

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

*Today November 5th we show the interaction between parallelism and meaning.*

*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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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 Meaning *Daily Rashi* Gn14-05c Sun 11/06/2016

**Biblical Text:** Cf. The following biblical texts with parallel descriptions of a nation as indicated by the underlines

- **Gn14-05** [Discussing a conquest] He conquered the Refaim in Ashteroth Karnayim
- The Zuzim in Ham
- The Eimim in Shavah Kiryathayim

Discussing *Ar* the capital city of Moab there are also parallel descriptions of a place:

- **Dt02-10** The Eimim dwelled there in the past a mighty nation like the Anakim;
- The Refaim are also like the Anakim and the Moabites called them Aimim
- [Discussing Amon] The Refaim use to dwell there
- And the Amonin would call them Zamzumim

**Discussion:** We see from the Deuteronomic verses that there were mighty nations call *Refaim* which in Hebrew means to *weaken*, that is, their sight or presence *weakens* those who oppose them. The Deuteronomic verses relate that *Refaim* were called by different names by other nations. These different names reflected their strength and power but used different words. We are told about two nations who had different names

- Moab: Called the *Refaim*, *Aimin*. *Aimim* comes from the biblical root meaning *fear*.
- Amon: Called the *Refaim*, *Zamzumim*. *Zamzumim* comes from the biblical root meaning *heated*.

So the Deuteronomic text gives three names to the same nation as follows

- *Refaim*: *To weaken (those who oppose them)*
- *Aimim*: *Causing fear*
- *Zamzumim*: *Heated*.

We also see from the Deuteronomic text that the *Refaim* had spread over several territories in several nations. They were conquerors.

Coming back to the verse in Genesis we see mention of 3 nations in 3 places

- Refaim in Ashteroth Karnayim
- The Zuzim in Ham
- The Eimim in Shavay Kiryathayim

**Sifsay Chachamim**, a Rashi commentator who conglamorated several Rashi commentators, points out using the **parallelism** principle that

- Deuteronomic text: Mentions *Refaim*, *Aimim* and one more *Zamzumim*
- Genesis text: Mentions *Refaim*, *Aimim* and one more *Zuzim*.

**Rashi text**: So Rashi concludes that *there were 4 names for Refaim. Because of there many conquests, conquered nations coined names for them reflecting their fear of them. Besides the names Refaim (weaken), Eimim (Fear), Zamzumim (heated) we have Zuzim (crawlers connoting their military prowess and agility)*

## **Parallelism Meaning *Daily Rashi* Gn14-01b Mon 11/07/2016**

**Biblical Text**: The following happened in the times of

- Amrafel, King of Shinar
- Aryoch, King of Elasar
- Kedarlaomer, King of Ailam,
- Thidal, King of Goyim

**Rashi:** Notice the **parallelism** in form. Four kings are listed and each is associated with *the* nation over which he ruled. But Goyim the nation in the last bullet, this word itself means *nations*. Let us examine the consequences of this.

- Taking the last bullet as a phrase by itself it would mean: Thidal was King of many nations (Perhaps ruling over one, being ousted and going to another)
- Taking the four bullets together we see that *each king ruled over one nation*.

So which is it? Did Thidal rule over one nation or many nations? Rashi resolves this using the modern concept of superpower. A superpower would be a sort of federal government ruling over individual state governments. For example, the leader of the US United States, rules, as the name United States implies, over 50 states each of which has its own sovereignty. Similar comments can be made for the United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) or the United Arab Emirates.

Rashi suggests that the Bible took the plural word for nation, *goyim*, and gave it a new meaning, *superpower* or *United Nations*.

## **Parallelism Daily Rashi Gn14-03a Tuesday 11/8/2016**

**Biblical Texts:** [a place mentioned in the text] The valley of *Sidim*, by the *Salt Sea*.

**Rashi:** *Sidim* comes from the Biblical root, *sdh* meaning field. Apparently, this was a valley situated by a good source of water, *the Salt Sea*, and individuals purchased lots to make fields. Hence it became known as the *valley of fields*. Although the Salt Sea also known as the Dead Sea does not allow plant growth (because of its high salt content), it is rich in minerals and since biblical times has been used for production purposes.

## **Reference-Meaning Daily Rashi Gn13-08a Wednesday 11/9/2016**

**Biblical Texts:** [Abraham speaking to his nephew on the need to separate because of frequent disputes between their shepards] *Are we not brothers: Let us therefore separate. If you go on the left I will go on the right and if you go on the right I will go on the left.*

**Rashi**: Rashi brings two explanations

- Here the word *brother* uses the literary technique of *synecdoche* to refer to a broader meaning, relative (Lot was Abrahams nephew). Synecdoche is the process by which *honey* refers broadly to anything sweet, or by which *hand in marriage* refers to acquiring the *entire person in marriage*.
- But wait: Rashi cites a Midrash Aggadah: The faces of Abraham and Lot looked similar and hence they were called brothers.

This is a typical situation where Rashi brings the simple meaning of the text and then brings a Midrash. Students of Rashi frequently do not understand the Midrash. This leads to the following vicious cycle

- The Midrash is not understood as following literary rules
- Hence it is made up, homiletic
- Rashi did believe in the simple meaning of the text which is what he gave initially
- But he also gave homiletic meanings of text; these are inspirational stories that exhort moral values.

Notice that this reasoning starts with the underlined phrase: It is not understood. But suppose it is understood? Then there is no reason to call it homiletic. In fact what we have tried to show in the **Rashi Newsletter** is that the 2nd Rashi explanation is always the simple meaning of the text and that there are severe problems with the first interpretation. Consider

- **Gn12-05** explicitly calls Lot, the nephew of Abraham. Synecdoche allows the term brother refer to any relative relation. So we are safe in interpreting the verse this way. Here we have used the **Reference** method to cite another verse and the **Meaning** method to interpret the word brother. *But* there is a problem with this approach. Abraham is using the fact that he and Lot are relatives to justify a separation. How does the fact of being relatives justify this. On the contrary: Relatives fight all the time over property. In fact, each relative thinks that they have superior claim to the property precisely because they are relatives. Thus although the Rashi interpretation of *brother* is sound it does *not fit* into the text.
- Rashi cites another pair of verses also using the **Reference** method. Both **Gn18-01:08** and **Gn19-03** show that Abraham and Lot had similar *dispositions*. They *faced* the world in the same way. In fact this was one of the hallmarks of Abraham: He emphasized the attribute of kindness and giving. The two texts just cited indicate that Abraham made a festive meal for

passerbys just as Lot did. This interpretation of the Midrash, that *brothers* refers to similar disposition is fully consistent with the current text. Abraham tells Lot, "Look we are brothers in charitableness; and *consequently* it is unbefitting that we should fight. Let us be charitable to each other and not place blame. Pick a direction, go graze in that direction and I will graze in the opposite direction. We again must use the synendoche principle to broaden the meaning of *brother* to any relationship where people have similar dispositions.

This Rashi is fundamental in understanding similar Rashis with two explanations. The approach of the **Rashi Newsletter** is that the 2nd explanation is the true explanation and that there are irredeemable problems with the first Rashi. I mention in passing that the approach of the Lubavitcher Rebbe was that both explanations are flawed and that neither of them could stand by themselves and hence Rashi had to present two explanations. Note, when Rashi cites the Aramaic translation Oonkelos as the 2nd explanation he considers the 1st explanation correct and disagrees with Oonkelos. Rashi frequently disagreed with Oonkelos. The next Rashi illustrates this.

## **Reference-Meaning *Daily Rashi* Gn14-07a Thursday 11/9/2016**

**Biblical Text:** [The Bible mentions a place during one of the biblical narratives] ... The Justice center, this is Kadesh. ...

**Rashi Text:** Rashi gives two explanations.

- i) Kadesh refers to the incident in **Nu20-01:13** which happened at *Kadesh*. *Kadesh* means to sanctify. In this incident Moses and Aaron lost their tempers at the Jewish people and God punished them that they would not bring the Jews into Israel. By punishing such great people and acknowledging the pain of the nation God Himself was sanctified and hence the name *Kadesh*. Rashi explains that the current Genesis text names a place that is named by something that happened later in the text.

Rashi further explains why this place was called the Justice center. It was called the Justice center because God delivered Justice against

Moses and Aaron despite their greatness and took the side of the complaining Jewish people.

- ii) Rashi cites Oonkelos. The place was called the Justice center since it was a place of courts. When people during the time of Genesis had a judicial matter they came to this place to present disputes and adjudicate payments. Oonkelos does not explain why it is called Kadesh.

**Approach of the Rashi Newsletter:** We would combine the two explanations as follows

- In Abraham's time this place had one name, the Justice Center.
- But we have seen above with regard to the four names of the Refaim nation - *Refaim, Aimim, Zamzumim, Zuzim* - that people (or places) frequently had multiple names. These multiple names could reflect the same concept.
- So *even* if it was called the Justice Center in Abraham's time why did the name stick? Rashi therefore points out that this name stuck because of the Judicial judgement against Moses and Aaron, the great leaders who were nevertheless punished because they got angry at the Jewish people.
- The verse *hints* at this future reference by adding the underlined phrase: *The Justice center, this is Kadesh*. In other words, the Bible deliberately gives the place two names. Initially it was called the Justice center because people came to present cases there. But because of the great judgement against Moses it received the name of Kadesh, Sanctify. The name Justice Center took on a new meaning: This was a place of paradigmatic judgement since Moses and Aaron,

the great leaders were punished.

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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