

The RashiYomi NewsLetter

The 10 RashiYomi Rules, Vol 30 #19, Jan.24, 2019 *Their Presence in this Week's Parshah, MiShPaTiM*

© RashiYomi.com 2019

All materials on RashiYomi website, including this Newsletter, are free, provided proper acknowledgement is made. RashiYomi Inc., consistent with Jewish Laws on education, proudly refuses any donations. Acknowledgement to our work can be made by citing, **RashiYomi. Inc.**, or www.RashiYomi.com. See the Appendix for a complete copyright statement as well as for a summary of the 10 RashiYomi rule

We deal with some Rashis that not everyone considers Peshat and show how Rashi really was using simple literary techniques. Please send questions on Rashi to RashiYomi@GMail.Com

On Ex21-02a:b, *When you purchase a servant...he works for 6 years and goes free on the 7th Rashi states*

- [There are 5 biblical chapters on servants]
- A) Dt15-12a begins *When your brother is sold to you...and works for 6 years*
- B) Lv25-39 begins *When your brother is poor and is sold to you ... until the Jubilee year he will work with you*
- C) Lv25-55 begins *Servants that you acquire from the surrounding nation; they serve you forever and you pass them on in inheritance*
- D) Ex21-02a begins *When you purchase a Hebrew servant ...he will work 6 years.*
- E) Ex22-01:02 begins *[talking about a thief found on your premises who stole] if he cannot pay back, he shall be [court] sold for purposes of paying back.*

Based on this Rashi asserts the following

- 2 reasons for becoming a servant: 1) to pay back a theft (Source E) 2) to compensate for poverty (Source B)
- 2 sources of servants: 1) Servants that are non-Jewish (Source C) and 2) Servants that are Jewish (Source A)
- 3 durations of servitude: 1) 6 years (Source A), 2) Till the Jubilee (Source B) and 3) Forever (Source C)

Rashi now associates the other

passages based on these fundamental passages

- Source A: Jewish, 6 years, [Since for poverty lasts till Jubilee this must be for theft]
- Source B: Jewish, poverty, till Jubilee
- Source C: Non-Jewish, Forever
- Source D: Since 6 years is mentioned it must be like Source A: Jewish, 6 years, theft
- Source E: Theft (So using sources A and D it must be for 6 years and Jewish]

Rashi here uses the **Parallel Verse method** aligning different biblical paragraphs speaking about the same topic. By aligning these parallel passages, differences and their consequent nuances are found. For greater clarity we summarize these in tables and bulleted lists.

Five Sources – What they explicitly say

- A) Dt15-12 Jewish, 6 years (of work)
- B) Lv25-39 Jewish, Poverty, till Jubilee
- C) Lv25-55 Non-Jewish, Forever duration
- D) Ex21-01 – 6 years
- E) Ex22-01 – Thief is court sold

Three Parameters governing servants

- Jewish, Non-Jewish – See Sources A, C
- 6 years, Jubilee, Forever: duration – See A-C
- Theft, Poverty – See E, B

Rashi inferences on the five sources

- Since *someone sold for poverty* serves till Jubilee (B) and non-Jews serve forever (C), it follows that the passages with 6 years of service (A, D) speak about the remaining case of theft (E)
- Since A) and D) both speak about 6 years of servitude, they must both be speaking about a Jewish person (Because according to C) non-Jews serve forever)

As can be seen from the tables, all Rashi did is

- Align the various passages
- Focus on what is explicitly mentioned
- Then make inferences to omitted details.

This is a good example of the **Parallelism** method. Using tables like these, I have obtained very good results even with young children (7-12) by simply asking them to write out the passages and identify parameters (This is a fun exercise that enables children to participate in the creative experience of Rashi commentary).

I recommend that every serious student of Rashi, whether they be a child, adult or even Rabbi or scholar, sit down and carefully review the five sources and see how what Rashi does is very straightforward.

On Ex22-02a discussing finding a person tunneling into a house for purposes of theft and

stating that although the person finding the thief may kill him (on the assumption that he is armed) *if the sun shines on the thief there is culpability for killing him*, Rashi states

This is like an analogy. If it is clear to you that the thief has peace with you like the sun which has peace with the world then you may not kill him (for example a son may not kill his father tunneling in to steal since a father would not kill his son and hence there is no self-defense right)

I believe that the Rashi can be clarified using the ten Rashi methods. The includes the **figures of speech submethod** including **idioms**. Consider the following English translation

If it is crystal clear about the thief, then there is culpability in killing him.

This is intuitive. The verse is using the English idiom *crystal clear* to express the idea that if the finder of the thief is certain the thief would not kill (for example a son finds a parent tunneling in) then it is prohibited to murder him and there is culpability in killing him.

Now consider the actual Hebrew text

If the sun rises on the thief there is culpability in killing him.

I am making the simple suggestion that *sun rises* in biblical Hebrew is no different than *crystal clear* in English. It is an idiom emphasizing greater clarity.

Now compare what Rashi actually says about *the sun shines on him*:

This is like an analogy. If it is clear to you that the thief has peace with you like the sun which has peace with the world then you may not kill him (for example a son may not kill his father tunneling in to steal since a father would

not kill his son and hence there is no self-defense right)

Notice that Rashi *appears* to be saying more than this is an idiom. Rashi engages in flowery language and in fact speaks about the sun bringing peace to the world. The approach of the Rashiomi Newsletter is that Rashi is concretized by simply classifying his activity as identification of an idiom. We are explicitly advocating ignoring other issues (like the peace of the sun) in understanding this Rashi. This may make some people uncomfortable, but it does cast the Rashi in a new light and makes it very palatable

Think of this as an idea and approach that could either replace literal reading of Rashi or else supplement and complement the Rashi. If it helps the reader understand the Rashi then it is indeed useful.

APPENDIX

THE 10 RASHI RULE CATEGORIES

A Lightning Summary with Examples

Copyright 2001, Rashiomi Inc., Dr Hendel President,
www.Rashiomi.com/rules-01.htm

NOTE ON COPYRIGHTS:

*This particular appendix, like many portions of the Rashiomi website, are protected by a paid copyright. However, we clarify that the intent of Rashiomi 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 Rashiomi explanations, rules etc. should acknowledge the Rashiomi website as the author by giving its URL: <http://www.Rashiomi.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) **(as)** while people are encouraged to cite paragraphs of explanations from Rashiomi in their own works, they must share their works in a similar manner under the creative commons agreement, **cc by nc as version 3.0**; they must cite the URLs for the Rashiomi 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 Rashiomi material and take precedence (or clarify and explain) already existing copyrights as well as permissions given in private emails.*

=====
Rule I-REFERENCE: EXAMPLE: Dt26-05d *We went down to Egypt with a few people* explained by Gn46-27: with 70 people
=====

Rule 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 (e.g. 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
=====

Rule III-GRAMMAR: EXAMPLE: BA-ah means COMING not CAME(Gn46-26a)
EXAMPLE: A grammatical conjugation in the Hitpael if 1st root letter is Tzade (Gn44-16a)
=====

Rule IV-PARALLELISM: EXAMPLE: (Ex20-04) Don't **POSSESS** the gods of others Don't **MAKE** idols RASHI: So both **POSSESS**ion & **MAKING** of idols are prohibited
=====

Rule V-CONTRADICTION: EXAMPLE: (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.
=====

Rule 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
=====

Rule VII-FORMATTING: EXAMPLE (BOLD indicated by Repetition): Ex12-09c) 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)
=====

Rule 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

=====

Rule 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.

=====

Rule 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