

“A Song for the Royal Wedding – Part 1”  
Psalm 45  
(Preached at Trinity, October 31, 2010)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Psalm 45** is the fourth psalm designated a Maschil – a psalm of holy teaching, full of truth and doctrine. This psalm is unique, unlike any other psalm. It was prepared to be sung on the occasion of a royal wedding.
2. It is also a messianic psalm. Other psalms have messianic elements but few are messianic in their entirety like this psalm. Hebrews 1 directs our attention to it as it pertains to Christ:  
**Hebrews 1:8-9** – “But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom. <sup>9</sup> Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”
3. We don’t know which earthly king and bride this psalm is referring to. There have been many suggestions, possibly Solomon, but we can’t say for sure. It follows some of the customs of the ancient wedding celebration.
  - A. The first step was betrothal. This was a formal act usually arranged by the parents of the future bride and groom, but often taking into account the desires of the couple. It was a legally binding arrangement and could only be broken by something akin to divorce. It was so weighty that the couple were often referred to as husband and wife, even though there was no physical union. This was the case with Joseph and Mary when Jesus was conceived.
  - B. The husband’s family provided a dowry or bride’s price. There was often a long delay between betrothal and the wedding itself.
  - C. When the wedding day finally arrived the friends of the bride gathered at her house where she prepared herself in the finest clothes and jewelry. At the same time the attendants of the groom gathered at his house. At the appointed time there would be a grand procession through the streets as the groom with his attendants went to fetch his bride. This is the scene of the parable of the Ten Virgins. After receiving the bride the procession then made their way back to the groom’s house for a joyous wedding feast lasting as long as a week or two.
4. This is a royal wedding feast, although marriage is blessed of God for all men.  
**Genesis 2:18** – “And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”  
<sup>NAU</sup> **Hebrews 13:4** – “Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage bed is to be* undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”
5. But this is a psalm that directs our attention to more than the wedding of an earthly king. It directs our attention to the heavenlies, to the sublime. It directs our attention to the Divine Groom receiving the church as His bride. It describes the mystical union between Christ and His Church. This makes it a particularly glorious psalm.

6. It contains four parts:
    1. **Verse 1** provides for us a short introduction.
    2. **Verses 2-9** are addressed to the groom – none other than Christ
    3. **Verses 10-15** are addressed to the bride – none other than the Church
    4. **Verses 16-17** end with a brief conclusion
  7. We'll divide the message into two parts: "The Groom" and "The Bride"
- I. Introduction:
- A. It is introduced as a "Song of Love"
    1. It draws our mind to Song of Solomon  
**Song of Solomon 1:2** – "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love *is* better than wine."  
**Song of Solomon 4:10** – "How fair is thy love, my sister, *my* spouse! how much better is thy love than wine!"
    2. It begins with the passion a husband and wife have for one another – not simply a carnal, sentimental love, but a joyous care for one another.
  - B. He announces the noble character of the theme  
 KJV – "My heart is inditing a good matter"  
 NASB – "My heart overflows with a good theme"
    1. The author feels compelled to address this most noble subject
    2. If it were addressed to an earthly monarch it would be lofty. But this is addressed to the King of kings.  
 "I speak of the things which I have made touching the king"
    3. We'll find in this psalm no lukewarm expressions but expressions of the highest measure. The psalmist's heart is overcome with emotion. May God grant us that our hearts might be full as we contemplate this glorious King and His bride.

After the brief introduction the psalmist embarks on his glorious subject. He begins by addressing the King – **Verses 2-9**

- I. The King's character was beyond compare – **Verse 2a, 7**  
**Psalm 45:2** – "Thou art fairer than the children of men"
- A. The psalmist uses an expression of comparison/contrast
    1. The King is fairer than men. This could be understood as referring only to the outward appearance. The ESV takes this approach  
<sup>ESV</sup> **Psalm 45:2** – "You are the most handsome of the sons of men"
    2. In the ancient world the monarch was particularly valued if he was of an attractive appearance.  
 Of Saul:  
<sup>NASB</sup> **1 Samuel 9:2** – "And he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome *man*, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people."  
 Of David:  
<sup>NASB</sup> **1 Samuel 16:12** So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he."

3. As pertaining to Christ it takes on a much loftier meaning. He was of greater grandeur than any man – although it was not just an outward appearance

**Isaiah 53:2** – “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him.”

- B. Jesus took upon himself the full nature of a man
  1. He was born of a woman, yet He was exempt from the corruption of Adam
  2. We are not to assume that there was some mutation of God into flesh. Rather, Jesus assumed flesh. He never ceased being God. He never divested Himself of His deity.
  3. This frail baby was God! All of creation should have bowed in the presence of His majesty.  
God had taken upon Himself the nature of a man while maintaining His divine nature!
- C. The Bible teaches us that Jesus was born under the Law
 

**Galatians 4:4** – “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,”

  1. This means that He was subject to all of the demands of the Law  
This should cause us great amazement  
The absolute independent God placed Himself under law, under obedience
  2. While every man has succumbed to failure in keeping the Law Jesus kept the Law perfectly  
**Hebrews 4:15** – “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.”
  3. He was a perfect, holy, spotless sacrifice – His inner beauty infinite.  
**Hebrews 7:26** – “For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;”
- D. The character of Jesus was impeccable
  1. The psalmist describes it in **Verse 4** as “truth and meekness *and* righteousness”
  2. There is no virtue that is not defined infinitely in Christ.

## II. The King’s words were most excellent – **Verse 2b**

**Psalms 45:2** – “grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.”

- A. Over and over Jesus’ words were spoken of with amazement
  1. When the officers were sent to arrest Jesus they returned empty handed  
**John 7:45-46** – “Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?  
<sup>46</sup> The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.”
  2. The men on the road to Emmaus spoke  
**Luke 24:32** – “And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”

3. Jesus taught with authority beyond any words of a man  
**Matthew 7:28-29** – “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: <sup>29</sup> For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.”
- B. Jesus spoke with grace, mercy, love
1. He spoke the words of life – when multitudes forsook Him his disciples told Him.  
**John 6:68** – “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.”
  2. He spoke words of forgiveness
  3. He spoke with power to calm a storm, cast out demons
  4. He spoke with words to draw men unto Himself – “Come unto Me”  
 He still speaks these words.
- III. The King’s military victories are without equal – **Verses 3-6**  
**Psalm 45:3** – “Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, O *most* mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.”
- A. The Kingdom of Christ is not a worldly kingdom
1. The psalmist describes it in earthly terms:  
**Verse 3** – “Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh”  
**Verse 5** – “Thine arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies”
  2. But it is not an earthly Kingdom as men consider kingdoms  
 He described it to Pilate  
NAS **John 18:36** – “Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”
- B. While it is not an earthly kingdom it manifests itself upon the earth as a mighty kingdom – it is the greatest kingdom upon the earth.
1. His Kingdom is not extended through military conflict – yet it is a fearsome mighty kingdom  
 Islam is terrified of Christianity. They hold their people with the edge of the sword threatening death to those who turn to Christ.  
 No disciple of Christ has ever converted to Islam.
  2. He rules His people with graciousness and love  
**Psalm 45:4** – “And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness *and* righteousness”
  3. It is an everlasting Kingdom  
**Psalm 45:6** – “Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.”  
 Notice the King is referred to as God – “Thy throne, O God”
  4. It is a Kingdom of righteousness  
**Psalm 45:7** – “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”
- C. All of His enemies are being defeated
1. Although our Lord’s Kingdom is not advanced by military might He rules with fearsome mighty and power.

2. The elect are defeated by having their hearts transformed. They gladly lay down their weapons to follow their King
3. All other enemies will be made His footstool
4. He is a fearsome conquering warrior
  - a. Satan is crushed beneath the cross
  - b. All men will bow before His throne as He sits as Judge. The wicked will be sentenced to hell

**Psalm 2:12** – “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.”

#### IV. The King’s glorious wedding – **Verses 8-9**

- A. We find the King dressed in the finest robes
 

**Psalm 45:8** – “All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.”

  1. While on the earth Jesus was in the lowest condition
    - a. He owned no real estate – He described it:
 

**Matthew 8:20** – “And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.”
    - b. When they crucified Him they stripped Him naked and parted His garments among themselves.
  2. This has all changed. He has been highly exalted to glory. He sits in His royal apparel upon the right hand of majesty.
 

**Philippians 2:9** – “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:”

**Revelation 4:2-3** – “Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. <sup>3</sup> And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.”
  3. The psalmist described the long awaited event. The King dressed in His finest apparel comes in procession to receive His bride.
  4. Myrrh and cassia are described in Exodus 30 as sacred ingredients reserved for the anointing oil. As our High Priest Jesus bears the fragrance of His anointing.
  5. The King arrives to bring His bride to the feast prepared
 

**Revelation 19:7** – “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

**Revelation 19:9** – “And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”
- B. **Verse 9** describes the excellence of His royal party – He is surrounded by King’s daughters
  1. While the Church is the entire body of Christ redeemed and sanctified by Christ as His precious bride it is represented upon the earth by individual local churches. So we find here the King’s daughters.

2. Puritan David Dickson – “The true spouse, the true church consisting of true converts, whose praise is of God being but one, is compared to the queen, but the particular churches, being many, are compared to the ladies of honour which serve the queen.”

#### Conclusion:

1. We find in this Psalm the fullness of the offices of Christ as our Mediator.
  - A. As Prophet He teaches us the will of God –  
**Psalm 45:2** – “grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.”
  - B. As Priest He offered up Himself as a sweet smelling savior before the Father. The sweet smell of incense still rises up from His garments.  
**Psalm 45:7-8** – “hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. <sup>8</sup> All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia”
  - C. As King He rules with absolute power and dominion. His throne shall know no end.  
**Psalm 45:5-6** – “Thine arrows *are* sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; *whereby* the people fall under thee. <sup>6</sup> Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom *is* a right sceptre.”
2. He is worthy of our love. He is worthy of our devotion. He is worthy of our worship.
3. We enter into His presence with gladness and wait longingly for His return. We are His bride, His beloved. We’ll see more of this next week.
4. Do you know Him?