

RASHI AS COMMENTATOR AS ILLUSTRATED

IN HIS COMMENTARY TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

THESIS

SUBMITTED AS PART REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF RABBI

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ABBREVIATIONS

Beiträge zur Geschichte der	Beitr. zur Geschichte
Raschi-Commentare	der R.C.
Jewish Encyclopedia.....	J.E.
Introduction to the Talmud.....	Intro. to the Talmud
Parschandatha.....	Parsch.
Year Book, Central Conference	
of American Rabbis.....	Year Book, C.C.A.R.
Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des	
Judenthums.....	Zeitschrift für die Wis.

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CHAPTER I.
LIFE OF RASHI

Around so great a character as Rashi, there has grown up a mass of fiction, legend, and fables. While this biography of Rashi will steer clear of whatever is unhistorical, fictitious or legendary, an example will be given of how the web of the miraculous was spun about the life of the great commentator. Dr. Max Beerman records the following:

"Die Sage hat seine Geburt verherrlicht. Raschis Vater besasz einen seltenen Edelstein. Mönche wolten ihn zu einem Auge eines Madonnenbildes erwerben. Doch aus religiöser Gewissenhaftigkeit mochte der Fromme ihn auch nicht um den höchsten Preis zu solchem Zwecke verkaufen. Da lockten ihn die Kauf-lustigen durch List auf ein Schiff und wollten ihn unter Androhung des Todes zur Hergabe des Steines zwingen. Da warf ihn der Rabbi in die Fluten. Zur selben Zeit habe sich in dem Lehrhause zu Troyes eine wunderbare Stimme hören lassen: Dir, Isak, wird ein Sohn geboren werden, der wie ein heller Edelstein leuchten wird."¹

Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, generally known as Rashi, was born in Troyes in the year 1040. He came of a learned family. "His father, Rabbi Isaac, and his maternal uncle, Rabbi Simeon ha-Zaken, a disciple of Rabbenu Gershom, were Talmudic scholars. His teacher, Isaac ben Judah, of Mayence, was related to him."²

1. Dr. M. Beerman, Rashi's Leben und Wirken.

2. M. Schloessinger, Rashi, Year Book, C.C.A.R., 1905.

Rashi's early instruction was given him by his parents, whom Dr. M. Berliner represents as having taken special care with his early upbringing. "From the tenderest age," says DR. Berliner, "the child was initiated into the observance of religious precepts, and was put upon his guard against their transgression. His parents had but one aim, to inculcate in him the religion of his ancestors and render the Law, the source of this religion, accessible to him. He was thus inured to the struggle of life, in which his shield was belief in God. The mother also took part in the rearing of her child. Her lullabies were often prayers or Biblical hymns."¹

Rashi pursued his studies in the cities of Mayence and Worms. In Mayence, Rashi studied under Isaac ben Judah, the head of the school of Rabbenu Gershom.² Rashi seems to have appreciated the personality of his various teachers. Thus, he pays a compliment to the kindness and modesty of Isaac ben Judah. Rashi wrote of him: "Er behandelt sich selbst wie die Schwelle, die getreten wird und wie ein wertloses Ding."³ In the opinion of Dr. A. Berliner, Rashi later used much of the material written by Rabbenu Gershom, which he studied at Mayence. Dr. Berliner notes: "Die Commentare des Rab. Gerschom und die schriftlichen Aufzeichnungen seiner drei Lehrer hat Raschi sehr oft wörtlich aufgenommen, was er aber zuweilen angegeben hat."

1. Liber, Rashi, p. 39.

2. M. Schloessinger, Rashi, Year Book, C.C. A.R., p. 226

3. Dr. M. Beerman, Rashi's Leben und Wirken, p. 11.

4. Dr. A. Berliner, Beitr. zur Geschichte der R.-Com., in Jahres-Bericht des Rabbiner-Seminars, p. 5

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At the School in Worms, Rashi studied Bible and Talmud with Jacob ben Jakar and Isaac ha-Levi.¹ The latter had been a pupil of Eliezer of Worms whose book the "Paths of Life" he taught carefully to his pupils. From the pages of Eliezer's book, Rashi derived many useful lessons.² Of his studies in this book, Dr. Beerman writes, "In dieser Schrift fand er herrliche Lehren, die er selbst später seinen Schülern einschärfte. Da hiesz es: "Zeige dem Kranken ein heitres Angesicht, dasz Du ihn nicht belästigst. Gib dem Armen heimlich und speise ihn mit dem Besten."³

After completing his studies, Rashi returned to his birthplace, Troyes, where he founded a school. Troyes became the center of instruction in Talmud for all of that section. Not only did Rashi serve as teacher in the community, but in all probability he exercised the functions of judge and rabbi.⁴ Rashi secured his livelihood from sources other than that of compensation as rabbi, probably from viticulture. Because of his disinterested service, Rashi exercised great influence in his community. In explanation of Rashi's personal power and influence, Liber remarks: "When the religious representative showed such devotion and disinterestedness, the pious willingly submitted themselves to his authority. The spiritual heads of the community had as great ascendancy over believing Jews as a king had over his subjects; they were sovereigns in the realm of

1. M. Schloessinger, Rashi, Year Book C.C.A.R. 1905, p. 226.

2. Dr. M. Beerman, Raschi's Leben und Wirken, p.11.

3. Ibid., p.11.

4. Liber, Rashi, p.56.

the spirit. And Rashi in his time, because of his learning and piety, exercised the most undisputed authority." ¹

Rashi's family included many great scholars. A complete list of the illustrious members of Rashi's family is given by Dr. Schloessinger. "Rashi, who had married while yet a student had three daughters, but no son. He was fortunate, however, in having learned sons-in-law, and still more learned grandsons. One daughter, Miriam, married a pupil of Rashi, Judah ben Nathan, the Tosafist; his second daughter, Jochebed, the learned Meir ben Samuel of Ramerupt, whose sons were Samuel ben Meir (RaSHBaM), Isaac ben Meir (RIBaM), Jacob ben Meir (Rabbenu Tam), and the exegete and grammarian Solomon ben Meir, who until recently has been totally eclipsed by his more famous brothers." ²

The latter part of Rashi's life was saddened by the misery which was brought upon the Jews of the Rhine valley by the First Crusade. Though the Jews of France did not themselves suffer directly, they were deeply affected by the suffering of their German co-religionists. In commemoration of those massacres, the Jews of France ordered a fast and prayers. ³ However, Rashi had to write in behalf of the Jews who had under stress of circumstances been converted to Christianity and whom many Jews refused to receive back into the fold when they were able to return publicly to Judaism. In order to offset this uncharitable attitude, Rashi wrote: "Let us

beware of alienating those who have returned to us by repulsing

1. Liber, Rashi, p. 56

2. M. Schloessinger, Rashi, Year Book of C.C.A.R. 1905, p. 228.

3. Liber, Rashi, p. 67.

them. They became Christians only through fear of death; and as soon as the danger disappeared, they hastened to return to their faith."¹

The writings of Rashi are:

1. Commentary to the Bible.
2. Commentary to the Talmud.
3. Commentary on Genesis Rabbah, ascribed to Rashi but probably based on a fragment of the original Rashi commentary.²
4. Siddur, ascribed to Rashi, about to be edited.² (i.e., in 1905)
5. Seven selihot composed by Rashi, two of which have found a place in the Liturgy.²
6. The responsa of Rashi which he wrote in answer to numerous inquiries which came to him from both France and Germany.

The character of Rashi has been lauded highly by all who have made a careful study of his writings. He is said to have been extremely modest and humble, having a capacity for self-effacement. His intellect was marked by its clearness and poise. Rashi may be pointed out as one who combined great knowledge with great character. In the estimate of Rashi pronounced by Eliezer ben Nathan, he is exalted for both his knowledge and his character:

מִיָּמֵינוּ אֵין שׁוֹתִים וּמִפֵּי אֵין אֵשׁר אֵדָן וְחִיר וְתִין אֵדָנִים
זִתּוֹרָה. שְׁפִתּוֹתָיו שְׁמֵרוּ לֵעֵת. וְתוֹרָה נִתְּנָה לָהֶם וְנִתְּחַלְשָׁה וְנִקְרָשָׁה
מִפֵּי. תוֹרָה אֵמֶת הִיָּתָה נִפְיָהוּן נִשְׁלָם וְנִמְיָשֵׁר הֵזֶל וְהַעֲמִיד נִעֲוָם
לְגַל עֲצִיָּה וְהַגְדִּיל תוֹרָה וְהַגְדִּיר:

1. Liber, Rashi, p. 67.

2. M. Schloessinger, Year Book C.C.A.R., pp. 241-242.

"Of his waters we drink and by his words we live; he searched out, examined, and disclosed the meaning of the Torah; his lips kept knowledge and the law was sought at his mouth; even as it was rejuvenated by him; the law of truth was in his mouth; he walked in peace and uprightness; he placed the Law upon a firm foundation and made it great and glorious."¹

1. M. Schloessinger, Rashi, Year Book, C.C.A.R., p.245.

CHAPTER I
SOURCES USED BY RASHI

Though tradition has attributed to Rashi great knowledge of all branches of learning, it is the opinion of many students of Rashi that his erudition lay almost entirely in the field of Rabbinical literature. Of Rashi's general education, Zunz remarks:

"But I say of my hero, that he was master of the Talmud, that he understood nothing of Persian, Arabic, Latin, and Greek-, that his German, astronomical, geographic and medical knowledge had an insignificant content- that he was a stranger in the Kabala, not free of superstition."¹

While Rashi's knowledge was limited to Biblical, Talmudic, and Rabbinic literature, his grasp on that literature was all the more thorough and profound. A complete list of the sources which Rashi used can be found in Zunz's essay, Salomon ben Isaac, genannt Raschi.² When one grants to Rashi a thorough acquaintance with these sources, he appreciates the vast learning in Rabbinic literature which Rashi possessed.

In Judges, Rashi quotes from a number of sources, though, in the main, his comment is original and independent. The works and authors to which he does refer are listed below:

1. The Book of Healing. Zunz includes this book in his list of sources quoting only one instance in which it is used. He says: "Ein Sefer-refuoth (medizinisches Buch) führt Raschi zu Richter 15:15 an."³

1. Zunz: Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums, p.285.

2. Ibid., p.292-322

3. Ibid., p.318

Judges 15,15 וְיָרָא ... And I have seen in "The Book of Healing" that they call the moisture which goes forth from a wound

וְיָרָא

2. Seder Olam.

This is a "Collection in three 'gates', relating to history, especially to Biblical chronology. Its redaction is commonly attributed to R. Jose ben Halafta."¹

In the following passages, Rashi quotes Seder Olam:

2:1 And an angel went up.....

We read in Seder Olam that this was Pinhas.

2:16 In all which they did, the hand of God was against them...

Against Abimelech and Machlon and Kilyon (characters in Ruth), as it is said in Seder Olam.

3. Midrashim.

a. Midrash Tanhuma.

This is the "Name of a Midrash on the Pentateuch, redacted by the pupils of R. Tanhuma. Quite recently the endeavor was made to prove that Rashi did not know Tanhuma either in the current text, published by Buber ^{or in the more extended text} in 1885, and that he called Tanhuma the Midrash Yelamdenu, which is lost, and which is said to be the prototype of the two versions of the Tanhuma."²

In the following passages, Rashi quotes Tanhuma:

3:10 And the spirit of God was upon him... Rabbi Tanhuma explained, "We think of what the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Moses in Egypt, 'I have surely seen the affliction of my people.' What is the significance of the use of the verb וַיִּרְא and of the infinitive? God

1. Liber, Rashi, Note 43, p.248.

2. Ibid., Note 41, p. 247

said to Moses, 'I see that they are destined to err with the golden calf, nevertheless, I have seen the affliction of my people.' This ^{OK} ~~Asniel~~ explained; he said, 'Whether they are innocent or whether they are guilty, it is incumbent on him to save them.'"

not an Rashi

4:3 They oppressed the children of Israel with rigor... Rabbi Tanhuma explained it, "with blasphemy," and so he says, "Your words have been strong against me."

b. The Mekilta, the Halachic Midrash to Exodus.

In the following passage, Rashi quotes the Mekilta:

4:6 Did he not command?.... Through Moses that "you should utterly destroy them." Thus, it is rendered in Mekilta.

c. Bereshith Raba.

5:24 Above women in the tent shall she be praised...

It refers to Jael. Why should they bear and raise children, for if it weren't for Jael, behold this wicked one (Sisera) would have come and destroyed them. Thus it is written in Bereshith Raba.

[Handwritten scribble]

4. Menachem ben Saruk.

Zunz, in his list of Rashi's sources, says of Rashi's use of the writings of Menachem ben Saruk:

"Menachem ben Saruk.... Exactly, Menachem ben Jacob ben Sarkk, but usually called by Rashi simply Menachem (never Rabbi). He is a Spaniard and writer of Mahberet, a lexicon arranged with synonyms, which Rashi very frequently

1. Zunz, Zeitschrift für die Wis., 1822, p.308.

especially with regard to the meaning of words, quoted."¹

In the following passage, Rashi quotes Menachem:

5:11 וְהָיוּ לָהֶם חֲמִשָּׁה חֲבָלִים.... Menachem interpreted it thus, arrangers of battle and orderers of war, and they leagued with the king not to lie-in-wait and go forth as a company. All of it is an expression of companies.

up part
quot prov 30:2

6. Targum.

Of Rashi's use of the Targum, Liber remarks:

"The official Aramaic translation, or Targum, of the Pentateuch is attributed to Onkelos and that of the prophets to Jonathan ben Uzziel. Rashi constantly draws inspiration from both of these works.... Sometimes he simply refers to them, sometimes he reproduces them, less frequently he remarks that they do not agree with the text."

In the Book of Judges, Rashi quotes Targum very frequently. Occasionally, Rashi refers to Targum because he seems to find in Targum necessary substantiation for his own interpretation. We have an example of this in Rashi's comment to Judges XIV:9

And he scraped it.... It is an expression of separating what clings of any (substance) which clings. And so for example, bread which clings to the furnace, its separation is called הִסְרִיתוֹ. ... And so Targum J. translates it, "he removed the honey."

In the passage quoted above, Rashi makes the statement of Targum serve as proof for his own interpretation. In other passages, his own comment is made subsidiary to that of Targum, e.g., VII:13,

וְהָיוּ לָהֶם חֲמִשָּׁה חֲבָלִים.... Targum Jonathan translates it, "A

charred cake of barley bread." It was charred because they baked it on coals. Here Rashi seems to derive his own comment from that of the Targum's.

As a rule, Rashi agrees with Targum. Yet, he does not regard the translation of Jonathan as infallible. Thus, in 3:19, Rashi takes issue, for the sake of accuracy, with Targum:

And he said, "Keep silence." Eglon said, "Let all keep silent." And Targum Jonathan translates *on* as *p'so*, to depart, nevertheless, it is an expression of silence.

In reading Rashi to Judges, one is immediately struck by the frequent use which Rashi makes of Targum. As stated above, Rashi refers to Targum sometimes to substantiate his own interpretation, sometimes to discover from the Targum the meaning of a passage, again in order to indicate his difference from the Targum. The following list of verses, in which Rashi refers to Targum, will show how often Rashi makes use of the Targum:

Judges 1:14, 1:15, 1:19, 2:18, 3:15, 3:19, 3:23, 4:18, 4:22, 7:2, 7:13, 7:15, 8:18, 9:6, 13:4, 14:8, 14:9, 14:15, 14:18, 15:16.

7. The Bible.

The Bible to Rashi was the chief source for all spiritual inspiration. In his list of Rashi's sources, Zunz remarks:

"The Holy Scripture is the first basis of his spiritual life, the element of his Biblical commentary, and also in the Talmudic commentary, he refers in innumerable places, back to the same."¹

1. Zunz: Zeitschrift für die Wis., p. 292.

Sometimes, Rashi quotes the Bible in order to throw light upon the meaning of a word,¹ often to illuminate a grammatical problem,² but most interesting is his ingenious linking of the text upon which he is commenting with other characters from other parts of the Bible. This he does, for example, in V:24:

וְיָשָׁב אִשָּׁא בְּאֶהֱרָא It refers to Sarah of whom it is said, "Behold she is in the tent." To Rebecca, for it is said of her, "And Isaac took her into the tent." Of Rachel and Leah, for it is said of them, "And he went forth from the tent of Leah, etc."

8. The Mishnah and Talmud.

- a. To Tractate Zeraim, §:26.
- b. To Pesachim, 5:21.
- c. A statement quoted in the name of Rav, 4:18.
- d. A quotation from the Rabbis, 5:12.

While the above citations of references which Rashi makes to Jewish literature are not in themselves sufficient to prove his intimate and profound acquaintance with Jewish literature, still they may serve to swell the evidence which already has been collected to prove Rashi's vast knowledge. There is one reference in Judges which is worthy of particular attention, that made to "The Book of Healing." Zunz mentions only one place in which Rashi refers to "The Book of Healing," and that place is Judges 15:15.³

1. Judges, 15:8.

2. Judges 15:4.

3. Zunz, Zeitschrift für die Wis., p. 318.

*this already
related on
p. 10 bottom*

Chapter II.

RASHI AS EXEGETE AS ILLUSTRATED IN HIS COMMENTARY TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES

In his interpretation of Judges, Rashi uses three of the four methods of exegesis which are commonly designated by the word *Pardes*. His purpose is to clarify and explain the words of Scripture. His manner and style of exegesis can be analyzed under three heads:

I. The Peshat. According to Mielziner the Peshat is "the plain interpretation, where a law or a passage in Scripture is explained in the most natural way according to the letter, the grammatical construction, and the spirit of the passage."¹

Since Rashi contributed largely to the development of the Peshat, his commentary on Judges abounds with plain, clear, natural explanations growing directly out of the text. Under various headings, these comments may be grouped:

A. Paraphrase, e.g.,

9:37 From the highest part of the land.... From the stronghold of the land, from the highest point of ^{mountain} them all.

13:8 To the child that shall be born.... Who is destined to be born.

16:1 To the Gazites, saying... To the men of Gaza, it was told.

B. Definition, e.g.,

8:10 In Karkar.... The name of a place

1. Miel., Intro. to the Talmud, p. 117.

9:53 The upper-millstone.... The cutting stone of the upper-millstone, which is called lōṭ (the riding or moving one of the stones).

14:11 Companions... Companions for the groomsmanship.

C. Explanation of obscure passages through bringing out explicitly the meaning of the passage, e.g.,

2:3 For snares... For harassers on your border, in companies and troops, to spoil and plunder.

8:1 What have I done in comparison with you?... What is what I have done in the beginning to be esteemed like what you have done in the end?

13:18 It (i.e., the name of the angel) is hidden, for it is changed continually, and ^{he} I do not know to what it is ^{might} changed to-day.

D. Remarks upon geographic references. These are probably more numerous in Rashi's commentary to the Book of Judges than they are in his commentaries to other books of the Bible, owing to the nature of the Book of Judges.

Comments made by Rashi upon geography are:

11:16 Unto the Red Sea... To the South of the land of Edom, and the land of Edom was to the south of the land of Canaan.

19:2 To Gibeah... Gibeah of Benjamin

20:33 At Baal-tamar... In the plain of Jericho

E. Comments upon history. These are especially common in the Book of Judges as the book itself is historical.

Examples of references to history are:

11:26 By the side of the Arnon... Beside the Arnon, because these were cities of Moab, and (the Ammonites)

knew that they could not cross over against them, for behold (Israel) took them from Sihon who took them from the king of Moab.

11:26 Three hundred years.... Since they conquered the land in the days of Joshua until the days of Jephthah. From here, there is to be learnt the years of the judges who are mentioned up till now, whether the years of servitude to any nation is counted within the days of a judge or not. And we read in Seder Olom that Joshua sustained Israel twenty-eight years, and there is no verse from which to learn it, and Ashiel ~~fourty~~ forty years with the years of Cushan-Rishathaim included. ~~Jehud~~ eighty years, with the eighteen years of servitude to Eglon included. Making one hundred and ~~foubty~~ forty years so far.....

In the above verse, Rashi goes on enumerating the number of years the various Judges ruled, until he counts the entire three hundred years. It is a splendid example of how Rashi sought to support by chronology the accuracy of the statement made in the text.

II. Derash. While Rashi's midrashic comments are rarer than those he makes in the spirit of the Peshat, there are, nevertheless, a number of explanations in the Book of Judges which are purely Derash. Derash, according to Mielziner, is "that method by which it is intended, for certain reasons, to interpret a passage in a more artificial way which often deviates from the plain and natural meaning. The result of this method of interpretation is termed midrash, that which is searched out, the artificial deduction."¹

1. Miel., Intro. to the Tal., p. 118

Sometimes, these midrashic comments have merely an historical, or rather a pseudo-historical bearing. In such verses as the following, Rashi seems to be dealing with history in order to intrigue the imagination of the reader.

18:27 Laish... The name of a city. And in the Book of Joshua, it is called Leshem. (Josh. 19:47) because they found there a precious stone whose name was Leshem. And its name was written on the breastplate of the tribe of Dan; therefore they knew in truth that this was their inheritance.

At other times, Rashi employs Derash in order to deduce some fact of religious or ethical significance. It is when so used that Derash justifies itself completely. Moreover, the work of Rashi becomes more significant and valuable when we view it as a contribution to Jewish ethics, instead of considering it merely as a commentary whose sole object is to explain obscure points. As an example of Rashi's subtle power to clothe a matter-of-fact statement with ethical significance, we shall quote the verse which is interpreted to mean that Ehud is rewarded for the reverence which he shows to the messenger of God.

3:20 "I have a message of God for thee.".... And it is necessary for you to stand.

And he arose from his seat.... Therefore Ruth was descended from him.

It is important to note that Rashi himself is fully conscious of the difference between what is purely Peshat and what is Derash. Thus, he frequently gives both, and calls attention to the difference between them, e.g.,

*Derash is merely
to give a meaning
to the words of the
text.*

7:16 Trumpets and torches... In order to call to mind the merit of the giving of the Torah. And its literal meaning is that it was night, as it is written, "and it was dark." Therefore, they bore torches to give light to them, and they placed them in the pitchers, in order that (the enemy) shouldn't see them on account of the torches.

III. Rashi occasionally makes use of Remez. It implies that within the text there is lurking some subtle and hidden reference to something not explicitly mentioned. Thus, a prediction of the future conduct of Moab and Edom is read into the following statement:

11:17..... But he would not.... Moses hinted in the Torah, "As the children of Esau that dwelt in Seir, and the Moabites that dwelt in Ar." (Dt. 2:29). Just as Edom did not permit them to pass through, so Moab did not permit them to pass through.

Just because Rashi uses the Peshat so frequently in the Book of Judges, he does not make much use of special hermenutic laws of interpretation. However, one law or method of interpretation he does employ several times. Rashi relates the content of two passages to each other because of their proximity in the text. He finds reasons for their proximity which are not altogether self-evident and were probably not intended by the author of the passages. Thus, he explains the proximity of the passage in the story of Micah, wherein eleven hundred pieces of silver are mentioned, to the passage in the story of Samson, wherein likewise eleven hundred pieces of silver are mentioned, by the

fact that in both cases the money was used for evil purposes.

17:3 There are some who say that this woman was Delilah, because it is written eleven hundred pieces of silver. And they are in error because Micah preceded Samson by many years. But the two passages are near each other (הַכֶּסֶף שֶׁיָּצָא מִכָּאן) because the two amounts of evil silver are equal. And both of them are silver which brought on punishment.

One of the outstanding characteristics of Rashi as an exegete is his accuracy which had its origin in his careful examination and understanding of the text. We see his keen observation in the following verse, wherein he bases a comment on the fact that "days" not "years" is used in the text:

217 Who lived days.... Days they lived, not years, because they were lazy with regard to Joshua's eulogy. It is that which is said (verse 9) וַיַּעַן הָהָר, because the mountain quaked over them to kill them.

Scarcely ever, does Rashi appear to act as a critic on the original text. Yet, sometimes, when a text is obviously meaningless, he cannot refrain from remarking on its deficiencies, e.g.;

18:6 Before the Lord is your way.... Before the Holy One, blessed be He, is your way revealed, for (to the present text) there is no sense. *the word "way" is not to be taken in the literal sense (but in the sense of "revelation")*

Rashi's great contribution as an exegete lies in the fact that his interpretations have been studied and accepted, until they have become the very key to the text, an inseparable portion of it. So Dr. Abraham Geiger remarks:

"Rasschi, d. h. sein Commentar, gehört noch heute gewissermaassen mit zum Thalmud, und gehörte lange Jahrhunderte mit zur Bibel, die man nur nach seiner Auffassung in sich aufnahm."¹

Rashi is said to owe his popularity in part to his clever combination of Peshat and Derash, of the literal and of the fanciful interpretation. But, it may also be said to be due to the clarity, the lucidity, the concisemess, and the accuracy with which he makes his comments.

1. A. Geiger, Parshandatha, p.12.

CHAPTER III.

RASHI AS GRAMMARIAN.

Rashi, as a grammarian, must naturally have been subject to the limitations of the French exegetes in the field of grammar. The French exegetes lagged behind the Spanish in the development of grammar. This is the unanimous opinion of students of Rashi. Liber remarks comparing the French with the Spanish School:

"In France, on the contrary, though Rabbinical studies were already flourishing, the same is not true of philological studies, which were introduced into France only through the influence of the Spaniards. French scholars soon came to know the works, written in Hebrew, of Menahem ben Saruk and Dunash ben Labrat, and Rashi avails himself of them frequently, and not always uncritically."¹

Dr. A. Geiger attributes the backwardness of the French exegetes in Hebrew grammar to the unsettled state of French grammar at that time.²

Though all critics agree with regard to the limitations of the French school of exegetes in grammar, still they grant to Rashi a certain amount of independence and originality, even though he did rely upon the Spanish grammarians for much of ^{his grammatical knowledge}. Thus, Dr. M. Schloessinger grants that Rashi was not slavishly dependent upon the Spanish

1. Liber, Rashi, p. 127.

2. A. Geiger, Parsch., p. 9.

Butler not at all dependent on *Gaillard*
graminifolium except *Microbeum* & *Sonch*
+ *Polygonum*, it is again seen that he

takes a mercuric plant at least

Russie die nach Korea

attained by commercial firms

of the other Spanish gallies.

because they were in

Arabic

and the second was that Postle did not know of the Tri-lateral root clearing which Maynard first presented as ~~an issue~~ for the fall session there were bi-lateral and uni-lateral roots. He, however, classes "B" roots as Tri-lateral roots.

grammarians. He writes:

"The lexicographical and grammatical standpoint of Rashi is in general that of Menahem ben Saruk and Dunash ibn Labrat, that is, the pre-Hayyujian standpoint of the bi-literal root theory. Nevertheless, he often maintains his own views against the authority of his predecessors."¹

Certain it is, that in the Book of Judges, Rashi makes many keen remarks upon grammatical structures. In this chapter, these will be grouped under appropriate heads.

I. Comments upon the Verb.

Rashi points out the difference between the form of the ל"ו verb in the Qal and in the Hiphil.

1:23 וַיִּשְׁלֹחַ Through others; and they sent spies. The Qal (וַיִּשְׁלַח) is said with regard to spies themselves, and of those who send spies, it is said with regard to them, the Hiphil (וַיִּשְׁלֹחַ). *awkward part*

Rashi^{shows} his knowledge of tri-literal theory of verb forms, in his remark upon the contraction of the ל"ו form.

5:13 וַיִּשְׁבַּע is a contraction of וַיִּשְׁבַּע , as "to subdue before Him the nations."

Rashi draws a difference between the meaning of an apocopated ל"ו with . and an apocopated ל"ו with .: . His examples from the Bible tend to make his point convincing.

15:4 וַיִּשְׁבַּע The tails, tail to tail. And the literal meaning of וַיִּשְׁבַּע is "he turned himself." (Intransitive). And the literal meaning of וַיִּשְׁבַּע is "he turned others." (transitive) And this is the use of every ל"ו verb. (When it is spelled with

1. M. Schloessinger, Rashi, Year Book, C.C. A.R., 1905.

a . it is intransitive, and with a . it is transitive.) As
 "And the people multiplied, וַיִּבְרַךְ ." (Ex. 1:20); "He hath multi-
 plied in the daughter of Judah mourning וַיִּבְרַךְ ." (Lt. 2:5)

"And Judah was ^{carried} away captive from his land, וַיִּבְרַךְ ."

וַיִּבְרַךְ means to be exiled, intransitive. "And the king of
 Assyria exiled Israel to Assyria וַיִּבְרַךְ ." Exiled here, וַיִּבְרַךְ
 is transitive.

Rashi comments on the tense or time of a verb.

2:18 וְכִי הָיָה ... An expression of the present tense. When
 God would raise up for them judges, then God was with that
 judge.

II. Rashi distinguishes between an adjective and a noun
 by the difference in vocalization. So he makes a distinction
 between חָכָם , adjective with ח , and חָכְמָה , noun
 with ח .

5:29 $\text{חָכְמוֹת שְׂרוּתֶיהָ}$ The wise (made an adjective by Rashi)
 among her princesses; therefore the ח is punctuated by a ־ .

When it is a noun, it is punctuated with a ו as in *Rashi 9*
 $\text{חָכְמוֹת נְאֻם הַחָכְמִים}$ ("Wisdom is too high for a fool.") (Pr. 24)
 And so in חָכְמוֹת נְשִׁים ; "the wise" (adjective) among
 women. (Pr. 14)

III. He is familiar with the laws which govern the eliding of
 a ו .

5:29.... וַיִּבְרַךְ ... The Dagesh of the ו serves in the
 place of $\text{וּ$ (the object, her) as the ו does in the following
 case, "From Rivcath, he brought her.) See Lev 6:14

IV. Rashi is acquainted with the use of וְ with the interrogative

וְכִי הָיָה תביא

ה .

2:22 Whether they would observe.... The letter ה is punctuated with a -:, because it is an expression of questioning and testing.

V. Prepositions.

Rashi asserts that כִּי with either אֲחֵרֵי or אַחֲרָיו it means "to contend against in opposition", while כִּי with לְ after it means to contend for the sake of.

6:32 כִּי הָיָה לְגִדְיוֹן Against Gideon, in opposition. (The verb כִּי meaning to contend against in opposition) occurs with either אֲחֵרֵי after it or לְ after it, as in "he contended against (כִּי) Laban." But כִּי meaning to fight against doesn't occur with לְ after it. And every לְ after the verb כִּי occurring in Scripture infers to fight "for the sake of."

Rashi's close and careful translation of prepositions can be seen in his translation of לְ in the following verse:

14:7 הָיָה לְהִשָּׁאֵר ... He spoke concerning the woman to her relatives.

VI. Gender.

Rashi comments frequently on the gender of nouns and verbs. The following verse is an interesting example of an observation upon a rather uncommon verbal form:

11:35 הִנֵּנִי לְךָ ... It is feminine, as הִנֵּנִי לְךָ , "thou (f.) hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride." (Ct. 4:9)

Sometimes, the text itself is extremely loose or perhaps corrupt, so that it is impossible to give a meaningful translation. In such cases, the comment of Rashi is particularly

valuable in establishing the sense of a passage. For instance, this sentence from the song of Deborah is elucidated by Rashi's comment.

5:8.....וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּנְהַר אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל..... When Israel chose new gods, then was war decreed in their gates.

From the above citations, it is clear that Rashi supplies in his commentary on the Book of Judges useful information along the lines of grammar and syntax which is helpful in giving to the text a lucid translation. Moreover, these examples prove the statement of Liber with regard to Rashi as a grammarian to be true:

"Rashi in his explanations pays regard to the laws of language, and in both his Talmudic and Biblical commentaries, he frequently formulates scientific laws, or, it might be said, empiric laws, regarding, for instance, distinctions in the usage of words indicated by the position of the accent, different meanings of the same particle, certain vowel changes, and so on. Thus, we have been able to construct a grammar of Rashi, somewhat rudimentary, but very advanced for the time."¹

1. Liber, Rashi, p. 126.

Chapter IV.

RASHI AS LEXICOGRAPHER

Rashi uses a number of French words in his commentaries, giving them as equivalents of the Hebrew. The advisability of this is seen when we consider that the people for whom he originally intended to write were familiar with the French language. These words which Rashi quotes are of value to anyone who attempts to ~~to~~ reconstruct old French. Their value may be seen from the following statement: "Written, as they were, in Champagne, the laazim of Rashi represent almost the pure French (the language spoken in Champagne lay between the dialect of the Ile-de-France and that of Lorraine), and, what is more, they were words in common use among the people, for they generally designated objects of daily use. These laazim, then, constitute a document of the highest importance for the reconstruction of old French, as much from a phonetic and morphologic point of view, as from the point of view of lexicography; for the Hebrew transcription fixes to a nicety the pronunciation of the word because of the richness of the Hebrew in vowels and because of the strict observance of the rules of transcription."¹

French words used by Rashi in explaining passages in Judges are found in the following passages:

	French	Hebrew
3:15	וּלְרֹאשֵׁי הַבָּיִת	אֶל רֹאשֵׁי הַבָּיִת
3:26	אֶשְׁקֶמֶד צִדְיָא	אֶשְׁקֶמֶד
3:31	אֶלְיָא	אֶלְיָא
4:11	כַּרְיִישׁ קָ	אֶלְיָא

1. Liber, Rashi, p. 100.

	French	Hebrew
4:21	קני"ז "ז	מזל קנאה
9:23	שנ"ש	לח צדק
9:46	כז"ש "ר	צדק
16:13	קנא "ר	מחזקות
16:26	כז"ו "ש	לחמישי
16:29	אונברז "א	לחזות
18:21	פונטומל	הפונטומל
19:21	א פונל "ר	לחזות

Rashi, being a Frenchman, was undoubtedly familiar with the greater part of the French language. In the opinion of Zunz, Rashi was not very familiar with German. He believed that Rashi's knowledge of German was limited practically to the words he used in his commentaries. After explaining Rashi's comparative ignorance of Persian, Arabic, and Greek, he says: "Not much better than with the ancient dead languages, did he fare with the modern, living language, the German."¹

German words used by Rashi in the Book of Judges are:

	German	Hebrew	English
3:16	ומן זאגל	לחז ארך	cubit long
6:2	לעוועלער	לחז קרוח	vaults
6:2	לעוועלער	לחז קרוח	caves

As a translator and lexicographer, Rashi did great service in helping define rare words by giving their equivalent in common, known Hebrew words. This he does, for instance, in the following passage:

11:40 זתנו . . . ציון, to mourn.

1. Zunz, Zeitschrift für die Wis., p.288.

Other passages in which Rashi throws light upon the meaning of rare words are: 9:27, 11:40, 15:8, 16:7, 19:2, 19:21.

Besides Rashi's references to the French and German, there is his constant turning to the Aramaic in the Targum Jonathan. It is my general impression that Rashi gives more attention to Aramaic equivalents of the Hebrew, in the Book of Judges than he does in the Books of the Pentateuch. A list of passages in which Rashi refers to Targum Jonathan has already been given on page 14, under "Sources used by Rashi."

CONCLUSION

Influence of Rashi

Rashi's influence was first seen in the multiplication of schools in all localities wherein rabbinical studies were pursued. Because of the impetus he gave to learning, Northern France became a centre for the intellectual activity of the Occidental Jews. ¹

A great deal of Rashi's influence is due to the fact that immediately after his death his work was continued by his pupils and his own immediate family. The names of his disciples and of his own family who continued his work are numerous, but the chief ones are mentioned in the following quotation:

"Seine Schüler, deren Namen erst durch mühselige Forschungen der jüngsten Zeit eruiert wurden- wir nennen Simcha ben Samuel, Schemaja und Samuel ben Perigoros- waren teilweise seine Mitarbeiter und wurden die Fortsetzer seines Werkes. Tatsächlich ausgebreitet und erhalten hat es seine Familie.

Raschi hatte keine Söhne, wie bereits oben bemerkt wurde, aber von der einen seiner drei Töchter erwachsen ihm drei Enkel, welche wirkliche Erben seines Geistes wurden.

Zunz sagt mit Recht: Ein beispielloses Glück- diese Genealogie!

Der älteste Enkel hiesz R.Schmuel ben Meir (Raschbam), der zweite R. Isak ben Meir (Ribam), der jüngste und berühmteste

1. Liber, Rashi, p. 185.

ist Jacob, mit dem Zunamen Tam-- er wurde ein zweite Raschi.

Durch diese drei Männer wurden alle Gelehrten herangebildet, welche in Deutschland, Frankreich und der Provence zahlreiche Talmudschulen gründeten."¹

Following the direction given to them by the pupils and relatives of Rashi, came a host of other commentators on the Bible and Talmud. A long list of rabbis, including Jacob of Orleans, Moses of Pontoise, Isaac the Elder, Isaac the Younger, Judah Sir Leon, wrote Tossafot to the Bible as well as to the Talmud.² An idea of the impression Rashi himself made can be gained from the fact that more than fifty super-commentaries were written on his commentary to the Pentateuch.³

It is interesting to note that Rashi influenced Christian exegesis. Among the Christian exegetes whom he reached were:

- a. Nicholas de Lyra, His commentary on the Psalms is often a paraphrase of Rashi's.⁴ He was even termed, *simia Salomonis*, Rashi's Ape.
- b. William of Mara. He cites Rashi's commentary under the name of Perus.⁵
- c. Luther. He is said to have gained his knowledge of Hebrew from Nicholas de Lyra. It became a common saying that "Rashi and the Tossafists made Nicholas de

Lyra and Nicholas de Lyra made Luther."⁶

1. Dr. Beerman, Raschi's Leben und Wirken, pp.21,22.

2. Liber, Rashi, p.198.

3. Ibid., p. 196.

4. Ibid., p. 200.

5. Ibid., p. 201.

6. Ibid., p. 201.

Of all commentaries to the Bible none is so popular as that of Rashi's. It has been of great value in stimulating faith and piety in all who have read it. Of Rashi's works it may be truly said that they have had an appeal both to the scholar and to the laymen.

Rashi's influence is to be compared to a stream ever widening and growing, sending its tributaries through many lands, enriching the soil and making it fertile.