

# The 10 RashiYomi Rules

*Their presence in Rashis on Shofetim-Ki-ThayZay*

## Vol 20#18 - Adapted from Rashi-is-Simple

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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 - Meaning *Daily Rashi Sunday Aug 11th, 2013*

The first two examples today illustrate how Rashi uses other verses to ascertain meaning. Rashi does not cite other verses in explaining these terms but rather simply states the meaning.

However, it is the job of the teacher and student to fill in missing reasons. Since a typical method of ascertaining meaning is through other verses we feel it reasonable that Rashi used such a method. Furthermore, as we will show, there are other verses which neatly explain the meanings of these words. These fill-in exercises offer the student various advanced levels at which they can learn Rashi.

Read the target verse below and then answer the question.

### Reference Verse

- **Dt01-16** *And I [Moses] commanded your Shofets at that time as follows: Listen between your brothers and judge righteously between a person, his brother and his sojourner.*

### Target Verse

- **Dt16-18** *Shofets and Shoters place for yourselves in all your gates that God your Lord gives your tribes*

Question: Based on the **reference verse** explain the meaning of the underlined word shofets in the **target verse**.

Answer: A *shofet* is a person who

- *listens*
- *judges*
- *in matters between people*
- *gives righteous guidance.*

In other words, a *Shofet* is a judge.

Comment: Based on the age of the student, the teacher can adjust the difficulty level for the student as follows.

- Advanced level: The teacher can ask the student to search the Bible using a search engine. The student should be asked to find verses describing the activities of the *Shofet* (Not all verses *describe* the activities of the *Shofet*).
- Intermediate level: The teacher can ask the student to read **Dt01-16** and list the functions and activities of the *Shofet*. Based on these activities the student should be asked to identify who the *Shofet* is.
- Elementary level: The teacher can list the activities of the *Shofet* as presented in **Dt01-16**. This list is presented above. The student can then be asked to identify who the *shofet* is, that is, which person does the activities of *listening*, *judging*, *attending to pairs of people*, and *establishing righteousness*.

Comment: Of course, an alternative derivation of *Shofet* is that it is a noun form of the verb, *Shft*, to *judge*, and hence means *judge*. However, **Dt16-18** mentions both *shofets* and *shoters*. While *shofet* has a verb and noun form, *shoter* only has a noun form, no verb form. Since we have to use other verses to explain *shoter*, we thought it worthwhile to examine the meaning of *shofet* using other verses. In any event, Rashi-comments can often be explained using several methods.

## Reference - Meaning *Daily Rashi Monday Aug 12th, 2013*

The first two examples today illustrate how Rashi uses other verses to ascertain meaning. Rashi does not cite other verses in explaining these terms but rather simply states the meaning.

However, it is the job of the teacher and student to fill in missing reasons. Since a typical method of ascertaining meaning is through other verses we feel it reasonable that Rashi used such a method. Furthermore, as we will show, there are other verses which neatly explain the meanings of these words. These fill-in exercises offer the student various levels at which they can learn Rashi.

Read the target verse below and then answer the question.

### Reference Verse

- **Ex05-15** [A description of what happened to the Jews in Egypt when Pharaoh increased their burdens and deprived them of raw materials] *And the Jewish shofets that Pharaoh placed on the Jews were hit* [by Pharaoh's delegates] *saying* [to them] *'Why haven't you completed your daily output as you use to.'*

### Target Verse

- **Dt16-18** *Judges and Shoters place for yourselves in all your gates that God your Lord gives your tribes*

Question: Based on the **reference verse** explain the meaning of the underlined word *shoters* in the **target verse**.

Answer: A *shoter* is a person who

- *is placed on people*
- *oversees and is responsible for completion of tasks*

In other words, a *Shoter* is a *policeman*.

Comment: Based on the age of the student, the teacher can adjust the difficulty level for the student as follows.

- Advanced level: The teacher can ask the student to search the Bible using a search engine. The student should be asked to find verses describing the activities of the *shoter*.
- Intermediate level: The teacher can ask the student to read **Ex05-15** and list the functions and activities of the *shoter*. Based on these activities the student should be asked to identify who the *shoter* is.
- Elementary level: The teacher can list the activities of the *shoter* as presented in **Ex05-15**. This list is presented above. The student can then be asked to identify who the *shoter* is, that is, which person does the activities of *being placed on people and seeing to it that they get their jobs done*.

## Reference - *Daily Rashi Tuesday August 13th 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 verse** **Nu18-20** *And God said to Aaron: In their land [Israel] you will not inherit; and you will have no portion with them; I am your portion and inheritance amongst the Jewish people.*
- **Target verse** **Dt18-02** [God commenting on the Levite portion in Israel] *And they [the Levites] will have not inheritance [land] amongst their brethern; God is their inheritance as He cited to them*

Question: Explain the underlined phrase in the **target** verse, *as He cited to them* based on the underlined phrases in the **target** and **reference** verse.

Answer:

- The **reference** verse states that the Levites will have no inheritance
- In the **target** verse Moses **references** and summarizes this promise.

Comment: Based on the age of the student, the teacher can adjust the difficulty level for the student as follows

- Advanced level: The teacher can ask the student to find the verse that Moses is referencing
- Intermediate level: The teacher can ask the student to read Numbers 18 and find the verse that Moses is referencing
- Elementary level: The teacher can give the student the two verses as we have done above and ask the student to confirm that a reference was given.

## **Reference - Paragraph Daily Rashi Wednesday Aug 14 2013**

The reference today is to a story, to an entire chapter.

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 Chapter:** **Nu12** *Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, account of his Ethiopian wife for indeed he had taken an Ethiopian wife [but separated from her] They said: Is it only to Moses that God spoke, did he not also speak to us...[God spoke to Aaron and Miryam] Please hear my words: Typical prophets know prophecy by visions, they hear words in dreams; not so my servant Moses, he is trusted in my entire house...why did you not fear to speak against my servant against Moses. God was angry at them ...Aaron faced Miryam and behold: She was leprous as snow...*
- **Target verse:** **Dt24-09** *Remember what God did to Miryam, on the road when you left Egypt.*

Question: Explain the underlined phrase in the **target** verse *God did to Miryam* based on the **reference** chapter.

Answer: The reference chapter states that Miryam spoke against Moses and was punished with leprosy. The target verse asks us to remember this. By remembering the punishment for leprosy we will abstain from the sin of speaking against people.

Comment: Based on the age of the student, the teacher can adjust the difficulty level for the student as follows:

- Advanced level: The teacher can ask the student to search the Bible for accounts of Miryam that would explain the **target** verse.
- Intermediate level: The teacher can present **Nu12** to the student. The teacher can ask the student to identify the passages in **Nu12** that explain the target verse.
- Elementary level: The teacher can point to the underlined passages in Nu12, listed above: *Miryam ... spoke against Moses ... Miryam ...was leprous as snow.* The student should then be asked to summarize in his own words how these underlined words explain the commandment to *remember what God did to Miryam mentioned in the target verse.* The correct answer should mention *both* the punishment - leprosy - as well as the sin, *speaking against a person.* Younger students sometimes just mention the punishment but not the sin.

## **Reference - Inference *Daily Rashi Thursday August 15, 2013***

The following Rashi illustrates an advanced use of references. Not all students may be able to get this by themselves on the first instance. We have taylored the questions and answers to reflect this and make it easier for everyone.

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

- **Reference verses Dt20-15:16** *Similarly [begin war with a call for peace] you should do to all nations that are distant from you, that are not from these nations [the nations in Israel]; Rather, from these nations which God your Lord gives you as an inheritance you shouldn't let live any soul.*
- **Target verse Dt21-10:11** *When you go out to war ....and you see among the captives a good looking married woman*

Question:

1. Explain the contradiction between underlined words in the reference and target verse - *you should not let live any soul - captives.*
2. Explain how this contradiction implies that the **target** verse is talking about distant nations.

Answer:

1. The reference verse (as the underlined words show) says that in wars with these

nations (the nations occupying Israel) nobody should be left alive. But if so, there can't be any captives as mentioned in the target verse.

2. Since the obligation to leave nobody alive applies to these nations (those occupying Israel) it follows that captives can only be taken in a war with a distant nation (where calls for peace and surrender are allowed).

## 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 (Honyms)** 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