

MISSION STATEMENT: WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THIS WEBSITE? WHOM WOULD BENEFIT FROM IT?

(c) Sep 2026 Russell Jay Hendel

The goal of the Rashi website is to show that all Rashi comments have an underlying *peshat*, that is, an underlying *straightforward* meaning of the text. The contribution of the Rashi website lies in the definition of *peshat*: *Peshat*, refers to how a native literate speaker of a language hears and interprets a written or spoken sentence. Therefore, the Rashi website, accomplishes its goals by finding comparable English translations; a native literate English speaker hearing these translations would spontaneously and instantly react to a sentence the same way Rashi does.

Lets look at some examples:

Example 1: Rashi translates *mar-che-sheth* and *ma-cha-vath* as *pot* and *frying pan*. Rashi then explains why the flat structure of a frying pan is good for frying and why the deep nature of a pot is good for cooking. Here, by translating the Rashi into English we accomplish the goals of showing that the Rashi comments are *peshat*: they represent how a native literate English speaker spontaneously, instantly, and effortlessly responds when they hear *pot* and *frying pan*.

Example 2: Similarly, Rashi translates *nahar*, *yeor*, *agam* as *streams*, *rivers*, *ponds* again using the native literate English speaker's knowledge of English to establish the Rashi as *peshat*.

Example 3: When Jacob who had lived by his father-in-law for 20 years, married two women, and worked for one of the local important people, *Laban*, writes to his brother *I stayed over by Laban*, a native English literate speaker would feel uncomfortable using *stayed over* to indicate a 20 year *residence*; the phrase *stayed over* seems to connote some uncomfortableness.

Example 4: When the bible discussing creating public obstacles for which the creator is monetarily liable for any damages describes *a person who opens a (new) pit (on public grounds), or (even if he) digs (deeper an existing) a pit* he could like Rashi interpret the verse as referring to monetary liability for *either* creating a new pit or expanding an already existing pit.

Example 5: An English literate speaker hearing the sentence *Joseph, as a 17 year old, teenaged with the sons of the maids*, would regard *teenaged* as a new coined term and could easily like Rashi translate it similar to the English idiom, *behaved like a kid*, as indicating *immaturity*, behaving like a teenager.