

The King's Wedding Psalm 45

What are your favorite love songs?

- According to Billboard Magazine the #1 Love Song of all time is “Endless Love” by Diana Ross and Lionel Richy (1981).
- Also on the List: “How Deep is Your Love” (Bee Gees, 1977); “I Will Always Love You” (Whitney Houston, 1992); “I Can’t Stop Loving You” (Ray Charles, 1962).

Today we are looking at the greatest love song in the Psalms: Psalm 45.

- It is a unique Psalm that speaks about the King’s royal wedding to his bride.
- There are no other parallels to it in the Psalms.
- The best parallel is Song of Songs (a number of inter-textual connections) .

The Superscription tells us some interesting features:

- It’s a “**Love Song**” (or a wedding song. This is a reminder of the goodness and blessing of marriage; it’s worthy of song; it’s God’s idea)
- It’s a “**Maskil**” – that is, its intended to teach us about the goodness and blessing of marriage, as well as the special significance of a Davidic king’s wedding.
- The identity of the king is not provided, but it is a Davidic king who seems being wed to a foreign princess (10, 12); many think it refers to Solomon being wed to Pharaoh’s daughter (1 Kings 3)
 - The whole ceremony receives international attention (10, 12).
 - It was probably sung at various royal weddings.
- Further this maskil points us ahead to the ultimate union of Christ and the church. .
- The royal compliments suddenly blossom into divine honors (Kidner) **see v 6-7**
- As a song of “**the sons of Korah**” it is written “**According the Lilies**” – that is, “to the tune of the lilies.” The original audience would have known what this musical setting was – though we don’t.
- **I like to think of a slow jam!**

As we prepare to look at it, it’s important, then, to read it **historically and Messianically**.

- The Old Testament is prophetic and eschatological.
- This text is part of a grand story, and in this case, one that points us to Christ and the church (Eph 5); and Christ receiving his radiant bride in the end (Rev 19-22).
- It contains multidirectional praise to the Messianic King: his beauty, character, victory.

Verses 6-7 are cited by the author of Hebrews referring to Christ. When NT writers cite a verse they usually have whole passage in mind.

- **Calvin: “What is here said of Solomon as a type, the holy and divine union of Christ and his Church is described and set forth.”**

- It's not **allegorical** (where ever single detail stands for something else); but it is **analogous**. The overall theme points us to the greater than Solomon and his marriage with the Bride.

C.S. Lewis referred to this as *the second meaning in the Psalms*.

- The first is plain enough, it's about a royal wedding.
 - Yet, with the whole Bible in view, it highlights the magnificent union with Christ and his church.
 - After citing the Genesis account, Paul says “**this Mystery**” refers to “Christ the church.”
- We have a picture of how queen worships the King, & the King desires the queen (**11**)
- The Church is called to leave home and follow the King, as it were, in happy union.
- Like a foreign princess, we were outsiders, who have been brought into this sacred union.
- We will look at it in two parts: (1) Meet the Royal Groom (1-9), and (2) Meet the Radiant Bride (10-15). Final words are then offered to the King in verses 16-17.

#1: Meet the Royal Groom (45:1-9)

V. 1: The Court Poet has composed this song for the King.

- Today, we **spend money on a good photographer for weddings**; here, one has been commissioned to compose a beautiful song for the occasion.
- And He's a happy poet.
- The word “overflows” literally means “bubble over” “stirred”
- He is rejoicing as he extols the King.

My tongue is the pen of a ready (or ‘expert’) Scribe. Skillfully, carefully....

Writing as an act of worship.

- **In English it has a nice hip hop feel to it!**
- **He is ready and skilled to drop some bars.**

In like fashion, all who adore King Jesus bubble over as we think of his excellencies.

- We write/sing to his glory and fame; we cannot contain ourselves; we delight in him.
- What do you overflow about?

A. The King's Beauty (v. 2)

As the poet writes of the king's **beauty**, the rest of the Psalm makes clear that it's not merely physical beauty that he admires; it's the royal attributes he displays.

- “**his lips**” are praised not for their physical appearance but because they are anointed with “**grace**” – referring to what he speaks and how we speaks.
 - He speaks words of grace because he is a man full of grace.

- God has “**blessed**” this king.
- He is “**the most handsome of the sons of men [human beings]**” speaks to the uniqueness of this king.
- He is the ideal picture of humanity, towering above all.
- As we consider the grand story of Scripture, we know one who truly stands above all: Jesus Christ.

*Fairest Lord Jesus,
ruler of all nature,
O thou of God and man the Son,
Thee will I cherish,
Thee will I honor,
thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.*

In Jesus Christ that we see the beauty of his grace, and hang on his very words of life.

- Recall when the Pharisees sent officers to kill Jesus (John 7) they came back and said, “No one ever spoke like this man”!
- He commands “winds and waves to obey him.”
- He spoke with divine “authority, and not as the scribes.”
- He has “the very words of life.”

Grace is poured on his lips.

Not a Christian? I would just invite you to read the gospels. Pay attention to Christ and his words. He’s altogether beautiful and glorious in his perfections.

B. The King’s Might (3-5)

Attention now shifts to the king’s military prowess (his “**awesome deeds**”), and the just causes which cause him to fight. He’s not a bully; he’s the righteous warrior.

3: He has a warrior’s “sword”

- John says Jesus is armed with the sword of God’s Word coming from His mouth (Rev. 1:16), which He uses in battle (Rev. 19:15).
- We take up the “sword of the Spirit” in our battles.

4: He fights for “truth and meekness and righteousness”

- Jesus embodies these virtues; he is about these virtues.
- His **enemies** are the enemies of these virtues (v. 5)
- The enemy lies; is arrogant, and unrighteousness — tempting us in these ways.

and he does this in “**majesty**”

- Our King displays the majesty of God, the very glory of God.

Ride out “**victoriously**”

- He is Christus Victor; the Champion.
- He rose front the dead, conquering death.

- He will ride out again, not on a donkey but a war horse with a name written on this thigh, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

5: He conquers them with skill: “arrows are sharp... the people’s fall under you” (5)

So then, Jesus defends his people and executes justice.

- We continue to call on him in the midst of our present battles, knowing that we don’t call on some puny Christ! We call on the all-powerful Christ.

C. The King’s Throne (6-7)

- We come to the great **Christological highlight** of the Psalm.
 - (Side note: in Hebrews 1, Psalm 2, Psalm 45, and Psalm 110 are all quoted in reference to Jesus, three of the four royal Psalms that we’re considering).
- It contains a mystery that can only be resolved in the incarnation:
- Verse 6 calls the king “**God**” – in it’s original setting, remember the king represented
 - But Hebrews 1 leaves no doubt that Jesus is the fully divine King.
- Notice **verse 7** shifts to say of the king, “**your God** has anointed you”
- So in verse 6 *the king* is God, and in verse 7 we read of this king’s “*God*.”
- How can this be? The incarnation solves this mystifying problem.
 - Jesus is the second member of the Triune God.
 - “It is an example of Old Testament language bursting its banks”

6-7: his throne is forever (promise to David, fulfilled in Jesus)

The king rules with a mighty scepter of uprightness.

There is no one bit of corruption in this kingdom.

He “**loves righteousness**” and “**hates wickedness**” – **the two passions of a holy life, which we see perfectly in Jesus.**

- We should imitate his loves and his hates.
- He is exalted above all, as God “**anoints**” him with the “**oil of gladness**” (I think that’s what I’m going to call my beard balm that I make).
- He is set apart for this task of ruling, a task which he fulfills happily.

D. The King’s Glory (8-9)

As the king puts on his impressive royal robes, they were also “**fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia**”

- These were expensive perfumes associated with kings (**Songs 4:14**).
- Imagine the attire of Solomon during this occasion!
- Usually, the compliments of beauty go to the bride in our weddings, but occasionally the dude gets a “Hey, you clean up nice, Rico. And you smell better than normal.” Thinking, maybe you should do this more often.”
- Solomon — When Jesus wanted to compare the beauty of flowers to something he says, “Not even Solomon was arrayed like these.”
- That was a regular day; imagine wedding day!

- And he held court in an expensive palace of “**ivory**” (Ahab’s palace was adorned with ivory, 1 Kings 22.39) with beautiful “**music**” playing the background.
- The mention of “myrrh” makes us think of the wise men’s gift when Christ was born.
- Further, we also recall Jesus being anointed with costly oil before His crucifixion, and body being anointed with spices when He was buried. (Williams)

V. 9: This scene culminates with the palace being prepared for the queen herself, who is his bride, next to the king.

- She is the focus of the next part of the Psalm.
- “**Ladies of honor**” are present
- The Queen is pictured as “**standing**” – above all other ladies.
- “**at your right hand**” – she is with the King, (cf., Eph 2:6, “seated with Christ”)
- She is adorned with “**gold**” – not simply a decorative note, but one that speaks to the worth of the queen.
- “**Ophir**” is unknown, but may speak to the goldmines in Saudi Arabia

So meet the Royal Groom. He is praised by the Court Poet.

- And today King Jesus is He is worshiped by the numberless host of heaven.
- He loves righteousness and hates wickedness; he is the victorious warrior, reigning from his heavenly throne; full of grace and truth; of splendor and glory.
- And he will come again to claim his bride and we will share in that ultimate union forever.

#2: Meet the Radiant Bride (45:10-15)

A. The Preparation of the Queen (10-12)

V. 10: The Psalmist addresses her as the “**daughter**” and it’s time for her to leave home.

- We see the biblical pattern of “leaving and cleaving” as he says “**forget your people and your father’s house**” – leaving your home to unite with your spouse (Gen 2:24).

V. 11: The king is enthralled by her “**beauty**” and he greatly “**desires**” her.

- We have a kind of Song of Solomon description of romance.
- She is to give honor and respect to him (“**bow to him**”)
- We see this holy relationship w Christ and his church illustrated: love and affection for each other.
- “Christ loves his church” (Eph 5)

V. 12: The “**people of Tyre**” – a Phoenician city, known as a traveling center.

- The people would come to this royal wedding with expensive gifts.
- It’s an international wedding.

- A foretaste of the scene in Revelation where “the kings of the earth [will] bring their glory and their honor” to Jesus (Rev. 21:24, 26)

It's not hard to find the gospel analogies here.

- When we come to Christ, our King, we must make a break with the past, and unite with Christ in a new life, and in a new position.
- We bow to this King, who is our Lord and God, and give our full allegiance to him.
- And our King loves his Queen, the Church.
- He has died for His bride to “so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” (Eph. 5:27)

As someone has said the message of the Bible is “kill the dragon, get the girl.” Jesus has overcome to have a bride for himself.

B. The Presentation of the Queen (13-15)

V 13: Check her out: “all glorious” ... “with robes interwoven with gold”

- He says little about her physical appearance, in contrast to the Song of Songs
 - ‘teeth are like a flock of sheep’ - using those Crest Whitening Strips
- He focuses on her adornment and her company which speaks of her honor and dignity

V. 14: in “many colored robes she is lead to the king”

We picture the procession; as the King is already in his place.

It's the moment everyone is waiting for.

And she has her bridesmaids with her: “with virgin companions following behind her”

V. 15: And with these maidens they enter the palace with “joy and gladness”

- It's a happy and successful procession (unlike my friend Benjie's wedding!)
- “This royal wedding takes place in the temple and the bride and young women are brought with joy and gladness. The same joy and gladness is found in Cant.3:11 which speaks of the wedding day of the king – ‘on the day of his wedding, and on the day of his heart's joy’
- This royal wedding is a foretaste of what we anticipate now, when the whole earth is filled with the glory of God.
- John tells us that at the end of the age, there will be great rejoicing in heaven “for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints” (Rev 19:7-8)

- And he will be filled with joy and gladness!
- “God created the world to provide a spouse and a kingdom for His Son: and the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, and the spiritual marriage of the spouse to Him, is what the whole creation labors and travails in pain to bring to pass” - J Edwards

Final Words to the King (16-17)

V. 16: In the context of Israel’s king, sons were obviously significant, for they carried on the royal dynasty.

- Thus, the marriage will lead to offspring.
- And the offspring will reign **“in all the earth”** – which didn’t happen among any Israelite King, but is true of Jesus.
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- Jesus will “bring many sons to glory” who “will inherit the earth” and “reign on the earth” with him.

V. 17: And his name is **“remembered forever,”** in **“all generations”;** for **“the nations”** **“praise”** him.

Here is a “pleasing theme” – the union of Christ and his bride.

Final Reflections

1. If you’re not a Christian, just considering Christianity, then please see that one of the primary ways we are to understand the faith is with this picture of marriage.

- In becoming a Christian, you say goodbye to the past, and you enter a relationship with Jesus; the best of all relationships.
- The Bible begins and ends with a wedding. The first wedding, between man and woman, pictures the gospel; and the final day in which Christ receives his bride.
- So unite yourself to Jesus Christ, the King.

2. If you are a Christian, then give the King praise today. And make his ways known among the nations.

- He is to receive praise among the nations.
- He alone satisfies the deepest longings of our hearts.
- Keller says, **“We should be as smitten with his beauty as a new spouse—for that is what we are (Ephesians 5:25–32).”** He adds, **“We must let our marriages reveal Christ, not replace Christ. And if we are not married but wish to be, we should remember that we already have the only spousal love that will truly fulfill”**
- Only one will fulfill: Christ.
- Worship your King.
- Delight in him, as you experience his delight in you.
- Sing his praises, as you know he sings over you, his bride.