

ParShaT *TeZaVeH* One Pager Series

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[Background: We continue to bring controversies between Rashi and either academic scholars or other Jewish commentaries. Today we bring a Rashi Ramban controversy where both parties look right!]

Rashi #1 Biblical Text: Ex27-20:21, Lv24-02:04 (See table)

ID	Ex27-20:21	Lv24-02:04
A*	<u>You (Moses)</u> command the Jewish people	Command the Jewish people
B	They will take to you pure, crushed for light, oil	They will take to you pure, crushed for light, oil
C	to light flames periodically	to light flames periodically
D*	<u>In the Temple, outside the Separator over the tablets</u>	<u>Outside the separator of the tables in the Temple</u>
E*	Aaron <u>and his sons</u> will arrange it from morning to evening	Aaron will arrange it from morning to evening
F*	before God	before God continuously
G*	An eternal statute <u>for their generations from the Jewish people</u>	An eternal status <u>for your generations</u>
H*		On the (golden) pure Candelabra the lights will be arranged
I*		before God continuously

Rashi / Ramban Text:

#A) In the Table each verse can be read down its column. The rows allow comparisons between the two texts. Rows with asterisks (*) have differences between the two texts (columns) which are underlined in the columns. This uses the parallelism technique a major Midrashic method of the Talmud and Rashi.

#B) The Hebrew word *tamid* can mean *periodically* or *continuously*. The

word *tamid* occurs 4 times in the two texts. Each time is bolded and italicized.

#C) Notice how Leviticus verse in rows H & I has no parallel in the Exodus verse. Furthermore, it is a repeat of the commandments to arrange the lights stated in E.

#D) Rashi points out that "the word *tamid* in C, means *periodically*." Hence the law that if in the morning (after a night of burning) the Priest finds any of the non-central lights extinguished "He need not relight them" (Because *tamid* in C does not mean *continuously* but rather *periodically*, every day)

#E) Ramban citing several sources (such as the Sifrey and Mishnah) points out that *tamid* in F and I means *continuously*. Hence the law, "The central light must always be burning. If in the morning it was extinguished, the priest must relight it.

#F) I would suggest that the Ramban, Mishnah, and Sifrey learned that *tamid* means *continuously* because of the repetition of F and I a repetition (of I) not even found in Exodus. Repetitions frequently indicate the stronger meaning of a word (*continuously* vs. *periodically*)

Controversy: The preceding is how I read the biblical texts in such a way as to derive the Rashi and Ramban without controversy. But that is not the way Rashi and Ramban reads. Rashi simply says that *tamid* means *periodically* without any further comments. Ramban, modestly demurs: "But this (*tamid=periodically*) is not the way the Sifrey takes it. They take it as requiring continual lighting for the central light (The Ramban even though he cites the law doesn't point out the possibility that there are two lights - central and non-central-- and in one case *tamid* means *periodically* and in the other case it means *continuously*).

Both Appear Right: Rashi seems to have a strong case. *Tamid* does mean *periodically* and that fits the verse here. Ramban also seems to have a strong case. Rashi did ignore the Sifrey, Mishnah, and Torath Cohanim.

The Rashiyomi approach: An important principle of Rashiyomi, is that there might be multiple comments on a verse and they might involve other verses. By comparing the almost identical Exodus and Leviticus verses, we have an easy way of justifying both Rashi and Ramban, seeing them as complementary, and more strongly, seeing both Jewish laws derived as intrinsic to the texts.