

ParShaT *ChaYaY SaRaH* – One Pager Series

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Rashi #1: Biblical Text Gn23-01: These are the years of Sarah [who had just died] 100 years, 20 years and 7 years

Rashi Text #1:

The reason for the repetition of the word *year*, repeated for each number, is to teach that each number is explained (*derash*) by itself. At 100 she was as innocent as a 20 year old (Just as 20 year olds have no sin status because they are not yet fully responsible (not punishable)) so too at 100 she was without sin.

Rashiyomi explanation #1: It appears that Rashi is commenting on the extra repeated word *year*. Actually this is not the case. For example in Gen05 we find the following descriptions of ages, all with years repeated (912 is 12 years and 900 years; 905 is 5 years and 900 years, 910 years is 10 years and 900 years, 895 years is 95 years and 800 years). Using the implied rule from these Gn05 verses for describing numbers (below 100 first with *year* followed by hundreds with *year*) a clearer explanation of the Rashi comment is that 127 years should be stated as 27 years and 100 years and is instead stated as 100 years, 20 years, and 7 years with two major differences: i) hundreds (100) and below hundred (27) are instead grouped as hundreds (100), tens (20), and units (7); ii) the smaller number 27 should come first and the bigger number 100 last while the verse reverses order and lists the 100 first. In other words Rashi is commenting on a violation of grammar not on extra words. Rashi resolves this violation of grammar by interpreting these statement of years as *idioms*: *These are the years of Sarah: The 100-year life, the 20-year life, and the 7-year life*. In other words, the Bible is describing not the quantity of her years but their quality: She had lived the 7-year life (beauty), the 20-year life (innocence), and the 100-year life (maturity). Note the similar idioms in English (e.g. “She is behaving like a 20-year old”)

Rashi #2: Biblical Text Gn23-16: [Background: Abraham negotiated with *Ephrohn* to purchase a gravesite for Sarah; throughout the negotiations *Ephrohn* was offering the burial site free until the very end] Abraham paid *Ephron* \$400.

Rashi text: [Note the difference in spelling: Ephron vs. Ephrohn] A deficient spelling (missing the 2nd h in Ephrohn) for a person of deficient character.

Rashiyomi explanation: Like the first Rashi discussed above, this is based on a pun arising from a deliberate misspelling. The secular literature calls such a pun based on mis-spelling a metaplasmus. The spelling is deficient (missing a second h, (Ephron vs. Ephrohn) pointing to deficient personality. As Rashi says “He says a lot but in the end did nothing)

Rashi #3: Biblical Text Gn24-11a Eliezer *knee-ized* his camels

Rashi Text: He rested his camels (which was achieved by bending their knees and sitting in place)

Rashiyomi explanation: *Synecdoche*, a figure of speech principle, allows words to acquire the meaning of their primary function. For example: To *eye* a situation, to *lend an arm*, or something *smells fishy*. R. Hirsch explains *blessing [berachah]* as *knee-izing*, lending a *knee* to someone -the knee/blessing facilitates and smoothens motion