

A Pinch of Snuff

I. Thrice-Told tale

A. Joseph della Reina [53/300-1]

Messianic folktale

The failed redeemer from the forces of evil

B. Book of Job

C. Tales of Chelm

D. Haniha Ben Dosa & the viper E. Elijah the Prophet

II The Mephitic Council

A. Satan / der bal-dover [Samuel oversalts it]

Decadent, phlegmatic, faintly maskilic

Skeptical

Speaks Aramaic!

B. Lapitutn / demon flunkies

Jockeying for influence

hierarchical

C. The recorder / dos shrayberl

Bald-headed, light-footed, merry-eyed

D. Demonic props

1. sulphur smoldering floor

2. record w/blood-red ink reeking of sin

3. quill made of crow's feathers

4. parchment from the skin of an atheist

5. ring a bell made of the skull of a sophist

E. Lilith: intro a new repertoire

F. Protocol

1. heavily bureaucratic

2. stenographic style

3. God as ultimate arbiter

[in besdin shel mayle]

4. Grounded in Scripture

III. Chelm

A. The town itself: model of absurdity

B. The Rabbi:

1. no more a rabbi than the devil is a devil

2. obviously rooted in the law
3. parodic JOB
4. beyond desire
5. savvy about demons

IV. The Trials: 3+1

1. Bribery in public
 - nicely dramatized
 - Surprise ending
 - Connoisseur of voices
 - Yet adheres to judicial protocol
2. Bribery in private
 - His total selflessness
3. Seduction: "*an emes kol beisha*"
 - The joke is on her
4. Why does the last succeed where the others have failed?

V. The Last Demon

1. a Daytshl as messenger of desire
2. reduced to laughable size
3. The rabbi: a slave to routine
 - Prescribed walk through nature
 - Reciting Song of Songs!
 - Only real passion is for snuff
4. the man who combated evil is so easily confounded
5. his utter failure to dream, to desire