

**The 10 RashiYomi Rules**  
*Their presence in Rashis on Emor*  
**Vol 23#16 - 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](mailto:RashiYomi@GMail.Com).*

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- *Today we illustrate the Formatting-bullet rule*
- *The rule states that certain Rashis can be best understood through formatting*
- *There are a total of five Rashis which we state in the Sunday Rashi*
- *We then review each Rashi in successive days*

**Formatting-Bullets Meaning-Idiom Rabbi Ishmael Style**  
***Daily Rashi* Sunday May 3rd, 2015 Lv21-21c,22a-b,23a-b**

**Biblical Text: Lv21-21c,22a-b,23a-b**

**Background:** The verses discuss the blemished priest and indicates what he cannot do. The verses discuss the blemished priest and indicates what he can(not) do. The verses are stated below. A brief summary of all Rashis is compactly indicated with the footnotes; the contrastive or parallel words and phrases give rise to the emphasis in the Rashi text. Further details are provided in the text.

- He [a blemished Priest] shall not come near to *offer* the bread of his God.
  - The bread of his God,
    - ✓ From the holy of holy, and
    - ✓ From the holy. Shall he *eat*
- Only he shall *not go* in to the veil,
- Nor come *near to* the altar,

NOTES

1. Prohibitions to serve *either* a) at the altar or b) the veil
2. Offering is prohibited; eating is permitted
3. *Bread of his God* refers to Altar food, that is the offerings such as cattle and flocks offered on the altar which is food (bread)
4. Eating is permitted *both* from sacrifices classified as a) holy or b) holy of holies

**Rashi:** *bread of his God* is an idiom. Bread can refer to any food. (The various bullets in) The verse prohibits a blemished priest from offering i) sacrifices and ii) performing blood sprinkling on the veil. Contrastively, (the subbullets in) the verse allow the blemished priest to eat from the sacrifices called

*holy* or *holy of holies* [These are classifications of sacrifices; certain sacrifices like peace offerings which are partially eaten by priests and owners are considered to have *light holiness* and are called by the Bible *holy*, while other sacrifices not eaten by owners (like sin offerings) are considered to have *more stringent holiness* and are called by the Bible *holy of holies*].

Furthermore, the verse had to list *holy* in addition to *holy of holy*; that is one could not say that since *holy of holy* is permitted to be eaten, certainly *holy* is permitted to be eaten. The reason why allowance to eat from *holy of holy* sacrifices would not imply one can eat from *holy* sacrifices is because Moses (a non Priest) ate from *holy of holy* sacrifices (and this could justify a blemished priest eating from *holy of holies*, while there is no precedent for a non priest eating from *holy* sacrifices. Therefore both *holy of holies* and *holy* sacrifices had to be mentioned.

### **Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh and Mizrachi Rashi**

**commentators:** Rashi has already also stated on **Lv21-17a** that *bread* refers to any type of food. So why does Rashi repeat the same comment here? The following line of reasoning may explain this: The daily offering is explicitly called *my sacrifice my bread* (**Nu28-02**). No other sacrifice has the phrase *my sacrifice my bread*. Therefore, if the bible only used the expression *the bread of his God* once, we would have interpreted it to refer to the daily offering. By repeating the phrase *the bread of his God*, we broaden its interpretation to refer to any sacrifice.

Gur Aryeh adds further support for this explanation: The daily offering has a flour component (**Nu28-05**) which would justify

the term *bread* applied to it. Not every sacrifice has a flour component.

**Approach of the Rashi Newsletter:** The Rashi explaining *bread of God* to refer to sacrifices is an example of **hyponymy** or **metonymy**, and they justify an **idiomatic** interpretation. **Hyponymy** or **metonymy** (as well as **idioms**) are universal literary phenomena by which a typical member of a class acquires new meaning and refers to the entire class. Some other examples might be *honey* referring to anything sweet, *day* referring to the entire 24 hour period, or *bread* referring to any food.

**Comment:** Notice the difference of approach between the Rashi Newsletter and the commentators:

- The Rashi newsletter explains the underlying literary reason for the Rashi
- The Rashi commentators explain a *consequence* of the Rashi - why does Rashi repeat it twice (which results in broadening of meaning.)

We have seen this general vs. focused explanation several times in the difference between the Rashi Newsletter and the commentators.

**Formatting-Bullets Meaning-Idiom Rabbi Ishmael Style**  
***Daily Rashi* Monday-Tuesday May 4-5th, 2015 Lv21-21c,22a-b,23a-b**

**Biblical Text: Lv21-21c,22a-b,23a-b**

**Background:** The verses discuss the blemished priest and indicates what he cannot do. The verses discuss the blemished priest and indicates what he can(not) do. The verses are stated below. A brief summary of all Rashis is compactly indicated with the footnotes; the contrastive or parallel words and phrases give rise to the emphasis in the Rashi text. Further details are provided in the text.

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  - The bread of his God,
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1. Prohibitions to serve *either* a) at the altar or b) the veil
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**Rashi:** *bread of his God is an idiom. Bread* can refer to any food. (The various bullets in) The verse prohibits a blemished priest from offering i) sacrifices and ii) performing blood sprinkling on the veil. Contrastively, (the subbullets in) the verse allow the blemished priest to eat from the sacrifices called *holy* or *holy of holies* [These are classifications of sacrifices; certain sacrifices like peace offerings which are partially eaten by priests and owners are considered to have *light holiness* and are called by the Bible *holy*, while other sacrifices not eaten by owners (like sin offerings) are considered to have *more stringent*

*holiness* and are called by the Bible *holy of holies*]. Furthermore, the verse had to list *holy* in addition to *holy of holy*; that is one could not say that since *holy of holy* is permitted to be eaten, certainly *holy* is permitted to be eaten. The reason why allowance to eat from *holy of holy* sacrifices would not imply one can eat from *holy* sacrifices is because Moses (a non Priest) ate from *holy of holy* sacrifices (and this could justify a blemished priest eating from *holy of holies*, while there is no precedent for a non priest eating from *holy* sacrifices. Therefore both *holy of holies* and *holy* sacrifices had to be mentioned.

**Approach of the Rashi Newsletter:** The Rashi can be explained by the **Formatting-bullet** rule. The **Formatting bullet** rule was formulated by me in the article, "*Biblical Formatting*," **Jewish Bible Quarterly**, Vol 35(1), 2007. The **Formatting** rule states that the biblical Author indicates **Formatting** by using a repeating keyword. That is, a modern author would indicate bullets using bullet circles on consecutive rows, while the biblical Author indicates bullets using repeating keywords.

This verse states *The bread of his God from the holy of holies and from the holies he may eat*. The repeating keyword *from* indicates a bullet format which in *modern* typography would be rendered as indicated in the box above (with the checkmark bullets).

It is the bulleted structure itself which suggests that *holy* and *holy of holies* are not repetitions but distinct items (and hence indicated by distinct bullets).

Throughout Rabbinic literature (and based on biblical verses) there are two categories of sacrifices called *holy* and *holy of holies*; they differ in whether owners can eat of the meat, the holy of holies being more restrictive while the holy being less restrictive.

**Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh and Mizrachi Rashi**

**commentators**: Rashi himself raises the issue of why the biblical verse has to explicitly mention both holy and holy of holies. (Rashi explains that Moses, a non-priest, on one occasion ate from the holy of holies (**Lv08**) and therefore the permission to eat from the holy of holies would not imply a fortiori that one could eat from the holies since there are no precedents of non-priests eating from the holies).

The Rashi commentators contribute by mentioning the source of this Rashi (The source is Talmud Bavli, Tractate Zevachim as well as the Sifrey, an exegetical legal commentary on Leviticus).

The **Raam**, a well known Rashi commentator frequently cited by other Rashi commentators, questions the explanation of the Torah commentators: *But Moses in Lv08 officiated as a priest. So he was a priest that day.* The **Raam** answers, *But that is the point. He was a non-priest who for one day (actually 7 days) acted like a priest. So there is indeed a precedent for non-priests to eat (like a priest) from holy of holy sacrifices. There is no such precedent (of a non-priest acting temporarily like a priest) for the holy sacrifices.*

**Comment**: Again, we see how the

- Rashi Newsletter emphasizes the general literary principle

while

- The Rashi commentators emphasize minutiae such as sources and critical analysis of the Rashi commentary.

**Formatting-Bullets Meaning-Idiom Rabbi Ishmael Style**  
***Daily Rashi* Wednesday-Thursday May 6-7th, 2015 Lv21-21c,22a-b,23a-b**

**Biblical Text: Lv21-21c, 22a-b, 23a-b**

**Background:** The verses discuss the blemished priest and indicates what he cannot do. The verses discuss the blemished priest and indicates what he can(not) do. The verses are stated below. A brief summary of all Rashis is compactly indicated with the footnotes; the contrastive or parallel words and phrases give rise to the emphasis in the Rashi text. Further details are provided in the text.

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**Rashi:** bread of his God is an idiom. Bread can refer to any food. (The various bullets in) The verse prohibits a blemished priest from offering i) sacrifices and ii) performing blood sprinkling on the veil. Contrastively, (the subbullets in) the verse allow the blemished priest to eat from the sacrifices called *holy* or *holy of holies* [These are classifications of sacrifices; certain sacrifices like peace offerings which are partially eaten by priests and owners are considered to have *light holiness* and are called by the Bible *holy*, while other sacrifices not eaten by owners (like sin offerings) are considered to have *more stringent holiness* and are called by the Bible *holy of holies*]. Furthermore, the verse had to list *holy* in addition to *holy of holy*; that is one could not say that since *holy of holy* is permitted to be eaten, certainly *holy* is permitted to be eaten. The reason why allowance to eat from *holy of holy* sacrifices would not imply one can eat from *holy* sacrifices is because Moses (a non Priest) ate from *holy of holy* sacrifices (and this could justify a blemished priest eating from *holy of holies*, while there is no precedent for a non priest eating from *holy* sacrifices. Therefore both *holy of holies* and *holy* sacrifices had to be mentioned.

**Approach of the Rashi Newsletter:** The Rashi can be explained by the **Rabbi Ishmael Style** rule. Notice how the outer bullets form an **A-B-A** pattern

- (A) Don't come near to offer bread of his God
- (B) Don't go to the veil
- (A) Don't come near the altar

The Rabbi Ishmael Style rules is explained by me in my article "Biblical Formatting," **Jewish Bible Quarterly**, Vol 35(1),

2007. The repeated (A) phrase indicates an enclosure creating a *paragraph*. That is a modern author would indicate a paragraph by surrounding white space while the biblical Author indicates a paragraph by an **A-B-A** form. In modern typography the surrounding white space *delimits* the paragraph while in biblical typography the **A-B-A** form *delimits* the paragraph. The paragraph rules state that the paragraph development sentences (The (B) part) are seen as illustrative of the paragraph theme.

Indeed, the biblical text emphasizes *Don't offer the bread of God; don't go near the altar* By inserting a (B) clause, *don't go to the veil, the place where there are blood sprinklings (Lv16-14)*, the Bible creates a paragraph. *Don't offer bread; don't sprinkle blood; don't go to the altar* In other words, *a blemished priest should not do any sacrificial procedure.*

Now let us see what the Rashi commentators do.

### **Sifsay Chachamim, Gur Aryeh and Mizrahi Rashi**

**commentators:** Interestingly Rashi does not explain why the biblical text has to prohibit both coming to the altar and coming to the veil. The Rashi commentators therefore use another approach and cite the Talmud Bavli.

- First, the Rashi commentators clarify that *going to the veil* is a reference to the blood sprinkling procedure which is done on the veil (**Lv17-14**). Next, the Talmud points out
- If the Bible only mentioned the prohibition of coming to the altar to offer the *bread of God*, I would say that going to the veil which involves sprinkling blood and has nothing to do with *bread of God*, is not prohibited.
- If the Bible only mentioned *sprinkling of blood*, I might argue

that the sprinkling of blood is prohibited because it is in the inner Temple near the holy of holies; however offering on the copper altar which is in the Temple court would not be prohibited.

Notice the difference between the Rashi commentators and the Rashi Newsletter

- The Rashi commentators are using the Formatting-Bullet rule. There are two prohibitions *coming near to the veil* and *coming near to the altar*. The Rashi commentators explain the uniqueness of each one.
- The Rashi Newsletter uses the Rabbi Ishmael Style rules. The Rashi Newsletter emphasizes the repeating prohibition of coming near the altar. By inserting a middle phrase prohibiting coming to the veil, we infer that *all* sacrificial procedures, *offering* and *sprinkling* are prohibited. No other commentator seems to mention this.

But is this approach of the Rashi newsletter, Rashi's real reason, or is it a hypothesis?

Come and examine:

- Rashi did *not* cite the full explanation from the Sifray (though he does refer to it). Contrastively,
- Rashi cited the full explanation of the two bullets *holy* and *holy of holies*.

I would argue that Rashi cited the full explanation of the two bullets *holy* and *holy of holies* because he believed it. Contrastively, Rashi did not cite in full the explanation of the two bullets *veil*, *altar* because he did not believe it. The reason

he did not believe it is because there is a repetition of *don't go to the altar* which is not discussed. I would therefore argue that Rashi possibly held that the **Rabbi Ishmael style** rules are operative here: By using the **A-B-A** sequence of *altar-veil-altar* the Bible intended to include all activities whether they involve *bread of God* or whether they involve *sprinkling of blood*.

I think this is a reasonable interpretation of the Rashi who did not always explain his reason. The blatant citation of the Sifrey one Rashi earlier and not here suggests that Rashi did agree with the first citation but did not agree with the 2nd citation.

## 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

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**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

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**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)

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**IV-PARALLELISM:** (Ex20-04) Dont **POSSESS** the gods of others Dont **MAKE** idols RASHI: So both **POSSESSion** & **MAKING** of idols are prohibited

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**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.

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**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

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**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 don't 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

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**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

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**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.

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**X: SYMBOLISM: EXAMPLE:** (Use of puns) 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