The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis on <u>Parshat TzaV-Shemini</u>
Vol 19#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. This year, 2012-2013, we are concentrating on the **grammar** rule. We acknowledge benefitting from Dr. Isseroff's book, *An Introduction to Rashi's Grammatical Explanations in the Book of Genesis*, 1985, Published by the Torah Education Department of World Zionist Organization, MP Press Inc, <u>ISBN 965-222-049-3</u>. For a full lightning statement of all Rashi rules see the Appendix.

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Connective words - *Kol - all, every, each (part), whole*
Daily Rashi - Sunday March 24 2013

Every language has connective words which can connect two sentences or connect nouns with the adjectival phrases modifying them. Some common examples of connective words in English are *because, and, or, if-then, from, when, ….*

A beautiful discovery by Rashi, following the researchers of the Midrash, is that in biblical Hebrew, each connective word has multiple meanings, sometimes as many as half a dozen meanings. The most famous example points out that the biblical

Hebrew word *ki,* can have any of the following six meanings! *rather, perhaps, because, when, if-then, that.* As several Rashi researchers have pointed out, this principle of multiple meanings applies not only to *ki,* but generally applies to all connective words and prefixes.

So biblical Hebrew is unlike English:
- English is user friendly; the speaker explicitly by choice of words tells the listener exactlly what the speaker intends to say
- Contrastively, in Hebrew, the speaker and listener share the discovery of meaning: The speaker says something, but the listener has a choice of meanings.

Perhaps the reason for biblical Hebrew in doing this is that by the listener participating with the speaker in identifying meaning the listening experience is intensified, facilitating retention of communication.

Today we study the biblical Hebrew connective word, *Caph-lamed.* It can mean
- *All, without exception*
- *Each part, whole*
- *Each group*

As we go through the yearly cycle we will see examples of each of these meanings, thus sharpening the students eye to various nuances of the connective.

Example from this week's parshah.

Example: **Lv06-23a**

Biblical text: *If any part of a sin offering whose blood was brought into the Tent of Meeting to make atonement in the Holy, it shall not be eaten; it* [The sin offering] *shall be burned in fire.*

Rashi text: The Hebrew word **Kaph-Lamed**, normally translated as all or any, can also mean any part, as indicated by the underline. By translating the word this way the verse informs us that if only some blood was brought into the Tent of Meeting and sprinkled there (the way certain specific sin offerings are) then the totality of the sin-offering is invalidated.

Example 1: **Ex20-15** [The following verse describes the prophetic revelation at Sinai where the nation received the Torah] *And the entire nation, without exception, saw the prophetic visions of voice and and lightning and the voice of the ram's*

horn...

Rashi: The Hebrew word *Kaph-Lamed*, means all, without exception. There were no exceptions among the Jewish people who did not have a prophetic experience. Even the slaves and bondmaids among them saw the prophetic visions.

Example 2: **Lv06-11**
Background: The paragraph discusses the offering and consumption of the priestly minchah offering.

Biblcial text: *All male priests may eat it..*

Rashi: *All male priests*, even blemished priests: although they may not offer the offerings they may nevertheless participate in eating it.

The Subjunctive
Daily Rashi -   Monday March 25 2013

All languages have methods of indicating mood. To explain what mood is, consider the following examples:
- You <u>will eat</u> the apple
- You <u>wish to eat</u> the apple
- You <u>must eat</u> the apple
- <u>Please, eat</u> the apple

The first sentence is called the *indicative* since the verb *to eat* describes a possible future action that will happen in reality. Contrastively the other examples indicate not events in the real world but rather emotional dispositions to possible world events. Here are some further details
- Indicative: *You will eat the apple*
- Optative: *You wish to eat the apple*
- Exhortative: *You must eat the apple*
- Optative: *Please, eat the apple*

The general term used to indicate verbs that are not simply indicative, is subjunctive. The subjunctive is a general category that includes as special cases the optative, exhortative etc.

The subjunctive is not always properly translated. For example, Ex15-01, describing

the jubilant emotional reaction of the Jews to the drowing of the Egyptians at the reed sea should be translated as *I wish to sing to God*, not *I will sing to God*. The optative is indicated in Hebrew by a terminal *hey*, *ashirah* vs. *ashir*.

Examples from this week's Parshah:

Example 1: **Lv06-19b**

Background: The Bible is describing the procedures to offer a sin-offering atoning for the sinner's sins.

Biblical text: *The kohen <u>who could sin it</u>* [that is, offer it] *may eat it; it shall be eaten in a holy place, in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting.*

Rashi: The active verb <u>*to sin an offering*</u> which means to offer the sin offering, here is interpreted in a modal manner to mean the person who <u>*could*</u> (or who has the credentials and potential to) offer the sin offering.

Rashi adds: Why don't we simply interpret the verse literally: *The person who sins it* [that is, who offers it] *eats it*? Because it explicitly says below (**Lv06-22**) that all priests may eat the sin offering. So this verse speaking about the priest offering the sin offering must be interpreted in a modal manner.

Note: The usual modes of verbs indicate wishing to do the action, hoping to do the action, exhorting other to do action, etc. The underlying commonality of all these modes is not-real which is the literal meaning of subjunctive. Rashi introduces here a subjunctive usage -potential - which is not present in other languages. It however does occur in the bible.

Connective words - *Interchangability of connective words*
Daily Rashi -   Thursday March 28 2013

Every language has connective words which can connect two sentences or connect nouns with the adjectival phrases modifying them. Some common examples of connective words in English are *because, and, or, if-then, from, when, ...*

A beautiful discovery by Rashi, following the researchers of the Midrash, is that in biblical Hebrew, each connective word has multiple meanings, sometimes as many as half a dozen meanings. The most famous example points out that the biblical Hebrew word *ki,* can have any of the following six meanings! *rather, perhaps, because, when, if-then, that.* As several Rashi researchers have pointed out, this

principle of multiple meanings applies not only to *ki,* but generally applies to all connective words and prefixes.

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A consequence of this principle is that connective words do not necessarily have one meaning. In fact, the same prepositional connective can have opposite meanings - like to and from.

Examples from this week's Parshah:

Example 3: **Lv08-28b**

Background: The Bible is describing the process by which the Aaron and his sons, the priests, were inaugurated into the priesthood.

Biblical text: *And Moses took them* [the Peace offering components] *.... and perfumed them on the altar <u>after</u> the elevation offering*

Rashi text: The Hebrew word **Ayin-Lamed** which usually means spatially <u>on</u>, here means temporally <u>after</u>. (The word <u>after</u> is underlined in the verse).

Example 1:
Ex28-22a, discssing how the Choshen priestly garment was attached to the Eyfod priestly garment, states *And you shall make <u>for</u> the breastplate, chains, twisted like cords, of pure gold, at the end.*

Rashi: The Hebrew word used, *al,* normally means *on.* However, it means *for (for the purpose).*

As we go through the yearly cycle we will have occasion to study uses of *al.*

<u>Example 2</u>: **Ex35-22**
This verse discusses how the Jewish people donated generously for the building of the Temple. The verse describes how both men and women made contributions.

<u>Biblical text</u>: *The men came <u>with</u> the women; every generous hearted person brought bracelets and earrings and rings and buckles, all kinds of golden objects, and every man who waved a waving of gold to the Lord.*

<u>Rashi</u>: The Hebrew word, *al,* which normally means *on,* here, in this verse, means *with.* This word is underlined in the translation. (In fact the Hebrew word *al,* has about 7 meanings)

REFERENCES

The following are some references on the interchageability of specific connectives. There are many more

Esra Shereshevsky, *The Use of Prepositions and Conjunctions in Rashi's Commentary,* **The Jewish Quarterly Review, New Series**, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Jan., 1967), pp. 200-211

Nahum M. Sarna, *The Interchange of the Prepositions Beth and Min in Biblical Hebrew*, **Journal of Biblical Literature**, Vol. 78, No. 4 (Dec., 1959), pp. 310-316

Denominatives
Daily Rashi - Wednesday April 3 2013
Daily Rashi - Thursday April 4 2013

All languages have the capacity to change a noun, naming an object, into a verb naming an activity. Grammarians call this a *denominative.* Here are some common examples from English as well as two Rashis.

Examples from this week's Parshah:

We bring examples from both this week's parshah and next week's parshah.

<u>Example 12</u>: **Lv06-19a**
<u>Background</u>: The Bible is describing the procedures to offer a sin-offering atoning

for the sinner's sins.

Biblical text: *The kohen who <u>sins it</u> shall eat it; it shall be eaten in a holy place, in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting.*

Rashi: The phrase <u>who sins it</u> is a denominative referring to the priest who does the procedures of the sin offerings.

Example 13: **Lv09-15a**

Background: The Bible is describing the sacrificial procedures used to dedicate the Temple.

Biblical text: *And he* [Aaron the High Priest] *...took the nation's sin offering, and he slaughtered it and <u>sinned it</u> like the first one* [that is, like his first sin-offering]

Rashi: The phrase <u>he sinned it</u> is a denominative referring to performing the procedures of the sin-offering

Example 1:
To hammer means to use the *hammer* in its typical way. Here the verb *to hammer* comes from the noun, *hammer.*

Example 2:
To flower means to produce *flowers.* Here the verb *to flower* comes from the noun, *flower.*

Example 3:
To dust means to remove *dust.* Here the verb *to dust* comes from the noun *dust.* Hence from the word *Deshen,* referrring to animal ash, Rashi infers that the verbal *LeDashno* is a denominative meaning *to ash,* that is to *remove the ash.* The verbal form occurs in **Ex27-03b** in a discussion of utensils of the Temple altar.

Rashi notes the contrast that the same verb can give rise to contrastive denominatives: For example Ps80-10 speaks about flowers *taking root* while Job31:12 speaks about *uprooting* flowers. The driving force here is the Piel (intensive mode) which frequently has a connotation of negation.

Example 4:
Ex28-14b discussing the making of the Chosen states *And make two <u>bordered</u> chains of pure gold, twisted like cords, and fasten the corded chains to the fixtures.*

Rashi explains that *bordered* is a passive denominative indicating chains placed on the *borders* or ends of chosen (to attach them to the main garment).

Example 5:
To right means to *go to the right.* Here the verb *to right* comes from the noun *right.* A similar analysis applies to the meaning of *to left.* This is a Rashi comment on **Gn13-09** which *should* be translated as follows: *[Abraham to Lot, when Abraham asked him to part from him] If [you go] to the left, I will right; if [you go] to the right, I will left.*
Notice how all English translations avoid this punchy denominative which adds flavor to the verse.

Example 6 Gn01-22b (*from parshat Breishith*)
To be fruitful means to have many children like a tree producing many *fruit.*Here the verb *to be fruitful* comes from the noun *fruit* and indicates an important attribute of *fruit,* the large number of fruit produced by each tree (Rashi: Gn01-22b)

Example 7 Gn05-28a:
From the noun, *children*, we derive the verb, *to build a household* (Rashi: Gn05-28a). Rashi's perspective is interesting here. We might erroneously translate the Hebrew word *Bayit* as meaning house. Rashi actually translates it meaning *household.* Rashi's translation is extremely precise: Compare the use of *Bayit* in Gn 45-02: "And word was heard in Pharoh's household that Joseph's brother's had come." As Rashi observes, "*The house did not hear; rather the household heard.*"

Example 8,9: Ex01-07 (*from Parshat Shemoth)* Gn48-16c
From the nouns *insects* and *fish* we derive the verbs *to insectify (*in English, *to swarm),* and to *fishify;* both these verbs refer to producing many children since both *insects* and *fish* tend to reproduce alot. Contrastively, *fruits* on trees, appear in clusters of 3 or 4 at a time. Hence the denominatives
- *to be fruitful* - indicates the verb for normal reproduction
- *to swarm* or *to fishify* - indicates the verb for excessive reproduction (large families).

This denominative illustrates a major literary method of figures of speech, common in all languages. The method is called *synechdoche. Synechdoche* refers to naming something by a good example of it. Some common examples of *synechdoche* are
- naming *sweets, honey (honey* is a good example of sweets)
- naming the *24 hour day, day (day,* the 12-hour period, is a good example of the 24 hour period)

- referring to *food,* using the term *bread (bread* is a good example of food).
- similarly, to *insectify (swarm)* or *to fishify* names excessive reproduction by species (insects, fish) that are good examples of excessive reproduction.

Synechdoche, like other figures of speech, is a method common to all languages and is used extensively by Rashi.

Comment: Rashi on Ex01-06 literally says on the biblical text *they insectified (swarmed)* as follows: *They had 6 children at a time.* This has led some Rashi commentators to erroneously attribute this Rashi to the 6 words in the text: *The Jews were* (i) *fruitful*, and (ii) *insectified* (*swarmed*), (iii) *they multiplied and they became* (iv) *very* (v) *very* (vi) *strong* (in numbers). These Rashi commentators argue that Rashi's comment was not the simple meaning of the text but rather a pun: Rashi derives *They gave birth to six children at a time* from the six adverbs and verbs in the verse.

This is rediculous. For example, Moses' father, Amram, only had 3 children (Moses, Aaron and Miryam) not 6. All Rashi comments are rooted in the simple meaning of the text. The simple meaning of the text is that Rashi is commenting on the verb *insectify* and explaining that it means excessive reproduction. We can reformulate this abstractly by using the modern concept of the denominative.

However Rashi chose to phrase the form of his comment as a pun. Instead of saying *The word insectify means excessive reproduction* Rashi instead says *They had six children at a time.* The truth is however this is a pun in form not in content. Not all Jews had six children (as evidenced by Amram). However, overall the Jews had an excessive birth rate.

Example 10: *To leaf* means to cover with leafs. Here the verb *to leaf* (*Sacotha*) comes from the noun *leafs, bush, coverings* (*Sechach*). Then using the *synendoche* figure of speech which says *honey* can refer to *anything sweet,* and *bread* can refer to *any food*, we infer that *sacotha (to leaf)* refers to any type of loose covering. Rashi applies this to **Ex40-03** *and leaf the ark cover over the ark.*

The experienced Hebrew speaker will note that *sacotha* does not exactly mean covering with leafs. It actually refers to covering with leafy branches the type of covering used in the Succah holiday.

Example 11: **Ex39-03**
Biblical text: *And they skyed the gold sheets and cut threads in order to weave with*

the azure, with royal purple, with the worm-dyed wool, and with the linen.

Rashi: *To sky* is a denominative meaning *to hammer* and *make flat* so that it has the appearance of a rolled out sky.

APPENDIX

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 (Metonomy) (**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 **POSSESS**ion & **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: Prefered to COOK it in water; But COOK it at all costs(Even if you dont 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 - Pharoh 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) (NuXX-XX) 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