

Father's Expectations— Psalm 15:1-5

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I have been talking to my friends about our Heavenly Father's expectations for us—because He is a God of mercy.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread (Thursday, April 9), I gave a Bible study titled "What Are the Father's Expectations?" The purpose of the presentation was twofold.

- I wanted to remind friends that a God of grace has expectations for His children.
- I wanted to remind friends that the Bible contains many, many examples of the Father's expectations.

Let's notice a few of those expectations by looking at Psalm 15:1-5.

Psalm 15:1-5—"LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; he who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the LORD; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change; he who does not put out his money at usury, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved."

Your tabernacle

Bible students are aware how God gave instructions in the book of Exodus for them to set up a tabernacle. Notice two purposes of the tabernacle at that time.

- The tabernacle was the place where God talked to them.

Exodus 25:22—"And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel."

Exodus 29:42-43—"This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet you to speak with you. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory."

1 Corinthians 3:16—"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

- He wanted to dwell among His people.

Exodus 29:45—"I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God."

Leviticus 26:11-12—"I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people."

Revelation 21:1-3—"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.' "

Your holy hill

Bible students often discuss the location of God's "holy hill." Some mention that the location is Mount Zion. Others mention that the location is the Mount of Olives.

I believe that the biblical reference of "holy hill" is generally understood to refer to the location where God is. He is both on this physical earth and in the heavens.

Hebrews 12:22-23—"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect.

Desirable characteristics

Notice the characteristics that our Father wants us to have so that we can be in His presence.

- Walk uprightly and work righteousness
- Speaks the truth from the heart
- Do not backbite with the tongue
- Do not do evil to the neighbor
- Do not slander your neighbor
- Do not participate with a vile person
- Have respect for the Lord
- Keep your promise, even to your own detriment
- Do not take advantage of people by charging outrageous usury
- Do not take a bribe