

# 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.Rashiyomi.com/The\\_Rashi\\_Database\\_Project.htm](http://www.Rashiyomi.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 2, 2025 (v1,2023)**

**THEME, THIS ISSUE:** *Rashi comments based on cross references to other verses. Cross-referencing is a major Biblical exegetical method; it is recognized by the Bible critics who call it intertextuality.*

**PESHAT: THE SPONTANEOUS REACTION TO SKILLFUL ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS**

**RASHI ID: Ex35-11a, Ex35-11b, Ex35-11c, Ex35-12a, Ex35-13a, Ex35-14a,**

**Ex35-14b, Ex35-14c, Ex35-15a, Ex35-17a, Ex35-17b, Ex35-18a, Ex35-18b, Ex35-19a, Ex31-10a**

**Biblical Text: Ex35-11:20** (*Rashi comments on the underlined words*)

11. The tabernacle, its tent, and its covering, its clasps, and its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets,
12. The ark, and its poles, with the covering, and the veil of the screen, 13. The table, and its poles, and all its utensils, and the bread of display.
14. The candelabra for the light, and its utensils and its lamps, and the light-oil
15. And the incense altar, and its poles, and the anointing oil, and the incense of spices, and the screen entrance for the entrance of the tabernacle,
16. The altar of burnt offering, with its bronze grating, its poles, and all its utensils, the basin and its pedestal,
17. The hangings of the court, its pillars, and their sockets, and the screen for the door of the court,
18. The pegs of the tabernacle, and the pegs of the court, and their cords,
19. The uniforms, to do service in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office.
20. And all the congregation of the people of Israel departed from the presence of Moses.

**Rashi Rule:** Parallelism – Cross-Reference - Matching

**Rashi Comment:** Overview: The biblical text sometimes references itself. For example,

Lv04-24 ...he slaughters it in the place that the elevation offering is slaughtered,

indicating that the underlying offering being discussed is slaughtered in the place, previously indicated in another biblical chapter, where the elevation offering is slaughtered.

In the above example one verse references one other verse. However, in Ex35-11:20, ten verses with over a dozen words reference previously mentioned items in former chapters. Thus, we may speak about this as a *matching reference* rather than just a reference since the main challenge is to identify what *each* mentioned item corresponds to.

There are 41 items mentioned in Ex35-11:20. Rashi only matches 13 of them (and explains a grammatical oddity on the 14th). In each of these 13 there was some possible confusion which required clarification by Rashi. The 13 items are presented in the five tables below along with the possible sources of confusion or the need for clarification.

**1<sup>st</sup> Table:** This table discusses the main Temple building consisting of *the Temple proper, the roof (called the tent) and the protective covering of the roof.*

Item in Ex35	Verse	Reference	Verse	Need for clarification (Rashi comment)
Tabernacle	Ex35-11a	Tabernacle	Ex26-01	Just as <i>day</i> can refer either to the 12-hour period or the entire day, so too, <i>tabernacle</i> can refer to the entire tabernacle or one part of it.
Its tent	Ex35-11b	Tent	Ex26-07	See entry <i>Tabernacle</i>
tent cover	Ex35-11c	tent cover	Ex26-14	See entry <i>Tabernacle</i>

**2<sup>nd</sup> Table:** This table presents Rashis where Ex35 uses either a different word than in previous chapters or uses a peculiar sounding name.

Item in Ex35	Verse	Reference	Verse	Need for clarification (Rashi Comment)
Border-screen	Ex35-12a	screen... that divides	Ex26-31:33	Exactly the same word is not used. So, Rashi clarifies that the Hebrew <i>MaSaCh</i> means <i>border</i> and that all <i>borders</i> have a function to <i>divide</i> a space into two
face's bread	Ex35-13a	face's bread	Ex25-30	Exactly the same phrase is used. However, it is peculiar to call <i>bread</i> the <i>face's bread</i> . Rashi cross references his own commentaries at Ex25-29a, Ex25-30a.
its utensils	Ex35-14a	its tongs and trays	Ex25-38	<i>Utensils</i> is a <u>general</u> category (hypernym) while <i>tongs</i> and <i>trays</i> are <u>particular examples</u> of the general category (hyponym)
its lamps	Ex35-14b	its lamp	Ex25-37	Just as <i>day</i> can refer to the 12-hour lit period or to the entire day, so too, <i>lamp</i> can refer to the entire candelabra or just the part of it that holds the wicks which burn
the light oil	Ex35-14c	clear, beaten, olive oil for light	Ex27-20	<i>Light-oil</i> is an idiom that only occurs 3 times in Tabernacle construction. This idiom refers to the more detailed phrases <i>clear, beaten, olive oil for light</i> . Hence Rashi must clarify the connection

**Table 3:** There were 2 doors (called screens) in the Temple: the entrance to the Temple area courtyard and the entrance to the Temple proper. Moreover, they are referred to differently, Hence Rashi clarifies.

Item in Ex35	Verse	Reference	Verse	Need for clarification (Rashi comment)
the screen entrance for the tabernacle entrance	Ex35-15a	a screen for the tent entrance	Ex26-36:37	Notice the three terms to which <i>entrance</i> is applied: <i>tabernacle entrance, tent entrance, gate entrance</i> . Also note the reversal in Ex35-16 ( <i>screen for courtyard gate vs. for the courtyard gate a screen</i> ). Rashi therefore clarifies. He also adds additional remarks such as the courtyard construction and the fact the tent entrance had no supporting beams or tent-hides over it.
the screen for the gate of the courtyard	Ex35-17b	For the gate of the courtyard a screen	Ex27-16	See previous row.

**Table 4:** Rashi comments on an unmatched item between Ex35 and other chapters.

Rashi comment: Although *pegs* are mentioned in Ex26-19, *cords* are not mentioned. In other words, there is an *unmatched* item between Ex35 and Ex25,26,27. Rashi explains that the function of the *pegs* and *cords* is to tighten the hide coverings so that they don't move or vibrate in the wind.

My further explanation of this Rashi: Although *pegs* are mentioned in Ex26-19, *cords* are not mentioned. In other words, there is an *unmatched* item between Ex35 and Ex25,26,27. Rashi explains that the function of the *pegs* and *cords* is to tighten the hide coverings so that they don't move or vibrate in the wind.

I would argue that all Tabernacle items have symbolic significance. However, the *cords* have no symbolic significance and hence they are not mentioned in the commands to build the Tabernacle since they merely serve a function of tightening connections without significance.

I would also argue that there is one Rashi comment here even though printed editions have 2 comments. Rashi simply contrasts the functions of the *pegs* and *cords*; the *pegs* are attached to the ground for firmness, and the *cords* connect the *pegs* with the various temple items to secure them. I believe that the reason we have two Rashi comments instead of one in our current texts is because the copy editors would bold any word in Rashi which matched the text. In this case the words *peg* and *cords* both match the text, so the copyist listed two comments. But Rashi is not commenting on both words. He is only commenting on *cords* by indicating their function. Since the *cords* work with the *pegs* Rashi contrasts them; but he didn't intend to make two comments.

**Table 5:** Although the *SeRaD* garments are mentioned in both Ex35 and previous chapters there is no discussion of what they were? What is their function? How were they used? Rashi presents a solution.

Rashi Comment: The biblical phrase *SeRad garments* in Ex35-19a matches the identical phrase in Ex31-10. However, the root *S-R-D* (*Sin Resh Daleth*) does not occur elsewhere in the Bible. Additionally, it is not clear

what *SeRaD garments* refers to. In fact, *SeRaD garments* might refer to garments worn by priests the topic of discussion in Ex27. Rashi ingeniously compares

- The composition of the *SeRaD garments*
  - The composition of the *priestly garments* and shows they are distinct.
- So, the question of *what SeRaD* refers to remains.

Rashi suggests that the *SeRaD garments* refer to the *garment wraps*, that is, the cloth or garments used to wrap the Temple vessels when the Temple journeyed. I call this a suggestion since in the discussion of the requirements of packing for journeys (Nu4) the word *SeRaD* is not used. Rashi himself attempts to derive the meaning of *SeRaD* from comparable Aramaic words. My own suggestion, not found in Rashi, is that *Se-RaD* means *She - RaiD*, garments used when *taking down (RaiD)* the Tabernacle on each journey.

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**Verse: Dt26-05d**

Verse	Text of Verse	Cross Reference	Text of cross reference	Rashi Comment
<b>Dt26-05d</b>	Jacob descended to Egypt with <i>a few souls</i>	Dt10-22	Your fathers descended to Egypt with 70 souls	Rashi explains that <i>a few souls</i> means <i>70 souls</i> (without explicitly citing the cross referenced verse)

**NOTES:** (1) Rashi takes Dt26-05:10 as a *list* of events in our history for which we must be grateful. Thus the first calamity we faced was Laban who mistreated Jacob. We then faced two calamities in Egypt: One when we came – we were very few in number and nevertheless grew; and the 2<sup>nd</sup> when the Egyptian enslaved us. Similarly, consistent with the principles of parallelism (which resemble a collection of bullets in English), Rashi takes *this* and *this land* as two distinct items. *This land* obviously refers to Israel while *this place* refers to the Temple since the Temple is called in several places the *place*, similar to *God* who is called the *place*, indicating that God is a *place for all* not just for those who are holy.

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