

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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VERSION NUMBER: Version 4

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

WHAT IS NEW IN THIS ISSUE

- Welcome to the *lily garden* the affectionate name given by the Talmudic rabbis to the book of Leviticus. The rich set of verse pairs speaking about the same topic gives rise to numerous parallelisms which are the basis for many Rashi comments. In this issue, we give a taste of the rich flavor and variety of these parallelisms and what they imply.

RASHI ID: *Lv02-01a, Lv02-02c, Lv02-02f, Lv02-01b, Lv02-02d, Lv02-02e, Lv02-01d, Lv02-01e*

Lv02-01a *When one of the masses offers a Minchah offering: pure will be his offering; he will pour on it oil, and place on it frankincense.*

Rashi Rule: Parallelism

Rashi Comment: Table Lv02-01 compares the subject in the introductory chapters (chapters 1-3) to various offerings.

Chapter	Topic	Introductory Text
Lv01-03	Elevation offering	If an elevation is <i>his</i> offering from cattle
Lv02-01	Minchah offering	When <i>one of the masses</i> offers
Lv03-01	Peace offering	If a peace barbeque is <i>his</i> offering

Lv02-01a: Comparison of the subject of the elevation, minchah, and peace offerings.

Notice that a pronoun (*his*) is not used by the Minchah, but rather the phrase *one of the masses*. Typical biblical commandments use the term *person* (*ish*). The emphasis on *one of the masses* nuances that minchah offerings are typically brought by the masses, that is, poorer people, as the animal offerings can only be offered by people wealthy enough to own animals.

The actual Rashi language commenting on this is: *I (God) account to him as if he offered his soul to me*. Of course, this is a pun. Rashi's underlying intent is to show that the bible through the use of the term *one of the masses* is openly and explicitly encouraging the poorer people who may not own animals to volunteer offerings.

Lv02-02c,f *He [the offeror] brings it [the Minchah] to the priest; the priest fists from there a full fistful of its flour and oil*

Verse	Action	Type of fistful	fistful
Lv02-02	Priest fists	a full fistful	fistful
Lv06-08	Priest raises	in his fist	fist

Table Lv02-02c: Comparisons of types of fistful raised for Minchah.

Rashi Rule: Parallelism

Rashi Comment: As can be seen from the parallelism presented in Table Lv02-02c, the fistful must be both *full* and *inside*. Rashi explains that the priest takes a fistful fully fitting into the fist using the middle 3 fingers; in this way the *fistful* is both *full* and *inside*.

Rashi further comments that:

- The word *inside* implies that the fistful should be full but not overflowing.
- the requirement of a *full fistful* implies that if the Priest captures anything else besides flour and oil (such as salt or frankincense) then the fistful is not *full*; this would invalidate this particular Minchah.

I combined these two Rashi's since 3 Rashi comments are being derived from the same word. Rashi himself actually combines the first two comments in one Rashi comment.

[Note: The Talmud in Menacoth seems to derive these laws differently; Malbim also adapts the Talmud's approach; but I think the above approach straightforward and consistent with the language of the text.]

Lv02-01b *When one of the masses offers a Minchah offering: pure will be his offering; he will pour on it oil, and place on it frankincense.*

Rashi Rule: Paragraph-Bullets

Rashi Comment: The Rashi comment can be understood based on a principle of the Malbim (on Ex21 but not brought here) that when a paragraph has an *opening theme* followed by *several cases*, the *opening theme* is indicated with the Hebrew word *ki* while each case is indicated with

the Hebrew word *im*. Although Malbim does not go into this explicitly, the paragraphs can be nested as actually happens here.

Using this principle the paragraph structure of Lv02 is presented in Figure Lv02-01b

<p>(Ki) (I) When you offer a minchah, <i>pure</i> will be the offering (Ki) When you offer a minchah offering of <i>oven baked</i> (either) (II) Pure <i>challahs</i> mixed with oil, or (III) <i>Wafers</i> anointed with oil (IV) (Im) If a minchah on a <i>frying pan</i> if the offering, pure mixed with oil matzoh (V) (Im) If a minchah in a <i>pot</i> is the offering, pure in oil will it be made Come with any of the above minchahs to God; Bring it to the Priest He brings it near to the altar And the Priest raises from the Minchah its remembrance</p>

Lv02-01b: Paragraph structure of Lv02. For clarification and inferences read the text.

The roman numerals I-V describe five types of offerings. There are many inferences that can be made from this paragraph structure.

Rashi however suffices with the obvious point that

- A person can vow to bring any particular minchah (e.g. I will bring a *frying pan* minchah)
- A person who vows simply to bring a minchah brings the *pure minchah* offering (Type I)

Rashi further clarifies that as is clear from the text, types II-V are all cooked in some fashion while type I is uncooked (and therefore, as Rashi points out, it is called the *pure minchah* offering since it only consists of *pure wheat* and *oil* without cooking). In other words, a person who vows to bring a minchah offering can specify any one of these offerings. If they just vow to bring a minchah offering then they are only minimally obligated to bring type I, the *pure* offering which is the first listed. Since this paragraph begins with Ki, its contents and procedures

Lv02-02d *He [the offeror] brings it [the Minchah] to the priest; the priest fists from there a full fistful of its flour and oil besides [lit. on] all the frankincense*

Verse	Action	Flour and oil	Frankincense
Lv02-02	Priest fists	a full fistful from its flour & oil	besides the frankincense
Lv06-08	Priest raises	in his fist from its flour and oil	and all the frankincense

Table Lv02-02d: Comparison of phrases in verses about taking flour, oil, and frankincense.

Rashi Rule: Parallelism

Rashi Comment: As can be seen from the parallelism presented in Table Lv02-02d, the fistful of the Minchah includes only flour and oil; to that, (*on* that or *besides* that) all the frankincense is

also taken. In other words, the fistful includes only oil and flour but not frankincense.

Lv02-02e *He [the offeror] brings it [the Minchah] to the priest; the priest fists from there a full fistful of its flour and oil besides [lit. on] all the frankincense; and offers it on the altar*

Verse	Action	Flour and oil	Frankincense	Offering on altar
Lv02-02	Priest fists	a full fistful from its flour & oil	besides the frankincense	& offers it on altar
Lv06-08	Priest raises	in his fist from its flour and oil	and all the frankincense	& offers it on altar

Table Lv02-02e: Comparison of phrases in verses about what is offered on the altar

Rashi Rule: Parallelism

Rashi Comment: As can be seen from the parallelism presented in Table Lv02-02e, both the fistful of flour and oil as well as the frankincense are offered on the altar.

Lv02-01f, Lv02-02a

Rashi Rule: Parallelism

Rashi Comment: [NOTE: We combine Rashi comments Lv02-01f and Lv02-02a since they form one parallelism] Table Lv02-01f presents the parallel structure of Lv02-01:02

Subject - Verb in Lv02-01:02	Actions
When one of the masses	offers a minchah...
	He will pour on it oil
	He will place on it frankincense
	He will bring it to the <u>Priests</u>
He [the priests]	will take fistful of its oil and flour
	and offer it on the altar

Table Lv02-01f2: Sequence of actions with the doers of the action (column 1)

Rashi is simple and straightforward enough.

- The pouring and placing can be done by the offeror (one of the masses even though he is not a priest)
- But the acts of taking a fistful and the following acts must be done by a Priest.

Despite this simplicity Ramban demurs. Ramban uses the parallel construction of Lv01-08:09 presented in Table Lv02-01f2

Subject in Verb Lv02-08:09	Actions
The (offeror)	brings any of the above [five] Minchahs to God
	He brings it near to the Priest
He [the priest]	Brings it [the Minchah] near to the altar
	He raises the its remembrance from the Minchah
	And offers it on the altar

Lv02-01f2: Sequence of actions with the doers of the action (column 1). Cf. to table Lv02-01f1

Based on Lv02-01f2, Ramban cogently argues that *bringing near to the altar* is also done by the priest (and cannot be done by one of the masses). But if so, Rashi's statement "the priest starts activities from taking the fistful and thereafter" is incorrect as the priest starts activities from "bringing near to the altar."

Ramban therefore emends Rashi: Rashi' statement that *the priests responsibility is from the act of taking the fistful* should be emended to read *the priests responsibility in this paragraph Lv02-01:03 is from the act of taking the fistful*. Using this emendation of Ramban, Rashi is no longer contradicting the inferences from verse 8.

In passing I point out that many of my readings of Rashi are based on emendations similar to the Ramban's; that is, I frequently, based on examination of other verses point out that the scope of a

Rashi statement must be limited to certain verses. I hope that this example of Ramban shows that this is really quite common and should create any problems about deviating from the Rashi text.

As already pointed out, we combined the two Rashi comments (Lv02-01f and Lv02-02a) since they are part of the same parallelism.

Lv02-01d,e *When one of the masses offers a Minchah offering: pure will be his offering; - he will pour on it oil, and*

- *he will place on it frankincense.*

Rashi Rule: Parallelism

Rashi Comment: [NOTE: We combine Rashi comments d and e since they form one parallelism]

The text as shown above requires two procedures: *anointing the Minchah with oil* and *placing frankincense on it*. Rashi explains

- The oil is poured on the entire Minchah
- The frankincense is simply placed on top without mixing

Rashi's derivation that oil is *poured on the entire Minchah* but frankincense is *place (one scoop) on the top (without mixing)* is assisted by two other parallelisms.

Lv06-07:11 repeats the Minchah procedures. Verse 8 is laid out in parallel fashion in Table Lv02-01d1

Phrase 1	Phrase 2	Phrase 3	#4	Phrase 5
The priest will raise with his fistful	From	the flour and oil	of	the minchah
	All	the frankincense	on	the minchah

Table Lv02-01d1: Parallel structure of Lv06-08

The comparison of phrases suggests that the oil is mixed with the flour so that Priest can only take *from* it while the frankincense is *on* the Minchah so the Priest can take all of it.

Additional support is found by a parallel comparison of oil in each of the five Minchahs presented in Table Lv02-01d2. This table confirms that a blob of oil was not simply placed on the Minchah but somehow mixed through its entirety.

Minchah Type	Phrase #1 with oil	Phrase #2 with oil
Pure wheat	Pour on it oil	
Oven baked loaves	wheat matzoh loaves mixed with oil	
Oven baked wafers	matzoh wafers anointed with oil	
Griddle	wheat mixed with oil	pour on it oil
Pot	wheat (soaked) in oil	

Table Lv02-01d2: Descriptions of oil in the five Minchah types.

QUICKIES

VERSE ID	Text of Biblical Verse	Hebrew Word	Figure of Speech	Brief Explanation
Lv02-02g	And the priest offers the <u>memorable</u> towards the alter as a restful scent to God	AzKaRaH	Word Meaning - Root	Rashi explains that the word AzKaRaH which comes from the biblical root Zayin-Kaph-Resh meaning to remember is translated as that part of the Minchah offering by which the offeror is remembered to God. The Ibn Ezra similarly translates and cites others who give a slightly different nuance and translate as memorable. Ibn Ezra cites Hosea 14:8 Those who sat in its shadow will return; lived like grain, blossoming like the vine, <u>memorable</u> as white wheat. The Ibn Ezra's alternate translation is not necessarily different from Rashi's and may nuance it correctly.
Lv02-01f, Lv02-02a	If one of the masses offers a Minchah offering: [then] his offering will be made from pure	So-LeTh	Grammaticalization - Adjective-Noun	The proper phrase, pure wheat, is repeated so often that it simply gets called pure and people understand from context that it is pure wheat. This transference of meaning is known as grammaticalization and can refer to one part of speech taking the meaning of other parts of speech. Rashi explains the above and presents proof texts Ex29-02, Ex29-40, Lv14-21, Nu15-04, showing that pure refers to a certain measure (a tenth) of pure wheat flour.