

## A Sukka of One's Own

1 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Say to the Israelite people: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month there shall be the Feast of Tabernacles to the Lord, [to last] seven days... On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. You shall observe it as a festival of the Lord for seven days in the year; you shall observe it in the seventh month as a law for all time, throughout the ages. You shall live in tabernacles seven days; all citizens in Israel shall live in tabernacles, in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelite people live in tabernacles when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I the Lord your God.

Leviticus 23:33-43

2 As it is taught: "I made the children of Israel to reside in *sukkot*"; these tabernacles were clouds of glory, this is the statement of Rabbi Eliezer. Rabbi Akiva says: They established for themselves actual *sukkot*.

Sukka 11b

3 And the Lord said to me... Go, say to them, 'Return to your **tents**.'

Deuteronomy 5:25-27

Moses heard the people weeping, every clan apart, each person at the entrance of his **tent**. The Lord was very angry, and Moses was distressed.

Numbers 11:10

How fair are your **tents**, O Jacob, Your dwellings, O Israel!

Numbers 24:5

**4**

Jabal [was] the first to live in **tents** and raise cattle.

Genesis 4:20

Noah, the tiller of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk, and he uncovered himself within his **tent**. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a cloth, placed it against both their backs and, walking backward, they covered their father's nakedness; their faces were turned the other way, so that they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah woke up from his wine and learned what his youngest son had done to him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan; The lowest of slaves Shall he be to his brothers." And he said, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem; Let Canaan be a slave to them. May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the **tents** of Shem.

Genesis 9:20-27

[Abram] moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his **tent**, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east... So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they parted from each other; Abram remained in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the Plain, pitching his **tents** near Sodom... And Abram moved his **tent**, and came to dwell at the terebinths of Mamre, which are in Hebron; and he built an altar there to the Lord.

Genesis 12:8-13:18

The Lord appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the **tent** as the day grew hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the **tent** to greet them and bowed to the ground... Abraham hastened into the **tent** to Sarah, and said, "Quick, three *seahs* of choice flour! Knead and make cakes!"... They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he replied, "There, in the **tent**." Then one said, "I will return to you next year, and your wife Sarah shall have a son!" Sarah was listening at the entrance of the **tent**.

Genesis 18:1-10

Isaac then brought her into the **tent** of his mother Sarah, and he took Rebekah as his wife. Isaac loved her, and thus found comfort after his mother's death.

Genesis 24:67

When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in **tents**.

Genesis 25:27

**5**

He said, "Please, my lords, turn aside to your servant's **house** to spend the night, and bathe your feet; then you may be on your way early." But they said, "No, we will spend the night in the square." But he urged them strongly, so they turned his way and entered his **house**. He prepared a feast for them and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. They had not yet lain down, when the townspeople, the men of Sodom, young and old—all the people to the last man—gathered about the **house**. And they shouted to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may be intimate with them." So Lot went out to them to the entrance, shut the door behind him, and said, "I beg you, my friends, do not commit such a wrong. Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you please; but do not do anything to these men, since they have come under the shelter of my roof." But they said, "Stand back! The fellow," they said, "came here as an alien, and already he acts the ruler! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." And they pressed hard against the person of Lot, and moved forward to break the door. But the men stretched out their hands and pulled Lot into the **house** with them, and shut the door. And the people who were at the entrance of the **house**, young and old, they struck with blinding light, so that they were helpless to find the entrance.

Genesis 19:2-11

Laban ran out to the man at the spring—when he saw the nose-ring and the bands on his sister's arms... he went up to the man, who was still standing beside the camels at the spring. "Come in, O blessed of the Lord," he said, "why do you remain outside, when I have made ready the **house** and a place for the camels?"

Genesis 24:29-31

Jacob answered Laban... "Point out what I have of yours and take it." And Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. So Laban went into Jacob's **tent** and Leah's **tent** and the **tents** of the two maidservants; but he did not find them. Leaving Leah's **tent**, he entered Rachel's **tent**.... Now Jacob became incensed and took up his grievance with Laban. Jacob spoke up and said to Laban, "What is my crime, what is my guilt that you should pursue me? You rummaged through all my things; what have you found of all your **household** objects?... These twenty years I have spent working in your **house**... and you changed my wages time and again."

Genesis 31:31-41

They put Hamor and his son Shechem to the sword [and] took Dinah out of Shechem's **house**.

Genesis 34:26

And much as she coaxed Joseph day after day, he did not yield to her request to lie beside her, to be with her. One such day, he came into the **house** to do his work. None of the **household** being there inside, she caught hold of him by his garment and said, "Lie with me!" But he left his garment in her hand and got away and fled outside... So Joseph's master had him put in the **jailhouse**

Genesis 39:10-20

6 | “Standing near him” (Gen. 18:2) – Abraham’s home was open to the four corners of the world, to gather all the passers by.

Midrash Sekhel Tov, Genesis 18:2

7 | But Jacob journeyed on to Sukkot, and built a **house** for himself and made **tabernacles** for his cattle; that is why the place was called Sukkot.

Genesis 33:17

The cherubim shall have their wings spread out above, **shielding** (*sokhekbim*) the cover with their wings.

Exodus 25:20

And, as My Presence passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and **shield** (*sakhoti*) you with My hand until I have passed by.

Exodus 33:22

Place there the Ark of the Pact, and **shield** (*sakbota*) the ark with the curtain.

Exodus 40:3

And it shall serve as **tabernacle** for shade from heat by day, and a refuge and shelter from storm.

Isaiah 4:6

He will shelter me in His **tabernacle** on an evil day, grant me the protection of His tent, raise me high upon a rock.

Psalms 27:5

8 | In other ancient societies, such as Egypt, this lack of concern with the individual made slavery an acceptable and common practice. And slaves, by definition, were not full participants in the community.... They had no individual rights; and likewise no privacy right. In fact, many were housed together in barnlike accommodations like animals, and their masters traded or bred them like property – for they were regarded as possessions, not people. So privacy for them, like the masses of people who worked together voluntarily in service to their king, god, or larger community, was irrelevant.

Gini Scott, *The Death of Privacy*

9

I thought, too, of the admirable smoke and drink and the deep armchairs and the pleasant carpets: of the urbanity, the geniality, the dignity which are the offspring of luxury and privacy and space.... But for women, I thought, looking at the empty shelves, these difficulties were infinitely more formidable. In the first place, to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound-proof room, was out of the question.... There must be freedom and there must be peace. Not a wheel must grate, not a light glimmer. The curtains must be close drawn.... Intellectual freedom depends upon material things. Poetry depends upon intellectual freedom. And women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time. Women have had less intellectual freedom than the sons of Athenian slaves. Women, then, have not had a dog's chance of writing poetry. That is why I have laid so much stress on money and a room of one's own.

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

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