

PSALM 15:1-5

CHAPTER STUDIES ON THE PSALTER

"Where fruit is found, the root may not be seen, but it is there."

Division:

- The first verse asks the question.
- The remaining verses answer it.

We will call this Psalm, "The Question and Answer."

(Ps. 15:1) **LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?**

The question. Jehovah, high and holy One, who will be permitted to have fellowship with You? The heavens are not pure in Your sight. You charge Your angels with error (Job 4:18). What mortal can dwell with You? You are a consuming fire, a jealous God (Deut. 4:24). A sense of the glory of the Lord, and the holiness of His house, His service, and His attendants, inspires the humble mind to ask this solemn question, "How can we worship at all?" Unthinking people imagine that it is easy to approach the Most High. When they professedly engage in His worship, they have no questions about their fitness. Humbled souls often shrink under a sense of utter unworthiness; they would not dare approach God's holy throne were it not for our Lord and our Advocate. He abides in the heavenly temple, because His righteousness endures forever (Ps. 111:3).

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?

Who will be admitted to God's household, to live under His roof and enjoy fellowship with Him?

Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? Who will be a citizen of Zion and an inhabitant of the heavenly Jerusalem? Not everyone has this privilege. Even among believers there are aliens from the commonwealth who have no secret fellowship with God. On the grounds of law, mere mortals cannot dwell with God. No one on earth meets the requirements mentioned in the following verses. The questions in the text are asked of the LORD, because only the Infinite can answer them and satisfy the unquiet conscience. We must know from the Lord of the tabernacle the qualifications for His service. When He has taught us, we will clearly see that only our spotless Lord Jesus, and those who are conformed to His image, can stand with acceptance before the Majesty on high.

Impertinent curiosity frequently wants to know who and how many will be saved. If those who ask who may dwell in Your holy hill? would make a soul searching inquiry, they would act much wiser. Members of the visible church, which is God's tabernacle of worship and hill of eminence, should diligently prepare their hearts to be residents of God's house. Without the wedding dress of righteousness in Christ Jesus, we have no right to sit at the communion banquet. Without an upright walk, we are not fit for the imper-

fect church on earth, nor are we ready to enter the perfect church above.

[2] He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

[3] He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

[4] In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

[5] He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

The answer. The Lord, in answer to the question, informs us by His Holy Spirit about the character of the man who alone can dwell in His holy hill. In perfection, this holiness is found only in the Man of Sorrows, but in a measure, the Holy Spirit works it in all His people. Faith and the graces of the Spirit are not mentioned because this is a description of outward character. Where fruit is found, the root may not be seen, but it is there. Observe the accepted man's walk, work, and word. (*The Treasury of David*, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, updated by Mark Wash)

What is the question and what is the answer in Psalm 15?