

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

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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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PESHAT: THE SPONTANEOUS REACTION OF NATIVE SPEAKERS FAMILIAR WITH WORD NUANCES

WHAT IS NEW IN THIS ISSUE

- An interesting analysis of *paragraph* structure. The Rashi, Seforno, and Ramban work together by supplementing each other and bringing different aspects of explanation. This, therefore, is a nice example, where the commentators do not disagree but work together.
- We emphasize that comments on overall paragraph structure are as important in understanding Rashi as examining grammatical and nuance minutiae in individual verses.
- An alternate approach to these Rashis is simply classifying them as *word meaning* Rashis. However, I think the paragraph structure nicely enhances the explanation.

VERSE ID: Lv13-18a, Lv13-19a, Lv13-23b, Lv13-23c

Biblical Text: *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

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 translate *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 leprosy 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*. (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 colors are the colors that are being spoken about.*
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QUICKIES

QUICKY?	VERSE ID	Text of Biblical Verse	Hebrew Word	Rashi Rule / Figure of Speech	Rule Support	Brief Explanation	Notes
Quicky	Lv12-02d	She shall be ritually impure for 7 days like the days of her menstrual episode she shall be impure	<i>De-Vo-ThaH</i>	Synecdoche		The root <i>Daleth-Vav-Hey</i> refers to some type of <i>episode</i> not necessarily of illness but of feeling down or under the weather. Hence, it can refer to the menstrual period which frequently is associated with such feelings. This is the 2nd explanation of Rashi and the Rashi Website holds the position that the 2nd explanation of Rashi is the one he really advocates. The first explanation of Rashi focuses on the interchange of the letters <i>Zayin</i> and <i>Daleth</i> in Aramaic words so that the Hebrew word in the verse would be translated as the days of her menstrual oozings [See Dt33-25b for Rashi's similar treatment of 2 explanations of a root with a <i>daleth</i>]	
Quicky	Lv12-04a	She will then remain [lit. sit] in purity for 33 days [but can't yet deal with Temple items]	<i>Tay-Shev</i>	Synecdoche		The act of <i>sitting</i> is a good example [synecdoche] to remaining in a state (in contrast to standing or movement which indicates change) Hence Rashi translates <i>sit</i> in her purity as <i>remain</i> in her purity. [Interestingly a literal translation is possible: For example, the female octopus literally sits in place for several years while her eggs are incubating. This example highlights the importance of not assuming the literal translation is the best translation and experiencing language as dynamic with figures of speech]	
Quicky	Lv13-01a	A person that has in his skin a cloud-white, or secondary, or bright-spot white	<i>Se-EtH</i>	Synonyms		The verse mentions 3 colors of leprous afflictions. Rashi simply explains that the three words describe varying degrees of whiteness without going into detail. However, I have supplemented the Rashi general comment with the types of whiteness. In this verse we speak about <i>cloud-white</i> similar to naming colors in English by good examples (synecdoche) of them such as the colors <i>orange</i> , <i>cherry</i> . The root of <i>se-eth</i> is <i>na-soh</i> which can mean <i>cloud</i>	
Quicky	Lv13-01b	A person that has in his skin a cloud-white, or secondary, or bright-spot white	<i>Sa-Pa-ChaTh</i>	Synonyms		The verse mentions 3 colors of leprous afflictions. Rashi simply explains that the three words describe varying degrees of whiteness without going into detail. However, I have supplemented the Rashi general comment with the types of whiteness. In this verse we speak about <i>secondary from the root se-fi-ach</i> which means attached or secondary and hence refers to a slightly lower brightness.	
Quicky	Lv13-05a	If however, the skin application remains in its appearance [lit. eye]	<i>Mar-Ay</i>	Metonymy		The root <i>resh-aleph-hey</i> , <i>ra-ah</i> , means to see, from which we derive, using the metonymy principle the meaning <i>appearance</i> .	

Quicky	Lv13-06b	[If there are no symptoms] The Priest shall declare him pure, [because] it is a <i>secondary-affliction</i>	<i>mis-pa-cath</i>	Synecdoche		The Hebrew root <i>samech-pay-cheth</i> means to attach which is a good example (<i>synecdoche</i>) of something <i>secondary</i> .
	Lv14-14a	<i>...and he places the blood on the right inner-ear of the person being purified</i>	<i>Te-NuCh</i>	Synecdoche		Rashi explains that <i>te-nuch</i> refers to the inner ear. He explicitly says, "I don't know the etymology of TeNuCh (The Biblical word meaning inner ear) I would simply suggest that <i>te-nuch</i> come <i>toch</i> (<i>inside</i>) since the inner ear is a good example (<i>synecdoche</i>) of something inside. There are several words where an extra <i>nun</i> enters in the middle of the root.
Quicky	Lv14-14b	<i>...and he places the blood on the right thumb of the person being purified</i>	<i>bo-hen</i>	Synecdoche		Rashi explains that <i>bo-hen</i> means the thumb. It comes from the root <i>Beth-Yud-Nun</i> which means inbetween since the thumb enables the hand to grasp objects and hold them in-between the fingers. There are several words where an extra <i>hey</i> enters in the middle of the root.
Quicky	Lv14-41a	<i>He will sandscrape the house all-around....</i>	<i>yaq-tzi-ah</i>	Synecdoche		The root <i>quph-tzadeh-hey</i> means <i>end</i> . <i>Sandscraping</i> is a good example (<i>synecdoche</i>) of an activity done on the <i>end</i> of an object. Rashi explicitly connects <i>yaq-tzi-ah</i> with <i>end</i> .
Quicky	Lv14-41d	<i>...he takes the sandscraped dust</i>	<i>a-far a-sher hiq-tzu</i>	Metonymy		Rashi explains the phrase <i>sandscraped dust</i> as the dust resulting from the sandscraping of the house (You sandscrape the house not the dust). Naming the dust as sandscraped dust is an example of metonymy (something related)
Quicky	Lv14-43a	<i>...after he yanked the stones from the house and after the sandscraping of the house</i>	<i>a-char chiletz eth haavanim a-charay hiq-tzoth eth habayith</i>	Grammar		The verse has a lack of parallelism. It should say <i>after the yanking of the stones and after the sandscraping</i> . Or, after he yanked the stones and after he sandscraped. But instead the verse mixes the active verb, <i>yanked</i> , and the gerund, <i>sandscraping</i> : <i>after the yanking of the stone and after the sandscraping of the house</i> . Rashi simply points out the lack of parallelism (but does not explain it). I would explain that one sees the effects of being sandscraped after the sandscraping is done (you can recognize sandscraped surfaces); but one does not see that anything was yanked after it was done (because they are gone). Hence the verse does not use parallelism.
Quicky	Lv14-41b	<i>...he will sandscrape the inside [lit. the house] of the house roundabout</i>	<i>mi-ba-yith</i>	Synecdoche		The word <i>ba-yith</i> means house; however, it can also mean <i>inside</i> since a house is a good example (<i>synecdoche</i>) of an <i>inside</i> .
	Lv15-04a	<i>Any seat that he sits on</i>		Noun-Verb		The phrase <i>that he sits on</i> refers to anything on which a person sits, e.g. a desk, even if it is not made for the purpose of sitting. Contrastively, <i>seat</i> refers to an object made for sitting like a chair. The verse explains that if the ritually impure person sits on something (even without touching it) he transmits the ritual impurity to the object he sits on; but that is only provided that he is sitting on an actual seat, not on something not made for sitting.