

VANITY OF VANITIES: MATERIAL LIFE COMPARED TO SPIRITUAL LIFE

The Path To Follow Vayishlach

162

December 11th 06

18 Kislev 5767

Publication
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Guard Your Tongue!

Defending Yourself

The only case in which a person can denounce someone who has spoken ill of him is when it is to avoid being harmed. One who denounces another person solely to avenge himself is transgressing a prohibition. Furthermore, even one whose intention is to protect himself from another person's words only has the right to denounce him if he has firsthand knowledge that the person in question has, in fact, spoken ill of him. He has absolutely no right to denounce him based on hearsay. An individual can only act on evidence based on hearsay in order to take defensive measures against the person suspected of having spoken ill of him. It cannot be used to act against him in any way.

It is written, "Isaac expired and died...and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him" (Genesis 35:29). However in the description of Esau's descendants that is given in the next chapter, we are told: "Esau took his wives and his sons...and all his property that he acquired in the land of Canaan and went to a land because of his brother Jacob. For their possessions were too great to dwell together, and the land of their sojourns could not support them because of their livestock" (ibid. 36:6-7).

Commenting on the last verse, Rashi gives three reasons for Esau's departure: The first is that the land could not provide enough pasture for their animals. Rashi cites a second reason from the Midrash (Bereshith Rabba 82:13), which interprets the expression "because of his brother Jacob" (Genesis 36:6) as meaning: Because of the obligation of the decree "that your offspring will be strangers" (Genesis 15:13). Although this decree was placed upon Isaac's descendants, Esau thought he could escape it: "By leaving this place, I will have neither a share in the gift – for the land was given to him – nor in the fulfillment of the decree." From the same Midrash, Rashi cites a third reason for Esau's departure: He was ashamed of having sold his birthright.

This seems difficult to understand. The verse explicitly tells us why Esau departed: "The land of their sojourns could not support them because of their livestock." It is therefore obvious that only Rashi's first reason is valid. Thus how could two more reasons (avoiding the decree and feeling shame) be forwarded to explain his departure? The verse explicitly gives us the first reason, not the others, which are completely new. We must therefore find the Sages' two additional reasons hidden somewhere in the text.

Let us try and explain. After Isaac's death, Esau began to feel tremendous fear about remaining in Canaan, he and all his family. As we know, Esau believed very strongly in the prophecies of his holy ancestors, and he knew that if he wanted to receive the Torah and merit the land of Canaan as well, he would have to undergo many harsh trials. This is because, as we well know, the land of Israel and the Torah are acquired only through trials (Berachot 5a). However since Esau always fled from hardship and tried to acquire things the easy way, such as by theft and murder, he had no desire for such a gift, one acquired only through hardships. Because Esau wanted a free gift, he left the land to his brother Jacob, who accepted trials with love.

Let us say that these three explanations are mutually dependant. Esau was perfectly aware that everyone knew he had sold his birthright to Jacob. Nevertheless, he had the audacity to walk at the head of the funeral procession for their father Isaac, as it is written: "Esau and Jacob his sons buried him" (Genesis 35:29). This is the exact opposite of what happened between Ishmael and Isaac during Abraham's burial (ibid. 25:9), for Ishmael had repented (Bava Batra 16b; Bereshith Rabba 30:4) and bowed his head before Isaac as he let him pass ahead. Thus Esau's shame was revealed in public. If he continued to believe that he was the firstborn and that the land of Canaan was rightfully his, then Esau would have to repay the debt to his brother. He would also have to go into exile, both he and his descendants, instead of Jacob and his. However Esau did not want all this, which is why he left the land under the pretext that it could not support their livestock and that he had to look

elsewhere. In reality, the wicked Esau thereby demonstrated that the land did not belong to him in any way, and that it rightfully belonged to Jacob and his children alone. This is because they studied Torah, and a consequence to studying Hashem's Torah is that the Holy Land – the land of Israel – also belonged to the Children of Israel.

If we are correct in this regard, then the two reasons cited by the Midrash are alluded to in Genesis 36:6. The first part of the verse, "For their possessions were too great to dwell together," signified that there was not enough pasture for their animals, which is what Esau claimed. The second part of the verse, "The land of their sojourns could not support them because of their livestock," relates to the first reason given by the Midrash, for one of the brothers was a resident of the land while the other was a sojourner there, having to leave for exile and pay the debt against him. This was due to their mikneh (livestock) – consisting of the kinyan (transaction) between Jacob and Esau – meaning the birthright that Jacob purchased from his brother Esau.

However it is certain that Esau's claim (wherein he was leaving the land because there was not enough pasture for his animals) was not accepted, for there is no reason to leave the land of Israel. Thus Esau's shame was revealed in public, since everyone then knew that he left because he had the gall of wanting to remain the firstborn and because he had sold his birthright to Jacob. In other words, he left "because of his brother Jacob," for he did not want a gift that comprised hardships. The one who was truly the firstborn, and who wanted to acquire the Torah and the land of Israel by hardships, would inherit the land.

The Torah states, "If you walk in My statutes" (Leviticus 26:3), which the Sages have said refers to toiling in the study of Torah (Torat Kohanim 26:2). A person must realize that the Torah is only acquired through hard work, by hardship and with difficulty. This is in order for him to feel that he is acting in this way solely because he loves his Creator, as it is written: "Because for Your sake we are killed all day long" (Psalms 44:23).

If we act in this way, then the end of the passage will also be fulfilled: "You shall dwell in safety in your land" (Leviticus 26:5), meaning we will receive the land of Israel. However if we only want to benefit from a free gift, from mitzvot all prepared, then this will not last. Persistent and laborious effort in Torah study can only be achieved when a person devotes himself totally and exclusively to the Torah, not when he devotes himself entirely to increasing his wealth.

Jacob conquered this path for all his descendants after him. If we want to benefit from a mitzvah, we must endure many trials of love in an unselfish way. The proof is that Jacob gave all his possessions to acquire a tomb in the cave of Machpelah. He put a large pile of gold and silver before Esau and said, "My brother, do you prefer the portion that is yours in this cave, or all this gold and silver?" (Shemot Rabba 31:17).

Jacob was prepared to endure hardships uniquely to inherit the land and to acquire mitzvot, for the land of Israel belongs solely to the Children of Israel. We learn a great lesson from this, which is that only a person who devotes himself to the Torah in the land of Israel has a portion in the Holy Land.

MUSSAR FROM THE PARSHA

Going Outside During the Bombing

It is written, "The remaining camp shall survive" (Genesis 32:9).

Rashi states that Jacob "prepared himself for three things: For a gift, for war, and for prayer."

Although the Holy One, blessed be He, had promised Jacob that He would protect him wherever he went, Jacob did not rely on miracles. Instead, he did everything he possibly could and fulfilled his duty of putting an effort into getting things accomplished, after which Hashem's will would be done.

Just how far does the duty of putting an effort into getting things accomplished extend? Is it not, in fact, unlimited? On the other hand, perhaps there is a limit that we should not go beyond.

We can properly understand this by an incident that occurred to the Rav of Brisk, Rabbi Yitzchak Zev Halevi Soloveitchik Zatzal. During the bombing of his city, the Rav attempted to stay indoors for reasons of safety, but eventually the bombing grew in intensity and the bombs falling near his home began shaking the entire neighborhood. At that point he decided to tell the members of his household that he was going to the Beit Midrash to look for a certain book he needed.

The Rav's family began to tremble at the thought of him going outside. They said to him, "Up to this point you've stayed inside, but now that the bombs are falling all around us, you're going outside?" He answered, "Precisely. When the bombing was relatively light, there was a chance of surviving by remaining indoors, and I did all I could to stay at home. However now that the enemy has decided to increase the bombing to the point that there's no difference between staying inside or out, I'm not obligated to do all I can to stay inside. I have the duty to trust in the Holy One, blessed be He, and to leave my fate in His hands." There are cases in which a person is not obligated to rely on his own abilities, cases in which the outcome would not change if he were to rely on them. Let us imagine a person in an airplane flying above the ocean. If the plane were to begin pitching and rolling, and were the captain to announce with a trembling voice that everyone should prepare for the worst, would a passenger be obligated to try and do anything in that case? Indeed, could a passenger actually do anything then? It is precisely in such scenarios that a person is obligated to place all his trust in Hashem to save him, and to know that nothing else exists but Him. A person must realize that no other force in the world can even scratch him in the slightest way unless it has been decreed from Heaven.

If someone were to ask, "Suppose I've understood this correctly, and I've strived to infuse myself with the realization that nothing exists but Hashem – penetrating this concept deep within my heart – then when bombs really do begin to drop around me (G-d forbid), could I really stay relaxed and composed?"

The answer to such a question is found in the realization that the Holy One, blessed be He, does not ask us for more than we can do. If a person does what he must and strives to the best of his abilities to reinforce his realization that nothing exists besides Hashem, then He will act on his behalf to annul all the forces and desires of the world, and they will not harm him.

A Pearl From the Rav

It is written, "She bore Amalek to Eliphaz" (Genesis 36:12).

In his book Pahad David, Rabbi David Pinto Shlita asks why Amalek emerged from none other than Eliphaz, since he studied Torah during his entire life.

We may explain that Eliphaz's way consisted of using light and darkness together, vacillating between the two. On one hand he studied Torah, while on the other hand he was a murderer like his father Esau.

Just as Esau trapped his father by his nice-sounding words and made him think that he was a tzaddik, he was nevertheless a murderer and a thief. It fact this attitude became so infused in Esau that he fathered Eliphaz in his image, with Eliphaz perhaps being even worse. Although he actually studied Torah, he tried to kill Jacob because he was overtaken with a desire for money. Now as we know, the word "dollar" (daleth vav lamed resh) has the same numerical value (240) as both safek ("doubt") and Amalek. This value is the same as that of the word ram ("lifted up"), which evokes the elevation of the heart, meaning pride, as in the expression: "Then your heart will be lifted up, and you will forget" (Deuteronomy 8:14). Pride leads to doubt, and eventually to denying the Torah and Hashem.

I Kept the 613 Mitzvot

It is written, "I have sojourned with Laban" (Genesis 32:5).

Rashi states, "I sojourned [gart] with the wicked Laban, but I kept the 613 [taryag] mitzvot, and I did not learn from his evil deeds."

The Beit Yitzchak asks: "Jacob sent Esau the message that he selflessly observed the 613 mitzvot? Was Esau the Chief Rabbi? Does this have anything to do with Esau?"

He replies by noting Rashi's statement that Jacob was prepared for three things: Offering gifts, praying, and fighting. However he naturally preferred to offer gifts. A gift would mean that Jacob wanted to find favor in Esau's eyes, that he was not interested in fighting, and that he had oxen and donkeys to give him. Nevertheless, Jacob said to Esau: I kept the 613 mitzvot, and of that I will relinquish nothing, not even to find favor in your eyes. If peace depends on me ceasing to observe the mitzvot, then there will be no peace!

What Jacob Failed to Learn

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Rashi states, "I sojourned [gart] with the wicked Laban, but I kept the 613 [taryag] mitzvot, and I did not learn from his evil deeds."

Jacob complained that even by living with Laban and seeing the "devotion" and "fervor" that he put into committing every possible sin, he still did not learn to accomplish mitzvot with the same level of enthusiasm.

It Was Not Fulfilled in Me

It is written, "He commanded them, saying: Thus shall you say to my lord, to Esau: So said your servant Jacob, 'I have sojourned with Laban'" (Genesis 32:5).

Rashi states, "I did not become an officer or a dignitary, but a stranger. It is not worthwhile for you to hate me on account of your father's blessing that he blessed me with: 'Be a master over your brothers' [Genesis 27:29], for it was not fulfilled in me."

The Gan Revach states, "Jacob wanted to tell Esau that his father Isaac had given him the blessing, 'Be a gevir [master] over your brothers,' yet what remained of this gevir? Only a ger [stranger]."

The middle letters of the word gevir were not fulfilled. Rashi states, "It was not fulfilled bi [in me]." The letters of bi are the same as the middle letters of gevir, out of which only ger remains. Thus Jacob was saying: Don't hate me, for bi was not fulfilled.

Who Are These To You?

It is written, "He raised his eyes and saw the women and the children, and he said: 'Who are these to you?' He said, 'The children with whom G-d has favored your servant'" (Genesis 33:5).

Esau raised his eyes and saw Jacob, his children, and his livestock, large and small. Surprised at this, he asked: Who are these to you? From our mother's womb we agreed upon sharing both worlds, with you taking the World to Come and I taking this world. Therefore who are these to you? Where do you have the right to use them all? They belong to my world, not yours.

REASONS FOR THE MITZVOT

The Ground Floor

It is written, "Esau returned on that day on his way to Seir" (Genesis 33:16).

Rashi states, "Esau [returned] alone, the 400 men slipped away one by one."

When Esau was making his way towards Jacob, he arrived with great pomp, having 400 men with him. However it is Hashem who brings down and lifts up, and all Esau's splendor went up in smoke, as if it had never been. Thus he returned alone. This is what normally happens to a person who believes that he is great and begins to grow proud. Hashem turns the wheel of fortune so that nothing remains of his greatness, and he falls from a great height into a deep abyss. The more a person grows proud, the more violent his fall will be.

Regarding this subject, when Rabbi David Pinto Shlita was in the United States he was brought to the spot where the Twin Towers once stood. There he saw a plaque stating "Ground Floor," and he asked what it meant. He was told that they were standing where the ground floor of the building once was. The Rav remained there, not moving.

Nearby was another plaque, an inscription in marble that stated: "You are now at the top of the world." This naturally piqued the Rav's curiosity, and he also asked what this meant. He was told that on the top floor of the building was a restaurant where this marble inscription stood. After the towers were destroyed, however, both signs were placed next to each other. The Rav concluded by saying, "This is what is written, 'He brings down and raises up.' Those people imagined, and perhaps even believed that they were really at the top of the world. However Hashem showed them otherwise. He showed them that they were on the ground floor." Similarly, the Titanic, that famous vessel which was supposedly "unsinkable," sunk during its maiden voyage, in the midst of its inauguration. As we know, on the bridge of the Titanic it was written, "Not even G-d could sink this ship," a horrendous phrase to mention. Yet the Holy One, blessed be He, showed them that "He brings death and gives life. He lowers to the grave and raises up" (I Samuel 2:6). The Holy One, blessed be He, brings down the arrogant, those who rely on themselves, and He uplifts the humble, those who trust entirely in Him. In a letter from the Ramban to his son, meant to guide him in the ways of the Torah and the fear of G-d, there is some good advice for us all: "Why should one feel proud? Is it because of wealth? Hashem makes one poor or rich. Is it because of honor? It belongs to G-d.... So how could one adorn himself with G-d's honor? And one who is proud of his wisdom surely knows that G-d 'takes away the speech of assured men and reasoning from the sages.' So we see that everyone is the same before G-d.... Therefore lower yourself and Hashem will lift you up" (Iggeret HaRamban).

A TRUE STORY

Two Words

Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin Zatzal went to see a government minister in order to intercede on behalf of the Jewish people, for the Czar had denounced the Jews and wanted to expel them from the country. Another problem was that the minister whom Rabbi Chaim went to see hated Jews and did not even want to speak to them. Nevertheless, Rabbi Chaim took some money and went to see the minister in question, telling his secretary: "Please tell the minister that I have only two words to say, no more."

The secretary disappeared and returned after a few minutes. He opened the door and said to Rabbi Chaim, "You can say two words, no more."

Rabbi Chaim approached the minister, put a bag full of money on the table, and said to him: "Take it and keep quiet." Rabbi Chaim then left.

When the government ministers assembled with the Czar on the next day, they opposed the plan to expel Jews from the country. In fact they even began to support them! The Czar was stunned, for during their last meeting everyone was in agreement with the expulsion, but now they had a completely different opinion. The Czar noted that his most important minister sat down and didn't say a word during the meeting. Afterwards the Czar asked him, "Why were you so pensive today?"

The minister replied, "Your Majesty, I realized that if I received such a great deal of money simply to remain silent, how much more money did the other ministers receive to speak up!"

Jacob replied: The children that G-d has given to your servant are also part of my World to Come. This is the way I serve Hashem. Everything you see before you not only serves a material goal, but is also an integral part of my spiritual endeavors. For a person who works for the World to Come, the present world is also sanctified and become spiritual.

What is the Benefit of this World?

It is written, "He raised his eyes and saw the women and the children, and he said: 'Who are these to you?' He said, 'The children with whom G-d has favored your servant'" (Genesis 33:5).

A wealthy man went to see the gaon Rabbi Aharon Kotler Zatzal and said to him: "Rabbi, I don't understand you. I share in your learning by having established an agreement with you similar to the one between Issachar and Zebulun. I should therefore receive a reward equal to yours in the World to Come. That being the case, why don't you do as I do – look for an avrech and support him financially – so you can profit from this world?"

Rabbi Aharon replied, "Insofar as the World to Come is concerned, you are correct: We shall both receive the same reward. However with regards to this world, one cannot profit from it without Torah, for one who has not felt the pleasure of explaining a difficult Rashba has no idea of what the pleasure of this world is like."

A Sign for the Children

It is written, "He put the handmaids and their children first, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last" (Genesis 33:2).

The Vilna Gaon wrote, "The deeds of the fathers are signs for their children. The Sages have said that this parsha alludes to the time of the Final Redemption. In the era preceding the coming of Mashiach, there were be leaders stemming from the mixed multitude, signified by the handmaids and their children, viewed as first in importance. The majority of the people, signified by Leah and her children, will follow them and be considered as second in importance. At the very end will be the talmidei chachamim of the generation, like Rachel and Joseph, considered as last in importance."

Overview of the Parsha

Our parsha deals with Jacob's family, drawn from Laban's clan and having become independent of it. Jacob faced his enemies, Esau on the inside and Shechem on the outside, when he returned to the land of his fathers. In the description of Jacob's confrontation with his brother, we see that he sent messengers to Esau in order to appease him. He also fought against the one who struck his hip. Afterwards, when Jacob and Esau actually met one another, Jacob presented his wives and children to him, after which they went their separate ways: Esau traveled to Seir, while Jacob went to Sukkot. From there Jacob went to Shechem, whose residents were massacred by Shimon and Levi because of what had been done the sister. On account of this, Jacob told his two sons, "You have troubled me" (Genesis 34:30), and then he went to fulfill his vow of constructing an altar and memorial pillar in Bethel. We are told of Rachel's death on the way to Ephrat, and the death of Isaac in Hebron. At the end of Isaac's life, the descendants of Esau are enumerated. They lived in Seir, whereas Jacob lived in Canaan, for the land could not support both of them because of their many possessions. The kings and chiefs of Esau are then listed, and from there Scripture returns to the subject of Jacob and describes the beginnings of the Jewish people.

YOUR EYES SHALL BEHOLD YOUR TEACHER

Rabbi Dov Ber – The Maggid of Mezritch

Born in the year 5464 to Rabbi Avraham of Lukatch, the Maggid of Mezritch was recognized early on in life as being destined for greatness. This became clear as he studied in the yeshiva of the gaon and author of Pnei Yehoshua, where he perfected himself in the revealed and hidden Torah, and where he elevated himself to great heights. He was initially engaged in studying Torah, but then he began earning a living by teaching. He also gave sermons – hence the name maggid (“preacher”) – in cities such as Beturtzin, Kovno, and Koretz. However his main activity was to draw closer to his teacher and Rav, the holy Baal Shem Tov, may his merit protect us all. As the founder of Chassidut, the Baal Shem Tov selected him as his successor to continue building the movement.

The saintly author of Toldot Yaakov Yosef said that after the passing of the Baal Shem Tov, Chassidut packed its bag and went to live in Mezritch. In fact during the lifetime of the Maggid of Mezritch, Chassidut began to grow and spread its wings everywhere. The Maggid was such a holy and pure individual that the saintly Rabbi Leib Sarahs said that he wanted to meet him just to see how he took off his shoes! The Maggid of Kozhnitz also said that before going to see the Maggid of Mezritch, he studied 800 works of Kabbalah. Yet when he arrived at the Maggid’s home, he realized that he hadn’t even begun to learn! At the end of his life, the Maggid settled in Anipoli, and on Kislev 19, 5533 the Maggid died and was buried there. May his merit protect us all.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HAFTORAH

I Will Bring You Down

It is written, “Behold, I have made you inferior among the nations; you are very despised. The wickedness of your heart has misled you, who dwells in the clefts of the rocks in his lofty abode, who says in his heart, ‘Who can bring me down to earth?’ ...I will bring you down from there, says the L-RD” (Obadiah 1:2-4).

We can understand these verses by means of a parable: A king was angry with one of the most important ministers in his kingdom, yet nobody dared to raise a hand against him. The king therefore took a brutish man and made the minister his servant. This man bragged to everyone that the king loved him more than all others, since he had given him a great minister as a servant.

People then told the brutish man, “You fool! It’s precisely because you’re so brutish, course, and cruel, with absolutely no sensitivity or mercy, that the king assigned this task to you!”

This teaches us that when Hashem wanted to punish the people who were close to Him, He found no other group as brazen and wicked as the Edomites. This is why He chose them to harass Israel. When the Edomites saw the magnitude of their supposed greatness, they became proud of their task. The prophet therefore came to them and said that the reason for their might was that they were as insignificant and contemptible as possible among the nations. Hence the Edomites were chosen to persecute Israel on account of their cruelty. However the conceit of their heart misled them, and they believed that they were pleasing to Hashem. Thus although Edom “dwells in the clefts of the rocks in his lofty abode...I will bring you down from there, says the L-RD.”

– Petach HaSha’ar

A MATTER OF EDUCATION

To Destroy the World on Account of Fools?

A philosopher asked Rabban Gamliel, “It is written in your Torah, ‘For the L-RD your G-d is a consuming fire, a jealous G-d’ [Deuteronomy 4:24]. Why, however, is He so jealous of its worshippers rather than of the idol itself?” He replied, “I will give you a parable: To what is the matter like? To a human king who had a son, and this son reared a dog to which he attached his father’s name, so that whenever he took an oath he exclaimed, ‘By the life of this dog, my father!’ When the king hears of it, with whom is he angry – his son or the dog? Surely he is angry with his son!” [The philosopher] said to him, “You call the idol a dog, but there is some reality in it.” [Rabban Gamliel asked.] “What is your proof?” He replied, “Once a fire broke out in our city, and the whole town was burnt with the exception of a certain idolatrous shrine!” He said to him, “I will give you a parable: To what is the matter like? To a human king against whom one of his provinces rebelled. If he goes to war against it, does he fight with the living or the dead? Surely he wages war with the living!”

[The philosopher] said to him, “You call the idol a dog and you call it a dead thing. In that case, let Him destroy it from the world!” He replied, “If what was worshipped was something not needed in the world, He would abolish it. Yet people worship the sun and moon, stars and planets, brooks and valleys. Should He destroy His universe on account of fools?”

– Avodah Zarah 54b

EISHET CHAYIL

I Was The One

Rabban Gamliel asked that seven scholars be assembled to intercalate the year, but when he arrived he discovered eight scholars. He asked, “Who is the one who came without permission? Let him leave.” At that point Shemuel Hakatan got up and said, “I was the one who came without permission. My objective was not to join in the intercalation of the year, but because I felt the need to learn the practical application of the law.” Rabban Gamliel then answered, “Sit down, my son, sit down. You are worthy of intercalating all years [in need of such], but it is a decision of the rabbis that it should be done only by those who have been specially appointed for the purpose.” In reality it was not Shemuel Hakatan who was the uninvited member, but another person. He only wanted to save the intruder from humiliation.

Similarly, it once happened that while Rabbi was delivering a lecture, he noticed a smell of garlic. He then said, “Let the one who has eaten garlic leave.” Rabbi Chiya then got up and left, after which all the other disciples got up and left one by one. In the morning, Rabbi Shimon (Rabbi’s son) met Rabbi Chiya and asked him, “Was it you who annoyed my father yesterday?” Rabbi Chiya answered, “G-d forbid that such a thing should happen in Israel,” for Rabbi Chiya’s intention had been to save the real offender from humiliation.

Rabbi Chiya learned such conduct from Rabbi Meir. The story is told of a woman who appeared at Rabbi Meir’s Beth Midrash and said to him, “Rabbi, one of you has taken me as his wife.” Rabbi Meir then stood up and gave her a get, after which each of his disciples stood up and did the same. Rabbi Meir learned such conduct from Shemuel Hakatan, who in turn had learned it from Shecaniah the son of Yechiel. Shecaniah had included himself in the accusation of infidelity (even though he was innocent), as it is written: “Shecaniah the son of Yechiel, one of the sons of Elam answered and said to Ezra, ‘We have broken faith with our G-d and have married foreign women of the peoples of the land. Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this matter’” (Ezra 10:2). Shecaniah learned this behavior from the story of Joshua, as it is written: “The L-RD said to Joshua, ‘Raise yourself up! Why do you fall on your face? Israel has sinned’” (Joshua 7:10) Joshua asked, “Master of the universe, who are the sinners?” G-d replied, “Am I an informer? Go and cast lots to find out.”

– From Sanhedrin 11a