

## The 10 RashiYomi Rules

*Their presence in Rashis on Ki Tzayzay*

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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](mailto:RashiYomi@GMail.Com).*

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In this issue, I want to present the exciting Leipzig project which is posting online one of the most authentic Rashi manuscripts known to us. Rashi wrote his commentary several times and left it to his students and secretary to complete transcriptions. This Leipzig transcript comes from these sources close to Rashi. By inspecting these sources we can appreciate certain aspects of the Rashi commentary. In today's issue I will bring 3 examples of Rashi using the **meaning** rule. In one of them I will show how the Leipzig manuscript illuminates the Rashi **hypernym** approach. You can find this manuscript at [http://alhat Torah.org/Commentators:Rashi\\_Leipzig\\_1/Devarim\\_21](http://alhat Torah.org/Commentators:Rashi_Leipzig_1/Devarim_21)

Rashi did not just give meaning. He frequently gave meaning using auxiliary techniques such as *idioms, synonyms, antonyms, hononyms and hypernyms*.

A *hypernym* can best be explained by example. *Roses, lilies, violets* are hypernyms of the hyponym *flower*. Similarly, *Ford, Chevy, Dodge* are hypernyms of the hyponym *car*. By using these auxiliary methods Rashi did not just boringly give meaning but rather gave nuances and distinction challenging the mind of the Rashi student.

## Meaning Hypernyms *Daily Rashi Lv02-05a:07a Thu/Fri 9/4,5/14*

**Background:** The Bible is discussing the *Minchah* offerings consisting of flour, oil and wine.

### **Biblical text:**

- **Lv02-05a** - *If you offer a Minchah offering on a frying pan...*
- **Lv02-07a** - *If you offer a Minchah offering in a pot*

### **Rashi Text:**

- Frying pans are used for frying and are flat
- Pots are used for cooking and typically have recognizable height

**Summary:** Rashi *appears* to be giving translations but in reality is giving nuanced distinctions. Rashi does not simply translate *cooking utensils* but explains the difference between the *function* and *form* of a frying pan and pot.

## Meaning Hypernyms *Daily Rashi Dt24-06a,b Sat/Sun 9/6,7/14*

**Background:** The Bible is discussing the what a lender can take for a pledge.

### **Biblical text:**

**Dt24-06a,b** *A person [lender] should not take for a pledge [for a loan]*

- *neither the scenter [lower millstone]*
- *nor the rider [upper millstone]*

*for he takes a man's life [livelihood] as a pledge.*

### **Rashi Text:**

The Rashi translations are inserted in brackets above. It is not hard to guess how Rashi arrived at these translations

- *Rider* is the upper millstone since it *rides* on the lower millstone
- *Scenter* is the lower millstone since the grinding leaves a scent of grain in the air.

**Summary:** Rashi *appears* to be giving translations but in reality is giving nuanced distinctions. Rashi does not simply translate *millstone* but explains the difference between the *form* and *effect* of the lower and upper millstone.

## **Meaning Hypernyms *Daily Rashi* Dt21-18a,b Mon/Tue 9/8,9/14**

**Background:** The Bible is describing the rebellious son (a capital crime)

### **Biblical text:**

**Dt21-18a,b** *When a person has a*

- *stubborn and*
- *rebellious*

*son; he doesn't listen to his father's and mother's voice...*

As promised I will give the *current* Rashi text as well as the *Leipzig* manuscript.

You can find this manuscript at [http://alhatorah.org/Commentators:Rashi\\_Leipzig\\_1/Devarim\\_21](http://alhatorah.org/Commentators:Rashi_Leipzig_1/Devarim_21).

### **Current Rashi Text:**

- *Stubborn* - Deviates from the path
- *Rebllious* - violates his father's words; a connotation of rebellion.

### **Leipzig Rashi Text**

However in the Leipzig manuscript we have the additional underlined words indicating old French

- *Stubborn* - Deviates from the path *Retaliation* [in French]

- *Rebllious* - violates his father's words; a connotation of rebellion-Revolting [Fr]

**Rashi Newsletter comments:** We view *retaliation* and *revolting* as hypernyms to the hyponym of *disagreement*

- Retaliation - E.g. His father says 'Don't join his gang' and he does the opposite;*Retaliation* means doing the opposite of what parents command
- Revolting - This is the oppositve of retaliatation. The revolter *ignores his father* - he doesn't necessarily do the opposite but rather ignores. As an example, the son may steal from his father - in the act of stealing he *ignores* his father's right to possess.

The astute reader may object: But that is not *exactly* what *retaliation* and *revolting* means. This misses the point. Translation can never be exact it at best approximates. By focusing on the translation with the lens of *hypernyms* we can delineate more - we can see the two adjectives as contrastive within a category. You can disagree with father by either i) doing the opposite of everything asked (retaliation) or ii) by ignoring him (revolting). *Rashi's intent on this verse was to do the same thing he did in other verses reviewed in this issue, to identify contrastive hypernyms. Rashi sought to accomplish this goal through the use of translations approximations in Old French.*

Further analysis would require a knowledge of old French. So the above analysis is only exploratory. Our purpose was to show how the old French and our knowledge of Rashi methods can greatly illuminate Rashi meaning.

## 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 (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

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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