

"And I put the plague in a house of the land of your possession... And the Kohen will come and see that the plague has spread throughout the house... Then he shall demolish the house, its stones and its wood." (14:34,44-45)

Rashi quotes the *Medrash* which states that a plague of leprosy on the house was a blessing in disguise. Upon hearing about the eventual entry of *Bnei Yisrael* into their land, the Cananites hid their valuables in the walls of their houses. Thus, they sought to prevent their valuables from falling into Jewish hands. In order that these treasures would be discovered by His people, Hashem caused a leprous plague to appear on the house. The houses would then have to be demolished, thereby exposing the hidden treasures. This seems a rather indirect way of giving riches to people. Why was it necessary to go through a circuitous process of leprosy and demolition of the houses before the valuables could be discovered? There must be a special message to be noted from this seemingly strange process.

We may suggest the following lesson to be derived from this particular method of reward. All of Hashem's actions are intended for our benefit, even if at times they seem exceedingly harsh. Sometimes the blessing is readily apparent, while at other times Hashem's beneficence eludes discovery by man. In order for an individual to maintain appropriate trust in Hashem, he is required to display enormous moral fortitude. During moments in which one's faith in Hashem is taxed, it is incumbent upon every individual to reflect upon Hashem's benevolence and exercise an attitude of complete faith in Him. One who can do this will spare himself much of the anxiety and anger that accompany life's everyday occurrences. Our *Chazal* assure us that every individual is ultimately recompensed for sacrifices he must make. The *Torah* Jew should always remain stalwart in the belief that, despite the various vicissitudes of life, whatever Hashem decrees upon us is always for the best. That is the message of the leprous house. Even in those moments when Hashem's benevolence seems ambiguous, one must trust and believe that these clouds truly have a silver lining.