

# “A MAN AFTER GOD’S HEART”

## Psalm 15

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### INTRODUCTION

Once again, this is a psalm of David. There is no reason to question his authorship—esp. since he refers to the “tent” for the sanctuary and not a finished temple. David was concerned for the restoration of public worship in Jerusalem, but it was important to clarify the importance of avoiding “formalism and ritualism” in worship that ignored the importance of the heart and life in fellowship with God.

Whereas Psalm 14 presents the typical ungodly man, Psalm 15 presents the typical godly man. Ps. 14 spoke of “the generation of the righteous” and longed for “the salvation out of Zion.” Here we see who these righteous are, and with whom such salvation would prevail. David shows “the un-hypocritical piety and genuine lowliness which were manifest” in him “in their most beautiful light”—esp. when he brought the ark to Jerusalem. (Del. p. 988).

Here David presents a question to the Lord concerning who was worthy to abide in His tent—in His presence. Altogether there are **Ten Qualifications** [cf. Ten Commandments] of the worshiper.

Here, however, no ritual requirements are given for entering God’s presence; moral requirements are expressed: “The Lord’s reply searches the conscience” (Kidner, 81). Note a similar passage in Ps. 24:3-6 for ascending “into the hill of the Lord”—which would of course have reference to Zion where the tent was with the ark—and standing “in His holy place.” The answer, like this one in ch. 15, gives moral requirements; note the similarities: “He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood [or in vain], and has not sworn deceitfully.” The psalm further refers to them as those “who seek Him, who seek Thy face—even Jacob.”

Another similar passage is Isa. 33:14-17: There Isaiah gives an allusion to sinners terrified with God’s presence and not being able to “live [this is the same verb used for “abide” or “sojourn” in Ps. 15.] with the consuming fire” and “continual burning”—likely a reference to the fires at the temple in connection with burnt offerings and worship. Isaiah also gives moral requirements: “He who walks righteously, and speaks with sincerity, He who rejects unjust gain, and shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe; He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil.” Isaiah finishes his section with a reference to “seeing the king in his beauty” and beholding “a far-distant land” [heaven?]. Kidner compares this with the beatitude in Mt. 5 of the “pure in heart” who will see God (p. 81).

In this psalm we see **God as Man’s Host (1)**, and **Man as God’s Guest (2-5)** David begins with a question as to **who is worthy to enter into His presence (1)** and then provides an answer by listing **10 qualifications** in vv. 2-5.

- I. God as Man's Host (1)
  - A. Worship—"Tent"; "holy hill"
  - B. Hospitality—"Sojourn", "dwell"
  
- II. Man as God's Guest
  - A. His Character—shown in Lifestyle (2)
    - 1. He "Walks with integrity"
    - 2. He "works righteousness"
    - 3. He "speaks truth in his heart"
  
  - B. His Words—Restrained (v.3)
    - 1. He does not slander with his tongue
    - 2. He does not do evil to his associate
    - 3. He does not "take up reproach against his neighbor"
  
  - C. His Allegiance—Clear Cut (4)
    - 1. A reprobate is despised in his eyes.
    - 2. He honors those who fear the Lord.
  
  - D. His Dealings: Honorable (4c-5)
    - 1. "He swears to his own hurt."
    - 2. "He does not put out his money at interest."
    - 3. "He does not take a bribe against the innocent."
  
  - E. His Place Assured (5c)

## CONCLUSION

Yes, the Lord is concerned about our **character**, our **words**, our **allegiance**, our **dealings**, and our **place**.

This psalm "shows us that faith in God and spotless integrity may not be sundered; that religion does not veil or excuse petty dishonesties; that love to God is only then worthy the name when it is the life and bond of every social virtue" (Perowne, p. 188). The NT epistle of James takes up this theme.

God will "host us" in His presence; these qualities show us what he is looking for in His genuine worshipers.