

Sneak Peek

30-DAY DEVOTIONAL

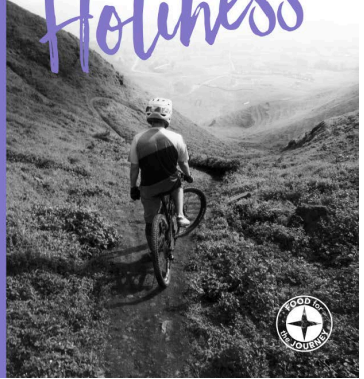
Holiness

Edited by Elizabeth McQuoid

Series editor
Elizabeth McQuoid

30-Day Devotional

Holiness



Day 1

Read Leviticus 11:1–47

Key verses: Leviticus 11:43–44

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⁴³Do not defile yourselves by any of these creatures. Do not make yourselves unclean by means of them or be made unclean by them. ⁴⁴I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy.

Finding the first call in Scripture to ‘be holy, because I am holy’ at the end of a list of food regulations is like digging over a scrap heap and suddenly finding a diamond ring buried in the muck and the rubbish!

Why were these regulations given? Perhaps it was to do with hygiene or that the banned animals were used in cultic practices by the Canaanites. Recently, the most popular explanation has been that whenever there’s a lack of wholeness or something doesn’t measure up to the norm, then it’s considered impure and you are to steer

4 | LEVITICUS

clear of it (see Day 2). But even this reasoning is secondary to the Bible's own explanation.

God's holiness is the primary reason he gives for these regulations (see verses 44–45). The human mind always likes to explore further, but it ought to be enough that God says to his people, 'Live like this.' God says this is what you can eat and this is what you should avoid and, because these regulations somehow connect to holiness, we should obey.

However, these are not the demands of an impersonal, sovereign lord of the universe who woke up one day and decided to make life awkward for his creatures. This is a reflection of the personal, saving relationship that God has with the children of Israel. He says, 'I am the LORD, *your* God! [Verse 44, emphasis added.] I am your redeemer. Your obedience isn't mere drudgery or duty. It rises out of gratitude and is an expression of the relationship you have with me.'

In essence, holiness is resembling God. 'Be holy,' says God, 'because I am holy.' This is a staggering command, not just for the children of Israel but for us as well, since it's repeated in the New Testament (see 1 Peter 1:16). God calls us to be holy so that we might, to some extent, reproduce him in the world. We can never be perfect

reproductions. We are not life-giving creators as he is. We do not have his matchless perfection or his power. There are qualities that belong to God alone. But we are called to resemble God not by following food regulations but by demonstrating his grace, compassion, mercy, goodness and moral purity to the world.¹

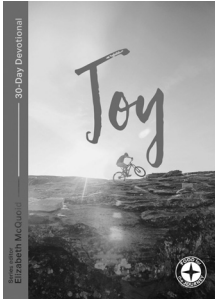
∴ This command to imitate God and be holy is absolutely
 ∴ breathtaking! It may seem overwhelming but consider
 ∴ this:

∴ Imitating Christ is no burden for genuine disciples who
 ∴ act out only what, or rather who, is in them. The dis-
 ∴ ciple's mandate is simply 'Become who you are already
 ∴ are [in Christ]' . . . The real work of discipleship, growing
 ∴ into our parts as little Christs, remains, not as a condition
 ∴ but as a consequence of our salvation . . . If disciples
 ∴ are to become Christlike, they must do more than learn
 ∴ their lines; they must also develop their characters.
 ∴ (Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Faith Speaking Understanding*,
 ∴ Westminster John Knox Press, 2014, p. 129)

1 For further study on Leviticus, see Derek Tidball's *The Message of Leviticus* in IVP's *The Bible Speaks Today* series (listed in the 'For further study' section at the end of this book).

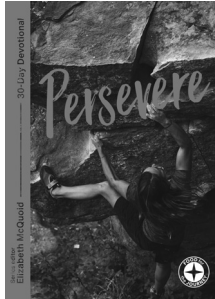
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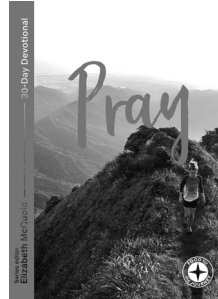
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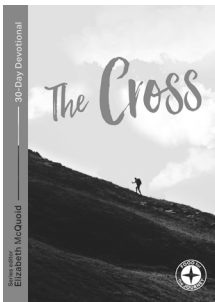
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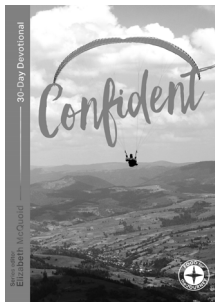
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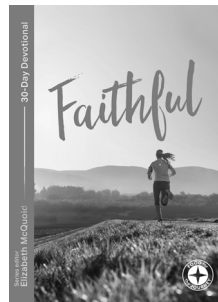
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