

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on VaYiQRaH
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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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- *There are not that many Rashis on VaYaQhel PeQuDay so we concentrate on the easiest Rashi rule, the REFERENCE rule. This is a particularly good rule for HomeSchoolers.*
- *Occasionally I do get inquiries from subscribers. Please feel free to inquire about difficult Rashis by writing to Rashiyomi@GMail.Com*

**Reference/Citation/Formatting *Daily Rashi* Thur Mar 19
2015 Lv04-24a**

Biblical Text: Lv04-24a Slaughter the Sin offering in the same place where the elevation offering is slaughtered

Rashi Text: The place of slaughter of the elevation offering is in the northern part of the altar

Rashi Newsletter approach: We explicitly introduce the **reference/citation** rule. Rashi compares the following two verses:

- **Lv04-24a** Slaughter the Sin offering in the same place where the elevation offering is slaughtered
- **Lv01-11** Slaughter it [the elevation offering] on the side of the altar northward before God

This by the way is an excellent homeschooling exercise for children (and for adults!). Ask the child (or adult) to look through Lv01 and find where the elevation offering is slaughtered. This way the child (or adult!) gets the thrill of participating with Rashi in the process of discovery.

Sifsay Chachamim, Mizrachi and Gur Aryeh Rashi commentators: But there is a 3rd verse to teach that slaughter is done in the North. Behold

- **Lv06-18** ...in the place where the elevation offering is slaughtered, there the sin offering is slaughtered.

We need two verses to emphasize that *north* is *required*.

Rashi Newsletter approach: The Rashi Newsletter introduced the **formatting** rule.

- A modern author indicates *unspecified emphasis* by using bold or underline
- The biblical Author indicates *unspecified emphasis* by using repetition.
- In other words, the ancient reader reads a repeated passage the same identical way the modern author reads a bolded passage.

Here is a simple analogy to drive home that this is the *simple meaning* of text

- If a mother tells her child to pick up her toys the child might interpret that to mean that she should *eventually* pick up her toys.
- If a mother then repeats the command, "I said to pick up your toys" the mother thereby indicates that she wants this done now. This interpretation is neither homily nor exegesis; it is the simple meaning of the **repetition**.

If the Bible just said once, slaughter it in the north, it would be *preferred* to slaughter the sin offering in the north, but if you didn't slaughter in the north, the offering would still be efficacious. By repeating the command, the Bible indicated it is a *requirement*. If the sin offering was not slaughtered in the north then it is invalid; the sinner has to bring another sin offering!

Comment: Notice the contrast of the Rashi commentators and the Rashi Newsletter

- The Rashi commentators deal with *followups* to the Rashi while the Rashi newsletter deals with the main focus of Rashi
- The Rashi commentators deal with Talmudic type distinctions (required or preferred) while the Rashi Newsletter aims to show the spontaneous and intuitive foundation of the Rashi.

Synonym *Daily Rashi* Fri Mar 20 2015 Lv01-17a

Biblical Text: Lv01-17a ...And he [the priest] will tear it [the bird offering] with its wings without totally breaking it in two

Rashi Text: The tearing must be done by hand not by utensil as we learn from Samson who tore the lion **Ju14-06**.

Mizrachi Rashi commentator and Rashi Newsletter

approach: The Mizrachi ingeniously cites the verse **Ju14-06** in its entirety: *and he Samson tore the lion apart the way one tears a sheep and he had nothing in his hand* So, concludes the Mizrachi, the underlined words prove that the nuances of this particular Hebrew word for tearing, *shasah*, is a tearing with ones hands without help of a tearing utensil; contrastively a word like *cut* might indicate *cutting with a utensil*

The Rashi Newsletter further explains that the **Meaning** rule has 10 subrules one of which is the **Synonym** rule. The purpose of the **Synonym** rule is not to *explain* meaning but to *clarify distinction and nuances between words that appear to have the same meaning*.

Parallelism/Hyponymity *Daily Rashi* Sat Mar 21 2015 Lv02-11a

Biblical Text: Lv02-11a

- For neither leaven nor *devash* may be offered on the [altar] fire to God
- But you do offer them as *beginning* offerings to God
- So long as they don't go on the altar as a pleasing odor to God

Background: The Hebrew *devash* normally is translated as *honey*. For example *a land flowing with milk and honey*.

Rashi Text: All sweet fruit is called *devash*. [As an aside, Rashi would therefore translate the recurring biblical phrase: *a land flowing with milk and sweet fruit*.]

- **Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh, and Sifsay Chachamim Rashi commentators:** The Rashi commentators emphasize the **parallelism** rule. The parallel passages bulleted above are contrastive. *Devash* must refer to something that is in the *beginning* offerings. But there is no *beginning* offering involving honey. There is however a *beginning* offering of figs and dates **Dt26-02:11**. Hence the Rashi: *Devash refers to sweet fruit*.

Rashi Newsletter approach: Of course, the Rashi newsletter supports the **parallelism** rule. However the Rashi Newsletter has also used modern linguistic accounts of transference and development of word meaning.

Towards this end we explain the terms *hyponyms*, *hypernyms*, *metonymy* and *synecdoche*.

- *Hypernym*: A word like *food* is a hypernym since it refers to many subcategories of food like fruit, vegetables, bread, meats, etc.
- *Hyponym*: The subcategories of a hypernym are called hyponyms. So fruit and bread are hyponyms of the hypernym food.
- *Synendoche*: It is well known that the word *bread* can refer to any type of food. For example *man does not live on bread alone* really means *man does not live by food alone*. The exact mechanisms of the transference are as follows:
 - The *hyponym*, bread, can by transfer of meaning refer to the *hypernym*, food
 - Not all *hyponyms* can take on the meaning of the *hypernym*. Only good examples of the *hypernym* can take on this meaning. Since *bread* is a good example of *food*, *bread* can refer to the entire category of food. We refer to this, good examples taking on the meaning of the whole, as *synendoche*.
 - But once *bread* means *food*, it can then refer to any type of food. In other words *synendoche* justifies a *hyponym* being able to refer to *co-hyponyms*.

Summary: Honey is a *hyponym* of the general category of sweet items. Since honey is a good example of sweetness, *synendoche* allows honey to refer to the *hypernym*, sweet things. It then follows that honey can refer to any class of sweet things even if it does not contain honey, that is honey now has the capacity to refer to *co-hyponyms*. Hence the Rashi that *honey* can refer to *figs and dates*.

Notice how

- The Rashi commentators dealt with the *fact* that honey can now refer to *figs and dates* while
- The Rashi Newsletter emphasizes the general linguistic principle that a good example of a category acquires the meaning of the entire category and can refer to co-hyponyms.

**Grammar/Connectives *Daily Rashi* Sun-Mon Mar 22-23
2015 Lv02-14a Ex22-20a**

Biblical text: Lv02-14a *If you bring a minchah of first fruits ..*
Ex22-20 *If you build an altar of stones, don't ...*

Rashi text: The word *if* is used here in the sense of *when*(Ki). And similarly in the verse *if there be Jubilee* Rabbi Ishmael says every *if* in the bible is permissive except for 3 verses. In other words *if* in these verses means *when* (Kaasher). [See table below for examples]

Verse 1	Translation Verse 1	Verse 2	Translation	ReTranslation Verse 1
Lv02-14a	<u>If</u> you bring a minchah of first fruits	Dt26-02	When you come to Israel bring first fruits to God	<u>When</u> you bring a minchah of first fruits
Nu36-04	<u>If</u> the jubilee year comes then..	Ex25	Proclaim a jubilee year every 50 th year	<u>When</u> the Jubilee years comes then
Ex22-24	<u>If</u> you loan money to my people	Dt15-08	You must give or loan to your poor neighbor	<u>When</u> you loan money to my people
Ex22-20	<u>If</u> you build an altar of stonesí	Dt27-06	When you come to Israel build an altar of stones	<u>When</u> you build an altar of stones

Rashi NewsLetter Approach: The Rashi newsletter approaches both these Rashis through the simple approach of the **Grammar** rules. The Hebrew language, like all languages has many connective words, words like *also, if, when, from, to, and etc.* Sometimes these concepts are indicated by whole words and sometimes they are indicated by prefix or suffix letters. As a general rule of thumb these connective words have multiple meanings. Even the prefix letter **vav** which usually is translated as *and* can have up to 70 different meanings (**Vav** can also mean, *but, then* etc). Rashi here simply tells us that the word *if* can sometimes mean *when*. (Some people might consider *if* and *when* contrastive words; but even the prefix letters for *to* and *from* sometimes interchange). This principle - that connective words are plastic with many meanings - is universally acknowledged by both religious and secular grammarians. As a simple example, Rashi in several places enumerates (in the name of Chazal) the multiple meanings of the Hebrew word *ki*: *if, when, because, perhaps, that*

Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh, and Sifsay Chachamim Rashi

commentators: Notice how the Rashi newsletter concentrates on the broad principle used, a principle which is also often used on similar words. By contrast the Rashi commentators

- Focus on details such as why Rashi indicated the concept *when* by using the Hebrew *Ki* in one Rashi comment but using the Hebrew *Kaasher* in the other Rashi comment (There are two verses with Rashis saying the same thing at the beginning of this section).
- Focus on details on whether there are 3 or 4 examples when *if* means *when*. To wit: There are *at most* 4 verses illustrating

this principle as indicated in the Table. However Rashi on **Ex22** cites Rabbi Ishmael who gives only 3 examples (The **Nu36** example is not given). On **Lv02**, Rashi gives one example, the **Nu36** example. Rashi, as he traditionally does, bases his comments on exegetical texts like the Sifray and Sifrah. These texts actually cite a controversy between Rabbi Ishmael and Rabbi Judah on whether the proper translation in the **Nu36** verse is *if* or *when*. The strong argument for using *if* is that after the destruction of the Temple (such as today) the Jubilee laws are not applicable. So you can't say *when* the Jubilee comes. However the counterargument is that **Nu36** is not the place to indicate that the Temple will be destroyed and the verse should be translated using *when* the Jubilee comes. The Rashi commentators conclude that the Rashi citing Rabbi Ishmael and giving 3 examples is according to the opinion of Rabbi Ishmael; the Rashi adding the **Nu36** verse is according to the opinion of Rabbi Judah.

Summary: The Rashi comment should be approached in three stages

- First, we should mention, the broad grammar rule that connectives typically have multiple meanings. This is done by the Rashi Newsletter.
- Next we should clarify that Rashi can indicate the word *when* using either the Hebrew *Ki* or *Kaasher* (Rashi commentators)
- Finally, we should list all biblical examples. There are 3 or 4 depending on how we approach the **Nu36** verse (Rashi commentators)

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