



## 1. Rabbi Menachem Leibtag

**Summary:** Bereishit is mostly narrative. Shemot has a mix, but the laws are part of the story (example, the laws in Mishpatim were given at Har Sinai). Vayikra is mostly laws, with some necessary narratives (such as the story of the inauguration of the Mishkan). However, Bamidbar:

Chapter	The Story (Narrative) (and mitzvot l'sha'ah)	The Mitzvot (L'dorot)
1-4	Organizing the camp ("sidur ha'machanot")	
5		Korban Chatat; Laws of Sotah
6		Laws of Nazir; Birkat Kohanim
7	Dedication of Mishkan	
8	The appointment of Leviim	
9	Offering Korban Pesach in the desert (laws of Pesach Sheni); Travelling following the Anan	
10	Gathering camp by trumpet (chatzotot); Leaving Har Sinai (on 20th of Iyar)	
11	Complaints during the journey ("mitoninim," "mitavim," etc.)	
12	Complaints against Moshe ("chet Miriam")	
13	Sin of the 'spies' ("chet ha'm'raglim")	
14	The punishment: 40 years of wandering	
15		Laws of Shlamim, chalah, chatat, shabbat and tzitzit
16-17	Korach's rebellion	
18		Laws relating to the Kohen's reward for his service
19		Laws of "tumat meyt"
20-21	Events of the 40th year: death of Miriam; "Mei m'iva" incident; Death of Aharon; Conquest of Trans-Jordan, etc.	
21-24	Story of Bilam and Balak	
25	Sin of Ba'al P'or and the act of Pinchas	
26	The census for inheriting the Land	
27	Transfer of leadership from Moshe to Yehoshua	
28-29		Korbanot Tmidim Umusafim
30		The laws of n'darim
31	War against Midyan	
32	Inheritance of Reuven and Gad	
33	Summary of the journey through the desert	
34-36		Laws in preparation for conquest and inheritance of the land ("nachalot" and "arei miklat")

## 2. Ramban on Numbers 1:1

והספר הזה כולו במצוות שעה שמצטוו בהם בעמדם במדבר, ובניסים הנעשים להם, לספר כל מעשה ה' אשר עשה עמם להפליא. וסיפר כי החל לתת אויביהם לפנייהם לחרב, וצוה איך תחלק הארץ להם. ואין בספר הזה מצוות נוהגות לדורות, זולתי קצת מצוות בעניני הקרבנות שהתחיל בהן בספר הכהנים, ולא נשלם שם, והשלימן בספר הזה.

And this book deals entirely with 'mitzvot sha'ah' (transient commandments) that applied only during Bnei Yisrael's stay in the desert, and the miracles that happened to them, to tell all the amazing things G-d did with them. It tells that he began to give their enemies to them by the sword and instructed them as to how to divide the land.

This book does **not contain** any **mitzvot l'dorot** (commandments for all generations) **except** for a few **mitzvot dealing with korbanot** that the Torah began discussing in **Sefer Vayikra**, but did not finish their explanation there, and they are finished here instead.

### 3. Rabbi Leibtag:

1) **"Mitzvot l'sha'ah"** are commandments that were given specifically for the generation of the desert, such as: ♦

- Organizing the camp around the Mishkan (chapters 1-4);
- ♦ Sanctifying the Leviim (chapter 8);
- ♦ Travel and encampment following the "anan" (chapter 9).

2) **"Mitzvot l'dorot"** are regular mitzvot, such as:

- ♦ The laws of "sotah" (chapter 5);
- ♦ The laws of "nazir" (chapter 6);
- ♦ The laws of Korbanot T'midim u'Musafim (chapters 28-29).]

Thus, according to Ramban, Sefer Bamidbar details the events that take place during Bnei Yisrael's journey from Har Sinai towards the Promised Land. This includes **both** the **narrative** that details those events, as well as the special mitzvot - **mitzvot l'sha'ah** - that Bnei Yisrael are given concerning that journey. The **mitzvot l'dorot**, dealing with topics unrelated to the journey through the desert, do not belong in Sefer Bamidbar! So why does the Torah include mitzvot that don't belong in Sefer Bamidbar? Unfortunately, Ramban seems to have left this question unanswered.

After a quick glance at the list in the right hand column of Board #1, the answer is quite obvious: they belong in Sefer **Vayikra**. Take for example:

♦ Parshat "sotah" (5:11-31) and parshat "nazir" (6:1-21):

Both contain "torot" (ritual procedures) for korbanot (see 5:29 and 6:21). Thus (as we explained in previous shiurim) these parshiot belong with the other "torot" found in the first half of Vayikra.

♦ Parshat "parah adumah" (chapter 19):

Belongs in Parshiot Tazria/Metzora, together with the presentation of all of the other laws of how one becomes "tamey" and the necessary procedures to become "tahor."

♦ The laws of "korbanot t'midim u'musafim" (chapters 28-29):

Belong with the chagim in "Emor" (Vayikra 23). Note that on each holiday mentioned in Emor we must bring an "ishe l'Hashem." Sefer Bamidbar details the specific "ishe" (korban) that must be brought for each chag. (See Vayikra 23:37.) Thus, it appears as though Chumash has deliberately taken parshiot that could have been in Sefer Vayikra and 'randomly' placed them throughout the narrative of Sefer Bamidbar! But why would the Torah take a mitzvah that 'belongs' in one sefer and move it to another?

### Sh'china in the Camp

The first topic of Sefer Bamidbar is the organization of the camp ("sidur ha'machanot") surrounding the Mishkan (chapters 1-4). As we explained last week, this re-organization of the camp stresses the importance of the interdependent relationship between the camp and the Mishkan, i.e. between the nation and the Kohanim and Leviim.

This may explain the reason that Sefer Bamidbar chose to include the parshiot that follow:

**A) "Shiluach T'mayim" (5:1-4):** As the camp was organized with the Sh'china dwelling at its center, the first mitzvah is to remove anyone who is "tamey" from the camp.

**B) "Gezel HaGer" (5:5-10):** Here we find laws that reflect the special relationship between the nation and the kohanim. This mitzvah begins with the standard law of the Korban Asham as explained in Parshat Vayikra (5:20-26). The halacha requires that prior to bringing the korban, the transgressor must first repay the person ("keren v'chomesh"). This parsha describes the case when the payment is given to the Kohen, i.e. when the person who is owed the money has passed away and left no inheritors (see Rashi 5:8). The parsha continues with a general statement regarding the legal ownership of tithes that the nation must give to the kohanim (see 5:9-10).

**C) Parshat Sotah (5:11-31):** Here again we find a special relationship between the Kohanim (as servants in the Mishkan) and the nation, as the kohen is instrumental in solving problems in a marital relationship. Even though this is a korban mincha, its nature is quite different from those mentioned in Sefer Vayikra (see Ramban 5:9).

**D) Parshat Nazir (6:1-21)** Here we find a case where a member of the nation takes upon himself laws similar to those of a Kohen (see 6:6-8), as well as the 'kedusha' of a Kohen. Note also the similarity between the korban that the nazir must bring (6:13-21) and the special korbanot brought by the kohanim during the 7 day miluim ceremony (8:1-30).

**E) Birkat Kohanim (6:22-27):** The blessing that the Kohanim bestow on the nation is yet another example of the connection between the Kohanim and the machaneh. The kohanim serve as vehicle through which God can bless His people.

### Travelling with the Sh'china

Why are specifically parshiot from Sefer Vayikra woven into Sefer Bamidbar? This structure of Bamidbar may reflect a 'way of life....