

**The 10 RashiYomi Rules**  
*Their presence in Rashis in NaSoH*  
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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.*

*Hi*

*Today we go over rarely used rules which make Rashi very plausible. Even experienced Rashi-ists may sometimes overlook these rules.*

*Hope you enjoy*

*Russell Jay Hendel, President, Rashiyomi*

*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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## **Grammar-Denominatives *Daily Rashi* Thursday 6/16/16Nu06-25b**

**Biblical Text:** *May God shine upon you and grace you*

**Rashi:** *To grace you* means to give you grace.

**Contribution of Rashi Newsletter:** Naively we might expect that this is the **meaning** rule. However, it really is the **grammar** rule. Meaning has many flavors. Sometimes you do have to look up something in the dictionary. But sometimes you derive a meaning using grammatical rules.

All nouns can be transformed into verbs. The name for a verb coming from a noun is *denominative*. Some examples are *to flower, to dust, to hammer*, or in this Rashi, *to grace*.

To really appreciate the Rashi - whether you are homeschooling or simply learning the Rashi as an adult - is to try and recite as many denominatives (in English) as you can.

## **Grammar-Adjectives *Daily Rashi* Friday Jun 17, 2016 Nu07-15a**

**Biblical Text:** *One young bull, one ram, one young lamb, for an up offering.*

**Rashi:** The text does not say *one young bull* but rather *young one bull!* It should therefore be translated as *young distinguished bull*.

What a strange Rashi. What could its rationale be. Let us look at some attempts.

**Contribution of Mizrachi Rashi Commentator:** Mizrachi uses what we call **parallelism**. He compares the bull mentioned here to other places in the Bible where bull is mentioned

- *one bull*
- *bull*

Mizrachi see the word *one* as superfluous and therefore reinterprets it as meaning distinguished.

**Contribution of Gur Aryeh, Rashi commentator:** Gur Aryeh appears to use parallelism but actually uses grammar. He compares the *word sequences* here and elsewhere

- **Nu07-15** *young one bull*
- **Nu29-22** *one young bull*

He doesn't further elaborate. Perhaps, it appears, he is using parallelism like the Mizrachi.

**Contribution of Rashi Newsletter:** Every language has rules for *sequencing* adjectives. For example

- 1) *red young bull*
- 2) *young red bull*
- 3) *two red young bulls*
- 4) *red young two bulls*

Notice how we all fell uncomfortable about #4. Contrastively, #1,#2,#3 sound OK. This corresponds to the English rule that the *sequence* order

for a numerical adjective is first in English (*2 red bulls* but not *red 2 bulls*). There are similar rules in Hebrew (I have translated the Hebrew into English to reflect the feeling of the translation.)

Rashi's point is simply that the Hebrew text, *young one bull* does not sound right. Hence Rashi interprets *one* as meaning distinguished (*one of a kind*). The text then reads *young distinguished bull*.

Thus the Rashi is rooted in the rule of grammar, *adjective sequence order*.

A useful exercise is to Google "adjective sequence order". You can then find many charts on proper sequencing.

## **Parallelism-Grammar-Repetition *Daily Rashi Sat*** **6/18/16, Nu07-12b**

**Biblical Text:** cf. The following

- **Nu07-12:13** *The offerer of his offering on day 1 was Nachshon, His offering was..*
- **Nu07-25** *On the 3rd day, the prince of... so and so His offering was*
- **Nu07-31** *On the 4th day, the prince of.. so and so His offering was*
- **Nu07-37** *On the 5th day, the prince of...so and so His offering was*
- **Nu07-42** *On the 6th day, the prince of ... so and so His offering was*

**Rashi (literal):** On day 1, was the offering brought by the prince *on behalf of his tribe and from his tribe* or was the offering *from the prince (paid for by the prince) on behalf of his tribe*? Since it concludes *this is the offering of so and so* I conclude that the offering was *from* the prince

on behalf of his tribe.

**Contribution of the Rashi newsletter:** But by each prince it says at the end of the paragraph, *this is the offering of so and so*. So why does Rashi only single out the first day?

The Rashi Newsletter suggests that Rashi is really deriving his derivation from the double repetition of *his offering* in **Nu07-12:13**. Repetition always indicates emphasis. Here the emphasis was that it was really *his* offering brought on behalf of the tribe, not the tribes offering brought by the tribes funds.

**Contribution of Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh, and Raam Rashi commentators:** The Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh and Raam, all explain the Rashi along the lines we mentioned above. The contribution of the Rashi Newsletter is to explicitly identify the rule as a rule of repetition. All commentators point out the parallelism. All the commentators remark that Rashi's explanation does not make sense (since every day ends with the phrase *this is the offering of so and so*). No one explains why Rashi phrased his explanation the way he does.

## **Parallelism-Grammar-Puns *Daily Rashi* Sunday 6/19/16 Nu07-18a**

**Biblical Text:** cf. the following verses

- *On day 2, so and so offered, the prince of so and so, He offer his offering*
- *On day 3, so and so offered, the prince of so and so. ----- his offering was...*
- *On day 4, so and so offered, the prince of so and so ----- his*

*offering was ...*

- *On day 5, so and so offered, the prince of so and so ----- his offering was ...*

**Rashi:** Why does it say on day 2, *offered*, twice. If you observe the biblical text the word *offered* (*offered his offering*) is misspelled. It reads *He offer his offering* a verb, *offer*. This is a pun.

One way to understand this is to realize that the princes did not offer in order of birthright but rather in order of how they camped. Undoubtedly the "elder" princes came and complained (that they should go first). Moses responded with the biblical word *offer* - *This is what God told me - who is to offer first. It was a command of God.* In other words, God said *offer*, a command.

**Contribution of Rashi Newsletter:** Most people think the above Rashi silly. After all, Rashi looks at a misspelling and creates a pun making it sound like a command. To defend this, Rashi conjurs a political bickering on order. It sounds nice, but it certainly is not the simple meaning of the text.

Not so! It is the simple meaning of the text. Many Rashi-ists and scholars are surprised that even secular scholars regard puns as a legitimate way for authors to communicate. Please see my paper, *Biblical Puns*, Jewish Bible Quarterly, 34(3), 2006 accessible at [www.Rashiyomi.com/puns.pdf](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/puns.pdf)

Of course you can't make puns whenever you want to. But if a text goes out of its way to repeat something with a distorted spelling, it is legitimate to say that the Author intended it.

We hope you enjoyed this issue of Rashiyomi. We covered some rare rules which however are logically founded. They are

- Denominatives
- Adjective sequencing
- Repeated nouns
- Puns

Many people are not aware of these rules and think Rashi cannot be made logical. But as we see here, it can be done.

Praise, be Him who chose them and their learning.

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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 (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

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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