



King Messiah & His Bride!

Psalm 45

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READERS of an older generation will undoubtedly remember the Richard Rodgers' and Oscar Hammerstein's musical hit, *The King and I*. The great, lavish and memorable production featuring Yul Brynner and Gertrude Lawrence (initially) in the leading roles, was based on the 1944 novel *Anna and the King of Siam* by Margaret Landon, which was in turn derived from the memoirs of Anna Leonowens, governess to the children of King Mongkut of Siam (Thailand) in the early 1860s.

Whoever could forget the musical's plot relating to the experiences of Anna, a British schoolteacher hired as part of the King's drive to modernize his country. The relationship between the King and Anna was marked by conflict throughout much of the piece, as well as by a love that neither could admit!

What contrasts there are in this temporary show-time banter and the eternal principles ensconced in the scriptural truths of this "Royal Wedding", messianic Psalm – Psalm 45!

The first and most obvious contrast is the fact that there is a positive, eternal relationship initiated and established by the Messianic-King and His Bride. In verses 1-9, the King is praised; in verses 10-12, He is exhorted, while in verses 13-15, there is a divine record of the Bride's description and her eternal relationship with her God-man Paramour.

Second, the Messianic King is not reluctant to express His love towards the one (His Bride) who is the sole object of His Kingly heart's virtuous affections.

Third, in this relationship there is no conflict whatsoever. More to the point, there is an openness and freedom of expression of this unique, God-sourced love – never a reluctance to express it openly.

Fourth, this love is reciprocated unabashedly by the Bride as she is presented to the Messiah King.

Fifth, while King Mongkut's concern was to modernize his country, King Messiah's rule and reign is said to be manifested in and by his church (as we shall go on to explain) through His numerous and distinguished posterity. This is indicated in the benediction expressed in verses 16 and 17:

*Instead of Your fathers shall be Your sons,
Whom You shall make princes in all the earth.
I will make Your name to be remembered
in all generations;
Therefore the people shall praise
You forever and ever. [NKJV]*

To help us understand this prophetic, messianic Psalm, we shall consider its summary statement (*The Glories of the Messiah King and His Bride*)



by explaining it in terms of the four captivating vignettes that make up the whole picture. Before launching out into the treasures of this study, however, a brief explanation as to the Psalm's title is in order. In doing so, this writer is reminded of a jovial limerick he learned decades ago that even today is probably still as truthful as it is comical:

*There once was a preacher named "Spurgeon",
Who wasn't very fond of lit-urgy,
But his expositions were fine,
and I use them as mine,
And I suspect so do most of the clergy!*

Charles Haddon Spurgeon had this to say in his inimitable, nineteenth century preaching style in his introduction to Psalm 45:

Titles. The many titles of this Psalm mark its royalty, its deep and solemn import, and the delight the writer had in it. *To the Chief Musician upon Shoshannim*. The most probable translation of this word is upon the lilies, and it is either a poetical title given to this noblest of songs after the Oriental manner, or it may relate to the tune to which it was set, or to the instrument which was meant to accompany it. We incline to the first theory, and if it be the true one, it is easy to see the fitness of borrowing a name for so beautiful, so pure, so choice, so matchless a poem from the golden lilies, whose bright array outshone the glory of Solomon. *For the sons of Korah*. Special singers are appointed for so divine a hymn. King Jesus deserves to be praised not with random, ranting ravings, but with the sweetest and most skilful music of the best trained choristers. The purest hearts in the spiritual temple are the most harmonious songsters in the ears of God; acceptable song is not a matter so much of tuneful voices as of sanctified affections, but in no case should we sing of Jesus with unprepared hearts. *Maschil*, an instructive ode ("a contemplative, didactic [teaching] poem"), not an idle lay, or a romancing ballad, but a Psalm of holy teaching, didactic and doctrinal. This proves that it is to be spiritually understood. Blessed are the people who know the meaning of its joyful sound. Not a carnal sentimental love song, but a celestial canticle of everlasting love fit for the tongues and ears of angels.

Subject. Some here see Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter only — they are short sighted; others see both Solomon and Christ — they are cross eyed; well-focused spiritual eyes see here Jesus only, or if Solomon be present at all, it must be like those hazy shadows of by passers which cross the face of ▶

the camera, and therefore are dimly traceable upon a photographic landscape. "The King," the God throne is forever and ever, is no mere mortal and his everlasting dominion is not bounded by Lebanon and Egypt's river. This is no wedding song of earthly nuptials, but an Epithalamium (ie. a song or poem celebrating a marriage) for the Heavenly Bridegroom and his elect spouse. (*The Treasury of David*, ad loc., emphases and comment added).

Though the Psalm may well have been written as King Solomon was to be married to a foreign (Egyptian) Princess in the historical context – (see 1 Kgs. 3:1), the overall thrust of the Psalm focuses ultimately on the Lord Jesus Christ, (Israel's King-Messiah) for in Matthew 12:42 we read "a greater than Solomon is here". Four proleptic vignettes encapsulate the vivid descriptions of the messianic King and His beloved Bride. First, we see Him as:

I. The All Gracious 'Son of Man' (vss 1-2)

As the psalm opens, the writer's heart in composing this love song for the King overflows, such is his overwhelming joy and praise for the privilege. Indeed, his "tongue is the pen of a ready (Hebrew: *skilfull*) writer" (vs 1).

The Regal Monarch is first described as "fairer than the sons of men" (vs 2.) Here He is identified with his "fellow companions", the "sons of men" (cf. Heb 1:9; 2:10; 3:1, 14 where the Greek term '*metochoi*' [a fellow partaker, sharer, companion; note Ps 45:7!] underscores the Messiah's identification with mankind, yet "without sin" – Heb 4:16). In fact, "in His humanity, the Heir of all things (the Messiah-King, the Lord Jesus Christ) is exactly suited to the needs of His fellow Heirs" (Zane Hodges, *Notes on Hebrews*, 2:1-18). He is "fairer" than the sons of men, probably not in the sense that He was "more handsome" (as some translations have it – Cf. Is 52:14), but with the understanding that "grace was poured out upon (His) lips, [therefore] God has blessed (Him) forever" (vs 2, emphases added). Thus, in verse 1, His humanity is envisaged, while in verse 2, His deity is implied (Cf. vss 6, 7).

How are these aspects reflected in God's unfolding drama of redemption – His Word? To cite some further examples:

- All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. (Luke 4:22). John declared that He was "full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:17).
- Surely you have granted him unending blessings and made him glad with the joy of your presence. (Psalm 21:6)
- The LORD God have given Me the tongue of the learned ... (Is 50:4)

- And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught as one having authority and not as one of the scribes (Mt 7:28-29).
- To these references, may be added: Pr 22:11 and Eccl 10:12.

Dear reader, could it be said of you that your speech is always "seasoned with salt" (Gal 4:6), or does your speech "betrayer (ie. "make known", "betray", "reveal") thee (ie. who you really are/ where you are from)?" (Mt 26:73).

But the Messiah-King is not only the All Gracious 'Son of Man' in His identification with His fellow-companions in His humanity, He is also depicted in Psalm 45 as:

II. The Triumphant Warrior-King (vss 3-5)

These verses reveal the Psalmist's injunction and praise-full adulation by telling the King to go forth with His sword victoriously in the service of all that is right, and to clothe Himself thereby with glory! He is to make His reign adorn Him even more truly than the wedding garb with which He is presently arrayed (Cf. vs 8).

Here is no malicious, butchering, conqueror or thug intent on world domination as we see portrayed by the present day's IS (ISIS, better described, ISIL – the "Islamic State of Iraq



and the Levant") forces fighting for the establishment of Sharia Law, worldwide. In contrast, He is the One who rides forth majestically on behalf of truth, humility and righteousness! His "right hand" (the symbol of authority, power and might) will display "awesome deeds" (See Ps 66:5; 106:22 and 145:6). This messianic Warrior-King will not *come to power* by man-centred revolutionary means. Rather it will be by virtue of His godly life and Spirit controlled ministry submitted to His Father's will (Jn 8:29; Heb 10:7, 9; Acts 10:38). It was culminated in His all-conquering, atoning sacrifice on the Cross and over death, sin, Satan and Hell itself (Cf. Is 42:1-9; Jn 19:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Col 1:20, 2:15; Eph 1:19ff; Rev 19-20ff).

No wonder that "His arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies" and "the peoples fall under (Him)" (vs 5; cf. Ps 2:8-9; 110:1-2, 5-6). As the apostle Paul would say centuries later, "every knee will bow, and every tongue confess ... that Jesus Christ is LORD to the glory of God the Father." (Phil 2:11). All this is possible since the "All Gracious Son of Man" (vss 1-2) is at once the divine, sovereign, All-Conquering, "Triumphant, Warrior-King" of the universe (vss 3-5). His humanity and deity are co-existent and co-eternal for He is "Immanuel – God with us!" (Is 7:14; Mt 1:23).

Have you allowed this triumphant "Warrior-King" to conquer your heart? Don't be like Julian, the Apostate Emperor who, while lying mortally wounded in battle, expired with the words: "Thou has conquered, O Galilean!"

But look, there's more! In verses 6-7a, the Psalmist presents another picture of the Messiah-King. He is:

III. The Sovereign Messiah-King (vss 6-7a)

It is noteworthy to observe the opening words of this section of this "Royal Wedding" Psalm: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever". Some have suggested that the king's throne is called "God's throne" because He is called God's regent. But the King is addressed as God precisely because not only is He the "Davidic King" (the LORD's anointed – 2 Sam. 19:21), but because the One herein referred to is "great David's Greater Son" – the Lord Jesus Christ. Only such a description of the Davidic king attains its fullest meaning when so applied, just as the author of Hebrews does (Heb. 1:9). His throne will be *for ever and ever* and in Christ alone, the Son of David messianic aspect is fulfilled.

As to the glory of this Messiah King's reign, it will be characterised by justice and righteousness (Cf. Ps 72; Is 2:1-4; Heb 12:25-29; Rev 20ff). How the present world needs these qualities to right the wrongs of man's injustice and unrighteousness (Cf. Rom 1:18ff; Rev 20-22).

Finally, Psalm 45 changes its focus from the Messiah-King to the All Glorious Bridegroom King and the chosen Object of His love, His adored and suitably adorned Bride.

IV. The Bridegroom-King (vss 7b-17)

Three aspects are herein revealed:

A. Preparation of the Bridegroom (vss 7b-9)

The descriptive, adjectival words *All Glorious* are deliberately chosen here. They are not an over-statement of the Heavenly Bridegroom

in this context! Great preparation attends this Messiah-King, now called the Bridegroom. Yes, He would have been anointed as King in taking the throne of the Kingdom, but there is more meaning implied in the words “Therefore, God, Your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than Your companions”. The psalmist here refers to the anointing the Bridegroom shares with His noble companions attending His royal wedding. It is the “oil of *gladness*” with which He is anointed, and that “*more than*” (His) companions!” (Emphases added).

Well may we ask: “What does this mean?” We believe Hebrews 12:1-2ff provides the specific answer by “(comparing) scripture with scripture” (1 Cor 2:13-14f): “... let us run the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, *who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross*, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of God”, (emphases added). The “joy that was set before Him” was none other than presenting His elect, redeemed, Bride to the Father and then finally “(presenting) the Kingdom to the Father” (1 Cor 15:22-26). This was the “more delightful oil” than the aromatic oils with which His head and body were anointed on His wedding Day. It was the oil of “*joy*” (See Ps 23:5; Is 61:3).

For Him, as for us as believers, *there’s no crown without (enduring) a cross!* Is that a word in season for someone who is weary reading this article? Fellow Traveller, the rewards are *really out of this world!* (Cf. Luke 9:23-31ff, 56-62; Heb 12:25-29; cf. Gal 6:7-9).



The text continues, however, with references to the King’s garments being “scented with myrrh, aloes and cassia” (vs 8) and the glory of the King’s wedding – from palaces adorned with ivory, to the sonorous, musical tones of “strings that make (Him) glad”, and the guests who attend His wedding. All these aspects represent the international recognition

of this King-Messiah (vs 9). Perhaps the words of Henry Barraclough’s song “Out of the Ivory Palaces” reveal these truths as clearly as any:

1. My Lord has garments so wondrous fine,
And myrrh their texture fills;
Its fragrance reached to this heart of mine
With joy my being thrills.

Refrain:

*Out of the ivory palaces,
Into a world of woe,
Only His great eternal love
Made my Saviour go.*

2. His life had also its sorrows sore,
For aloes had a part;
And when I think of the cross He bore,
My eyes with teardrops start.
3. His garments, too, were in cassia dipped,
With healing in a touch;
In paths of sin had my feet e’er slipped—
He’s saved me from its clutch.
4. In garments glorious He will come,
To open wide the door;
And I shall enter my heav’nly home,
To dwell forevermore.

B.Preparation of the Bride (vss 10-12)

The universality of the Messiah King’s reign is observable in Psalm 45, verses 10 to 12. Here, the Psalmist addressed the King’s Bride in terms of her *preparation*. She is to be totally loyal to her adoring King (vss 10-11). Her allegiance to Him must be without compromise; she is to “worship Him for He is your Lord” (vs 11). In mentioning the “king of Tyre”, it is to be remembered that Tyre was the first foreign ruler to recognize the Davidic dynasty (2 Sam 5:11) and Solomon maintained close relations with that city-state (1 Kgs 5: 9:1-14; 26-28). As a prestigious Mediterranean Trade Centre, Tyre was renowned for its wealth and influence. That “the daughter of Tyre” would come to the king with a gift (vs 12) demonstrates the unique importance of this Bridegroom King whose messianic reign would be universally recognized. Ezekiel, of course, later prophesied its ultimate overthrow, along with its literal King – also a picture of Satan (Ezek 28:1-16ff; cf. Is. 14:14ff).

By way of application, do we consider our *preparation* in our sanctifying pilgrimage on the highway to Heaven? By this we mean that spiritual process in our experiential walk with the LORD. Do we use the means of grace (prayer, Bible Study, worship, meditation, fellowship, etc) to *prepare us for heaven where we will be like Him, for we*

shall see Him as He is? My reader-friend, prayerfully meditate on 1 John 2:28 - 3:4 as a spiritual discipline, if you want to stand before the Bema Judgement Seat with “confidence and not be ashamed” (Cf. 2 Cor 5:9-10; 1 Cor 3:10-16; 9:16-27). It’s a salutary exercise!

C. Presentation of Bride to King (vss 13-15)

These final verses speak clearly of the Bride being brought to the King. She is bedecked in robes of royal finery (vs 13) and is accompanied by her permanent attendants (vs 14). Their entry into the King’s palace and presence is associated with “gladness and rejoicing” (vs 15).

This beautiful occasion, historically, foreshadowed another yet-future *presentation*, that of the King’s Bride who, having been “clothed in the garments of righteousness” (Is 61:10), will be presented to the Father, “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing” (Eph 5:25ff, “blameless” (1 Thess 5:23) – all because of the gracious, imputed righteousness of the Messiah-King (Rom.3-4)! No wonder the apocalyptic “Creator Lamb” (Rev 4) who is also the “Redeemer Lamb” (Rev 5), is forever the Object of worship and praise in the final wrap up of End Time events. As D’Urhan-Rimbault expressed it: “The Lamb is all the glory, in Immanuel’s land”.

The final words of the Psalm are addressed to the King Himself in the form of a benediction as we have already noted. The Psalmist expressed his wish that the King would have numerous and distinguished posterity. “Instead of Your fathers shall be Your sons” – obviously to be taken in a spiritual sense, ultimately - for John tells us how those who are “born again” (Greek: *anōthen*, from above, for a second time – Jn 1:12; 3:5, 7) have the right (Greek: *exousia*, authority) to be “called the children (Greek: *teknia*) of God”. Hebrews 2:10 elaborates on this to include the idea of the “Captain of our salvation” (Jesus), God’s Priest-Son and God’s King-Son, being absolutely able to “(bring) many sons to glory” (Heb 2:10; cf. 7:16, 25). Indeed, the King is able to “make princes in all the earth” (Ps 45:16). We take heart that this King-Messiah, Jesus, said “I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it” (Mt 16:18). Furthermore, this Messiah-King’s name will be “made great” and “remembered in all generations” (Ps 45:17a). As a result, “*therefore*”, as the next part of the verse states, “the people shall praise You forever and ever” (verse 17b, emphasis added). ▶

Conclusion: In the light of the vast, eternal issues concerning the “All Gracious Son of Man”, the “All Conquering, “Triumphant Warrior-King”, this “Ever Eternal, Sovereign Messiah-King”, the “All Glorious, Bridegroom-King” presented in Psalm 45, the earth-bound plot of maestros Rogers’ and Hammerstein’s *The King & I* fade into relative puny insignificance. Yes, there was a timely need to drag the King of Siam’s kingdom into the vicissitudes of the nineteenth century and the unfolding saga between him and Governess Anna may hold an audience’s attention for a season, but this “Royal Wedding” Psalm (45) captivates all who are willing to read (or hear) its message (Rom 1:14-17), respond in faith to its spiritual principles (Rom 10:17) and obey its mandate now (2 Thes 1:8) – “while it is day” (cf. Jn 9:4) - and therefore be fitted for an eternity in the worshipful presence of the Messiah-King.

Jewish or gentile reader, have you made that choice to accept Him? That decision has eternal consequences!

Report on the 2015 Australian Hesed Project

The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry in the USA have operated volunteer trips to Israel for several years. In January, as an extension of the US programs, our WA representatives, Kevin and Lorene Vigus, travelled to Israel with nine other Australians to do voluntary work at Kaplan Medical Centre in Israel. As you read Kevin’s report, prayerfully consider if God might want you to join a similar trip in the future.

Beginning in the Biblical Garden: As soon as we landed in Israel and collected our luggage we were transported to another world – ‘Neot Kedumim’ – the “Biblical Garden”. Our guide showed us around the garden and taught us about olive trees and “the seven species of Israel” (Deut 8:8), and we climbed sycamore trees and tasted date honey and crushed hyssop with a mortar and pestle to experience its fragrance. We were reminded how ONLY in the land of Israel do these 7 species bring forth their fruit in the seasons noted in the Bible – not in Europe or Spain, but Israel – a powerful testimony through nature of the authenticity of the rightful homeland of the Jewish people. We also saw with our own eyes what modern Israel was forced to accept as we stood in the middle of an 11 km strip Israel’s enemies (and many ‘friends’) expect them to accept –

the ‘Green Line’ (pre-1967 borders). Just 5½ km to our left was Tel Aviv and 5½ km to our right we could see the trees of the ‘Green Line’. The question was clear in our mind – how could anyone defend this from attack, let alone a people surrounded by declared enemies.

God’s Testimony at Shabbat: In Jerusalem, our group along with four other people had the amazing privilege of attending a “Shabbat of a lifetime” hosted by a gracious young Jewish couple. It was a ‘demonstration Shabbat meal’ where they explained the traditions and practices. Our hosts asked each of us to share a bit of who we were and why we were in Jerusalem. I felt honoured to be part of the group the LORD had brought together for this time as each member of our team communicated their genuine love for Israel and their devotion to Yeshuah HaMashiach (Jesus the Messiah). Yeshua was given repeated focus and honour as we affirmed how He centred our life and gave our time in Jerusalem its significance.

The team at the hospital: Our service at the hospital ran smoothly from the start and each team member slotted in well to the tasks assigned, getting to know new Jewish friends as we worked together. The hospital employees understood the love we have for them being expressed through our presence. ‘Hesed’ is the Hebrew word for God’s unconditional, covenant love.

Our reputation earned: We were known at the hotel as ‘Christian friends’ and it is a great privilege to own that label. The staff knew every time we returned tired but satisfied that we had chosen to give our time to serve alongside Jewish people in Israel and clearly expressed their awareness and appreciation of why we came. It was also very moving when individuals at the hospital pulled us aside and said “Apologies for my bad English but I must ask you – why do you do this?” When we told of our love for them and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of our desire to show true friendship they took our hand in appreciation and expressed their gratitude – “Thank you!”

Closure of our Volunteering: The hospital staff expressed in practical terms their appreciation of our time – it is the Jewish way! They planted 2 olive trees for us at the hospital (a ritual of deep Jewish significance – placing down roots in the land of Israel). The hospital now has a growing number of olive trees in an area they affectionately

call “The Friends of Israel Grove” and it is a testimony to the growing group of individuals who are putting down roots in Israel through volunteering. We had the privilege of adding two more trees as part of something far bigger than ourselves. Through The Friends of Israel, there is a testimony of what the LORD continues to build in His love at Kaplan Medical Centre, and now the first Australian group have made their contribution.

Of course we also took time in Israel to see the places that make it special— Jerusalem, Galilee, Nazareth, Beersheba, and much could be shared of these things. But here we wanted to share the heart of why we went – to love and serve people in the land of Israel.

Kevin and Lorene, on behalf of our team of eleven, on the first Australian Hesed Project.



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