

The 10 RashiYomi Rules

Their presence in Rashis in BeHa'aloTheChaH

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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 I reveal some source secrets. How I arrive at punchy Rashi explanations.

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.

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Synonyms *Daily Rashi* Thursday, Friday 6/23-24/16 Nu09-03a,b

Biblical Text: *The Jews performed the Passover-offering commandment on the 14th of the month of Nissan,...each did it according to its characteristics and obligations.*

Rashi: *The [two synonyms, characteristics and obligations] mean as follows*

- *Characteristics*, refers to intrinsic properties of the Pascal lamb [i.e. characteristics in the body of the lamb itself], such as unblemishedness, it being a lamb, it being male, and young (less than 1 year)
- *Obligations* refers to external properties of the pascal lamb [that is properties not of the lamb proper but rather of the Pascal lamb procedure] such as the requirements to eat it with Matzoh and bitter herbs.

Contribution of Rashi Newsletter: First, the Rashi newsletter contributes the classificataion that this is the **Synonym** rule. We have translated the Hebrew terms as *characteristics and obligations*. This already hints at what Rashi says since *characteristics* are something intrinsic to an object while obligations are something external to it.

How did I know to translate this way. I used the Thesaurus. I routinely recommend that teachers and students use the English Thesaurus when dealing with Rashi meaning since it often allows capturing the nuances of Rashi.

Meaning - Figures of Speech ::: Grammar-Paragraph-

Development-Climax *Daily Rashi* Saturday-Sunday Jun 25-26, 2016 Nu09-20b,22a

Background: The Bible speaks about when the Jews camped and when they journeyed. They camped as long as the God's cloud resided on the Temple; when the cloud ascended they journeyed. The Biblical text gives examples of how long the cloud could stay]

Biblical Text:

- *Sometimes The cloud stays a countable number of days* [Rashi: a few days]
- *Sometimes*
- *the cloud stays from evening to morning*
- *evening and morning*
- *a double day*
- *a month*
- *days* [Rashi: A year]

Rashi: The Rashi comments are inserted parenthetically in the brackets as shown.

Contribution of Rashi NewsLetter: Why did Rashi interpret *days* as meaning a year? Naively, some people may approach this using the **Meaning** rule: *days* can mean *year*. But that doesn't explain why it *must* mean year here.

The Rashi Newsletter contributes the idea of Paragraph Development by climax. The Bible presents a bulleted list of five items shown above.

Intrinsic to the idea of paragraph development is that the terms are increasing (principle of **climax**). This awareness of increasingness is not a property of meaning but a property of the climax itself. *Days* could very well mean days; but when it comes at the end of a sequence of *12-hour, 24-hour, 2 day, month, days*, then *days must* mean a year. The climax creates the meaning not vice versa!

What about Rashi's interpretation of *countable days* as *a few days*? Here we use the universal literary principle of synecdoche which states that words can mean what they are good examples of. Hence *honey* can refer to anything sweet; the 12-hour lit part of the day can refer to the entire 24 hour cycle; Why? Because honey is a good example of sweetness and the 12 hour lit part of the day is a good example of day. So too countability is a good example of a small number.!

In developing this explanation of the Rashi comment I was greatly aided by Authur Quinn's, "Figures of Speech: 60 Ways to Turn a phrase." A fundamental part of the **meaning rule** is the use of figures of speech common to all languages.

Spreadsheets *Daily Rashi* Monday 6/27/2016, Nu09-02a

Biblical Text: God spoke to Moses on the first month of the 2nd year of the Exodus. The Jews should do the Passover *in its time*.

Rashi: *In its time* means that Passover always happens on the 14th even if it is Sabbath and even if they community is ritually impure.

Contribution of Mechiltah, Sifrah and several Rashi commentators:
The most ingenious intellectual acrobatics are used to justify this Rashi. For example *in its time* occurs in **Nu25** by the daily offering. We know the daily offering is brought even on Sabbath because it explicitly says

so. In other words *in its time* in **Nu25** means that it overrides the Sabbath. The implication is that *in its time* here also refers to overriding the Sabbath.

To justify this all types of exotic principles must be made: i) the concept of a leftover word, *in its time*, in Nu25, ii) the concept of a parallelism of similar words in two chapters (*in its time* in Nu25 and Nu09).

Other commentators bring in the fact that *in its time* is stated in twice once in verse 2 and verse 3.

The list goes on.

Contribution of Malbim: The Malbim brilliantly points out that Passover of the 2nd year after the Jews left Egypt fell out on Sabbath (The day before the Passover when the lamb must be slaughtered fell out on Sabbath). So if Passover fell out on Sabbath and the verse says that the Jews observed the Sabbath in its time on the 14th, it must mean that the Passover overrides the Sabbath. This derivation of overriding happens not because of the word *in its time* but rather because of the historical fact that the 2nd year passover happened on Sabbath.

Contribution of Rashi Newsletter: Accordingly the Rashi Newsletter classifies this as a **Spreadsheet** rule. Malbim offers the following explanation: We know that the Temple was erected on One Nissan. The erection and consecration of the Temple is mentioned in Lv09. We know the Temple was consecrated on the Sabbath. (These historical facts are derived from the *Seder Olam*, History of the World, an ancient text which provides dates and other trivia for important Jewish occasions).

But then the 14th of Nissan happened 2 weeks later, also on a Sabbath.

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