

In the Shade of *Faith*

בְּצֶלַת דְּמֵי־מְנוּחָה

In the Shade of *Faith*

בְּצֶלַל דְּמַהֲיָמְנוּתָא

Chassidic Tales & Teachings
From Sukkos Through Simchas Torah

Chaim Davies

Tishrei 5787

שְׁנַת וְשִׁמְחָה"ת בְּחֶגֶךָ לַפ"ק

Table of Contents

FROM NE'ILAH TO SUKKOS

1. The Moon Revealed Through Joy.....	17
2. And Now What?.....	18
3. He Asked for Maseches Sukkah.....	18
4. Every Day Was Sukkos.....	19
5. The Crippled Shoemaker Searching for Boards.....	19
6. A Story for Mazal Tov	20
7. He Tore the Schach with His Teeth	21
8. The Yom Kippur Ketores Became the Schach	22

BENEATH THE SCHACH

9. The Sukkah Revealed That He Was a Chassid	23
10. Turn the Rope Below	23
11. The Rav Yibi Wanted Dofen Akumah	24
12. The Baal Shem Tov's Controversial Sukkah	24
13. "I Was in Heaven Once"	25
14. The Sukkah in the Hat	25
15. Before His Own Kezayis He Went to the Widow	26
16. Tzedakah Was the Beauty of His Sukkah	27
17. Eight Hundred Rainish for Paper Birds	27
18. The Person Sitting in the Sukkah.....	27
19. The Schach Does Not Like Anger	28
20. The Angel Who Repeated the Lashon Hara	28
21. Berel, You Are Sitting in the Bowl	29
22. The Name Upon the Schach.....	30
23. The Mail Carrier at the Sukkah Door	30
24. Why Eliyahu Did Not Enter the Sukkah	31
25. The Fly That Came for Reb Pinchas	32
26. The Mazik Could Not Enter the Sukkah	32
27. The Chortkover's Heavy Schach.....	33
28. Rain Everywhere Except in the Baal Shem Tov's Sukkah	34
29. The Sukkah of Tricks	34
30. The Butshatsher Stood His Watch in the Rain	35
31. Then Let Me Be Called a Hedyot.....	35

32. The Anshei Sukkos Who Never Left	36
33. Zusha Is Cold.....	36
34. Amalek Is Cold; a Jew Has Warmth	37
35. The Satmar Rebbe Tried to Exempt the Kapishnitzer.....	37
36. The Sukkah on the Ship	39
37. The Soldier's Face Was Shining.....	39
38. The Roof They "Could Not Afford"	40
39. A Sukaleh a Kleiner Under Stalin.....	41
40. "From the Depths I Called You"	42
41. The Sukkah That Awakened a Soviet Officer.....	43
42. Heaven Is Laughing, So I Am Laughing.....	46
43. "The Walls of the Sukkah Are Warm"	47
44. They Heard the Shinover Rebbe Trembling	48
45. "This Is What Keeps Me Alive All Year"	48

THE FOUR SPECIES

46. "Is Yisrael'ki Here?"	49
47. The Esrog That Arrived When the Lulav Was Bound.....	50
48. He Could Not Wait for Dawn	50
49. The Rebbe Rashab Waited for His Esrog.....	51
50. The Esrog in Rostov	51
51. The Gentile Who Brought the Ruzhiner an Esrog in Prison.....	52
52. The Kaddish After Kegavna.....	52
53. The Torah Did Not Mean Corfu	53
54. The Esrog He Chose Without Looking.....	53
55. "This Is My Esrog!"	54
56. His Departed Son Chose the Esrog	55
57. The Lulav Fell on His Last Sukkos.....	55
58. The Hadassim from the Cemetery.....	56
59. Heaven Would Not Let Him Bless on a Stolen Esrog.....	56
60. The Pitom Reattached with a Needle	57
61. The Pasul Esrog That Became Hadar ShebaHadarim	57
62. What Melancholy Have You Brought into My House?.....	58
63. The Nefesh Chayah Lent the Public His Finest Esrog	58
64. The Horse Bought with Esrog Money	59
65. He Traded the Only Esrog for Fish.....	59
66. The Esrog Was Broken; He Did Not Become Angry.....	60
67. He Surrendered Gan Eden to Enter a Sukkah	61
68. His Soul Nearly Left Him When He Took the Esrog	61
69. "My Heart! My Heart!"	62
70. What Reb Shalom of Kaminka Saw	63
71. "I Almost Had the Yeshuah in My Hand"	63

72. The Villager's Enemies on Every Side	64
73. The Simple Tailor Whose Esrog Shook the Heavens.....	65
74. For Three Days He Felt No Illness	65
75. The Esrog That Traveled from Town to Town.....	66

USHPIZIN

76. A Garment of Tzedakah for the Ushpizin	67
77. Avraham Avinu Would Not Enter an Empty Sukkah.....	68
78. Were Avraham Avinu's Guests Better Than These?.....	68
79. The Guests Named for the Ushpizin	69
80. Ushpizin Before Angels	70
81. "We Saw Moshe Enter Before Yosef"	70
82. "They Come in the Order You Invite Them"	71
83. There Was Room for the Seven Shepherds.....	71
84. I Want to See Yitzchak	72
85. Yitzchak Entered with the Yehudi HaKadosh.....	72
86. Do Not Start Up with Yaakel	72
87. "Now You Have an Ushpiz Too"	73
88. But You Have a Brother Named Moshe	74
89. The Guest Reb Yaakov Was Allowed to See.....	74
90. "Avraham Avinu Answered Me"	74
91. The Hidden Tzaddik Who Saw the Ushpizin	75
92. "Could It Be?"	75
93. The Ushpizin Wore Silk Kapotes.....	76
94. "How Did They Get Past Me?"	77
95. He Left Before the Ushpizin Came.....	77
96. The Man Willing to Die to See the Ushpizin.....	78
97. "They Have Not Come Yet"	78
98. "I Cannot Exchange the Ushpizin for You"	79
99. "Why Be Afraid of a Father?"	79
100. Faith Is Clearer Than Sight.....	80

SIMCHAS BEIS HASHOEIVAH

101. The Torches of Tzfas	81
102. Three Roles, One Simchah	82
103. He Farbrenged Until Three in the Morning.....	82
104. Whole Nights of Simchas Beis HaShoeiva	83
105. Let Him Wallow Among Chassidim.....	83
106. "Are You Happy—or Did You Drink Wine?"	84
107. One True Simchas Beis HaShoeiva in Seventy Years	84
108. One Short Farbrengen Broke Open a Satisfied Man	85

109. If They Knew How the Schach Was Laughing	85
110. The Clarinetist Put Down His Instrument and Began to Cry	85
111. The Rebbe Told Zelig and Ephraim to Dance	86
112. "We Want to Become Holy"	87
113. The Neighbor Called the Police	88
114. They Were Still Dancing at Four in the Morning	88
115. Stop the Car—I Am Going to Dance with Them	89
116. The Rebbe Took Back a Niggun	89
117. The Breslover's Dabke in the Prison Camp	90
118. "How Can I Take My Eyes Off Them?"	91

HOSHANAH RABBAH

119. "Dovid Melech Yisrael Chai Vekayam"	95
120. Lock the Door—the Rebbe Is Coming	95
121. Young Man, Yirah Means Fear	96
122. The Merit Hidden in a Pinch of Snuff	97
123. They Are Hoshanos	98
124. The Two Words He Would Not Say	99
125. He Did Not Notice the Blood	99
126. The Hakafof Were Held as Usual	100
127. The Bobov Willow Segulah	100
128. He Finished Davening and Remembered He Had No Food	101
129. The Goose That Needed One More Day	101
130. The Iron Wall Around the Heart	101

SHEMINI ATZERES

131. "Oy, Rebbe"	105
132. The Avnei Nezer Saw the Chassid's Battle	105
133. The Debate That Lasted Until Dawn	106
134. He Danced Around a Barrel in the Cellar	107
135. The Chevra Kadisha Who Could Drink a Sea	107
136. The Fire of Torah Against the Bitter Cold	107
137. They Saw Actual Light	109
138. The Chozeh's Fall	109
139. Hakafof with Torn Mishnayos in Mühldorf	110
140. The Divrei Chaim Could Not Leave His Sukkah	110
141. Your Separation from One Another Is Difficult	111
142. The Communist Who Hosted Simchas Torah	111

SIMCHAS TORAH

143. New Merchandise on Credit	113
144. Let the Yetzer Hara Say Ata Horeisa	114
145. The Hundred Meanings of Ata Horeisa	114
146. The Young Tzemach Tzedek Danced by Himself.....	115
147. They Took Pieces of His Simchas Torah Coat	115
148. The Shoe Torn in the Baal Shem Tov's Dance	116
149. The Rebbetzin Saw Fire Around the Dancers	116
150. The Nobles Came to Watch Him Dance	117
151. The Baal Shem Tov Took Hold of the Spiritual Torah.....	117
152. He Could Carry the Torah Only a Few Steps	118
153. They Feared His Soul Had Left His Body	118
154. The Floor Was Wet with His Tears	119
155. The Guests at the Kozhnitzer's Hakafof.....	119
156. The Shlah Was Angry with Me	119
157. He Pushed Away the Sanzer Hakafof Pamphlet	120
158. The Ropshitzer Stood at the Door.....	120
159. Pray for Me, and I Will Make You a Kli.....	121
160. The Chazzan Said Ata Horeisa	121
161. Only Now Have My Father's Hakafof Ascended	122
162. If a Commander Falls, Does the Army Flee?	123
163. Seven Hakafof Between the Bed and the Table	123
164. We Do Not Mix One Simchah with Another	124
165. Dance, and Your Son Will See	124
166. He Danced Like a Man Who Had Lost His Mind	125
167. The Torn Shoes That Became a Crown	126
168. Heaven Is Waiting for the Berdichever's Vehu Rachum	126
169. He Danced Alone in His Room	126

JOY & WISDOM

170. The Stanzas He Was Supposed to Skip	128
171. She Closed the Shutters and Danced.....	129
172. They Laughed for Nearly an Hour.....	129
173. The One Joy Sadness Could Not Enter.....	130
174. Nothing Had Ever Gone Badly for Reb Zusha	131
175. "Do You Truly Want More Money?"	132
176. "This Is Pain, Not Sadness"	132
177. His Own House Had Burned Too	133
178. One Sigh Was Enough.....	134
179. The Broken Bottle Was a Sign of Blessing	134
180. Do Not Spoil My Olam Hazeh	135

181. Do Not Sell the Ring for Less	135
182. He Emptied the Shop for the Beggars	135
183. A Daughter for a Daughter	136
184. The Cooked Plum for Eight Daughters	138
185. “You Take My Money; I Will Take Your Mitzvos”	138
186. Mordechai Came to Rejoice with Them	139
187. The Ice Water Fell from the Heavenly Scale	140
188. The Jew Moshiach Would Rejoice to Receive.....	141
189. The Voice He Wanted to Use for Hashem	142
190. The Song the Bandit Remembered	142
191. Simchas Beis HaShoeiva Is Blazing—Let Them Talk	143
192. The Beis Avraham Danced Above the Floor	144
193. “Now I See That Ber Can Dance”	144
194. The First Lechaim Outside the Prison	144
195. The Badchan’s Verdict.....	145
196. The Man with All Four Names.....	146
197. The Actor Who Earned More Than the Beggars	147
198. Why the Short Sermon Raised More Money	147
199. The King Who Enlists Old Fools.....	148
200. The Deceased Was Laughing in His Heart	149
201. The Coachman Who Thought He Understood	150
202. “Kohes Is Kodesh; He Is Kodesh Kodashim”	150
203. Two Great Men in One Generation	151
204. A Man Eager for Korbanos.....	152
205. What Teshuvah Could Do Before the Kugel	153
206. “It Is We Who Have the Good Life”	153
207. When the Extra Soul Left Among Jews.....	154
208. The Praise from Which Heaven Is Sustained	155
209. The Box Where He Kept His Anger.....	155
210. One Middah for the Whole Year	156

Sukkos

חג הסוכות

From Ne'ilah to Sukkos

Days of Purity

1. The Moon Revealed Through Joy

One Motzaei Yom Kippur, thick clouds covered the sky. The Baal Shem Tov wished to recite Kiddush Levanah, but the moon could not be seen.

He withdrew and labored with all the holy intentions known to him, seeking to uncover the moon. Still the clouds did not move.

Meanwhile, the chassidim had gathered in another room. The fast was over; their hearts were light, and they began to sing and dance. Their joy grew until they entered the Baal Shem Tov's room, took hold of him, and drew him into their circle.

As they danced together, someone cried out that the moon had appeared. The clouds had opened, and its light filled the sky.

The Baal Shem Tov said, "What I could not accomplish through my avodah, the chassidim accomplished through joy."

Years later, Reb Dovid Moshe of Chortkov told this story to a troubled chassid who stood apart while others danced. He urged him to trust in Hashem and enter the joy of the Mitzvah even in a time of distress.

Source: Divrei David, Husiatyn 5664, pp. 65–66.

2. And Now What?

On Motzaei Yom Kippur, the Frierdiker Rebbe entered the room of his father, the Rebbe Rashab.

The fast was over. The final words of Ne'ilah had been cried aloud, and the holy day had passed.

"And now what?" he asked.

His father answered, "Now, especially, we must do Teshuvah."

Source: Sefer HaSichos 5689, p. 25.

3. He Asked for Maseches Sukkah

One Yom Kippur, Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev led all the prayers in Yaroslav. Among those present was the young author of the Yeshuos Yaakov, who was then living at his father-in-law's home.

He longed to see how the Berditchever conducted himself when the public avodah of the day was over. Before Reb Levi Yitzchak entered the room prepared for him, the young scholar slipped beneath the bed and hid there.

After Maariv and Havdalah, the people around Reb Levi Yitzchak asked what they should bring him to revive his heart after the fast. They offered food and drink.

He refused them.

"Bring me a Gemara Sukkah," he said. "With that I will revive my heart."

The Gemara was brought, and Reb Levi Yitzchak began to learn. The hidden observer listened as he continued through the night in the same melody and with the same vitality. At some point the young man fell asleep beneath the bed.

When he awoke at dawn, Reb Levi Yitzchak was still learning. Before Shacharis, he completed Maseches Sukkah.

Source: From the Yeshuos Yaakov, publicly related by the Klausenburger Rebbe in Elul 5743.

4. Every Day Was Sukkos

The tzaddikim of Reb Naftali of Ropshitz's generation said his neshamah came from the Mitzvah of Sukkah.

Throughout the year, he occupied himself with that Mitzvah. One day he would drive a peg into his Sukkah; another day he would learn Maseches Sukkah. This was his practice all his life.

At the very least, every day of the year he would mention the word "Sukkah." He would find a way to turn the conversation until he came to speak of it.

Source: Ohel Naftali, §3, quoted in Mechubarim—Or LaYesharim, Sukkos 5785, p. 5.

5. The Crippled Shoemaker Searching for Boards

Before Sukkos, Reb Mordechai of Lechovitch prepared a supply of boards for the poor people of the town who had nothing with which to build their Sukkahs. One after another they came, and the boards were distributed until none remained.

Rain had turned the streets to mud when Reb Mordechai noticed a crippled shoemaker dragging himself from place to place. Walking was painfully difficult for the man, yet he was searching every yard for a few boards.

"What are you looking for?" Reb Mordechai asked him.

"Boards for a Sukkah."

When Reb Mordechai saw how the shoemaker was struggling through rain and mud for the sake of the Mitzvah, he began to weep. He lifted his eyes and pleaded before Hashem over the mesirus nefesh of His people.

Then he went up to his attic. There he found boards. He gave them to the shoemaker together with the schach that remained from his own Sukkah and sent men to help him build.

Source: Reb Moshe Chaim Kleinman, Or Yesharim, Warsaw 5684, p. 2.

6. A Story for Mazal Tov

On Erev Sukkos, a frightened group came to Reb Nachum of Chernobyl. A woman had been laboring for a long time and could not give birth.

Reb Nachum sent them to his son-in-law, Reb Shalom Shachna of Prohobisht, who was occupied with decorating his Sukkah.

They begged him to help. Reb Shalom Shachna answered that he was not a worker of wonders and sent them back. Reb Nachum returned them to him with a command that he must act.

Reb Shalom Shachna stopped his work.

“I will tell you a story,” he said.

In Istanbul, Jewish women would go to the mikvah together because it was dangerous to walk alone. One night, a woman had no companion and went by herself.

A man seized her. He carried her to an attic, locked her inside, and left for a time, intending to return and assault her.

The woman knew what was at stake—not only the terror of the assault, but the possibility that her husband would never believe she had escaped it. She searched the attic and saw a balcony high above the ground. A thick piece of cloth lay nearby. She wrapped herself in it to soften the fall, climbed over the railing, and jumped.

She reached the ground unharmed.

Still wrapped in the cloth, she ran home. Afraid that her husband would think she had been violated and would have to divorce her, she said nothing. She hid the cloth beneath the oven.

Her husband saw that something was wrong. That night he kept apart from her. Unable to settle his mind, he went down to the harbor and took a boat onto the water.

There he encountered another man who was plainly troubled. The two agreed that each would tell the other what weighed upon him.

The stranger spoke first. He had abducted a woman, he said, and locked her in an attic. When he returned, she was gone. But that was not his only loss: she had taken the thick cloth in which he had hidden a large treasure.

The husband now understood everything. The stranger before him was the kidnapper. His wife had escaped before the man returned; she had not been assaulted.

He hurried home and asked about the cloth. Together they opened it and found the hidden money. Husband and wife were reconciled. In time, the woman conceived and bore a child.

Reb Shalom Shachna finished the story.

"Go home," he told the petitioners. "You too have mazal tov."

They returned and found that the woman had given birth safely to a healthy child.

Reb Shalom Shachna would say that telling this story was a segulah for a woman experiencing a difficult labor.

Source: Siach Sarfei Kodesh II, pp. 124–125, entry 476.

7. He Tore the Schach with His Teeth

A poor Jew went into the forest on Erev Sukkos to cut branches for schach. When he reached the trees, he discovered that his axe had fallen somewhere along the road.

There was no time to retrace his steps. Evening was approaching, and at home there was still no schach.

He seized the branches with his hands and tried to tear them loose. When they would not break, he used his mouth and teeth. He pulled and twisted until his lips were torn and bloodied, but he did not stop until he had enough branches for a Sukkah.

The later tradition relates that his mesirus nefesh aroused a decree in Heaven that Avraham Avinu should appear to him.

On the first night of Sukkos, a stranger entered the poor man's Sukkah. The host, thinking he had come in search of food, apologized.

"I am myself a poor man," he said, "and there is almost nothing here. Go to the wealthy man across the way; there you will be given a proper meal."

The guest answered, "I did not come for your bread. I am Avraham Avinu. I came so that you might see me, in reward for the Sukkah you built with suffering and mesirus nefesh."

Then he vanished.

Source: Divrei Shalom, p. 788; later Stropkov-Shinova tradition.

8. The Yom Kippur Ketores Became the Schach

On his first visit to Mezritch, the Alter Rebbe heard the Maggid repeat a teaching in the name of the Baal Shem Tov.

The cloud of the ketores offered by the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, the Maggid said, extends into the schach of the Sukkah. The verse that joins the two is Hashem's declaration, "I have loved you."

Then came the demand contained within that love: ahavas Yisrael—love a Jew.

The words did not remain a teaching for the Alter Rebbe. From that time, his manner toward simple Jews changed. He began to draw them close with a new and visible warmth.

Source: Toras Menachem 5722, vol. I, pp. 71–76, citing Sefer HaSichos 5708, p. 169.

Beneath the Schach

In the Shade of Faith

9. The Sukkah Revealed That He Was a Chassid

When Reb Simcha Bunim of Peshischa was still a young married man living at the home of his father-in-law, his attraction to Chassidus was not yet publicly known.

Then Sukkos came.

The young Reb Bunim entered the Sukkah and could no longer conceal what burned within him.

He began kissing the walls of the Sukkah. Then he kissed the floor.

He danced and leaped with such fiery enthusiasm that he began running about, crying out and kissing the walls and floor again and again.

When he finally became calm, his secret was no longer hidden. From then onward, it became known that he belonged to the great chassidim.

Source: Reb Shmuel of Shinova, Ramatayim Tzofim, §1.

10. Turn the Rope Below

The attendant of the Chozeh of Lublin reported that the Sukkah had been completed and the Chozeh's chair stood ready. Only the roof remained to be opened. By turning and pulling a rope below, the covering above would roll away.

The Chozeh listened.

“Yes,” he said. “That is my desire: that I should turn below, and it should open Above.”

Source: Avnei Zikaron, cited in Likkutei Shmuel—Sukkos, p. 8.

11. The Rav Yibi Wanted Dofen Akumah

Reb Yibi loved the Mitzvah of Sukkah. He had the floor paved so that the Sukkah could be entered even in muddy weather.

“A person enters this Mitzvah completely,” he said, “even with his boots.”

Each year he deliberately built part of the Sukkah so that it would depend upon the law of *dofen akumah*, the bent wall. He did not want the halachah to remain only a passage in the Gemara; he wanted to fulfill it in practice.

Reb Yibi did not leave the Sukkah from Erev Yom Tov until the festival was over. On the twentieth of Tishrei 5551, as he lay dying there, his *neshamah* would not depart while his bed remained beneath the kosher *schach*.

He instructed those around him to move the bed beneath the portion considered *dofen akumah*—the roofing treated by Halachah as an extension of the wall. There his *neshamah* departed.

Source: Later Rav Yibi traditions preserved in accounts of his passing on 20 Tishrei 5551.

12. The Baal Shem Tov's Controversial Sukkah

The rabbis of Mezhibuzh examined the Baal Shem Tov's Sukkah and concluded that its construction was not kosher. They entered into a halachic dispute with him, but the Baal Shem Tov did not dismantle it.

In the middle of the discussion, he rested his head upon his hand.

A slip of parchment appeared in his hand. Written upon it were the words: “This Sukkah of Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov is kosher.” It was signed, “Matat, *Sar HaPnim*, the Minister of the Interior.”

The Sukkah remained standing.

Source: Baal Shem Tov al HaTorah, Sukkos, p. 262.

13. "I Was in Heaven Once"

During Sukkos, a chassid from Rozvadov visited Reb Meir of Premishlan. When Reb Meir heard that the man intended to continue to Dzikov, he began to praise Reb Eliezer of Dzikov.

"Reb Eliezer is a great chacham," he said. "Whenever Meir goes up to Heaven, he finds Reb Eliezer already there before him."

Then Reb Meir added that he was surprised by something: at that very moment, Reb Eliezer was sitting in a Sukkah whose sunlight exceeded its shade. The Sukkah was pasul.

The chassid hurried to Dzikov and repeated the words.

The Sukkah was examined. While Reb Eliezer had been away at a bris, children had climbed onto the roof and shifted the schach. No one had noticed. Now there was indeed more sunlight than shade.

Reb Eliezer's sons were stirred by the rest of Reb Meir's statement. If Reb Meir had known from afar what had happened to the schach, then his words about meeting their father in Heaven must also be true.

They pressed Reb Eliezer to tell them about his ascents. At last he answered them.

"Yes. I was in Heaven once—before I came out of my mother's womb."

Source: Ohel Naftali, Lemberg 1911, p. 32.

14. The Sukkah in the Hat

One Sukkos, the Baal Shem Tov sat in his Sukkah together with his disciples. Suddenly he smiled.

The disciples wondered what had caused their Rebbe to laugh. The Baal Shem Tov told them what was happening elsewhere at that very moment.

A Jewish wagon driver was traveling on the road during Chol HaMoed. He became hungry, but there was no Sukkah anywhere nearby, and he would not simply sit down and eat.

Then he had an idea.

The wagon driver took his hat and tore a hole in it. Over the opening he placed branches and leaves for schach. He put the hat back upon his head and sat down to eat, certain that he was now sitting beneath a Sukkah.

The little structure was not a kosher Sukkah. But in Heaven they saw the simple Jew's innocent longing to fulfill Hashem's Mitzvah, and a great laughter of joy arose Above.

"And through that laughter," the Baal Shem Tov said, "many decrees and troubles were annulled."

Source: Agadah Jewish Folktale Archive, "The Sukkah in the Hat".

15. Before His Own Kezayis He Went to the Widow

On the first night of Sukkos, the family and chassidim of Reb Yehoshua of Dzikov waited for him in the Sukkah. He was known to hurry to make Kiddush and eat the required kezayis, but that night he had disappeared.

They searched the house, then the courtyard and the nearby streets. At last they found him in the small home of a poor widow and her orphaned children.

He was sitting with them, speaking gently, comforting them, and bringing joy into their Yom Tov.

Only after the widow and her children had been strengthened did Reb Yehoshua return to his own Sukkah and eat his kezayis.

Source: Sichasan shel Avdei Avos.

16. Tzedakah Was the Beauty of His Sukkah

The Divrei Chaim of Sanz would give generously to tzedakah on Erev Sukkos.

One year he said that he needed several thousand silver rubles. His sons went to wealthy men and borrowed the money. As soon as they brought it to him, he distributed it among the poor.

That night he entered his Sukkah.

“In years to come,” he said, “there will be rabbis who adorn and beautify their Sukkahs with great splendor. That is not my way. Tzedakah is the *noy* Sukkah. That is its beauty and its splendor.”

Source: Reb Yisrael Berger, *Eser Tzachtzachos*, Piotrków 5670, p. 124, §21.

17. Eight Hundred Rainish for Paper Birds

The Klausenburger Rebbe related that his ancestor, the Divrei Chaim of Sanz, had a chassid to whom he would give eight hundred rainish for *noy* Sukkah.

With a little of the money, the chassid bought six sheets of colored paper. He emptied several eggs, and from the paper and eggshells fashioned decorative birds that covered much of the Sukkah wall.

The rest of the money supported him throughout the year. From it he was even able to marry off his children.

Source: The Klausenburger Rebbe, *Motzaei Yom Kippur 5738*, as quoted in Betzila Demeheimnusa—Sanz, Erev Sukkos 5784, p. 43, note 13.

18. The Person Sitting in the Sukkah

The Frierdiker Rebbe was asked whether Sukkahs in Lubavitch had been decorated.

They had not, he answered: neither beneath the schach nor on the walls. Once, Reb Zalke Persitz of Moscow brought an artificial cluster of grapes to hang in the Sukkah. It was not hung.

“With my father,” he said, “the noy Sukkah was the person sitting in the Sukkah.”

For the Rebbe Rashab, the awe of accepting the yoke of Heaven on Rosh Hashanah, the avodah of Erev Yom Kippur and Yom Kippur, and the joy of Sukkos were experiences in the innermost depths of his neshamah.

Source: The Frierdiker Rebbe, *Sefer HaSichos 5704*, p. 12, §3.

19. The Schach Does Not Like Anger

Reb Yosef Mordechai was a man of distinguished lineage, and he knew it. One Sukkos he entered the Sukkah in anger.

The Rebbe Maharash stopped him.

“You may be a meyuchas,” he said, “but before the schach you must have derech eretz. Schach does not like anger.”

Source: *Sefer HaSichos 5704*.

20. The Angel Who Repeated the Lashon Hara

One night of Sukkos, Reb Chaim Sanzer, one of the sages of Brody, sat alone in his Sukkah with his son.

As they spoke, Reb Chaim began criticizing the Baal Shem Tov. The surviving account says that he spoke about him in a manner asur ledaber—things that should not have been said.

They finished and went to sleep.

Very early the next morning, Reb Chaim arose to go to the mikvah. On the way, he encountered the Baal Shem Tov.

The Baal Shem Tov confronted him.

“What is this? A person sits in the Sukkah together with the holy Ushpizin—and speaks such lashon hara?”

Reb Chaim was stunned. No one had been present besides his son, and his son was still asleep.

“Who told you?”

“An angel told me,” answered the Baal Shem Tov.

Reb Chaim immediately challenged him. “How is an angel permitted to speak lashon hara?”

The Baal Shem Tov answered, “When a person does good, he creates a good angel. Such an angel does only good and would certainly never repeat lashon hara. But when a person does something wrong, a bad angel is created. That angel was quite willing to carry the lashon hara to me.”

Source: A. J. Heschel Hasidic Ethnographic Archive, Herzog College, “A Bad Angel Can Speak Slander”; Rabbi Teomim transmission.

21. Berel, You Are Sitting in the Bowl

Before Reb Yissachar Ber of Radoshitz became known as a Rebbe, he lived in severe poverty and often fasted because there was no bread.

One year he had nothing to eat even before Yom Kippur and fasted for several days. After the fast, he continued to live on almost nothing. When Sukkos arrived, there was no food in the house for Yom Tov.

On the first day of Sukkos, Reb Ber remained in the beis midrash after davening. He did not go home because he knew that nothing awaited him there.

What he did not know was that on Erev Yom Tov his wife had taken a piece of her jewelry and sold it. With the money she bought challos, candles, and potatoes.

After everyone else had left, Reb Ber came to the Sukkah. He saw the glowing candles and the challos and rejoiced. He washed his hands and began the meal. He was starving from the days of fasting. When he tasted the potatoes, he ate them with great pleasure.

Then he gathered his thoughts. “Berel,” he said to himself, “you are not sitting in the Sukkah. You are sitting inside the bowl.”

He stopped eating at once.

Source: Niflaos HaSaba Kadisha, printed p. 27.

22. The Name Upon the Schach

Once the Apter Rav traveled to spend Sukkos with the Chozeh of Lublin. He brought his son, Reb Yitzchak Meir, with him.

As father and son sat in the Chozeh's Sukkah, Reb Yitzchak Meir looked upward. Upon the schach he saw the holy Name of Hashem engraved before his eyes.

He told his father what he had seen.

The Apter Rav explained that such a sign was granted only to the tzaddik hador.

Years later, after the Chozeh had passed away, the Apter Rav and his son were again sitting together in a Sukkah.

Once more, Reb Yitzchak Meir looked upward. The Name appeared upon the schach.

The Apter Rav said, "We asked the Ribbono Shel Olam that He should give this to us."

Source: A. J. Heschel Hasidic Ethnographic Archive, Herzog College, "The Name of Y-H-V-H Appears on the Schach."

23. The Mail Carrier at the Sukkah Door

During Sukkos, a non-Jewish mail carrier arrived at the home of the Imrei Yosef of Spinka. He insisted that the letter be delivered directly into the recipient's hand.

The Chakal Yitzchak went into the Sukkah and asked his father whether the man might enter.

The Imrei Yosef refused.

"The Divrei Chaim once said that one should not spit in a Sukkah," he explained. "It is enough that we walk with our feet upon the holy Names that dwell there. Shall we spit there as well? How, then, can a repulsive gentile be brought inside?"

The letter was received outside.

Source: Tosafos Chaim, as cited in Me'ayan HaChaim—Sukkos 5785, p. 2.