

**The 10 RashiYomi Rules**  
***Their presence in Rashis in She'LaCh LeChaH***  
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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.*

*Today we illustrate the straightforwardness of certain Rashi comments that appear to be homiletic or fancy. Today's reading is excellent for someone who wishes to understand Rashi as giving a grammatical reading of the text vs. a fanciful reading.*

*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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## **Grammar Daily Rashi Nu15-06a Tuesday-Wed June 5-6 2018**

**Background:** The Torah at **Numbers 15** gives the laws for libation offerings. The idea is simple: If you offer certain types of animal offerings then you must *accompany* the offering with a libation offering of flour, oil, and wine. The amount of flour, oil, and wine differs according to the animal. Let us look at a few verses to sense this.

Before we look at these verses we state some conventions. Throughout the citation we refer to biblical measures. In English we have *cups, quarts, pints, gallons*. In Biblical Hebrew we have *issaron, log, and hin*. The exact quantity of this does not matter; just think of them as measures.

## **Biblical Text: Nu15-1:6**

- For lambs: Libation offerings are 1 *Issaron* flour, 1 *log* oil, 1/4 *hin* wine
- For Rams: Libation offerings are 2 *issarons* flour, 2 *log* oil, 1/3 *hin* wine

Here is the subtlety. The Biblical Hebrew introduces the For Ram clause using the Hebrew word *oh*. Here is the Rashi comment.

## **Rashi Text:**

You can think of *oh ram* as meaning *if you offer a ram* or the way we have translated it above as for rams.

However, the Talmudic Rabbis (Menachoth 23a, Chulin 91) *darshaned* this word, *oh*, to refer to the pallax [Note: A lamb until 1-year old is called a *lamb*, from 1 year and 1 month it is call a *ram*, during the 1st month of its second year it is called a *pallax*; think of *lamb-pallax-ram* as *child-teenager-adult*]

**Contribution of Rashi Newsletter:** Rashi's 1st mentioned point in his commentary is that both the Hebrew prefix letter *vav* and the word *aleph-vau*, *oh*, can mean *or*. So according to Rashi, the verse is simply listing the 2nd case, *ram*, after discussing the first case, *sheep*.

How then do we take the Talmudic Rabbis explanation that use of *oh* means the *pallax*? Rashi in his comment explicitly uses the word *derash* to describe *oh* as meaning *pallax*. It seems that the Talmudic Rabbis are simply picking on the elongated form of the word *or* (*oh* vs. *vav*) and using it to emphasize and *include something extra*. This is certainly fancy and not straightforward meaning. One school of thought thinks of these Talmudic exegesis as memory pegs; they have no real meaning but were just made to help you remember something.

Not so! Rashi is purely grammatical!!

To understand Rashi consider a mother who offers her children *vanilla* or *chocolate* Sundays. There are several ways of understanding this

- Disjunctive or: *Either* the child gets a Sunday that is exclusively *vanilla* or a Sunday that is exclusively *chocolate*.
- Conjunctive or: The child can get a pure vanilla Sunday, a pure chocolate Sunday, or combo vanilla-chocolate.

In English, we have the word *or*. The word *or* does not necessarily imply conjunctive or disjunctive or.

However, according to Rashi and the Talmudic Rabbis, the biblical word *oh* is used for *conjunctive or*. Let us see how this works in **Numbers 15**

- Lamb (conjunctive) or Ram: Rashi: The *or* functions conjunctively. You can have *lamb*, *ram*, or *lamb-ram* combo, the *pallax*. (Think of teenager as a mixture of child and adult). ;
- Here is another example from **Nu. 15**. The libation laws apply to *up offerings* or *slaughter offerings*. *Up offerings* means they are offered completely *up* to God; *slaughter* offerings refers to the peace

offerings and means the owner *slaughters* and eats of the offering (the Priest and Altar also have a portion). By using the conjunctive or in the phrase *up offerings or slaughter offerings* we get again the combo, the *up-slaughter* offering, that is an offering that has characteristics of *up offerings* and characteristics of *slaughter offerings*. The Talmud says this refers to the *thanksgiving offering* because *like a slaughter offering* the owner, priest and altar eat from the animal and *like an up offering* the matzoh loaves of the *slaughter offering* are *not* eaten by the owner.

It is interesting that Rashi only cites the Talmud on the phrase *lamb or ram* but not on the phrase *up or slaughter*. I have said many times that Rashi may give one example and expect the teacher or student to fill in and apply to other examples.

**Comment:** But is this the simple straightforward meaning of the text?

Yes. Rashi is explaining a principle of Talmudic Grammar! Here is an English analogy: Suppose I say *pass the apples*; then it is grammatical to infer that there were 2 apples. The extra *s* in *apples* means an extra apple. Not because we play games '*extra letters extra apples*' but rather because the *s* refers to the grammatical plural and the plural means at least 2.

Suppose you had learned in school that *oh* means conjunctive *or*. Suppose you were told to use *prefix vav* for *or* but *oh* for conjunctive *or*. Suppose you had exercises and practiced this till it was second nature. Then you would read these passages with *oh* that we have discussed - lamb or ram, up or slaughter - as grammatically indicating combinations and referring to a lamb-ram, the pallax, or an up-slaughter offering, the Thanksgiving offering.

If you understand this Rashi then your entire understanding of Rashi will change. You can ask: but didn't Rashi call this a *derash*? And that too is part of the culture the Rashi Newsletter is trying to change. There is this mythology that there is *peshat* and *derash* and *that is the way things are*. No! There is only *peshat*, sound grammatical reading of the text; that is

all Rashi does. All *derash* are no different than the *pass me the apples* derash. Rashi calls it *derash* because it requires extra knowledge of grammar.

### **Grammar Daily Rashi Nu15-04a,12a,b Thu-Sat June 7-9 2018**

**Background:** We have already indicated that **Nu15** teaches us that all offerings must be accompanied by libations. But what is the nature of this obligation? What drives the libations?

To answer this question we ask some routine questions about the nature of these laws. These questions are always asked when there is a requirement

- Suppose one person brought two offerings. Is there a requirement of two libations or one libation? That is, is the requirement of libation *per offeror* or *per offering*?\_
- Suppose several people each bring one sheep. Does each owner bring a libation for their offering? Or, is there one libation for the sheep offerings on the altar? That is, is the libation *per owner*, or *per officiating priest*? On whom is the requirement to offer libations?

Returning to our theme for this week, this is not homily or fancy or Talmudic pickiness. It is rather the type of straightforward clarification we always seek when told a new ruling.

Rashi answers these questions by picking up on three phrases in the Torah portion which address this issue. Here are the three phrases and what they imply

- *These libations described above are what you should offer for one ox, one ram or one sheet. According to how many [animals] you offer, you shall similarly do by that number [of libations].*

So, if you offer many sheep you offer that many libation offerings

- *If the offeror offers an offering then (s)he shall offer the following*

## libations

So, the requirement of libations is per offeror not per animal

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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