

Bamidbar
All Mitzvos Deserve Equal Status
Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

In Bamidbar 4:20 we read, regarding the Leviyim, that they should not come in to see the holy things before the Kohanim cover them lest they die. The Kohanim had to cover the holy things before the leviyim came to carry them. My Rosh Yeshivah, Rav Moshe Feinstein, Zt'l pointed out that this is actually a bit repetitive. In the verse before, we already read that the Kohanim had to protect the Leviyim from divine punishment. So why was there a need to repeat that the Kohanim are to protect the Leviyim from seeing what they should not see? Rav Moshe answered that the Torah repeats the command for Aharon and his sons to protect the Leviyim from divine death to emphasize that all Mitzvos of Hashem must be followed whether or not they seem prestigious. The tasks of Kohanim and Leviyim are equal as they are both doing Hashem's Mitzvos and as such, each group's tasks should be looked at and treated equally. SO Kohanim had to make that the Leviyim did their tasks properly as well and this would include protecting them from seeing what they should not see. We see that Moshe Rabbeinu physically put up the Mishkan, personally served Aharon and his sons to prepare them to be Kohanim. Nothing was unbecoming or beneath his dignity. Everything he did was Mitzvas Hashem. We often find Kohanim reluctant to go to a Pidyon Haben [redemption of the first born male] because they feel the five dollars is not worth the time and effort. It is not the five dollars; it is the principle that the Pidyon Haben is Hashem's mitzvah. This is what we should always bear in mind. As avdai Hashem we must always be ready to serve Hashem whether the task is big or small.