

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 from the Rashi website www.Rashiyomi.com

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

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

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THEME, THIS ISSUE: The Hebrew lu can mean if only so, perhaps, if

RASHI ID: Nu14-02a, Gn30-34b, Gn23-13a, Gn50-15b, Nu20-03a, Gn17-18a, Gn43-10a, Gn50-15a

PESHAT: SPONTANEOUS REACTION TO SKILLFUL ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

WHAT IS NEW IN THIS ISSUE: This issue presents the Metropolitan area approach of Rashi pedagogy using the 7 Rashi comments where Rashi explains the meaning of the Hebrew **lu**, **Lamed-Vav**, which means (i) if only so, (ii) if, (iii) perhaps.

The Metropolitan area approach of Rashi pedagogy uses the term Metropolitan area as a metaphor. Metropolitan areas refer to areas with a big central city with lots of more rural cities surrounding it. The central city is called the Metropolis. However, because folks in the rural cities travel frequently for employment, shopping, and medical appointments to the Metropolis the entire area is considered one unit. In biblical exegesis, Rashi will frequently have one central Rashi with many examples and explanations. We call this the Metropolis Rashi. There may be several other identical Rashi comments on other verses where Rashi simply tersely gives the explanation without any more examples and reasons. In my doctoral thesis I advocated that more important than manuscripts is identifying the Metropolis of each Rashi which then serves to illuminate all the other similar Rashi comments. We double asterisk the Metropolis of these Rashi in the list of Rashi verses.

Rashi Verses: Nu14-02a, Gn30-34b, Gn23-13a, Gn50-15b, Nu20-03a, Gn17-18a, Gn43-10a(**)

Replacement: This digest replaces digest Nu13-30 which will eventually be taken down.

Rashi Rule: Meaning –Synonyms (lu=if only so, if, perhaps)

Rashi Comment: The Main Rashi, the Metropolis, is at Gn43-10a: The Hebrew **Lu**, has three meanings

- *if only so*, an expression of something not expected

- *if*

- *Perhaps*

There are 6 other Rashis where Rashi comments on **Lu**. On those Rashis, Rashi simply gives the explanation without presenting the full-blown theory expounded at Gn50-15b. They are summarized in the following two tables. Note, that Rashi in the Metropolis compares **Lu** to **Ooly** which has similar meanings.

Verse	Principle	Verse Text	Verse	Principle	Verse Text
Nu14-02a	<i>lu=if only so</i>	<i>If only</i> we had died in Egypt	2S16-12	<i>Ooly=supplication</i>	<i>Please, God see my affliction</i>
Gn30-34b	<i>lu=if only so</i>	<i>if only</i> you keep your word	Jo14-12	<i>Ooly=supplication</i>	<i>Please, God be with me</i>
Jo07-07	<i>lu=if only so</i>	<i>if only</i> we had settled in Jordan			
Gn23-13a	<i>lu=if only so</i>	<i>if only</i> you would listen to me and take the money			
Dt32-29	<i>lu = if</i>	<i>if they were smart they would see this</i>	Gn18-24	<i>ooly=if</i>	<i>If there are 50 righteous in the city, would you not forgive them</i>
2S18-12	<i>lu = if</i>	<i>if you gave me a \$1000, I would not do this</i>			
Is48-18	<i>lu = if</i>	<i>if you had obeyed my commandments, it would be good with you</i>			
Gn50-15b	<i>lu=perhaps</i>	<i>perhaps</i> Joseph will hate us			

Table Lu: The Main Metropolis Rashi is found at Gn50-15b. At Gn50-15b Rashi brings the examples presented in the Table. In the other Rashis, Rashi will simply explain the meaning of the word without elaborating with the entire theory.

Verse	Principle	Verse Text
Nu20-03a	<i>lu= if only</i>	<i>if only</i> we had died in the plague
Gn17-18a	<i>lu= if only</i>	<i>if only</i> Ishmael will live in Your Presence
Gn43-10a	<i>lu = if</i>	<i>if</i> we hadn't delayed, we could have returned twice

Table Lu 2. The Rashis in this table also explain Lu but are not found in the Metropolis Rashi at Gn50-15b.

My Linguistic Classifications: Although Rashi gives 3 explanations, I add, not found explicitly in Rashi, the basic idea of *something not expected* occurs in all of them. For example, Gn50-15 could be translated *The brothers of Joseph saw that their father was dead, and they said, this is not expected, perhaps Joseph will hate us and return to us all the evil we caused him.* Rashi comments: “(Perhaps) They used to eat daily with Joseph and once their father died he no longer invited them” (something unexpected) that led them to fear retaliation. Although Rashi makes his comment on, *They saw that their father is dead* and in fact comments *What did they see?* I would add that the use of **Lu** shows something not expected (Rashi then uses the principle of reasonable speculation to theorize what they could have possibly saw). Similarly, Dt32-29, *if the non-Jewish nations were smart they would see as the hand of God,* could be translated *if only the non-Jewish nations wised up, then they would see this as the hand of God,* in other words, there is a lack of expectation that the non-Jewish nations would become smart.
