

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in VaYaQheL PeQuDaY
Vol 28#25 - 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 issue continues our exploration of commandments in each parshah.

We review today some aspects of Jewish law about intimacy that you don't expect. Judaism, both biblical and rabbinic, encouraged enjoyment of intimacy.

We also see aspects of Jewish law about recognition of efforts which again we don't expect to find but it is there.

We see laws governing accounting as it relates to the fundamental Jewish values of honesty.

Finally we see one of the great pillars of democracy, basing selections on what the United States government call KSA, Knowledge, Skills, and Ability rather than lineage.

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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Spreadsheets *Rashi NewsLetter* Ex38-08a, Thur Mar

8, 2018

Background: PeQuDay contains what accountants call an audit. The audit can be skillfully used to see where donations and money went. PeQuDay in classic accounting style prepares an audit sheet

- Inflows or assets
- Outflows or liabilities

It does this for

- Gold
- Silver
- Copper.

In this case we examine copper donations.

Biblical Text

Ex38-29:31 The donations of copper were 70 kikkar's of copper or 2400 coin weights of copper. With these were made

- The copper bases for the wooden beams
- The copper altar
- The copper wrap around of the altar
- The copper bases for Temple tent
- The copper bases for the Temple doors
- All stakes for the Temple

Ex38-08a

- The copper washbasin its copper support

were made with the mirrors of the woman who stood in guard by the door of the temple

Rashi Text: A comparison of Ex38-08 and Ex38-29:31 shows that the Temple Copper Washbasin was *exclusively* made from the mirror of the woman.

Rashi actually cites a Midrash about how the Jewish women in Egypt would emotionally support their exhausted husbands using these mirrors. But remember, we are not interested in the Rashi Newsletter with fancy and homily. We are interested in the simple straightforward meaning of the text.

Clearly even without this Midrash, mirrors are a beauty aid. Rashi gives examples of how a woman could use a mirror to begin intimacy. But there are many intimacy uses of mirrors.

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: To fully understand the rest of Rashi we must employ symbolism. The Temple Copper Washbasin was used to wash the legs and hands of the Priests. A priest who did not rinse his legs and hands could not function in the Temple. Symbolically, continuing the intimacy theme, the washing of legs and hands symbolizes that intimacy should have a foreplay component in which legs and hands are played with prior to consummation.

So, it is indeed fitting that the WashBasin was made with mirrors as this enhances the symbolic value.

Contribution of The Rambam: Perhaps some readers think I am being too loud in identifying the symbolism of the Washbasin with intimacy. But know, that, as the Rambam says:

The Great Sanhedrin sat near the Temple court. Why? Because the majority of its functions was dealing with Priestly blemishes. In fact, the Rambam gives a list of about 150 bodily perfections that Priests must have (If they lack these they are considered blemishes invalidating the priesthood). In other words, a major function of the Temple rites was symbolic affirmation of the proper method of intimacy. This in turn helped the masses whose intimacy may, as happens from time to time, get out of synchronization.

It is interesting that the emphasis on intimacy and bodily perfection is sometimes attributed to the Greeks. Not so! We were there first. The major purpose of the Temple was to symbolically instruct people through symbolic meanings about their intimacy and bring sanctity to their life.

Ezra the great scribe who returned the exiles was famous for his rabbinic enactments focusing on intimacy. Thus, Ezra made a civil law that perfume merchants should be able to sell their wares in non-home cities. Why? "So that the daughters of Israel may have perfume readily accessible." Some of the other great enactments of Ezra focused on rape prevention and other aspects of good intimacy.

These laws are not emphasized enough and should be as they are characteristically Jewish.

Praise be Him who chose them and their learning!!!

Paragraph-Format *Rashi Newsletter* Ex38-21a, Fri Mar 9, 2018

Biblical Text: *These are the accountings of the Temple, the Temple of testimony, that were accounted for by Moses, the works of the Levites in the hands of Ithamar the Priest.*

Rashi Text: This is an introductory verse explaining the purpose Ex38,39,40. Its purpose is to give an accounting of the Temple activities.

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: Here Rashi uses the Format-paragraph method. Rashi explains that the

verse is an introductory verse describing the theme of the Parshah. This is similar to the General-Detail method of Rabbi Ishmael. There is a general statement - accounting of the Temple followed by details what was done.

But what is an accounting statement and what is its purpose. An accounting statement deals with an entity usually a business but in this case the Temple by listing and balancing.

- assets and liabilities
- income and expenses

In other words

- What are the Temple assets - who made the contributions, how much were they per person, and how much were they in aggregate
- What are the Temple liabilities and expenses - to produce utensils what materials had to be used.

By listing these two, the auditor shows that assets equal liabilities (in this case income = expenses).

Accounting statements are mentioned in various parts of Jewish law (e.g. The executor of an estate need not make a public accounting statement but must nevertheless make a private (internal) accounting statement (See Inheritance, 11).

The accounting statement has bearing on two aspects of Jewish law

- avoidance of theft
- avoidance of improper appearance.

Parallelism *Rashi NewsLetter* Ex35-34a, Sat Mar 10 2018

Background: Notice the stark contrast in the description of the major people overseeing the Temple construction:

Both

- Their lineage
 - Their skills
- are mentioned.

Biblical Text: Ex35-30:35

Who	Lineage	Knowledge Skills and Ability
Bezalel	God called him by name! Bezalel ...from the Tribe of Judah	Filled him with the spirit of wisdom To weave...deal with gold, silver, copper To do stone and wood work, And to lead
Ahaliav	Ahaliav..from the Tribe of Dan	To lead with Bezalel Both had great weaving and tapestry skills

Rashi Text: Note the contrast

- Lineage
- KSA, Knowledge skills and ability

Rashi goes deeper citing Gen30 and Gen49

- Judah was a direct descendant of a matriarch and was given the monarchy
- Dan was a descendant of bondmaid.

Rashi sees this text as emphasizing that selection should be based on KSA not on lineage. In fact, the choice of basing things on KSA is one of the cornerstones of democracy since by basing selection on skills one attacks the idea of selecting by race and other form elements.

We see here the basis of this very important idea in Jewish law.

Database-Rabbi Ishmael *Rashi NewsLetter* Ex37-01a, Sunday Mar 11 2018

Background: We see here a beautiful application of the Database method. We ask the simple query: For each temple utensil *who* is listed as the creator of that utensil

Biblical Text:

Temple utensil	Verse	Who made it
Temple	Ex36-08	All wise men, they made
Roof	Ex36-14	He made
Beam structure	Ex36-20	He made
Veil	Ex36-35	He made
Ark	Ex37-01	Bezalel, he made
Table	Ex37-10	He made
Candelabrah	Ex37-17	He made

Golden altar	Ex37-25	He made
Copper altar	Ex38-01	He made
Basin	Ex38-05	He made
Courtyard	Ex38-09	He made

Rashi Text: Clearly, Bezalel commanded the *Temple Team* who built the utensils as is explicitly said by the utensil *Temple*. Why then does it say by the utensil *Ark*, that Bezalel made it? Because he was their leader and took responsibility for all production aspects.

Contribution of Rashi Newsletter: Here the Bible lays down important principles of *recognition*.

The above text is also a beautiful example of the Rabbi Ishmael rules

- Suppose there is a general category (*e.g. he made*)
- And there are exceptions to that category (*e.g. Bezalel made, they made*)
- Those exceptions aren't specific to the particular categories where they are mentioned (that is, *the Temple and Ark*)

- Rather, those exceptions (*they made, Bezalel made*) generalize to all categories
- Unless there is an additional textual indication that it only applies to the specific categories.

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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 (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

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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