The aim of this caring science thesis is to find out what the term 'holy' includes and what it means as a caring science concept. The section regarding preunderstanding consists of a theoretical background and a review of previous studies regarding the term.

The theoretical perspective is based on Eriksson's caring science tradition with roots in hermeneutics and the human sciences. The methodological approach of the thesis is thus hermeneutic. The method consists of Koort's elaborated method of conceptual analysis including an etymological, semantic and discrimination analysis of the concept 'holy' and its synonyms. The research questions are: 1. What does the concept 'holy' mean? and 2. What does the concept 'holy' mean as a caring science concept? In order to reach deeper understanding and possibly gain new understanding of the concept.

The results in this thesis open up a deeper understanding of the concept of 'holy'. Holy is a multi-evident concept and holiness contains several important dimensions. Conceptually, holy has the strongest like to inviolable. It can be seen from the conceptual analysis that a human being is holy, she is godlike, wonderful, precious and valuable. Holiness is fundamentally untouchable, but the perception of holiness is vulnerable. In the dimension holy as inviolable, there are two principal meanings, holy as inviolable in the sense that it must not be violated, and holy as inviolable in the sense that it cannot be violated. Violation of holiness means suffering for a human being.