



*The Rock is a Youth  
Ministry of Ascension  
Lutheran Church*

## **A Plumber on the Roof**

*Based on Joshua 5:10-12*

- Tevye:** **Austin (Beard, Plunger, Tool Belt)**  
**Golde:** **Alleah (Dress & Apron)**  
**Lazar Wolf:** **Tobi (Blazer, Beard)**  
**Tzeitel:** **Peri (Teen Clothes)**  
**Motel:** **Matthew (Drum Shirt & Sticks)**  
**Hodel:** **Allee (Teen Clothes)**  
**Perchik:** **Mattias (Dictionary & Big Glasses)**  
**Chava:** **Peri (Teen Clothes)**  
**Fyedka:** **Matthew (Teen Clothes)**
- Setting:** **Plumber Tevye, is clearing snow from the top of a roof. He is talking to Audience & God.**
- Tevye:** **(To audience.) A plumber on the roof. Sounds crazy, huh? But here in our little village of Ames, Iowa, you might say every one of us is a plumber on the roof, trying to fix the problems in our lives, while keeping our balance. You may ask, how do we keep our balance? Well, we keep our balance by keeping change in our lives to a bare minimum. My name is Tevye, the plumber.**
- Tevye:** **And why am I a plumber? It's steady work, with little change. For example, in 150 years there has been virtually no change in the basic mechanism of a flush toilet. (Climbs down from ladder.)**
- Tevye:** **(Looking up.) Oh, dear Lord, you made many,**

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*Page 1*

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*A Plumber on the Roof*

many, poor plumbers. I realize of course, it is no great shame to be a poor plumber...but then again, it is no great honor either.

**Golde:** *(Off stage.)* Is that you, Tevye? Are you talking to yourself again?

**Tevye:** *(To audience.)* That's my wife, Golde. *(To Golde.)* I'm talking to God, woman.

**Golde:** *(Enters room.)* Did you get the Johnson's toilet fixed?

**Tevye:** It wasn't their toilet that needed fixing. It was their roof.

**Golde:** Their roof?

**Tevye:** The snow had drifted over the bathroom vent on their roof, so they thought they had plumbing problems. I climbed up there, cleared the snow, and the problem is fixed.

**Golde:** You're too old to be climbing onto roofs. You're apt to slip and kill yourself.

**Tevye:** And YOUR too old not to know that you can't tell an old man how to do his job.

**Lazar Wolf:** *(Knock on door).*

**Tevye:** Who is it?

**Lazar Wolf:** Lazar Wolf.

**Tevye:** *(Excitedly lets him in.)* Well, if it isn't Lazar Wolf, my favorite Rich Real Estate agent! To what circumstance to we owe this honor?

**Lazar Wolf:** Tevye, I have good news for you. The city council has voted to put a new shopping mall right here on your property.

**Tevye:** Right here?

*A Plumber on the Roof*

- Golde:** But we only have a small lot. And this home has been in our family for generations. Surely there is a better place for a...
- Lazar:** They're condemning the whole neighborhood. You'll all be paid handsomely for your homes, and you can move into a new home in the north part of town.
- Tevye:** Hmm...so all you want is my home? You don't want to marry my daughter or anything?
- Tzeitel:** *(Enters room, pulling Motel behind her.)* Ooh, Daddy, funny you should mention that. Motel and I have decided to marry and move to the coast at the end of the semester.
- Golde:** Motel, I thought you going to be an engineer.
- Motel:** No, I've decided to follow my dreams: move to the coast and become a world-famous professional jazz drummer.
- Golde:** Professional Drummer? What kind of a career is that?
- Tevye:** Tzeitel, you know what they say the difference is between a drummer and a savings bond? *(Pause)*. One of the two will mature and make money!
- Tzeitel:** Daddy!
- Golde:** *(To God.)* Dear Lord, first you take our home, now you take our oldest daughter!
- Tevye:** Oh, don't worry, woman. We still have the younger daughters. Hodel is still enrolled at the college, and Chava is still in high School. *(Hodel & Perchik enter.)*
- Hodel:** Daddy, Perchik has something he'd like to ask you.

*A Plumber on the Roof*

**Tevye:** Ah, Perchik, my young apprentice, and apple of my daughter's eye. What can I do for you? Do you need a new tool belt, some new tools, a salary advance?

**Golde:** You've been working him too hard. Let me guess. You want to take off Good Friday?

**Tevye:** Woman, I've already given him Easter Sunday off! Why in my day, plumbers were on call 365 days a year.

**Hodel:** Daddy, you're not listening!

**Tevye:** Well...(waits impatiently for Perchik to speak)...speak!

**Perchik:** I was working under the Peterson's sink yesterday when I heard...I heard...

**Tevye:** Yes, out with it!

**Hodel:** Daddy!

**Perchik:** A voice...

**Tevye:** It was Mrs. Peterson. She's always interrupting us when we work.

**Perchik:** No, no, I think it was God speaking to me.

**Golde:** Well, now I know he is your apprentice. He's talking to God.

**Hodel:** No Momma, GOD was talking to HIM.

**Tevye:** And he said what? You need a new plunger?

**Perchik:** He said "Build it and they will come."

**Tevye:** Of course, they will come! If you ever finish the installation of the Peterson's sink, dozens

*A Plumber on the Roof*

of little Petersons will come to wash their hands and brush their teeth.

- Perchik:** No, Tevye. I think God was telling me to quit my plumbing apprenticeship, and build a spelling bee hall!
- Golde:** Perchik, are you sure it was God's voice and not Johannes Gassman's (or pick congregational celebrity of your choice) voice you were hearing?
- Tevye:** A spelling bee hall? What do the Peterson's need with a spelling bee hall?
- Hodel:** Daddy, you're not listening! Not the Petersons. The people of Ames.
- Perchik:** The one constant through all the years, Tevye, has been spelling bees. America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It has been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt and erased again. But spelling bees have marked the time. These words, this tradition, is a part of our past, Tevye. It reminds us of all that once was good and could be again. People will come, Tevye, people will most definitely come.
- Hodel:** Hundreds of kids will come from all over the country and engage in weekly spelling competitions. It will develop into teams, then a league, drawing thousands of spectators, corporate sponsorships, television contracts...
- Golde:** (*Looking skyward.*) Lord, first our home, now our oldest two daughters, and now my husband's only workman!
- Tevye:** NO! This is too much change. We don't need new malls & homes (*stares at Lazar*), children leaving home (*stares at Tzeitel*), professional drummers, spelling bees, & other crazy ideas (*stares at Hodel*).

*A Plumber on the Roof*

- Chava:** *(Chava & Fyedka enter.)* **Daddy!**
- Tevey:** **Oh, how I'm beginning to fear that greeting! Hello my youngest daughter Chava, and...**
- Chava:** **Fyedka! You always forgetting his name!**
- Tevey:** **Sorry.**
- Chava:** **Fyedka and I needed your opinion on the meaning of Joshua 5:10-12.**
- Tevey:** **Oh, at last, someone who asks me about something that doesn't deal with change: God's word.**
- Fyedka:** **Well that's just what we wondered about, Tevey. Joshua 5:10-12 reads like this: "On the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, while camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, the Israelites celebrated the Passover. The day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain. The manna stopped the day after they ate this food from the land; there was no longer any manna for the Israelites, but that year they ate of the produce of Canaan."**
- Tevey:** **Ah yes, the wonderful unchanging tradition of the celebration of Passover: the celebration of God's miraculous deliverance of his people from their bondage in Egypt.**
- Chava:** **I say this must have been a frightening time for the children of Israel, entering a new land, and losing the 40-year miraculous provision of manna and quail.**
- Fyedka:** **But I say that this should have been a time of rejoicing because God was moving them from the temporary provisions of manna & quail to the even better permanent abundance of regular food in the land of milk & honey.**

*A Plumber on the Roof*

- Golde:** So on the one hand we have changed people who have grown accustomed to a dependent, changeless way of life.
- Tevye:** And on the other hand we have a changeless God who in changing times still loves and watches over his people.
- Chava:** So it's not lack of change that should bring comfort to God's people, Daddy.
- Fyedka:** It's our knowledge of the loving provision of a changeless God.
- Tevye:** *(Cast freezes as Tevye steps out to speak to audience.)* Hmm...on second thought, here in our little village of Ames, Iowa, you might say every one of us is a plumber on the roof, trusting in God to fix the problems in our lives and keep us in perfect balance.