

# The Wedding of the King – Psalm 45

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## A Wedding Song

*Here comes the bride, all dressed in white,  
slipped on a banana peel, and went for a slide.*

There are all kinds of wedding songs which can be sung as the bride walks down the aisle, during the service, or at the wedding reception. When I was younger, lots of people would have Whitney Houston's version of *I will always love you* for their wedding dance which was an amazing song, but it was a song about breaking up with someone, not marrying someone. I wonder what kind of song you would have at your wedding if you were going to get married soon? Some people make a bit of a joke of their wedding song, others want their song to express their deepest feelings, and then there are those who don't really care about songs at all. Today's psalm is a bit different to most other psalms because it is a wedding psalm, or a wedding song, which was to be sung at the wedding of the king of God's Kingdom.

Now, this wedding song is very different to the kind of wedding songs we would sing. Firstly, it is not really about the bride, it is about the groom, though there is a verse about the bride later in the psalm. Secondly, it is not about love, or feelings, or passion. It is about splendour, honour, integrity, responsibility, and legacy. This psalm looks beyond the short lived nature of feelings to the virtuous character of those getting married. Strangely enough, the psalm starts off with the writer speaking about the honour he had in writing such a psalm for this special occasion.

**Psalm 45:1** *My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king;  
my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.*

Not everybody gets to write a song for the king's wedding and the writer takes the opportunity to express his gratitude for having such an honour. But very quickly, he turns his attention to the groom, to the king who was about to get married.

## The Character of the King

**Psalm 45:2-5** *You are the most excellent of men  
and your lips have been anointed with grace,  
since God has blessed you forever.*

<sup>3</sup> *Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one;  
clothe yourself with splendor and majesty.*

<sup>4</sup> *In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice;  
let your right hand achieve awesome deeds.*

<sup>5</sup> *Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies;  
let the nations fall beneath your feet.*

The king was supposed to be a good and upright person. A person of excellence, might, and majesty. He was supposed to be victorious in truth, humility, and justice. He was to achieve awesome deeds, and defeat his enemies. The king was supposed to be like Superman! A heroic figure who always does what is right. It is not just that he saves the day, it is that he is a good man, the ideal man, the perfect king. I think it is amazing how the writer sticks the word "humility" between the words "truth" and "justice". There was no place for pride in this king. But it must have been hard to be humble when people were singing songs of praises about you, singing about how awesome and powerful you are, but humility has always been an important character trait for the person of God. We live in a time when we are told that we ought to have pride in ourselves, in who we are, in what we do, but we need to be careful with our pride. As it says in...

**Proverbs 16:18** *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

A humble person is someone who does not boast in their own achievements, in who they are, but in God and what he has done for them. For, they are nothing without God.

## A God-like King

The next section is also about the king, but it is also about God. The king's throne was God's throne, for Israel was God's Kingdom. The king would sit on God's throne and rule God's kingdom which was why he had to be a king of godly character.

*Psalm 45:6-9 Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;  
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.  
<sup>7</sup> You love righteousness and hate wickedness;  
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions  
by anointing you with the oil of joy.  
<sup>8</sup> All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia;  
from palaces adorned with ivory the music of the strings makes you glad.  
<sup>9</sup> Daughters of kings are among your honored women;  
at your right hand is the royal bride in gold of Ophir.*

Verse 6 starts by addressing God. It is God's throne which lasts forever and ever, but then it becomes hard to work out whether the rest of this section is talking about God or about the king. God does love righteousness, and he hates wickedness, and this should be a warning to the king. If the king was to ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility, and justice, if he was to achieve awesome deeds, then he would need to love righteousness like God loves righteousness, and hate wickedness like God hates wickedness. For, there is no way that a wicked king could be victorious in truth and justice if he lived a life of wickedness, sin, and evil. So, it seems to me that the writer of this psalm deliberately made it hard for us to tell when he stopped talking about God and started talking about the king again. Because, as I have already said, the king is supposed to have the character of God as he sits on God's throne over God's kingdom.

Imagine being one of those kings on your wedding day. There is all this pomp and ceremony. There are lots of fancy words being said about you. You could easily miss it, but if you listen carefully, you would hear about how you need to be like God if you are to rule over God's Kingdom. That is a great responsibility, one that is too big for any king to bear. No one can be like God. We all sin and easily fall into wickedness. And with all that power and wealth at our disposal, everyone of us would fail at being a good king of God's Kingdom, unless you are speaking about Jesus. The idea of one of David's descendants always being on the throne goes back to 2 Samuel 7 when God made a promise to king David through Nathan the prophet.

**2 Samuel 7:11b-13** *"The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: <sup>12</sup> When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup> He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.*

David's son Solomon built the first temple, but this was not the house which God was talking about. The house was God's dynasty, his kingdom, his people, his family. Ultimately, Jesus was the eternal king of God's Kingdom, and the Letter to the Hebrews quotes Psalm 45 as a psalm pointing to this idea.

**Hebrews 1:8-9** *But about the Son [that is, Jesus] he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. <sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."*

Psalm 45 talks about the king's throne being God's throne and the king needs to rule like God would rule, but Hebrews 1 quotes these verses as if it is God who is giving God the throne. The only way that this can be

explained is through the Trinity. God the Father gives God the Son the eternal throne and is set above everyone else as ruler of all creation. This makes sense if you believe that Jesus is the King of God's Kingdom and is both man and God. The reality was that no other son of David could be the kind of king that this song describes. Even the most excellent of men, women, and children will say things which are untruthful, wicked, deceitful, and full of harm. Yes, there are times when we can say good things, but our lips are not truly dripping with grace. There are times when people can perform extraordinary deeds. We can show great compassion and love to those in need, but eternal splendour and majesty is beyond our grasp. There are times when our lives reflect truth, humility, and justice, but we are not victorious in it as we all lie, have pride, and seek our own benefit at the expense of others. The only way that someone could truly sit on God's throne is if they are sinless as God is sinless, is if they love righteousness as God loves righteousness, is if they are victorious in truth, humility, and justice as God is victorious in truth, humility, and justice. Jesus was, and is, a man. A sinless man who is God. A man who sits on God's throne and rules over his eternal King. The king that this psalm points to is Jesus, the King. But now, the psalm turns to the bride.

## The Precious Bride

**Psalm 45:10-15** *Listen, daughter, and pay careful attention:*

*Forget your people and your father's house.*

<sup>11</sup> *Let the king be enthralled by your beauty;  
honor him, for he is your lord.*

<sup>12</sup> *The city of Tyre will come with a gift,  
people of wealth will seek your favor.*

<sup>13</sup> *All glorious is the princess within her chamber;  
her gown is interwoven with gold.*

<sup>14</sup> *In embroidered garments she is led to the king;  
her virgin companions follow her-- those brought to be with her.*

<sup>15</sup> *Led in with joy and gladness, they enter the palace of the king.*

If we go back to verse 9, we see that the bride is a royal bride. She is a princess, a daughter of a foreign king. As I read verse 10, I cannot help but think how rough and crude the first piece of advice she was given is.

**Psalm 45:10b** *Forget your people and your father's house.*

We would find this piece of advice hard to take. After all, are we not supposed to honour our father and mother? And if we believe we should honour our father and mother, does that not mean that we should honour them even after we are married? But this would have been the great difficulty of being a queen. Once the foreign princess is married to the king, she becomes the queen of that kingdom, and all her allegiances must be to her king and her new kingdom. She cannot be a spy for her foreign father, she cannot undermine the king's authority, otherwise she would become a traitor and be punished like a traitor. But if she honours her king, and lives with him as her lord, then she gains all the honour, wealth, and dignity of being the king's bride. The honour and dignity is seen in how the city of Tyre comes to her with a gift, in the way people of wealth will seek her favour, and there is something about marrying the king which brings her glory. But just as Jesus is the fulfilment of the true king of this psalm, so too is the church, God's people, the fulfilment of the bride. We can see this in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. He said in...

**Ephesians 5:25-27** *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her<sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,<sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

At the end of this passage, he said...

**Ephesians 5:31-32** *"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." <sup>32</sup> This is a profound mystery-- but I am talking about Christ and the church.*

Christ is the King of God's eternal Kingdom and his bride are the people who belong to his Kingdom. In this passage, Paul calls them "the church" and he talks about how Jesus loved the church by cleansing her from her sinfulness. Remember, none of us could ever take the throne of God because we are sinful people, and yet because of the cleansing which Jesus offers us, we are made holy and blameless which means that we can share in the glory of the king. In Psalm 45:13 we read about the glory of the princess and how her gown is interwoven with gold. She is dressed as a queen, ready to be united to her king. In Revelation 21 we read...

**Revelation 21:9b-11** *"Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." <sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. <sup>11</sup> It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.*

The bride of Christ is no longer seen as a foreign princess, or even as the church, but as the Holy City, the new Jerusalem. The rest of Revelation 21 goes onto explain just how beautiful and precious this new city will be. But what makes this city so precious is not gold or jewels, they are just symbols of things that are precious. No, the preciousness of this city is found in its people, and they are made precious by Jesus, the King who saves them for his Kingdom.

## **Legacy of Children**

And this is when we come to the legacy at the end of Psalm 45.

**Psalm 45:16-17** *Your sons will take the place of your fathers;  
you will make them princes throughout the land.  
<sup>17</sup> I will perpetuate your memory through all generations;  
therefore the nations will praise you for ever and ever.*

The bride and groom will be fruitful. They will have children. Those children will have their children, and so it will continue throughout the generations. The birth of future children picks up on two ideas. Firstly, the king's throne will continue beyond his lifetime. Secondly, though the king may die, he will be remembered. The legacy of children gives the king a kind of eternity. His throne will continue, and he will not be forgotten. As Christians, we are the spiritual children of God, but our eternity is not found in dim memories and old thrones, our eternity is found in life beyond death. Jesus gives us eternal life if we are part of his kingdom, his people, part of his family.

## **Conclusion**

I don't know if this psalm would be a good psalm for a modern day wedding, I don't know if anyone who is getting married soon would want it, but it does have an amazing message. God's Kingdom has the right king in place. Jesus rules over God's Kingdom with grace, truth, humility, and justice. And we all can be part of the great wedding day for Jesus, if we are one of his people. We can only be one of his people if Jesus himself has prepared us. Only Jesus can wash us clean of our sin, only Jesus can make us holy and blameless, only Jesus can make us right for God's eternal Kingdom. It may seem strange for you to think of yourself as part of the bride of Christ, but it is only by being part of that bride that you can be in God's eternal Kingdom. But think of all the honour and dignity which you can have through Jesus. You are precious to him, so precious that he has prepared eternal life for you. So, listen to the advice given to the bride in Psalm 45 and forget all your allegiances to this world. Honour Jesus, live for him, for he is you Lord, your God, and your King.