

## He shall don a sacred linen tunic; linen breeches shall be upon his flesh. (16:4)

The *Kohen Gadol* performed all of the daily rituals, as well as part of the *Yom Kippur* service, while wearing his golden vestments. When the *Kohen Gadol* entered the *Kodesh Hakodoshim*, the Holy of Holies, to seek penance for *Klal Yisrael*, he changed into the simple linen vestments. Since the Jewish People had sinned by worshipping the Golden Calf, it would have been inappropriate to seek penance wearing gold. The material of gold acts as a prosecuting agent against the Jewish People. Hence, gold vestments are not the appropriate attire for effecting a positive response for forgiveness.

We infer from here the importance of trying to see the good in the Jewish People. This positive outlook, unfortunately, has deficits. **Horav Zalmen Sorotzkin, zl**, decries those who would justify every infraction performed by a Jew. These do-gooders criticize anyone who dares to chastise another Jew for transgressing any commandment of the *Torah*. They invoke the memory of the great saint **Horav Levi Yitzchak, zl, M'Berditchev**, who was able to find a positive aspect in a Jew's actions, regardless of the gravity of his behavior. Indeed, once the *rav* of a community chastised a member for eating non-kosher meat in a butcher store owned by a Jewish apostate. The more "liberal" members of the community critiqued him for his lack of sensitivity in finding fault in another Jew. The *rav* should have looked for a reason to "justify" the Jew's transgression.

This utter foolishness has reached its pique in contemporary times when we are induced to find excuses to mitigate what used to be considered transgressions, but have currently been labeled, "errors". Indeed, the *mitzvah* of *tochachah*, reproach, has almost become antiquated. The *rav* who gives mussar, reproach, might jeopardize his position or, at best, be called inconsiderate! We will only succeed in reaching out to those who have accepted an alternative to a *Torah* way of life by telling the truth, not fearing it and "sugar coating" violations. This approach can be compared to a situation in which a doctor is told not to reveal the true diagnosis to his patient. The unsuspecting patient will continue to maintain the lifestyle that has precipitated his present illness. Is the doctor actually helping the patient?

*Horav Sorotzkin* adds that this orientation is appropriate only during the *rav* or leader's dialogue with the people. In his supplication to the Almighty, however, he must make every effort to intercede on his behalf of his flock, seeking ways to justify their actions. This distinction may be noted from the *Kohen Gadol's* manner of dress on *Yom Kippur* when he was outside the Holy of Holies. As he stood in the *Azarah*, surrounded by the *Kohanim*, *Leviim*, and *Yisraelim*, he donned golden vestments, despite the damaging impression this makes. On the contrary, let the people notice and reflect upon the sin of Golden Calf which they perpetuated. Let them recognize their ingratitude toward Hashem and be cognizant of the anger they aroused in Him. When the *Kohen Gadol* enters the Holy of Holies to entreat Hashem on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*, when no one but

Hashem hears him, then he wears the simple, white linen vestments, the symbol of virtue and purity.