

# The 10 RashiYomi Rules

*Their presence in Rashis on Devarim-VaEthChaNan*

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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](mailto:RashiYomi@GMail.Com).*

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## Reference - *Daily Rashi Sunday July 14th 2013*

The question and answer below can be used as a starting point for teaching young children. It can also be used by adults who wish a richer participatory experience of Rashi.

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

- **Reference verses Dt34-01** [Moses, just prior to his death] *Moses went up from the Moabite plan to Mount Nevo, the head of the mountain range, facing Jericho, and God showed him the entire land from Gilad to Dan.*
- **Target verse Dt03-27** [God, responding to Moses prayer to enter the land. He can't enter but he is allowed to see it] *Go up to the head of the mountain range, and eye-scan west, north, south and eastward, and personally see, because you will not go over the Jordan*

Question: What information do the underlined words in the reference verses - *up, head of mountain range, etc.* -- give about the target verse.

Answer:

- The target verse relates a *promise* by God to see the entire land from the head of the mountain range.
- The reference verse indicates the *fulfillment* of this promise by God to Moses before his death.

Comment: The astute student might notice some phrase equivalencies not noted by Rashi. For example,

- *north, south, east and west* in the **reference** verse corresponds to
- *the entire land* in the **target** verse

Such additional correspondences, even though not explicitly mentioned by Rashi, are important, expected and part of the Rashi learning experience.

## Reference - *Daily Rashi Monday July 15th 2013*

The question and answer below can be used as a starting point for teaching young

children. It can also be used by adults who wish a richer participatory experience of Rashi.

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

- **Reference verses Dt02-31** [God preparing Moses for a war victory] *And God said to me: Indeed: I am beginning giving to you Sichon and his land. Prepare conquest, to conquer his land.*
- **Target verse Dt03-24** [Moses, beginning a prayer to God to allow him to enter Israel] *Lord, God, you have begun to show your servant your greatness and your strong hand, that there is no god in heaven or earth who can do like your acts or deeds.*

Question: What information do the underlined words in the reference verse - *begun* -- give about the target verse.

Answer:

- In the target verse, Moses relates a beginning of seeing God's greatness, a beginning he would like to continue
- The reference verse indicates where God began to show Moses his greatness.

Comment: This particular type of Rashi reference is particularly easy since the two verses are linked with a common word, begin-beginning.

## **Reference - Sequential *Daily Rashi Tuesday July 16th 2013***

Today's example illustrates sequential reference verses. This may be a bit harder than the more simple examples where two verses are linked by an obvious phrase.

The question and answer below can be used as a starting point for teaching young children. It can also be used by adults who wish a richer participatory experience of Rashi.

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

- **Reference verse #1 Nu14-29** [God's punishment for listening to the spies and doubting God could conquer Canaan] *In this desert will their bodies fall, all counted in the census from 20 years and above because you complained on Me.*

- **Reference verse #2 Nu01-03** [Discussion of census requirement] *Count in the census all from 20 years and above, those who go out in the army*
- **Target verse Dt02-14:16** [Bible relates about death of spy generation] *There were 38 years from the time we [The Jews] were in Kadesh Barnayah till we arrived at Zered river: Until the entire generation, the military men, died out from the camp. God's hand was also on them to destroy them from the camp until they were gone. When the military men were gone, God spoke to me as follows.*

**Question:** What information do the underlined phrases in the reference verses - 20 years and above, those who go out to the army - give about the underlined phrase, military men, in the target verse?

**Answer:** The people who died as punishment for listening to the spies, were 20+ year old males who formed the army. They are called military men since they were eligible for the army. (Only the men died, not the women.)

## Reference - Meaning *Daily Rashi Wednesday July 17th, 2013*

The question and answer below can be used as a starting point for teaching young children. It can also be used by adults who wish a richer participatory experience in learning Rashi.

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

- **Reference verses Isiah 10:33** [The Bible describes how God will protect us from the enemy] *Behold: The Lord, God of Hosts, will de-branch the bough with a maaraytzah*
- **Target verse Dt01:29** [Moses rebuking the nation for doubting God can help them conquer Canaan] *And I told them: Do not be afraid and do not be aartzun from them [the Canaanites]*

**Question:** What information does the reference verse give about the word aretz in the target verse.

**Answer:** The word or verb *aratz*, in the reference verse, means *to destroy, to shatter, to ruin*. (If you or the child you are teaching does not want to derive this, you could alternatively look up the meaning of the reference verse in any translation;

however, most children can infer from context that *maaraytzah* is an instrument that shatters and ruins).

Hence the target verse could mean any of the following: *Do not be afraid and do not let the enemy shatter* [your resolve to defeat them], or *Do not be afraid and do not let the enemy ruin* [your resolve to defeat them] or *Do not be afraid and do not let the enemy destroy* [your resolve to defeat them].

Comment: Rashi use different reference verses to explain the Target verse. Both the reference verses that Rashi uses and the verse we have selected shed the same light on the Target verse: They both show that *artz* means to *shatter, destroy, ruin*. While it is important to understand why Rashi selected specific illustrative verses, when teaching Rashi initially, it is sometimes useful to show that alternate verses can be used.

Also notice how we gave three translations: *shatter, ruin, destroy*. Either of them is equally valid. It is important when teaching meaning to understand that there may be multiple translations. It is an important exercise to try and find alternate translations. This way the student participates in the translation process.

## **Reference - Advanced/Nuance *Daily Rashi Thursday July 18th 2013***

The question and answer below can be used as a starting point for teaching young children. It can also be used by adults who wish a richer participatory experience of Rashi.

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

- **Reference verses Dt33-20** [Moses, in his fairwell speech, blessing the Gadites] *And to Gad he [Moses] said: Blessed be He who grants spaciousness to Gad, for he [Gad] dwells like a lion, tearing the arm and even the head*
- **Target verse Dt02-16:17** [Moses, instructing the Reuvenites, Gadites and Menashites on their part of the deal in order for them to acquire the transjordan] *And I [Moses] commanded you [The Gadites...] at that time as follows: You, all good warriors, will go armed before your fellow Jews...until they conquer the land*

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

Answer: The reference verse describes the Gadites as mighty fighters, *like lions*. Rashi uses this, their fierceness, to justify the nuances of the underlined word before in the target verse. The emphasis, is that the Gadites, will go out to war first, before their fellow Jews. The reason they will go out first is because they are such good fighters.

Comment: Many of the other Rashis that we have presented can be easily independently derived by children and adults. However this Rashi is advanced. Both children and even some adults might not immediately see the connection between *like lion* and *before*.

One of our goals in this weekly Rashi digest is a varied and comprehensive spectrum of easy and advanced methods for reading Rashi.

## 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*

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**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

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**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)

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

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**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.

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**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

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**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)

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**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

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**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.

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**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