



Likkutei Sichos

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Bread and Meat

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1.

REPETITION IN RASHI

In Rashi's commentary on this week's *sedrah*,¹ we find something astonishing: Rashi comments on the same point twice, repeats {in his second gloss} part of his previous interpretation with all of its details — and moreover — does so in two adjacent verses!

In response to the Jews' complaints (after "their bread had run out")² — "If only we would have died... when we sat by the pot of meat, when we ate bread until satiation..."³ — the verse says:⁴

Moshe and Aharon said to all the Children of Israel: "In the evening, you will know that Hashem took you out of the land of Egypt. And in the morning, you will see the glory of Hashem, that He has heard your complaints against Hashem...."

Rashi explains:⁵

... Moshe told them: "In the evening you will know" that He can satisfy your longing, and He will give meat, but He will not give it with a radiant countenance because you asked for it improperly and with a full stomach. But regarding the bread that you requested for a {legitimate} need, when it descends in the morning, you will see the glory of His radiant countenance. For He will bring it down lovingly — in the morning, when there is opportunity to prepare it, and with dew over and under it, as if it were placed in a box.

¹ {The weekly Torah portion.}

² Rashi on *Shemos* 16:2.

³ *Shemos* 16:3.

⁴ *Shemos* 16:6-7.

⁵ {In his commentary on *Shemos* 16:7.}

The verse immediately following says:⁶

Moshe said, “When Hashem gives you meat to eat in the evening and bread in the morning until satiation, as Hashem hears your complaints that you cause {others} to complain against Him....”

(After Rashi explains,⁷ “*Meat to eat* — but not to be satiated. The Torah teaches proper conduct: Meat should not be eaten until satiety”) Rashi asks:

What did He see to {make Him} bring down bread {from Heaven} in the morning and meat in the evening?

(Rashi answers:)

Because they requested the bread properly... but they requested the meat improperly... therefore, He gave them {the meat} at a bothersome time, “improperly.”

This is puzzling: Why does Rashi repeat this point?

2.

AN ATTEMPTED ANSWER

Seemingly, we can say that these two explanations of Rashi are talking about two different things:⁸

The first time, Rashi aims to explain why, concerning Hashem giving bread (in the morning), Scripture says, “you will *see*...” whereas concerning Hashem giving meat (in the evening), it says, “you will *know*....” Rashi explains this discrepancy by pointing out the difference in the **manner** that the food was dispensed: The meat was given “**not**... with a radiant

⁶ {*Shemos* 16:8.}

⁷ {Rashi on *Shemos* 16:8.}

⁸ *Divrei David*; see a **similar** {explanation} in *Levush*.

countenance” (then, they didn’t *see* “the glory of Hashem” {thus, it only says “you will *know*”}). In contrast, the bread was given such that “in its descent... you will *see* the glory of His radiant countenance... lovingly...” {Thus, the verse says, “you will *see*.”}

The second time, Rashi aims to explain why the bread and the meat were given at different **times**:⁹ [“What was it that He saw to {make Him} bring down bread from the Heavens in the morning and meat in the evening?”] Rashi explains that the bread (which “they requested properly”) was given in the morning, since it was a “proper” {convenient} time, whereas the meat (which “they requested improperly”) was given in the evening — “at a bothersome time, ‘improperly.’”

This, however, is insufficient. Because:

[Aside from the **primary** issue that this explanation does not explain why Rashi needed to repeat the details already discussed in his first interpretation (that the request for bread was proper whereas the request for meat was improper, etc.)]

From the fact that Rashi says (immediately, in his first gloss), “But regarding the bread, which you requested for a {legitimate} need... (for) He will bring it down lovingly, **in the morning, when there is opportunity to prepare it...**,” it is clear that his first gloss already gives a **reason** why Hashem would “bring down bread in the morning (and meat in the evening).” And this was [not only because “evening” **alludes** to “a somber countenance” (“not with a radiant countenance”), and “morning” to “a radiant countenance,” but] for the **same** reason that Rashi states in his second gloss, viz., in the “morning ...there is opportunity to prepare it.” (From here it is automatically understood that Hashem gave meat **in the evening** because [as a result of {the fact that} “He will not give it to you with a radiant countenance” — it was given at a time when] there was **no** “opportunity to prepare it”).

⁹ And therefore, Rashi doesn't remark here {that the bread was given with} “dew over and under it...” because that is not so relevant **to the time** it was given {which is what Rashi is coming to address here}.

Since **this** difference between meat and bread (whether or not they were given at a convenient time) is also included earlier in Rashi's first gloss, the question remains: Why does Rashi repeat this? Furthermore, he begins his second gloss as a question: "**What did He see** to {make Him} bring down bread {from the Heavens} in the morning and meat in the evening?" Even were it necessary to repeat the interpretation, it is superfluous, however, {for Rashi} to **ask** "what did He see" after he already addressed this question in {his remarks on} the **previous** verse?

3.

DIFFERENCES IN RASHI

There are also **several** variations in diction and differing nuances in Rashi's two interpretations. The general question: What is the **reason** for the variations and nuances? Moreover, at first glance, reason dictates that many of these {changes} should have been written **specifically** in the reverse {of the way they are written}:

- a) Since Rashi explains in his first gloss that the "radiant countenance" relating to the giving of the bread was expressed by the fact that it was given "in the morning, when there was opportunity to prepare it," he should have said **there**, regarding the meat, that its being given **without** a radiant countenance was expressed by the fact that it was given in the evening, "at a bothersome time." Why does Rashi only say this in the second gloss?
- b) Ordinarily, something is said first with all of its relevant details, and when it is repeated, a summary is sufficient. In our case, however, regarding the explanation of the clauses, "they requested the bread properly" and, "they requested the meat improperly," we see the opposite order in Rashi's explanations:

In his first gloss, Rashi says concisely, “the bread which you requested for a {legitimate} need... but the meat you asked for improperly, and with a full stomach”; And in his **second** gloss, Rashi explains at length: “they requested the bread properly, **for a person cannot exist without bread...** they requested the meat improperly **for they had many animals, and furthermore, they could have gone without meat.**”

- c) In his first gloss, Rashi first offers an explanation regarding the meat and then regarding the bread, consistent with the order of the verse, “In the evening you will know... {referring to the meat}, and in the morning you will see...” {referring to the bread}. In his second gloss, however, Rashi **reverses** the order: “What was it that He saw to {make Him} bring down bread in the morning and (**then**) meat in the evening.” [And Rashi does the same his subsequent remarks: “Because they requested the bread properly...,” (and then) “but {they requested} the meat...”] Moreover, this is the reverse of the order found in **this** verse: “When Hashem gives you meat to eat in the evening and (then) bread in the morning until satiation....”

4.

MORE DIFFERENCES

In addition to the fact that in his second gloss, Rashi writes at greater length than in his first, there are also **changes** of diction (and meaning in the explanation regarding the meat):

- a) From Rashi’s wording (in his first gloss), “because you asked for it improperly, **and** with a full stomach,” it is clear that the phrase “and with a full stomach” does not serve as *the* reason **why** their request was improper, but rather, it serves as an **additional** reason why the request for meat was inappropriate. As the commentators¹⁰ explain,

¹⁰ *Sifsei Chachamim* {commentary on Rashi here}.

by saying “improperly,” Rashi’s intention is that the request was “not for a {legitimate} need,” since “they could have gone without meat” (as Rashi says in his second gloss), and, the phrase, “with a full stomach,” means (as Rashi says in his second gloss) that “they had many animals.”

We need to clarify: In Rashi’s first gloss, “improperly” (which means “they could have gone without meat,” as explained above) is written **before** “with a full stomach”; and in his second gloss, he **reverses** the order — first “for they had many animals,” and then, “for they could have gone without meat”?

- b) In his first gloss, Rashi says, “**and** with a full stomach {ומכרם מלאה}” — using the conjunctive letter וּוּ {ו} — ‘and,’ meaning, that this phrase} adds {to the preceding phrase} — (it is also a primary reason). In his second gloss, he says, “for they had many animals, **and furthermore**, they could have {gone without meat}...” — {the word ‘furthermore’} emphasizes that this reason is secondary to the primary one (“for they had many animals”).
- c) In his first gloss, it says, “and with a full stomach,” not mentioning with what it was “full.” In contrast, in his second gloss, Rashi specifies: “for they had many **animals.**”

5.

WHY TWO STATEMENTS?

We can resolve these questions by prefacing with a perplexing point underlying these passages: First the verse says, “Moshe and Aharon said... in the evening you will know... and in the morning you will see...” and immediately afterward, it says, “Moshe said, ‘When Hashem gives you meat to eat in the evening and bread in the morning until satiation....’”

Why is this split into two separate statements — first a **generalized** statement: “In the evening you will know... and in the morning you will see...” (without spelling out what will cause you to know and see), and then, separately, a specific statement: “When Hashem gives you meat to eat in the evening and bread in the morning until satiation...” — rather than having them together as **one** statement: “When Hashem gives you meat to eat in the evening, and you will know... and bread in the morning until satiation, and you will see...”?

We do find many times in the Torah that something is said in a general way first, and then all of its details are specified. However, it is difficult interpret it this way here, because:

[In addition to the fact that in our case, (a) the Torah could have completely circumvented the need to write the second statement by adding just a few words in the first one; and, (b) this doesn't explain why the Torah repeats the **second** part of the verse (“as Hashem hears your complaints... and what are we...”) which was already stated **explicitly** in the previous verse (“that He has heard your complaints... and what are we...”).]

From the fact that the first statement says “Moshe and **Aharon** said” and in the second statement, “Moshe said” (**alone**), it is clear that these statements are making two separate points: The first statement pertains to Moshe and Aharon, whereas the second is germane only to Moshe, as will be explained.

6.

REBUKE AND CARE

The explanation:

In the general complaint of the Jewish people (as a result of the fact that “their bread had run out”), there were two issues to which Hashem responded:

- a) supplying the (physical) **necessities** of the Jewish people — by determining what was necessary and unnecessary for them [and this is the difference between bread and meat, as will be explained in Section 9];
- b) counteracting and correcting the **conduct** of the Jewish people in this instance — since their complaints showed that they needed to be reprovved.

This is the general difference between the two statements (and Rashi's explanations):

In the first statement, Moshe and Aharon told the Jewish people how Hashem would respond in order to better their **behavior**. **This** issue was germane to Moshe and Aharon, since Hashem had instructed them both to “take the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their legions.”¹¹ And they both were responsible to guide the Jewish people in the right path.

The second statement, however, speaks of how Hashem would provide the Jewish people with their needs — “meat to eat in the evening and bread in the morning until satiation.” **This** was relevant to Moshe {alone}, as he was the shepherd of Israel who provided the Jewish people with their needs — “like a nurse carries a suckling.”¹²

Therefore, the clause, “when Hashem gives... meat... and bread...” does not belong in the first statement, since it does not discuss the necessities that the Jews will receive, just the lesson and rebuke regarding their waywardness.

¹¹ *Shemos* 6:26.

¹² *Bamidbar* 11:12.

7.

COMPLAINTS OF FAITH

The grievances of the Jewish people contained two contrasting points:

On the one hand, their request for bread and meat was communicated as a **complaint**, indicating they were in an undesirable {spiritual} state.

On the other hand, the complaint itself — the fact that they turned to Hashem with their demands — emphasized that they believed that Hashem **could** provide this, and that **He** was the nourisher and sustainer of all, from whom this must be asked and solicited.

The two statements, which express two modes of Hashem’s interaction with the Jewish people, were responses to these two issues (expressed by the complaints):

Regarding their grievance and complaint, “If only we would have died... **in the land of Egypt...** for **you** {Moshe and Aharon} took us out to this desert...,”¹³ the response was, “In the evening you will know that Hashem took you out of the land of Egypt”:¹⁴ Hashem will (refute the above complaint, and will) show “that **Hashem took you out** of the land of Egypt” (and He leads you in the desert);

and in response to their complaint and petition that Hashem must feed and sustain them, which was an expression of their faith in Him — “You will see the glory of Hashem” (measure for measure): Hashem will show them “the glory of Hashem.”¹⁵

[On this basis, we can explain why the clause, “Hashem has heard your complaints against Him...,” follows the clause, “In the morning you will see the glory of Hashem,” although seemingly, this statement

¹³ {Shemos 16:3.}

¹⁴ {Shemos 16:6-7.}

¹⁵ {I.e., Hashem’s goodwill and love.}

“Hashem has heard **your complaints...**”) would seem to justify the opposite {of a revelation of Hashem’s glory}.

With their statement, Moshe and Aharon (primarily) intended to underscore Hashem’s satisfaction at “hearing” {i.e., discerning} in their demands their faith (“Hashem has **heard** your complaints (which were¹⁶ — against Hashem”) that He is the nourisher and sustainer of all, Who must provide for their needs. Therefore — “you will see the glory of Hashem.”]

8.

EXPLAINING THE DIFFERENCES

In light of all of the above, we can understand the difference between Rashi’s two above-mentioned explanations, congruent with the above difference between the two statements:

In his first remark, Rashi’s intention is to explain the connection between “You will know... and you will see...” [Hashem’s two methods of dealing with the Jewish people] and the distribution of bread and meat. [And therefore, “in the evening (specifically) you will know...” — by being given mean meat, “and in the morning (specifically) you will see...” — being given bread]:

The **complaints** of the Jewish people (“if only we would have died...”) — which led to the response, “In the evening you will know that Hashem took you out of the land of Egypt” — were expressed in their request for **meat**, which “you asked for... **improperly...**” Therefore, it was given “not with a radiant countenance”;

¹⁶ Rashi on the verse; see the commentators on Rashi, {who explain that Moshe was saying that although it appeared that the Jews were complaining against Moshe and Aharon, they were, in truth, complaining against Hashem.}

Their request for bread, which was “**for a need**,” was a result of their faith (that Hashem provides their needs). Therefore, “In its descent in the morning, you will see the glory of His radiant countenance.”

[And since it is a *chidush*¹⁷ to say that the fulfillment of the request for bread (the giving of the manna) was “with a radiant countenance” — since **generally**, the way the Jews made requests (including the one for bread) was that they “complained...”¹⁸ — Rashi explains and clarifies how we see Hashem’s affection in how the manna descended: (a) it was given in the morning when there was opportunity to prepare it; and (b) it had dew over and under it, as if it were placed in a box.

In contrast, regarding the meat, Rashi says only, “He will not give it to you with a radiant countenance” — without spelling out how this {lack of radiant countenance} was actually expressed (when the meat was given) — since in **this** verse, how the meat was given is irrelevant. What is germane is only that this giving was given begrudgingly (“not with a radiant countenance”)].

However, in Rashi’s explanation on the verse, “when Hashem gives you...” — which discusses how Hashem will dispense to the Jews their needs — Rashi’s wants to explain how the difference between the giving of bread in the morning and the meat in the evening was also connected to this point. Meaning, the distinction between the **necessity** of their requests corresponded to the difference in **how** their requests were fulfilled:

Hashem gave the bread, which “they requested properly,” in the morning (at a convenient time, “when there is time to prepare it”), and the meat, which “they requested improperly,” “at a bothersome time.”

¹⁷ {A novel idea. Rashi does not state the obvious in his commentary; he offers novel solutions to difficulties in the simple understanding of the text.}

¹⁸ {*Shemos* 16:2.}

9.

EXPLAINING THE DIFFERENCES IN WORDING

On this basis, the differences in Rashi's wording can be understood **straightforwardly**:

In his first gloss, Rashi says only that the meat that “you requested... improperly, and with a full stomach... but regarding the bread (which) you requested for a {legitimate} need,” since Rashi's intent is not to explain the reasons **why** each request was legitimate or not. Only the **nature** of the request is relevant here: The request for bread was desirable (since it was “for a need”). Therefore, the outcome of this request was that “you will see the glory of Hashem.” The request for meat was (a) improper (with **complaints**, etc.); and (b) “with a full stomach” — requesting meat with “**a full stomach**” indicates a low {spiritual} state — and therefore, meat was given “not with a radiant countenance.”

In contrast, in his second gloss, Rashi explains the difference between meat and bread in terms of their **necessity** for the Jewish people: The request for bread was “proper,” since “a person cannot exist without bread”¹⁹ (they **need** to have it); and the request for meat was “improper,” since “they had many animals”: There was no reason to give them meat, something they **already possessed**.

Subsequently, Rashi adds, “and furthermore, they could have gone without meat”: Even if they would not have had any animals, their request would still not be as “proper” as the request for bread, because meat is not a necessity that they could not have lived without — “They **could have gone** without meat.”

¹⁹ {Rashi's second gloss.}

10.

THE REASON FOR THE CHANGE IN ORDER

The reason for these two types of giving — “meat in the evening” (at a “bothersome time”) “and bread in the morning” — is emphasized later in this verse: “as Hashem hears your complaints, which you cause {others} to complain against Him”:

“Hashem has **heard** your complaints,” meaning, Hashem hears and **accepts** the substance of the Jews’ request (as explained above in Section 7). For this reason, “Hashem gives you... bread in the **morning**.” And the fact that “you cause” **others** “to complain against Him”²⁰ expresses the Jewish people’s improper conduct, which is the reason why the meat was given “in the evening,” at an inopportune time.

Accordingly, we can say that this is the reason why Rashi reverses the order in his second gloss (“What did He see to {make Him} bring down bread in the morning and (then) meat in the evening”). Rashi’s order matches the order in which the verse presents the **reasons** for the difference in how the bread and meat were given: First, “for Hashem **has heard...**” — this explains why the bread was given in the morning. Afterward, “which you cause {others} to complain against Him” — this explains why the meat was given in the evening.

With this (order reversal) Rashi clarifies that the question, “What did He see ” is not a question that **Rashi** is raising [because Rashi already answered this question in his comments on the **previous** verse (as explained above in Section 2)], but rather this question is {implicitly} part of the **verse**:

After saying, “When Hashem gives you... meat in the evening... and bread in the morning,” a difficulty arises: “What did He see to {make Him} bring down bread in the morning and meat in the evening”? The difficulty

²⁰ Rashi on the verse; see Rashi to v. 7 above (s.v. “*Ki salinu alenu*”).

(primarily) is: Since Hashem had accepted the complaints of the Jewish people when “their **bread** had run out,” and therefore, Hashem said, “Behold! I shall rain down for you bread...”²¹ (without mentioning meat then at all), He should have provided bread immediately, without waiting until morning. “What did He see to {make Him} bring down bread in the morning {and not right away}? (And {conversely;} since there was **one** inducement for Hashem giving both bread and meat — the complaints — why was the second effect) “meat {given} in the evening” (and not together with the bread in the morning)?

The verse explains: “Hashem has heard your complaints.” Meaning (as Rashi explains), the request for bread was sensible; therefore, bread was given in the morning {at a convenient time}. The request for meat — which incited others to complain about Hashem — was unwarranted, so meat was given at night, “at a bothersome time.”

11.

THE REVEALED AND INNER DIMENSIONS OF TORAH

From the “wine of Torah”²² alluded to Rashi’s commentary:

Mystically, the difference between bread and meat (*slav*)²³ is that bread alludes to the revealed dimension of Torah.²⁴ *Slav*, which is “(a species of bird and is) very **fat** {שֶׁמֶן}”²⁵ — {etymologically related to} oil {שֶׁמֶן}²⁶ — alludes to the “oil” of Torah, the inner dimensions of Torah, and

²¹ *Shemos* 16:4.

²² {The deeper ideas of Torah.}

²³ {A species of bird that Hashem miraculously made appear in the Jewish camp, in response to their demand for meat.}

²⁴ *Imrei Bina*, “*Shaar Hakrias Shema*”, ch. 53.

²⁵ Rashi’s wording in his gloss on v. 13, later on; see *Yoma* 75b.

²⁶ *Likkutei Torah*, “*Behaloscha*,” 32a, 32b ff.

specifically, to the deepest secrets of Torah.²⁷ The metaphor of fatty meat, therefore, symbolizes the deepest secrets of Torah as they are expressed in (a manner that can be ingested — {integrated by a person’s}) understanding and comprehension.²⁸ (The secrets then have “taste”²⁹ {i.e., reason} and can be enjoyed.)

Although the manna, being bread from the **Heavens**, also alludes to the inner dimension of Torah, there is a difference between manna and *slav*:

Manna, which was given in the form of **bread** (the revealed dimension of Torah, as explained), represents the level of the inner dimension of Torah that is clothed in its revealed dimension. In contrast, the *slav*, which, even as it came below, retained its fatty nature (it was very fatty) in a revealed sense, represents the inner dimension of Torah **itself**.

On this basis, we can understand the differences between manna and *slav*:

- a) Although even as it descended below, manna retained its essential character, something that was not intimately connected to the constraints of space and limits (and consequently, “whoever took more had nothing extra and whoever took less was not lacking”),³⁰ nevertheless, it was given in a **measured** way — “an *omer* {measurement} per person....”³¹ In contrast, regarding the *slav*, we don't find that there was a limit on how much each person could take³² —

²⁷ {*Bread* is a metaphor for the revealed dimensions of Torah law, the concepts of Torah that are necessary for Jew to know to observe *mitzvos* properly. Like bread, this knowledge is necessary for our people’s existence. In contrast, oil is a metaphor for the inner dimensions of Torah. Like oil, the study of the inner dimensions of Torah adds pleasure and vitality to our observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*.} See *Imrei Bina*, loc cit. (ch. 54 ff.) which explains at length the difference between the “wine” and “oil” of Torah.

²⁸ This is similar to the explanation in *Likkutei Torah*, loc. cit., that the *slav* connects *bittul* (*chochmah*) and *yesh* (meat). See there.

²⁹ {In Hebrew, *taam* means both “taste” and “reason.”}

³⁰ *Shemos* 16:18.

³¹ *Shemos* 16:16.

³² Note the description of the *slav* in *parshas Behaaloscha* — *Bamidbar* 11:32.

Clearly, since the revealed dimension of Torah “is measured and limited,”³³ the level of the inner dimension of Torah that is garbed in the revealed Torah must also be limited and demarcated. By contrast, the inner dimension of Torah itself is the “unlimited” facet of Torah.

- b) Although the diffusion of the manna {in the spiritual realm} also took place on Shabbos³⁴ (since Shabbos has a connection to the inner dimension of Torah), only its efflux **Above** {in the spiritual realm} happened on Shabbos. Below {into the physical world}, however, it descended (as “bread,” as explained) only during the weekdays.

In contrast, the diffusion and descent below of the *slav* started (according to **Rashi**) on Shabbos. Moreover, it began on Shabbos afternoon, the time of *raava deraavin*,³⁵ which is the hour on Shabbos itself that is **especially** attuned to the inner dimension of Torah.

12.

THE SECRETS OF THE TORAH BEFORE THE GIVING OF THE TORAH

Regarding this {two-fold request}, Rashi says that the request for bread was predicated on a “need” and therefore, “proper,” since “a person cannot exist without bread.” Without the revealed Torah, we cannot know what we must do and what we may not do. And since the inner dimension of Torah is needed in order for the revealed Torah be {integrated} as it should, they were given manna, bread from **Heaven**.³⁶

³³ End of *Maamar BaYom HaSheini 5685* (in *Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 2, end) et al.

³⁴ *Zohar*, vol. 2, 63b; 88a.

³⁵ {*Raava* means “will.” Shabbos afternoon is called *raava deraavin* (lit., “will of wills”) because it is a time when Hashem’s inner will is revealed.}

³⁶ {On its own, it is possible for the revealed Torah to be viewed as just another, albeit brilliant, form of wisdom. The inner dimension of Torah, by its sublime spiritual flavor, reminds a person of the true Divine nature of Torah, that Torah is the expression of Hashem’s will and wisdom. Therefore, in order for Torah to be approached appropriately, its study must be accompanied with the study of the inner dimension of Torah. This idea is represented by the manna, which is bread — the revealed Torah — from Heaven with the heavenly, G-dly dimension of the Torah revealed.}

The request for meat, however, was improper for two reasons:

- a) {The clause} “For they had many animals,” tells us, according to Rashi, that the Jews asked for **animal** meat, which {in contrast to bird meat} is rather coarse (and not as receptive to the influence of *bittul*³⁷ symbolized by “oil.” Regarding Torah, this means that the Jews wanted to “absorb” the inner dimension of Torah, as it grasped by the **animalistic** soul,³⁸ without really sensing the **G-dly light** of what was understood.

[Therefore, they were given *slav* — “a species of **bird**” — since the meat of fowl is not as materialistic as animal meat, and therefore, is receptive to the influence of the quality symbolized by oil. In the context of a person’s soul, “bird” — specifically *slav* — symbolizes the divine soul as it is encloded itself in the intellective soul.³⁹ The *slav* symbolizes the inner dimension of Torah, as it is comprehended by the G-dly soul, and through it, the intellective soul].

- b) “And furthermore, **they** could have gone without meat”: There was no need to reveal the “hidden treasure”⁴⁰ — the understanding and comprehension of the inner dimension of Torah — to **them**, since they lived before the Giving of the Torah.⁴¹ Furthermore, since this demand was made before the divide between “the upper and lower realms”⁴² was breached, it was impossible then to connect the “upper” and the “lower” realms.” {Meaning} it was not possible that the inner

³⁷ {*Bittul* connotes self-nullification, humility, and the negation of ego. This is symbolized by oil, which is manufactured by crushing olives. On a deeper level, oil symbolizes *chochmah* (wisdom). Just as oil rises to the surface of all other fluids, so, too, wisdom is the loftiest of all human faculties. In turn, wisdom is the source of the “selflessness” (*bittul*) that comprehends G-d and His greatness.}

³⁸ The animalistic soul is one of the two souls possessed by every Jew, the other being the G-dly soul. A fundamental element of the animalistic soul is that it desires physicality, and all negative traits are rooted in the animalistic soul. The primary objective of a Jew’s divine service is to subdue the desires of the animalistic soul, to direct its powers for more noble objectives.

³⁹ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1295.

⁴⁰ *Shabbos* 88b.

⁴¹ {Before the giving of the Torah, the inner dimension of Torah was not a **necessity**, since, as explained above, the necessity to study the inner dimension of Torah is in order that the revealed Torah be related to as it should — as Hashem’s will and wisdom.}

⁴² {Before the Giving of the Torah, there was a strict divide between the upper and the lower realms — spirituality and physicality. Beginning with the Giving of the Torah, this divide was bridged, and it became possible to fuse the spiritual with the physical, and vice versa.}

dimension of Torah (the “upper” dimension of Torah) would come, **unfiltered**, into comprehension, especially into the comprehension of the animalistic soul (the “lower realms”).

[For this reason, the *slav* was given “not with a radiant countenance, פנים מאירות” — the sublime inner dimension did not **illuminate**, מאיר, within the meat of the *slav*.]

On this basis, it turns out that {the mystical dynamic symbolized by} the *slav*, (diffusing the “oil” of Torah into “meat” — comprehension) was, at that time, connected with a descent.

In contrast, after the Giving of the Torah, especially after the revelation of {Kabbalah disclosed by} the *Arizal*,⁴³ and his proclamation that “it is a *mitzvah* to reveal this wisdom,”⁴⁴ and more specifically, after the revelation of (*Chassidus*, and especially) *Chassidus Chabad*, the deepest secrets of the Torah were given in a manner that **everyone** can understand them with their intellect.⁴⁵

13.

THE SECRETS OF TORAH IN THESE TIMES

This explanation — that “**they** could have gone without meat” {i.e., without understanding the inner dimension of Torah} because they lived before the Giving of the Torah — is only according to the opinion⁴⁶ (and supposition) that the *slav* spoken of in **our sedrah** only was given for a short time (only before the Giving of the Torah).

However, from the fact that Rashi does not mention this difference between the manna and *slav* (that the *slav* in the evenings only came together with the bread for **three weeks** although the bread lasted for **40**

⁴³ {Yitzchak ben Shlomo Luria, 16th century Kabbalist, Tzfat. One of the most celebrated Kabbalists of all times, his teachings have left an indelible mark on the esoteric parts of Torah and Jewish practice.}

⁴⁴ *Iggeres HaKodesh*, ch. 26 (p. 142b).

⁴⁵ See above, that “*slav*” represents the secrets of the Torah as they descend into **comprehension**.

⁴⁶ *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah* ch. 13 (ch. 12), et al.

years), it appears that Rashi (in his Torah commentary) maintains that the difference between them was only regarding when they were given (in the morning or evening), but the *slav* descended {every evening} for the entire time that the manna descended {every morning}. (This is true according to most opinions).⁴⁷

The meaning of “**they** could have gone without meat” according to **these** opinions (including Rashi’s opinion): Moshe’s {spiritual} stature was characterized by **seeing**⁴⁸ G-dliness.⁴⁹ He {therefore} asked with wonder,⁵⁰ “Where can I get meat?!” (since he transcended the plane of spirituality symbolized by “meat”).⁵¹ The same was true of the generation of the desert, the generation of knowledge,⁵² Moshe’s generation: They **saw** G-dliness; they were surrounded by the Clouds of Glory; and they were the generation of the desert (on the level of “thought”),⁵³ etc. For **them**, “meat” (including the meat of *slav*) — understanding and comprehension of G-dliness — constituted a descent.⁵⁴

[This is also the deeper meaning of what Rashi says — that *slav* was given “at a bothersome time” — in relation to “seeing” G-dliness, understanding {G-dliness} is “bothersome”].

In later generations, by contrast, and especially in these generations of the footsteps of Moshiach, the “request for meat” is totally appropriate. **On the contrary** — only by “spreading your wellsprings outward,”⁵⁵ the wellsprings of Torah, “will the Master come,⁵⁶ that is, King Moshiach.” In the words of the *Raaya Mehemna*:⁵⁷ “With this book of yours... the book of *Zohar*, you will be redeemed from exile with mercy.”

— From a talk delivered on Shabbos *Parshas Beshalach* 5734 (1974) and 5726 (1966)

⁴⁷ Collected in *Torah Shleimah* on *Shemos* 16:13.

⁴⁸ See *Likkutei Torah*, “*VaEschanan*,” 3a ff.

⁴⁹ {Seeing represents a palpable consciousness of G-dliness, as real as something that is seen.}

⁵⁰ *Bamidbar* 11:13.

⁵¹ See *Likkutei Torah*, “*Behaaloscha*” (31d; 33b) that “meat” was completely below his level.

⁵² See *Vayikra Rabbah* ch. 9:1; *Bamidbar Rabbah* ch. 19:3.

⁵³ *Likkutei Torah*, “*Shelach*,” 37b; 38b. {“Thought” represents a level of spirituality that is beyond and removed from the limitations of the physical realm, represented by “speech” and “action.” Since the Jews of that generation lived on the level of “thought,” the meat of the *slav* — G-dliness coming into the comprehension of the coarse *animalistic soul* — was unnecessary, and indeed a descent.}

⁵⁴ See *Likkutei Torah*, “*Behaaloscha*,” 31d.

⁵⁵ {The spreading of Chassidus — the esoteric teachings of the Torah.}

⁵⁶ From the famous letter of the *Baal Shem Tov* (printed at the end of *Ben Poras Yosef*; at the beginning of *Keser Shem Tov*, and in other sources).

⁵⁷ *Zohar*, vol. 3, 124b.