

The 10 RashiYomi Rules
Their presence in Rashis in BeHaR-BeChuQoThaI
Vol. 29#08 - 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 year I am focusing on the presence of Jewish Law in verses and Rashi.

This week we review the Torah's description of how apostasy happens. The Torah describes apostasy, leaving the Jewish people, as a 6-step process; it doesn't just happen in an instant. While this is not "Jewish law" it is Jewish guidance on how to stop the most severe of all sins, leaving Judaism.

I am also continuing to explain the Rashi rules in a more leisurely pace.

This week's digest should be of special interest to those in pastoral care since it describes how to do outreach to those leaving Judaism.

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 Daily Rashi Lv26-14a,b Lv27-15a,b,c,d,e Tue-Mon May 8th - May 14th, 2018

Background: The Torah at Lv26 describes the punishments if we *don't observe the Torah*. *Don't observe the Torah* is described through 6 stages of leaving it. The Biblical text and the Rashi comments are compactly presented in the table below. The Table is based on the Rashi **Parallelism** method. As I mentioned last week, I met someone in the supermarket a few weeks ago who told me that some Rashi explanations in the digests are above his head. It turns out that I sometimes take for granted the reader's understanding of certain Rashis. So, I am devoting myself to explaining these Rashi methods in a very leisurely pace so everyone can understand them. In passing, if you would like to see more features in the Rashi digest please email me at Rashiyomi@GMail.Com. Remember, this is your email list.

Biblical & Rashi Text: (See next page)

Sequence	Introduction	Use of <i>my</i>	Word for commandments	Activity	Use of <i>my</i>	Word for commandments	Rashi: Stage of irreligiosity
1	If			You do not listen	To <i>me</i>		Learning
2				You do not do		All these commandments	Non-observance
3	If	in <i>my</i>	statutes	You despise			Ridiculing laws without reasons
4	If	<i>my</i>	civil law	You find despicable			Seeing Jewish civil law as antiquated
5	Until			There is no doing	<i>My</i>	Commandments	Preventing others from observance
6	Until			Annul	<i>My</i>	Covenant	Denial of Divine Revelation

Table should be read left to right and top to bottom in green shaded area. The columns show differences which the non-colored Rashi column explains. This table will be explained in a leisurely manner in the rest of the digest.

Contribution of Rashi Newsletter:

What is **parallelism**? How does it justify the inferences above? Let us carefully go over the inferences. We do this row by row.

Rows 1 and 2

STEP 0 - The verse

The verse says: *If you don't listen to me and don't do these commandments.*

The idea of **parallelism** is that the verse has two parts and each part seems to say the same thing. The first step in understanding parallelism is to identify the two parts. The table shows us how to break this up. Here is the same verse with its two parts which we call A and B. Notice how A and B almost say the same thing.

STEP 1 for Rows 1 and 2 - *The two parts*

A) *If you don't listen to me*

B) *If you don't do these commandments*

STEP 2 for Rows 1 and 2 - *The differences*

Now that we see the A and B part of the verse the next step seeks commonalities and differences. These should be underlined. Again, the table does this all for us

but we present A and B below: The italicized parts of A and B are the same while the underlined parts differ.

A) *If you don't listen to me*

B) *If you don't do these commandments*

STEP 3 for Rows 1 and 2 - *The explanation of the differences.*

In step 3 we attempt to find the nuances or subtleties in the underlined differences. Sometimes, this is too much for us so we need Rashi's help. In this case for Rows 1 and Rows 2 it may be easy. After all, do commandments indicates observance; listen to God would seem to indicate just study such as listening to a teacher or listening to leaning. This is in fact what Rashi says

A) *If you don't listen to me* ----- Rashi: Don't learn

B) *If you don't do these commandments* ---- Rashi: Don't perform

If you now look at the table you will see Steps 1,2, and 3.

Rows 3 and 4

Let us now continue. We present the 3-step analysis of parallelism for rows 3 and 4.

STEP 0 - *The verse*

In step 0 we just state the verse.

If my statutes you despise and my civil ordinances you loathe

STEP 1 for Rows 3 and 4 - *The two parts*

In step 1 we break that verse into two parts.

A) *If my statutes you despise*

B) *If my civil ordinances you loathe*

STEP 2 for Rows 3 and 4 - *The differences*

In step 2 we try and find commonality and differences.

A) *If my statutes you despise*

B) *If my civil ordinances you loathe*

Notice how I consider *despise* and *loathe* the same since they both mean to detest and abhor. The main differences between the two verses are the words describing the commandments. Part A uses statutes while Part B uses civil ordinances.

STEP 3 or Rows 3 and 4 - *The differences explained*

In step 3 we try to understand the nuances and subtleties in these two differences. Here we need Rashi's help.

- *Statutes* denote commandments without apparent or immediate reason
- *Civil ordinances* denote laws like the prohibition against theft

This makes sense. First the non-believer attacks things he doesn't understand such as the statutes; then he also attacks the rational laws (because we could derive them ourselves so why do we need to learn them from the Torah)

Rashi brilliantly adds further nuance. Didn't row 2 state that the person no longer does the commandments. So, what does row 3 *add*? The reader can ask, "Why does Row 3 have to *add* anything? Perhaps it is just *repeating* Row 2?" This is a good question. A very great Bible Scholar, James Kugel answered this in his book on **parallelism**: Kugel explains that real parallelism always has the B clause *adding* to the A clause. In this case the A clause of Row 3 has to *add* to the B clause of Row 2.

"Why?" you say. Kugel explains that the **Parallelism** style is always used in a climactic manner. This is true in all cultures. It is the way that **parallelism** is intended to be used by the Poet or Author. The B clause must always add to the A clause. Kugel presents a true challenge to readers of the Bible. Some scholars think he has gone too far. Actually, as we will show, Rashi always interpreted **Parallelism** using Kugel's *add* principle. I recommend all people who read the bible whether simple laymen, scholars, or advanced Rabbis read his excellent book, "The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History." This was first published in 1981 (Yale University Press) and recently has been reprinted.

Getting back to Rows 3 and 4, Row 3, despising the statutes must add something to Row 2, non-observance. Rashi does the following

- Row 2: If you don't do all these commandments ----- Rashi: Observance
- Row 3: If just seeing my statutes (performed by others) makes you despise ---- Rashi: Adds nuance of despise observance of others
- Row 4: If just hearing the idea that Judaism is a civilization with civil ordinances makes you sick --- Rashi: Adds nuance of despising judges

Let us summarize

STEP 3 for Rows 3 and 4 - Explaining the differences

A) *If my statutes you despise* ---- Rashi: Because statutes lack reason. You despise seeing anyone observing them: "Why do the irrational?"

B) *If my civil ordinances you loathe* ---- Rashi: Eventually you loathe reasonable laws *as interpreted by Jewish Rabbis*. This is not as farfetched as may appear. Many people think the prohibition-of-interest laws are silly. When they loan money to each other they don't follow the advice of Rabbis to create certain documents. The point of view is: "We observe what is rational. But American law is already rational. Why do I have to commemorate something several 1000 years old? Today we know that interest can sometimes be good and stimulate the economy."

Summary of Rows 1 - Rows 4

We can summarize Rows 1 - Rows 4 by indicating symptoms of people on the path of leaving Judaism. As indicated earlier, these verses describe a 6-step process very useful to those in pastoral care. Here are the *symptoms* of the first 4 stages.

* Row 1: **Don't learn:** I don't feel like going to the Rabbi's *shiur* teaching lesson today

* Row 2: **Don't observe:** I had a business conference oversea and decided to skip davening (Performance)

* Row 3: **Despising statue observance of others:** I stop buying suits in my usual store since I am charged extra to check for the presence of wool and linen. It is not like I ordered a suit made of wool and linen. If it happens it happens

* Row 4: **Despising Jewish Sage interpretation of civil laws:** To do this business deal I needed money. My usual friends would only give it to me if I sign an ancient contract protecting against interest. So, I made a deal with a non-Jewish colleague. Why do people have to observe rituals thousands of years old?

I again emphasize that Kugel's approach *B adds to A* is very deep. It is so easy to just read a poem and say *repetition*. Kugel's approach requires work. As we shall see, Rashi always applied Kugel's approach.

Before we leave rows 3 and 4 we should ask if I explained the Rashi or is it "over my head." The key idea here is not whether you the reader could arrive at the Rashi. The key idea here is whether you understand that

i) Rashi sees parallelism

- ii) Rashi focuses on the underlined differences between the verses
- iii) Rashi seeks to explain the nuances of these underlined differences using the *add* principle.

True, Rashi may come up with things I didn't foresee. But the important thing is I see Rashi, not as just making an arbitrary homily, but rather as applying principles. Here is a recap of the four verse phrases and Rashi's key points. The underlined phrases are the differences.

Row 1) If you don't listen to me - Rashi: Don't learn

The next 3 rows, Rows 2 through 4, deal with lack of observance.

Row 2) If you don't do all these commandments - Rashi: Don't observe

Row 3) If in my statutes you despise - Rashi: Can't stand seeing other people observe statutes, commandments without apparent reason

Row 4) If in my civil ordinances you loathe - Rashi: Can't stand Jewish sages taking something rational and adding ancient rituals

Rows 5 and Rows 6

STEP 0 - Row 5 and Row 6 - *The verse*

Until not doing my commandments, until annulling my covenant.

STEP 1 of Rows 5 and 6 - *The two parts*

Perhaps the reader would like to try by himself before seeing the answer how to break this up.

A) *Until not doing my commandments,*

B) *Until annulling my covenant.*

STEP 2 of Rows 5 and 6 - *The differences*

A) *Until not doing my commandments,*

B) *Until annulling my covenant.*

STEP 3 of Rows 5 and 6 - *Explaining the differences*

A) *Until not doing my commandments, --- Rashi: Actively trying to prevent or steering others from doing my commandments*

B) *Until annulling my covenant----- Rashi: Denying Divine revelation, the basis of our covenant.*

Summary: What would I like the reader to walk away with after reading this

First: The *idea* that a repeated biblical theme can develop over several stages

Second: The *idea* that by underlining differences we can *begin* to understand the progression in the verses

Third: That advanced Parallelism requires us to use the *add* rule: That clause B always adds to clause A and this is something that all poets, Whether God or man expect from their listener. We may not be at that level yet, but it is something to strive for in our learning. Rashi always used advanced Parallelism.

For those interested in pastoral issues such as outreach and counseling I list the 6 stages outlined in these Rashis. The first four have already been done.

* Row 1: **Don't listen: (Example)** I don't feel like going to the Rabbi's *shiur* teaching lesson today

* Row 2: **Don't do: (Example)** I had a business conference oversea and decided to skip davening

* Row 3: **Despise Statute Observance (of others): (Example)** I stop buying suits in my usual store since I am charged extra to check for the presence of wool and linen. It is not like I ordered a suit made of wool and linen. If it happens it happens

* Row 4: **Despise Rabbinic understanding of (rational) civil ordinances: (Example)** To do this business deal I needed money. My usual friends would only give it to me if I sign an ancient contract protecting against interest. So, I made a deal with a non-Jewish colleague. Why do people have to observe rituals thousands of years old?

* Row 5: **Until now doing the commandments: (Example)** I being to participate in activities discouraging people from observance. I might make my vacations on Sabbaths and holidays inconveniencing my loved ones who would like to participate with me.

* Row 6: **Until annulment of my covenant: (Example)** Finally, I defend my actions by denying the Divinity of the law.

If you look around you, you can find elements of these six stages in people who are not religious. The skilled pastoral counselor can focus on any stage and make a person go backwards instead of forward.

Comment: We have explained most of the Rashis. Again, the goal was not to enable the reader to independently come up with the Rashi comment but rather to make the reader appreciate Rashi as following specific rules based on the text. I also point out that we have done most of the Rashi comments. We have left out one

very advanced issue since it would have made the digest too big: Rashi actually has 7 not 6 stages. Rashi breaks up what we have called stage 6, *denial of prophecy*, into two parts: *denial of the Divine origin of the commandments and denial of revelation and prophecy altogether*. Rashi derives this from the alternating use of the possessive word *my* (my commandments). The interested or advanced reader can review the table where the word *my* is italicized showing how Rashi would approach this.

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