

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 Rashid comment to the reader

* Additionally, each Rashid comment is examined using the 10 organs of the Rashid anatomy.

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

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

OTHER COMMENTATORS (ABBREVIATIONS): R=Ramban, T=Baal Turim, K=Kli Yakar, I=Ibn Ezra, H=Hendel

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RASHI ID: Dt28-63a,b 64a, 65a,b,c, 66a,b 67a,b 68a,b,c,d

PESHAT, SPONTANEOUS, REACTION TO SKILLFUL ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

OVERVIEW: ISSUES AND GOALS OF TODAY'S RASHI: Most items in today's Rashi are explained by the rule colloquially known as *context*. In the Rabbi Ishmael list of exegetical rules recited daily in our prayer books the rule is known as *items learned from their surrounding narrative*.

However, both these formulations lack *specificity*. What is *context*? What is *the surrounding narrative*? Therefore, in my doctoral thesis I advocate for further *specificity and clarity*. I replace these overly broad terms *context and local narrative* with *paragraph development*. Paragraph development in turn is explained by the perspective that every paragraph has a *theme sentence* and *development sentences*. Development takes specific forms such as *examples, lists of examples increasing in climax, and generalization*.

This idea of paragraph development also occurs in those college textbooks which teach *writing* as a collection of skills (Jones & Falkner, 1977). These books give practice exercises for *giving examples, generalization, and climactic lists of examples*. These concepts also coincide with the Rabbi Ishmael exegetical rules which speak about *general-and detail* which I have concretized as meaning *theme and example, or general-detail-general* which refers to a paragraph structure of *theme at the beginning, theme at the end, and illustrative examples* in the middle.

THEME AND DEVELOPMENT IN TODAY'S RASHI: The paragraph theme of the six verses explained today is stated in Dt28-63: *God will make [your enemies] happy to make you wander, destroyed, and uprooted*. Rashi therefore interprets the eighteen passages that follow it as *developing* this theme. To understand the development of this theme we peek at the final sentence: *you will attempt to contract your services out to others without buyers*.

Once we know the theme and development we can begin to interpret or understand the various passages as fitting into this *context* by which we mean fitting into this paragraph and climax. For example

The verse says – *God will return you by boat to Egypt*
Rashi explains – *God will return you as captives by boat to Egypt*.

Here, as *Sifsay Chachamim* states, Rashi is simply interpreting the verse as consistent with the theme.

For another example,

The verse says – *and you will worship there other gods, that you never knew, wood and stone*
 Rashi explains – *You will work under a foreign rule and a foreign government that reflect idolatrous values.*

Why does Rashi interpret it this way? Because the paragraph ends with a statement of inability to get jobs – *you will attempt to contract yourself out without buyers* – and therefore Rashi hears and interprets the other passages similarly as referring to jobs and acquiring basic necessities. In an almost similar manner,

The verse says – *your life will hang, ...you will have no firm belief dependency) on your life*
 Rashi, citing the Talmud, interprets – *there will be no public market for goods; prices will be unstable.*

Rashi and Talmud so interpret because the climax of the chapter is about lack of work and consequent lack of acquiring basic necessities.

THE EXEGETICAL PILLARS USED IN THE 14 RASHIS: There are 14 Rashis. Five of them deal with *word or dictionary meaning*. Two of them deal with *grammar*. The remaining 7 Rashi comments (about 50%) deal with the interpretation of the passage using climactic parallelism *developing the paragraph theme*.

CHAPTERS AND PARAGRAPHS: Several times I have indicated that Rashi differed from other biblical commentators by emphasizing rules of paragraph development. Therefore, other commentators approached each passage as a standalone passage and might for example discuss possible meanings. It appears as if there is controversy between them and Rashi. Not so. Rashi does not disagree that words can have multiple meanings. He disagrees that when paragraph context requires it, words will have specific meaning, *not because of the rules of the dictionary*, but rather because of the rules of paragraphs.

It turns out that there is one major theme in this narrative which divides into four subthemes, sort of a chapter, and paragraphs. They are as follows:

Main Theme: God will uproot you from your land; you will attempt to contract out for jobs in the lands you are exiled to but there will be no buyers.

Paragraph 1: God will uproot you to foreign lands rooted in idolatrous governments

Paragraph 2: You will be depressed there

Paragraph 3: There will be no economic security; there will be instability in job and food markets

Paragraph 4: You will be brought back as captives to Egypt with no one wanting to give you employment

ILLUSTRATIVE RASHI, PARAGRAPH 1 Dt28-63,64 The theme is exile to foreign governments.

Biblical Narrative	God will make [your enemies, (1)] rejoice over you To lower your economy(2) To destroy you (3) You will be uprooted from the land God gave you (4) God will disperse you among the nations (5) From one end of the continent to the other (6) And there you will work under Foreign Idolatrous Governments (7)
Rashi Comments	(1) Rashi supplies the object “your enemies” of the verb “rejoice”. Such grammatical omissions are common in Poetry and Rashi frequently fills in in his commentary. (2) This is not in Rashi – But Rashi is interpreting this passage climactically. “Lost” has a

	<p>frequent meaning of “without food/job”</p> <p>(3) Here is the climax. First the Jewish economy is lowered and then the country collapses</p> <p>(4) Rashi explains the dictionary meaning of the Hebrew word “uprooted”</p> <p>(5) The climax continues. <i>Besides</i> losing your land the Jews will not reunite but be dispersed</p> <p>(6) The climax continues: The dispersion is very distant; further preventing unity</p> <p>(7) It literally says “You will “work/worship” foreign gods. Rashi interprets this as “You will work <i>under</i> foreign gods/governments. He does so because both the end of this chapter and through it, it speaks about instability in jobs and hence because of <i>context</i> he interprets this verse similarly.</p>
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BUT IS THIS PESHAT, THE STRAIGHTFORWARD MEANING OF THE TEXT: The United Kingdom and European systems of reading literacy have six levels, A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 with A indicating beginning and C indicating advanced. The beginning and intermediate levels A, B deal with understanding *sentences*. The advanced level, C1, C2, deals with understanding paragraphs. So, although our reading of Rashi is *peshat*, it is nevertheless *advanced peshat*; It is something expected from every literate speaker, but at an advanced level.

ILLUSTRATIVE RASHI, PARAGRAPH 2 Dt28-65 The theme is *depression*.

Biblical Narrative	<p>And there you will work under Foreign Idolatrous Governments (1)</p> <p>And in those governments you will not have a <i>second of rest</i> during the day (2)</p> <p>Nor will you have days off (3)</p> <p>And God will give you worrisome emotions (4)</p> <p>No hope (5)</p> <p>And depression (6)</p>
Rashi Comments	<p>(1) I repeated the last verse of the first paragraph since it blends nicely with the second paragraph. I Music the sharing of a previous unit with the current one is called syncopation</p> <p>(2) Rashi interprets the <i>hyponym</i> (child of the category <i>rest</i>) in terms of the <i>hypernym</i> (category) of <i>rest</i>. But since the underlying root means <i>second</i>, we further interpreted the nuances of this particular category of rest to refer to <i>short times off</i> during the working day</p> <p>(3) Consistent with climax we interpreted the previous phrase as <i>a second to rest</i>, while this phrase we interpret as <i>a day off</i>. The point is that since the government is foreign, the idea of days of rest like the Jewish Shabbath are unknown. Citizens must work continuously.</p> <p>(4) Rashi explains the dictionary meaning of the phrase. Since <i>heart</i> frequently means <i>emotions</i> I have adjusted the English translation to <i>worrisome emotions</i></p> <p>(6) Literally <i>worn-out eyes</i> which Rashi interprets as an idiom meaning <i>no hope</i>. Here Rashi uses the principle of synecdoche a frequent correlate (worn out eyes from crying) with the emotion of <i>no hope</i></p> <p>(7) The English translation provided, <i>depression</i>, seems the best concept, that is, most nuanced fitting in with the narrative</p>

ILLUSTRATIVE RASHI, PARAGRAPH 3 Dt28-66,67 The theme is *economic insecurity*.

Biblical Narrative	<p>Your life [livelihood] will be hanging in front of you (1) You will be afraid continually (2) You will have no confidence in your life [livelihood] (3) In the morning you will say “Who would give us back [yesterday] night (4) And in the evening you will say “Who would give us back [this] morning (4) [These sayings arise] from your constant fears (2) and from the sights you will see (5)</p>
Rashi Comments	<p>(1) Rashi interprets <i>hanging in front of you</i> as an idiom indicating <i>instability</i> (2) The verse says, “You will be afraid day and night”. We think “day and night” is an idiom meaning “continually” (This is not however in Rashi) (3) Rashi, based on the Talmud <i>translates the verses literal life</i> to mean <i>livelihood</i> referring both to job security and food security. We have already explained that Rashi and the Talmud do this based on the paragraph development which climaxes with <i>you will attempt to contract yourself out in the foreign lands you go to with however no buyers</i>. Thus they interpret all passages as referring to <i>job and food insecurity</i> (4) Rashi’s insertion of <i>yesterday night</i> (vs <i>tonight</i>) and <i>this morning</i> (vs. <i>tomorrow morning</i>) is based on the principal of climax (5) Rashi does not comment but most probably this refers to seeing people die in the streets from starvation.</p>

ILLUSTRATIVE RASHI, PARAGRAPH 4 Dt28-68 The theme is *captivity without employment*.

Biblical Narrative	<p>God will return you [as captives] to Egypt (1) The path that I [God] said you will never see again (2) You will attempt to contract out your services (3,4) But there will be no buyers [because they wish to starve you to death] (5)</p>
Rashi Comments	<p>(1) Rashi adds <i>as captives</i> to emphasize that this is a punishment [See S=Sifsay Chachamim] (2) Rashi does not comment. This is a sort of irony: We broke God’s covenant and sinned; now God is breaking his promises and returning us to Egypt (3,4) Rashi explains the grammatical conjugation. He points out that the verse could not mean you will be sold [passive] but rather means <i>you will market your services</i>. The concept of translating the <i>Hitpael</i> conjugation as <i>marketing</i> fits in with my essay establishing that the <i>hitpael</i> refers to interference with agency [So when you market you try and persuade the buyer, you try and change his mind, that is, bend his agency to be consistent with your needs (5) Rashi adds the parenthetical phrase <i>because they wish to starve you to death</i> to emphasize how this ties in with the rest of the passage. Note: Rashi literally says <i>they wish to kill you</i>; however, consistent with the narrative emphasis on employment I have translated this as <i>lack of jobs and lack of resources to buy food</i>, similar to Paragraph 3 which emphasized food and job insecurity</p>

10 ORGANS OF THE RASHI ANATOMY: Dt28-63b

Organ	Brief Explanation	Rashi	My emendations
Lemma,	Beginning words, what is Rashi commenting on	<i>Uproot</i>	None
Number of Rashi comments		1	None
4 Exegetical Pillars	How is Rashi deriving this comment	<i>Dictionary meaning</i>	<i>None</i>
Form	How does Rashi express his idea	Straightforward	<i>None</i>
Reasonable speculations		None	None
Consequences	Lessons learned	None	None
Language Nuances	Recognized by literate speakers	None	None
Simpleton explanations		None	None
Homily	Explanations taken out of context of verse	None	<i>None</i>
Moral exhortation		None	None

10 ORGANS OF THE RASHI ANATOMY: Dt28-65b,c;66a

Organ	Brief Explanation	Rashi	My emendations
Lemma,	Beginning words, what is Rashi commenting on	<i>Mad heart; Worn out eyes; Life hanging opposite you</i>	None
Number of Rashi comments		1	None
4 Exegetical Pillars	How is Rashi deriving this comment	<i>Dictionary meaning-Idiom</i>	<i>None</i>

Form	How does Rashi express his idea	Dictionary meaning <i>Mad heart=worrisome</i> <i>Worn out eyes=no hope</i> <i>Life hanging=job insecurity</i>	<i>I explain that it is an idiom</i> <i>I also explain the metaphor used</i> <i>*Worn out eyes=Synecdoche</i> <i>(Frequent correlate of no hope from excessive crying)</i> <i>*Hanging = Physical form of instability</i> <i>Mad heart = synecdoche</i> <i>(Frequent correlate of excessive worry)</i>
Reasonable speculations		None	None
Consequences	Lessons learned	None	None
Language Nuances	Recognized by literate speakers	None	None
Simpleton explanations		None	None
Homily	Explanations taken out of context of verse	None	<i>None</i>
Moral exhortation		None	None

10 ORGANS OF THE RASHI ANATOMY: Dt28-65a

Organ	Brief Explanation	Rashi	My emendations
Lemma,	Beginning words, what is Rashi commenting on	<i>Have a second to rest</i>	None
Number of Rashi comments		1	None
4 Exegetical Pillars	How is Rashi deriving this comment	<i>Dictionary meaning</i>	<i>None</i>
Form	How does Rashi express his idea	Straightforward	<i>Rashi explained a particular subcategory (hypernym), second to rest as simply belonging to the parent category (hyponym) rest. I emend by pointing out the nuances of the subcategory</i>

			<i>(not a day of rest but a second or short breather to rest) Rashi frequency explains hypernyms as hyponyms</i>
Reasonable speculations		None	None
Consequences	Lessons learned	None	None
Language Nuances	Recognized by literate speakers	None	None
Simpleton explanations		None	None
Homily	Explanations taken out of context of verse	None	<i>None</i>
Moral exhortation		None	None

10 ORGANS OF THE RASHI ANATOMY: Dt28-68b,d

Organ	Brief Explanation	Rashi	My emendations
Lemma,	Beginning words, what is Rashi commenting on	<i>Attempt to contract yourselves out</i>	None
Number of Rashi comments		1	None
4 Exegetical Pillars	How is Rashi deriving this comment	<i>Grammar – Conjugation</i>	<i>None</i>
Form	How does Rashi express his idea	Straightforward and contrastive. Rashi both explains the meaning of the form as well as what one should not confuse it with.	<i>None</i>
Reasonable speculations		None	None
Consequences	Lessons learned	None	None
Language Nuances	Recognized by literate speakers	None	None
Simpleton explanations		None	None

Homily	Explanations taken out of context of verse	None	<i>None</i>
Moral exhortation		None	None

10 ORGANS OF THE RASHI ANATOMY: Dt28-63a

Organ	Brief Explanation	Rashi	My emendations
Lemma,	Beginning words, what is Rashi commenting on	<i>God will [<u>cause your enemies to</u>] rejoice on you to make you lost and destroyed</i>	None
Number of Rashi comments		1	None
4 Exegetical Pillars	How is Rashi deriving this comment	<i>Grammar-Elliptical subject, object</i>	<i>None</i>
Form	How does Rashi express his idea	Straightforward: Rashi inserts the missing words <i>God will <u>cause your enemies to rejoice on making you lost and destroying you.</u></i>	I concur that Rashi is just filling in a missing part of speech (God causes <i>your enemies</i> to rejoice). NOTE: Implied by this is that Rashi's comment is grammatical. He is not commenting on content (Why should God rejoice on our downfall?) There are many Rashi comments on elliptical subject, objects
Reasonable speculations		None	None
Consequences	Lessons learned	None	None
Language Nuances	Recognized by literate speakers	None	None
Simpleton explanations		None	None
Homily	Explanations taken out of context of verse	None	<i>None</i>
Moral exhortation		None	None

10 ORGANS OF THE RASHI ANATOMY: Dt28-64a, Dt28-66b, Dt28-67a, Dt28-67b, Dt28-68a, Dt28-68c

Organ	Brief Explanation	Rashi	My emendations
Lemma,	Beginning words, what is Rashi commenting on	<p><i>* you will serve <u>under governments of idolatrous gods</u></i></p> <p><i>* you will have no stability in <u>acquiring daily living needs</u></i></p> <p><i>* In the morning you will wish for <u>yesterday evening</u></i></p> <p><i>* In the evening you will wish for <u>the previous morning</u></i></p> <p><i>* Go will return you by boat <u>as captives to Egypt</u></i></p> <p><i>* No one will contract with you <u>since they prefer you have no job and die of starvation</u></i></p>	None
Number of Rashi comments		1	None
4 Exegetical Pillars	How is Rashi deriving this comment	<i>Paragraph (Theme-detail) Context</i>	<i>None</i>
Form	How does Rashi express his idea	He adds the underlined words to the translation of the text	I emphasize that the Rashi fill-ins all emanate from a requirement to interpret the paragraph in the context of its theme that Jews will be second class citizens with limited job opportunities (S). In each case, the Rashi fill-in makes the verse consistent with the paragraph theme of a curse against full-fledged citizenship and equal employment rights.
Reasonable speculations		None	None
Consequences	Lessons learned	None	None
Language Nuances	Recognized by literate speakers	None	None
Simpleton explanations		None	None

Homily	Explanations taken out of context of verse	None	<i>None</i>
Moral exhortation		None	None