

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.

PUBLICATION: www.Rashibyomi.com/RashiDatabase.htm

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

MG=Modern Grammar with Applications to Rashid (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: Ex19-02b, Lv01-02h, Lv01-02i, Nu13-22a, Lv18-29a, Lv18-29b

PESHAT: SPONTANEOUS, REACTION TO SKILLFUL ENGLISH TRANSLATION

WHAT IS NEW: This week's entire digest reviews verses with mixes of singular and plural. It turns out this is a grammatical style in biblical Hebrew by which the Author indicates that something (for example a commandment) applies separately to both the individual and community.

TODAYS CHALLENGING RASHIS

VERSE: Lv18-29a, Lv18-29b

TRANSLATION: (a) Watch my commandments (plural); don't do these abominations
(b) Don't be like the former residents (plural) who sinned and were vomited out of the land
© Whoever (singular) does any of these abominations
(d) the souls doing them (plural) will be cut off from their nation
(e) Watch my commandments (plural)

METHOD: Grammar - Agreement- Parallelism

BRIEF EXPLANATION: A rather delicious blend of plural and singular. (a) The verse starts with a plural command: Watch my commandments with a contrast to (b) a plural sin by the former inhabitants of the land. (c) Then the verse switches to singular (Whoever does...) and continues in (d) plural (the offending souls will be cut off) and final concludes with a (e) plural requirement to watch Gods commandments. Quite simply the simultaneous use of plural and singular implies that both individuals and the community must watch, that is, the ruling community body must set guardrails to prevent sin. As to the singular plural shift in (c)-(d) ---whoever does...these souls will be cut off-- this is similar to English where a plural can emphasize that both men and women are obligated.

DATABASE ENTRIES

The Free Downloadable Excel based database is found at
http://www.Rashiyomi.com/The_Rashi_Database_Project.xls

VERSE: Ex19-02b

TRANSLATION: ...They *came to Mount Sinai*...They *journeyed from Refidim*, They *came to Mount Sinai*, they *encamped in the desert*, he *camped opposite the mountain*

METHOD: Grammar - Parallelism

BRIEF EXPLANATION: Notice that (a) five verbs are used of which 4 are plural (came, journeyed, came, encamped) and one is singular (he camped) (b) The act of encamped is mentioned twice one after the other one in the plural and one in the singular (They encamped in the desert, he (the Jews) camped opposite the mountain). So Rashi is not commenting on the singular verb for the nation but rather on the parallelistic contrast between they encamped ...he encamped. Clearly the Author thereby indicates an emphasis: Namely they camped in unison which is the essence of Rashi's comment. Rashi adds a contrast that other encampments had complaints (such as lack of food)

VERSE: Lv01-02h

TRANSLATION: *When a human amongst you offers an offering to God, [then] from animals, from cattle and penned animals, you (plural) shall offer your offerings (plural)*

METHOD: Agreement - Plurality-Number

**BRIEF
EXPLANATION:**

There are two grammatical points in this verse. (#1) The sentence starts in the singular (when a human..offers an offering) but ends in the plural. Such a plural-singular construction indicates that voluntary elevation offerings may be brought either by a single person or by a plurality of people (a partnership). (#2) Additionally the verse changes from 3rd person (when a person offers an offering) to 2nd person (you shall offer your offerings). The switching to 2nd person plural indicates the community can offer a voluntary offering (as happens when there is extra money in the Temple slush fund which can be allocated to voluntary communal offerings). The idea here is that the community is addressed as 2nd person while an individual would be someone else and hence 3rd person. NOTE: The Sifrah simply makes the two derivations from the two plural words (you (plural) will offer, your offerings) without specifying the driving force of the derivation. My opinion is that one derivation comes from the singular - plural shift while the other derivation comes from 3rd person - 2nd person shift.

VERSE: Lv01-02i
TRANSLATION: See Lev01-02h
METHOD: See Lev01-02h
**BRIEF
EXPLANATION:** See Lev01-02h

VERSE: Nu13-22a
TRANSLATION: *They went up; they spied the land...; they went up to the south; he came to Chevron; they came to grape-cluster river; they cut a vine...; they carried it by a pole for two*
METHOD: Grammar - Agreement - Parallelism
**BRIEF
EXPLANATION:** It is important to note parallelism when reading Rashi. The verse has 6 verbs 5 of which are plural and one of which is singular. The Rashi comment comes from the contrast: Clearly only one spy went to Chevron. This is the simple meaning (peshat) of the verse. However, we are not told who went there. This involves the technique of reasonable speculation: We know that (a) Caleb differed from the majority of the spies who recommended that the land could not be take; (b) that God promised him the land he tread on; and (c) he obtained Chevron (Jos 14:6-14). So it stands to reason that he went there. We are also not told why. Again reasonable speculation suggests that he prayed on the graves of his ancestors (similar to practices today) to have strength and resolution against the other spies.

VERSE: Lv18-29a

TRANSLATION: (a) *Watch my commandments (plural); don't do these abominations*
(b) *Don't be like the former residents (plural) who sinned and were vomited out of the land*
© *Whoever (singular) does any of these abominations*
(d) *the souls doing them (plural) will be cut off from their nation*
(e) *Watch my commandments (plural)*

METHOD: Grammar - Agreement- Parallelism

BRIEF EXPLANATION: *A rather delicious blend of plural and singular. (a) The verse starts with a plural command: Watch my commandments with a contrast to (b) a plural sin by the former inhabitants of the land. (c) Then the verse switches to singular (Whoever does...) and continues in (d) plural (the offending souls will be cut off) and final concludes with a (e) plural requirement to watch Gods commandments. Quite simply the simultaneous use of plural and singular implies that both individuals and the community must watch, that is, the ruling community body must set guardrails to prevent sin. As to the singular plural shift in (c)-(d) ---whoever does...these souls will be cut off-- this is similar to English where a plural can emphasize that both men and women are obligated.*

VERSE: Lv18-29b
TRANSLATION: See Lv18-29a
METHOD: See Lv18-29a
BRIEF EXPLANATION: See Lv18-29a