

# The RashiYomi NewsLetter

## The 10 RashiYomi Rules, Vol 31#19, July 25th, 2019 *Their Presence in this Week's Parshah, MattoS MasaY*

© 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](http://www.RashiYomi.com). See the Appendix for a complete copyright statement as well as for a summary of the 10 RashiYomi rule

*In this issue we take a Midrash that people think is a matter of Tradition. We show how this Midrash can be derived by logic. The RashiYomi Newsletter champions showing that difficult traditions may be derivable by logic. Therefore, please feel free to send questions on Rashi to [RashiYomi@GMail.Com](mailto:RashiYomi@GMail.Com)*

**Nu30-01:02:** Biblical Text: Moses

- *Spoke to the Tribal Governors*
- *For the Jewish people*

Rashi text:

*This is a great honor that*

- *Moses taught the governors first*
- *And Then taught the Jews*

### I: Misconception about Moses

We tend to have this simplistic conception of Moses lecturing to all 600,000 Jewish males along with their wives and children.

The above Rashi, based on a Biblical text, hints at a different method. Rashi himself, on this Rashi continues with more verses

### II: More Verses

Rashi text continued from above:

*And how do we know that this procedure of first teaching the Governors and then the people applied to other commandments?*

Because it [explicitly] says

**Ex34-31:32** Biblical Text

- *Aaron and all the leaders returned to Moses [after he descended from heaven]*
- *And afterwards the Jewish people came*

We see here the idea that there are different verses that suggest that Moses was not the sole lecturer as we commonly and naively think.

Rashi on **Ex34-31:32** actually explicitly refers to the Talmud in *Eruvin* discussing how the oral law was transmitted. Let us examine it.

### III: Divine Teaching Method

The Divine Teaching Method is presented in detail in the Babylonian Talmud in the tractate *Eruvin* on page 54b.

It is presented below in the yellow-highlight table.

Notice several modern approaches to teaching here which we don't expect from the desert Jews which we tend to think of as primitive. We think of Moses the great prophet and teacher lecturing to 600,000 Jewish males who passively sat and learned with their wives and children. Not so! Read the Talmudic passage based on verses:

- There were multiple teachings corresponding to the modern idea of review and active learning.
- The famous modern flipped classroom method is used whereby after the initial

teaching the students themselves became

Eruvin 54b: *Our Rabbis learned: What was the procedure of the instruction in the oral law? [Passage from Davka.Com translation v3.4]*

- *Moses learned from the mouth of the Omnipotent.*
- *Then Aaron entered and Moses taught him his lesson.*
- *Aaron then moved aside and sat down on Moses left.*
- *Thereupon Aaron's sons entered, and Moses taught them their lesson.*
- *His sons then moved aside, Eleazar taking his seat on Moses right and Ithamar on Aaron's left. R. Judah stated: Aaron was always on Moses right.*
- *Thereupon the elders entered, and Moses taught them their lesson,*
- *And when the elders moved aside all the people entered and Moses taught them their lesson. ...*
- *At this stage Moses departed and Aaron taught them his lesson.*
- *Then Aaron departed and his sons taught them their lesson.*
- *His sons then departed, and the elders taught them their lesson. It thus followed that everybody heard the lesson four times.*

R. Akiba stated: *Whence is it deduced that a man must go on teaching his pupil until he has mastered the subject? From Scripture where it says: And teach thou it to the children of Israel.*

*And whence is it deduced that it must be taught until the students are well versed in it? From Scripture where it says. Put it in their mouths.*

*And whence is it inferred that it is also his duty to explain to him the reasons It has been said: Now these are the ordinances which thou shalt put before them.*

teachers. What better way to motivate students,

then to make them not passive, but actively participate in the teaching process.

- ❖ But we are not through: Rabbi Akivah one of our great Talmudic teachers *explicitly* notes the inference of teaching method.
- ❖ Basic principles and goals of teaching are laid down. Although they sound modern, they occurred in the desert teachings.
  - It is not enough to learn. Students must have mastery
  - It is not enough that they have mastery; it must become habit, something on the *tip of their tongue* an English idiom reflecting the Biblical Idiom *put the Torah in their mouth (Dt31-19)*
  - It is not enough that it is on the tip of their tongue: They must know the reasons for it.

There you have it: Education is not about passive receipt of God's word from the prophet but rather active receipt, having it on the tip of one's tongue, being fluent enough to teach, knowing both content and reason: And all this in the desert teaching.

## IV: The Full Set of Sources

But is the Eruvin narrative justified. To answer this, we use the all-powerful Rashi Database method. We inquire: What verses, *besides* 'God spoke to Moses to say over' indicate a complexity and richness in the Desert Teaching Method. The green table below contains the relevant verses.

One verse in particular comes very close to the Eruvin narrative:

**Lv17-01:02** God spoke to Moses to say over. Speak to Aaron, his children, and all the Jews, and tell them: This is what God commanded to say over.

This verse speaks about

- Separate teachings to
  - Aaron
  - His children

- And the Jews
- And speaks that these people themselves
- Should say over [Teach]

(Many e.g. **Lv01-01:02**) *God pages Moses; He spoke to him from the Desert Temple to say over: Speak to the Children of Israel*

**Nu30-01:02** *Moses spoke to the Tribal Governors for the Jewish people*

**Ex34-28:31** *He [Moses] was with God 40 days and 40 nights...he wrote on the tablets all God commanded....Aaron and the Governors came to him [upon descent] and Moses spoke to them; Afterwards the Jewish people came and Moses commanded them all God spoke to him in Mount Sinai*

**Lv11-01:03** *God spoke to Moses and Aaron to speak to them Speak to the Jews*

Additionally, we have sporadic verses of communications to people besides Moses. Here are a few

**Lv10-12** *Moses spoke to Aaron, Elazar and Ithamar....*

**Lv10-08** *God spoke to Aaron to say over*

**Lv17-01:02** *God spoke to Moses to say over. Speak to Aaron, his children, and all the Jews, and tell them: This is what God commanded to say over.*

## V: Conclusion

There are several takeaways from the above.

- **Can we prove every detail of the Eruvin Midrash?**

*The defense lies in the verses in the Green Box. It would take a great deal of time to go over each detail. However, the important takeaway is that the idea that there were multiple teachers (Moses, Aaron, Priests, Governors, Jews) and multiple opportunities*

*for students to be active and passive. As indicated earlier this is a very modern teaching approach and it already exists in the Talmud.*

- **You, the Rashi Newsletter take this Midrash as referring to modern teaching methods. But did the Talmudic Rabbis perceive this Midrash this way?**

*Yes. The passage in Eruvin contains explicit teaching advice from Rabbi Akiva. Let us never forget who Rabbi Akiva was: He was an adult learner who started in his 40s. It is befitting the Jewish teaching methodology should be expounded by him.*

- **But is it really true that the teacher-lecture+student-passively-listening is not a Jewish idea? Haven't Jews taught that way for many thousands of years.**

*True: In the Middle ages because of the persecutions we lost much of our zest. But that is not the way it was in the Desert. We live in a tolerant age and should reclaim what is ours.*

# APPENDIX

## THE 10 RASHI RULE CATEGORIES

### *A Lightning Summary with Examples*

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) **(as)** 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 as 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.

=====

**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 offerings* 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