

The 10 RashiYomi Rules

Their presence in Rashis in BaMiDBaR

Vol. 27#13 - 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.

Today we bring back an old favorite of mind: Rashi, King of Databases.

Rashi lived before the advent of databases. Yet he had a database mind. We show a delicious example which to the best of my

knowledge cannot be accomplished with modern database theory; but it was easy for Rashi to solve this problem. We see here Rashi's acuity of vision and his attention to detail while maintaining his high standards of clarity and intuitiveness.

I will attempt to send out the Parshah over a week in advance.

Russell Jay Hendel, President, RashiYomi

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Database *Daily Rashi* Ex20-03a, Dt05-07a, Nu03-04a, Gn11-28a, Dt21-05 Daily Rashi Tue-Sat May 23-27, 2017

Background: How do you say *on* in biblical Hebrew.

- The usual word for *on*, is *on*, or *al* in Hebrew
- But the phrase *on the face of* (Hebrew *al pney*) is also used to mean *on*.

What is the difference?

We can cheerfully create database queries. Here are some results:

- 45 occurrences of *on the face of* occur in the Tanakh
- 6 of the 45 are *on the face of the earth*; 8 of the 45 are *on the face of the land*; so 33% of the 45 are *on the face of the land or earth*

You might expect patterns: There are 6 *on the face of the earth* and 17 *on the earth* without any apparent difference.

- Here are two random verses with *on the face of the earth* (i) **Gn06-01** *When people multiplied on the face of the earth, then...* (ii) **Gn07-23** *God destroyed all living things on the face of the earth*
- Here are two random verses with *on the earth* (i) **Dt28-11** *Observe God's commandments ... in order to live long on the earth God swore to your ancestors to give you.* (ii) **Dt07-13** *God will bless your livestock and produce on the earth which God swore to give to you*

All four verses speak about multiplying and increasing on the earth. Why do two verses use the phrase *on the face of the earth* while two verses use the phrase *on the earth*?

Apparently modern database theory fails to find any answer.

But not Rashi. Rashi found a partial answer. Rashi noted that there were five occurrences of the phrase *on the face of X* where *X* is a single human being. In such

a case, *on the face of X* means *during the lifetime of X*. The verses and Rashis are compactly presented in the table below. (Note: One of the verses has no Rashi so I supplemented the text with a Rashi-like comment consistent with the other cases; I have frequently indicated that filling in Rashi-comments is part of the job of the teacher).

For this reason I call Rashi the King of Databases. Notice how Rashi zoomed in and found a segment of the 45 verses with *on the face of* with a specific idiomatic meaning. This is true genius and as indicated cannot be replicated with modern database theory!!!

Praise be Him who chose them and their learning!

Verse	Biblical Text [<i>The phrase “on face of” is translated “while alive”</i>]
Ex20-03a	You shall not have gods of others <u>while</u> I (God) am <u>alive</u>
Dt05-07a	You shall not have gods of others <u>while</u> I (God) am <u>alive</u>
Nu03-04a	Elazar and Ithamar died <u>while</u> their father was <u>alive</u>
Gn11-28a	Haran died <u>while</u> his father was <u>alive</u>
Dt21-05	A person can't give firstborn rights to his loved wife's son <u>while</u> the hated wife's son is <u>alive</u>

Today we have merited to visit King Rashi in his palace sitting on his throne.

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*

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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 (Homonyms)** 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