

# 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: Lv13-18a, Lv13-19a, Lv13-23b, Lv13-23c , Lv13-18b,  
Lv13-22a , Lv13-20a, Lv20-23a**

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

**WHAT IS NEW:** *The other commentaries cited this week show how the commentaries need not be disagreeing but supplementing each other. For example, Rashi mentions that reddish-white is a mixed color: Rambam explains “The color resembles a cup of milk to which 2,4,8, or 16 drops of blood have been added.” Clearly, the Rambam does not disagree with Rashi but supplements him. Other commentaries cited this week are Sforno and Ramban. Finally this week we do not include the “table” (If you prefer this format let me know). The full spreadsheet is still on the Rashi website as a free download.*

## *From the Rashiyomi Website*

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**Lv13-18a, Lv13-19a, Lv13-23b, Lv13-23c** Or flesh that has an inflammation, it was healed and in the spot of the inflammation there is a cloud-white-wound or a reddish snow-white wound; then it is seen by the Priest. The priest sees and its appearance is deeper than the (surrounding) skin and its hair has change to white: Then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a leprous sound rising in the inflammation.

- If the priest sees: (a) there is no white hair in it or (b) it is not deeper looking than the skin but duller: then the priest secludes it for 7 days.
- If it spreads in the skin then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a wound
- If it remains stable in its place, there is no spreading, then the priest declares it ritually pure; it is the scar of the wound

**Rashi Rule:** Word Meaning

**Rashi Comment:** To understand the Rashi we start with a comment of the Sforno. Here, Sforno is not disagreeing with Rashi but adding supplementary comments not found in Rashi. Together, Rashi and Sforno facilitate understanding the text as a whole. To understand both Sforno and Rashi we review the paragraph structure of Lv13

- Lv13-1:8 Skin Leprosy
- Lv13-9:17 Skin Leprosy (entire body)

- Lv13-18:23      Inflammation Leprosy
- Lv13-24:28      Burn Leprosy
- Lv13-29:37      Beard-Face Leprosy
- Lv13-38:39      Skin non Leprosy
- Lv13-40:44      Scalp Leprosy

Hence Sforno's comment: *This paragraph Lv13-18:23 deals with leprosy found in inflammations which has distinct laws from the leprosy found in the skin, beard, or even burns.*

Rashi supplements Sforno by explaining the medical terms used in Lv13-18:23 as well as the subject of the paragraph. Rashi explains 3 (medical) terms (one term receives two Rashi comments, one for an explanation based on Biblical verses with this word and one for an explanation based on old-French; we have combined these two Rashi comments):

- Rashi explains that the biblical *shchin* means *inflammation*. Rashi literally says *a language of heat* or perhaps a better translation, *a nuance of heat*. Here, Rashi does not translated *shchin* as meaning *heat* but rather intends that *the true translation of shchin is a word having something to do with heat*. In this case *inflammation* would fit nicely since inflamed skin is normally hot. It is interesting that the next paragraph Lv13-24:28 deals with leprosy in *burns*. Rambam explains further the text by pointing out that we are dealing with a sickness or blow that caused removal of the skin. Initially the skin is *pussy*. Then, tissue begins to form. The skin has 3 layers; the biblical *inflammation* refers to the first layer of skin that begins to form. It is subject to the laws specified in Lv13-18:23.
- Rashi explains that the biblical term *tzareveth* means *scar tissue*. Sforno is of the opinion that the skin never grows back normally (citing doctors). But sometimes the skin does grow back without scar. In either case, once the healing is complete, even with scar tissue, the laws of Lv13-18:23 do not apply (Instead the laws of skin patched apply).
- Rashi explains that the phrase *white-red* is an *idiom*. It is a coined term meaning in Hebrew, just as in English, a color that is borderline between white and red and more precisely refers to a reddish-white. Hence the Rashi comment, *the patch is not pure white but a mixture of white and red*. (We already noted that English employs the same idiomatic construction (e.g. *blue-green*). Rambam further clarifies: *Take 2,4,6 or 8 drops of blood and place them in 4 cups of milk. The resulting reddish-white color is the color that is being spoken about.*

**Lv13-18b, Lv13-22a** *Or flesh that has an inflammation, it was healed and in the spot of the inflammation there is a cloud-white-wound or a reddish snow-white wound; then it is seen by the Priest. The priest sees and its appearance is deeper than the (surrounding) skin and its hair has change to white: Then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a leprous sound rising in the inflammation.*

- *If the priest sees: (a) there is no white hair in it or (b) it is not deeper looking than the skin but duller: then the priest secludes it for 7 days.*
- *If it spreads in the skin then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a wound*
- *If it remains stable in its place, there is no spreading, then the priest declares it ritually pure; it is the scar of the wound*

## **Rashi Rule:** Paragraph Cohesion

**Rashi Comment:** Rashi explains that the subject or the theme of the paragraph is the leprous spots rising in the inflammation; the inflammation itself is not the subject but rather background for the subject. Hence, the Rashi comment (Lv13-18b) *There was an inflammation; it got cured* (or perhaps *it began curing*); *then a cloud-white patch appeared in it*. In other words, the sentences of the paragraph after the mention of the cloud-white patch are talking about the cloud-white patch. If it meets certain criteria, the verse says *it is a wound* (where we have translated *nega* as *wound*; *nega* can also be translated as *affliction* or *plague* neither of which fits here). Rashi explains that when it says *it is a wound* the *it* refers to the white-spot and the word *wound* is used as it is used throughout Chapter 13 as a *leprosy*.

The novelty of Rashi is that the reference is to the white spot as otherwise I could think it refers to the inflammation itself. This is why Rashi, at the outset, explained that that inflammation is simply background: there was an inflammation, it got healed, and then a cloud-white patch arose in the healing tissue.

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**Lv13-20a** *Or flesh that has an inflammation, it was healed and in the spot of the inflammation there is a cloud-white-wound or a reddish snow-white wound; then it is seen by the Priest. The priest sees and its appearance is deeper than the (surrounding) skin and its hair has change to white: Then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a leprous wound rising in the inflammation.*

- *If the priest sees: (a) there is no white hair in it or (b) it is not deeper looking than the skin but duller: then the priest secludes it for 7 days.*
- *If it spreads in the skin then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a wound*
- *If it remains stable in its place, there is no spreading, then the priest declares it ritually pure; it is the scar of the wound*

## **Rashi Rule:** Word Meaning

**Rashi Comment:** Rashi explains *its appearance is deeper than the surrounding skin* as follows: This doesn't mean the white patch is actually deeper but appears deeper; an analogy occurs in a black square with brilliant white square center. The white center on the background of the black square gives an appearance of not being level with the black background but deeper (as if something was removed from the black square exposing the white center underneath). If however, there is no appearance of deeper-ness, then the patch does not get declared ritually impure. Rambam also gives this explanation. In fact, Rashi gives this explanation throughout Lv13 where the issue of *deeper than the skin* occurs several times.

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**Lv13-23a** *Or flesh that has an inflammation, it was healed and in the spot of the inflammation there is a cloud-white-wound or a reddish snow-white wound; then it is seen by the Priest. The priest sees and its appearance is deeper than the (surrounding) skin and its hair has change to white: Then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a leprous wound rising in the inflammation.*

- *If the priest sees: (a) there is no white hair in it or (b) it is not deeper looking than the skin but duller: then the priest secludes it for 7 days.*
- *If it spreads in the skin then the priest declares it ritually impure, it is a wound*
- *If it remains stable in its place, there is no spreading, then the priest declares it ritually pure; it is the scar of the wound*

**Rashi Rule:** Word meaning - Synecdoche

**Rashi Comment:** The biblical word *ta-chath* means *underneath*. *Your spot* is typically *underneath* you and hence *ta-chath* can also mean *underneath*. This extra meaning of *ta-chath* is for example included in the *Sefer Shoroshim* the root dictionary of the Radack. The technique of naming something by some frequent example of it - for example naming *sweet* by the word *honey*, that is, *honey* can either refer to *honey* itself or to anything *sweet* - is a technique common to all language known as *synecdoche*.

Ibn Ezra supplements Rashi by explaining the need to specify that *in its place the wound remains stable without spreading*: Ibn Ezra states *because there are inflammations which might, instead of spreading, so to speak, travel from one spot on the skin to a nearby spot*.

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