

אני לדודי לדודי לי

His son was the light of his life since the day he was born over thirty years ago, and it was really hard that he now lived at the other end of the world. Missing him terribly, he could take it no longer and he decided to make the trip as soon as physically possible. At his age and state of health it would be a great ordeal but what wouldn't he do for his son? His heart fluttered as he watched NYC getting smaller and smaller through the window of the plane and twenty-four hours and two stopovers later he finally landed in Sidney, Australia. At last he would finally see his dear son. He realized it was foolish, but with the clarity of his mind clouded by his love he strained his eyes peering through the window of the plane, maybe he would already see his son... When a young fellow offered to help him get his bags he declined saying, "Its fine he'll be here any moment," as if all knew who he was referring to. When the man explained that whoever would be picking him up would not be able to enter the area, he still declined thinking dreamily, "How can I need someone else's help when I'm so close to my dear son!" After waiting awhile and with an excitement he hadn't felt in years, he made his way to where the crowds awaited their loved ones. However, even there his son was not in sight. After an hour and a half of waiting longingly, with fear in his heart, he took a cab to his son's house. He ran up to the front door and knocked... No answer. He knocked again, harder... Still no answer. Wild eyed with fright he banged on the door with all his might... "Who's there?" There was no mistaking his son's voice. "Are you alright?!" he screamed into the door. "Sure, why I'm just fine. Who's there?" "What do you mean who's there? It's your dear father, I told you I'm coming." "Oh... now I remember, but, to tell you the truth, it's really not a good time right now, I just got undressed and lied down for the night..."

Can we imagine the pain?!... As you read these words and commiserate with the father's unspeakable pain, if you listen closely, you may hear the knocking at your own door...! Yes! It's your dear Father, Who loves beyond all measure, Who, with overflowing love, has taken care of your every need, since before you were born to this very day, Who has come to plead with you to return to Him so He can provide you with the greatest rewards for all eternity, before it's too late!

"Open for me an entrance the size of a needle head and I will open for you like the size of a chamber!" Many have heard this quote from Chazal encapsulating the meaning of Elul. Many, however, do not know the source and background of it and therefore its true meaning.

*"**My Beloved (Hashem) is knocking**" at my door and telling me, "Out of my love for you, I have come to you laden with all that is good, from one end of the world to the other, to benefit you. If only you will **'open up** for me' an opening of teshuva as small as the tip of a needle, I will open up for you gates through which loaded carriages can pass." "**My sister, my wife, my dove**"—Hashem is comparable to the dove, which upon identifying her mate does not let him consort with any other bird, so too, He will never let me leave Him. "**My perfect and innocent one, my twin**"—just as twins feel each other's pain, so too, Hashem says, "I am with you in your suffering!" (Then, we too often respond) "I have taken off my tunic; how can I put it on? I have bathed my feet; how can I soil them?" (**Shir HaShirim** 5:2-3 with Rashi and Medrash)*

Our lives and those of our families depend upon it. **Will we answer the door...?!**

