

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in BreiShiTh
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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 year I am focusing on parallelism, that is, those Rashis that can be derived from tabular representations of verses.

I will attempt to send out the Parshah over a week in advance. So this digest dealing with Breishith, Genesis, is being sent out the week before (So you can read it during the week).

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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Verse Code	Verse text	Rashi Rule	Rashi Subrule	Rashi Rule code	Derivation of Rashi Comment From Biblical Text Using the Rashi Rule and Subrule
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Parallelism Structure *Daily Rashi* Sun-Fri 10/23 -10/28 Gn01-05a,07b,21a,31a

The following table contains *comparisons* of verses within Genesis 1. For example, the Bible in narrating the creation story explicitly identifies each day in the following verses of Genesis 1: v5,8,13,19,23,31. So for example **Gn01-05** states "*There was evening there was morning, Day (#) One.*" Similarly for the other table entries. The reader is encouraged to always check table entries by reading the verses and seeing the contrasts. the table may look a bit compact and terse but it represents phrases recurring on each day, their similarities and differences.

Issue/Day	1-Sunday	2-Monday	3-Tuesday	4-Wednesday	5-Thursday	6-Friday
Day count	<u>Day one</u> ^{Gn01-05a}	2 nd day	3 rd day	4 th day	5 th day	<u>The 6th day</u> ^{Gn01-31a}
Item created	Light/dark	<u>Water</u> ^{Gn01-07b} /heaven:earth	<u>Water</u> ^{Gn01-07b} : Seas/Land Vegetation	Heavenly bodies (stars, moon sun)	Fish, birds, Sea <u>monsters</u>	<u>Animals</u> , Human(s)
Mention of "it is good" in chapter	It is good	<u>Absent</u> ^{Gn01-07b}	It is good(sea/land) It is good (Vegetation)	It is good	It is good	It is good(animals) It is <u>very</u> ^{Gn01-31a} good (humans)

Words describing creation	Let there be, and there was	Let there be, God made	Gather, sprout, come out	Let there be, God made	Swarm, God <u>created</u> ^{Gn01-21a}	Let come out; Let us make, God <u>created</u> ^{Gn01-21a}
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Background: The above table compares the language in Gen Chapter 1 describing the creation. One can see the differences. Each difference generates a Rashi comment.

Gn01-05a, Gn01-31a

Every day of creation gives the count of the days. As can be seen from the 2nd row of the above table there are some deviations in style

- Days 2,3,4,5 are called *2nd day, 3rd day, 4th day, 5th day*
- Day 1 is not called *first day* but *day one*
- Day 6 is not called *sixth day* but *the 6th day*

It is important when reading Rashis on differences like this to emphasize the *simplest meaning*. Very often in addition to that simplest meaning Rashi will present *good examples*. Rashi is not trying to *identify* the verse meaning with these examples; rather Rashi is trying to *illustrate* the verse meanings with these examples. This approach to Rashi - *simplest meaning + illustrations* - will give the Rashis a deep atmosphere and appearance.

We now explain the two anomalies in the 2nd row of the table: *the 6th day*, and *day one*.

Gn01-31a. (Sunday Daily Rashi)

- The simplest meaning: *The 6th day*, the day God created humans, is

the day. The purpose of creation is the creation of humans.

- Illustrative examples: Rashi mentions a good example of humanness; The acceptance of the Torah, a reaching of moral heights, man divesting himself from his animal self. This acceptance of the Torah happened on Shavuoth which is the 6th Sivan (6th Sivan as in 6th day, a witty and charming pun, but the main emphasis is that *the* 6th day refers to the day of humanness one good illustration of which is the acceptance of a moral law over the jungle law in which other civilizations were living.

Gn01-05a (Monday Daily Rashi)

- The simplest meaning and illustrative example: The first day when God created light, which according to Rashi is prophetic light, the light of prophecy by which people can *see* beyond space and time (Rashi's language is *from one end of the world to the other*) is a *pun*: The *one day*, is the day of the *One*.
- Some people will ask if we can regard a pun as *the simple meaning of the text*. Actually, even in secular literature there are two schools: Those who think puns only exist in the eyes of the reader while others believe puns are intended by the author. In fact, some puns follow rules not unlike the rules of grammar. In my article on puns I suggest that statistical deviance is one method for an Author to indicate *intent* to pun. The difference between *apple* and *apples* (singular: plural) is not something fanciful. The extra *s* does indicate extra apples precisely because the extra *s* indicates the grammatical plural. In the text before us, the fact that every day uses an ordinal number - 2nd, 3rd, 4th - and only on the 1st day do we have a cardinal number - day *one* - shows that this pun, although it is a pun, is intended. For more information see my article on puns accessible at

<http://www.Rashiyomi.com/puns.pdf>

- Note that I connect the *the* of *the 6th day* with the statement of *very good* on the 6th day (4th row of table). Although Rashi does not explicitly mention this, it does support the claim that the creation of humans was not just something good, but something very good.

Gn01-07b (Tuesday Daily Rashi)

If you look at the 4th row of the table you will see several strange things

- *God saw it is good* is mentioned twice on Tuesday (Day 3) and Friday (Day 6) (Because two things were created on it)
- *God saw it is very good* is mentioned on Friday (because humans, the pinnacle of creation, were created)
- *God saw it is good*, is not mentioned on Monday because the creation of water-heaven-sea-land was not completed on Monday but on Tuesday.

By looking at the rows of the table we see both

- What Rashi explicitly mentions (the absence of *it is good*) on Monday; the presence of two *it is goods* on Tuesday
- What Rashi does not mention (the presence of two *it is goods* on Friday)

The discovery of additional items not mentioned by Rashi is typical of **parallelism** analysis using tables. To fully appreciate Rashi we must examine his methodology and extend his examples.

Just to be clear: Rashi notes the absence of *it is good* on Monday and the presence of *it is good*, twice, on Tuesday and then explains them simply

without reference to midrashic themes: *It is good* is mentioned twice because two things were created. *It is good* is absent on Monday because the item created was not completed till the next day.

Notice how Rashi is very simple in his explanations. Rashi avoids Midrash unless it is necessary to understand the text. Here, it is sufficient to note that *it is good* is mentioned twice if two things are created. I applied this Rashi principle to Friday where *it is good* is mentioned twice and two things - animals and humans - are created. Even though Rashi did not say this, I feel confident in explaining this anomaly *the same way Rashi explained the two "it is good" on Tuesday*.

Gn01-21a (Wednesday Daily Rashi)

Read carefully the 5th row of the above table. It describes the language by which God created various things. E.g. *Let there be lights, God made the lights, Let waters swarm with swarming (fish), let the earth bring forth animals; the earth brought forth animals*

The verb *create* is only used with two items

- Humans (v27)
- The great sea monsters (v21)

This is peculiar. Examining the 5th row of the table brings this out. Again, the proper way to approach Rashi is to explore the *simple meaning* and the *illustrative meanings*.

- The Simple meaning: Something is special about humans. Similarly something is special about the sea monsters. We however are not told what is special. This observation - specialness - is the basis for the Rashi.

- The Illustrative meaning: The sea monsters refers to the *leviathan*. God created a male and female leviathan. God killed the female and salted it for the Messianic era so that the righteous should feast from it. For if God did not kill the female the sea monsters would multiply and fill the world.

Now that is certainly fanciful. But if we perceive this Rashi not as *identifying* the meaning of the verse but as *illustrating* the *specialness* of sea monsters, a specialness indicated by the verb *create*, then the Rashi is deep and mature. Understand this.

Gn01-21a (Thursday Daily Rashi)

But are we just to look at Rashi's detailed Midrash about the Leviathan as a mere illustration? This does not seem satisfying. How then are we to explain this. Some approach Rashi through "traditions"; "there is a tradition that God will slaughter the Leviathan and use it to feed the Jews in the Messianic era." The position of the Rashi Newsletter is that *all* Rashis have a logical basis and that this logical basis is achieved through the 10 Rashi rules. In this case we can supplement the **parallelism** rule with the **reference** rule.

In fact there are two explicit verses which contain Rashi's exotic and fanciful midrashi on the Leviathan! Thus the Rashi is not homiletic. It is the simple meaning of the text based on other verses which it cross **references!** Judge for yourself; here are the verses.

- **Psalm 74:12-14** Describing the Exodus from Egypt the Psalmist states *God is my King from old...you crumbled the sea...you broke the heads of the (Egyptian) monsters on the sea You have crushed the head of the Leviathan (a reference to Egypt) and given it as food for a nation in a wilderness* [A reference to the food, gold, silver and

clothes the Jews took when leaving Egypt and which they used in their wilderness Journey]

- **Isiah 27:1.** *On that [future] day God will visit with his big, strong, hard sword a) Leviathan the flying serpent b) Leviathan the crooked serpent, and kill the monster at sea.*

Thus the idea of *killing the Leviathan monster* and using it *to feed the Jews* is not Midrash but poetic metaphor that occurs explicitly in the Psalms. Apparently the Talmudic Rabbis, whom Rashi followed, see **Isiah 27:1** as referring to the Messianic era when there will be a repetition of the Egyptian exodus described in **Psalm 74:14** - God will kill the Leviathan and feed the Jews. (See the **Radaq** who explicitly refers **Isiah 27:1** to the great Gog and Magog wars of the Messianic era).

Notice that our use of the **reference** method has greatly illuminated the Rashi. Rashi is not talking about some fanciful sea creature but as is clear from the referenced verses, Rashi is talking about a great nation that oppressed the Jews and resembles a sea-monster. It is this monster that God will slaughter and use for food for the Jews.

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) Don't **POSSESS** the gods of others Don't **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: Don't 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