

## The people sat to eat and drink, and they got up to revel. (32:6)

The creation of the Golden Calf was a grave sin. It was compounded when the *Bnei Yisrael* rose to revel. *Rashi* explains the word “*Itzachek*,” “to have fun,” to revel, as implying a complete degeneration on their part. Their behavior became wanton. In addition to the idolatry of the Golden Calf, they committed various immoral acts. These acts even included murder, when they killed Chur as he attempted to dissuade them from serving the Golden Calf. **Horav Eliyahu Meier Bloch, zl**, observes that not all errors in philosophy are critical ones. It is still possible for an individual to modify his perspective once he realizes the truth. The moment of danger occurs when he permits himself to act upon his misguided philosophy. The tragic consequences include acts of licentiousness and immoral, degenerate behavior.

The Jews started out on their ill-fated journey to degeneracy with a simple error. Moshe seemed to be late. Thus, *Bnei Yisrael* planned to create another “intermediary” to take his place. They felt they needed someone, something, to which they could relate. It did not stop there. They made a Golden Calf. They proceeded to dance in front of it and act in a manner unbecoming a nation that had just experienced the greatest revelation of the Almighty. Such moral degeneracy could not be condoned. They had gone beyond appropriate bounds. The singing, the dancing, the behavior which reeked of wanton lewdness, sealed their fate. When they acted as animals, they could not be treated with the patience one has reserved for humans.