

At the King's Wedding

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Righteous weddings are glorious occasions. We all know something of the joy of the striking groom waiting for his bride to come down the aisle and to receive her in all of her beauty and to be united in marriage. There are not many of us who are able to be at a wedding and see something develop and to completely divorce ourselves from all emotion from that. There is just something that elevates our spirits at a time where true righteous love between a man and a woman are celebrated in the joining together in holy matrimony. Psalm 45 captures that kind of scene and elevates it even further in multiple ways as it captures a royal wedding for a king in the line of David, and as we go through this, you're going to be quite encouraged by the loftiness of the themes that are contained in Psalm 45.

When God established David as king, he promised to sustain David's throne in perpetuity and we need to set a little bit of background. Go over to 2 Samuel 7 for just a moment because it will help us grasp the significance of what's going on. 2 Samuel 7 is where we want to go. God is establishing David as the king and he says in verse 12, he's promising him that there will be a line that will follow after him. In 2 Samuel 7:12, he says, "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." Then down in verse 16, "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever." The loftiness of the promises that God made to David when he established his throne was: there will always be a king to sit on your throne going forward.

So the king of Israel was uniquely the representative of God. His marriage, therefore, represented the continuation of a divine line; it indicated that God's promises were being furthered for another generation. So when we come to this Psalm 45, which is celebrating a marriage of a king, we need to understand that this is much more than as much as we enjoy a human wedding in our own generations and in our families, that Psalm 45 is elevated beyond that because of the unique role that the king of Israel played in the plan of God. Far more was at stake than a mere human romance, the marriage of a king of Israel manifested the continuing outworking of the purposes of God for his people. Psalm 45 takes us into the divine significance of it and what's more, Psalm 45 ultimately in the outworking of God's further revelation in the subsequent centuries, Psalm 45 points us to

Christ himself who is the bridegroom of his people, who is superior to all and is victorious over all.

So as we come to Psalm 45, it is bursting at the seams with eternal significance in everything that we see. We see in Psalm 45 a foreshadowing of the ultimate triumphant Christ at the end of human history. This is another magnificent Psalm that God has recorded for us and it breaks down into three easy sections. In the first nine verses, the Psalmist is addressing the king. Then in verses 10 through 15, he addresses the bride. Then in verses 16 and 17, he speaks of the future coming of children that would come out of this divine union. So that's a little bit of our outworking of the outline as we continue to study systematically through the Psalms. We are studying Psalm 45 because it comes right after Psalm 44 and it's just before Psalm 46. We are just studying through the Psalms one by one and letting God speak to us, as it were, through his word and just benefiting from the systematic study of Scripture.

One of the things that I love about this and that I trust that you are appreciating also is that this method of studying the Psalms exposes us to Scriptures that we would otherwise not be prone to study, and so by going verse by verse, chapter by chapter through the Scriptures, you are enabled to receive the benefit of the full counsel of God. There is no wasted word in Scripture. There is no passage that is irrelevant to us. It is all pertinent. It is all inspired by God, breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and training in righteousness. So Psalm 45 is in that noble line of the inspired word of God.

So let's enjoy this Psalm together. Psalm 45, point 1: the address to the king. The address to the king. The writer is full of emotion as he writes this Psalm. Look at verse 1. You get a little bit of a little window into the nature of the inspiration of Scripture as it pertains to the human writer with this verse. The Psalmist says,

1 My heart overflows with a good theme; I address my verses to the King;
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

His heart is full as he's writing. He is being stirred up by the Spirit of God in what he's about to say and what he is writing and so his heart is boiling over, as it were, bubbling over with the fullness of what he has to say here in this Psalm and he is writing his Psalm, he is addressing his verses as it starts to the king, to the king of Israel.

Now, let me just say a word. We'll say more about this later on but I just want to say this, if you're using a NASB you see that the addresses are often capitalized here. He says in verse 2, "You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips; God has blessed You," capitalized indicating a reference to deity. Not every version does that. Psalm 45 as we're going to see, is ultimately a reference to Christ as we see from Hebrews 1 and that's why it's capitalized like that. But we have to understand that within the writer's context, he is actually writing this to a human king at the time of a human marriage, and so there are multiple levels that are working out in this Psalm. In his immediate human context, he is not addressing the Messiah to come centuries from now

without reference to anything in his own circumstance, he's addressing a real king as he writes these words. Scripture realizes that they have an ultimate fulfillment in Christ and that's why you see the pronouns capitalized like this, but he's addressing a human king in his own context as he says this.

Look at what he says in verse 2. This king is a man who is noble in appearance and he is eloquent in tongue. Look at verse 2, it says,

2 You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips;
Therefore God has blessed You forever.

He's addressing this king and he's a man of stature. He's a man of eloquence. He's a man of fine appearance. So on his royal wedding day, all of those attributes come together and make him a man of striking appearance and so the Psalmist praises this man and extols his virtue, and his virtue is an indication that God has blessed him. "You are so fair in appearance. Your words are so wise, therefore," he says at the end of verse 2, "it's obvious that God has blessed You and established You in Your position. You are on the receiving end of God's favor."

Notice something else about verse 2 and it helps us see that this is pointing beyond the human circumstance as well. In verse 2, it says, "God has blessed You forever," look at the end of verse 17, "Therefore the peoples will give You thanks forever and ever." Let's back up for just a moment and contemplate what we're looking at here and to get a sense of the fullness of what's being said. The Psalmist opens the Psalm by saying, "My heart is full. It is bursting. It is overflowing." It's obvious that there are great themes that are pulsating through his mind and so it doesn't surprise us to see that he writes in elevated terms that transcend his life circumstance while still addressing the immediate circumstance in which he is writing. The word "forever" ties the whole Psalm together and ultimately tells us to look for distant truth even as we are contemplating what's in front of us in the Psalm that is here. So it's a magnificent theme that he is writing about as he addresses this king.

Now, look at verse 3 with me. The king will be the leader of the military. He will have future battles. By the way, the scholars cannot agree on which king of Israel is being referred to here. Many think that maybe it's Solomon. Others say other kings. It's not really specified in a way that we can know exactly who he is addressing but the king is the leader of the military of the nation in addition to being the representative of God, so he says in verse 3,

3 Gird Your sword on Your thigh, O Mighty One, In Your splendor and
Your majesty!

So he says, "You're going to have future battles as the king. May You go forth, may this glorious day be in anticipation of glorious victories in battle against Your enemies as You fight for God's people, as You represent the cause of God here on earth. May You go

forward and have glorious victories that are fitting with the glorious majesty of Your appearance on this, Your wedding day."

Verse 4, he says,

4 And in Your majesty ride on victoriously, For the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness

He says here in verse 4 that, "Your conquest is not simply a matter, Your representation is not simply a matter of human expansion, it's not simply a matter of human wealth that is here, but You are actually advancing the virtues of God, the purposes of God with Your reign. The virtues of truth and meekness and righteousness." And this godly Psalmist swept up under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, swept up in the majesty of the purposes of God, swept up in the majesty of the representative of God being before him says, "Let the purposes of God, of truth and righteousness and humility, be advanced through Your future reign." And because the king's cause is virtuous, he expects victory to come to him.

Look at verse 5. He says,

5 Your arrows are sharp; The peoples fall under You; Your arrows are in the heart of the King's enemies.

So it's kind of a picture of future victory in the battle that he expects to come, that he wishes upon the king; that his heart prays for the king to be victorious in the future. And with a rhetorical flourish, he ascribes permanence and joy to the king's future reign.

Look at verse 6. He says,

6 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom. 7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of joy above Your fellows.

Now, the throne and scepter are symbols of his authority and his rule and anointing was a symbol that he had been set apart for the task; that he was set apart to be the king, to be God's representative to lead the people of God in the nation.

And it is very striking that he addresses him as God. "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever." And we see two things here. In the immediate situation, actually let's back up here for just a moment. This is a significant interpretive issue, this verse, because is the Psalmist calling the king himself God? This human king hundreds of years before Christ, is that what he's doing? Well, no. He's not ascribing deity to the king himself in that situation. We need to think about it this way: in the immediate situation of this divine wedding, this royal wedding, better stated, the king was God's representative on a throne that God established, advancing the purposes of God for God's people. So he holds no

mere human throne, he's addressing the majesty of the king in recognition of God who established him in that place. He does not deify the king but he is speaking beyond the king in Spirit-inspired fullness; speaking beyond the king to the recognition of the God who established his throne, but more than that, remembering that his heart is full as he writes, this throne would be fulfilled in Christ who is God Incarnate.

Look over at Hebrews 1 where we see the ultimate fulfillment of Psalm 45 being set forth. Hebrews 1. Here in Hebrews 1, the writer of Hebrews is establishing the superiority of Christ to angels and in verse 6, he says, "when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, 'Let all the angels of God worship him.'" Speaking of Christ. "And of the angels He says, 'Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.'" Then in verse 8, he quotes from Psalm 45 and he says, "But of the Son He says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of Your kingdom.'" So what's happening here in Psalm 45 and what Hebrews 1 helps us to see is that the Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of Psalm 45. What was said to a human king long ago in a representative capacity is applied in its fullness and in its fulfillment to Christ who is the greater David. Christ is greater than the angels, he is God himself, and this Psalm is ultimately messianic for it points us to Christ as we see in later revelation.

But in verse 8, the Psalmist returns to the occasion at hand and says,

8 All Your garments are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; Out of ivory palaces stringed instruments have made You glad. 9 Kings' daughters are among Your noble ladies; At Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir.

So the king is being described in his wedding attire. He is a majestic figure. Expensive fragrance has anointed him. Beautiful music in the palaces decorated with ivory greet him. So the Psalmist is swept up in the majesty of the occasion, swept up under the inspiration of the Spirit of God to such an extent that he speaks of things that were beyond what would occur in his own lifetime, speaking to Christ himself ultimately in a fulfillment of this.

Now, you move into the other side of the Psalm, the other half of the wedding as the Psalmist gives his advice to the bride. That is point 2: the advice to the bride. He speaks to the bride before she goes into the presence of the king and look at what he says in verse 10,

10 Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear: Forget your people and your father's house;

What is he saying to her? He's saying, "You need to realize that as you enter into this marriage, that you need to leave your family behind. You need to leave your people behind and give yourself over fully to the King that you are about to marry. To marry a King, you leave behind your prior life and your prior loyalties," and in that sense, it's a

picture even of what it is like for someone to come truly to Christ for salvation in that when we come to Christ, Christ says that you leave behind your father and mother, you must detest by comparison your prior family, your prior life; leave it all behind in order to come to Christ and to follow after him. Think about it, for someone to marry a king means that there could be no other greater or competing allegiance to the king in that marriage. When you come to Christ for salvation, you come saying, "There will be no one who will have a higher loyalty in my heart than You, O Christ."

Now, as we go back to verse 11, he says this king will be your husband, yes, but he is going to be more than a husband to you. Look at verse 11. He says,

11 Then the King will desire your beauty. Because He is your Lord, bow down to Him.

He says, "O bride, understand that this man, this King will be your husband but he is more than a husband for you are also a subject in his kingdom so you must give him respect. You must honor him." And in that it gives a picture of what we see elsewhere in Scripture about the whole nature of marriage.

Turn over to Ephesians 5, if you would. Ephesians 5:22. On a human scale, we see the same principle being played out by what is said to wives in Christian marriage. Verse 22, "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything." Scripture lays forth a hierarchy in marriage that shows the husband as the head of the wife and the wife living in submission to her husband, to him as the man. And the husband loving his wife as Christ loved the church. This call to submission that we find in Ephesians 5 finds its echo in Psalm 45 as the Psalmist gives advice to the wife. Go back to Psalm 45 with me, if you would. Psalm 45, "Because He is your Lord, bow down to Him."

So he lays forth before her in her advice, "Leave your family behind, honor the King, your husband, as Lord. Respect him. Bow down before him. And the outcome of this is that the King will desire your beauty," here indicating that your attitude of love and submission to your husband will create in him desires for your beauty; it will draw him to you. Ladies, don't you know something about this in your own marriage? When you show love and respect to your husband, it has a way of drawing him to you. That is the way that it is supposed to work. Your attitudes of love and respect engender the affection of your husband toward you, in a good Christian marriage, we should say. And the Psalmist promises the bride in verse 12 that, "If you follow my advice, you'll find yourself to be blessed."

Verse 12,

12 The daughter of Tyre will come with a gift; The rich among the people will seek your favor.

Tyre was a wealthy city, a port city with much wealth and the daughter of Tyre refers to the inhabitants of the coastal city. It says that, "you will be honored by Honorable people from an honorable city. They will come and honor you if you will simply honor my advice and give honor to your husband, the King. They will bring gifts to honor you."

Now as you move on in verse 13, the scene shifts as the bride is brought into the king's presence.

13 The King's daughter is all glorious within; Her clothing is interwoven with gold. 14 She will be led to the King in embroidered work; The virgins, her companions who follow her, Will be brought to You.

So it's a picture of the wedding party following her in as she is brought into the king's presence. "Glorious within," a reference to her in her bridal chamber and expecting the ultimate consummation of the marriage.

Look at verse 15.

15 They will be led forth with gladness and rejoicing; They will enter into the King's palace.

So a noble royal bridegroom is meeting his beautiful submissive bride and the Psalm now modestly anticipates the consummation of the wedding.

Look at verse 16 as we move into point 3: the anticipation of children. The anticipation of children here in point 3. Weddings are a pivot point to the future, if you think about it. The groom and bride leave their former lives behind and they become one in a new union and this marriage will produce children. Look at verses 16 and 17,

16 In place of your fathers will be your sons; You shall make them princes in all the earth. 17 I will cause Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the peoples will give You thanks forever and ever.

What's he saying here? The king was one time considered to be the son of his father but now he is going to become the father to the future rather than a son of the past, and his sons will continue the royal line and extend to the father's memory. Look at verse 16 with me again, "In place of your fathers will be your sons." So his sons will rise up in prominence as compared to the prior prominence of his father. "You shall make them princes in all the earth." In other words he's saying, "This wedding is going to give birth to sons. This marriage will give birth to future kings who will add to the legacy of the king that is in front of me now." Righteous sons will add to the blessing of the memory of their father. So we get a little bit of an overview of Psalm 45 in the celebration of the king's marriage.

Now, with that said, we want to see something as this plays out in terms of Christ. In the progress of revelation, we see a greater royal bridegroom who will have a greater victory in the name of God. Christ will receive his people as his bride.

Look over at Revelation 19 here as it looks forward to the consummation of human history before the beginning of the millennial kingdom. In Revelation 19:6, the Apostle John says, speaking of the vision that he saw, "I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, 'Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.'" Then look at what he says in verse 7, "'Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.' It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." So looking forward to the ultimate triumph of Christ, you see his people being brought to him as a bride brought to the groom and then Christ will trample down the enemies of God in a climactic final battle that will usher in the millennium.

Look at chapter 19, verse 11. Christ the King, coming now in victory in battle in verse 11, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war." Drop down to verse 16, "on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'King of kings and Lord of lords.' Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, 'Come, assemble for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.'" Verse 19, "I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army." Verse 20, Christ the King, having received his bride now goes forth into battle, "the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh." Here at the end of time we see the ultimate fulfillment of Christ the King, Christ with his bride having been brought to him, and now with the marriage being consummated, he moves forward in victory and defeats the enemies of God just in prefiguring way, the kings of Israel, the righteous kings of Israel went out and won battles in the nature for the people of God. What does it mean for us today? It means that we have a royal bridegroom who is the fulfillment of Psalm 45.

Go back to Psalm 45 with me and we will consider this a little bit from the perspective of the way that the Psalm now we can see it as applied to Christ. Psalm 45:2, if you would. Who is fairer than the sons of men except our Lord Jesus Christ? Who is there that has grace poured upon his lips except for our Lord Jesus Christ?

Look over at John 1, if you would. John 1:14, "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and

truth." And as Christ taught, as we're going to see in the Sermon on the Mount, as Christ taught, as he spoke, people were amazed at his teaching. In chapter 7 of Matthew, it says, that they "were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." So grace fell from the lips of Christ. Truth tumbled from his mouth every time that he opened his lips.

We see in verse 3 of Psalm 45 that he comes forth in splendor and majesty. He rides victoriously for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness. So what we see in Psalm 45 points us to a human king but today on the other side of the cross, what we see is a fulfillment in its most magnificent fullness in our Lord Jesus Christ. He, the bridegroom, the church, his people as his bride.

And we'll wrap up with Ephesians 5, if you'll go back there with me. Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word." Drop down to verse 29, "no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church." Christ is the bridegroom. The church is the bride. Verse 32, "This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church."

We see from this picture of the bridegroom and the bride, we get a picture of what Christ has done for us. Our Lord, our King, going forth in victory on our behalf. Our King, our Master, our husband, as it were, loving us and sanctifying us through his death on the cross. We coming to him as a bride, giving our love, giving our devotion, giving our submission to him as we enter into salvation through faith in Christ. And what is the outcome of that? The outcome of that is that we have a husband, as it were, who covers us with his protection; who keeps us; who sanctifies us; who prepares us for eternal glory. The bridegroom is Christ. We are the bride and in that union with Christ, in that divine marriage, as it were, we are prepared to be joined with the one who will be victorious throughout all of eternity. What a blessing is ours to be in Christ. What a wonderful picture of him as the ultimate bridegroom in a royal wedding.

Let's bow together in prayer.

Our Father, we humbly bow before you in this picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who is God himself, the one who has come to earth in order to purchase his bride and bring with him his bride in order to secure us for all of eternity. We thank you for the grace that is ours in Christ. Father, we pray that we might be a responsive people who love him with no greater loyalty than that which we give to our Lord. Father, we look forward to his ultimate conquest in eternity. We pray that victory might be manifest soon, Father, that our Lord Jesus would come and come quickly, Father, that we might enter into the fullness of that eternal relationship which you appointed us to before the beginning of time. Lord Jesus, we honor you. We bow before you. We gladly give you our respect, our devotion and our love. We ask you to keep us as we go forward now. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

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