

# אני לידיד' לידיד' לי

*“...I’ve been trying to figure out exactly why it is that I’m convinced that I wouldn’t be happy in Vermont, or anywhere, or any time.*

*And I think I finally figured it out: it’s because I’m a Jew.*

*Why do I think this?*

*Simple: Every other Jew I’ve met is the same.*

*When I was growing up in secular Highland Park, Illinois, that’s something like 120% Jewish, no one was happy. I mean, they had happy moments. But they were all trying to achieve something. Or fix something. The high school kids were dying to get into good schools. And I don’t mean in the normal way, but in some sort of pathologically insane way, a way that made the entire school’s energy be focused on that goal.*

*The adults, they were always trying to reach higher, you could see it. It was one of those upper-middle-class Jewish places. Everyone was trying to reach the “top”. I’m sure they all still are, G-d bless ‘em....*

*...Perhaps the reason orthodox Jews are less depressed is because they wouldn’t touch a psychologist with a ten-foot pole, but perhaps it’s also because the structure of religion makes it slightly easier for them to find the meaning that every Jew is dying within to experience and live out...”*

*(Excerpt from an essay by non-religious writer, Elad Nehorai, titled: I’ve Never Met A Happy Jew)*

As the Chosen Nation of Hashem, the prizes of Creation, we have already merited to feel the infinite pleasure of the King’s closeness when He revealed Himself to us at Har Sinai. This pleasure, seared into the depths of every Jewish heart is so great that no physical pleasure can ever bring us true satisfaction. This spurs us on to constantly search for something more. And in even in the depths of our exile we still cry out:

***“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love is better to me more than any wine banquet and more than any pleasure and joy.”*** This figure of speech was used because He gave them His Torah and spoke to them face to face, and that love is still more pleasant to them than any pleasure, and they are assured by Him that He will appear to them to explain to them the secret of its reasons and its hidden mysteries, and they entreat Him to fulfill His word, and this is the meaning of “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.” (**Shir HaShirim 1:2** with Rashi)

