

## "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.