

Dvar Torah by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at

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TAZRI'A-M'TZORA

When I began studying the weekly double Parsha, I noticed seemingly a "glitch" or an extra letter added. Upon describing the malady of Tzaraat on one's home, the Torah refers to it in two different ways. At first tzaraat is described as a NEGA – an affliction.

"When you arrive in the land of Canaan that I give you as a possession, and I will place a tzaraat affliction upon a house in the land of your possession" (Vayikra 14:34).

Yet, immediately in the following verse (14:35), the Torah describes the tzaraat a little differently.

"Something LIKE an affliction has appeared to me in the house."

Is the Torah defining tzaraat as an affliction or ONLY LIKE an affliction?

Rashi explains that what may seem like an affliction and harmful in one person's perspective, may in essence be beneficial to that person. Rashi gives us insight into the fact that the Amorites hid treasures of gold in the walls of their houses during the forty years that the Israelites were in the desert. As a result of the affliction,

the homes and the treasures were uncovered. This is puzzling, because the Talmud in Arachin 16a says that afflictions are a punishment and yet here, they seemed to be viewed as a reward.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein shares an amazing answer with us in his sefer Darash Moshe, which has tremendous insight even for us today in our current situation. He feels that the solution is very clear. If the owner of the house were completely guiltless, he would find that same treasure in a painless way. Since it is apparent that he is deserving of some pain and loss by forcing him to demolish his house, Hashem allows him, on the one hand, to contemplate on his actions and errors, on the other hand, to find a treasure and learn to take to heart the manner in which the treasure was given to him. When Hashem wishes to grant someone wealth, he can do so without the beneficiary losing even one penny. If someone has an opportunity to earn a profit, he will be willing to spend a sum of money from which he will have no benefit until he reaps that profit. Yet even though he had to invest money, he will not feel that he is losing money, because he will profit in the long run. He will initially be troubled by the expense of demolishing his wall which seems a useless expenditure, but then he will realize that in the end Hashem rewarded him both in teaching him an

important lesson and also compensating him well beyond his wildest dream.

Perhaps, that is why it is referred to LIKE an affliction. What may seem a trying period of time, may be seen, looking back, as a crucial time to foster unity and empathy. 🏰