

"And Di Zahav." (1:1)

Rashi interprets the place of Di Zahav etymologically to refer to the "excess gold" that *Bnei Yisrael* acquired upon leaving Egypt. Unfortunately they submitted to their cravings and created the Golden Calf from this abundant gold. Boredom coupled with affluence can create a highly volatile situation. If Moshe's goal was to rebuke *Bnei Yisrael* for the Golden Calf, why did he provide them with a defense for this deed? Excess gold may, indeed, have been the reason for the sin of the Golden Calf.

Horav Dovid Feinstein Shlita explains that there are two distinct possible orientations towards newly acquired wealth, only one of which is appropriate. One who views himself as a self-made man is likely to have an arrogant manner towards his newfound wealth. Thus, he ignores the responsibilities which are associated with this blessing. Obviously such a person does not seek to allocate his wealth in a respectable manner. In contrast, another individual understands that everything ultimately belongs to Hashem. He perceives that in His beneficence Hashem bestows upon us the opportunity to be a conduit of material blessings to those who are in need. Such a person views every cent that he possesses as a blessing and is conscientious about the way he uses his wealth.

This was the nature of Moshe's rebuke to *Bnei Yisrael*. The sin of the Golden Calf originated in their attitude towards their wealth. Had *Bnei Yisrael* appreciated their Divine gift and recognized the responsibility to use it wisely, they would not have yielded to their base instincts to create the Golden Calf.