

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on VaYeChi
Vol 21#05 - 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.

We are currently in our 5 year, half-year cycle:

- * For period: Oct 2012 - May 2013 - we studied the Grammar rule*
- * For period: June 2013 - Sep 2013 - we studied the Reference rule*
- * For period: Oct 2013 - May 2014 - we will study the Parallelism rule*

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.

*Here is a very simple example of parallelism: Gn49-11 states
(Because of the plenty in Judah's reign) Clothes are washed in wine
(Because of the plenty in Judah's reign) "Suth" [are washed] in blood-of-grapes*

*Rashi comment: Wine is parallel to blood-of-grapes, showing that blood-of-grapes means wine
Similarly, Clothes are parallel to suth showing that suth means cloathing.*

Thus the parallelism method explores repeated verse phrases and allows inferences based on the repeated passages.

As usual, when making tansitions 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 Wednesday Dec 11th, 2013*

Rashis covered: **Gn50-16**

Background: Today we use parallelism to infer grammar. Many people erroneously think that grammar is in textbooks and can be looked up. Not so. The great grammarians discovered grammar typically by examining parallel passages.

Commonality: The verses below all speak about *commands*.

Questions: After reviewing the two verse phrases discuss the following

- 1) What is the same in the verses
- 2) What is different in the verses
- 3) How would *you* explain the difference (Hint: You may have to look up the verses to ascertain their context)

After answering these questions, we will see how the great Rashi resolved them. Although Rashi's answer is deeper, it is important for readers of Rashi to practice answering the Rashi questions by themselves in order to sharpen their textual focus thereby enriching the Rashi experience.

- **Gn32-18** *And he commanded the first*
- **Gn44-01** *And he commanded those on his house as follows*
- **Ex27-20** *You, command the Jews as follows*
- -----
- **Ex06-13** *God spoke to Moses and Aaron and commanded them to the Jews for the Exodus*
- **Es04-10** *Esther spoke to the butler and commanded him to Mordechai [to tell him that...]*
- **2S17-23** *Achitofel saw he failed he commanded to his house and committed suicide*

Here are the answers to the questions.

- 1) All verses speak about commands
- 2) The phrase
 - *commanded* so and so, means giving a command to so and so
 - *commanded to* so and so, means giving a command concerning so and so

So for example, Esther commanded her butler *to Morderchai*, that is concerning a statement to be made to Mordechai. Similarly, God commanded Moses and Aaron *to the Jews*, that is on matters concerning the Jews to free them from Egypt.

Rashi similarly explains:

- **Gn50-16** states not that the brothers *commanded Joseph* but rather that the brothers *commanded [someone] to Joseph*, that is concerning their fear that Joseph would now retaliate.
- We are however not told who was commanded; Rashi conjectures that the older brothers (who actually sold Joseph) commanded the bondsmaid children with whom Joseph used to hang out.

Reference - *Daily Rashi Thursday December 12, 2013*

Rashis covered: **Gn49-11c,d**

Background: The Bible is speaking about the plenty during the Messianic era.

Commonality: Both verselets speak about washing in wine.

Questions: After reviewing the two verse phrases discuss the following

- 1) What is the same in the verses
- 2) What is different in the verses
- 3) How would *you* explain the difference (Hint: You may have to look up the verses to ascertain their context)

After answering these questions, we will see how the great Rashi resolved them. Although Rashi's answer is deeper, it is important for readers of Rashi to practice answering the Rashi questions by themselves in order to sharpen their textual focus thereby enriching the Rashi experience.

- **Gn49-11** *One washes in wine his clothes*
- [one washes] *in the blood of grapes his suth.*

Here are the answers to the questions.

- 1) Both verse halves speak about washing in wine. The first half refers to *wine* while the 2nd half refers to *blood-of-grapes*.
- 2) One verse speaks about *clothing* as what is washed; the 2nd verse speaks about *suth* as what is washed. Hence the Rashi conclusion: *Suth* is a type of garment. Such a Rashi conclusion is justified by the parallelism.

Comment: Rashi simply notes the parallelism

- *wine = blood of grapes*
- *clothing = suth*

That justifies the inference that *suth* is a type of clothing. But which type of clothing? Rashi does not say. In fact, very often, Rashis are exploratory: To fully understand the Rashi comment we have to supplement the Rashi: Since the root **Samech-vav-Tauv** means seduce or persuade we could conjecture that the clothing is a type of clothing having to do with persuasion: Here are two possibilities

- lingerie
- formal suits (worn by people trying to make an impression)

Reference - *Daily Rashi Friday December 13 2013*

Rashis covered: **Gn47-29d**

Commonality: These verses describe acts of kindness

Background: Carefully ascertain what the *kindness* is for

Questions: After reviewing the two verses discuss the following

- 1) What is the same in both phrases
- 2) What is difference in both phrases
- 3) How would *you* explain the difference (Hint: You may have to look up the verses to ascertain their context)

After answering these questions, we will see how the great Rashi resolved them. Although Rashi's answer is deeper it is important for readers of Rashi to practice answering the Rashi questions by themselves in order to sharpen their textual focus thereby enriching the Rashi experience.

- **2Sam02-06** *kindness and truth* [burial of King Saul]
- **Gn47-29** *kindness and truth* [burial of Jacob]
- **Jos02-14** *kindness and truth* [spare Rahab from military conquest]
- **Gn24-49** *kindness and truth* [marriage of Rivkah to Isaac]
- -----
- **Gn39-21** *kindness* [Joseph placed warden of prison]

- **1Sam10-02** *kindness* [comfort mourners]
- One can see that 4 verses use the phrase *kindness and truth*; two of the *kindness and truth* verses describe *funeral* arrangements; the 3rd verse describes a kindness to Rahab the prostitute who would otherwise have died in the war; the 4th verse describes the kindness of letting Rivkah marry Isaac - this is like death since Rivkah would permanently leave her family
- The word *kindness* by itself can refer to a variety of situations such as comforting mourners or giving people positions.

Rashi explains: *Kindness and truth* is an idiom. An idiom is a sequence of words that transcends and is more than the sum of the meaning of the individual words. For example, *give me your hand in marriage* is an idiom since the marriage is not to the hand but to the entire person. Consequently, the phrase *she gave her hand in marriage* is an idiom. So too *kindness and truth* is an idiom; it refers to kindness where no reciprocity is expected. Examples of *kindness and truth* include

- burial of the dead (who cannot reciprocate)
- marriage where the woman permanently leaves her family and does not return
- kindness to a war victim (who cannot reciprocate)

Reference - *Daily Rashi Saturday Dec 14, 2013*

Rashis covered: **Gn49-33b**

Background: Jacob is dying.

Commonality: These verses describe death.

Questions: After reviewing the verses phrases discuss the following

- 1) What is the same in both verses
- 2) What is different in both verses
- 3) How would *you* explain the difference (Hint: You may have to look up the verses to ascertain their context)

After answering these questions, we will see how the great Rashi resolved them. Although Rashi's answer is deeper it is important for readers of Rashi to practice answering the Rashi questions by themselves in order to sharpen their textual focus thereby enriching the Rashi experience.

- **Gn49-33** [Jacob] *He expired and gathered to his nation*
- Gn25-17 [Ishmael] *He expired and died and gathered to his nation*
- Gn35-29 [Isaac] *He expired and died and gathered to his nation*
- Gn25-08 [Abraham] *He expired and died (ripe age) and gathered to his nation*

Rashi: Jacob never died.

Comment: Rashi is commenting on the parallelism. Three verbs are used to describe death

- expired
- died
- gathered to his nation

However, with Jacob (and only with Jacob) only 2 verbs are used. *Died* is not used.

Notice the very profound point that this Rashi is descriptive not explanatory. That is, Rashi describes the lack of the verb *died* but does not explain what it means to say that he did not die. This is an important point in understanding 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

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