

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on Acharay-QeDoShiM
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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 illustrate the Reference rule*
- *Sometimes a reference is explicit*
- *Sometimes however a reference is implicit*
- *We explore 3 types of references today*
- *Reference Rashis are excellent for Homeschooling and adults*

Database *Daily Rashi* Sunday Apr 26, 2015 Lv19-02a

*In Memory of Rabbi Dr. Aaron Lichtenstein
who passed away this week
We dedicate this Rashi,
illustrative of the Brisker method
Which both he and I learned from the
Rav, Rabbi Dr Joseph Soloveitchick*

Biblical Text: Lv19-02a

God cited to Moses to say over. Cite to the entire congregation of Israel and tell them...

Rashi: The underlined words teach us that the set of laws in this chapter were taught in the presence of the entire community.

Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh and Mizrachi Rashi

commentators: But we know that all Torah laws were taught to the entire community since Rashi explicitly says so on **Ex34:32a**. [So why is this chapter singled out as being taught to all of Israel]. We must therefore distinguish between these chapters to explain why the entire congregation is mentioned in this chapter. Here are three approaches of distinctions:

- **Entirety vs. Simultaneity (Mizrachi):** Other chapters were taught to sequential groups of people (till the *entire* congregation was exhausted) while this chapter was taught *simultaneously* to the entire congregation
- **Entirety of congregation vs people (Sifsay Chachamim):** Other chapters were taught to all males (the "congregation") while this chapter (dealing with charity, honesty and social relations) was taught to men, women and children

- **Required vs Preferred (Gur Aryeh)**: In other chapters, people who couldn't make it were excused, (attendance was preferred), while for this chapter everyone had to attend.

As can be inferred, the Brisker method advocates explaining differences using clear and sharp distinctions. Such an approach clarifies differences and facilitates mutual respect of opposing positions.

Approach of the Rashi Newsletter: The Rashi is based on the **Database** rule. Rashi performed a review of all chapter beginnings. Compare the following sample of verses

- *God cited to Moses to say over*
- *God cited to Moses to say over*
- *God spoke to Moses to say over*
- *God spoke to Moses, speak to the priests, and say to them*
- *God spoke to Moses and Aaron to say over to them*
- *God cited to Moses to say over; speak to the entire congregation*

The database inquiry clearly shows how **Lv19-02** emphasizes speaking to the entire congregation.

I will now invoke the Rabbi Ishmael style rules: *Consider a set of verses from which one verse went and deviated:*

- *That deviant verse is not commenting exclusively on itself*
- *Rather, that deviant verse is commenting on all verses.*

So the Rashi is simple!! This chapter *as well as all other chapters*, was said to the entire congregation.

What about the distinctions brought by the Rashi commentators

- Moses would have a physically hard time talking to all of Israel. Rather, all laws were spoken non-simultaneously to a sequential set of groups till the entire congregation was exhausted
- Clearly, people who couldn't make it were always excused. There is no reason to think otherwise (Someone was sick or had a headache)
- All chapters were spoken to men women and children since many laws of the Torah apply to men and women. Indeed, some biblical chapters begin *a man or woman*

Format-Bullets-Grammar *Daily Rashi* Monday Apr 27, 2015
Lv18-30a

Biblical Text: Lv18-30a

[God had just prohibited the sexual sins. God now warns the Jewish people of the obligation to observe and the consequences of sin]

- Do not defile yourself in these sins because the previous nation defiled and was expelled from the land..
- Watch, you yourselves, my statutes and civil law...and don't do these abominations
- Watch my watch in order not to do these abominable statutes...

Rashi: *Watch my watch*; this is an order to the courts to make enactments and fences to prevent sins. [An example of a fence might be not eating meat and milk at the same meal; this is a fence against the real law which prohibits certain types of

cooking of meat and milk]

Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh and Mizrachi Rashi

commentators: Why did Rashi interpret *Watch my watch* to refer to the courts. Because the previous verse, *watch you yourselves* refers to people watching. So the extra verse must refer to the courts.

Approach of the Rashi Newsletter: The Rashi Newsletter introduced a beautiful rule, the **Formatting** rule (Biblical Formatting, *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, Vol 35(1), pp 17-27, 2007). According to the formatting rule the Bible used formatting techniques like bullets, bold, italics and underline.

However, whereas modern typography allows you to *indicate* bold and bullets with special formatting, the bible has its own style to indicate formatting. The biblical Author indicated bullets by using a *repeating keyword*. So in the above example the keyword *watch* is repeated indicating a bullet structure as shown.

The bullets by themselves simply alert us to the twoness - there are two obligations to watch. But watch what? For this we use the **grammar** rule.

- There is an emphasis in the first bullet; *watch you yourselves*; so this is clearly a command to the individual
- There is conjunctive phrase, *in order to*, in the 2nd bullet. It speaks about watching *the watches in order to not do these abominations*. This phrase clearly describes prophylactics, preventive watches, fences and ordinances. Of course, these are decreed by the courts but the emphasis is on both not

sinning and using fences and preventives.

Comment: In comparing the Rashi Newsletter and the Rashi commentators we see that:

- The Rashi commentators emphasize talmudic type exhaustion of possibilities (individual already mentioned so it must refer to courts)
- The Rashi Newsletter places these distinctions in a broader context by emphasizing structure such as formatted bullets and its biblical counterpart
- The Rashi Newsletter supplements the formatting rule with some simple grammatical observations.

Rabbi Ishmael Style-Grammar *Daily Rashi* Tue-Wed Apr 28-29, 2015 Lv19-14a, Ex22-27a

Biblical Text: Lv19-14a, Ex22-27a

- Do not curse a judicial entity [God or a judge] and
- A king in your nation do not curse
- Do not curse a deafmute

Rashi:

- The first bullet prohibits cursing any judicial entity whether God or a judge.
- The 3rd bullet prohibits cursing a deafmute.
- It is prohibited to curse any (live) person who, as the underlined words indicate, is in your nation.
- Deafmute is specified since there is no biblical prohibition in cursing a dead person.

Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh and Mizrachi Rashi

commentators: There is a controversy between Rabbi Akivah and Rabbi Ishmael on what the first bullet in the biblical passage prohibits.

- Rabbi Akivah says it refers to God
- Rabbi Ishmael says it refers to a judge

The problem here is that the word *E-lo-Him can equally mean*

- God
- Judge.

As the Rashi commentators point out

- Rashi and Rambam derive *both* the prohibition of cursing God and judge from this verse. To reflect the Rashi and Rambam opinion we have translated *e-lo-him* as *judicial entity* to reflect that it can mean either God or judge.
- Oonkelos the aramaic translation says it means judge. The Mizrachi says that this is the simple meaning of the text.

The big question is how we derive the prohibition of cursing any person. Before we discuss this we mention a beautiful book by ***Azzan Yadin, "Scripture as Logos: Rabbi Ishmael and the Origins of Midrash", Ebook 2011, Univ. of Penn Press.***

Yadin points out that there are two issues with a halachic midrash: i) *what* is the law derived from the biblical text, ii) *how* is the law derived from the biblical text. In other words, two scholars might agree on the substance of the law but disagree on *how* it is derived. With this background let us explore two methods of deriving the prohibition of cursing anyone

- Approach of Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 86a: We use the Rabbi

Ishmael style rule, *generalization from multiple texts*.
 Consider the following hierarchy:

Lowest end of existence	Middle end of existence	Highest end of existence
Dead person	Deaf mute (can't hear curse)	Judge or King (They are "high" because you have to obey legislation from the king and judicial verdict from the judge)
No verse; so permitted	Prohibited (Lv19-14a)	Prohibited (Ex22-27a)

In other words the Rabbi Ishmael Generalization rule says *anybody from a deafmute to a King or Judge*, should not be cursed. Entities below this group (such as a dead person) have no prohibition. The Talmud further explains why you need to mention both Judge and King: A judge has the right to decide cases of civil dispute (the King does not); contrastively, a King has right to make enactments (the Judge does not).

- Approach of Sifray, a halachic commentary on Lv19-14a which in fact is cited by Rashi. We infer it from the underlined phrase in your nation in the verses cited above. Gur Aryeh goes a step further and retranslates the verse: *Do not curse a judicial entity [God or Judge] and a prince [because he is] in your nation do not curse*. So the Gur Aryeh adds the phrase [because he is]. Thus the phrase in your nation is used to justify everyone.

Comment: The Talmud itself seeks to refute the *Rabbi Ishmael generalization*, by pointing out that *deafmute* and *king-judge* are extremes. However, I dont see this since a deafmute is not an extreme since a dead person is at the extreme. Very often a Talmudic passage will attempt to refute something without explicitly denying he refutation. However, from the fact that the law is accepted we can infer that the refutation is not that strong.

Approach of the Rashi Newsletter: The Rashi Newsletter seeks the simplest explanation consistent with universal rules. To translate *in your nation* to mean *because he is in your nation*, or to start arguing that *in your nation* is superfluous is not a concise rule (The Rashi Newsletter never makes appeal to superfluous words). The Talmud itself uses the phrase *in your nation* to qualify the prohibition of cursing a king: A king should not be cursed *provided he is in your nation*; if the king sins you can curse him.

The Rashi Newsletter adopts the Rabbi Ishmael style rule approach of Rabbi Ishmael: If the Bible gives 2-3 examples then the *Rabbi Ishmael Generalization* rule states that the prohibition applies to all items *within* the examples. This is the simplest way to approach the prohibition.

The translation of *e-lo-him* as *judicial entity* including both God and judge follows the **meaning** rule. Here we seek a unifying meaning to *judge* and *God*: The unifying meaning is *judicial entity*.

Although this example has many inuendos and side explanations, it is illustrative of how exegesis uses a variety of tools. The Rashi Newsletter seeks to make derivations consistently follow a few simple intuitive basic literary rules common to all languages. Very often this approach is reflected in explicit Talmudic and midrashic passage.

Meaning-Synonyms *Daily Rashi* Thur Apr 30, 2015 Lv19-13a

Biblical Text: Lv19-13a

- Do not do **Oshek** to your friend [because] you shouldn't steal
- Do not [even] delay the pay of a hired person with you until morning

Rashi: **Oshek** refers to withholding hired-person pay (not paying).

Sifsay Chachamim and Mizrachi Rashi commentators:

Rashi considers the meaning of **Oshek** as withholding hired pay.

Approach of the Rashi Newsletter: The Rashi Newsletter makes two contributions.

Meaning-Synonym method: We make explicit the **Meaning-Synonym method**. Very often Rashi

- will not explain the *meaning* of a word but rather
- he explains the *contrastive nuances* of two hyponyms of the same hypernym.

In this case

- The Hypernym (general category) is *theft*
- Hyponyms (subcategories) of *theft* are *robbery, usury, wage withholding, wage denial*.

So Rashi is not so much explaining the meaning of **Oshek**, but rather explain the contrast between the two words in the verse: Theft, **Oshek**.

Database Inquiry: But how does Rashi, or the Talmud or Sifray

know that **Oshek** means wage withholding. To accomplish this we should review all verses (about 5 dozen) using the word **Oshek**. Most of them don't tell us anything about the meaning of the word but some do, such as the following verses where we clearly see that **Oshek** means withholding (a wage)"

- **Dt24-14** Do not do **Oshek** to a hired person, who is poor, from your brothers.... [Instead] Immediately pay him on that day
- **Jr50-33** (Verse brought by the Radaq) The Jews are **Osheked**; their captors hold them without releasing them
- **Mal03-05** I (God) will be a quick witness against those who do **Oshek** to the wages of the poor: widow, orphan...

I think these verses are most conclusive. Based on them we *could* use the **Climax** principle to interpret **Lv19-13**

- Do not do **Oshek** to your friend [because] you shouldn't steal
- Do not [even] delay the pay of a hired person with you until morning

We inserted the bracketed word [even] to emphasize the climactic nature. The first verse half speaks about absolute denial of wages while the 2nd part goes a step further (climax) and prohibits delayal. Kugel emphasized that true biblical parallelism must have an element of climax.

To make the structure climactic we have to see the "don't steal" as explanatory to **Oshek**. There are other ways of reading the verse brought down in the Talmud; the above approach is not necessary, but is consistent with the general tone and overall biblical style.

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 (Homonyms)** 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