King David describes the ideal Jew

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This psalm of King David, Psalm 15, is very brief—it contains only five pesuquim (biblical verses) – but it is very rich in meaning.

The text begins with a question:

PASUQ 1: *God, who deserves to be invited to Your residence? Who deserves to dwell in Your temple?*

Living close to God refers to reaching the highest spiritual state. Living in the vicinity of God means feeling close to Him, continuously. This closeness to God, on the one hand, entails a great responsibility: the awareness that God watches (and judges) us permanently. On the other hand, living under the eyes of God means deserving His attention and supervision [hashgaha peratit], which is considered the highest merit . The question then is: what are the virtues and values □□that an individual must reach to deserve living close to God and deserving His attention?

PASUQ 2: *“[The man who] conducts himself with righteousness,*

acts with justice and speaks the truth of his heart."
This pasuq lists the virtues that a man must have to become an "ideal Jew" and deserve to live in His presence. All the qualities mentioned here have to do with integrity and honesty. This does not mean that other aspects of the Tora, rituals, religious and ceremonial, are less important. But that this Psalm focuses specifically on ethics and interpersonal morality, as the qualities of the ideal Jew. This verse describes the three principles that guide the life of that individual: integrity, justice and speaking the truth. The next verse, as we will see now, will mention three negative actions that a good person should avoid.

PASUQ 3: *"[The man who] does not harm others with his tongue, does not hurt his friend, does not embarrass his relatives."*
Again, we see that this Psalm emphasizes moral actions (ben adam lahabero). The first offense mentioned here is *leshon hara*: talking negatively about another person. Saying something that may be true, but it is negative, unjustified and may cause harm to another person. Then, the pasuq refers to avoid causing material damage to others, such as stealing or physically assaulting someone. And finally, it mentions that a good person should never offend others causing emotional damage, that is: insulting, offending or verbally abusing (bullying) someone , etc.

PASUQ 4: *"[The man who] rejects those who do evil; but honors those who fear God. [The man who] when he commits [will keep his promise and] will not change it, even when [by keeping his word] he would suffer material losses. "*
This pasuq continues describing the behavior of the ideal man. A decent person does not envy the wicked, even when the wicked prospers. The role models for a good person are God fearing people. That is, individuals who carry out their lives with a permanent awareness that HaShem is watching what they do. Finally, a good man is, above all, honest. And how do you measure honesty in Judaism? When for example an individual

committed to a commercial transaction, and although he did not sign anything, he already gave his word. And then he realizes that –or it happens that under new circumstances– carrying out this transaction will damage him financially and he will lose money if he keeps his word. In these circumstances, the decent man will not retract. It will not change his words or deny his commitment. The man who deserves to live close to God will honor his word and be willing to lose money so as not to break his promise. This, in Judaism, is considered the epitome of integrity.

PASUQ 5: *[The good man] will never lend money with interest, nor accept bribes that incriminate the innocent. He who does all this will never fall.*

And will deserve to live in the proximity of God in this life and in the next.