

And they (the Egyptians) wept for him (Yaakov) (50:3)

Rashi comments that the Egyptians wept for Yaakov because they recognized the material blessings that were manifest as a result of his presence in their country. Indeed, the seven year period of hunger which was destined for Egypt ended five years prematurely with Yaakov's arrival in Egypt. The Nile River, which is Egypt's prime source of irrigation, was also unusually blessed. *Horav Moshe Rosenstein, z.l.*, comments upon the Egyptian reaction to the void left by a *tzaddik* in contrast to our recognition of the value of a *tzaddik*'s presence in our midst.

Yosef was the viceroy of Egypt. It was within his power to sustain the entire world with the vast stores of food which he had accumulated. Yet, he could not put an end to the hunger. Money and power may be able to create a panacea for a difficult situation. They may be able to temporarily address a crisis. They cannot, however, solve the source of the problem. It was Yaakov's presence in Egypt that brought a satisfactory conclusion to the famine that was jeopardizing the country.

Do we properly acknowledge the presence of a *tzaddik* in our midst? *Horav* Rosenstein makes a simple, but profound, analogy to illustrate our unawareness of the *tzaddik*'s inestimable value to our community. A wealthy man makes a large contribution to a hospital, financing thirty additional beds for the critical care unit. Imagine the wonderful accolades which will be conferred upon this philanthropist. The *tzaddik*, however, who is regrettably ignored or at best taken for granted, is the one in whose merit thirty people will not become sick! If we would only realize what good is engendered by the *tzaddikim* of our generation, we might learn to accord them the special reverence which they deserve.