

"These are the accounts of the Mishkan." (38:21)

After the *Mishkan* and all its holy vessels were completed, Moshe told the *Bnei Yisroel*, "*Let me present to you an exact account of how I used the materials which you donated.*" He then gave a complete reckoning of how he had employed every ounce of gold, silver, and copper which they had contributed. The *Midrash* explains that Moshe felt it necessary to justify his actions before the Jewish people, since he had overheard remarks concerning his honesty and trustworthiness. It is interesting to note that when the people were summoned to participate in the sin of the Golden Calf, the *Torah* remarks that the people couldn't wait to remove their jewelry to "donate" it for the Golden Calf. Although the end result of their donations was merely one Golden Calf, they didn't complain, and they didn't ask for an accounting of their donations. Regarding the *Mishkan*, however, all that was demanded of them was a half-shekel per person, nevertheless they complained and spread rumors suggesting dishonesty on Moshe's part!

In reality every *Ben Yisroel* is inherently good and his genuine desire is to do good. Therefore, when he chooses to donate to a worthy purpose, it is his desire that his donation be used for the proper goal it is intended. However, when one falls into the clutches of desire and contributes toward an unholy or improper purpose, he is bothered and troubled to the point that if his money does not reach the ultimate goal he will secretly be thankful. Similarly, once the Jews parted with their jewelry for the Golden Calf, they no longer cared whether the ultimate purpose was realized.