

"THE BOOK OF PSALMS"

Psalm 15 - The Marks of a True Worshiper

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS PSALM

- 1) To note the character of those whom God would have worship Him
- 2) To be reminded of basic principles of righteous conduct required by God

SUMMARY

The heading attributes this psalm to David, and may have been written in anticipation of the ark's restoration to Israel and establishment of public worship in Jerusalem (cf. **2 Sam 6:1-19**). It is didactic in nature, and is entitled by Leupold as "**The Marks of a True Worshiper.**"

The psalm begins with two questions addressed to Jehovah (LORD), perhaps prompted by the incident involving Uzzah touching the ark when it was being transported improperly on the back of a cart (cf. **2 Sam 6:3-7; Num 4:5-15; 7:9**). Since no one could actually take up residence in the tabernacle, the inquiry could be paraphrased "Whom will You accept when he comes to Your house, O Lord?" (1).

The answer provided begins with a general description of a true worshiper as one who walks uprightly and works righteousness. More specifically, the true worshiper is one who does not lie (cf. **Ep 4:25**), backbite with his tongue (cf. **Ja 4:11**), do evil to his neighbor, or take up a reproach against his friend (cf. **Psa 101:5-8**). He despises a vile person, but honors those who fear the Lord (cf. **Psa 16:3; 119:63**). His upright character is illustrated by his unwillingness to go back on his word even if he has sworn to his own detriment (e.g., **Josh 9:18-20; Jud 11:35**). He also will not loan money at interest (cf. **Exo 22:25; Deu 23:19,20**), or take bribes (cf. **Exo 23:8**) against the innocent (**2-5a**).

The psalm ends with a declaration that one who does these things shall never be moved. This is because he is privileged to draw near to God (cf. **Psa 16:8**), and is reminiscent of the blessed man of Psalms 1 who prospers in every thing he does (**5b**).

OUTLINE

I. The Question Posed (15:1)

A. Who may abide in the Lord's tabernacle? (1a)

B. Who may dwell in His holy hill? (1b)

II. The Answer Provided (15:2-5)

A. In general terms (2a)

1. He who walks uprightly
2. He who works righteousness

B. In specific terms (2b-5)

1. He who speaks truth in his heart
 2. He who does not...
 - a. Backbite with his tongue
 - b. Do evil to his neighbor
 - c. Take up a reproach against his friend
 3. In whose eyes...
 - a. A vile person is despised
 - b. One who fears the Lord is honored
 4. He who swears to his own hurt and does not change
 5. He who does not...
 - a. Put out his money at usury (interest)
 - b. Take a bribe against the innocent
- He who does these things shall never be moved

Review questions for the psalm

1) What are the main points of this psalm?

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2) Who is the author of this psalm?

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3) What is the character or style of this psalm?

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4) What question(s) does the psalmist ask at the beginning? (1)

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5) What is the answer in general terms? (2a)

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6) What is the answer in more specific terms? (2b-5a)

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7) What is said of one who does all these things? (5b)

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