

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

It is a new issue (Vol 28) and a New Year. This year I am focusing on non-Rashi comments. We have explained Rashi now for 18 years. We frequently say that Rashi intended that the teacher use the parallelism and besides explaining the Rashi comments also explain all nuances of the parallelism, the non-Rashi comments.

So this year I am focusing on complete explanations of all parallelisms including both the Rashi and non-Rashi comments.

*Today's Rashi is an old favorite -
inferring what attributes a good Jewish
wife should have.*

We also have a bonus, an explanation of the Rashi-Rambam-Raavad controversy on the prohibition of relying superstitiously on signs.

Dr. 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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Meaning-Synonyms-Grammar *Daily Rashi* Gn24-14a:c Thur-Sat Nov 9-11, 2017

Background: Eliezer prays to find a good wife for Isaac. His prayer states:

Biblical Text:

God, the Lord my lord Abraham, please be present for me today. Behold, I stand by the wells.The maiden to whom I say to her, "Tip me your bucket that I may drink," but she says, "Drink and I will also give water to your camels," this is the maiden

- *that you have clarified for Isaac your servant,*
- *and though her, I hope to know that*
- *you have dealt charitably with my lord_.*

Rashi Text: We have underlined three phrases in the text. Rashi comments on these underlined words

I) *Clarify*: There are various words for *knowing*, for example, *know*, *clarify*, *recognize*. The Hebrew verb used in the text, comes from the biblical root, **nun-caph-cheth**, which means *opposite*. In the cognitive domain, **nun-caph-cheth** means to make clear (as if it is opposite you).

This Rashi is famous and presents the idea that the ideal Jewish wife should be charitable, a well-known concept.

II) *I hope to know*: This is another gem in the golden Rashi-Rambam series. So let us elaborate. There is a biblical prohibition against being superstitious. One for example should not say, "A black cat crossed my path so I will not do business today."

The Talmud says, "Any superstition which is not like Eliezer's statement by the well is not true superstition (So it may be rabbinically prohibited but is not biblically prohibited)." What does this statement mean?

- Startingly, Rambam says that Eliezer violated the Biblical prohibition of superstition.
- Raavad demurs: Certainly what he did was reasonable, seeking a charitable woman for a wife. What then does the Talmudic passage mean? It means that biblical superstition must have the *form* of Eliezer's statement: If X happens then I will do Y. In this case. This is only true if X has nothing to do with Y. So saying *Y=I will not go to work when X=a black cat crossed my path* is superstition. But saying *Y=I will select her as a wife when X=she is charitable*, is not superstition.

But what then is the controversy. Does Rambam really believe that you cannot for example select a date based on charitableness?

The solution to the Rambam - Raavad controversy can be found in Rashi.

The verse says, "I will know," that she is Isaac's wife
Rashi translates, "I will *hope* to know," that she is Isaac's wife.

What is the controversy? The controversy is grammatical! In grammar, we speak about *moods*.

The *indicative* mood refers to the real world: "I will know she is his wife"
The *subjunctive* mood refers to one's imagination, feelings and hopes: "I hope to know she is his wife"

In biblical Hebrew the *subjunctive* can be indicated by a terminal *hey*. For example the famous song by the sea (**Ex15-01**)

Does not begin *I sing to God* (indicative mood)
But rather begins *I wish to sing to God* (subjunctive mood)

The subjunctive is indicated by the terminal *hey*. This paints a beautiful emotional state: The Jewish people were so shocked at seeing their Egyptian masters die that they couldn't sing but rather *hoped, wished to sing*. Here the subjunctive corresponds to a mood of awe and trepidation.

But the subjunctive does not require a *hey*. As in the rest of Hebrew, the subjunctive can be clear from context. Hence, the controversy.

Rambam translates Eliezer's statement as, "I will know she is Isaac's wife." Therefore this is superstition since he is certain based on a sign. Superstition according to the Rambam is when you 100% base your behavior on a sign.

Rashi translates Eliezer's statement as "I hope to know she is Isaac's wife" Hence Rashi and Raavad do not see this as superstition but rather as a *direction* without certainty of how to proceed. Rashi interprets the verse as meaning that *charitableness* justifies *dating* or getting to know the woman but does not (as Rambam interprets) justify outright marriage.

Praise be Him who chose them and their learning!

III) I will know that you have dealt charitably with my master: Here we have the justice-charitable synonym pair:

Justice indicates what is deserved. So Eliezer was instructed to get a woman from Abraham's family and did so.

Charitably indicates beyond what is deserved. *Besides* obtaining someone from Abraham's family, the woman was *also* charitable.

Format-Paragraphing Meaning-Synonym Daily Rashi **Gn24-17a,b Sun, Mon 11/12-13/2017**

Background: Eliezer had prayed to find a charitable wife for Isaac. He met Rivkah and ran to her and performed his test: He asked to sip water and waited to see if she would give water to both him and his camels.

Biblical Text:

*And the servant ran to her and said
Let me sip water from your bucket*

Rashi Text: Rashi uses the **Format-Paragraph** method which seeks to explain why verses are consecutive. Here are the sequence of verses

Eliezer prays for a charitable wife that will give water to him and his camels even though he only asked for himself

He sees Rivkah who went down to the well and (quickly) filled and went up

He runs to her

He performs his test

Rashi explains the consecutive phrases as indicating *cause*. Why did he run to her? Because he saw that she quickly filled her buckets. This is indicated by the verse which says *she went down, filled her bucket and went up* indicating a professionalism in filling (done immediately) Because he saw her industriousness he *ran* to her.

This too is part of counseling on selecting a wife: One should *grab* (=run) opportunities and see if they work out (not be hesitant).

The second half of the verse uses the Rashi **meaning** method. There are many words for drinking such as *drink, sip, etc.* The root of the verb in the verse is **Gimel-Mem-Aleph** which means *reed*. A *reed* corresponds to our *straw*. In effect, Eliezer said *let me straw from your bucket*, indicating a modest request to only sip. (Rivkah responded that she would let him drink (not sip) and also take care of his camels.)

Summary: We can summarize the five lessons about selecting a wife in this week's parshah

Clarify: Charitableness clarifies a potential wife

I hope to know: One should not be too certain. One should pursue to know the woman with an open mind that things may or may not work out.

Charitably with Isaac: One hopes for many things in a wife; good family, character etc. Sometimes we can only get one of them.

He ran to her: One should actively and un-hesitantly pursue opportunities

Let me sip: One should act modestly without expectation and see if the woman counters with more offers.

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

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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