

# פרשת בהעלתך *Parashat Behaalotcha*

*Bamidbar / Numbers 8:1-12:15, Zechariah 2:14-4:7  
Luke 17:11-18:14*

## Who will Feed Us Flesh?

In this week's Torah portion we read the following, *Bamidbar / Numbers 10:33-36*, וַיִּסְעוּ מִהַר יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים וְאֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה, וַיִּסְעוּ מִהַר יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים לְפָנֵיהֶם דֶּרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים לְתוֹר לָהֶם מִנוֹחָה: *10:33 They marched from the mountain of the LORD a distance of three days. The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD traveled in front of them on that three days' journey to seek out a resting place for them; וַעֲבָדוּ יְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹמָם בְּנֵי־* (ס) (ע) *10:34 and the LORD's cloud kept above them by day, as they moved on from camp. וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעֵי הָאָרוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה* *10:35 When the Ark was to set out, Moses would say: Advance, O LORD! May Your enemies be scattered, And may Your foes flee before You! יְהוָה יְהוָה שׁוּבָה יְהוָה!* (ס) (ע) *10:36 And when it halted, he would say: Return, O LORD, You who are Israel's myriads of thousands!* What we find here in the text is how the Lord God of Israel went ahead of the people to seek out a place for them to camp as they are leaving the foot of the mountain of Sinai. In this section of the Torah, there is an interesting typesetting feature in the text shown as inverted nuns (ע). The idea is the inverted nuns mark the text sectioning the book. Some

Jewish commentaries state this symbolizes the start of a new book of the Torah (*Talmud Bavli Shabbat 115*), others say this shows a separation between the good things that happened prior and the bad things that happened afterwards. Rashi states this is a separation between the first evil event (golden calf) and the second evil event (personal complaint) (*Rashi on Bamidbar / Numbers 10:35 Part 1*). The Midrashic approach according to the *Talmud Bavli Shabbat 115* focuses upon the inverted nuns to demonstrate that this paragraph is out of place. The rabbis say two sparks issued forth from the cherubim over the Ark of the Covenant that killed the snakes and scorpions and burned the thorns. (*Midrash Tanchuma Vayakhel 7:12*) The reference to snakes, scorpions, and thorns is a reference to the enemies of God. The Midrash states that smoke rose up from the burning of these things, and the nations smelled the odor of the burning and asked “*Who is this that comes out of the wilderness?*” (*Song 3:6*). The nations do not recognize the God of Israel because they serve gods of their own making. Rashi states the following:

***Rashi on Bamidbar / Numbers 10:35 Part 5***

מִשְׂנֹאֵיךָ *THOSE THAT HATE THEE* — *These are those who hate Israel, because whoever hates Israel, hates “Him who spoke and the world came into existence”, as it is said, (Psalms 83:3, 4) “[For lo, thine enemies are in an uproar] and they that hate Thee have lifted up the head” — and who are these that hate Thee? The next verse states this (v. 4): “They who have taken crafty counsel against thy people” (Sifrei Bamidbar 84:4).*

The idea is if one hates Israel, one also hates the God of Israel and becomes an enemy of both. This is consistent with what the Lord God told Abraham in *Bereshit / Genesis 12:1* *Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; 12:2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the*

*families of the earth will be blessed.*’ (NASB, וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם, אֵל-לְךָ-מֵאֲרָצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאֲרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ: ב וְאֶעֱשֶׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְאַבְרָכְךָ וְאֶגְדְּלָהּ שְׁמֶךָ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה: ג וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלָךְ: אֶאָר וְנִבְרָכוּ בְּךָ כָּל מְשַׁפְּחֹת הָאָדָמָה: One of the reasons the Rabbis say the inverted nuns were inserted here at *Bamidbar / Numbers 10:33-36* is to provide a break between one disaster and the next, with the first disaster being the physical departure from the Mountain of Sinai coinciding with a spiritual departure from what Mount Sinai stood for. The second disaster is the one that follows *Bamidbar / Numbers 11* with the people looking for something to complain about. The rabbinic conclusion was by leaving the Mountain of Sinai, this parallels leaving the study of the Torah.

### ***Daat Zkenim on Bamidbar / Numbers 10:35 Part 1***

וּגוֹ, “קוּמָה ה’ וְגוֹ, “rise up O Lord, etc.” This is a prayer that if enemies will gather to attack the Israelites they should be dispersed by G–d before carrying out their plans. If, for some reason they had already succeeded in massing, G–d should put them to flight. [In both instances Israel’s enemies are described as G–d’s enemies by definition. Ed.]

Again this parallels what we read in Parashat Lech Lecha, those who are Israel’s enemy are described as God’s enemy, those who curse Israel God will curse, and those who bless Israel, God will bless.

There is a significance to the Lord God going ahead of the people three days to search out a place for Israel to camp. This leads to the interpretation that there were certain aspects of the location that were necessary for the spiritual growth of God’s people. Note how this is stated, and then follows the complaint of the people about bread and meat to eat. The rabbinic interpretation on the Lord going forth before Israel on a three day journey is connected to a kabbalistic concept, i.e. *“The reason the Israelites had to trek through the desert was to locate and rescue ‘sparks’ of sanctity which were held captive by the spiritually negative forces whose domain is the desert and other inhospitable parts of the earth. We must appreciate that all these spiritually negative forces may be divided into two categories. One category is*

*essentially a seducer who endeavors to bring his adversary to heel by luring him into immoral and unethical behavior against man and G'd. The other category consists of various types of destructive forces which simply attack the body of a person trying to kill or to maim him.*" This may seem strange at first, but the idea is based upon how the Lord God is working in our lives to root out the sources of sin, and teach us his way of consecrating our lives (living in righteousness, holiness, and truth) according to His Word. The enemy is sin, and sin harms us both physically and spiritually. The idea is the Torah writes וַיִּגְסוּ מִשְׂנְאֵיךָ מִפְּנֶיךָ, "*let them that hate You flee before You*" referring to those forces who display their hatred of God indirectly by seducing God's servants into sinning before Him. The Torah describes these "*enemies*" of God in the plural as there are many enemies and these are referred to as evil urges, such as one having the desire to serve idols, another having the desire to engage in illicit sexual relations, etc. This is why the Lord God of Israel needed to address the issue of sin in our individual lives, the intrinsic impurity bringing Yeshua into this world to die for our sins. This is also why the Lord God of Israel sent His Son Yeshua the Messiah taught the Torah in order to lead and guide us into God's Ways. On Shavuot, the giving of the Spirit of God into the hearts of men for those who would believe in Yeshua, leads to the changing of the heart, the transformation from the inside to something new so that we have the desire to do what is right as opposed to serving sin.

The Scriptures we are looking at this week are taken from *Bamidbar / Numbers 10:33-11:23*.

***Bamidbar / Numbers 10:33-11:23***

*10:33 Thus they set out from the mount of the Lord three days' journey, with the ark of the covenant of the Lord journeying in front of them for the three days, to seek out a resting place for them. 10:34 The cloud of the Lord was over them by day when they set out from the camp. 10:35 Then it came about when the ark set out that Moses said, 'Rise up, O Lord! And let Your enemies be scattered, And let those who hate You flee before You.' 10:36 When it came to rest, he said,*

*'Return, O Lord, To the myriad thousands of Israel.'*  
11:1 Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the Lord; and when the Lord heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. 11:2 The people therefore cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the Lord and the fire died out. 11:3 So the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burned among them. 11:4 The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, 'Who will give us meat to eat? 11:5 'We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, 11:6 but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna.' 11:7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium. 11:8 The people would go about and gather it and grind it between two millstones or beat it in the mortar, and boil it in the pot and make cakes with it; and its taste was as the taste of cakes baked with oil. 11:9 When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna would fall with it. 11:10 Now Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, each man at the doorway of his tent; and the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly, and Moses was displeased. 11:11 So Moses said to the Lord, 'Why have You been so hard on Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all this people on me? 11:12 'Was it I who conceived all this people? Was it I who brought them forth, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom as a nurse carries a nursing infant, to the land which You swore to their fathers'? 11:13 'Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me, saying, 'Give us meat that we may eat!' 11:14 'I alone am not able to carry all this people, because



*it is too burdensome for me. 11:15 'So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once, if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see my wretchedness.' 11:16 The Lord therefore said to Moses, 'Gather for Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and their officers and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. 11:17 'Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put Him upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear it all alone. 11:18 'Say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the ears of the Lord, saying, 'Oh that someone would give us meat to eat! For we were well-off in Egypt.' Therefore the Lord will give you meat and you shall eat. 11:19 'You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, 11:20 but a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you; because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before Him, saying, 'Why did we ever leave Egypt?''' 11:21 But Moses said, 'The people, among whom I am, are 600,000 on foot; yet You have said, 'I will give them meat, so that they may eat for a whole month.' 11:22 'Should flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to be sufficient for them? Or should all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to be sufficient for them?' 11:23 The Lord said to Moses, 'Is the Lord's power limited? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not.'* (NASB)

לג וַיִּסְעוּ מִהָרַיִם יְהוָה דָּרָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים וְאַרְוֹן בְּרִית-יְהוָה  
נִסְעוּ לִפְנֵיהֶם דָּרָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים לְתוֹר לָהֶם מִנּוּחָה: לֵד  
וְעָנּוּ יְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם יוֹמָם בְּנִסְעָם מִן-הַמִּחָנֶה: ס [ששי]  
ג לֵה וַיְהִי בְּנִסְעֵהֶם הָאֶרֶץ וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה קוּמָה | יְהוָה וַיִּפְצְאוּ

אִיבִיָּהּ וַיִּגְסוּ מִשְׁנֵאֵיָּהּ מִפְּנֵיהָ: לוּ וּבִגְחָה יֹאמֶר שׁוֹבָה יְהוָה  
 רַבְבוֹת אֶלְפֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: נ פ

### ספר במדבר פרק יא

א וַיְהִי הָעַם כְּמִתְאַנְנִים רַע בְּאָזְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה וַיִּחַר  
 אַפּוֹ וַתִּבְעַר-בָּם אֵשׁ יְהוָה וַתֹּאכַל בְּקִצָּה הַמַּחֲנֶה: ב וַיִּצְעַק  
 הָעַם אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל מֹשֶׁה אֶל-יְהוָה וַתִּשְׁקַע הָאֵשׁ: ג  
 וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם-הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא תִבְעֵרָה כִּי-בִעַרָה בָּם אֵשׁ יְהוָה:  
 ד וְהָאֶסְפָּסָף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאוּוּ תְאוּוֹה וַיִּשְׁבוּ וַיִּכְפוּ גַם  
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי יֹאכְלֵנוּ בְּשָׂר: ה זָכַרְנוּ אֶת-הַדָּגָה  
 אֲשֶׁר-נֹאכַל בְּמִצְרַיִם חֲנָם אֵת הַקִּשְׁאִים וְאֵת הָאֲבִטְחִים  
 וְאֵת-הַחֲצִיר וְאֵת-הַבָּצְלִים וְאֵת-הַשּׁוּמִים: ו וְעַתָּה נִפְשָׁנוּ  
 יִבְשָׁה אֵין כֹּל בְּלִתֵּי אֶל-הַמָּן עֵינֵינוּ: ז וְהַמָּן כְּזֶרַע-גֶּד הוּא  
 וְעֵינֵנו כְּעֵין הַבְּדֹלַח: ח שָׁטוּ הָעַם וְלָקְטוּ וְטָחְנוּ בְּרִחִים  
 אוּ דָכוּ בַמִּדְבָּרָה וּבִשְׁלֹו בַפְּרוֹר וְעָשׂוּ אֹתוֹ עֲגוֹת וְהָיָה טַעְמוֹ  
 כְּטַעַם לֶחֶם הַשָּׂמֶן: ט וּבִרְדַת הַטַּל עַל-הַמַּחֲנֶה לְיִלָּה יֵרֵד  
 הַמָּן עֲלֵיו: י וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הָעַם בֹּכָה לְמִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ  
 אִישׁ לְפִתַח אֹהֶלוֹ וַיִּחַר-אַף יְהוָה מְאֹד וּבְעֵינָי מֹשֶׁה רָע: יא  
 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-יְהוָה לָמָּה הִרְעַתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ וְלָמָּה לֹא-מָצַתִּי  
 חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְשׁוֹם אֶת-מִשְׁאָ כָּל-הָעַם הַזֶּה עָלַי: יב הָאֲנֹכִי  
 הָרִיתִי אֵת כָּל-הָעַם הַזֶּה אִם-אֲנֹכִי יִלְדָתִיהוּ כִּי-תֹאמֶר אֵלַי  
 שָׂאֵהוּ בַחֲיִקְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא הָאֱמֹן אֶת-הַיִּנֹק עַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר  
 נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאַבְתָּיו: יג מֵאֵין לִי בְשָׂר לְתֵת לְכָל-הָעַם הַזֶּה  
 כִּי-יִכְפוּ עָלַי לֵאמֹר תָּנֶה-לָנוּ בְשָׂר וְנֹאכְלָה: יד לֹא-אוּכַל  
 אֲנֹכִי לְבַדִּי לְשֹׂאת אֶת-כָּל-הָעַם הַזֶּה כִּי כִבֵּד מִמֶּנִּי: טו  
 וְאִם-כֹּכָה | אֶת-עֲשֵׂה לִי הִרְגֵנִי נָא הֲרֹג אִם-מִצָּאתִי חֵן בְּעֵי-  
 נֶיךָ וְאֶל-אַרְאֵה בְּרַעְתִּי: פ טז וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה  
 אֶסְפָּה-לִּי שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יָדַעְתָּ כִּי-הֵם  
 זִקְנֵי הָעַם וְשֹׁטְרָיו וְלִקְחָתָ אֹתָם אֶל-אַהֶל מוֹעֵד וְהִתְיַצְּבוּ  
 שָׁם עִמָּךְ: יז וַיִּרְדָּתִי וְדִבַּרְתִּי עִמָּךְ שָׁם וְאַצְלֵתִי מִן-הָרֹוּחַ  
 אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיךָ וְשִׁמְתִי עֲלֵיהֶם וְנִשְׂאוּ אֹתָךְ בְּמִשְׁאָ הָעַם וְלֹא-

תִּשָּׂא אֶתֶּה לְבַדְּךָ: יח וְאֶל-הָעַם תֹּאמֶר הִתְקַדְּשׁוּ לְמַחֵר  
וְאֲכַלְתֶּם בָּשָׂר כִּי בְכִיתֶם בְּאֲזְנֵי יְהוָה לֵאמֹר מִי יֵאָכְלֵנוּ  
בָּשָׂר כִּי-טוֹב לָנוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם וְנָתַן יְהוָה לָכֶם בָּשָׂר וְאֲכַלְתֶּם:  
יט לֹא יוֹם אֶחָד תֹּאכְלוּן וְלֹא יוֹמִים וְלֹא | חֲמִשָּׁה יָמִים  
וְלֹא עֶשְׂרֵה יָמִים וְלֹא עֶשְׂרִים יוֹם: כ עד | חֲדָשׁ יָמִים עַד  
אֲשֶׁר-יֵצֵא מֵאִפְכֶם וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְזָרָא יַעַן כִּי-מֵאִסְתֶּם אֶת-  
יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וּתְבַכּוּ לְפָנָיו לֵאמֹר לָמָּה זֶה יֵצְאָנוּ  
מִמִּצְרַיִם: כא וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה שְׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת אֶלֶף רַגְלֵי הָעַם  
אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי בְּקִרְבוֹ וְאַתֶּה אָמַרְתָּ בָּשָׂר אֲתֹן לָהֶם וְאֲכָלוּ  
חֲדָשׁ יָמִים: כב הֲצִאן וּבְקָר יִשְׁחַט לָהֶם וּמִצָּא לָהֶם אִם  
אֶת-כָּל-דְּגֵי הַיָּם יֵאָסֹף לָהֶם וּמִצָּא לָהֶם: כג וַיֹּאמֶר  
יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה הִיךְ יְהוָה תִּקְצֹר עֲתָה תִרְאֶה הִיקְרָה דְבַרִּי  
אִם-לֹא:

The rabbis speak of both people in this world, and the spiritual forces seducing God's servants into become disloyal to Him. (*Or HaChaim on Numbers 10:35 Part 1*) This is the way those who do such things display their hatred of God and of God's people. These were the kinds of people that led Israel to rebel and complain in the desert following their departure from the mountain of Sinai. These people caused the congregation of Israel to be discontented as we read in *Bamidbar / Numbers 11:4-10*.

#### ***Bamidbar / Numbers 11:4-10***

*11:4 The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, 'Who will give us meat to eat? 11:5 'We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, 11:6 but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna.' 11:7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium. 11:8 The people would go about and gather it and grind it between two millstones or beat it in the mortar, and boil it in the pot and make*



*cakes with it; and its taste was as the taste of cakes baked with oil. 11:9 When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna would fall with it. 11:10 Now Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, each man at the doorway of his tent; and the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly, and Moses was displeased. (NASB)*

The text states **וְהָאִסְפָּסְפָּא אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ הִתְאַוּוּ תַּאֲוָה וַיִּשְׁבּוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ גַם** **11:4** *The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, ‘Who will give us meat to eat? (NASB)* The interesting part of this verse is the translation of **וְהָאִסְפָּסְפָּא** as “*rabble*” who were among the people. Translators have chosen to render this as the following:

***Bamidbar / Numbers 11:4***

HEB: **וְהָאִסְפָּסְפָּא אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ**

NAS: The rabble who were among...

KJV: And the mixed multitude that [was] among...

CSB: The riffraff among them...

There is a question on the etymology of this word, where it is derived from, and on whether it is connected to word **אסף** (to gather, collect) and **אסם** (literally a barn or storehouse meaning to heap up)? In *Shemot / Exodus 23:16* **טז וְחַג הַקָּצִיר בְּפוּרֵי מַעֲשֵׂיךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע בַּשָּׂדֶה וְחַג** **23:16** *Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the **Feast of the Ingathering** at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field.*), we find the festival called Chag Ha’asif (**וְחַג הָאָסֵף**) the Festival of Ingatherings, Sukkot is a harvest festival and is sometimes referred to as Chag Ha-Asif. It could be these people were becoming a heap of people taking a stand against the Lord and Moshe. Rabbi Hirsch explains on this passage that this word was in reference to an external gathering and making a pile. That is why we find the use of the word “*rabble.*” Something to note here in the word **וְהָאִסְפָּסְפָּא** in the Chu-

mash / Torah, in the Masoretic Text, this word has no vowelization under the aleph. This lack of vowelization under the aleph is similar but somewhat different from אסף as explained by Rabbi Hirsch about *Bamidbar / Numbers 11:4*, this is similar to the way Ibn Ezra explains it (והאספסוף – שנאספו על ישראל ואינם מהן, והן ערב רב. והמלה) (כפולה כמו: סחרחר (תהלים ל"ח:י"א), חמרמרו (איכה א':כ'). The א (aleph) being quiescent gives the nuance of meaning that the absorption was more of an external nature, that those who were “gathered in” did not really enter into the nation of Israel through assimilation, or being at the same spiritual level. It was more of a סף (threshold or container) than an אסף. Israel was more of a סף, a container, a vessel, and a “threshold” to them, they were “contained” in Israel but never really became an integral part of it by accepting the God of Israel into their lives. These people considered themselves as separate as well as insisting on getting all of the benefits, but not being subject to the responsibilities listed in the Torah. (Does this sound familiar?) The idea here is as the people complained they literally said מִי יֵאָכְלֵנוּ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל “who will feed us flesh?” These people were hungry for physical food as opposed to spiritual food. They were interested more in satisfying their own desires as opposed to wanting to live their lives for the Lord in contentment. Moshe speaks to the Lord about how food will be brought to these people. It is interesting what Moshe says to the Lord regarding this situation, *11:13 ‘Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me, saying, ‘Give us meat that we may eat!’ 11:14 ‘I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too burdensome for me. 11:15 ‘So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once, if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see my wretchedness.’ (NASB)* Moshe seems to blame the Lord for the burden of the people. He knows how the Lord God is able to move in the hearts of men to do what is right. We have many examples of this in the Torah. He asks to die rather than to see his end at the hand of the people. The text gives us God’s response, *11:23 The Lord said to Moses, ‘Is the Lord’s power limited? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not.’ (NASB)* The text literally states, “is the arm of the Lord short?” The lengthening or shortening of the arm is related to the power of God that is present to

work. In the example of תְּרוּמַת מִעֵשֶׂר (the tithe for the priesthood) the contribution was brought, and it was made kadosh (holy) such that the tithe may become permitted from the people to the priests. Note the tithe was brought by the mixed multitude. The way one causes the power of God to be limited in their lives is through unbelief, the lack of faith, and complaining about the situations we are in. Here the text states that because of the complaints, the fire of the Lord burned on the outskirts of the camp. In the statement when God asks *“is there then a limit to the Lord’s power?”* the Lord God implied that just as it was within His power to provide what He had said He would provide, so it was in His power to see to it that they collect it until His word has become fulfilled. So the people gathered and gathered the meat and ate until it came out of their noses, meaning they loathed the meat because there was so much. The Torah states in *Bamidbar / Numbers 11:31*, וַיִּטֶשׂ עַל הַמַּחֲנֶה בְּדֶרֶךְ יוֹם כֹּה וּבְדֶרֶךְ יוֹם כֹּה סְבִיבוֹת הַמַּחֲנֶה וְכֹאמֶר, תִּים עַל פְּנֵי כָל הָאָרֶץ, *“and He strewed them over the camp, a distance of a day’s walk in each direction and to the height of two cubits above the face of the earth.”* So the blessing of meat was so great, the people did not have to even bend over to pick up the birds, it was two cubits in depth. They literally had to wade through the birds pushing them with their legs to get through. That would have made quite a mess of birds to clean up.

Now Moshe commented in *Bamidbar / Numbers 11:21-22* about giving meat to the people and slaughtering animals. From what we have studied in the Torah thus far, we know that at that time any meat which was not the result of having been slaughtered as a sacrifice to the Lord was forbidden for the people to eat. Also, it is the Shalammim korban (peace offering) that allows for the mass enjoyment of the slaughtered meat. Moshe’s question recognizes there were only two priests available to slaughter the animals, Aaron and his two surviving sons. So His question involved how could three people slaughtered so many animals for so many people in a short period of time. In addition to this, there was a strict time limit on eating the slaughtered meat, two days for on the third day it is to be burned up. Moshe makes the statement about fish (*11:22*) as an alternative to supplying meat, this was not a question but a comment, a solution to the sacrificial slaughter of animals since fish do not require this. Also, the

people could never have collected enough fish in a day to last them for a month. The Lord God's solution was to provide birds which also did not require ritual slaughter by priests, as did the cattle or flocks. Rashi states that these men, the ramble, would never be satisfied, they were complainers from deep within. His interpretation of this text by Rashi is *"If all the cattle in the world were slaughtered for them, וּמִצֵּא לָהֶם, would this suffice them, i. e., would they be satisfied with that?), in the end they will always argue against You. If You give them flesh of large cattle (oxen) they will say 'We wanted that of small cattle (sheep)'; if You will give them flesh of sheep, they will say We wanted that of oxen', or, 'we wanted wild beasts (venison) and fowls', 'we wanted fish and locusts!'"* (Rashi on Bamidbar / Numbers 11:23 Part I) Moshe then returned to the people concerning God's word (His answer) and asked if the hand of the Lord is short? The Lord provided water for the people from a rock, He provided bread from heaven, He gave them His Word, they witnessed the miracle of His manifestation upon the mountain of Sinai, and yet they believed *"He has no power to grant their request."* Moshe then gathered the 70 men and brought them near, and the Lord spoke to them, and they helped bear the burden of the people.

We are given all of these things as a testimony to build our faith in the God of Israel who is able to deliver us from anything. The Lord sent His Messiah Yeshua, the bread which comes from heaven (paralleled here) who guides us, who nourishes us, and helps us to live according to God's Word, just as Moshe did on behalf of the people bearing up the people before God. It is interesting how the Lord God brought manna from heaven to supply food for the needs of the people. The people however desired to gratify the desires of the flesh in their question *"Who will give us flesh to eat?"* Note how the peoples complaint led to death, the Scriptures say the fire of the Lord burned at the edges of the camp. (Bamidbar / Numbers 11:1) The idea of the uncleanness that comes from within and the need for Yeshua to cleans us from this impurity is not simply an *"academic"* or speculative messianic approach to be considered in purely rational terms, but rather is a matter of eternal life or death. How we choose to respond to the Word of God, jut as the people here in the Torah text, its message determines our destiny. Everything revolves around whether we

wake up to the reality of the Messiah of God laying down his life for our sins or not. Without Him we are hopeless; and Paul wrote with Him we are more than conquerors (*1 Corinthians 15:14, Romans 8:37*). The God of Israel loves us with “*an everlasting love*” (אַהֲבַת עוֹלָם) and draws us to Himself in chesed (חֶסֶד, mercy/grace). The prophet Jeremiah stated in *Jeremiah 31:3* אַהֲבַת עוֹלָם אֶהְבֶּתִּיךָ עַל־כֵּן מִשְׁכָּחִיךָ חֶסֶד “*I love you with an everlasting love; therefore in chesed I draw you to me.*” Notice how the word translated “*I draw you*” comes from the Hebrew word mashakh (מָשַׁח), meaning to “*seize*” or “*drag away.*” (The Septuagint [Greek translation] used the verb helko (ἔλκω) to express the same idea.) Yeshua said, “*No one is able to come to me unless he is “dragged away” (ἐλκύση) by the Father*” (see *John 6:44*, <sup>44</sup>οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με εἰ μὴ ὁ Πατήρ ὁ πέμψας με ἐλκύσῃ αὐτόν, καὶ γὰρ ἀναστήσω αὐτόν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.). God’s mercy (chesed) seizes us, takes us captive, and leads us to the Savior. Paradoxically, there are many people do not want life on God’s terms. They are contented to stumble along in their lives and remain a rasha in the deception of the world. When someone is called by the Lord, it is usually when they are at the point of brokenness and need for a miracle. Here the people needed a miracle, but were desiring so for the gratification of the flesh and not for the sake of heaven. As we seek to do the will of God, we seek His Messiah through a personal encounter. It is then when Yeshua says “*Kumi*” rise up, awaken from the dead, become alive in the Messiah! (*Mark 5:41, John 6:40*). Just as Moshe interceded on behalf of the people, Yeshua intercedes on our behalf before God. In Heaven, the Messiah embodies the Presence and Reality of our Advocate and Mediator before God.