



5786 Divrei Torah on Jerusalem by Rabbi Reuven Schreier Parashat Tetzaveh/פרשת תצוה

With Great Revelation Comes Great Responsibility

Hashem promises intimate closeness with His people, and yet in the very same breath, hints at death.

At the culmination of this week's *parshah*, *Moshe Rabbeinu* is commanded regarding the inaugural *korbanot* that would draw the *Shechinah* into the newly constructed *Mishkan*. The Torah then introduces the daily *tamid* offering, brought twice each day for as long as the *Mishkan* would stand.

Specifically after commanding that this sacrifice be brought before the *Ohel Moed*, the rendezvous point between *Hashem* and *Moshe*, the *pasuk* cryptically adds: 'וְנִעַדְתִּי שָׁמָּה לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִקְדַּשׁ בְּכַבְדִּי' - There I will arrange meetings with the children of Israel, and it will be sanctified by My glory.

The phrase 'נִקְדַּשׁ בְּכַבְדִּי' is deeply puzzling. The sanctity of the *Mishkan* obviously stems from *Hashem's* Presence; why state the obvious?

Chazal see in these words a chilling allusion to the future death of *Aharon HaKohen's* sons, *Nadav* and *Avihu*. These righteous men are consecrated as holy servants of *Hashem*, yet at the very moment of inauguration, they enter the Holy of Holies improperly and perish in Divine fire.

Moshe Rabbeinu later attests that *Hashem* already hinted to him that such a tragedy would occur. Upon hearing of *Nadav* and *Avihu's* death, *Moshe* tells his brother: "This is what the *Hashem* spoke, [when He said], 'I will be sanctified through those near to Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" *Rashi* (*Shemot* 29:43) explains that *Moshe* now realized this was the meaning of 'נִקְדַּשׁ בְּכַבְדִּי'; the *Mishkan* would be sanctified through the death of "My sanctified ones," those closest to Him.

While the intention of the phrase has been clarified, its connection to the *korban Tamid* is still entirely unclear. Why is this ominous hint placed specifically here immediately after the command of the *korban tamid*, the offering that represents constant, reliable Divine access?

Ironically, it may have been *Hashem's* promise of ongoing intimate connection that necessitated *Nadav* and *Avihu's* death. The *Ohr HaChayim* (*Shemot* 29:43) notes that it is specifically after *Hashem* promises consistent "meetings" with the Jewish people that he reveals the grave consequences of becoming overly familiar with the intensity of the *Shechinah*.

Since His Presence would now dwell continuously among them, the danger of taking that closeness for granted would become very real. Constant access to holiness can dull awe. And a gift of such gravity can be dangerous when abused.



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The deaths of *Nadav* and *Avihu*, towering *tzaddikim* who went one step too far, would stand as a permanent warning. The *Mishkan* was not merely a place of warmth and closeness; it was a place of fire. Intimacy with the Divine demands precision, restraint, and trembling reverence.

This message reverberates powerfully in our own time. The intense revelation of *Hashem's* Presence that pulses within His sanctified abode – *Yerushalayim Ir HaKodesh* – is a staggering gift. The fact that the Jewish people have reclaimed sovereignty over the holy city is an astounding expression of Divine favor. But familiarity with Divine gifts breeds complacency. When access becomes routine, reverence erodes.

All too often, when walking through the streets of the Old City, one witnesses behavior wholly out of place in the holiest rendezvous point between *Hashem* and His people. Such insensitive conduct is not only a gross breach of sanctity; it reflects a failure to grasp the weight of standing in the shadow of the *Shechinah*.

The *Mishkan* was sanctified through those who came too close without trembling.

Yerushalayim demands no less.