

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

You said, “I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy” (Lev 11:44–45). I praise you today for your holiness! You are set apart from all that is sinful, and you desire me to reflect your holiness in all I say and do. Glory to the God who invites me to share in His holiness!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you told me about your laws regarding clean and unclean animals. These laws were related to the three ritual states which you instituted for Israel: the unclean, the clean, and the ritual-holy. They are called ‘ritual states’ because they set the boundaries for which ritual actions a person could do (or not do) and which ritual places a person could go (or not go). The normal ritual state for an Israelite was clean. They could become ritual-holy by being sanctified, and they could become unclean by being defiled. It was not wrong to become unclean, for the ritual states were not moral states. Indeed, it was possible to be moral-holy and unclean at the same time. However, it was not possible to be unclean and ritual-holy, and it was dangerous for someone who was unclean to come in contact with the ritual-holy (Lev 7:20–21; 22:3). This system of ritual states served several purposes: (1) *It reinforced the people’s understanding of your holiness.* Your presence dwelt in the most ritual-holy section of a ritual-holy tent, and you were served by ritual-holy priests offering ritual-holy offerings. Nothing unclean was to come near your presence. (2) *It encouraged the people to protect that which was ritual-holy.* As they made careful distinctions in the realm of ritual states, they respected and guarded what was sanctified to you. (3) *It taught the people that you wanted them to reflect your holiness.* The ritual states caused everyone to be acutely aware of what state they were in and what could make them unclean. As the people carefully chose between the clean and unclean in the ritual realm, they were reminded to choose between right and wrong in the moral realm. The laws of clean and unclean animals supported this system. At every meal, Israel was reminded that you had set them apart as your people, and they got practice in making proper distinctions. What a beautiful way to teach holy living!

### *Reflection*

Even though your laws regarding clean and unclean animals are no longer in force (Mark 7:19), they still have relevance to me. Am I careful to reject what is wrong and choose what is right?

### *Request*

Father, life is filled with choices and decisions. Train my powers of discernment to distinguish good from evil (Heb 5:14). Give me the wisdom to choose not only between right and wrong, but also between good, better and best.

### *Thanksgiving*

A spring or cistern was not defiled by the carcass of an unclean animal because the water, a purifying agent, was continually being renewed (Lev 11:36). Thank you for such a beautiful picture of my union with Christ. His life within me is continually renewing and purifying my heart, and His blood is presently, actively cleansing me from all sin (1 John 1:7)!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: “[Yield Not to Temptation](#)” – Horatius R. Palmer.*  
*Meditation Verse: Leviticus 11:44–45.*