

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in BeHaR
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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.

We devote this issue to analyzing a Rashi which partially refutes a recent book "What is Divine about Divine law" by Dr Hayes of Princeton. The analysis is interesting because I show how people familiar with Rashi and midrashim can attain a much greater insight into the Bible than secular scholarship.

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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**Database *Daily Rashi* Lv19-14b, Lv19-32b, Lv25-17a,
Lv25-36a, Lv25-43a 5/12/16**

Thursday May 26 2016

We present the only five verses with the concluding phrase

'Fear God' as a reason for doing commandments. Rashi, in all five cases, explains why it uses the argument of fear. "Because a person can say, no one sees me; I can claim I was trying to do good."

Verse with "fear God" as reason for performance	Verse Topic	Claim that no one sees me. Why prohibiting this item requires "fear as reason
Lv19-14b	No stumbling block before blind	He is blind; no one will know. I could claim was trying to mark good path
Lv19-32b	Rise before elder	I could claim I didn't see him
Lv25-17a	Don't loan on interest	I could loan to a non Jew who is loan to Jew (And pretend I didn't know)
Lv25-36a	Don't verbally abuse	I could claim, "I was trying to improve him" How can you prove otherwise
Lv25-43a	Don't overwork slaves	I could claim no one audits me who knows

Database Table of 5 verses with "Fear God" as reason for observance. In each case person could claim, 'Who sees me,' and 'I was trying to help.' So verse says 'God sees you and knows your thoughts, fear God and don't do it.

This Rashi uses the **Database method**. It looks at a collection of verses meeting some criteria and shows commonality.

Friday May 27 2016

We use this Rashi to respond to some comments of Dr Hayes in her book, *What is Divine about Divine law*.

The thesis of this 400 page book is that the Bible has three driving forces At different times different forces are dominant. The three driving forces are as follows.

- Tradition - God commands laws to preserve traditions
- Logic - God commands ethical laws that are logical and fair
- Force - God commands because He is boss and will punish those who violate

The 400 pages of the book trace the presence of these 3 driving forces of the law - *Tradition, Logic, Force* - in Greek philosophies and other near-eastern traditions. The main appeal of the book to me is the breadth of views on the basis of law in a variety of cultures. I do not believe her thesis is valid for the Torah. Let us examine further

Saturday May 28, 2016

One of my great delights is taking a 400 page book and deriving it from one little old verse. In this case the verse is **Gn10-01**

These are the generations of Noah,

- *Shem = [Name, Tradition]*
- *Cham = [Hot tempered, so he can only be controlled by threats of force]*
- *Yefeth = [Beauty, father of Greece, the logic tradition] they had children after the flood.*

As shown above, - *Shem/Tradition, Beauty/Greece/Logic, and Hot tempered/controllable by threats* - correspond to the three driving forces of law identified by Dr. Hayes.

It follows that Dr. Hayes has described the Noachide world, the world that Noah built. Noah perceived the world as based on

three driving forces, tradition, logic, and force. These forces did not work in harmony but fought for control and dominance. At various times some were superior. It is therefore no surprise that Dr. Hayes find Noachidism in a great variety of cultures.

Sunday May 29, 2016

But the Torah was written by Noah not Moses. It is therefore wrong to see the Torah as Noachidic. Let us examine one example that Hayes uses to prove here thesis that the Torah was Noachidic.

Commenting on the phrase *fear God*, Dr. Hayes (paraphrased) notes "This phrase asks for observance of the law based on God's superior force; it is not an appeal to logic or tradition. Thus this phrase occurs in those parts of the Torah reflecting the *force* approach to law."

Monday May 30, 2016

This argument of Dr. Hayes can be easily refuted. We make several points

- First, this phrase as a reason for commandment observance only occurs 5 times. It is not a dominant Torah theme; it is a side-issue.
- 2nd, as Rashi points out, this approach, *fear God*, only occurs in commandments where human intervention is not possible, not possible because no one knows, commandments such as abusing the blind, slaves, and the elderly. So on these rare occasions, God had to remind people to fear Him as a reason
- 3rd, it clearly is logical to respect the elderly who have more

experience than us; it is also logical to have pity on the helpless such as the blind and slaves. It is even consistent with Jewish *tradition* to be nice to slaves since as the bible reminds us in several places, we were slaves in Egypt. Thus if anything, we see a multiplicity of approaches - Tradition, logic and fear - in these commandments.

I close by pointing out what Dr Hayes has done. She has performed the classical fallacy of many biblical scholars, *exaggeration*. She takes a theme in five verses, *fear God*, and acts like it is a dominant driving force in observance of law.

Contrastively, Rashi gives a very focused and detailed explanation of these laws. One who learns Rashi need only read one verse, one Rashi and immediately knows more than 400 encyclopedic difficult-reading pages.

Praise be Him who chose them and their learning!

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) *Don't 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