

# 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](http://www.Rashibyomi.com/RashiDatabase.htm)

(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) ))

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

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**RASHI ID: Ex21-02a, Ex21-02b, Ex21-02c, Ex21-03a, Ex21-03b, Ex21-03c,  
Ex21-03d, Ex21-04a, Ex21-05a**

**PESHAT: SPONTANEOUS, REACTION TO SKILLFUL ENGLISH TRANSLATION**

**WHAT IS NEW:** *This week's reviews some deep principles in paragraph organization which we use to explain Rashi. We discuss a difficult Rashi which Ramban clarifies and illuminates.*

## TODAYS CHALLENGING RASHIS

**Biblical Text: Ex21-02:05**

**Translation:** *When you buy a Jewish slave*

*\*(I) IF he come in by himself, the leaves by himself*

*\* (II) IF he comes with a wife, she leaves with him*

*\* (III) IF his master gives him a wife and they have a family, the wife and family belong to the master but he leaves by himself*

*\* (IV) IF he repeatedly says: I like my master, my non-Jewish wife and family; I will not leave for freedom...his master brings him to court..*

**Rule:** Bulleted Paragraphs

### Rashi Comment:

In my article, Biblical Formatting, I explain that the Biblical authors used repeated keywords (like IF) to indicate what modern authors write as bullets. So a passage with repeated keywords should be read as a bulleted passage. Ex21-01:06 has 4 bullets as shown: (I) enters by himself (II) enters married (III) Marries a non-Jewish slave while in slavery (IV) doesn't want to leave. As in English, a bulleted passage indicates that each bulleted item is distinct. From this, Rashi infers three inferences which enter four of his comments:

- (i) Bullets I and III are distinct: So if a person enters slavery without a wife Bullet (I) his master cannot give him a non-Jewish wife Bullet (III) since giving him a non-Jewish slave requires he at least already be married Bullet (II).

- (ii) From the contrast that in Bullet (II) his wife leaves with him while in Bullet (III) his wife is owned by the master, Rashi infers that the wife mentioned in Bullet (II) is a Jewish (free) woman while the wife mentioned in Bullet (III) is a non-Jewish slave.
- (iii) In Bullet (IV) when the slave says I like my wife the slave must be referring to the non-Jewish wife mentioned in (III) who will not leave with him (since if he likes his Jewish wife, mentioned in bullet (II), she is leaving with him).

## DATABASE ENTRIES

*The Free Downloadable Excel based database is found at*  
[http://www.Rashiyomi.com/The\\_Rashi\\_Database\\_Project.xls](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/The_Rashi_Database_Project.xls)

**VERSE:** Ex21-02a

**TRANSLATION:** *\*Ex21-02 When you buy a Jewish slave...  
 \*Ex22-02 ..if he can't pay for this theft he is sold to pay if off  
 \* Lv25-39 If your fellow brother impoverishes and is sold to you...like a worker  
 \* Dt15-07....When there is a poor person among you....Dt15-11 for poverty will not stop  
 \* Dt15-12 When your Jewish brother is sold to you....*

**METHOD:** Parallelism - non consecutive

**BRIEF EXPLANATION:** The Rashi comment cannot be understood without using the three parallel Torahitic passages dealing with poverty. Clearly Lv25-39 and Dt15-07:12 deal with a person sold as slave because of poverty. Contrastively, Ex21-02 linked to Ex22-02 discuss slaves sold by a court order to pay off theft debts they committed. Rashi infers two items from this parallelism:

*\*(1) This chapter Ex21 linked to Ex22-02 describes court sold slaves while Dt15-07:12 and Lv25-39 speaks about slaves self-sold because of their poverty  
 \*(2) Jewish slave refers to a slave who is Jewish (not to the possibly non-Jewish slave of a Jew)*

**VERSE:** Ex21-02b

**TRANSLATION:** *See Ex21-02a*

**METHOD:** *See Ex21-02a*

**BRIEF EXPLANATION:** *See Ex21-02a*

**VERSE:** Ex21-02c

**TRANSLATION:** *...he (the slave) shall work 6 years and on the 7th he will go without debt completely (lit. to the) free(dom)*

**METHOD:** Grammar - articles

**BRIEF  
EXPLANATION:**

The root Cheth-Pay-Shin means free. In this verse an article and preposition are added: Not he will go free but he will go to the freedom. Rashi tersely and simply emphasizes that to the freedom means freedom. Rashi sometimes simplifies synonyms if explaining their nuances would be too complex for folks. My own opinion is that to the freedom means completely free; that is besides not having any more debt to pay off, the stigma of having sold is removed and the person starts over again. In particular, mentioning that this person was formerly a thief who was court sold would violate Jewish slander laws and is prohibited. The idea seems to be that by his slavery he has learned his lesson and his past is no longer part of him. In American law, both auto accidents and Federal employment have limitations; after a certain period prior accidents do not influence your auto insurance; similarly after a certain period and for minor crimes, a person's record does not prevent acquiring a government job

**VERSE:** Ex21-03a

**TRANSLATION:** *If he comes [into slavery] by himself [lit. with his body] then he leaves by himself*

**METHOD:** Synecdoche

**BRIEF  
EXPLANATION:** The Hebrew text uses the rare form BeGaPo. The root of the word is Gimel-Vav-Pay meaning body. Thus the verse literally says if he comes in with his body he leaves with his body. Rashi interprets this using the figure of speech synecdoche: if he come in by himself he leaves by himself. Synecdoche refers to a word acquiring a new meaning corresponding to a frequent and good example. For example, in English, honey refers to the honey of bees; but because bee-honey is a good example of sweetness, honey means sweet in English. Similarly, a good example of by himself is having only his body and no other bodies (dependents) with him such as his wife and children.

**VERSE:** Ex21-03b

**TRANSLATION:** *When you buy a Jewish slave*  
*\*(I) IF he come in by himself, the leaves by himself*  
*\* (II) IF he comes with a wife, she leaves with him*  
*\* (III) IF his master gives him a wife and they have a family, the wife and family belong to the master but he leaves by himself*  
*\* (IV) IF he repeatedly says: I like my master, my non-Jewish wife and family; I will not leave for freedom...his master brings him to court..*

**METHOD:** Bullets

**BRIEF  
EXPLANATION:**

In my article, Biblical Formatting, I explain that the Biblical authors used repeated keywords (like IF) to indicate what modern authors write as bullets. So a passage with repeated keywords should be read as a bulleted passage. Ex21-01:06 has 4 bullets as shown: (I) enters by himself (II) enters married (III) Marries a non-Jewish slave while in slavery (IV) doesn't want to leave. As in English, a bulleted passage indicates that each bulleted item is distinct. From this, Rashi infers three inferences which enter four of his comments:[continued in Ex21-03b]

**VERSE:**

Ex21-03c

**TRANSLATION:**

*See Ex21-03b*

**METHOD:**

*See Ex21-03b*

**BRIEF  
EXPLANATION:**

[Continued from Ex21-03b] (i) Bullets I and III are distinct: So if a person enters slavery without a wife (I) his master cannot give him a non-Jewish wife (III) since giving him a non-Jewish slave requires he at least already be married (II).  
(ii) From the contrast that in (II) his wife leaves with him while in (III) his wife is owned by the master, Rashi infers that the wife mentioned in (II) is a Jewish (free) woman while the wife mentioned in (III) is a non-Jewish slave.  
(iii) In (IV) when the slave says I like my wife the slave must be referring to the non-Jewish wife mentioned in (III) who will not leave with him (since if he likes his Jewish wife, mentioned in bullet (II), she is leaving with him).

**VERSE:**

Ex21-03d

**TRANSLATION:**

*\*Ex21-03 If he enters slavery with a wife, then she leaves with him.  
\*Lv25-40 He [the slave] will relate to you like a worker*

**METHOD:**

Parallelism - non consecutive

**BRIEF  
EXPLANATION:**

Lv25-40 clarifies that a `slave` is classified as a `worker`. Both the `worker` and `slave` provide service to the employer/owner in exchange for which the employer/owner pays wages; similarly, both can break the contract and leave any time they wish except that since the `slave` entered `slavery` because he could not pay for a theft, he cannot leave till his debt of theft is paid off. Since the `slave` is poor (he has no money or assets) his owner must provide room and board. What about the `slaves` dependents? Under Jewish law a wife has the option to either work by herself and provide her own food or to let her husband acquire her salary in exchange for which the husband provides her food. Ramban clarifies Rashi that the `slave's` owner substitutes for him for his dependents: The owner must supply food to the wife and children in exchange for the wife's earnings which go to the owner [It would appear to me that the wife still retains her option to work for herself and provide her own meals]. Thus both the `slave` and his wife were acquired by the owner at purchase except that the wife can leave any time she wants and additionally the wife does not have to provide services to the `slave` owner. However, when the `slave` leaves service, his wife leaves with him in the sense that the `slave` owner does not have to provide room and board to the wife anymore.

**VERSE:** Ex21-04a  
**TRANSLATION:** See Ex21-03b  
**METHOD:** See Ex21-03b  
**BRIEF  
EXPLANATION:** See Ex21-03b

**VERSE:** Ex21-05a  
**TRANSLATION:** See Ex21-03b  
**METHOD:** See Ex21-03b  
**BRIEF  
EXPLANATION:** See Ex21-03b