn't ask)		<i>God did for me when I left Egypt</i>

Notice how the wicked verse has two parts: i) smote Egyptian and ii) saved us while the apathetic-verse has only one part ii) God saved me. So again: The Haggadah should not be interpreted literally as referring to *us* vs *you* but rather in the wicked verse as seen by the parallelism, there is an added emphasis, not present in the apathetic verse, *saved us* but *smote the Egyptians*. This is also Rashi's comment on **Ex13-08**: *We have a hint here to the response to the wicked*. The hint is that one half of the two - part verse is absent. In summary: The wicked and apathetic sons share cynicism: To both sons we must emphasize *God saved me/us*. However, we also address the group of the wicked son and explain that by belonging to another group he forfeits his right to be saved.

One can still protest: But the Haggadah does not say that. It seems to mix up responses to the apathetic son with the response to the wicked son. The response to this is the language used by the Haggadah: When the response verse cited is in the chapter of that son the Haggadah simply cites the verse. But when the response verse cited belongs to another son's chapter the Haggadah introduces this verse with the phrase *you also tell him (af atah omer lo)*. The phrase *you also tell him* indicates that *besides* the biblical answer, *also* cite verses from the apathetic son (which we can do since the apathetic and cynical share cynicism).

- (3) This also explains why the response of the Haggadah to the wise son uses the biblical response to the wicked son: *This is a Passover sacrifice*. The Haggadah says *teach the wise son the laws of Passover (until) you do not eat any Passover meat after the afikoman is*

*eaten*. We have already explained that both the wise son and wicked son belong to the wisdom children since both use detailed words in their questions: *service* (wicked), *testimonies, statutes, civil ordinances*.

And as indicated above, the Haggadah introduces the answer with the keywords *you also*. So, the Haggadah says *you also answer him and tell him that we don't consume Passover after the afikoman*. In other words, *besides the biblical answer, you also cite from the answer to the wicked /cynical son who shares wisdom with the wise son*.

**Summary**: A quick review and summary:



- We used the **Rashi Database** method to analyze the four children chapters in terms of *word details, ask-say, plural-singular*. This gives rise to a two-dimensional student personality classification. Refer to the 2 tables at the top of this digest for this summary.
- The Haggadah uses both the Biblical questions and answers of the sons proper as well as the sons belonging to the same category. It uses the phrase *you also* to indicate that it is selecting phrases from another son who shares attributes with the given son.
- Rashi / Haggadah use words like *to you* and *for me* to indicate broad categories like *plural-singular* and *parallelism* (*smite Egyptian vs. save us*). Thus, we must hear the Rashi / Haggadah citations as referring to broad categories.
- Finally, there is considerable emphasis that outreach to the apathetic son is done through an emphasis on symbolic commandments.

The take away from this is how we approach education. Every child should be analyzed according to the two dimensions of *respect-cynicism* and *details-simplicity*. Such an analysis helps the teacher understand the child and help him or her grow. We especially note the example of the Lubavitcher Rebbe who in his enormous outreach efforts always, when dealing with the apathetic Jew, emphasized the symbolic, such as Tefillin, Lulav, and the Chanukah Menorah. This is fully consistent with the Biblical approach and perhaps explains his success.

## THE 10 RASHI RULE CATEGORIES / THE 30 RASHIRULE

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**I-REFERENCE:** Dt26-05d We went down to Egypt with a few people explained by Gn46-27: with 70 people

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**II-MEANING / Lexicography / Dictionary: EXAMPLE (Connectives)** KI means

IF,PERHAPS,RATHER,BECAUSE,WHEN,THAT (Rashi on Gn18-15a Gn24-33a ) **EXAMPLE (Nuances):** YDA means FAMILIAR, not KNOW (e.g. Dt34-10a) e.g. Gn04-01 Adam was FAMILIAR with his wife **EXAMPLE (Idioms)** ON THE FACE OF means DURING THE LIFETIME (Rashi on Nu03-04a Gn11-28a Ex20-03c Dt05-07a) **EXAMPLE (Synonyms)** Marchesheth means pot; Machavath means frying pan (Lv02-05a, 07a) **EXAMPLE (Homonyms)** SHAMAH can mean listen, hear, understand: (Gn42-23a) *They didn't appreciate that Joseph understood them* (Note: They knew he was listening) **EXAMPLE (Metonymy)** (Lv02-11a) *Don't offer ...any honey as sacrifices* RASHI: honey includes any sweet fruit juice

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**III-GRAMMAR: EXAMPLE:** BA-ah means CAME;ba-AH means COMING(Gn46-26a)

**EXAMPLE:** Hitpael conjugation has different rules if 1st root letter is Tzade (Gn44-16a)

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**IV-PARALLELISM:** (Ex20-04) Dont **POSSESS** the gods of others Dont **MAKE** idols RASHI: So both **POSSESS**ion & **MAKING** of idols are prohibited

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**V-CONTRADICTION:** (Nu04-03, Nu08-24a) Levites start Temple work at 25; Levites start temple work at 30. RASHI: They apprentice at 25 but start actual service at 30.

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**VI-STYLE: RABBI ISHMAEL RULES: EXAMPLE:** (Simple verses should be generalized): (Rashi Pesachim 6) (Dt25-04a) Dont **MUZZLE** an **OX** while **THRESHING** RASHI: Dont **STOP** any **WORKING ANIMAL** from eating

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**VII-FORMATTING: EXAMPLE (BOLD indicated by Repetition):** Ex12-09c) **COOK** it in water (So **COOKED**-**COOKED** is understood the same way bold is understood by modern reader) RASHI: Preferred to **COOK** it in water; But **COOK** it at all costs(Even if you don't have water) **EXAMPLE: (BULLETS indicated by Repeating keywords)** (Ex03-11a) Who am I - **THAT** I should go to Pharaoh - **THAT** I should take the Jews out of Egypt RASHI: Repeated word **THAT** creates **BULLET** effect - Pharaoh was a difficult king (Bullet one) - Jews were not yet ready for freedom (Bullet two) **EXAMPLE (Climax assumed in any Biblical list):** (Dt19-11a) If a man **HATES**, **SPIES**, **CONFRONTS** & **KILLS**. RASHI: Bible identifies 4 stages to murder(indicated by capped words)

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**VIII-DATABASE: EXAMPLE:** *God spoke to Moses to say over* introduces about 7 dozen biblical commandments; *God spoke to Aaron to say over* only introduces 2 commandments. RASHI: (Lv10-03b) Aaron was silent when his sons died because they served in the Temple drunk; hence he merited that the commandment prohibiting priests to work in the Temple drunk, was given to him

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**IX-NON VERSE: EXAMPLE:** (Use of Algebra)(Ex38-26b) *Temple donations of silver were 100 Kikar and 1775 Shekel from 630,550 half-shekels* RASHI: So one Kikar of silver = 3000 Shekel.

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**X: SYMBOLISM: EXAMPLE:** (Use of puns) Moses made a copper snake for people to look up to when bitten by snakes (so they should pray and recover) RASHI: (Nu21-09a) The Hebrew root for copper and snake are identical (Cf. The English *copperhead*) Moses made the metal snake copper colored to symbolize the snake