

The 10 RashiYomi Rules

Their presence in Rashis on Re'eh

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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.

The most frequent questions I receive about the Daily Newsletter are the following.

- *What do the classical commentators on Rashi say about his reasons?*
- *If they say such and such what are you adding?*
- *If they don't say what you say, why are you saying it?*

So the next year, or perhaps more, will be devoted to citing Rashi commentators and explaining how the methods of the Newsletter sharpen and crystallize them. We will be citing mostly from the 4-6 classical Rashi commentators: Sifsay Chachamin, Gur Aryeh, Mizrachi, and Chizkuni. We will occasionally add insights of Rav Hirsch and Malbim.

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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Parallelism *Daily Rashi* Dt16-11a Thur 8/21/14

Background (Dt16-11): The Bible is describing the joy and happiness of the festivals. The Bible discusses who you will be happy with and lists 2 sets of 4 categories.

Dt16-11	Vulnerable male	Vulnerable female	Prominent but lacking economic independence	Tendency to look down on
<i>You</i>	<i>Male slave</i>	<i>Female slave</i>	<i>Male sons</i>	<i>Female children</i>
<i>God's</i>	<i>Orphan</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>Levite</i>	<i>Non citizen</i>

Rashi Text: The four members of *your* family are **parallel** to the four members of God's family. The implication is that if you provide for *God's* family, God will provide for your family.

The Rashi commentators do not add anything to Rashi. Why? Because Rashi himself, in this case indicates method: parallelism.

Rashi newsletter: Rashi *could* be interpreted as a number association; your four corresponding to God's four. I have suggested a conceptual correspondence; for example, male and female slave correspond to orphan and widow since they are categories of vulnerable people. If you reject this approach, you can use Rashi's simple approach: *My four correspond to your four.*

Reference Contradiction *Daily Rashi Dt16-10a Dt16-17a Fri-Sat 8/22-23/14*

Background: The Bible is discussing the requirements of being joyful and happy during the festival. This is normally done through offerings some of which owners and priests partake in.

Biblical Text: (Dt16-10a) *Give.... The tax of the donation of your wealth*
(Dt16-17a) *Give... Each person according to the gifts of your hand.*

Rashi: (Dt16-10a) The sufficiency of your donational powers. Everything is according to how much blessing you have. According to your blessing bring many offerings and invite many people. (Dt16-17a) Whoever has many assets and many guests should bring many offerings.

It is interesting and fascinating how each of the Rashi commentators and this Rashi Newsletter add their own spice to the above two verses.

Sifsay Chachamim: He explicitly points out that the two verses, *Dt16-10a* and

Dt16-17a should be analyzed together. The Rashi Newsletter calls this approach the **reference** method.

Sifsay Chachami, Mizrachi: They explain the difficult Hebrew word, *misath*, which we have translated as *tax*, by reference to an Aramaic translation: According to Sifsay Chachami and Mizrachi, this word means *according to the sufficiency of your donational capacity*. They also add some grammatical insights on the conjugation of *misath*.

Gur Aryeh: The Biblical word which we have translated as *wealth* in **Dt16-10a** is literally translated as *hand*. Gur Aryeh brings verses (and it is also so listed in the RadaK Biblical Root Dictionary, *Roots, Shoroshim*) showing that *my hand* could mean *my domain* or *my possessions*.

Rashi Newsletter: In Hebrew, *misath* means taxes. Its use and form in **Dt16-10a** is a one-time occurrence. I would therefore invoke both the **contradiction** and **reference** method.

- The enjoyment on the festivals is according to your capacity (**Dt16-17a**)
 - But this enjoyment is also a tax and requirement. You must donate. (**Dt16-10a**)
- By approaching Rashi this way, using the root meaning of the word, we obtain deeper insight into how the two verses interact. If you think about it, the phrase *you must donate*, summarizes the contradiction: *must* but *donate*.

Summary: The two biblical verses are terse. Yet each commentator added some new nuance: (i) reference (ii) the word *hand* meaning *wealth* (iii) the strange word *misath* (iv) invocation of contradiction.

The Rashi is sort of like a gem; you appreciate it by turning it and studying the glitter from several angles.

Meaning Daily Rashi Dt16-15a Sunday 8/24/14

Background: The Bible is discussing the requirement to be happy and joyous on the festivals.

Biblical Text: (**Dt16-15a**) *you shall mostly be happy*

Rashi Newsletter: You will be happy *most* of the time. This means as follows
1. Festival happiness is implemented through bringing festival offerings some of

- which are eaten jointly by owners and priests
2. But offerings are typically offered only by day
 3. Nevertheless they can be eaten by night
 4. For example on *day 1* I might bring offerings and eat them that night which is the night of *day 2*. Similarly, I might bring offerings on *day 2* and eat them that night which is part of *day 3*.
 5. It follows I can bring festival offerings on *day 7* and eat them that night which is the part of *day 8* and is not part of the Succoth festival (It is *shemini atzereth* which is a separate holiday)
 6. However, I cannot bring offerings the day before the festival and eat them that night which is part of *day 1*.

#6 points to a limitation: I cannot be *happy*, that is, bring offerings prior to the festival, to eat on the 1st night. The Hebrew word *akh* means *mostly* or *usually* and *mostly* connotes exception, something excluded. Thus the word *mostly* excludes the first night. For a detailed discussion on the meaning of the word *akh* see my article on *akh* mentioned in the reference section.

The above is the simple approach to this Rashi. Let us now see how Rashi and his commentators each added part of the puzzle but not the entire puzzle.

Rashi: *Akh*: This Hebrew word *includes* the last day but not the first day. [Rashi phrases *akh* as meaning *inclusion* when in fact it means *mostly* and *exception*. Also Rashi does not explain the issue of sacrifices and nights]

Sifsay Chachamim: He cites the Talmud and points out that *including* the last night *excludes* the first night.

Gur Aryeh: He points out that *even though mostly usually limits, in this verse it includes*. Later on Gur Aryeh acknowledges that it *limits*.

Mizrachi: He explains in detail that the issue is bringing sacrifices by day and eating them that night. He gives the technical sacrifice background so we can understand what Rashi is referring to.

Summary: Just reading Rashi might lead one to suspect that *akh* here means inclusion. Also Rashi did not explain the day-night issue relative to the specific requirement of eating sacrifices. Each of the commentators added some (i) include last night but exclude first night (ii) inclusion and exception (iii) sacrificial details. The Rashi Newsletter added (iv) that *ach* means usually or mostly thus providing

concretization to the approach of limitation.

By reading the other commentators who cite the Talmud we see that even though the primary focus of the verse is inclusion the actual meaning refers to exclusion. The other commentators also explain specifically that this is day-following-night issue.

The Rashi Newsletter brought in the meaning method and translates *ach* as *mostly*. The Rashi Newsletter also clarified that the 2nd verse brought by the Sifsay Chachamim as illustrative of the Rashi reference method.

Thus this particular Rashi is an excellent illustrative example of multiple commentators illuminating Rashi's true meaning.

Reference

Russell Jay Hendel; *The Meaning Of Ach Jewish Bible Quarterly*, Vol 33(2), pp 100-109, 2005.

Parallel Daily Rashi Dt13-01c Dt04-02a Mon/Tue 8/25/14 - 8/26/2014

Biblical Text:

Dt04-02	<i>Don't add (A)</i>	<i>On the words I command you (B)</i>	<i>& Don't detract from them(C)</i>	<i>To guard the commandments of God (D)</i>	<i>Which I command you (E)</i>		
Dt13-01		<i>The words I command you (B)</i>		<i>That is what you should guard (D')</i>		<i>Don't add (A)</i>	<i>And Don't detract (C)</i>

Rashi: Rashi gives examples of the prohibition of adding commandments.

Dt04-02: Examples

1. Tefillin is suppose to have 4 chambers; you can't add and make it with 5 chambers
2. Lulav has 4 plant species; you can't add and take 5 species
3. Tzitzith must be on the 4 corners of your garmet; you cant place on 5 corners

Dt13-01: Examples

1. Tefillin is suppose to have 4 chambers; you can't add and make it with 5 chambers
2. Lulav has 4 plant species; you can't add and take 5 species
3. The blessing of priests has 3 verses; you can't add a 4th verse

Rashi Newsletter Approach: We use parallelism as shown in the table above. Notice the difference

Dt13-01 emphasizes guarding the commandment performancers (don't add/detract)

Dt04-02 emphasizes not adding/subtracting words in guarding commandments

In other words

- Dt13-01 says the words themselves that is what you should guard against adding
- Dt04-02 says don't add to the words I command you namely to guard the commandment performances

Hence it is both prohibited

- to add to the commandment performance (Taking 5 plant species instead of)
- to add words to the Biblical law (Such as adding an additional verse to the blessings of the Priests even though that verse occurs elsewhere in the Torah)

In other words the verses prohibit adding both new commandment parts and new text.

Rambam (Laws of Rebellious elders): Rambam explores one example, the prohibition of cooking meat in its mother milk; this biblical prohibition only applies to animals not to birds. But the Rambam continues "although it is prohibited to say that cooking birds in their mother's milk is prohibited it is not prohibited to make a fence to the law by prohibiting all "flesh" (Bird, animal but not fish) with milk." Thus eating a cheeseburger is biblically prohibited while eating a cheeseburger with cheese and chicken is only rabbinically prohibited.

Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh and Mizrachi: They

- Each mention the two verses
- Discuss the difference between adding objects (plants and tefillin chambers) vs. adding words (adding an additional blessing to the Priestly blessing)

Gur Aryeh: Interestingly, Gur Aryeh picks up on the pun that *words* mentioned in the two verses is the same Hebrew word for speech and text. But he dismisses this as a pun.

Rashi Newsletter: We have shown that is not just a pun on the mention of words but rather the parallelism and the reversal of order. **Dt04-02** prohibits adding to the performance of the commandments while **Dt13-01** emphasizes, *this, the words, is what you should guard.*

Hence the Rashi Newsletter emphasizes there are two prohibitions: Adding words to the Torah (or detracting) and adding commandments.

The Rashi commentators get into a technical legal discussion on the distinction between 5 chambers in tefillin where the chambers are physically bounded vs. adding extra verses to the blessings of the priests where the binding is in time (they are said sequentially). However Rambam leaves out this whole issue.

Summary: All commentators agree on the examples. The other commentators distinguish between bound objects and sequentially made statements. The Rashi newsletter based on the order of phrases in the verses distinguishes between adding commandments themselves (extra acts or objects) and adding text to the Torah. We believe this approach conceptually sound and based on the parallelism.

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) *Don't 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