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*Our mission is to show all Rashi comments as Peshat, the simple straightforward meaning of the text following the same laws of interpretation governing ordinary everyday conversation.*

The main Rashiomi categories of interpretation are :

- 1) **Grammar:** *Including verb conjugation, rules of style, paragraph development, and all relations of form and meaning*
- 2) **Parallelism:** *Including all nuances and inuendoes arising from same-verse parallelism, multi-verse parallelism, database inquiries, and contradictory verses*
- 3) **Symbolism:** *including parables, images, metaphors, similes, motifs, archetypes, signs, and tokens*
- 4) **Meaning:** *including all figures of speech*



# The Ten Components of a Rashi Comment

## 1) The true underlying reason (4 pillars)

*It may not be explicitly or completely mentioned*

## 2) The form Rashi expresses himself in

*May use puns, gematriahs, or coincidences*

## 3) Examples/Paradigms/Possible approaches(o)

*This involves reasonable speculation; it is not in the verse*

## 4) Moralistic / exhortative points (o)

*This is not part of the Rashi comment but extra*

## 5) Explicit statement of methodology (optional)

*Only about 10% of Rashis clearly state method*

## 6) Readings of Simple People (*peshat*) (o)

*This does not occur frequently. It is also not “the” reason*

## 7) (Failed) Attempts of explanation (*derash*)(o)

*Infrequently done. Saying its derash usually means its wrong*

## 8) Underlying Biblical text(s) commented on

*Very often the true verse commented on is elsewhere*

## 9) (Number of) points made (maybe more than 1)

*A Rashi might make 2 points with 2 underlying methods*

## 10) Cross references to similar Rashis

*e.g. Rashis full statement of reason may occur elsewhere*



## Verse Text Gn41-02b

- [The verses are discussing Pharoh's dreams]
- *Behold: From the Nile*
- *7 cows arose*
- *Good looking and healthy*
- *They pastured in the brotherhood.*

## Rashi Text:

- a. They pastured in the brotherhood means they pastured in the marshland
- b. A comparable verse is found in Job08-11: Will a reed grow without mud; will a marshland sprout without water

## Supplementary Material

- *We decided to go light today. Just a pleasant and cute translation*
- *Rashi himself translates Achu as Marsh*
- *But Ach is the word for brother*
- *So Achu would mean the brotherhood*
- *This issue is devoted to showing how the various commenters complement and support each other.*



## RASHI RULES USED TO EXPLAIN THIS RASHI

- **Rashi Meaning-Synecdoche Rule-Hypernym Rule**
- Words very often work in category-example units
  - The **broad category** is called the **hypernym**: For example, **color** is a hypernym
  - The **examples** of the broad category are called **hyponyms**: For example, **red, blue, green**
- **Synecdoche** is a figure of speech. It is a rule for giving new meaning to words.
- A **synecdoche** allows you to rename a word with a major attribute
  - For example **honey** is a good example of **sweetness**
  - So you can call anything **sweet, honey**
  - Similarly the **White House** ( a place) refers by synecdoche to **people in the White House**
  - Similarly, **bread**, a good example of **food**, can refer to food in general

## HYPERNYMY EXAMPLE (Ex16-33a)

- At Ex16-33 God tells Moses to store the manna in a Bakbook
- Rashi explains that Bakbook is a type of bottle
- Rashi does not further explain what type of bottle
- In other words, Rashi provides hypernymic interpretation
- My personal opinion is that bakbook is a thermos
  - One argument is that the purpose of the thermos is to preserve
  - And indeed this bakbook preserved the manna
  - A second argument is that bakbook repeats the b-k sound
  - In fact the thermos structure is a repeated or double bottle
  - By placing a bottle in a bottle, insulation is achieved
  - One can achieve further insulation by placing insulation between the two bottles

## MEANING-SYNENDOCHE EXAMPLE:

- Ex40-22 states
  - *They placed the Temple Table in the Temple-Tent*
  - *On the Northern thigh of the Temple*
  - *Outside the Holy-of-Holy veil*
- Rashi explains:
  - **Thigh** means [is a **synecdoche**] for **side**, like the thigh of a person which is on his side.
  - Rashi further clarifies: **Northern Thigh** simply means the **northern half** of the Temple
- So it wasn't strictly North (say against the wall) but rather in the northern half
- Therefore the **synecdoche** sees a person's **two thighs** as a good example of **northern and southern half**.
- The reader should notice that before reading this verse they did not think of **thigh** as meaning **side**
- We might say that **synecdoche** like other figures of speech create meaning
- **Synecdoche** expands what words can refer to



## Application of Rashi Rule to Gn41-02b

- Please reread the slide with the verse and Rashi example.
- **Step 1:** Rashi first establishes the meaning of **Achu**
  - Mysteiously, this word only occurs three times in the entire Bible
  - From context the Job verse **can an achu sprout without water** it appears that
  - **Achu** is a **plant form** growing in a **body of water**
- **Step 2:** When translating words we must always be aware of the **hypernym-hyponym** dichotomy
  - **Body of water** is a **hypernym** (general category)
  - Some **hyponyms** (examples of the category) are **marsh, swamp, lake, pond, and lagoon**
  - In this Rashi, Rashi actually identifies the **hyponym**: **The Marsh**
  - Rashi does this by using old French (**Mrask** in old French sounds like marsh)
- **Step 3:** What Rashi does not do is explain the etymology of **achu** meaning **marsh**
  - **Achu** clearly comes from the root **Aleph-Cheth, brother**
  - Thus biblical Hebrew seems to call the **Marsh** the **brotherhood** (the **achu**)
  - Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch explains why
  - Trees grow as **individuals** each with its own space. Each tree has independent interest
  - Contrastively, grass and marshes grow as a **group** (as a brotherhood). Individual grass blades or marsh plants do not have value by themselves; the value is in the group



## DISCUSSION POINTS

- One purpose of this digest is to show how our commentators complement and supplement each other
- Too often we think of commentators as disagreeing with each other (“controversy”)
- Not so: Very often they complement and supplement each other
- In this case Rashi simply explained that **Achu** means **Marsh**
- The obvious question of why a word whose original meaning is **brother** should mean **marsh** was not answered by Rashi
- It was left to another commentator, Rabbi Hirsch, to explain this.
- Such interactions between commentators happen often
- Very often they provide true gems of ideas.