

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on Va'aYRaH
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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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In today's issue we present Rashis whose explanation according to the Rashi Newsletter principles was already accomplished by the classical Rashi commentators. It is important to emphasize that the Rashi Newsletter principles were already known and used by the Rashi commentators. The goal of the Rashi Newsletter is to simply identify the 10 basic categories of rules and to consistently apply them in all situations.

**Contradiction-Grammar *Daily Rashi* Thursday-Friday
1/15,16/2015 Ex08-06a,08a**

Biblical Text: Ex08-05:09

- (1) *Moses said to Pharoh: "Challenge me, for what time should I pray to remove the frogs from you and your staff", and Pharoh said "Tomorrow" And Moses Said "As you wish, In order for you to know that there is no one like our God and [indeed] the frogs will leave from you and your house from your slaves and your nation, they will only remain in the river*
- (2) *Moses and Aaron left Pharoh, and Moses prayed to God about the frogs that he placed to Pharoh*
- (3) *And God did as Moses prayed: The frogs left*

Rashi Text: The frogs will leave tomorrow; but I will pray for that today

Mizrachi, Rashi commentator: The intent in Moses' initial question (bullet (1)) was "For what time do you want the frogs to depart" not "What time should I pray for them to depart" When Moses said "As you wish" he was similarly referring to the time of frog departure not to the time of prayer. Moses also said "For what time should I pray for you to remove the frogs from you and your staff", thus the prayer could be anytime but the removal is tomorrow.

Gur Aryeh, Rashi commentator: Moses' question is

- For what time should I pray to remove the frogs, not
- What time should I pray to remove the frogs

So the question of time refers to the frog removal not to prayer.

Why was Pharaoh given the option? Wouldn't he want the frogs removed immediately?

Perhaps, the logic is that, Pharaoh promised to let the Jews go when the frogs were removed. Therefore, God gave Pharaoh time to adjust to this.

Sifsei Chachamim, Rashi commentator: Because the question was when the frogs should be removed, not when should Moses pray.

Why didn't Pharaoh want them removed immediately?

Pharaoh thought Moses was a witch and could only remove them now. By delaying the time of removal, Pharaoh would see that Moses was a prophet, not a witch.

Rashi Newsletter Approach: First notice how the Gur Aryeh uses the **Grammar** rule

- It does not say "When should I pray for frog removal" but
- "For what time should I pray for removal"

The Gur Aryeh correctly points out that the preposition *for* shifts the question of time from the time of prayer to the time of removal.

The Rashi Newsletter also contributes the **Contradiction** approach.

- Bullet (1) above makes it sound like the removal will happen

tomorrow

- But bullets (2,3) sound as if Moses immediately left Pharaoh, prayed, and God did what Moses asked (Remove the frogs). You must say that Moses leaving Pharaoh was immediate, for otherwise you would have to say the ridiculous assertion that Moses stayed in the palace the entire night.

The **Contradiction** method resolves the contradiction.

- Moses did leave Pharaoh immediately
- Moses also prayed immediately
- However the actual removal was the next day.

Finally, note how the Rashi commentators bring in further discussion: Why did Pharaoh want an extra day?

So this posting illustrates how

- Rashi commentators bring in extra issues.
- Some Rashi commentators may explicitly use clear grammatical rules while others only hint at them
- Finally, it shows the possibility of bringing in new Rashi rules to shed light.

Referencer-Grammar *Daily Rashi* Sat 1/17/2015 Ex08-11a

Biblical Text: Ex08-11a

[Background: Pharaoh had promised to let the Jews go but requested that Moses remove the frogs. Moses prayed and the frogs were removed.] *Pharaoh saw there was a respite but nevertheless hardened his heart and did not listen to them just as God said.*

Rashi Text: Where did God say this: **Ex07-03:04** *And*
(1) *I [God] will harden Pharaoh's heart and will multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt,*
(2) *But Pharaoh will not listen to you, and I will [then] place my hand on Egypt and I will take my hosts out of Egypt...*

Levush Orah, Rashi commentator: Rashi had to explain this a second time because God promised two things
(1) God will harden Pharaoh's heart
(2) Pharaoh will not listen.

Bullet #(1) applied to the last 5 plagues when it was God who hardened Pharaoh's heart. Contrastively, bullet #(2) is a promise that Pharaoh will not listen *during the first five plagues* when he had free will and hardened his own heart.

Sifsay Chachamim, Rashi Commentator: Why did Rashi explain this citation here at the plague of Frogs. Why didn't he explain it earlier?

Because, earlier Pharaoh had not promised to release the Jews. In the plague of Frogs, Pharaoh promised that if the Frogs were removed he would release the Jews but he reneged.

We can also see this in the contrastive grammar of the biblical citation above

(1) I will multiply my signs and wonders in Egypt but
(2) Pharaoh will not listen to you

It should say

(2') Pharaoh will not listen to me

That is *I, God, will bring miracles, but Pharoh will not listen to me.*

Pharoh will not listen to you refers to *Pharoh not listening to Moses challenge "At what time do you want the frogs removed?"*

Pharoh had seen not only God's power, but God's trust of Moses and *did not listen to them*, Moses and Aaron.

Rashi NewsLetter Approach: We clarify the rules used by the Rashi commentators

- **Reference** rule - citation of another verse
- **Grammar** rule - this other verse emphasizes that Pharoh will not listen to Moses and Aaron (besides not listening to God)

Meaning *Daily Rashi* Sun-Mon 1/18,19/2015 Ex09-30a, Gn02-05a

Biblical Texts:

Ex09-30a

[Background: Moses had promised to remove a plague in exchange for which Pharoh said he would let the people go. Moses promises to remove the plague. But continues...] As for you and your staff, I know, you are not yet in fear of God

Gn02-05a

All field shrubbery was not yet in the land and all field grass had not yet sprouted because God had not sent any rain ...

Rashi Text: The biblical word *terem* means *not yet*. [We have inserted the Rashi translation in the verse citation above]

Mizrachi, Rashi commentator: On Ex09-30a, Mizrachi explains that *Rashi explains that terem means not yet and does not mean prior. Rashi does not explain his reasons here because he relies on what he said in Gn02-05a.*

Let us now explore the Rashi commentators on **Gn02-05a**.

Mizrachi, Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh, Rashi commentators: In other words *terem* is translated as two words, *not yet*.

It is incorrect to translate it as *prior*. There are two reasons for this.

- *Prior* can be conjugated as a verb. e.g. *Prior to it raining there was no shrubbery*. However although the Hebrew word for *prior*, *Kodem*, has verb forms, (e.g. *hikdim*), the Hebrew word *terem*, has no conjugation.
- If *Terem* meant *prior*, then the verse would not make sense. It would read *Prior to field grass sprouting, because God had not sent rain*. On the other hand the translation *not yet*, makes sense: *Field grass had not yet spouted, because God had not sent rain*. In other words, the word *because* forces the translation *not yet* instead of *prior*.

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