

The 10 RashiYomi Rules

Their presence in Rashis on Shelach-Korach

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GOALS

The goal of the Weekly Rashi Digest is to use the weekly Torah portion to expose students at all levels to the ten major methods of Rashi's commentary. Continual weekly exposure to these ten major methods facilitate the acquisition, familiarity, and facility with the major exegetical methods.

For the half year period Oct-2012 through May-2013 we studied the Rashi grammar rule. This entire series will be summarized and conveniently available in zip format in the near future.

For the coming half year period, we will study the Rashi reference rule, also known as the citation rule or colloquially at the other-verse rule. This deceptively simple rule- the use of citations or references by Rashi - is actually a super-rule, that dominates a large portion of Rashis. This rule was chosen by the authors of the Passover Haggadah and is exclusively featured in the Aramaean tried to destroy my father Haggadah passage.

We are also devoting this series to home-schoolers. The Rashis will be presented in home-schooling format and can be used on any age group above 5. Nevertheless, the scholarly aspect of the Rashi will not be ignored: Citations and references are very popular in Rabbinic sermons and in Talmudic passages.

We briefly illustrate the richness of the reference/citation rule by exploring the sister rule, reading comprehension, so popular now in America. Consider the sentence: At a red light, Abe quickly jumped out and purchased a coke for Sarah. Consider the following levels of reading comprehension questions:

- *Citation level: Who purchased the coke. **Answer**: Abe*
- *Inference level: From where did Abe jump out. **Answer**: A car*
- *Speculation level: Why did Sarah need a coke. **Answer**: She was very thirsty.*

Students in first - third grade may find the citation level easy but the inference and speculation level hard. The speculation level is frequently powerfully used in Rabbinic sermons. This is but a taste of what we will do this year.

As usual, when making transitions in the Rashi Newsletter we welcome positive and negative comments as well as requests. Please send all comments to RashiYomi@GMail.Com.

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Reference - Daily Rashi Sunday June 2 2013

The question and answer below can be used as a starting point for teaching young children or in a rabbinic sermon.

Read the reference and target verse below and then answer the questions.

- **Reference verse Gn06-04** The *nefilim* were current then [during Noah's time] and also afterwards; [the people] that had relations with the daughters of important people from which they had children of repute
- **Target verse Nu13-33** [Spies slandering Israel] And there [in Israel] we saw the *nefillim* and the might people from the nefillim; we were like grasshoppers in their eyes.

Question: What information does the reference verse give about the target verse.

Answer: Both verses use the italicized word *nefillim*. Rashi explains that the identity of the *nefillim* spoken about in the target verse is explained by the reference verse.

Rashi further explains the word *nefillim* which comes from the biblical root nafal, which means to fall: The reference verse explains that these *nefillim* use to have relations with other women; hence they have fallen off the right path.

Reference - Daily Rashi Monday June 3 2013

Here is another straightforward reference method. This example can be used for teaching young children or for a rabbinic sermon.

Read the three verses below and then answer the three questions.

Here are the 3 verses.

1. **Ju01-20** And they gave Hebron to Caleb as Moses said
2. **Dt01-36** [God speaking: I will punish the spies] except for Caleb...he will see the land ...I will give him the land he walked on
3. **Nu13-22d** [Talking about the spies] They went up [to Israel] they toured the land...he came to Hebron ...they came to the cluster river and they cut one cluster

Here are the 3 questions

1. What city did they give Caleb
2. **Ju01-20** says they gave Caleb according to Moses word. Where did Moses indicate a promise to give Caleb anything.
3. As the underlined words in **Nu13-22d** indicate, only one spy came to Hebron. Who was it? How do you know?

Answers: 1. Hebron (**Ju01-20**). 2. **Dt01-36** states "I will give him the land he walked on". 3. Caleb came. **Dt01-36** states they will give Caleb the land he walked on.

Reference - meaning Daily Rashi Tuesday June 4 2013

Rashi sometimes uses other verses to clarify the meaning of a word. I find it best when teaching children (or when giving sermons) to use punchy English parallels, thereby avoiding getting into issues with translation of other verses. Today's examples illustrate this.

Read the three English sentences below and explain how the meanings of "take" differs.

1. Take out the garbage
2. Take your brother to school
3. Take sides on whether you should clean up your room if no guests are coming.

Answer. The three sentences differ in *what* is taken.

1. An object is taken (garbage)
2. A person is taken (this means to go with, to accompany)
3. A side of thought or a position is taken (This means you hold the position).

Now that you know the *what is taken* test, analyze the meaning of take in the following verses.

Nu116-01:03 *And Korach took; and with him was Datan, Aviram and On. They rose up ...250 distinguished men were with them. They stood against Moses and Aaron: Why do you lead the Jewish people if all of us are holy.*

Answer (Rashi): Korach took a position or sides against Mosaic leadership; this is meaning #3. Korach also took people with him; they went with him against Moses; this is meaning #2.

Reference - meaning Daily Rashi Wednesday June 5 2013

Rashi sometimes uses other verses to clarify the meaning of a word. I find it best when teaching children (or when giving sermons) to use punchy English parallels, thereby avoiding getting into issues with other verses. Today's examples illustrate this.

Not every reference verse should be done with question and answer. Here is a cute example.

In English both *shh* and *quiet* mean the same thing. But

- *quiet* is a word which means quiet while
- *shh* is a quiescence sound which means quiet. (This, the use of sound to indicate a meaning, is called onomatopoeia).

If you go through the alphabet almost all the letters involve motions of the tongue and lips. For example *b* and *m* require starting from a closed mouth. However *h* and *s* are just breaths. They are the closest letters to quiet. Hence we use *h* and *s* to indicate quiet

- by the word *shhh* in English
- by the word *hsss* in Hebrew

This is also consistent with the fact that Hebrew reads right to left while English reads left to right. So the Hebrew *hss* is the reverse of the English *shh*.

Using this we can understand **Nu13-30**: *Caleb shhsed the nation towards Moses*.

Reference - Meaning Daily Rashi June 6 2013

A major submethod of the Rashi reference method is using reference verses to clarify meaning. The Hebrew word *Anashim* can mean

- people
- professionals.

This example is a bit advanced but all age groups can benefit from and participate in it.

In each of the verses below try filling in the best translation, *people* or *professionals*.

1. **Gn12-20** So Pharaoh commanded _____ for Abraham, to send him and his wife [out of Egypt]

2. **Gn13-08** Abraham said to Lot: Since we are brotherly_____,why should there be disputes between our shepards
3. **Dt01-13** Bring to me [Moses] _____ wise, insightful and communally known and I will appoint them over your tribes.
4. **Ex16-20** They disobeyed Moses; _____ left over Manna until the morning; Moses lost his temper on them
5. **Ex21-18** When _____ fistfight and one hits his colleague who doesn't die but falls sick.

The correct answers are as follows: 1. professionals, 2. professionals, 3. professionals, 4. people 5. people. Notice that example #2 would not make sense if we filled in with the word *people* since brotherly people do fight; however Abraham's point was that they were *professionals* and therefore their shepards shouldn't fight.

Advanced Rashi. The above exercise can easily be performed by anyone over say age 8. But alot more has to be done to understand today's Rashi, **Nu13-02** which states. [God speaking to Moses] *Send _____ for your personal satisfaction who will spie out Canaan* Here the translations *people* and *professionals* both make sense. Why then does Rashi translate this verse as professionals?

We would have to review many more examples: The basic idea is that the word *anashim* means professionals when it is assocaited with some socially good attribute. Hence

- In example #3, the people were selected as communal leaders and hence we translate as professionals.
- In example #2, the attribute professionals is associated with the good attribute of socially acceptable behavior (no disputes)
- In example #1, the verse associates the selected people with the good attribute of a professional escort (The intent of the verse is that Pharoh did not want Abraham harassed on the way out)

Rashi is now clear

The Hebrew anashim can equally mean people and professionals It means professionals when the people are selected for a socially important position. So Nu13-02 discussing the selection of communal leaders who will spy is discussing professionals.

Rashi also points out that *although they sinned late by slandering Israel, at the time of selection they were professionals.*

APPENDIX

THE 10 RASHI RULE CATEGORIES / THE 30 RASHI RULES

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I-REFERENCE: Dt26-05d *We went down to Egypt with a few people* explained by Gn46-27: with 70 people

II-MEANING / Lexicography / Dictionary: **EXAMPLE (Connectives)** KI means IF,PERHAPS,RATHER,BECAUSE,WHEN,THAT (Rashi on Gn18-15a Gn24-33a) **EXAMPLE (Nuances):** YDA means FAMILIAR, not KNOW (eg Dt34-10a) eg Gn04-01 Adam was FAMILIAR with his wife **EXAMPLE (Idioms)** ON THE FACE OF means DURING THE LIFETIME (Rashi on Nu03-04a Gn11-28a Ex20-03c Dt05-07a) **EXAMPLE (Synonyms)** *Marchesheth* means pot; *Machavath* means frying pan (Lv02-05a, 07a) **EXAMPLE (Hononyms)** SHAMAH can mean listen, hear, understand: (Gn42-23a) *They didn't appreciate that Joseph understood them* (Note: They knew he was listening) **EXAMPLE (Metonymy)** (Lv02-11a) *Don't offer ...any honey as sacrifices* RASHI: *honey* includes any sweet fruit juice

III-GRAMMAR: **EXAMPLE:** BA-ah means CAME;ba-AH means COMING(Gn46-26a)
EXAMPLE: Hitpael conjugation has different rules if 1st root letter is Tzade (Gn44-16a)

IV-PARALLELISM: (Ex20-04) Dont **POSSESS** the gods of others Dont **MAKE** idols RASHI: So both **POSSESSion & MAKING** of idols are prohibited

V-CONTRADICTION: (Nu04-03, Nu08-24a)Levites start Temple work at 25; Levites start temple work at 30. RASHI: They apprentice at 25 but start actual service at 30.

VI-STYLE: RABBI ISHMAEL RULES: EXAMPLE: (Simple verses should be generalized): (Rashi Pesachim 6) (Dt25-04a) *Dont MUZZLE an OX while THRESHING* RASHI: Dont STOP any WORKING ANIMAL from eating

VII-FORMATTING: EXAMPLE (BOLD indicated by Repetition): Ex12-09c) COOK COOK it in water (So COOKED-COOKED is understood the same way bold is understood by modern reader) RASHI: Preferred to COOK it in water; But COOK it at all costs(Even if you dont have water) **EXAMPLE: (BULLETS indicated by Repeating keywords)** (Ex03-11a) Who am I - **THAT** I should go to Pharaoh - **THAT** I should take the Jews out of Egypt RASHI: Repeated word **THAT** creates BULLET effect - Pharaoh was a difficult king (Bullet one) - Jews were not yet ready for freedom (Bullet two) **EXAMPLE (Climax assumed in any Biblical list):** (Dt19-11a) *If a man HATES, SPIES, CONFRONTS & KILLS.* RASHI: Bible identifies 4 stages to murder(indicated by capped words)

VIII-DATABASE: EXAMPLE: *God spoke to Moses to say over* introduces about 7 dozen biblical commandments; *God spoke to Aaron to say over* only introduces 2 commandments. RASHI: (Lv10-03b) Aaron was silent when his sons died because they served in the Temple drunk; hence he merited that the commandment prohibiting priests to work in the Temple drunk, was given to him

IX-NON VERSE: EXAMPLE: (Use of Algebra)(Ex38-26b) *Temple donations of silver were 100 Kikar and 1775*

Shekel from 630,550 half-shekels RASHI: So one Kikar of silver = 3000 Shekel.

X: SYMBOLISM: EXAMPLE: (Use of puns) (NuXX-XX) Moses made a copper snake for people to look up to when bitten by snakes (so they should pray and recover) RASHI: (Nu21-09a) The Hebrew root for copper and snake are identical (Cf. The English *copperhead*) Moses made the metal snake copper colored to symbolize the snake