

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on Lech LeChaH
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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.

YEAR 2015-2016: *This year I am reviewing comments from the book Yosef Hallel, by Rabbi Brachfeld. This book studies original Rashi manuscripts: i) The first (printed) version (of Rashi), ii) Elkavetz, iii) Rome, iv) Zamorah, v) Soncino, vi) some handwritten manuscripts. (One can and should google these to find out about them; some of these are online (with others)). My goal this year is to show that the methods approach of the Rashi Newsletter, what is Rashi's method?, can yield the same insights as the textual approach. We believe this important since a doctrinal position of the Torah is that it should be accessible to everyone (Deut. 30:11-14). Manuscript analysis is only available to scholars while the Rashi methods used the Rashi Newsletter are accessible to everyone. I would say more but throughout the year each issue will elaborate on this point.*

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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Grammar-Daily Rashi Wed Oct 21, 2015 Gn12-08b

Biblical Texts:

Gn12-08b *Abraham left the mountain, eastward of Bethel, and pitched her tent there*

Rashi NewsLetter Comments: The application of the Rashi Grammar rule is obvious

- Abraham is male
- But the text refers to her tent

Hence the Rashi comment: *Abraham pitched his wife's tent (her tent) first, then his.*

This Rashi comment follows immediately from the text. But Rashi *supplements* the Rashi comment by explaining *why* he pitched his wife's tent first. Two manuscripts give two different versions of Rashi's explanation.

Rome and Elkavitz manuscript: *He pitched his wife's tent first for reasons of modesty (That his wife should not have to stand outside while other tents were being pitched)*

Handwritten manuscripts: *He pitched his wife's tent first because according to the Talmud a person must honor his wife more than he honors his own person.*

Thus we see two possible legitimate reasons reflected in two different strands of manuscripts.

Contradiction-Daily Rashi Thur-Fri Oct 24-25, 2015
Gn15-19a, Dt02-05b

Biblical texts:

Gn15-19a [Background: God promised Abraham in the Covenant of Cuts to deliver to him 10 nations; 7 nations were the nations that the Jews conquered upon leaving from Egypt; but what about the other three] *Canaanite,.... Keni, Knizi and Kadmoni.*

Dt02-05b [Background: In their 40 year journey the Jews were near Seir, the land of Esau] *God tells Moses: Tell the nation, you are passing by Seir....do not antagonize them since I have given Seir to the Esau [and will not give you of their land]*

Current Rashi Manuscript: The three other nations mentioned, Keni, Knizi, Kadmoni, that is, Edom (Seir), Moab, Amon, in the future they (the three lands) will be given back to the Jews as it says (**Isa. 11:14**) *Edom and Moab are their (Jews) plunder and Amon will be in their servitude.*

Contribution of Rashi Newsletter: Rashi of course uses the **Contradiction** method.

- **Gn15-19** says that 10 lands will be given to the Jews
- But many verses e.g. **Ex13-05** only mention 7 lands given to the Jews

The **contradiction** is resolved through **Dt02-05** and **Is11-14** which show that 3 lands were given to Esau and Lot.

Apparently then, in the future (**Is11-14**) the Jews will get them back. In other words, the contradiction is resolved since

- *Now* 7 lands were given to the Jews

- *In the future* 3 more lands (10 in total) will be given to them.

Critique of Yosef Halel: Rashi identifies Keni, Knizi, Kadmoni as *referring* or *identical* with Edom, Moab and Amon. But Edom, Moab and Amon were not yet even born. So this equality is not warranted. Yosef Halel resolves this problem by citing more precise texts.

First printed Rashi manuscript: The text promises the Jews 10 nations but only 7 were given. And the other three nations, the Keni, Knizi, Kadmoni, were taken by Edom, Moab and Amon. These three lands will be given back to the Jews in the future.

Yosef Halel points out that the underlined words were taken are omitted in our current Rashi manuscript and hence the confusion. Similarly with the **Dt05-02** verse

First printed Rashi manuscript: I have given

- To Abraham, 10 nations
- 7 of them to the Jews
- 3 of them, Keni, Knizi, Kadmoni: 2 [were given] to Lot and 1 to Esauv.

Yosef Halel: So the phrases *were taken* and *were given* were omitted from the Rashi manuscripts giving the impression that Keni, Knizi and Kadmoni *are the same and identical* with Edom Moab and Amon; the other manuscripts clarify something we know from the verses (**Dt05-02** and **Is11-14**): Edom Moab and Amon are not identical with Keni Knizi and Kadmoni but rather

were the owners of these lands.

Comment: Notice the interplay between the Rashi Newsletter and the manuscripts. The Rashi Newsletter only gives the method, **Contradiction**, motivating the Rashi derivation. The manuscripts however concretize the details in a more meaningful manner by precisely describing the historical events. Nevertheless, a careful reading of the verses shows the explicit statement (Dt02-05) *For a permanent occupation to Esau, I have given Seir*. So the words omitted in our manuscript have given, were taken are in fact scriptural.

Grammar-Daily Rashi Saturday Oct 25, 2015 Gn06-23a

Biblical Text: *God destroyed [Vayimach] all living things on the ground*

Comment: This Rashi was given last week. We have an addendum below. This addendum is useful in showing how manuscripts should be used. So if some laypeople reading this Newsletter think manuscript reading is esoteric this will clarify the rules.

Current Rashi Manuscript: The Hebrew verb *Vayimach* is an active construction. It is not passive. [The rules are as follows]

- A verb ending in *hey* (1-2-*hey*) has future conjugations e.g. *Emcheh* (I will destroy), *Timcheh* (You will destroy), *Yimcheh* (he will destroy) or (*Evneh* (I will build), *Tivneh* (you will build), *Yivneh* (he will build) or (*Ephneh* (I will turn), *Tifneh* (you will turn), *Yifneh* (he will turn))
- When prefixed with the conversive letter vav, the future conjugation indicates the past: *Vayimcheh* (he destroyed),

VaYivneh (he built), *VaYifneh* (He turned)

- These verb forms can omit the terminal hey when the vav conversive prefixes (*Vayimach*, *Vayiven*, *Vayifen*)

So the verse is translated *God destroyed*

First Rashi Printed Manuscript: The First Rashi Printed Manuscript has all of the above but omits the underlined passage It is not passive.

Various handwritten manuscripts: They have all of the current text; they omit the underlined passage It is not passive; they add The verb is conjugated *Vayimach* not *Vayimmach*. The *Vayimmach* conjugation (with a doubled *mem*, *mem degushah*) would be more appropriate for a passive meaning (All living things *were destroyed* vs He *destroyed* all living things)

Rashi Newsletter analysis: Rashi newsletter emphasizes *method*. In this verse we use the **Grammar** method. Grammar textbooks are well known. I have added some explanatory material (on the conversive vav) above to illustrate how modern textbooks help understand the Rashi.

To illustrate the emphasis on *method*, **Yosef Halel**, brings in a footnote, that the Rashi Commentators, **Raam**, **Gur Aryeh** and **Levush** all point out that the Hebrew word *eth* after the verb *He destroyed* (*Vayimach*), this word *eth*, always points to a (in) direct object and (in)direct objects point to an active construction. Thus we have confirmation. **Yosef Halel** also cites a book **Beer Rechovoth** that mentions use of *eth* to differentiate between passive and active.

It is an interesting question what the Rashi original text is. It is even more interesting to ask why certain scribes inserted *it is not passive*. However, our point of view in the newsletter is that the focus is to understand the Biblical text. If we had to summarize the Rashi we could say

- *Vayimach* means he destroyed all living things (active tense)
- This is confirmed by the lack of double *m* (*vayimmach*)
- This is also confirmed by the use of *eth* indicating (in)direct object.
- If the biblical text had wished to say *all living things were destroyed* it would have said *vayimmach* and without the *eth*.

This is what one should take away from the Rashi. However the convergence of multiple manuscripts each one adding some nuance adds confirmation.

Addendum for this week: Yosef Halel is using the following principle

- Suppose we have two manuscripts (First Rashi manuscript and current Rashi)
- The earlier manuscript (First printed manuscript) leaves out a phrase (*it is not passive*)
- While the later manuscripts (Current manuscript) insert it.

Then it is reasonable that the first manuscript is correct while the 2nd is an insertion by a later scribe.

Response: But **Gn06-23a** in the latter part of the verse does use the passive: God *erased* [active] all living things - from man to animal.... - and they *were erased* from the land [passive].

Rashi very often when a context has two forms (such as active and passive) will indeed make a contrastive statement. For example **Dt32-14f** mentions *cream of cattle and the fat of livestock*. The Hebrew words for *fat* and *milk* - *cholorv* vs. *chalev* - are spelled the same but differ in pronunciation. Since cream is mentioned in the verse, Rashi must mention that *chalev* is fat not milk. Similarly on **Gn06-23**, Rashi distinguishes the two forms *active* and *passive*. In conclusion, I believe our current manuscript - with the phrase *active not passive* is Rashi's original version while the First Printed Manuscript which simply has *active* is the distortion by some scribe who did not see Rashi's point.

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 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)

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) 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