

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in DeVaRiM
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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

This issue highlights the non-verse rule.

*To often we think Rashi is *deriving* a comment *from* the verse. Rashi might in fact already know the comment from the outside world and *reading it* into the verse.*

This is an important point. It can save one the embarrassment of making up Rashi rules that are not there.

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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Partial table of Rashis discussed in this digest.

Verse	Verse Text	Rashi Rule	Rashi subrule	Rashi rule code	Brief derivation of Rashi comment
Dt13-05c	See Dt13-05e				
Dt13--05d	See Dt13-05e				
Dt13-5e	For judges pick knowledgeable, insightful, and well known people	Non Verse	Degrees	9c	Rashi reads into the text the requirements for any degee, academic, rabbinic, political. There are 3 requirements: a) core knowledge, b) insightful (able to derive new principles from old) and c) networked and respected. [Rashi was *assisted* by synonym rule but main rule was non-verve]

Dt13-07 e	Go up and possess the land...the mountains	Non Verse	Good parts of a land	9c	Rashi interprets all items mentioned in the verse as indicating the good parts of Israel. So mountains would be the State (or Royal) mountains. The State mountain would have national highways which were paved and protected.
Dt01-01 g	These are the words that Moses spoke to Israel during [their stay] in ...Hazeroth	Reference		1b	Nu11-35 says Jews were in Hazeroth Nu12-01 relates slander of Miryam and She got Leprosy So Dt01-01 refers back to lesson of Hazeroth Lesson is not to slander even for good cause
Dt02-08 a	We went northward	Non Verse	Geography	9b	Dt02 says Jews were in Seir Then they turned towards Moab wilderness Rashi explains that Moab was north of Seir Rashi also explains that east side of seir Looked like an inverted v: > So to go northward one went eastward Along top line of V

NonVerse-Degrees *Daily Rashi* Thur-Sat 8/11-13/2016 Dt13-05c,d,e

Background: [Moses is describing the process of selecting tribal judges]

Biblical Text: *Bring for yourself people who are*

- *wise*
- *insightful*
- *well known*

Rashi: *The three traits needed for a judge are*

- *Wise - that is versed in sources, knowledgeable*
- *Insightful - capable of original research, coming up with new laws*
- *well-known - Respected among your community.*

Rashi adds further comments on why a judge must be *well-known*: *If*

someone came to court before me, I have no way of knowing who he is. All I have is the case set before me. But if the judge mingles with people he will know the person's characteristics; that can be a contributory factor towards believability of offenses and defenses.

Contribution of Sifray, Rashi commentator: The Sifray is a legal exegetical commentary on the Bible. Rashi frequently derives his comments from here. The Sifray uses what the **Rashi Newsletter** calls the **Synonym** approach. It distinguishes between the synonyms *knowledgeable, insightful, and well known*. There are even etymologies; the use of etymologies illustrates the **Grammar-Meaning** rule. Thus, the word for *insightful, navon*, comes from the root, *bayn*, meaning *inbetween* signifying an analytic approach that can distinguish *between* concepts.

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: The Rashi Newsletter acknowledges the need to use the **synonym** and **grammar-meaning** rule. But these are not the primary driving forces of Rashi.

The primary driving force of Rashi is the real world requirements for degrees in academia, the Rabbinate or the courts. All degrees must reflect

- Core knowledge
- Analytic ability; the ability to derive
- Networking within the community.

If you think about it, this is true for Ph.Ds, judgeship and Rabbinical titles. When Rashi derives a comment from knowledge of the real world and not directly from the text of the Bible, we call the rule **non-verse**. Although the **synonym** and possibly the **grammar-meaning** rule are needed to *supplement* the non-verse rule, the basic driving force of the

Rashi comment, the reason Rashi would seek to look elsewhere is *because* of the **non-verse** rule.

NonVerse-Degrees *Daily Rashi* Sun 8/14/2016

Dt13-07e

Background: [Moses is describing the possession of Israel]

Biblical Text: *Turn, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and to all the places near there,*

- *to the Arabah,*
- *to the mountains*
- *to the lowlands, and*
- *to the Negev, and*
- *by the sea side,*
- *to the land of the Canaanites, and*
- *to Lebanon,*
- *to the great river, the river Euphrates.*

Rashi: *The mountains refer to the State mountains, [with paved national highways.]*

Contribution of Sifray, Rashi commentator: None of the Rashi commentators explain how Rashi derived this.

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: Rashi is clearly not using the meaning method. After all *mountain* does not mean the *State mountain*.

You could argue that Rashi is using the **Grammar** method: the verse does not say *in the mountains*, but rather *in the mountain*. The word *the* connotes specificity. And indeed the Grammar method is part of the whole answer.

But the essence of Rashi's comment is simply knowledge of the real world; it is a **non-verse** derivation. God is promising Israel to the Jews. Context would require that He enumerate the *good* parts of Israel. It doesn't make sense to promise someone a rocky mountain. However, among mountains there are always State mountains, the ones with national paved highways and protective patrols.

Rashi is not re-interpreting the word mountain. He is rather emphasizing a possible good in mountains. One should not look at Rashi as primarily **meaning** or **grammar**. Rather, one should look at Rashi as illustrating the possible good that will come: If it is a mountain then it must be a state mountain with paved highways.

This is a typical application of the **non-verse** rule.

Reference *Daily Rashi* Mon 8/15/2016 Dt01-01g

Background: [Dt01-01 is outlining Moses farewell speech in which he reviews the history of rebellions of the Jewish people]

Biblical Text: *These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel*

- *on this side of the Jordan in the wilderness,*
- *in the Arabah opposite the Red Sea,*
- *between Paran, and Tophel, and*
- *Laban, and*

- Hazeroth, and
- *Enough-Gold*

Rashi: Hazeroth refers to the Korax rebellion. Another interpretation is that Hazeroth refers to the punishment of Miryam with Leprosy for slandering her brother, Moses. [For indeed, **Nu11-35** explains that the people journeyed to Hazeroth and then **Nu12-01** speaks about Miryam's slander and her punishment]

Contribution of Sifray, Rashi commentator: The Sifray interprets Hazeroth as referring to Miryam. The Sifray elaborates in two ways

- Miryam had good intentions. Moses was her kid brother. She was simply trying to reunite her kid brother with his wife. Nevertheless, she was stricken with leprosy. How much more so should a person who has no good intention beware of improper speech. The spies slandered Israel and God. "God can't give us Israel" and "Israel eats its inhabitants." They should have learned from Miryam
- Miryam was careful to speak discretely. She spoke only to Aaron and then only to get Aaron to help. So Aaron would work on Moses and Miryam on Tziporah and they would get them back together. Nevertheless she had leprosy. How much more so the spies who publicly slandered God and Israel before the entire congregation.

It is paradoxical that the spies happened after Miryam. Didn't they see what happened?

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: Already Rashi (not his commentators) refers to the **Reference** rule when he explains that Hazeroth refers to the place where Miryam slandered Moses. This is one of those beautiful Rashis where there is no guesswork; Rashi explicitly

explains his derivation.

What about Rashi's first explanation? Korax? Fortunately, a strong principle of the **Rashi Newsletter** is that Rashi's second explanation is the preferred one and his first explanation should be rejected.

But in this case, I have no idea what prompted Rashi to mention Korax. The commentators also cannot explain it and point out that it would contradict the sequence of stories told in Numbers (not a serious problem). In any event, Rashi's 2nd explanation, makes sense, is based on a sound rule and is consistent with the Sifray.

Non-Verse Geography *Daily Rashi* Mon 8/15/2016 Dt02-08a

Background: [Dt02 is describing the Jewish journey from Seir through Moab]

Biblical Text: *And we turned and passed (from Seir) the road of the Moabite Dessert*

Rashi: *We turned northward and eastward*

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: This is clearly a **non-verse** rule. Rashi seeks to explain the geographic picture giving background to the verse. This requires not just a knowledge of geography but a knowledge of ancient geography. Certain nations changed boundaries and borders frequently. Here is a very rough map.

Mediterranean Sea			
	Israel	Dead sea	Moab (B)
		Edom	Edom or Seir - (A)

The Jews were at point (A) on the map, in Seir, possessed by Esau. They went northward towards point (B), Moab. We have modeled the

geography with a rectangle. However Seir has a right (east) side that looks like a rotated **V**: ➤ In going north, the Jews would have to go eastward along the top diagonal of the rotated **V**.

In using the above explanation we have simplified the geography. As already mentioned, the Edomites (also connected with Esau) changed boundaries and borders frequently. Another point of confusion is the exact whereabouts of Kadesh or Kadesh Barnayah in biblical times. This is hard to ascertain.

However at the simplest level, a reading of **Dt02** shows that a) The Jews were passing by Seir, b) Then went towards Moab. Since Rashi explains that Moab is north of Seir, the above map would be a very simple and accurate presentation.

Biblical maps frequently show Aram north (above) of Moab and Assyria north of Aram. But this does not concern us here. The fundamental concern is that Rashi was using knowledge of geography to paint the Rashi comments.

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: Hitpaal 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