

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on MeTzoRaH
Vol 21#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.

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 2013 - 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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Parallelism - *Daily Rashi Friday Apr 4, 2014*

Rashis covered: Lv14-28a

Commonality: The verse phrases below discuss lepor purification

Questions: After reviewing the verses 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)

Homeschooling exercise: Have you or your child review the two verses below. What is different in them? Seeing the difference should be easy; explaining it should be difficult.

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.

Background: Lv14-14:27 The verses discuss the lepor purification procedure: Here are some steps in the purification procedure

Step 1

And the priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering, and the priest shall put it

- *on the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, and*
- *on the thumb of his right hand, and*
- *on the big toe of his right foot;*

Step 2

And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand;

Step 2a

And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord;

Step 2b

And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put

- *upon the tip of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, and*
- *upon the thumb of his right hand, and*
- *upon the big toe of his right foot,*

In the discussion on step 2b we find two descriptions of how the oil should be placed on the ear, thumb and foot. The descriptions reference step 1 where blood was first placed on the ear thumb and foot. Basically the verses say to place the oil on the blood that was already placed on the ear, thumb and foot. Here are the two descriptions.

- **Lv14-17** *on the blood of the guilt offering*
- **Lv14-28** *on the place of the blood of the guilt offering*

Here are the answers to the questions.

- 1) All verse phrases list purification procedures for the lepor
 - 2) The verses differ in the descriptions of the placement of the oil and blood on the ear, thumb and foot thumb.
- One verse says the oil has to placed on the blood itself
 - The other verse says the oil has to be placed on the place of the blood

Most students including young children can easily see the difference between the two verses since **Lv14-28** emphasizes and introduces the word *place*. However, it might be difficult for young children to articulate the consequences between blood and place of blood. Such an analysis typically requires some Talmudic training. Here the explanation, presented by Rashi, comes from the ancient exegetical biblical commentary, the Sifre

Typically since the blood was placed first, the oil will be placed on the blood. But even if e.g. the blood evaporated or was no longer there, the priest still places the oil on the place the blood was.

This is a typical advanced exegetical parallelism. By contrasting *blood* and *place of blood* we infer that the law applies even when the blood evaporated; in such a case the blood was no longer there (so one can not place the oil on the blood); but one can place the oil on the place of the blood.

Database - Daily Rashi Saturday April 5, 2014

We have already explained in previous issues that

- parallelism typically refers to comparisons of two verses
- database refers to an anomaly among many verses

Commonality: The verse phrases below discuss discovery of leprous ritual impurity

Questions: After reviewing the verses 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)

Homeschooling exercise: Have you or your child review the two verses below. What is different in them? Seeing the difference should be easy; explaining it should be of moderate challenge.

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.

- **Lv13-02** *When a person has in his skin a leprous affliction*
- **Lv13-09** *When leprosy is in a person*
- **Lv13-18** *Skin which has healed boil which has a leprous affliction*
- **Lv13-24** *Skin which has a healing burn which has a leprous affliction*
- **Lv13-29** *A person who has a leprous affliction in his head or beard*
- **Lv13-47** *A garment which has a leprous affliction*
- **Lv14-34** *When you come to Israel and I (God) place a leprous affliction in the houses you conquer*

Here are the answers to the questions.

- 1) All verses discuss the discovery of leprous afflictions
- 2) The statement of discovery is different in **Lv14-34**
 - In the other verses, the verse speaks in the passive: When a leprosy happens
 - In **Lv14-34** the verse speaks in the active: When I God place a leprosy
 - Furthermore: In **Lv14-34** the verse speaks about Israel

Rashi explains the difference as follows:

Part of the house leprous procedure is removal of house items (to save them from a

declaration of ritual impurity and consequent destruction). The Canaanites, knowing the Jews would conquer their land, hid their treasures in the house so the Jews wouldn't obtain them. But God places leprosy in these houses, requiring a discovery effort to remove all household items. This discovery effort would enrich the Jews.

Of course, the Rashi explanation *appears* homiletic. But it nevertheless is based on a deep contrastive parallelism. It is the contrastive parallelism - *I God will place a leprosy* - that motivates Rashi to interpret the leprosy as beneficial to the house owner.

Database - *Daily Rashi Sun-Tue Apr 6-8, 2014*

We have already explained in previous issues that

- parallelism typically refers to comparisons of two verses
- database refers to an anomaly among many verses

Commonality: The verse phrases below discuss declaration of leprous impurity

Questions: After reviewing the verses 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)

Homeschooling exercise: Have you or your child review the two verses below. What is different in them? Seeing the difference should be easy; explaining it should be of moderate challenge.

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.

- **Lv13-02c:03** *The priest looks at the leprosy and if... the priest declares it unclean*
- **Lv13-09:11** *The priest looks at the leprosy and if... the priest declares it unclean*
- **Lv13-17:20** *The priest looks at the leprosy and if... the priest declares it*

unclean

- **Lv13-24:27** *The priest looks at the leprosy and if... the priest declares it unclean*
- **Lv13-29:30** *The priest looks at the leprosy and if... the priest declares it unclean*
- **Lv13-47:51** *The priest looks at the leprosy and if... the garment has a cursed leprosy in it*
- **Lv14-34:36a,b:44** *The house owner states, "I think I have a leprosy". and the house is emptied prior to the priest coming in order that its contents not be made ritually impure and the priest looks at the leprosy and if...there is a cursed leprosy in it*

Here are the answers to the questions.

- 1) All verses discuss the declaration of impurity
- 2) The statement of declaration is different in the last listed verse

Rashi explains the difference as follows:

As is clear from the underlined words in the last listed verse, ritual impurity must be declared by the Priest. The house owner cannot create the status of ritual impurity. Furthermore, since the verse explicitly states that household items must be removed in order to protect them from the priest declaration, it follows that even if the criteria are present for leprosy, the leprous state does not exist until the priest declares it.

Comment: We have already explained in Volume 21, #16, that a Rashi comment may have a very deep and cogent reason but Rashi may state the comment elsewhere than the verse with the deep cogent reason.

On **Lv13-02** Rashi states on the Biblical words, *the Priest will see the affliction and if... the priest will declare it ritually impure, that impurity requires a declaration of a Priest (Criteria by themselves do not create it).*

But as we saw in today's posting Rashi does not learn that from the text of **Lv13-02**. Rather Rashi learns it from the **database** comparison and from the explicit statements (underlined above) in **Lv14-34:44**.

The serious student of Rashi would greatly benefit from carefully examining the above database inquiry and then comparing it to the Rashi on **Lv13-02**. The Rashi on **Lv13-02** appears shallow and without solid ground. Contrastively, after reviewing the database inquiry the Rashi appears rich and deep, the simple meaning

of the text.

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