

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on Ki TiSaH
Vol 23#9 - 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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- *Today, we go over the resolution of a classic dispute between the early authorities (Rishonim). We show how to resolve a dispute between Rashi and Ramban. We also show how the resolution applies to several passages.*
- *Interestingly, this Rashi came from a question of a student of mine when I taught Rashi in Philadelphia. I didn't have the answer then, but 8 years later I solved it and published the paper with the solution*
- *Occasionally I do get inquiries from subscribers. Please feel free to inquire about difficult Rashis by writing to Rashiyomi@GMail.Com*

Paragraph, Meaning *Daily Rashi* Thur-Fri Mar 5,6 2015 Ex31-13a,b

Biblical Text: Ex31-13a,b

[The initial paragraphs of the chapter 31 are as about the building of the Temple] Activities for building a temple...Usually observe my Sabbath

Comment: Note: I have argued that the Hebrew word *ach* should be translated as *Usually* or *Most of* (*Usually* is *most of the time*). See "*The Meaning of Ach*", **Jewish Bible Quarterly**, Vol 33, #2, pp 100-109, 2005 www.Rashiyomi.com/ach.pdf) We will see the utility of this translation in understanding the Rashi comments as we go through the various Rashis.

Rashi Text: (The paragraphing of the Rashi comment is mine)

- Even though you are energetic in building the Temple, nevertheless, you must still observe the Sabbath
- All occurrences of *only* and *usually* in the Bible come to limit. [Here the limitation is to limit] Sabbath [observance] from the work of the Temple.

Ramban, Mizrachi, Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh Rashi commentators: The Ramban reads the Rashi as follows

Only and usually limit. So the verse limits the Temple construction from being done on Sabbath.

All Rashi commentators deal with the problem that this is an unusual use of limit. Every other place where *usually* occurs, the term *usually*, limits what follows. Here *usually* limits what precedes (It is the Temple building that is limited from performance on the Sabbath).

Some of the Rashi commentators are quite long. However, the Sifsay Chachamim's comment is most perceptive: *Rashi was commenting on the juxtaposition of paragraphs - seven paragraphs on building the Temple followed by a paragraph of Sabbath observance.*

Rashi Newsletter contribution: The Rashi newsletter interprets the Rashi as manifesting two rules and dealing with two different issues. This completely solves the inquiry of the Ramban. I show below several other examples.

Here are the Rashi texts in italics and how we interpret it.

- *Even though you are energetic in building the Temple, nevertheless, you must still observe the Sabbath*

This is based on the **paragraph** rule. The Rashi has a remarkably simple interpretation which in fact was forshadowed by the **Sifsay Chachamim**. We interpret it as follows:

Even though the previous 7 paragraphs command on building the Temple, nevertheless, you must still observe the Sabbath. In other words, you may not build the Temple on the Sabbath.

- *All occurrences of only and usually in the Bible come to limit. [Here the limitation is to limit] Sabbath [observance] from the work of the Temple.*

This is based on the **meaning** rule. The Rashi has a remarkably simple interpretation. We interpret it as follows.

The statement *Usually observe the Sabbath* immediately evokes in anyone hearing it, *Usually, when don't you?* Clearly the sentence is telling us that sometimes you don't observe the Sabbath. In fact, the daily offering is offered every day including the Sabbath.

We comment as follows:

- Notice how *usually* now limits the verse in the substance of the Sabbath observance (The Ramban's original question)
- Notice how the word *usually* spontaneously evokes a feeling that there is limitation. "*Usually! When don't you?*" The use of skillful translations is a major interpretive technique introduced by the Rashi website.
- The Rashi text uses the word *work of the Temple*. This phrase has two possible meanings: The i) building of the Temple, and ii) Temple service. Because the context is speaking about the building of the temple, people overlook that the 2nd half of Rashi is speaking about the Temple service (Which is done even on the Sabbath)

Paragraph, Meaning *Daily Rashi* Sat Mar 7 2015 Nu31-22a

Biblical Text: Nu31-19,22a,23

Anyone killing someone [in war]...must stay outside the camp 7 days and cleanse themselves in water....Most of the gold [vessels] and silver [vessels]... dip them in fire [to purify them]

Rashi text: Even though Moses only commanded you on the laws of impurity of dead bodies, there is a further impurity, the impurity of vessels which you have to know. ... The word *most of* always delimits. You don't have to purify rust (You can remove the rust and then dip the vessel). And this is the meaning of *most of*: Most of the vessel is purified; you only purify the vessel as it is not the additional rust.

Comment: Note: I have argued that the Hebrew word *ach* should be translated as *Usually* or *Most of* (Usually is *most of the time*). See "*The Meaning of Ach*", **Jewish Bible Quarterly**, Vol 33, #2, pp 100-109, 2005 www.Rashiyomi.com/ach.pdf
We will see the utility of this translation in understanding the Rashi comments as we go through the various Rashis.

Mizrachi, Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh Rashi

commentators: We have summarized arguments and claims of the other Rashi commentators above in the Rashis on Mar 5,6. Our purpose here is to show the value of seeing two Rashi rules in one Rashi. This is a simple technique that solves many difficult Rashi problems.

Rashi Newsletter contribution: The Rashi newsletter interprets the Rashi as manifesting two rules and dealing with two different issues. This completely solves the inquiry of the Ramban. I show below several other examples.

Here are the Rashi texts in italics and how we interpret it.

- *Even though Moses only taught you about the laws of impurity of dead bodies there is a further impurity, the impurity of vessels.*

This is based on the **paragraph** rule. We interpret it as follows:

The previous verse dealt with laws of impurity of dead bodies.
Now we add another verse dealing with an additional impurity, the impurity of vessels.

- *Most of the gold [vessels] and silver [vessels]... dip them in fire to purify them]*

This is based on the **meaning** rule. The Rashi has a remarkably simple interpretation. We interpret it as follows.

Most of the vessel is purified - so you removed the rust and purify the remainder of the vessel.

We comment as follows:

- Notice how *most of* now limits the verse in the substance of the vessels. (The Ramban's original question)
- Rashi gives two interpretations. I have only used the Rabbinic interpretation since this interpretation is consistent with the translation *most of*.
- Notice the spontaneity of the translation: *Most of the vessels* so we exclude the rust.

Paragraph, Meaning *Daily Rashi* Sun-Mon Mar 8,9 2015

Gn09-05a,d

Biblical Text: Gn09-03,05

You can eat meatUsually I will seek [justice] from those shedding blood...

Comment: Note: I have argued that the Hebrew word *ach* should be translated as *Usually* or *Most of* (*Usually* is *most of the time*). See "*The Meaning of Ach*", **Jewish Bible Quarterly**, Vol 33, #2, pp 100-109, 2005 www.Rashiyomi.com/ach.pdf) We will see the utility of this translation in understanding the Rashi comments as we go through the various Rashis.

Rashi Text: (The paragraphing of the Rashi comment is mine)

- *Even though you can kill animals for food you can't kill people.*
- *I will seek [justice] from those who commit suicide; from those who kill without witnesses I will seek [justice]*

Mizrachi, Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh Rashi

commentators: We have summarized arguments and claims of the other Rashi commentators above in the Rashis on Mar 5,6. Our purpose here is to show the value of seeing two Rashi rules in one Rashi. This is a simple technique that solves many difficult Rashi problems.

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Here are the Rashi texts in italics and how we interpret it.

- *Even though you can kill animals for food you can't kill people.*

This is based on the **paragraph** rule. We interpret it as follows:

Even though the previous verse says you can kill animals for food, nevertheless, you may not kill people.

- *I will seek [justice] from those who commit suicide; from those who kill without witnesses I will seek [justice]*

This is based on the **meaning** rule. The Rashi has a remarkably simple interpretation. We interpret it as follows.

Usually I will seek justice. When? When there are no witnesses.

We comment as follows:

- Notice how *usually* now limits the verse in the substance of the verse, God's seeking justice. God does not seek justice if there are witnesses and a trial since the courts do that.
- Notice the spontaneity of the word *usually*: *Usually I will seek justice.* This evokes the spontaneous response *When not?*

And the response is, *when there are no witnesses*. If there is a human court trial God does not have to intervene.

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