

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in ChaYaY SaRaH
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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.

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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Formatting *Daily Rashi* Gn24-01a Mon 11/21/2016

Biblical Text: *Abraham was elderly, advanced in days, and God blessed Abraham with everything.*

Rashi Text: When the letters of everything are added up, they equal the letters of *son* added up. And since Abraham had a son he had to find a wife for him.

Secular Comments on Rashi: The secularists use a Rashi like this to *prove* that Rashi engaged in homily. After all,

- everything, does not mean, *son*, it means *everything*
- You don't translate words using numerical values of letters.

The secularists conclude that this proves that Rashi, in his commentary, did not exclusively give the simple meaning of the text. On the contrary, Rashi engaged in fanciful homily if he thought it appropriate.

There is a simple answer to this. These secularists are *viewing* Rashi as using the **meaning method**. If Rashi were using the **meaning method** then their two objections would be correct: *everything* does not mean *son* and you don't obtain meaning through numerical values of letters.

However Rashi was not using the **meaning method**. Rashi was giving the simple meaning of the text. We now present it.

Contribution of the Midrash Rabbah, Rashi source: The Midrash

Rabbah lists numerous explanations (or a better term, *illustrations*) of everything

- Daughter
- Son
- Ishmael who originally was bad, repented
- Wealth

There is more. We can now ask

- Why does Rashi avoid the other interpretations e.g. "Ishmael repenting"
- Why does he exhaust the meaning of *everything* with just one thing.

It is noteworthy that the Rashi commentators deal with this (**Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh**). For example, "He had wealth but without a heir the wealth did not do him any good. As soon as he obtained a heir the wealth he already had meant he had everything."

Contribution of Gur Aryeh, Rashi commentator, Contribution of

Rashi Newsletter: Rashi is not using the **Meaning Rule**. Rather Rashi is using the **paragraph sequence rule** part of the **formatting rule**.

Rashi is explaining the *sequencing* of the verses: What governs the verse sequencing. To wit, what is the connection between:

- v1, *God blessed Abraham with everything*
- v2-, *Abraham asked his servant Eliezer to obtain a wife for his son.*

Rashi explains that Abraham's first priority might be himself and his family; but Ishmael had repented and he now had wealth. Abraham had everything in his old age. He undoubtedly had sons and daughters. He now focused on what anyone would focus when everything is secure - obtaining *continuity*. So he wanted to make sure that Isaac his son had a proper wife and Abraham's good fortune was kept in the family properly. Rashi's language seems to emphasize this as seen below in the re-citation of the Rashi text (Interpolations are mine)

Rashi text: [Since Abraham had everything] Abraham [also] had a son. And since he had a son, he had to properly marry him.

The word since in Rashi implies the **paragraph-sequence method** part of the **formatting method**. Rashi never had in mind to explain the meaning of *everything*. Rashi took it for granted that his readers knew that *everything* meant and included many things. Rashi however, showed that of all the everythings that Abraham had, he had to worry about obtaining a wife for his son.

As for the gematria, comments on numerical meanings of letters, I have shown in several articles that Rashi uses Gematria because there was no printing press and gematrias are short and punchy easily remembered. In other words, Rashi never derives the meaning of anything using gematria; rather he encourages the reader to remember his comments by using them.

Symbolism *Daily Rashi* Gn24-22a,b,c:23a Tue- Fri 11/22-25/2016

Background: Eliezer, Abraham's trusted servant, had just met Rivkah. He tested her by acting like a slave and asking her to *gulp* water. She responded by being charitable and giving him the water. He responds by checking that she comes from proper lineage and giving her presents.

Biblical Text: The man [Eliezer] took a

- golden nose ring, of weight bekah, and
- two bracelets on her hands,
- a weight of 10 gold.

And he asked her "What is your family; do you have a place for us to rest over."

Rashi Text: Rashi explains that he asked for her family *after* he gave the presents because he was so confident that his prayers had been answered and he found a proper wife for Isaac. Because of this confidence Eliezer immediately gave the presents and then asked. Rashi then explains the symbolism of the gifts as follows:

- Weight bekah ==> A hint of the commandment of taking census by bekah coins (Ex30-11:16).
- Two bracelets ==> A hint of the two tablets containing the 10 commandments
- Weight of 10 Gold ==> A hint at the 10 commandments

Contribution of Gur Aryeh, Rashi commentator: The Gur Aryeh points out the absurdity of the literal interpretation of this Rashi. Here are some of his comments

- What value does the symbolism have if she doesn't know them
- The text reports giving a gift; why is it necessary to interpret it otherwise.

The various commentators present a variety of explanations. One popular approach used by Rashi commentators, but not used by the Rashi Newsletter, is the following argument: *what is the value of telling us the weight; what is the value of telling us the gift.* Other commentators look for superfluities such as *two bracelets*; clearly they argue *bracelets* come in pairs so why mention the number two. More can be said but this gives the flavor. The Rashi commentators first establish superfluity and peculiarity and then explain the peculiarity symbolically.

The **Rashi Newsletter** focuses on the word hint in Rashi. The gifts did not symbolize the 10 commandments but they symbolized something else which hints or mirrors the 10 commandments. Here is our approach

- Rivkah gave water to an ordinary person behaving like a slave; hence Eliezer gave her a cheap gift - a bekah in weight- a bekah being the smallest unit of currency. The cheapness of the gift symbolized that she cared about little cheap people. And this in turn reminds us of the census where all Jews, both great and small gave one bekah (This relationship between bekah corresponding to all Jews is explicitly stated in the verse at the census commandment, **Ex30-15**). In other words, the main emphasis of the cheap gift was the symbolism that she cared about a cheap person who behaved like a slave. Rashi then enriches this symbolism by showing a comparable future commandment. But it is only a hint, an enrichment, not the actual meaning.
- Rivkah was simultaneously from a good family but cared about cheap people. Her name, Rivkah, means *barn*, and she cared about people who hung around barns (That is her charitableness extended to them also). Thus she was endowed with social *symmetry* - poor and rich. Hence the two bracelets. the emphasis being on the symmetry of her two hands and mirroring the symmetry of her well rounded personality.
- Rivkah was *complete* in charitableness, the number 10, the first two digit number, symbolizing *completeness*. She could both give water to a person who wanted to *gulp* water, give fodder for Eliezer's animals, and give him room and board. She was *complete*. Again, the symbolism referred to something that had just happened, Rivkah giving charity. However, it is worthwhile to recall those commandments that deal with symmetry and completeness. For example the 10 commandments possess a God-man symmetry; they deal with Man-Man and God-Man commandments (Commandments 1-5 deal with God-man and 6-10 deal with man-man commandments.) The commandments are *complete*: For example, the man-man commandments prohibits *all* crimes: from lust of someone else's property, to adultery, theft and murder. There is a spectrum

Summary: The **Rashi Newsletter** approaches the text as presenting the

symbolism of what immediately happened. The gifts symbolized Rivkah's generosity. However, Rashi points out the *hints* in these gifts: This sends a message to the Jewish people, Rivkah's descendants: Just as Rivkah, a Jewish Matriach, had a) care for the cheap person b) symmetry in caring and c) completeness in caring so too her descendants must possess these three attributes. It however, was not Rashi's intent to say the Eliezer gave her these gifts *because* of the future revelation at the decalogue.

THE 10 RASHI RULE CATEGORIES / THE 30 RASHIRULE

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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