

## The 10 RashiYomi Rules

### *Their presence in Rashis in DeVaRiM*

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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 review one four-word phrase which occurs three times in the Torah in different forms and which has eight Rashis. We believe the use of parallelism here breaks new ground in explaining Rashi.*

*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](mailto:RashiYomi@GMail.Com).*

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## **Parallelism-Meaning *Daily Rashi* Dt01-13b,c,d,e Ex18-21,b,c Ex23-08b,d July 22 - July 29, 2017**

### **Background:** In

- **Ex18-21**, Jethro advises Moses, after consulting with God, to appoint judges based on certain characteristics (*rich, God-fearing, truthful, hating money*).
- **Dt01-13**, Moses relates how he followed this command.

However, the words, adjectives, or descriptions of the four attributes differ in the two verses. To gain complete insight into Rashi we must align the two sets of 4 attributes. This allows us to focus on the true intent and meaning of each of the terms. I have also added **Ex23-08** which contains 2 (of the four) attributes of judges destroyed by bribery.

**Biblical Text and Rashi Text:** The biblical text as interpreted by Rashi is compactly presented in the table below. In constructing the table, I reversed the order of the biblical list of attributes in **Dt01-13** and **Ex23-08** in order to align them. We now examine each column and see how the various terms and Rashis converge to shed light.

Verses - Rashis	Verse deals with	#1	#2	#3	#4
<b>Ex18-21b,c</b>	Attributes needed for good judges	Men of skill ( <u>Rashi</u> : Rich)	Fear God	Truthful people ( <u>Rashi</u> : You can depend on them)	Hating money
<b>Ex23-08b,d</b>	Attributes of good judges destroyed by bribery			<u>Rashi</u> : truthful verdicts	mental sharpness
<b>Dt01-13b,c,d,e</b>	Attributes needed for good judges	Men known throughout the tribe	<u>Rashi</u> : Important personages	<u>Rashi</u> : Wise	<u>Rashi</u> : Brilliant (insightful)

- Column #1: The biblical terms used are *men known throughout the tribe* and *anshey chayil, warrior men*; certain English Bibles (e.g. Stone translation) translate *anshei chayil* as *men of accomplishment*. I believe the proper translation of *chayil* is *skilled*. For example the famous *eyshet chayil* poem chanted on Friday night at the dinner table does not praise the *warrior woman* but rather the *skilled woman*. Although *chayil* is used in a military context, it refers there to *skill in fighting* not to strength.

Rashi explains in **Dt01-13** that *the judges have to be known throughout the tribe so that they respect him*. But in **Ex18-21** Rashi translates *men of skill* to mean *rich*.

I would interpret these two Rashis as follows: *Judges have to have established businesses throughout the tribe. These businesses give wealth to the judges but also gives them a "name" throughout the tribe. The judges are known as influencing the business establishments of the tribe and thereby earn tribal respect.*

- Column #2: The biblical word *anashim* has two meanings in the bible: i) people and ii) personages (important people). Rashi here in **Dt01-13** interprets the word *anashim* as important *personages*. In **Ex18-21** the corresponding phrase is *God-fearing*.

I would interpret these two Rashis as follows: The tribe has to perceive the judge as being an important *personage* precisely because he *fears God*. After all, the judge is the last social structure to pass judgement. There is no one on top of the

judges. Therefore, the people want judges who realize that God reviews their decisions, God-fearing judges, since this leads to respect for the judges.

- Column #3: **Ex18-21** uses the phrase *men of truth* while **Dt01-13** uses *wise*. Although **Ex23-08** uses the term *tzaddik, righteous*, Rashi however interprets this to mean *righteous verdicts*, that is, *righteousness* refers to the verdicts, not to the people.

I would interpret the three phrases *men of truth*, *wise*, *righteous verdicts* as follows. Certain judgments depend on knowledge of commercial and industry custom. For example, the Rav, Rabbi Dr. Joseph B. Soloveitchick, related the following case that came before his grandfather:

Two diamond merchants shook hands on a deal. But delivery took place in a day and by that time the value of the gems had deteriorated over 100,000 dollars. The question arose whether the deal could be retracted. Rav Chaim, the Rav's grandfather said the deal had to go through *since handshakes are an industry standard of deal agreement in the diamond industry and Jewish law respects all established industry standards*.

Here the verdict was reached, not through analytic means, but rather through a thorough knowledge of all industry customs. Thus, we see that *wise* relates to *truth* in the sense of *dependability because of knowledge of industry customs*.

- Column #4: **Dt01-13** speaks about *insightfulness* or *analytic ability*. This is important as sometimes judges must reach a verdict through legal analysis. In **Ex23-08** the word used is *mental sharpness*. Interestingly, in **Ex18-21** it simply talks about *a judge who despises wealth* since interest in *wealth* frequently leads to a holistic approach to items overlooking analytic distinctions which are seen as arbitrary. Thus, wealth encourages lack of emphasis on distinctions.

The summary of all this is that a judge *should be a business leader with knowledge of business customs; he should fear God and not care per se about wealth. It would then follow that this person is known throughout the tribe as someone you can depend on and respect and whose verdicts reflect a search for truth since he is God-fearing*.

**Contribution of Rashi Newsletter:** We have covered new ground in Rashi this week. I used to think that the 8 Rashis we discussed were examples of the **Meaning-Synonym** method. While it is true Rashi used his knowledge of **meaning** and **synonyms**, there is more to this Rashi. I feel that the **Parallelism** method is the ultimate driver of these Rashis. A typical Rashi paradigm for **Parallelism** exegesis occurs when one set of verses *orders* an activity and a second set of verses describes the *compliance with the order*. By comparing the *order* and *compliance* using the parallelism method we obtain a fuller and more complete understanding. For example, *wise* in the Rashis we covered today does not for example mean someone who can win Jeopardy or who can get grades of A. Rather, *wise* is parallel to *truthful* which Rashi translates as *dependable*. This corresponds to *wisdom* in industry standards and customs facilitating verdicts consistent with business practice. I believe this **parallelism** approach to Rashi gives a more complete understanding. It is also new territory since the classical Rashi commentators do not refer to the **parallelism** even though as I pointed out above it follows an *order-compliance* paradigm.

**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

**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

**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)

**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