

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in SheLaCh
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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 deal with a parallelism that describes the paragraph structure.

Paragraph structure is often overlooked in teaching of Rashi. People are too eager to find extra words or milk nuances from individual words. Rashi however

frequently makes comments on structure.
Today's example is illustrative.

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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Parallelism Format Contradiction *Daily Rashi* Nu15-22b, 23a,24a,30a,31a Sun-Thur Jun 11-15, 2017

Background: Biblical paragraph Nu15-22:31 describes 3 cases of individuals accidentally or willfully worshiping idols. Rashi's job is to show that 1) there are three cases and show that 2) the text is dealing with worshiping idols.

How does Rashi show there are three cases? By carefully looking at the words in the three cases. Case 1 refers to the *congregation* sinning while cases 2,3 refer to a *soul* sinning. This contrast between *congregation* and *soul* leads Rashi to the comment that case 1 speaks about a congregational sin while cases 2 and 3 deal with an individual sin.

Furthermore, cases 1 and 2 deal with sinning through *ignorance* which we call negligent sinning while case 3 speaks about *presumptuous* sinning which Rashi calls willful. By carefully focusing on the words describing *who* sins, *congregation* or *soul* and *how* they sin, *through ignorance* or *presumptuously*, Rashi is able to show there are three cases.

How does Rashi show that the three cases are dealing with the sin of idolatry? This is done in two stages. Cases two and three simply speak about *sin*. Since these are

three cases and the first case deals with idolatry Rashi says the other cases are dealing with idolatry also because they are all parallel cases in one paragraph.

How does Rashi know that the first case deals with idolatry? Because on the one hand the opening paragraph speaks about violating *all* the commandments, *everything* that God ever commanded while case 1 speaks about the *sin* (singular) of the congregation. Rashi employs here the **contradiction** method. It is like a riddle which you ask little children. What single sin is so terrible that it is like violating all sins? The answer is idolatry which is a single sin but in its roots erases all the commandments since it undermines God's authority.

Biblical Text: Below is the biblical text. We have added formatting of the paragraphs through indentation and bullets. The formatting aligns the parallel passages dealing with the three cases. We have underlined keywords such as *congregation*, *soul*, *ignorance*, *presumptuously*. By reading these paragraphs one understands and appreciates what Rashi was trying to say. The Rashi comments are indicated through superscripts which act as footnotes. As the reader reads this text the key points to takeaway is that there are 3 cases that deal with sin whether of the congregation (case 1) or individual (case 2,3) and whether negligently through ignorance (cases 1,2) or willfully (case 3). We have supplemented Rashi's explanation by formatting the biblical text using indentation and bullets. Thus, we use the **Formatting** method.

General Introduction to the 3 cases – Non observance of all commandments

22. And if you have *erred*, and *not observed all*^{Nu15-22b,23a} *these commandments*, which the Lord has spoken to Moses, 23. All that the Lord has commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the Lord commanded Moses, and onward through your generations;

- **Case 1: Congregation sins negligently**

24. Then it shall be, if it^{Nu15-22b,23a} (*the sin*) is committed by ignorance without the knowledge of the congregation^{Nu15-24a},

that all the congregation shall offer one young bull for a burnt offering, for a sweet savor to the Lord, with its meal offering, and its drink offering, according to the prescribed ordinance, and one kid of the goats for a sin offering. 25. And the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the people of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance; and they shall bring their

offering, a sacrifice made by fire to the Lord, and their sin offering before the Lord, for their ignorant sin^{Nu15-22b,23a}; 26. And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the people of Israel, and the stranger who sojourns among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance.

- **Case 2: Individual sins negligently**

27. And if any soul sins^{Nu15-27a} through ignorance,

then he shall bring a female goat of the first year for a sin offering. 28. And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul who sins ignorantly, when he sins by ignorance before the Lord, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. 29. You shall have one Torah for him who sins through ignorance, both for him who is born among the people of Israel, and for the stranger who sojourns among them.

- **Case 3: Individual Sins Willfully**

30. But the soul who does anything presumptuously^{Nu15-30a},

whether he is born in the land, or a stranger, that person dishonors the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 31. Because he has despised the word of the Lord^{Nu15-31a}, and has broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

Rashi Text: The table below shows how the Rashi comments which are indicated as footnotes above are dealing with the paragraph structure.

A key point to emphasize here is that these Rashi comments are simply clarifying the structure of the biblical text which we have clarified through use of indentation, formatting and bullets. Let us carefully consider the Rashi comments to appreciate this.

On **Nu15-30a** Rashi explains that the biblical word *presumptuously* occurring in case 3 indicates willful sin. Why? Because the other cases, cases 1 and 2, deal with sin by ignorance. So Rashi explains that the contrast is ignorance vs. willful. As can be seen Rashi's sole job here is to clarify the paragraph structure.

Similarly, on **Nu15-24a** Rashi clarifies that cases 2 and 3 use the singular (a soul) while case 1 uses the plural and refers to the congregation. Rashi therefore explains

that case 1 is congregational sin while cases 2 and 3 are individual sin. Rashi further clarifies *how* the congregation sins. After all isn't a congregation just a collection of individuals? Rashi explains that the congregation sins by its leading legislative body giving improper guidance.

A final point of Rashi found in comments **Nu15-27a** and **Nu15-31a** explains that since the three cases are bundled together they are all speaking about the same sin, which we know from case 1 is idolatry.

The serious student of Rashi should study this example carefully. Too often I find people who are experts in finding extra words on which Rashi comments or on milking nuances from individual phrases. An equally important task of Rashi comments is to clarify structure and formatting.

Verse / Rashi	Rashi's comment is on structure	Further explanation on Rashi comment
Nu15-30a	<i>Presumptuously</i> = Willful	Rashi contrasts the biblical words <i>presumptuously</i> with <i>ignorance</i> in the three cases. Thus, the <i>presumptuous</i> case is speaking about willful sin.
Nu15-24a	Case 1= <i>Congregational</i> sin; Cases 2,3 = individual sin of <i>a soul</i>	Rashi is careful to distinguish between case 1 which uses the plural and cases 2 & 3 which use the singular. Rashi explains <i>how</i> the congregation sins; for example, if the leading legislative bodies made an error in guidance to the community
Nu15-22b,23a	Case 1 = idolatry (It is a sin that is i) all the commandments ii) individual sin → So it must be a single commandment which equals all other commandments, that is, idolatry	Rashi uses the contradiction method here since the introductory verses speak about violating <i>all</i> commandments while the three cases speak about <i>one sin</i> . So it must be <i>one sin</i> equal to all commandments.
Nu15-27a,31a	<i>Sins</i> = idolatry sin	Case 2 and Case 3 are similar to Case 1; Since case 1 is idolatry the other 2 cases are as well. Hence, Rashi interprets the general word <i>sins</i> in case 2 to refer to idolatrous sin. Similarly, Rashi interprets the word <i>presumptuously acts</i> in case 3 to idolatrous sin.

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

