

The 10 RashiYomi Rules

Their presence in Rashis on Ki-ThayZay-Ki-ThaVoH

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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 Aug 18th, 2013*

In today's issue we give several typical examples of Rashi using the **reference** method.

This example, is a typical *Rashi* using the *reference* method. It can be used as the basis for teaching children, adults or for a Rabbinic sermon.

Read the reference and target verse below and then answer the question that follows.

Reference Verse

- **1Sam15-2:3** [God commanding Saul to destroy Amalayk] *I, [God] remember what Amalayk did to the Jews ... now go and smite Amalayk destroy all belonging to them, do not have mercy on them, from man to woman, from a newborn to an infant, from oxen to sheep, from camels to donkeys*

Target Verse

- **Dt25-19** [God commanding Moses to command the Jews to destroy Amalayk] *When God leaves you from all your enemies surrounding you, erase the memory of Amalayk...*

Question: Based on the **reference verse** explain the meaning of the underlined word *erase* in the **target verse**. How do you erase the memory of a nation?

Answer: You erase the memory of a nation by

- *destroying the people*
- *destroying survivors*
- *destroying property.*

Rashi explains that this erases the memory of the nation since

- survivors might for example say, "I am a survivor of Amalayk"
- property owners might say "I or my ancestors obtained this property from Amalayk"

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 *detailing* the destruction of Amalayk.
- Intermediate level: The teacher can ask the student to read **1Sam15** and explain how you erase the memory of a nation.
- Elementary level: The teacher can ask the student to read **1Sam15-03** and explain why the activities listed there - destroying survivors and property - would result in erasing the memory of the nation.

Reference - Meaning *Daily Rashi Monday Aug 19th, 2013*

This example, is a typical *Rashi* using the *reference* method. It can be used as the basis for teaching children, adults or for a Rabbinic sermon.

Read the reference and target verse below and then answer the question that follows.

Reference Verse

- **Dt10-22** *With 70 people, your ancestors came down to Egypt; but now, God your Lord, placed you like the heavenly stars*

Target Verse

- **Dt25-26d** *An Aramaean [Laban] tried to destroy my father [Jacob]; [so] he went down to Egypt and lived there with only a few people but nevertheless he became there a very great and influential nation*

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

Answer: A few people in the target verse means 70 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 using a search engine. The student should be asked to find verses detailing the number of people with which the Jews descended to Egypt.
- Intermediate level: The teacher can ask the student to read **Dt10-22** and explain the word *few*.

- Elementary level: The teacher can ask the student to read **Dt10-22**. The teacher can ask the student, *How many Jews went down to Egypt with Jacob*.

More advanced exercises. Rashi doesn't say that he derived his comments from **Dt10-22**. Rashi does not even cite **Dt10-22**. It is always exciting to see multiple confirmations to a Rashi comment. The teacher can ask the student to read **Gn46-08:22** and *count* how many Jews came down to Egypt with Jacob.

Reference - Paragraph *Daily Rashi Tuesday Aug 20th 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 Dt15-28:29** *At the end of three years you shall bring forth all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall lay it up inside your gates And the Levite, because he has no part nor inheritance with you, and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, who are inside your gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.*
- **Target verse Dt26-12:13**. *When you have finished tithing all the tithes of your produce in the third year, which is the year of tithing, and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, that they may eat inside your gates, and be filled; Then you shall say before the Lord your God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of my house, and also have given them to the Levite, and to the stranger, to the orphan, and to the widow, according to all your commandments which you have commanded me; I have not transgressed your commandments, nor have I forgotten them;*

Question: Explain the underlined phrase in the **target** verse, tithing based on the underlined phrases in the **target** and **reference** verse, levite, stranger, orphan and widow.

Answer:

- The **reference** paragraph is speaking about the tithe in the 3rd year
- The tithe referenced in the **target** verse references this 3rd year tithe. This inference is based on the recipients of the tithe which are the same in both

verses: Levite, stranger, orphan, widow.

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 tithe Moses is speaking about in the **Target** verse. This is a very difficult exercise.
- Intermediate level: The teacher can ask the student to find the reference-verse word tithe in other verses by seeking the keywords Levite, stranger, orphan and widow.
- Elementary level: The teacher can point out that the tithe in the **target** verse is given to the Levite, stranger, orphan and widow. The teacher can ask the student to read the **reference** verse, **Dt14**, which contains several tithes and ask which one the target verse is referring to. The student makes that judgement by comparing recipients.

The reference in today's Rashi is a more advanced type since match-up of verses is done by similar recipients, an attribute of the tithe.

Reference - Meaning *Daily Rashi Wednesday Aug 21 2013*

This example, is a typical *Rashi* using the *reference* method. It can be used as the basis for teaching children, adults or for a Rabbinic sermon.

Read the reference and target verse below and then answer the question that follows.

Reference Verse

- **Ex19-05** [God, at Exodus, promising reward to the Jews if they observe his commandments] *And now if you listen to Me, and watch my Covenant, you will be a treasured nation from all nations, because the world is mine.*

Target Verse

- **Dt26-18** [Moses summarizing God's promise to the Jews] *Today God commands you to his statutes and civil laws ... and God declares you today to be for him a treasured nation ... as he spoke to you.*

Question: Based on the **reference verse** explain the meaning of the underlined phrase as he spoke to you in the **target verse**.

Answer: The key is the common linked word treasured in both **target** and **reference** verse.

- In the **reference** verse God promises to make the Jewish people treasured
- In the **target** verse Moses cites this promise of being treasured

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 for where God promised to make the Jews treasured.
- Intermediate level: The teacher can ask the student to read **Ex19-05** and explain how Moses is citing it.
- Elementary level: The teacher can ask the student to point to the words in **Ex19-05** where God promises to make the Jewish people treasured.

Reference - Inference *Daily Rashi Thursday August 22, 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 tailored 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 warand 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

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