

A PEOPLE APART - LEVITICUS

Written by Ted Swartz

Characters: Uzziah, Malachi, Deborah, Moses

Scripture text: Drawn from book of Leviticus

Props: Table with four chairs, coffee cups, large book/scroll/document

Length: 5 minutes

(Scene opens with Uzziah, Malachi, and Deborah coming on stage and taking their places at the table.)

DEBORAH: So, what do you think of this?

UZZIAH: Seems a bit like overkill.

DEBORAH: Like a lawyer wrote it.

MALACHI: Moses wrote it.

UZZIAH: *(With a chuckle.)* He's not a lawyer.

MALACHI: Actually he didn't write it. It came from *(Points up)*. Moses just writes it down.

DEBORAH: He gave us the big 10. Why do we need more?

MALACHI: Right.

(MOSES enters holding a cup of coffee.)

MOSES: All right, you've all seen the latest document.

MALACHI: Well, MosesStill "plowing" through.

DEBORAH: It's an awful lot to throw at us.

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UZZIAH: Have you thought about an editor?

MOSES: Do you or do you not want to be a chosen people?

UZZIAH: Of course, but...

MOSES: But what?!

MALACHI: Moses, you know us—there's always a but...

MOSES: But nothing! You screwed up—I get called in for more instructional material. Carved in rocks. Which I have to carry down. Hopefully this will be the end of it—provided we don't get too many more BUTS.

DEBORAH: Are we going to stop for lunch?

UZZIAH: How can you think about lunch?

DEBORAH: How can you not think about lunch?

MALACHI: Have you read this? I'm not sure we can eat anything anymore.

UZZIAH: *(To MALACHI)* Exactly how did you come to be on this council?

MOSES: Can we get back to... *(Lifts the document.)*

UZZIAH: Boy ... that's a big ... what exactly is this?

DEBORAH: Looks like a cookbook.

UZZIAH: A cookbook?—What about the sex parts?

MALACHI: There are sex parts?

UZZIAH: You did read it, right?

MALACHI: I got bogged down with the things we can't eat.

DEBORAH: Like I said, a cookbook.

MALACHI: More like a no cookbook.

MOSES: It's not a cookbook.

MALACHI: Did you know we can't eat rabbits?

DEBORAH: Really.

MALACHI: But we can eat grasshoppers.

DEBORAH: I read that. Go figure.

MALACHI: But not moles... (*Musing*) I don't like moles.

MOSES: It's not just about what we can't eat.

DEBORAH: So Moses, what is exactly is this?

MOSES: It's a code, people; a code to live by—and it's our job to present this to the people, people.

UZZIAH: Why?

MOSES: Why?

UZZIAH: Why do we need such a thing?

MOSES: Why?! Why? Can I just name a couple of reasons? The Golden Calf incident.

ALL BUT MOSES: Do we have to keep bringing up the calf?

UZZIAH: We're sorry already.

DEBORAH: Oh, I get it; it's a punishment.

MOSES: It's not a punishment.

DEBORAH: (*Softer.*) Feels like a punishment.

MOSES: It's a guideline!

UZZIAH: OK... It could be a good thing.

MALACHI: Not eating anything is a good thing?

UZZIAH: I just think a little direction is a good thing. Keeps us chosen folks from sliding down that slippery slope to chaos.

DEBORAH: A little is fine—but this? This is going to be impossible.

MOSES: What is it with you? What part of a chosen people don't you understand?

UZZIAH: So he's doing this because we're chosen?

MOSES: Yes!

UZZIAH: Wouldn't like to see what he does for the non-chosen.

MOSES: Well, keep complaining...

MALACHI: *(Has been reading the document.)* We can also eat crickets. *(They all look at him.)* But not pelicans ... or hoopoes.

MOSES: People, people once again, focus on the question! Anything else?

DEBORAH: Tell me about the spitting.

UZZIAH: All of this and you want to talk about the spitting?

DEBORAH: Yes. If you direct where a man spits you control his life ... it's a metaphor.

UZZIAH: No it isn't. It's a directive.

DEBORAH: It's a metaphor.

UZZIAH: For what?

DEBORAH: For ... spitting.

MALACHI: Not if you're the spittee.

UZZIAH: Malachi, check the book.

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MOSES: It has only to do with being unclean.

DEBORAH: The spittee or the spitter?

MOSES: The spitter!

UZZIAH: I think if the spitter is unclean, by definition it makes the spittee unclean as well. (*A look from MOSES.*) Stands to reason.

MALACHI: Pigs are out. (*They all look at him.*) It's the hoofs. (*Does an imitation of hoofs—think clenched fist T-Rex.*)

MOSES: Look, after you get by the instruction to the priests, the rest of this is common sense ... don't steal, don't lie, pay your workers well ... don't mistreat foreigners, treat them as well as treat your own, love them as much as you love yourself.

(*Pause.*)

MALACHI: Hang on, what was that last part?

MOSES: Love the foreigner as much as you love yourself.

DEBORAH: (*Pause.*) What if he's a spitter?

MOSES: If he's a...

DEBORAH: I'm just saying—if he's a spitter...

UZZIAH: Or raises hoopoes...

DEBORAH: Or eats rock badgers...

UZZIAH: Or camels...

MALACHI: Or pelicans.

MOSES: People...

DEBORAH: Or bats.

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UZZIAH: Bats?

MOSES: People...

MALACHI: Or pigs. (*Does the hand motions again.*)

MOSES: Stop! (*MALACHI is stopped in mid-motion.*) People, let's not make this more complicated than it already is.

UZZIAH: And that's possible?

MOSES: You treat the foreigner in the way you want to be treated ... even if he's a spitter.

ALL: Right.

MOSES: God wants his people to be safe and prosperous—that's what most of this is about—all right?!

MALACHI: Fine.

DEBORAH: OK.

UZZIAH: I like it. (*They begin packing up.*)

MOSES: I just hope they don't call it something like The Law of Moses.

THE END

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