

The Majesty of Mighty Messiah
And the Beauty of His Bride

Psalm 45

Intro. 1) The arrangement of the Psalter is not without rhyme and reason. Psalms 42-72 constitute book 2, and it could not begin on a more somber and sorrowful note. Psalms 42-44 describe a people in a desperate situation. Though we are uncertain as to the exact time each was written, they would have spoken loud and clear to the nation in exile following their devastating defeat by Babylon in 587-86 B.C. Their King is dethroned, the temple destroyed and Jerusalem sacked. Thus the psalmists cry out:

Psalm 42:3-4, "My tears have been my food day and night, while they continually say to me, where is your God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me.

For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast."

Psalm 42:9-10, "I will say to God my Rock, why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a breaking of my bones, my enemies reproach me, while they say to me all day long, where is your God?"

Psalm 43:1-2, "Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; oh deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man! For You are the God of my strength; why do You cast me off? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

Psalm 44:1-3, "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, the deeds You did in their days, in days of old: you drove out the nations with your hand, but them you planted; you afflicted the peoples, and cast them out. For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them; but it was

Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, because You favored them.”

Psalm 44:9-26, “But You have cast us off and put us to shame. And You do not go out with our armies. You make us turn back from the enemy, and those who hate us have taken spoil for themselves. You have given us up like sheep intended for food, and have scattered us among the nations. You sell Your people for next to nothing, and are not enriched by selling them. You make us a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision to those all around us. You make us a byword among the nations, a shaking of the head among the peoples. My dishonor is continually before me, and the shame of my face has covered me, because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles, because of the enemy and the avenger. All this has come upon us; but we have not forgotten You, nor have we dealt falsely with Your covenant. Our heart has not turned back, nor have our steps departed from Your way; but You have severely broken us in the place of jackals, and covered us with the shadow of death. If we had forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a foreign god, would not God search this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart. Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Awake! Why do You sleep, O Lord? Arise! Do not cast us off forever. Why do You hide Your face, and forget our affliction and our oppression? For our soul is bowed down to the dust; our body clings to the ground. Arise for our help, and redeem us for Your mercies’ sake.”

2) The cries of being forgotten and forsaken by God are painful. Here is the people of God confused and crushed. There is a plea in Ps. 44:17-18 for God to remember His covenant and to search their hearts. Yet, in each psalm there is an echo of faith not yet

destroyed. Note that each Psalm ends with a word of 1) hope in God and 2) help from God (Ps. 42:11; Ps 43:5; Ps. 44:26). Will God answer their prayer? And if He does how will He do it? The glorious answers to both questions is found in Psalm 45.

- Yes, He will answer the heart cry of His people.
- How? By the appearance of a King like no other, thru the majesty of mighty Messiah joined in marriage to His beautiful bride, the people of God!

3) Psalm 45 is a royal wedding psalms and is utterly unique in the Psalter. Some have thought it was first applied to Solomon and his wedding to an Egyptian princess (1 Kings 3:1). There is perhaps some truth to such a view, and yet this psalm, both in content and location looks forward to a coming King, a King like no other in beauty, power and glory, one who in words hard to comprehend is told in v. 6, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.” Post-exilic Israel understood this Psalm messianically. The author of Hebrews, by the inspiration and insight of the Holy Spirit, understood what this psalm saw, for in Heb. 1:8-9, he tells us this psalm is fulfilled in Jesus!

4) C.S. Lewis in *Reflections on the Psalms* wrote, “The birth of Christ is the arrival of the great warrior and the great king. Also of the lover, the Bridegroom, whose beauty surpasses that of man” (p.130).

Trans. Why is this bridegroom so great, so awesome, so glorious that words must stretch themselves to describe Him? We will build our portrait around 3 forever and ever truths (v. 2, 6, 17).

I. Messiah is mighty and majestic because He is King 45:1-5

- 4 times the word King appears in Ps. 45 (vs. 1, 5, 11, 14).
- 3 times the idea of forever is trumpeted (vs. 2, 6, 17).

- This language is rooted in the great Davidic covenant of 2 Sam. 7:12-16 where God promises that a son of David will have the throne of his kingdom established forever.
- That King is now described, with multiple reasons given as to His worthiness to receive such a kingdom.

1) He is a good King

45:1

- Vs. 1 is the prologue. The psalmist's heart is overflowing (*NIV*, "stirred") with a good or noble theme.
- This theme he recites in verse for the King, his tongue, as it were, serving as the pen of a skillful writer. He will sing and he will write.
- The psalmist has a good word to sing because his heart overflows with the thoughts of this great King, one of whom Acts 10:38 reminds us "went about doing good." This song is about a good King.

2) He is a graced King

45:2

This King is graced in appearance and conduct.

- "He is fairer" (*NIV*, "the most excellent; *ESV*, "most handsome") than all men. Why? God appointed Him. God is with Him ("has blessed you forever").
- "Grace is poured upon Your lips." His words are kind and wise, healing and helpful. When this King speaks, wise persons will listen. Why can He speak with such grace? Again, because God is with Him ("has blessed you forever").

What did the people say when King Jesus spoke? John 7:46 provides the answer: “No man ever spoke like this Man!” This King is graced in His speech.

3) He is a glorious King 45:3

Verse 3-5 evokes military imagery and are anticipatory of the Rider on a White Horse in Rev. 19:11 ff. Girding his sword at His side, He is described as the 1) Mighty One, 2) glorious and 3) majestic. As the Mighty One (*gibor*), He is invincible and unconquerable. With glory (*NIV*, “splendor”) and majesty, He is incomparable and unparalleled. He is as Rev. 19:16 describes Him, “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”

4) He is a great King 45:4-5

- This king is a champion who in majesty rides prosperously and victoriously. And for what things does this great king fight and make war? We are unprepared for the answer: 1) truth, 2) humility and 3) righteousness. His agenda is God’s agenda. His kingdom is characterized by 3 things foreign to this world’s empires. His kingdom is like no other.
- From the right hand (the hand of authority), awesome things shall be taught, things that will bring peace and blessing.
- And for those who oppose this great King?
 - 1) His sharp arrows will pierce their hearts.
 - 2) The peoples (*NIV*, “nations”) will fall under you (*NIV*, “will fall beneath your feet”). Oppose this King? What a fool.

Calvin, “whoever shall engage in the attempt to shake the stability of his kingdom shall miserably perish, for the King has in his hand a sufficiency of power to break the stubbornness of all such persons” (p. 177).

II. Messiah is mighty and majestic because He is God 45:6-9

- These verses continue the marvelous description of the royal groom. If vs. 2-5 were exalted, what follows takes us over the top. The one who is the exalted God is now declared to be the eternal God!

1) His crown is eternal 45:6

- These words, amazingly, are directed to the King. “Your throne, Your kingdom, Your reign, O God, is forever and ever.”
- Spurgeon said, “To whom can this be spoken but our Lord? The Psalmist cannot restrain his adoration. His enlightened eye sees in the royal Husband of the church, God, God to be adored, God reigning, God reigning everlastingly. Blessed sight! Blind are the eyes that cannot see God in Christ Jesus....No throne can endure for ever, but that on which God himself sitteth (vol. 1, 318).

2) His character is exalted 45:6-7

- These verses address the character and constitution of His kingdom. No King will ever reign like this God.
- “A scepter (symbol of authority) of righteousness (righteous policies, acts and deeds) is the scepter of your kingdom.” A rule of integrity and authenticity based on the laws of God is His platform. This is its positive aspect.

- “You love righteousness and hate wickedness.” Here is the negative corollary. To love one you must hate the other. A love for righteousness consumes Him. A hatred for wickedness consumes Him too!
- Verse 7b gives the result of v. 6-7a. Again, the language is breath-taking and unexpected.

“Therefore God, Your God, has anointed you, with the oil of gladness more than your companions.” These words are so striking that numerous commentators feel compelled to either alter the text or at least propose a strained interpretation that would obscure the plain meaning of the text. The psalmist clearly and without hesitation calls the King, God. He goes on to say that His God is the one who anointed Him with the oil of gladness (symbolizing His joyous ascension to the throne) and He has done so more or above His companions. Some wish to excuse this as court flattery, royal hyperbole, kingly exaggeration. However, the author of Hebrews applies this to the Son of God in making the argument that He is greater than the prophets and greater than the angels. Derek Kidner is certainly correct when he writes, “Verse 7 distinguishes between God, your God, and the King who has been addressed as ‘God’ in verse 6. This paradox is consistent with the incarnation, but mystifying in any other context. It is an example of O.T. language bursting its banks, to demand a more than human fulfillment” (p. 172).

3) His clothing is excellent

45:8

This King is glorious in character and appearance. “All Your garments are

scented” (He has the scent of deity). “Out of ivory palaces by which they have made you glad” (The best came from the best for the best!). Here in full royal display for all to smell and see is “the splendor of the King.” What he wears reflects who He is! He is excellent in every way.

4) His companions are esteemed 45:9

Continuing to draw on the wedding imagery, the dignity and importance of the guests and bride is duly noted. Princesses honor this King. And his queen, who now stands at the place of honor ready to wed her king, is ornated with gold from Ophir. “Gold from Ophir” is unknown as to its origin, but highly valued for its quality. Gerald Wilson says, “Gold of Ophir came to be the standard for gold of purity and quality” (706). An esteemed queen for an excellent King!

III. Messiah is mighty and majestic because He is Lord 45:10-17

Verses 10-15 shift attention to the bride of the King who is at His hand (v.9). Because she has been chosen by such an awesome King to be His in marriage, she receives words of wise counsel as to how she should conduct herself. These are appropriately applied to each one of us who constitute the bride of this King, the bride of Christ. Including the final 2 verses of this psalm that provide an appropriate and climatic refrain, 4 basic responses are given as to our posture and service before this King who has taken us as His very own.

1) Worship Him 45:10-12

- Note the verbs of vs. 10: 1) Listen, 2) Consider, 3) Incline (*NIV*, “give ear”), 4) Forget.

Forget where you were and where you came from and look to the King! He is

your life. He is your future. He will be all that you will ever want or need.

- Vs. 11 → He will desire you and your beauty (His response)

→ Because He is Lord worship Him (Our response)

The word means to honor or bow down. Because the bride loves her husband, calling Him Lord and worshipping Him is a pleasant and easy thing to do.

- Vs. 12 → Others will take note of you and how you honor the King. In return they will honor you because you are His. They will bring gifts and they will seek your favor. They will admire one who is so devoted to her Lord, her King.

III. What does a man say in marriage to His bride?

What did I say to Charlotte on May 27, 1978?

What did Charlotte say to me on May 27, 1978?

P.A. Allegiance to this King transcends any and every other relationship in life.

Luke 14:26 captures the gist of our duty, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.”

2) Honor Him

45:13-15

- Our scene now shifts in focus from the throne room and palace to the beautiful bride as she prepares herself for her King. As she prepared herself, she does so in such a way as to enhance her beauty and honor her Lord (v.11).
- This royal daughter or princess is said to be all glorious, her clothing woven with gold. She is radiant and valued by her King.

- She is brought to the King “in robes of many colors,” and her virgin companions follow her and come to honor and serve the King. Indeed they all come “with gladness and rejoicing” as they “enter the King’s palace.” No looking back! There’s, ours (!), is a new and better life with this King as our Lord. Gladness and joy envelopes our souls as we consider the One who has invited us into His kingdom, into His palace. To honor Him is a joy not a duty, a blessing not a burden.

3) Remember Him

45:16-17

Returning his attention to the King, the psalmist notes there will never come a time when the name of this King is lost or forgotten. Many sons will come from this King who will rule and reign with Him in all the earth. A dynastic rule of global proportions is the destiny of this one who is “the most excellent of men” (v.2) and “blessed forever” (v.2). Yes, his name will “be remembered in all generations.” No one will ever forget the name of King Jesus.

4) Praise Him

45:17

- He is fairer than any man and grace is on His lips (v.2).
- He is the Mighty One who rides victoriously promoting truth, humility and righteousness (v. 3-4).
- He is sovereign over all (v.5) and His throne is forever (v.6). He loves right and hates wrong (v.7), and God has anointed Him as King (v.7). What, then, can we say, should we say about this King? “The people (*NIV*, “the nations”) shall praise you forever and ever.” Never, never, never, shall we grow tired of singing the praises of King Jesus. Not today. Not ever!

Con. Concerning Psalm 45, Alexander Maclaren said, “either we have here a piece of poetical exaggeration far beyond the limits of poetic license, or a greater than Solomon is here.” (Boice, vol. 2, 381). Greater than Solomon. Greater than David. Greater than any King who shall ever be. This is Messiah King Jesus.

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever...

Therefore the people shall praise You forever

And ever” (Ps. 45:6, 17).