

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in VaYiShLaCh
Vol 26#16 - Adapted from Rashi-is-Simple

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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 is a Rashi Special showing how a Rashi that looks as the height of homily is actually the simple meaning of the text.

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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Bullets Cross-Reference *Daily Rashi* Gn32-10a Mon 12/12/2016

Background: Jacob was returning home after his 20 year stay with Laban. He hears that Esauv is coming towards him with 400 troops. He prays to God for safety.

Biblical Text: (Gn32-10a) *Jacob said*

- * (1) The God of my father Abraham, The God of my father Isaac
- * (2) The God who tells me to return 'Return home to your parents home.
- *
- * I have become diminished from all
- * - The Kindnesses and
- * - The truths

Rashi (paraphrased): Notice the repetition of the underlined keyword God in the two parallel passages. The repetition of this keyword is not grammatically necessary. The text could have said

- * (1) The God of my father Abraham, The God of my father Isaac

* (2)_who tells me to return 'Return home to your parents home

[The following is not in Rashi but is a **Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter**. It comes from my article, *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, 35(1), 2007, **Biblical Formatting**. *A parallel passage with a repeating keyword indicates a bullet-like structure. That is the ancient biblical ear heard the repeating keyword the same way modern ears hear bullets. And how are bullets heard? They are heard as indicating author-intended unspecified separate emphasisii. That is, the author bulleted the items to indicate something special to emphasize in each bullet]*

It follows that each passage uttered by Jacob has a separate and distinct meaning. In fact, Jacob is recalling two separate promises by God. We can identify these promises by using the **cross-reference** method as follows.

* (1) **Gn28-13** [Dialog from God to Jacob before his 20 years with Laban] *I am God: The God of your father Abraham, and the God of your father Isaac...and I will watch you wherever you go*

* (2) **Gn31-03** [Dialog from God to Jacob after 20 years with Laban] *Return to your birthplace and father's land and I will be with you*

In other words, the bullets indicated by the repeating keywords indicate a double unspecified emphasis which Rashi interprets to refer to two separate promises by God to be with Jacob. So Jacob in his prayers relied on these two promises as emotional support for protection from Esauv.

Database (Parallelism) Idioms *Daily Rashi* Gn32-11b Gn47-29d Tue-Wed 12/13-14/2016

Background: Jacob is praying to God to be saved from Esauv.

Biblical Text: I (Jacob) have become diminished from all the kindness and all the truth

Rashi: "Truth" refers to the prophetic promises.

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: We can ask a simple database inquiry, "How does the bible refer to *kindness - truth*". It is not hard to search this with modern search engines. There are about two dozen verses with *kindness-truth*. The usual phraseology is *kindness and truth*. This verse **Gn32-11** is an exception, using the phraseology, *all the kindnesses and all the truths*.

Rashi explains the phrase *kindness and truth* on **Gn47-29d** when Jacob asks his son Joseph for a *kindness and truth* to him and to bury him in Chevron. Rashi explains that *kindness and truth refers to burial since the person being buried is not expected to reciprocate the kindness back to the giver*. Here Rashi uses the idiom method: *kindness and truth* refers to a kindness that is a true kindness without expected reciprocity.

An important method in understanding Rashi is to critically examine Rashi in light of his, Rashi's, own methodology. Based on the verses we just examined, we must generalize Rashi: *kindness and truth* refers to *any* kindness (whether burial or not) where the recipient cannot or is not expected to reciprocate. For example in **Joshua 2**, the spies promise to do *kindness and truth* to Rahab the prostitute for sparing their lives. Here Rahab, a single person from an enemy nation could not possibly reciprocate to a conquering nation. Thus what was done to her was *kindness and truth*.

We can now refer to **Gn32-11b**. Jacob speaks about *all the kindness and all the truth* that God did. The *truth* refers to the prophetic promises that God made with Jacob. Notice in these promises that Jacob *does* reciprocate to God. For example, Jacob says **Gn28-20:22** *if God will be*

with me and watch me...then this stone will be made into a house of God, God will become my God, and I will give tithe from all you give me.

Thus we see that *all the kindness and all the truth* is different than *kindness and truth*.

* *kindness and truth* is an **idiom** that refers to a kindness where there is no expectation of reciprocity

* *all kindness and all truth* refers to kindness and truths where there is reciprocity.

Jacob's prayer can now be understood as follows: *Even though God watches me, I am worried that what I have vowed is not sufficient to save me from losses in a military confrontation.*

Parallelism-Idioms *Daily Rashi* Gn32-15a Gn32-16a Thur-Fri 12/15-16/2016

Background: The bible lists the animal gifts that Jacob sent to Esau. This Rashi is fundamental to understanding many exegetical approaches to biblical passages.

Biblical Text:

* Female goats, 200	Male goats, 20	[Ratio: 200:20=10]
* Ewes, 200	Rams, 20	[Ratio: 200:20 =10]
* <u>Nursing camels</u>	<u>& Their sons [men]</u>	<u>30 [Ratio:30:30=1]</u>
* Cows 40	Bulls 10	[Ratio: 40:10=4]
* Female donkeys, 20	Male donkeys, 10	[Ratio: 20:10=2]

Rashi: There are two oddities in the parallelism.

* The ratios are different [I have placed the ratios in brackets for clarifying purposes; they are not in the biblical text]

* The two columns clearly refer to females and male mates. Yet by camels, their mates are referred to as *sons*. Furthermore the females are

referred to as *nursing*.

Rashi then goes on to explain the first anomaly, the ratios. From this set of ratios we learn the laws of marital frequency. Husbands have an obligation of marital frequency to their wives. This obligation is a function of

- * workload
- * travel distance.

Here are the rules for required marital frequency from husbands to wives.

-
- * Retired husbands - 1 @day - no work
 - * City workers - 2 @ week - work, no travel
 - * Donkey workers - 1 @ week - work, minimal travel
 - * Camel workers - 1 @ month -work, intermediate travel
 - * Ship people- 1 @ 6 months -work, long travel

Rashi goes on to explain: *I do not have a way of deriving these numbers for humans from the associated numbers for animals.*

I would therefore conjecture that the biblical passage lays down the rule that

marital frequency (for animal) = function(work, distance)

and that this rule for animals transfers to humans.

Here are the rules

-
- Goat/Rams = Animals don't work = ratio of 10*
 - Bulls = Worker animals = ratio of 4*
 - Donkeys = workers but travel = ratio of 2*
 - Camels = workers but long travel = ratio of 1*

The fundamental contribution of this Rashi is that the biblical text can transfer and impart a basic functional rule (Function of work and travel distance). This basic functional rule can be transferred to human settings.

It then *appears* that the Talmudic rabbis derived the numbers for humans from the numbers for animals. Not so.

In my very first article on Rashi, *Tradition*, 1980, 18(4), "**Peshat and Derash**", I call this the *principle of stages*. The derash precedes in two stages

- stage one derives a functional principle = function (work, distance)
- stage two applies this functional principle to humans

However, Rashi is not deriving the animal numbers from the human numbers.

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|-------------------------|--|
| * Female goats, 200 | Male goats, 20 [Ratio: 200:20=10] |
| * Ewes, 200 | Rams, 20 [Ratio: 200:20 =10] |
| * <u>Nursing camels</u> | <u>& Their sons [men] 30 [Ratio:30:30=1]</u> |
| * Cows 40 | Bulls 10 [Ratio: 40:10=4] |
| * Female donkeys, 20 | Male donkeys, 10 [Ratio: 20:10=2] |

Rashi: There are two oddities in the parallelism.

- * The ratios are different [I have placed the ratios in brackets for clarifying purposes; they are not in the biblical text]
- * The two columns clearly refer to females and male mates. Yet by camels, their mates are referred to as *sons*. Furthermore the females are referred to as *nursing*.

We have left to explain the phrase *nursing camels and their sons* to refer to *female camels and their husbands*.

Rashi text: Rashi says this is due to a pun by which *sons* is used to refer to *niceness* and *niceness* in turn refers to being with ones husband.

However, the pun is not standard. I would therefore argue that the pun is a way of remembering the derivation not the actual source of the derivation.

Rashi also explains that because there is a 1:1 relationship the camels are modest and the bible used discrete language.

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: We have to explore how languages use idioms to describe male-female relations.

- * In English: A man might refer to his wife as "baby"
- * (Zohar): (**Songs 3:6-11**) Solomon refers to his wife as "Mother"

Generally, wives in various languages can be referred to as *child(baby)*, *wife*, *mother*. These represent three different aspects of the male-female relationship

- * wife - equality
- * Mother - for example, when the man is depressed and needs comfort
- * Child - for example, when the man is dominant

Notice how different languages emphasize different aspects of the male-female relationship.

Returning to **Gn32-16a**, I would simply suggest that

* nursing camels

* sons

refers to caring non-aggressive forms of intimacy. This would be consistent with Rashi's observation on these words that *the male and female are referred to this way - nursing, sons - so as not to be explicit. This is out of respect for their modesty.*

From a rule point of view

* What alerted Rashi and us was the anomalous **parallelism** exhibited above at the beginning of this posting

* However, the mechanism of explaining the anomaly was the use of **idioms**. We explored idioms in several languages which name spouses using equal or non-equal relationships. Hence a husband can be named *son* nuancing a caring female-male relationship, contrastive to an aggressive relationship. Similarly, *nursing mothers* refers to a caring relationship.

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