

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.Rashibyomi.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: Rashi comments explaining an entire paragraph.

PESHAT: THE SPONTANEOUS REACTION TO SKILLFUL ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

WHAT IS NEW IN THIS ISSUE: Rashi comments based on an entire paragraph.

There is a difference between

- a Rashi comment on a word, phrase, clause, or verse and
- a Rashi comment on an entire paragraph

When Rashi comments on verses he might explain *meaning, verb conjugation, preposition meaning, or contrasts and commonalities of two clauses.*

When Rashi comments on a paragraph, he explains how the parts of the paragraph inter-relate; he also gears his explanation to emphasize the paragraph as a whole. That is, he uses the same techniques he uses to explain words,

RASHI ID: Ex34-31b, Ex34-32a

Biblical Text:

* Ex34-01:03 God commands Moses to ascend (a 2nd time) on Mount Sinai with two new blank tablets

* Ex34-04:09 Moses

- ascends the mountain;
- God reveals his 13 attributes of Mercy;
- Moses asks God to go with the Jewish people (i.e. forgive them)

* Ex34-10:26 God

- establishes a *new covenant*
- with emphasis on the prohibition of idolatry and
- the three Jewish festivals when the nation unites

* Ex34-27:28 God orders Moses to *write* the new covenant; Moses stays 40 days on the mountain writing

* Ex34-29: AS Moses descends the mountain with new tablets he is unaware of his *radiance*

* Ex34-30 - Jews are afraid to approach Moses because of radiance

* Ex34-31 - Moses calls to them; Aaron and princes return to Moses; *Moses speaks to them*

* Ex34-32 AFTERWARDS the Jews return to Moses; *He commanded them* (What God revealed to him)

Comment #1) From the contrast of the two parallel italicized phrases *Moses spoke to them (the elders)* vs. *Moses commanded them*, Rashi & Ramban infer (more explicit however in Ramban) that

- First, because the Jews were afraid of Moses' radiance, Moses *spoke* to them and explained to them that there was a new covenant, and that they had been forgiven
- When the Jews were reassured and re-approached Moses, *Moses commanded* them the laws he had written which emphasized the prohibition of idolatry and three pilgrimage festivals when the nation unites.

As indicated this distinction (*speech of reassurance* vs. *commands in new covenant*) is mainly emphasized from the parallelism of the two phrases.

This explanation is explicit in Ramban. Rashi simply modestly says *This biblical text is a present tense tone* by which he meant *this biblical text is a continuation (present tense) of the previous chapter*.

Comment #2) Rashi cites a Talmudic passage in TB Eruv. 54, that all learning was fivefold: i) Moses taught Aaron, ii) Aaron taught the priests, iii) the priests taught the tribal elders, iv) the elders taught the Jews, v) The Jews taught each other.

- Ramban: Erroneously believes that Rashi derived this from the succession in this biblical text that first Moses spoke to Aaron and the elders and *then* spoke to the Jewish people
- Rashi: Rashi however did not derive this fact from here. Rashi is simply cross referencing another Rashi comment Nu30-02a which itself is derived from numerous contrasts of paragraph openers: (Nu30-02 *Moses spoke to the tribal governors*; the usual opener e.g. Ex34-25 *God spoke to Moses*; Ex34-21 Elazar the priest spoke to the soldiers; Lv21-01 *God spoke to Moses to speak to the priests* vs. the closing sentence *Moses spoke to Aaron, his children, and the Jewish people* and many more.

Summary: Rashi acknowledges that our biblical text is simply a continuation of the previous chapter dealing with the new covenant and specific laws. Ramban is more explicit that there are two messages: i) establishment of a new covenant and ii) the laws of the covenant. This is reflected in the parallel phrases *Moses spoke to them* vs. *Moses commanded them* as well as the emphasis in v. 32, *Moses commanded them*, implying they had to be reassured that God was with them before commanding them.

Rashi also cross references the five-fold method of Jewish learning which has nothing to do with the current biblical text. Ramban, however, though Rashi was deriving this comment from here leading him to disagree with Rashi. In reality both agree.

VERSES: *Gn40-23a,b, Gn41-12a,b,c,d*

BIBLICAL TEXT:

- A. (Joseph interpreted the dreams of the Kings master chef and wine butler. We cite excerpts from the dialog). *Joseph came to them in the morning and saw they were worn out*
- B (They then told him they were concerned about dreams they had; Joseph responded) *Interpretation belongs to God; tell me (they then told him their dream and Joseph interpreted them. *
- C. (Joseph Continues) *Perhaps you will remember me to Pharaoh when the occasion arises, and you will please do me a favor: I will leave this prison. Because I was kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews and here also, I did no crime that they put me in the pit.*
- D. (The text continues) *But the master butler did not remember Joseph and forgot him.*
- E. (Statement of the Kings master wine butler to Pharaoh who was inquiring about the interpretation of dreams). *And there with us [in prison] was a Hebrew, Kid, A Slave of the Master Chef, and we told to him [our dream] and he interpreted them, each person, according to his dream he interpreted*

NOTE: We classify this as a paragraph Rashi since Rashi asks, "paragraph questions." *What is the theme and motif behind the narrative? What values does this narrative imply?* First, we state the Rashi text with my comments and then we present a holistic explanation.

RASHI TEXT:

(Rashi on C,D) *Rashi blames the 2 years extra stay of Joseph in prison on his asking for help and states, "He should have relied on God"* [My comments on this Rashi: But there is nothing morally wrong, or even morally non-preferable if, while relying on God, you ask people for help]

(Rashi on E) The master butler was a wicked person. Rather than acknowledge the good Joseph did he insults him as much as possible calling him a kid (immature), a Hebrew (a foreigner), and a slave (someone who has no business before kings). [My comments on this Rashi:] But the master butler had been thrown into prison because of one of Pharaoh's temper tantrums and was in fact exonerated. He was legitimately concerned that if he brought an immature person with slave like character before Pharaoh, Pharaoh would lose his temper again? Doesn't this justify his behavior? Why insult him?

SOME FURTHER JUSTIFICATION OF CALLING JOSEPH IMMATURE and SLAVE

We bring two comparisons of statements of Joseph *before* and *after* his prison stay. These comparisons show that Joseph was indeed immature and slave like and had to grow up before appearing to Pharaoh.

Comparison #1:

While in prison: *"Doesn't interpretation belong to God, tell me"*

2 years later: *Without me you will get your interpretation. It is God who answers and restores peace of mind to Pharaoh/*

My comment: Notice the immaturity in prison: God gives interpretations so tell me. The emphasis is on the self. Here we see self-centered concerns

Notice the maturity two years later: *It is not from me but from God*. A deemphasis on the self.

Comparison #2:

While in prison: Perhaps you will remember me to Pharaoh when it is appropriate for you and get me out of this prison....

2 years later: (After Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream). Pharaoh should select a wise insightful person and appoint him over Egypt.

My comment: Joseph, in asking for help, was speaking *to* the chief butler instead of speaking *with him*. Joseph states what he wants without asking for participation on the Chief Butler's part. His request is framed as a personal favor, an act of kindness

Contrastively, 2 years later, Joseph does not tell Pharaoh to appoint him. He also does not speak about doing favors. Rather, he frames his remarks by acknowledging that it is Pharaoh's decision and appeals to the skills (wise and understanding) needed for the job. In other words, Joseph no longer lived in a world of connections and favors as he did in prison; he lived in a world of experience and skills with recognition that final decisions are not the result exclusively of logic but of the person who owns the decisions.

FINAL ANALYSIS:

- Joseph, while in prison, was both immature (self-centered), slave-like (not performing best practices of good teamwork (e.g. soliciting feedback when making requests), power-based (people did favors if they felt like it) versus skill and experienced based
- Thus, before appearing to Pharaoh, he had to *grow up*.
- Rashi appears to *blame* this on his asking the chief butler. What Rashi really is saying is *he asked him without dialoging with him for example, asking Is the dream interpretation satisfactory, allowing the Chief Butler to spontaneously offer to do Joseph a favor*. This Joseph's error is not *that* he asked but *how* he asked
- The Chief butler had every right to forget Joseph and ignore his memories when they popped up since he was concerned about his safety. But Rashi notices that *besides* calling Joseph *immature* and *slave like* he also called him *a Hebrew, a foreigner*. Rashi correctly reads into this that the Chief Butler was prejudiced and biased against Joseph and hence interprets all his characterization (*immature* and *slave like*) as pejorative.

FURTHER COMMENTS

Gn40-23a,b states

- A) The Master Butler did not remember Joseph
- B) He forgot him (every time the memory came back)

Rashi literally says: Did not remember Joseph: *That day*; He forgot him: *After a while*.

But consistent with other Rashi comments, I interpret B, as the habitual as indicated in the translation. In other words, now and then, Joseph's image popped up in his mind and he forgot him.

VERSES: Gn18-04a, Gn18-04b, Gn18-04c, Gn18-05a, Gn18X05a, Gn18-05b, Gn18-05c, Gn18-05d, Gn18-06a, Gn18-07a, Gn18-07b, Gn18-08a

The 13 Principles of Good Charity and Hosting

We study the biblical paragraph Gn18-04:08 describing how Abraham gave hospitality to the three people passing by. Although Rashi brings many midrashim, the *peshat* straightforward meaning of this paragraph is the principles of good charity and hosting. About 8 Rashi principles are used in this paragraph. However, it would obscure the paragraph theme to do each one separately and hence the choice to treat by a paragraph. The table below contains sequentially the clauses of the paragraph, the main theme of this clause in the context of the paragraph and good charity and hosting principles, the Rashi principle used, and any homiletic Rishis introduced.

Verse, Rashi	Translation (Dialogue from Abraham to guests)	Main point within paragraph	Rashi rule used	Rashi rule explained	Homilies in Rashi
Gn18-04a	<i>Please, let water be taken for you</i>	The host does most of the work and does not ask guests to participate	Grammar	The passive is used (<i>taken for you</i>) instead of the active (<i>take water</i>).	Because you Abraham had water taken by a messenger, I will reward that your children get water taken by a messenger (Moses gave the Jews water)
Gn18-04b	<i>Wash your feet and rest under the tree</i>	If you have personal needs impose them softly without over burdening guests	Parallelism	Abraham: Wash and Rest Lot: Rest and wash	In ancient East people worshipped dust on legs. Abraham did not want idolatry in his house, so he requested washing first.
Gn18-04c	<i>Rest under the tree</i>	Address both basic and higher needs of guests. The trees were oak trees with much shade	Cross-Reference	(Gn18-01, Gn14-13) Abraham dwelt in the <i>oak tree valley</i> of Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre	
Gn19-05a	<i>I will take a loaf of bread, and you will satisfy</i>	Fulfill the needs of your guests so that they themselves will feel satisfied	Synonyms	<i>Bread</i> is synonymous with food that satisfies and prevents further hunger	Rashi supports these nuances with verses about bread: Ju19-08, P104-15
Gn19X5a	<i>And you will satisfy your needs</i>	Do appeal to guests' needs but not to the more sensational emotions (e.g. the verse didn't say <i>satisfy your passions</i>)	Synonyms	Lamed-Beth refers to emotions while Lamed-Beth-Beth refers to passions	Rashi provides homily that angels have no passions
Gn19-05b	<i>After that you are free to go</i>	Value guests time. An important part of hospitality is letting them leave after providing their needs	Paragraphs	First: In a narrative paragraph with sequential items, each item is distinct and contributes to the paragraph meaning. 2 nd : There is emphasis in the verse with the introduction <i>after that</i>	
Gn19-0c,d	<i>Because you have passed by my house</i>	Emphasize to guests that your hospitality is not a burden but rather an honor and privilege	Paragraphs, Meaning	Rashi explains that the Hebrew <i>al kaya</i> indicates <i>cause</i> . In a paragraph of sequential clauses each clause contributes uniquely to the whole.	
Gn19-06	<i>Abraham quickly went to the tent to Sarah and said: Quickly prepare</i>	Work zealously and energetically for the guests	No Rashi	The paragraph uses <i>quickly</i> 3 times and <i>run</i> (Indicating quickness) once	
Gn19-06a	<i>Quickly prepare three units of coarse and fine flour, knead and</i>	Prepare both <i>food</i> and <i>utensils</i>	Parallelism	<i>Coarse</i> and <i>fine</i> are in parallel but contradict each other. Fine flour was used for baking while coarse flour was used to clean the pots	

	<i>make pastries</i>				
Gn19-07a	<i>And Abraham ran to the cattle: He took a soft, good, young cattle</i>	Prepare the best for your guests needs	Multiple adjectives	Abraham prepared tongue and mustard (a reasonable speculation on the reason for taking the choicest cattle)	
Gn18-07b	<i>And he gave it to the lad</i>	Do involve other people in your hospitality so as to create a hospitality team	Paragraphs	In a narrative paragraph of sequential statements each clause gives distinct meaning to the paragraph	It is reasonable that <i>lad</i> in this verse refers to his son, Ishmael
Gn18-08a,b,c	<i>He took the cream and milk and the meat which he prepared and placed before them</i>	Have contingency plans if something does not work out	Parallelism, Meaning	Preceding verses mention <i>pastries and meat</i> , while this verse mentions <i>cream, milk, and meat</i> . Apparently, the pastries could not be prepared so Abraham had a contingency plan to give them milk and cream. (The translation of <i>cream</i> , and <i>made</i> as meaning prepared re provided)	It was customary in the mid-east that women during their period did not prepare foodstuffs. Even today there are restrictions on women working in perfumeries since research has shown certain toxins would damage the perfume. Because of the prophecy (of future birth) Sarah's period resumed
Gn19-08	<i>And he stood over them while they ate</i>	After fulfilling guests' needs, stand by for any extra requests.	No Rashi	There is an emphasis that after providing their needs, Abraham still stood ready in case new requirements of guests emerged.	

VERSES: Dt11-26a, Dt11-27a, Dt11-28a, Dt11-29a, Dt11-29b

Dt11-26:29 See: (1) I give you today the blessing and the curse.

- The blessing: If (2) you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today
- The curse: If (2) you do not listen to the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today (3) (even if you only) follow the path of other gods in order to worship them.

When your God your Lord brings you to the land which you come to inherit:

- You will place the witnesses (4) to the blessing on Mount Grazi (1)
 - ----- the witnesses (4) to the curse on Mount Eyval.(1)
-

NOTES: (1) (Rule used: Reference / Intertextuality) These verses refer to the blessing – curse procedure described later on in the Biblical text at Dt27:11-26. This paragraph is in turn analyzed below.

(2) (Rule used: Parallelism) Verses 30 and 31 start off as follows:

- The blessing: *that* you listen to the commandments...
- The curse: *if* you don't listen to the commandments

Parallelism shows that *that* and *if* are parallel. Hence Rashi translates both verses using *if: If you listen ...and if you do not listen*

- (3) (Rule used: Parallelism) Verses 29,30 have a very clear parallel structure of *contrast*
 - The blessing: if you do listen to the commandments
 - The curse: if you do not listen to the commandments

Rashi therefore interprets the next phrase *to walk in the path of the idolaters in order to worship then* as connected to the previous phrases using the concept of *even if only*. In other words, *if you violate all commandments that God commanded you then you will be cursed and even if you only violate the one commandment of idolatry you will be cursed*. Rashi expresses this with the phrase “the sin of idolatry has equal weight to all other commandments.” Upon examining the Rashi comment, I reformulated this as *even if only* since that captures the relationship of this clause to the previous verse clauses.

VERSE: Dt27-12a

Dt27:11-26 Moses commanded the nation on that day as follows:

- These will stand to bless the nation (1) on Mount Grasim when you cross over the Jordan: Simon, Levi....
 - These will stand on the curse (1) on Mount Ayval: Reuven, Gad,
- The Levites will responsively (1) say in loud voice to each Israelite person
- Curse be the person who makes an idol or molten image, an abomination of God, a manufactures product and places it in hiding: *and the entire nation will responsively say* (1), Amen.
-

NOTES: As indicated by the underlined words, the entire paragraph lists four types of participants in the blessing-curse procedure of Mount Grazi and Ayval

- The *sayers* of the blessing, curse – identified as the Levites
 - The *amen* responders – identified as the entire nation
 - The *standers to bless* and the *standers to curse* – identified as two sets of 6 tribal representatives
- We understand what it means to *say* a blessing and curse and similarly we understand what it means to *respond Amen*. But who are the *standers to bless* or the *standers on the curse*? For example, the *standers to bless* could not be the *sayers of the blessings* since the verse identifies the sayers as the Levites. Rashi therefore interprets *standers on the blessing / curse* to be *witnesses to the blessings and curse*. This results in the following procedure described by Rashi and cited from the Talmud, Sota 32
- The 6 tribal representatives witnessing the blessings go up to Mount Grasim
 - The 6 tribal representatives witnessing the curses go up to Mount Eyval
 - The Levites at the bottom of the mountains first turn to Mount Grazi and *say* the blessings followed by
 - The entire nation at the bottom of the mountains saying Amen
 - The Levites then turn to Mount Eyval and *say* the curses followed by
 - The entire nation at the bottom of the mountain saying Amen

SUMMARY: Rashi interprets *standers to bless* and *standers on the curse* as idioms meaning *witnesses to the blessing and curse*. He does this by seeking the unified meaning of the entire paragraph.

VERSE: Gn13-17a

- Gn12-06: The Canaanites were in the land at that time(2): God appeared to Abraham and said **your descendants(1) will inherit this land**
- Abraham is forced to leave Canaan because of the famine and travels to Egypt.(3)
- ...Abraham and Lot had many more possessions than the land had resources for; there arose disputes between Abraham's and Lot's Shepards even though the Canaanites were (2) at that time in the land so they separated
- *(Gn13-14) After Lot separated from Abraham (3) God told him: Look at the breadth and depth of this land because **it will(1) be given to you and your descendants**

NOTES: (1) Gn12-06 through Gn13-14 stand as one biblical paragraph; the paragraph structure is indicated by the repeating bolded phrase **the land will be given to you and your descendants**. In English, a paragraph structure is indicated by either white space prior and after the paragraph, or by indentation, or by both white space and indentation. Such formatting indicates that the group of sentences inbetween constitutes one paragraph with a central theme that is developed. In Biblical Hebrew, the paragraph is indicated by a repeated opening and closing phrase with sentences inbetween. The theme of this paragraph should be clear: Abraham's descendants *will* inherit the land. The reason why the land is not being given immediately is stated in another verse: (Gn15-16) *Four generations from now your descendants will have this land because the Emorite sins (justifying their banishment) will not be complete till that time*. Note how the first set of sentences after the introductory phrase in the paragraph – the sentences that indicate that Abraham could not stay in the land that was promised to be eventually his because of a famine forcing him to leave it – is consistent with the nuance that acquisition of the land will happen in the future.

(2)(3) Also consistent with the *future* fulfillment of the promise is the phrase that *the Canaanites were then in the land* is also consistent with this and the explanation given in Gn15-16. The second set of sentences in the paragraph (after Abram's descent to Egypt) states that there was a conflict between Lot's Shepards and Abram's Shepards; but the text does not specify the cause of the conflict. Three explanations are offered.

#1) Rashi consistent with the theme of future inheritance (not now) suggests that Shepards allowed sheep to graze freely in Canaan even though the land was not yet theirs. In other words, these Shepards reasoned that since this land will belong to Abraham eventually, they have the right to graze in it now. Consistent with this explanation of Rashi, is the narrative marked "(3)", that God only reiterated and provided more detail on the future inheritance, *after* Lot left. God did not tell Abraham details since Lot's Shepards misinterpreted the prophecies as applying now.

#2) The Ramban cites Rashi and demurs: *The simple meaning of the text is that they had a dispute because (as explicitly stated), "they had many assets and the land's resources were not enough for them*. It is easy to refute the Ramban. Generally, Rashi explanations can offer both interpretations based on immediate verse text as well as interpretations based on the surrounding text. Other commentators such as Ramban and Ibn Ezra were not aware of the grammar of surrounding text (In fact this grammar of surrounding text known as pragmatics is modern and Ramban and Ibn Ezra unlike Rashi based their

knowledge of Grammar on the models at that time of the Arab grammarians.) So, the Ramban is perfectly correct that *if you only read v5-6 the dispute was because of insufficient resources*. However, if you read v5-6 in the context of the entire paragraph which addresses future possession of the land, Rashi's explanation is superior.

#3) Ibn Ezra interprets the word *then* in the phrases (indicated by "(2)" above) to mean immediately then According to the Ibn Ezra the Canaanites had just conquered the land as indicated by *then* which he interprets *immediately then*. However, the Ibn Ezra's principle while correct for verbs (*then* does typically indicate *just then*) for nouns and noun phrases *then* can simply indicate emphasis Compare

- Gn24-41 (*then* after a verb), *Then* (meaning *then and not before*), when my family does not want to give you a wife, you will be free from my oath
- 2S23-14, (*then*) at that time David was already dwelling in Metzudah or Job18-21 did you know the time (*then*) you were going to be born and have many years

Thus, the current text, *The Canaanites where then in the land* (with *then* preceding a noun phrase, *in the land*) is simply emphasizing and echoing the statement in Gn15-16 that the land that God promised Abraham was already occupied and wouldn't be free for another 400 years.

VERSES: Gn32-02a, Gn32-03a, Gn32-04a, Gn32-04b, Gn32-05a, Gn32-06a, Gn32-06b, Gn32-06c, Gn32-06b

Overview: Recall that Jacob, at this mother's suggestion, stole the birthright blessings from Esauv (who had sold them) and because Esauv wanted to kill Jacob, Jacob fled. Jacob now is returning home and has to deal with this issue. This, the dealing with the Esauv issue, is the *theme* of the paragraph. The paragraph gives both *background* and *supportive* facts and arguments.

Biblical Narrative	Function in the paragraph	Rashi comments
(Laban departed and) Jacob continued on his way; he bumped into Angels of God	This is background material showing that although Esauv had military superiority Jacob had spiritual superiority and the support of Angels	<i>Angels of God</i> : They were actual angels (the word <i>malach</i> can also mean messengers). Rashi suggests that since God ordered Jacob to return to his father in Israel, God sent Angels, to help him, consistent with Jacob's being helped by Angels while living with Laban (Gn31-11)
When Jacob visioned them, he said (to himself) <i>this is a camp of Angels</i> ; therefore, they nicknamed the place <i>Twin Angels</i>	Angels had already been mentioned as assisting Jacob while with Laban. Presumably the Angels that <i>came</i> with him to Laban. Now that he is returning home, he saw another camp of Angels prompting a response of <i>surprise, this is a camp of Angels</i> . So, there were twin camps of Angels, and he nicknamed the place <i>Twin Angels</i> . The background here emphasizes that Jacob was not alone but received help.	Grammar - Plurality : A suffix <i>mem</i> indicates plural; A suffix <i>mem</i> preceded by an <i>ah yim</i> indicates a plurality of twins. <u>Examples</u> : Eyes (<i>aynayim</i>); ears (<i>aznayim</i>), hands (<i>yadayim</i>), feet, <i>raglayim</i>). Hence: <i>machanayim</i> would indicate a twin set of camps; and therefore, just as the angels he bumped into were Angels of God, so too the Angels with him by Laban were Angels of God. [We several times mention these Angels had helped Jacob with Laban (Gn31-11)]
Jacob sent Angels before him to his brother Esauv,	With the above background the main theme of the paragraph, Jacob dealing with Esauv's former hatred, is dealt with.	Rashi emphasizes, based on paragraph context, that the Hebrew <i>malachim</i> here which could mean either <i>messengers</i> or <i>angels</i> means <i>angels of God</i> .
In the direction of Seir, the Sedomite fields	Recall, Esauv was promised the land of Seir (Dt02-05). Also recall, from the story of Lot, that the Sedomite fields were known for their rich physicality and lushness (Gn13-10:12). By sending Angels in that direction Jacob begins his attempted reconciliation with Esauv <u>by emphasizing that he Jacob recognizes Esauv's rights to physicality and lushness</u> (which both Jacob and Esauv were promised)(1)	Grammar : Direction in Hebrew can be indicated either by a <u>prefix Lamed</u> (<i>le-eret seir</i> ; would mean <i>to Seir country</i>) or a <u>suffix Hey</u> (<i>artzah seir</i> means in <i>the direction of Seir country</i>). I have investigated further this rule and found that the <i>suffice hey</i> indicates <i>direction</i> without necessarily an arrival while <i>prefix lamed</i> indicates both <i>direction</i> and <i>intended eventual arrival</i> .
He commanded them as follows: This is what you	<u>Unlike the rest of the paragraph, Esauv is called <i>master</i> not <i>brother</i></u> ; here we see again attempted	In my doctoral thesis I point out that when several phrases in a paragraph support a theme in Rashi comments, Rashi need not

should say to <u>my master</u> (1) Esauv	<u>reconciliation by Jacob who acknowledges that Esauv is the master (so to speak the firstborn) This contradicts the blessing that Jacob will be the master (1)</u>	comment explicitly on all of them but may suffice with highlighting one or two leaving the reader who may in fact be an instructor to fill in the rest himself. That is, omission by Rashi does not imply Rashi was unaware of the comment.
I <u>stayed over</u> (1) by Laban and therefore was delayed until now [to reach out]	Stayed over!? But Jacob was there 20 years, married two women, and worked for the local city officials (Laban). By using <i>stayed over</i> Jacob emphasizes that “ <i>I did not seek a position; did not throw in the towel to become like Laban; did not join the town culture; and in general I am not interested in that type of leadership.</i> ”(1) Here Jacob continues the reconciliation by address a key point of the blessings he stole: <i>Nations will serve you;You will be master to your brothers</i> But Jacob rather than having people work <i>for him</i> instead himself worked <i>for them</i> ; instead of being a leader he was in effect a stranger. So, Jacob repudiates interest in the content of the blessings!	There are two synonyms for <i>dwelling</i> : <i>resides (lit. sits)</i> indicating a permanent resident and <i>being a non-citizen</i> which as the name implies, is a secondary citizenship status.(2)
And that is why I <u>delayed until now</u> (1) (to communicate with you)	No Rashi but its support of reconciliation is clear: <u>Jacob explains that Isaac’s request to go to Laban to get a wife in effect overrode the blessings since he had a non-leadership life struggling for livelihood. In other words, almost immediately after the blessings Jacob rejected them to find a wife(1).</u>	
I acquired <u>cattle and donkeys, herds, servants, and maid servants</u> , (1)	The blessing Jacob stole promised <i>plentitude of grain and wine arising from good rainfall and rich land</i> (i.e. food without much toil); but I had to acquire these assets through hard work	Rashi points out the contract with the blessings. Rashi also explains GRAMMAR: <i>cattle and donkeys</i> are <u>collective nouns</u> (so the singular refers both to the singular and plural)
And I sent - <u>To</u> tell my Lord - <u>To</u> find favor in your eyes	After the above supportive arguments, Jacob concludes with his request: <i>reconciliation</i> through finding favor in your eyes.	The repeated underlined keyword <i>to</i> creates what in modern typography would be a bulleted list: Jacob emphasizes - I want you to know this (that I have not been pursuing the blessings) - I want to earn your favor (Reconciliation)

NOTES

- (1) The 5 underlined items with a (1): --- i) *Sedomite fields*, ii) *My master Esauv*, iii) *non-citizen by Laban*, (iv) *that is why I delayed* (v) *I had to work for my assets (cattle, herds, donkeys, servants)* --- indicate support by Jacob for the reconciliation since Jacob didn’t seek the promises of the blessings and Jacob acknowledges Esauv’s interest in them.
- (2) Many current Rashi manuscripts have a *gematria* (play on letters): The letters of *garti* (be a non-citizen) when descrambled spell *taryag* the number of biblical commandments affirming that Jacob was observant even in Laban’s house. However, very early manuscripts of Rashi do not have this *gematria*. It started appearing in the 16th and 17th century; apparently, it was put in by a printer to increase marketability, and it was so successful that people incorporated this into future Rashi texts (Academic paper by *Macks* 1996).

(2) VERSES: Gn42-03a, Gn42-03b, Gn42-04a, Gn42-05a, Gn42-06a, Gn42-07a, Gn42-08a, Gn42-08b, Gn42-09a, Gn42-09b, Gn42-10a, Gn42-11a, Gn4-11b, Gn42-12a, Gn42-13a, Gn42-14a, Gn42-15a, Gn42-15b, Gn42-16a, Gn42-17a, Gn42-19a, Gn42-19b, Gn42-19c, Gn42-20a, Gn42-21a, Gn42-21b, Gn42-22a, Gn42-23a, Gn42-23b, Gn42-23c, Gn42-24a, Gn42-24b, Gn4-24c

BIBLICAL TEXT: This chapter dealing with the meeting of Joseph and his brothers nicely divides into 3 paragraphs.

PARAGRAPH 1: Gn42-03:05 – Jacob worried about avoiding accidents

The *theme* of this paragraph is Jacob’s worry *less an accident happens*. The biblical text explains that Jacob didn’t send Benjamin for this reason. But the text, in two places, emphasizes that the 10 brothers came *amidst* the comers to Joseph. The emphasis on *midst* ties in with *less an accident*

happen. The brothers were not to be conspicuous; they should blend together with the crowd. Rashi suggests that Jacob actually advised his sons to enter through different portals so as to be inconspicuous; but the driving force is the paragraph theme, *less an accident happen*.

Contrasting within the paragraph the reference to the brothers – sometimes *children of Israel* and sometimes *Joseph’s brothers* - suggests that they wanted to see if they could locate Joseph. Rashi notes the unusual emphasis on numbers: *Joseph’s brothers, the 10 of them*, suggesting that they all had different approaches to Joseph. Rashi does not give details. Perhaps some brothers just wanted to see if he was alive; they didn’t really want him back while other brothers wanted to redeem him.

PARAGRAPH II: Gn42-07:17 – Cross examination of Joseph of his brothers

The theme of this paragraph is verse 8: *Joseph recognized his brothers, but they didn’t recognize him*. The simple meaning of the sentence is of course that Joseph was 17 when he left, he didn’t yet have a beard, and his mannerisms were boyish. (Rashi simply mentions the beard but his general demeanor should also be brought in.)

But the placement of this verse here designates it as a theme sentence. So, this verse acquires an additional meaning in the context of the paragraph: Joseph had mercy and recognized his brothers, but they were cruel to him. The paragraph emphasizes that Joseph dreamt dreams to help them as he was doing now in providing food. It is interesting to compare Joseph’s treatment of his brothers with their treatment of him as shown in the following table

Speaker	Accusation	Confinement	Regret
Joseph	You are spies	Joseph imprisoned them	Joseph recanted “I fear God so I will let you bring home food”
His brothers	You want to reign over us	They threw Joseph in the pit	No mention of fear of God by the brothers is given. Judah simply mentions there is no profit in murder

Thus, the incidents of this paragraph support the general theme.

Rashi also notes how the harsh cross examination led the brothers to start thinking about Joseph. Thus, they admitted to feeling guilty about what they did (v21) and under conditions of cross-examination they begin to speak imprecisely as shown by several contrasts. Initially they said, “We are all brothers” while later on they said, “The 12 of us are brothers with one home and one disappeared.” They also spoke in holophrastic sentences (short one-word sentences) “No my lord”.

Although we don’t know exactly what transpired between them it is easy to guess: Joseph knew they entered in different gates because he had records of who came into Egypt. It is very possible that the brothers, eager to find Joseph, were asking about the slave trade in Egypt. So, Joseph lured them into discussing this and pointed out that asking for a country’s slave trade is spying. Rashi learns this from the emphatic pronouns used in the dialogue. *This is exactly why I claimed you were spies.*

To summarize, we don’t know exactly what they spoke about, but normal cross examination procedure would lure them into speaking about their missing brother and their desire to find him.

PARAGRAPH 3: Gn42-19:24 Guilt, Fear of God, Imprisonment of Shimeon

The brothers spoke among themselves in Hebrew not realizing Joseph could understand them because an interpreter was used. They express guilt about Joseph. During the dialogue it emerges that Reuven defended Joseph. He was the oldest and thus the conversation enlightened Joseph with his innocence. Since Shimeon was 2nd oldest he probably advocated killing Joseph. It is not hard to imagine, that people knew that Jacob’s 2 sons Shimeon and Levi destroyed a city in which their sister was raped. So, Joseph was gathering a picture of whom to blame. Rashi gives specific details, but we can focus on high level items like the conversation they were having and their history.

As pointed out above, Joseph emphasizes that he *fears God* a phrase we never find in the brother’s discussion of selling him. He allows them to

return with food and to prove their story by bringing Benjamin. (Apparently it didn't make sense that ten of them came and left one behind). He jailed Shimeon as the one who instigated his sale. Rashi points out that at the time of sale Shimeon probably man-handled him for example pushing him in the pit. The way to take these Rashis is suggestions of the paragraph themes that Joseph took out on the perpetrator of his sale without knowing exactly what details took place. Note: The Rashi comment that he treated Shimon nicely in prison is similar to the way prisoners of war are treated today – they are treated nicely because they offer the opportunity for exchange.

Although we have gone over these Rashi in paragraph form instead of phrase by phrase, the interested reader can go to the texts and see each Rashi comment as fitting into the overall paragraph theme.

VERSES: *Gn44-18a, Gn44-18b, Gn44-18c, Gn44-20a, Gn44-22b, Gn44-29a, Gn44-29b, Gn44-31a, Gn44-32a, Gn44-33a*

In this dialogue, Judah requests to replace Benjamin so that Benjamin can return home lest, if otherwise, Jacob, his father might enter massive depression. The paragraph is organized into 4 parts: Introduction, Joseph's non-standard treatment, the cooperation with Joseph, request for Judah to replace Benjamin.

Part I-Introduction: Judah approached him [Joseph] and said: May your servant please bring to your attention a matter and don't get angry at your servant (1) *since you are like Pharaoh* (1).

Part II-Non-standard treatment of us: My lord asked your servants as follows: Do you have a father or brother (3)

Part III-We fully cooperated with your unusual requests: We answered my lord (4): We have an elderly father with a young child, whose brother died (5), who was the sole survivor of his mother; his father adores him.

My lord said, *bring him down to me so I can place my eyes on him* (3).

We said to our master *the child can't leave his father; if he left his father he might die* (6). You said to your servants *if he doesn't come down with you [to acquire food] you will not be allowed to see me.*

When we went back up to your servant our father we informed him of our lord's wishes

Our father said: *return and acquire more food*

We said: *We may not go down unless our younger brother is with us because we were prohibited from seeing the person without our younger brother*

Our father your servant said to us: *You know that my wife gave birth to two children. One left me, I think he was probably mauled* (5) *and I have not seen him till now; if you take this one and an accident happens* (6) *then you will bring down my old age to hell.*(7)

If now, I come to my father and the child is not with me then since his soul is bound to his soul, when he sees that the lad is not there he might die from anguish and your servant will place your servant our father in massive depression.

Part IV: For (8) Your servant guaranteed the lad from my father as follows: *If I don't bring him back then I will be in sin with you eternally.* Now, let your servant replace the lad (9) as a servant to my lord and let the lad go back with his brothers. For otherwise how could I go up to my father and the lad is not with me; less I see the evil that finds my father.

NOTES:

(1) I combined these two Rashis (Gn44-18b,c). The first Rashi comment emphasizes that the nuances of Judah's speech had harsh overtones while the 2nd Rashi brings out the overtones. Although Rashi cites many overtones the two most relevant ones to the overall paragraph are:

(a) You are like Pharaoh implying you can undo a decree of yours [While an example of Joseph's power to retract his own words is not brought explicitly by Rashi, we point out the obvious that in fact Joseph originally wanted 11 brothers imprisoned and in the end said *I fear God*, he changed his mind, and only imprisoned one brother.

(b) Pharaoh's ancestor tried to marry Sarah and was severely punished leading to him cancelling his plans. The overall gist of Judah's remarks were, *You are like the Pharaohs: you fear God like your ancestors and you can change.*

(2) Item #2 is Rashi comment Gn44-18c which we have combined with Gn44-18b in item #1 above.

(3) There are 4 themes to Judah's speech which we have labeled Parts I-IV. In this second part (as illuminated by the Ramban) Judah points out that the entire interrogation about the brother's family was very peculiar, not done to others who request food, and appears to be a machination. Several parts of Judah's speech fit into this; they are footnoted as item (3) being supportive of the theme of non-standard treatment by Joseph.

(4) In our current text of Rashi this is not a separate Rashi comment. But Rashi already cites the Midrash Rabbah in item #(3) with emphasis *despite your strange and unusual questioning we cooperated.* This seems to be a separate theme and hence I reconstructed it as a separate Rashi comment. This entire Part III besides continuing the theme of unusual requests shows cooperation with all requests.

(5) This statement, *Joseph is dead* contradicts previous dialogues between Joseph and his brothers saying *we are seeking him.* Rashi explains that Judah changed both their story and projected it onto their father; the purpose of the lie was to prevent further requests from Joseph to *bring him to me* (Gn44-20a)

(6,9) Rashi interpolates Judah's words. *His mother died while on travel and Benjamin might die the same way.* Similarly, when Judah offers to *replace Benjamin*, he probably pointed out that as measured by *service, fighting, and might* he could be of better use to Joseph.

(7) Rashi shows the way Judah built up the emotional impact on Jacob: *He lost his wife and his other son; this son, Benjamin, is the only remnant of his relationship. If you take him away Jacob will disintegrate and enter massive depression.*(Gn44-29b, Gn44-31a)

(8) Of the four parts of Judah's dialogue, this Part begins with *for, since, or because.* It ties back to Judah's original request (Part I): *Please don't be angry but give me your full attention for I was a guarantee for Benjamin even though I was not involved in the theft.*(Gn44-32a)
