

## **The 10 RashiYomi Rules**

***Their presence in Rashis in BeHa'aLoTheChaH***

**Vol. 29#11 - Adapted from Rashi-is-Simple**

(c) RashiYomi Incorporated, Dr. Hendel President, May 28th, 2018

For the full copyright statement see the Appendix

### **Useful URLs:**

Rashiyomi Website: [≤http://www.RashiYomi.Com≥](http://www.RashiYomi.Com)  
This week's issue: [≤http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule2911.pdf≥](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule2911.pdf)  
Former week's issue: [<http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule.htm>](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule.htm)  
Old weekly Rashi's: [≤http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule.htm≥](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule.htm)  
Rashi short e-course: <http://www.Rashiyomi.com/RashiShortGuideHTMLBook.htm>  
[<http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule.htm>](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rule.htm)  
Hebrew-English Rashi: [<http://www.chabad.org/library/bible\\_cdo/aid/63255/jewish/The-Bible-with-Rashi.htm>](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/63255/jewish/The-Bible-with-Rashi.htm)

### **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.*

*One of the most important areas of Jewish law, the very severe prohibition of gossip and slander, has its roots in this week's parshah. A full understanding of the Biblical text greatly enhances performance.*

*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).*

**Subscribe / Unsubscribe:** Email

RashiYomi@GMail.Com <mailto:RashiYomi@GMail.Com>

**Meaning *Daily Rashi* Nu12-01c, d, g Mon-Wed 5/28-30/18**

**Reference *Daily Rashi* Nu12-01e, h:02b Thu-Sat 5/31-6/1/18**

**Formatting *Daily Rashi* Nu12-01f Sun 6/2/18**

**Grammar *Daily Rashi* Nu12-01b Mon 6/3/18**

**Background:** Our task today will be to explain the discrepancy between the way Jewish law reads Nu12 and what it actually says.

Jewish Law: Moses separated from his wife, Tziporah, despite her being a religious good-looking person. Miriam asked Aaron to help and get them back together claiming that Moses was letting his prophecy go to his head. God in turn punished Miriam

The actual text: Miriam and Aaron spoke about the Ethiopian wife Moses had married because he married an Ethiopian wife. They said: "Did God only frequently speak to Moses: Has he not frequently spoken to us also?" God heard. But Moses was humbler than any other person. God then suddenly revealed himself to all three of them and punished Miriam.

One can certainly see a wide gap between what Jewish Law sees in the text and what the text actually says.

Let us now, one by one, derive from the text what Jewish law says.

Tziporah's Divorce: A very powerful method is the **Reference Method**. It explicitly says at **Ex18-02**, *Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Tziporah, Moses wife and her two sons, after her divorce*. So, we have an explicit reference to the fact that she was divorced.

Miriam instigated the conversation: Although the text says, *Miriam and Aaron spoke about Moses*, the verb spoke is singular (*Vatedaber*) while the subject is plural (Miriam and Aaron). In biblical Hebrew, when a singular verb is used with a plural subject it means that the first person mentioned in the subject instigated the activity (in this case talking about

Moses) and the 2nd person tagged along. So indeed, this whole conversation was spearheaded by Miriam.

Tziporah was attractive, religious, with a nice personality: But the bible simply calls her an Ethiopian.

Interestingly, the Jewish sages used modern research methods to show that the word Ethiopian can mean distinguished. This is done by doing a computer search on the word and seeing if it *exclusively* means Ethiopian. There are four cases where it seems to mean *distinguished*. The idea here is just as you can easily pick out an Ethiopian from a white crowd so too you can easily pick out a distinguished person. For this research done by the Talmudic Rabbis see the following table.

Verse	Rough Text of Verse	Who is called an Ethiopian	Why?
Ps07-01	<i>A Psalm for David written about the Benjaminite Ethiopian</i>	King Saul, a Benjaminite, who pursued David	He was a distinguished leader
Amos09-01	<i>God says that the Jews are like Ethiopians</i>	The Jews	They are distinguished
Jer38-7,39-15:18	<i>The Ethiopian servant of the King saves Jeremiah and is spared by God</i>	Baruch Ben Nariah who was a religious servant of king and a royal contact for Jeremiah (Jer. 32:12, Chapter 36, Chapter 43)	Baruch was one of the better and more distinguished servants of the King
Nu12-01	<i>Moses' Ethiopian wife</i>	Tziporah, Moses wife (cf. Ex18-01:02)	She was very distinguished.

Attractive and Nice: But maybe Tziporah was just attractive (So the bible is making a point that despite her attractiveness, Moses divorced her). How do we know she was attractive, religious, and nice?

Here we use the Rashi **Formatting method**: A modern author would indicate unspecified emphasis using underline or bold. The biblical writer uses repetition. Thus, the following biblical sentence with the underlined repetition

Bible: They spoke about the distinguished wife Moses had taken  
because he had taken a distinguished wife

is read by a modern reader as

Bible: They about the ***distinguished wife*** Moses had taken.

By using bold or italics the modern author indicates an extra emphasis without telling us what that emphasis is, hence the term *unspecified*

*emphasis*. The text seems to be telling us that Moses wife was really really distinguished.

This is an unspecified emphasis which the Talmudic rabbis interpret to mean *she was really distinguished both physically (attractive) and personally (religious and of nice character)*.

How do we know they blamed the divorce on his prophetic state: We use the **Reference Method** one more time. **Ex19-15** clearly states that separating from married life was a prerequisite to the prophetic revelation at Sinai.

We now put the pieces together: Moses married an attractive, religious woman of fine character but had divorced her. Miriam apparently thought that Moses did this because of his need to prophetically interact with God. She demurs, "Is it only Moses who frequently spoke to God; does not God speak to us frequently?"

There is then a little fill-in. Miriam wanted to get Moses and Tziporah back together. For this she needed to work with a male. They presumably would invite them (Moses and Tziporah) over for dinner and remind them of their courtship and encourage reunion.

Why call this slander & gossip: We now get to the heart of the Jewish law derived from this text. The Jewish law category of slander and gossip also includes thinking badly of good people and making hasty judgements. The Chafetz Chaim, the author of the legal Jewish books on slander explains what Miriam's sin was.

First: Her sin wasn't being malicious and nasty since Miriam wanted to get Moses and Tziporah back together.

But her sin was twofold. She states declaratively, *Is it only Moses that frequently spoke to God? Does he not also frequently speak to us (and we haven't separated from our spouses)?* In other words, she should have spoken with less surety such as: *It appears that Moses may be making an incorrect assumption about prophecy. Let's check this out.*

Secondly, as the continuation of the text says *Is it only Moses that frequently spoke to God?... But Moses was the most modest person*

*on the earth.* In other words, her sin was saying something that totally contradicted his personality. If you know a person has a certain personality or trait you shouldn't accuse them of being otherwise.

There is a lot more to be learned from this Chapter. For one thing, as stated at the end of the Chapter, the entire nation gave Miriam an honor guard; they refused to break camp until she recovered from her leprosy. We infer from this, that Miriam as a prophetess, would frequently settle marital disputes and bring couples back together. She was highly respected. No one held against her the fact that she wanted to reunite Moses and Tziporah. In this regard, she was like her brother Aaron, the High Priest, who continuously pursued peace.

Reading this chapter should give the reader a greater appreciation of the Jewish law attitude on proper speech.

**Comment:** We left out explanation of one Rashi comment. Rashi points out that *Ethiopian* is numerologically equal to *knockout* because of her great beauty. We have explained many times that *after* Rashi uses grammatically sound methods to derive a Rashi, he may *supplement* the logical grammatical explanation with a punchy numerological pun. His purpose in this pun or numerology is not to *derive* the law but rather to say something *cute* to facilitate *memorization* of the law. Don't forget, in Rashi's time there were no i-Phones or computers. If something was not punchy you would forget it. Rashi skillfully used Gematria, puns and numerology to facilitate memory. Why am I so sure? Because Rashi *only* states these cute puns *after* he carefully derives them using grammar and logic.

## THE 10 RASHI RULE CATEGORIES / THE 30 RASHIRULE

Copyright 2001, Rashiyomi Inc., Dr Hendel President, [www.Rashiyomi.com/rules-01.htm](http://www.Rashiyomi.com/rules-01.htm)

### **NOTE ON COPYRIGHTS:**

*This particular appendix, like many portions of the Rashiyomi website, are protected by a paid copyright. However, we clarify that the intent of Rashiyomi copyright statements is the intent expressed in the creative commons copyright statement, the full statement of which may be found at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/legalcode> and the human readable summary which may be found at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>. The basic intent is: (1) **(by)** any citation of Rashiyomi explanations, rules etc should acknowledge the Rashiyomi website as the author by giving its URL: <http://www.Rashiyomi.com> (or the specific page on the website); (2) **(nc)** It is prohibited for anyone to use the material on this website for commercial use, that is to derive monetary gain from it; (3) **(sa)** while people are encouraged to cite paragraphs of explanations from Rashiyomi in their own works, they must share their works in a similar manner under the creative commons agreement, **cc by nc sa version 3.0**; they must cite the urls for the Rashiyomi website and the creative commons website. In short our intention is to facilitate distribution of Torah educational material and not inhibit that distribution with monetary interests or lack of acknowledgment. For precise legal details see the URLs cited earlier. The contents of this paragraph govern all future uses of Rashiyomi material and take precedence (or clarify and explain) already existing copyrights as well as permissions given in private emails.*

=====

**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

=====

**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.

=====

**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

=====

**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)

=====

**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

=====

**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.

=====

**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