

## **Tazria 5772**

### **Rabbi Aharon Ziegler**

The last pasuk of this parsha [13:59] states: “*ZOT TORAT NEGAH TZARA’AT*”, This is the law of the Tzara’at affliction. The Gemara [Arachin 3a] comments that even a one day old child can become afflicted with Nega’im.

R’ Shamshon Rafael Hirsch asks, if Chazal say that Nega’im are brought on a person as a punishment for sins, [usually for Lashon Harrah] why should an infant who has not sinned be so punished? The answer is that just as a Nega on a garment or house is a warning to its owner, it’s not the house or the garment that is being punished, these are mere objects. HaShem is sending a message to the owners that something in their life needs correction, so too, with a Nega on the forehead of their innocent child. The child is the object-the sinners are the parents.

The Torah is giving us a keen observation of human values and instincts. The first warning goes on the house, which represents the wealth and assets one possesses. If he doesn’t get the message then HaShem continues the warnings upon the clothing, which represent the personal and sentimental attachments of the person. If that doesn’t work, then HaShem will afflict the person directly, on his own body. If after all that, the person remains abstinent and refuses to heed the warning then HaShem resorts to the final blow, the affliction of their child. Parents would rather suffer than have their child suffer. This warning the parents will not and cannot ignore.

This feeling of parents to children is a universal one. We find that Par’oh suffered and received nine warning signs, nine Makkot but he would not relent, he would not give in-to let our people go. It was only on the last Makkah, the Makkah upon the Egyptian first-born, including the first-born child of Par’oh. This was the clincher, even for a Par’oh.