

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on VaYRaH
Vol 24#22 - 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.

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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Meaning-Hononyms *Daily Rashi* Jan 7th 2015, Ex06-06c

Biblical Texts: Ex06-06c

I am God; I will take you out from the ol of Egypt

Current Rashi text: *I am God; I will take you out from the burden of Egypt*

First Printed Rashi Text: *I am God; I will take you out from the enslavement of Egypt*

Contribution of Rashi NewsLetter and Yosef Halel:

Rashi, here, is using the **meaning-hononym** method. The same Hebrew word *ol* can mean

- the *feeling* of burden, bitterness
- the *act* of enslavement

Rashi informs us that although *ol* usually means burden and bitterness, in Ex06-06c, it means enslavement. In fact, Yosef Halel points out that the Aramaic translation always translates it as bitterness.

Yosef Halel brings several verses where *ol* can mean enslavement (e.g. **Isiah 9:3, 10:27**)

We see here how the alternate Rashi text explains more clearly the nuances of the verb.

Meaning-Synonyms *Daily Rashi* Friday Jan 8th 2016, Ex07-01b

Biblical Texts: Ex01-07a

[God speaking to Moses] You [Moses] will speak to Pharaoh while Aaron will be your **Navih**

Current Rashi Text: **Navih** here comes from the root **Nun-Yud-Beth** meaning a flowering of words (e.g. a translator). This is similar to the use in the following verses *flowering of lips, flower wisdom, and he ceased flowering poetry* [By Samuel]

Old Rashi Manuscript: There are two differences from the current Rashi text:

- The bracketed underlined phrase [by Samuel] is replaced with [by Saul].
- The current Rashi text uses the Hebrew word **mayhithnaboth** (with an aleph) to indicate *ceased flowering poetry* while the old Rashi manuscript uses the word **mayhithnaboth** (without an aleph)

Contribution of Rashi NewsLetter and Yosef Halel: Rashi uses the **meaning-synonym** method

- Biblical root **Nun-Yud-Beth** means *flowering of plants or words*
- Biblical root **Nun-Beth-Aleph** means *prophecy*.

Obviously these words resemble each other since prophets typically speak in poetic flowery language. If one looks at **Ex01-07a** the obvious meaning is *You [Moses] will speak to Pharaoh while Aaron will be your interpreter* [flowery words to echo Moses' statement]. Rashi therefore stated that the root is **Nun-Yud-Beth**, *flowering*. In this particular verse the word is

spelled **Nun-Beth-Yud-Aleph-Caph** suggesting that the root might be **Nun-Beth-Aleph**, prophet (Aaron would be Moses' prophet). Therefore Rashi explains that the **Aleph** in the word is non-root and the word really means *flowering of words* (Moses would speak and Aaron would be the flowerer/ translator).

Summary: From context, the verse means *you, Moses, will speak while Aaron will translate*. However because the Hebrew word for *translate* has an **aleph** in it, it appears that the verse could mean *you, Moses, will speak while Aaron will be your prophet*. Rashi therefore assures us that the root in question refers to *flowery* language such as *translation*. Yosef Harel cites an old Rashi manuscript where the supportive verse for Rashi's translation (citation from the book of Samuel about Saul) indeed have no **aleph** in them and mean flowery speech.

**Grammar Daily Rashi Saturday-Sunday Jan 9,10 2016,
Gn32-06b, Ex07-21a**

Biblical Text: Gn32-06

And I have

- ox, and
- donkey,
- *flock*
- menservant, and
- women servant;

Ex07-21a The *fish* in the Nile will die.

Rashi (Paraphrased): The word *flock* is a collective noun, that

is, a single entity that refers to a group. English examples of collective nouns are *jury, army, committee, class, grass*. In Hebrew, a word like *donkey* can have plural form (*donkeys*) or it can function as a collective noun.

Contribution of Yosef Halel: Ex07-21a on which there is no Rashi also has a collective noun, *fish*. The verse did not for example say *The fishes in the Nile will die*. Yosef Halel brings Rashis on the use of *fish* in **Jer06-06** and **Ez47-10**.

Interestingly, the rules of English grammar address the plurality of the verb associated with a collective noun. Here are some simple examples using the collective noun, *class*.

- *The class took a test* [Here *took* is singular since the class as a whole took the test]
- *The class starts their lunch when finished with their test* [Here *start* is plural since each class member started lunch at a different time]

Grammar-Connectives *Daily Rashi* Mon Jan 11, 2016, Ex07-23a

[Background:] Moses asked Pharaoh to let the Jewish people go. Pharaoh wanted signs that Moses was sent by God. The first sign was the staff that turned into a snake. Then Moses brought the 10 plagues. The first plague was turning the Nile into blood.]

Ex07-23a Pharaoh did not listen to this *also*

Current Rashi Text: *Also:* Pharaoh listened neither to

- This sign of the snake, *nor*

- This sign of the blood

The current Rashi text uses the

- feminine form of *this* in the Biblical verse, referring to the sign of the blood
- masculine form of *this* in the Rashi referring to the sign of the snake

Elkavitz Rashi Text: The Elkavitz Rashi text uses the feminine form of *this* for both

- The biblical verse referring to the sign of the blood
- The Rashi text referring to the sign of the snake

Contribution of Rashi NewsLetter: The Rashi rule is classified as **Grammar**. The subrule is the use of **connective** words such as *this, but, nevertheless, also*.

Contribution of Yosef Halel: Yosef Halel cites one midieval sefer "explaining" why Rashi switched from the feminine form of *this* to the masculilne form of *this*. Yosef Halel then cites the **Elkavitz** text showing that this "explanation" was not necessary. This is an important point since very often corrupt texts inspire explanations which are really not necessary.

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