

EREV YOM KIPPUR

ONE MORE MITZVAH

The greatest preparation may be what we do for another Yid

By Rabbi Yehuda Zev Klein

“I want to have the zechus of completing a shidduch before Yom Kippur.”

THE CHASAM SOFER

One year, on Erev Yom Kippur, the Chasam Sofer thought of a shidduch between an older bachur who was a yasim and a girl who was also an orphan. He asked his daughter to serve as the shadchan.

She said, “Totty, I’ll take care of it immediately after Yom Kippur.”

But the Chasam Sofer told her, “I want you to redt the shidduch today. I want to have the zechus of completing a shidduch before Yom Kippur.”

His daughter went ahead and presented the shidduch to the boy. But the boy declined. He was concerned that the girl’s family did not have the financial means to support him.

It was already getting late in the afternoon, and the Chasam Sofer went personally to the boy’s home.

He told him, “If you marry this girl, you will have parnassah your entire life. You may not become wealthy, but you will have enough to live comfortably.”

The boy agreed, and the couple became engaged just before the zman.

Because of this, the Chasam Sofer arrived to shul for Kol Nidrei later than usual. The gabbai pointed to the clock, as if to say you’re late.

The Chasam Sofer told him something amazing.

“Don’t worry. They don’t begin the judgment in Shamayim until I say Kol Nidrei.”

What an incredible statement.

But there is another, perhaps even more important, lesson hidden in this story.

ONE MORE MITZVAH

The Chasam Sofer was one of the gedolei hador. He had spent his life immersed in Torah and avodas Hashem. And despite that, on Erev Yom Kippur, as the Day of Judgment was approaching, he was still looking for one more mitzvah to add to his ledger.

And he understood that the best way to do that is to bring happiness and yeshuah to another yid.

And that brings to mind another remarkable story.

THE KLAUSENBERGER REBBE

The Klausenberger Rebbe zt”l was known for his extraordinary compassion for any Jew with a broken heart. Having himself suffered unimaginable horrors during the Holocaust, including the loss of his wife and eleven children, he devoted himself to comforting and rebuilding the lives of Jewish survivors.

In the DP camps, he organized minyanim, taught Torah, and encouraged people who had lost everything.

On Erev Yom Kippur in 1947, while the Rebbe was preparing for the holy day, there was a knock on his door.

A young girl stood there with tears in her eyes.

“Rebbe,” she said, “every year, my father would bentch me before Yom Kippur. My father was burned alive, and I have no one to bless me.”

The Rebbe looked at her with compassion and said:

**Mein kind ich vel zein dein totta.
“My child, I will be your father.”**

He placed a handkerchief on her head and gave her a heartfelt Beracha.

The girl left his room smiling, comforted, and strengthened.

But the story did not end there.

Word spread, and soon other orphaned girls came to the Rebbe for a blessing. One after another, he welcomed them and blessed each one with patience, warmth, and tears.

By the time he finished, he had blessed 87 orphaned girls.

By then, he had very little time left for his own personal preparations for Yom Kippur.

**But what better preparation could there be for the holiest day of the year
than to spend those precious hours comforting brokenhearted Jewish
children?**

And there is one more part to this story.

AND THERE WAS ONE MORE STORY

Years later, when the Klausenberger Rebbe passed away, a woman came to the family during shivah carrying a bag. She sat among the women and began to tell them about her experience in the DP camps.

One day, she said, the Rebbe was walking through the camp when he noticed a young Jewish girl who was not wearing stockings.

He approached her gently and said, “Mein tuchterel, dee bist duch a bas Yisrael. You are a Jewish girl. It is not proper for a Jewish girl to go without stockings.”

The girl replied:

“Stockings? I don’t even have bread to eat. Where am I supposed to get stockings?”

Immediately, the Rebbe sat down on the ground, removed his shoes and socks, and handed his socks to the girl.

“Now, my child, at least you have socks,” he said.

The woman paused. Then she opened the bag she had brought with her.

“I was that girl,” she said. “And these are the socks. I want you to have them.”

Wow. What a story.

THE SAME POWERFUL LESSON

The Chasam Sofer and the Klausenberger Rebbe teach us the same powerful lesson.

On Erev Yom Kippur, when a person could be focused on his own judgment, his own preparation, the greatest preparation may be to turn our attention toward another Yid.

And perhaps this is what we should ask ourselves as we approach Yom Kippur:

What can I do for someone else before Yom Kippur?

Whom can I call? Whom can I encourage? Whom can I forgive? Whom can I help? Whom can I make feel that they are not alone?

May Hashem grant us all a Gmar Chasima Tova—a year filled with refuos, yeshuos, nachas, menuchas hanefesh, and everything we need.