

"If I will find in Sodom fifty righteous in the midst of the city, I will forgive the whole district for their sake." (18:26)

The Talmud comments that those who say: "*What do we benefit from the Rabbis, they study only for themselves*" are considered non-believers (*Sanhedrin 99b*). One of the sources mentioned is the above *posuk* where it is implied that Hashem was willing to spare the city of Sodom because of the few righteous people that lived there. Imagine! Had there been righteous people in Sodom the city would have been spared, and life would have continued as normal. No one would have realized that they have been destined to die, but they were spared only due to the merits of a few righteous people. Similarly, today, we do not appreciate how many decrees have been eliminated due to the merits of the various *tzadikim* of every generation. It is therefore incumbent upon us to constantly remember the contributions of those who devote their lives to the study of *Torah*. The very presence of *tzadikim* in a community is to be considered as a very special asset to that community. and must always be appreciated.