

HOLY

“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

—1 Peter 2:9

31 A People Set Apart

OUR HUMAN CONDITION

I don’t like to be “different.” Even appearing to be different makes me uncomfortable. People ridicule others who seem strange and out of step with the crowd. And I surely don’t want to be thought of as “holy.” I don’t even want to *be* holy—what a bore! Nothing turns folks off more than pompous, proud, self-righteous, holier-than-thou attitudes.

ASSIGNMENT

The letters of Peter certainly call into question the popular idea that “it pays to serve God,” that we will be rewarded for our goodness. Clearly, holy living was resulting in suffering for the readers of these letters. Notice also that stressful times leave people open to false teachings, hence the call to remain faithful.

If you wonder why we are rereading passages from Leviticus and Isaiah, it is to remind us of our powerful symbolic roots in Israel’s experience. We cannot understand First Peter if we have not read Old Testament history.

- Day 1 1 Peter 1–2 (new birth into a living hope)
- Day 2 1 Peter 3–5 (God’s own people, persecution, final warnings)
- Day 3 2 Peter 1–3 (danger of false teaching)
- Day 4 Leviticus 11; 19 (laws of cleanness and purification, love of neighbor)
- Day 5 Isaiah 52–53 (the suffering servant); 55:1–56:8 (Israel’s coming restoration)

- Day 6 Read and respond to “The Bible Teaching” and “Marks of Discipleship.”
- Day 7 Rest and worship.

PRAYER

Pray daily before study:

“May my words and my thoughts be acceptable to you,
O LORD, my refuge and my redeemer!”
(Psalm 19:14, TEV).

Prayer concerns for this week: