

[Background: Very often children, adults, academic scholars, and Rabbis view Rashi historically or philosophically. Not so. All Rashi comments are based on four exegetical pillars: *meaning-grammar, parallelism, symbolism, and figures of speech*. As I explained in my very first paper on Rashi (Tradition Winter 1980) if we were literate in biblical Hebrew, we would instantly comment on a verse the same way Rashi does.

In the following verses the word *after* occurs. There is a blank line before the *after*. Sometimes the translation should be *immediately after* (**Achar**) while sometimes the translation should be *a while after* (**Acharay**). This is based on a Rashi at Gn15-01.

Exercise: Read aloud (at the Shabbath dinner table) each verse and the surrounding context. Then decide whether the bible should say *immediately after* or *a while after*. Answers are given at the bottom.]

**Rashi #1 Biblical Text: Dt31-29a** *For I know that \_\_\_\_\_ after my death you will sin.* Fact: Jews did not sin all while Joshua, Moses pupil, was alive. We find national sin mentioned again in the book of Judges

**Rashi #2 Biblical Text: Gn15-01a** Fact: Abraham had just waged war and defeated a multi-nation army to save his nephew. \_\_\_\_\_ after God tells Abraham “Abraham, do not be afraid, you have much reward.”

**Biblical Text: Gn39-07 (No Rashi! Perhaps it obvious)** *Potiphar let Joseph oversee everything and did not know any of his doings except what he ate. \_\_\_\_\_ after Potiphar’s wife flirted with Joseph and asked for an affair*

**Rashi #4 Biblical Text: Nu31-03a** *God spoke to Moses to say over: Avenge the vengeance of the Jews on the Midianites [who seduced Jewish men, bringing a plague from God as punishment]; \_\_\_\_\_ after you will die. [So] Moses spoke to the nation to pass along: Constrict from yourselves men for an army in order to form against Midian to give the vengeance of God on the Midianites.*

**Answers: Rashi #1** *a while after my death you will sin:* Rashi therefore explains this consistent with the fact that the Jews didn’t sin immediately after in the days of Joshua. Rashi attributes this lack of sin to the fact that Joshua, being Moses student, resembled Moses, preventing sin. But the reason for the comment is the *a while after*.

**Rashi #2** *immediately after God told Abraham not to be afraid.* Rashi explains that Abraham was worried that he killed someone innocent in the war; God therefore *immediately* assured him that his merit was great.

**Rashi #3** *immediately after.* Strange there is no Rashi; perhaps it is obvious. When a husband stops showing possessional curiosity – e.g. Where were you today? Who did you meet with? What did you do? – a wife may feel abandoned and satisfy her need for possessional caring with other men.

**Rashi #4** *immediately after.* Rashi explains the surprise: Although Moses was told he would immediately die after completion of the task (creating an army) he did not delay the creation of this army.