

אני לידיד לידיד

Though coming from one of the most prestigious and scholarly families in his community, Yakov was failing in so many areas of life. His father, knowing that Yakov had inherited his own talents and qualities, began to realize that it was Yakov's lack of self-esteem that was hiding his many talents and he racked his brain for a way to help him. Finally, he struck upon an idea he hoped would change his son completely. "My dear son," he said to him, "I have arranged for you a week of vacation at the estate of my dear friend and prize student Rabbi Katz." Yakov was really excited, for aside from Rabbi Katz's scholarship, he was known as one of the world's wealthiest Jews. However, nothing prepared him for the reception he received upon his arrival. Rabbi Katz himself came out to greet him with the greatest of honors insisting on personally carrying his bags up to the lavish suite he would be staying in. He looked on in shock as Rabbi Katz personally looked after his every need with true respect reflecting from his eyes. In answer to his bewilderment Rabbi Katz said, "Can I do any less for the son of my great teacher?! Being his son, I have no doubt as to the great qualities you possess as well. This being so, it is my honor to serve you! Throughout the following week, each scene of the great Rabbi Katz personally taking care of yet another one of his needs added another layer to the rebuilding of his self-esteem. After a week he would never forget, Yakov returned home a changed man. He began succeeding in all his endeavors and the talent and qualities he had inherited from his father began to show for all to see. What had kept his talents hidden, his low self-esteem, had been removed forever!

The study of Shir HaShirim reveals to us that the infinitely great qualities our Avos possessed have been inherited by each and every one of us. However, many times our lack of self-esteem gets in the way of our awareness and ability to make use of this great inheritance. There is a vacation we can all take similar to Yakov's in our story above. This vacation does not necessitate major changes to our daily schedules. To the contrary, we can continue living our lives just as we have until now, while merely keeping the words of the following Medresh (Mishlei 9:1) constantly on our minds:

"We have found greater than this - the High priest serves Israel on Yom Kippur." Rabban Gamliel said to them, "You have left over the honor of the Holy One, blessed be He, and you are dealing with the honor of flesh and blood? The Holy One, blessed be He, created His world, makes the wind blow, makes the sun shine, brings down the rain, makes the dew appear, makes the plants grow and sets up a table in front of each and every [person], as it is written, (Psalms 23:5), 'Set a table in front of me.'!"

It is happening every minute of your life whether you are mindful of it or not. How unfortunate it is if one is not constantly aware of everything Hashem is doing for him!

