

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on TeTzaVeH
Vol 23#8 - 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.

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 the first set of Rashis we show how the Rashi commentators offered more insights than the Rashi Newsletter.*
- *In the 2nd Rashi (Sunday) we show how the Rashi Newsletter and Rashi commentators both offer the same solution.*
- *In the 3rd set of Rashis we show how the Rashi Newsletter solved a problem that the Rashi commentators could not solve.*

Citation, Meaning-Synendoche *Daily Rashi* Thur-Fri Feb 26,27 2015 Ex29-31a Ex29-32a

Biblical Text: Ex29-31a Ex29-32a

Take the Ram Peace offering, and cook its meat in a holy place....and eat it by the door of the Temple

Rashi Text:

In a holy place *refers to the Temple courtyard.*

Mizrachi, Rashi commentator and Rashi Newsletter

contribution: The Rashi Newsletter contributes an explicit identification of rules. Rashi here uses the **Reference** or **Citation** rule. Something unknown is specified by referencing another verse. The following verses are mentioned (The first one is mentioned by the Mizrachi while the other is mentioned by the Rashi Newsletter)

Lv06-19 [**Background:** The text describes the Sin offering which is holy of holies] *It shall be eaten in a holy place, in the Temple courtyard*

Lv08-31 [**Background:** The text describes the Ram Peace offering during the Priest indoctrination ceremony] *Cook the meat at the Temple Entrance and eat it there.*

The following inferences can be made from these other verses

- Offerings which are holy of holies are eaten in the Temple courtyard
- Although peace offerings are generally not holy of holies, the

Peace offerings of the Priest inauguration ceremony were treated like holy of holies; they must be eaten at the Temple Entrance

- Now the Temple entrance includes the actual entrance and the entire courtyard.
- It can't be imagined that the Peace offering of the Priest Inauguration ceremony is more holy (only eaten at the entrance) than the holy of holy offerings (eaten in the entire courtyard)
- Therefore we interpret the phrase *Temple Entrance* to refer to the *Entire Courtyard*. The use of a part to reference a whole is a literary technique called **Synendoche** and is common in all languages. For example we speak about *taking her hand in marriage*; clearly no one marries a hand; you marry the entire person, but the hand is a part of of ther person and by synendoche we can refer to the entire person by the part.

Comment: In this example both the Mizrachi and Rashi Newsletter use the **Reference** method. The Rashi Newsletter explicitly identifies this rule but the Mizrachi explicitly identifies the verse. The Mizrachi also adds the absurdity of translating *Temple Entrance* literally (how could a peace offering be more stringent than a holy of holy offering). The Rashi Newsletter also added the **Meaning Synendoche** method which explains why *temple entrance* refers to the *entire courtyard*.

Reference / Meaning-Synonyms *Daily Rashi* Sat 2/28/2015
Ex29-30a

Biblical Texts:

Ex29-30a

[Background: Discussing the Priest Inauguration Ceremony]
The Priests will wear the clothes for a septuplet of days

Rashi Text: The word *septuplet* implies 7 consecutive days

Comment: Notice how the Mizrachi and Sifsay Chachamim use totally different rules to arrive at this.

Mizrachi, Rashi commentator: That the 7 days are consecutive we learn from an explicit verse **Lv08-35** *Sit by the Temple entrance day and night for 7 days* [So *day and night* mean consecutively]

Here, the **Mizrachi** uses the **Reference** method.

Sifsay Chachamim, Rashi commentator:

Rashi infers this from the difference in meaning between

- *Seven*, which could mean 7 days, even non-consecutive
- *Septuplet*, which refers to a bundle of 7 consecutive days.

Here, the Sifsay Chachamim uses the **Meaning-Literary-Figures-of-Speech** method.

Rashi Newsletter Contribution: The Rashi Newsletter contributes an explicit identification of rules. In this case two different rules - **citation** and **meaning** - give rise to the same conclusion. Such duplicity of derivation enriches the Rashi experience.

Parallelism *Daily Rashi* Sun 3/1/2015 Ex29-40a

Ex29-40a

Biblical text: [Background: The Bible is discussing the Michah accompaniment to the Daily Offering] *And a tenth of pure flour mixed with a quarter hin of oil*

Rashi text: Tenth *refers to a tenth of the Ayfah* [A measure, about a gallon]

Mizrachi and Sifsay Chachamim, Rashi commentators and

Rashi Newsletter: We learn the meaning of *tenth* from the parallel verse in **Nu28-05** in a parallel duplicate passage, also discussing the Daily offering. This verse states *And a tenth of an Ayfah pure flour for a Minchah offering.*

The Rashi Newsletter makes a contribution by making explicit the **parallelism** rule and graphically showing the **parallelism** of the two passages each describing the Daily offering.

- A tenth _____ of pure flour mixed with a quarter hin of pure oil
- A tenth of an Ayfah of pure flour mixed with a quarter hin of pure oil

As can be seen the parallelism of the two verses shows that the unspecified word *tenth* refers to a tenth of an Ayfah.

Comment: This Rashi exhibits a special type of **parallelism**: It is a parallelism where the two passages are talking about the same thing but in different biblical paragraphs. Such *double paragraphs* are an important source of biblical nuances.

Formatting *Daily Rashi* Mon 3/2/2015 Ex30-04a

Ex30-04a

Biblical text: [Background: The Bible is discussing the Golden Altar] *Make a crown around its edges...make two golden rings beneath the crown on its two ribs on its two sides; they will function as housing for the poles that bear them.*

Rashi text: Two ribs on its two sides means two horns on its two sides [The golden rings were on two opposite corners of the square altar. Each ring was at the bottom of the altar horn right below the altar crown. In other words the altar had

- 4 horns (protrusions) on top
- a crown (sort of a belt) surrounding the top of the altar at the bottom of the horns
- Rings right beneath the belt-crown at the bottom of two diagonal horns. The rings carried the poles that bore the altar.]

Mizrachi and Sifsay Chachamim, Rashi commentators:

Normally the phrase *ribs* of an object refer to its sides just as ribs are the sides of a person. In this verse however, *ribs* here means horns. Why? Because if it meant *sides* as it normally does, the verse would read *place the rings on the two sides on the two sides*. Therefore we translate *place the rings on the two horns on the two sides*.

Rashi Newsletter Contribution: The Rashi Newsletter

contributes as follows:

First, the Rashi Newsletter opposes making a translation based on no rule simply because there is a superfluity. If *ribs* always means *sides* then it can't suddenly mean *horns*.

Second, the Rashi newsletter contributes the **Formatting** rule. The Formatting rule basically states that certain features of formatting in English such as underline, bold, italics, bullets, and paragraphing, can be indicated in biblical Hebrew using certain formatting features (See my article, *Biblical Formatting*, Jewish Bible Quarterly, 2007, Vol 35, Number 1, pp 17-27).

So in this verse

- we indeed translate *place the two rings on the two sides on the two sides*.
- Using the above article, we retranslate the verse for a modern reader as if it was bolded, in other words as if it was written as *place the two ring **on the two sides***
- The above article made explicit the idea that bold, italic and underline formatting indicates an intended unspecified emphasis by the author.
- Finally we interpret this unspecified emphasis as indicating intensity of translation. Recall that a cube (such as the golden altar) has 6 faces, 12 border lines and 8 corners. If all the verse had said was *place the rings on 2 sides* I could reasonably interpret *place the rings on 2 opposite faces of the altar* or *place the rings on 2 opposite border lines*. Since the verse says *place the rings **on 2 sides*** with unspecified emphasis, the phrase *two sides* is interpreted intensely that is

restrictively: *place the rings on 2 (opposite) corners.*

This is in fact what we have explained above: The gold altar had a square top; from the square top there arose 4 protrusions called horns; around the square top there was a belt that was called the crown. The rings that allowed the golden altar to be carried were placed on two diagonally opposite corners of the altar on top beneath the crown at the foot of the horns.

This principle that repetition indicates intensity is used throughout the bible. It differs from an ad hoc principle that *since there is repetition lets simply reinterpret ribs as horns.* Rashi is not reinterpreting ribs but rather reinterpreting the repeated or equivalently the bolded phrase. Rashi interprets this phrase intensely or restrictively. The word *side* now means corners instead of faces.

Note the Ibn Ezra appears to disagree with this principle. So we will revisit this Rashi principle at Tazria Metzorah. Rashi and the Talmudic sages interpret the biblically coined word *red-red*

as meaning *the most intense pure red* while Ibn Ezra interprets it to mean *a light red*. We will investigate why Ibn Ezra interpreted this way and respond to his objections.

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