

## **I will cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols. (26:30)**

The *Sifra* employs a meaningful story to elucidate this *pasuk*. During the time of the destruction of the first *Bais Hamikdash*, when people were starving to death, Eliyahu *Hanavi* walked out on the streets of Yerushalayim, seeking out those Jews whose bodies had become swollen from hunger. When he came across a man who was dying of hunger, he questioned his family lineage. After the man responded with the name of his family, Eliyahu asked him about the size of his family. "We were a family of three thousand of which I am the sole survivor," responded the man. "Do one thing," said Eliyahu, "and you will live. Say '*Shma Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad,*' and you will be spared the fate of the rest of your family,." To this the man cried out, "No! My father never taught me to mention G-d's Name, I will not begin now!" After this declaration of skepticism, the man revealed an idol that he was holding and began to hug and kiss it. While he was doing so, his strength slowly ebbed away. He died resting on his idol. Hence, the meaning of the *pasuk*, "*I will cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols.*"

If we think about it, are we that far removed from that terrible period of starvation? We live in a period in which the famine is not of a material nature, but a spiritual famine where people are literally starving for the *dvar* Hashem, word of G-d. Many unfortunates people do not realize how little they must do in order to save themselves from spiritual death. Why? Because their parents never taught them anything about *Yiddishkeit*. Did they ever have a *Shabbos*? Did they ever see candles lit Friday night? Were they ever exposed to the beauty of a *Yom Tov*, the sublimity of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*? Is it any wonder that they continue to clutch their self-made idols, their false beliefs in what constitutes morality, even if it delivers them to a spiritual end? By divorcing themselves from any semblance of tradition, they are regrettably severing the last potential bridge of return.