

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 the presence of Jewish Law in verses and Rashi.

A Special Rashi-Rambam treat today. We shall explore 3 approaches to the treatment of verses with requirements for judges. We will present Rashi's approach, Rambam's approach, with their justifications. Finally, we shall show how the Rashiyomi approach can give a deeper understanding of Talmudic texts.

This issue should be of benefit to everyone from ordinary people, to Beth Jacob teachers of little children, to Rabbis trained in advanced Talmudic analysis.

Enjoy

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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Meaning-Synonyms Other Verses *Daily Rashi* Dt01-13c,d,e, 01-15b, Ex18-21b,c,d *Thur-Thur* 7/19/2018-7/26/2018

Background: The Bible in the given verses spells out the requirements for judges, that is, what qualities and attributes does a judge have to possess. One verse comes from Jethro's recommendation to Moses to select certain people as judges while the other verse describes Moses description of what he sought.

Biblical Text:

Verse A

Bring to me [Moses] people who are

- *Wise*
- *Understanding*
- *Known to your tribes*

and I will make them heads on you.

Verse B

[Moses relating what was brought] *And I took heads of your tribe, people who were*

- *Wise*
- *Known to your tribes.*

Verse C

[Jethro to Moses] *You [Moses] will see from the nation*

- *Valiant people*

- *who fear God*
 - *People of truth*
 - *Who despise monetary pursuit*
- and make them people in charge of 1000s, 100s, 50s, and 10s of people.*

Rashi Text: Rashi does two things: He explains each of the bulleted phrases above and also comments on the discrepancy between the 3 things he looked for (Verse A), the 2 things he found (Verse B), and the 4 things proposed by Jethro (Verse C). Here are the comments

- *Wise* - Knowledgeable. Has a lot of raw facts at his/her command.
- *Understanding* - Insightful. Can infer from existing data.
- *Known to your tribes* - Socially recognized and involved with people
- *Valiant people* - wealthy so that they don't have to flatter or recognize people [unnecessarily]
- *who fear God* -
- *people of truth* - dependable people, whose word can be relied on
- *Despise monetary pursuit* - They even despise making money for themselves.

Bible list – Dt01-13,15, Ex18-21	Rashi	Rambam	Rashiyomi approach – Other Verses - Biblical Illustrative Stories
Wise	Knowledgeable – raw facts	Wise	Gn41-33:39 Joseph in interpreting Pharoh's dream requests that Pharoh appoint a wise & understanding person to allocate food during the famine years. Pharoh concurs and notes <i>After God revealed all this to you there is no one as wise & understanding as you.</i>
Understanding	Insightful – can derive/infer facts	& Understanding	
Known to tribes	Socially respectable	Known to tribes	
Valiant	Wealthy so no need for flattery or unnecessary recognition	Stand up for oppressed	Ex02-16:20 Moses stood up to defend Jethro's daughters from the harassment of the shepherds. Notice that despite saving them Moses did not ask for food or lodging (He controlled his emotions from asking for gifts for his acts of courage)
God fearing	God fearing	God fearing	Gn42-18:24 Joseph judges his brothers. After jailing them for three days he decided to release them and only retain one as hostage prisoner. Upon so doing he explains "I fear God", in other words he can't do whatever he wants.
Truthful	Dependable; their word is solid	Truth seeking for sake of truth	Nu17-16:24 Korach asserted that any person could be high priest. The rebellion cost the Jews 250 lives. Moses did not stop there. He pursued truth for the sake of truth. He performed at God's request an experiment: Each tribe gave a branch which was deposited in the holy of holies; only Aaron's branch sprouted proving that God chose him. We see here a judicial process supported by a truth-seeking experiment.
Despise wealth	No monetary pursuits even for themselves	No monetary pursuits even for themselves	Ex23-08 – Do not take bribes because bribes blind the wise and distort the words off the righteous
		Modest	Nu11-23:29 Moses had just selected 70 elders. Two remained and prophesied, presumably about Moses death and Joshua's replacement of him. Joshua asked that they be jailed for being disrespectful to the government (Moses). Moses acted with Modesty – <i>Are you defending my honor; [my honor is defended] if only God would make the entire nation prophets. So, Modesty here means overcoming conflict of interest and doing what is right.</i>

Finally, Rashi comments on the discrepancy of Verse A (what he asked to find) and Verse B (what he actually found)

- [Moses asked for people who were wise, understanding and known to tribes] but only found people who were wise and known to tribes

Contribution of Rambam: The Rambam lists the 7 attributes mentioned by Moses and Jethro. To understand the problem please look at the first three columns of this table.

The Chumash and Rashi's 7 requirements of judges are

- wise
- understanding
- socially known
- valiant
- God fearing
- truthful
- despising money

Contrastively, Rambam has the following 7 requirements

- wise & understanding (The two are coalesced into one)
- socially known
- Valiant
- God fearing
- truthful
- despising money
- humble (Not mentioned in either verse!!!)

This naturally evokes the question: What is going on here? Why did Rambam combine *wise and understanding* into one category when they are two words? Why did Rambam add humble when it is not even mentioned in the verses?

There are other questions: If there are 7 categories why are they split into two verses?

Contribution of Rashi and Rambam Commentators:

We have set the drama above: A simple collection of verses with two totally different lists by Rashi and Rambam; why?

The great Rashi commentator, Mizrachi analyzes these problems. Similarly, the great Rambam commentator, Mishneh Lamelech analyzes these problems. We don't think of the Mishneh Lamelech as a commentary on the Biblical text, but it can be just as Rambam himself can be commenting on the biblical text.

The approach of these commentaries is to bring in pre-Rashi and pre-Talmudic exegetical sources.

For example,

- The Mizrachi brings down the Devarim Rabbah. The Devarim Rabbah, an ancient exegetical commentary, explains why there are 2 sets of verses for one set of 7 attributes: *To show that although each judge should have all 7 attributes listed, if a judge only has 4 listed in one book or the 3 listed in another book and we can't find anyone with all 7, that suffices.* In other words, the purpose

of the 2 verses was to show that it is *preferred* to have 7 but 3 or 4 suffice.

- The Mishneh Lamelech shows that Rambam followed the exegesis in the Jerusalem Talmud (which was apparently not available to the Mizrachi). The Jerusalem Talmud for example, introduces the requirement of *humble*.

- The Mishneh Lamelech also explains why the Rambam followed the Jerusalem Talmud: *Because the Babylonian Talmud although it doesn't list humility as a requirement mentions that in Talmudic times they sought humble, wise, righteous people throughout Israel and gave them scholarships to become Judges. Other Jerusalemite requirements are mentioned in the Babylonian Talmud in other contexts.*

Thus, great insights have been provided by the Rashi and Rambam commentaries. But they still have not answered the question of *why* which we mentioned above. *Why coalesce wise & understanding as the Jerusalem Talmud does? Why add humble which is not even mentioned?*

Contribution of the Rashi Newsletter: The Rashi Newsletter offers 3 levels of explanation of Rashi

Level 1: Rashi-ists frequently explain Rashi by word counting games. Here the Bible uses 7 adjectival words, a) wise, b) understanding, c) socially known, d) valiant, e) God fearing, f) truthful, g) despising wealth. *Therefore* the 7 attributes must correspond to 7 words.

This is the *count-word* approach to Rashi. It is superficial and based on form. It appeals to people because of the click of coincidence - 7 words, 7 attributes - sounds right.

Level 2: Talmudic level: Here, as do the Rashi and Rambam commentators, people explore a multiplicity of sources (Devarim Rabbah, Sifre, Jerusalem Talmud) and show how different early authorities (Rashi, Rambam) used diverse sources in arriving at their conclusion.

But this approach leaves out answers to *why*?

Level 3: Conceptual level (Rashiyomi). Rashiyomi introduces several key concepts that will not only harmonize Rashi and Rambam but also harmonize the Jerusalem Talmud on which the Rambam bases himself with logic.

The first step is to realize that the bible is not listing 7 words but rather 7 conceptual categories. What is a conceptual category? It is a category possibly with multiple items that typically occur together. Each category is distinct from the other category because the categories are *independent*, that is you can have one without the other.

Here is a beautiful analogy. One of the great triumphs of statistical theory in the 20th century was the famous Framingham Heart study. Here about 10000 people were tracked for several years; for each person several 100 variables (measurements were taken).

So, in the end you have a table with about 10000 rows and each row has several 100 columns. How do you infer anything from so much data? The answer is you look for clusters of columns that tend to go together. Each of these clusters becomes a *risk factor*, a term coined by the Framingham study. Two items that go together belong to one cluster. To items that occur independently of each other belong to different clusters.

The Framingham Heart Study is famous for identifying the half dozen or so controllable risk factors that contribute to heart disease: *obesity, diet composition, exercise, smoking, blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes*. Just to be clear, obesity and exercise are separate risk factors: You can exercise while obese and you can be obese without any exercise. Obesity and exercise contribute independently to heart disease.

Let us return to the issue of requirements for judges. We can easily see that wise and understanding are two items that typically go together. True, they mean different things, but it is hard to amass a lot of knowledge (wise) without developing insights to relate the knowledge.

So, we now understand the Jerushalmi. The Jerushalmi selected clusters of attributes that are independent. For example, *socially known* is independent of *wise & understanding*. You can be wise and socially inept. Or you can be socially known and not that bright.

This is the first principle that Rashiyomi espouses: Treat Rashi as identifying concepts not counting words.

A second important principle is that Rashi is not deriving the 7 attributes from 7 words or even 7 concepts. As the Rashiyomi Newsletter has emphasized many times **Other Verses** is a powerful but simple method at the root of many deep concepts.

So, when we look at the requirements for judges we must not only ask what *words* are used, what *concepts* are used, but what *stories* are used.

These are the two keys to understanding this Rashi:

- *Concepts vs words*
- *Stories vs concepts and words*

Now let us look at the stories *about judges* and what attributes they teach us. The stories, their sources, and their lessons as well as the Rashi and Rambam approach to the judge issue are all summarized in the main table.

- Humility: In a famous story, Joshua requested that Moses jail two prophets. Apparently, they prophesized that Moses will die, and Joshua will take his place. In modern parlance we call this *conflict of interest* since Moses was an *interested party*. Moses acted with *humility* that is he ignored the *conflict of interest* and instead cited the law: *The goal is that all Jews become prophets and they should speak freely independent of content so there will be no jailing.*

- God Fearing: When Joseph jailed his brothers, he came to them on the 3rd day and said he would suffice with one brother retained since *he fears God* and was afraid of consequences of jailing people unnecessarily.
- Wise and Understanding: Recall we wondered why Rambam combined the two words into one class. We argued that they typically come together and should be bundled. In the story of Joseph and Pharaoh we see that Joseph requested an overseer who is *wise & understanding* and Pharaoh in appointing Joseph said you are *wise & understanding*.
- Valiant: Interestingly, Rashi explains this as *wealthy* since wealth gives you independence and enables you to prevent the need for *flattery and unnecessary recognition*. Rambam explains *a person who is valiant in overcoming his urges*. Rambam later adds *a person who is not afraid to stand up for the oppressed*. How are we to understand this? Again, we need the simple but powerful **Other Verse** method. When Moses saw the daughters of Jethro harassed *he got up and saved them*. Later on, we see that he did not even ask for food and board even though he was all alone (thus we see the control of urges). Interestingly, Jethro tells his daughters, to *invite him and date him*. Thus, we see in this story the attributes that Rambam mentions. Rashi of his own accord added wealthiness since the wealthy are typically more in a position to stand up for things.

Importantly, we do not, as the Yeshivashe tendency, see Rashi and Rambam in controversy. We rather see them as completely agreeing. Why? Because both Rashi and Rambam must acknowledge the awesome power of the **Other Verse** method, all stories about judges point to fundamental requirements. The could not therefore disagree. What about Rashi's mention of wealthiness? Rashi himself explains *since wealthy people are independent and have no need to flatter or socially recognize where not deserved*. And Rambam? Rambam would agree that a wealthy student is more likely to become valiant than a non-wealthy student. The important thing in becoming a judge is standing up for the oppressed. Rashi simply adds an external attribute, wealth, where it is more likely for a person to become valiant. So neither Rashi nor Rambam disagree at all.

[As a side note, we observe that we are told that women's rights are a modern invention and that in old times women were passive and let men run things. Not so! This Jethro story clearly shows that women could initiate a *date* (see Rashi for my reading), a tendency which we think is modern but is grounded in the Bible.]

– Truth seeking: Rambam simply says *interested in truth for its own sake*. We find an example of this in the dispute of Moses and Korach. Moses could suffice with the authority of killing Korach and his rebellion. But he didn't. The pursuit of truth is also found in the story. The Jews

were entitled to proof (outside of Gods power and authority) that Aaron deserved the priesthood. Moses did this with his well-known branch experiment where only Aaron's branch blossomed. This symbolically explained to people why Aaron was picked because only his advice gave fruit and blossomed into social settlements and peace.

Conclusion:

- In two verses we have descriptions of judges. 7 phrases are listed.
- *Additionally*, throughout the Bible we have numerous stories about judges.
- The RashiYomi conceptual approach emphasizes summarizing the clusters of attributes in these stories and verses.
- RashiYomi does not emphasize word counts or even concept counts.
- However, an important supplement to the RashiYomi approach is the typical Yeshivashe and Talmudic approach in which multiple sources are brought and it is shown that lawbooks rely on these sources in formulating their laws.
- In commenting on the stories certain commentators (e.g. Rashi) might bring in other attributes (e.g. wealth) which more easily lead to fundamental attributes like standing up for the oppressed. But on the basic requirements, there is never any controversy since the attributes come not from Talmudic sources but rather from actual biblical stories!!!

Praise be Him who Chose Them and Their Learning!

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 (egg Dt34-10a) egg 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)** Marchese means pot; Machinate 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 Candelabras means COMING(Gn46-26a)
EXAMPLE: Whiptail conjugation has different rules if 1st root letter is Trade (Gn44-16a)

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IV-PARALLELISM: (Ex20-04) Don't **POSSESS** the gods of others Don't **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) *Don't MUZZLE an OX while THRESHING* RASHI: Don't 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