

King Jesus, Our Wonderful Husband

Psalm 45:1-17

Halifax: 5 February 2006

Introduction

As most of you know,

- I am currently preaching through the gospel of Matthew...
- And as most you know,
 - Every few weeks, we break from our series in Matthew in order to learn a new Psalm that corresponds to whatever we are studying in Matthew...

Well this week is one of those weeks to take up a new Psalm...

- As we move on into Matthew 16 and 17, we are going to find Jesus revealing Himself to His Disciples...
 - He reveals His identity, His suffering, His glory, His resurrection, and His condescension.
 - Psalm 45 is very appropriate for us to sing in connection with this series,
 - because it gives us words to sing that tell of His excellent majesty as the church's royal bridegroom and of our blessed connection with Him as His bride.
 - It is a wonderful Psalm that I have often wanted to preach from, and am so glad to have the joy of presenting it to you today.
 - As you know, we will plan to sing it each Lord's Day for several weeks.
 - I hope you will sing it at home as well.

In singing it, it will be good for all of you to sing with the same attitude as the one who composed it...

- He describes his attitude in verse 1
 - He says,
 - Ps. 45:1: "My heart is overflowing with a good theme."
 - That word **overflowing** literally means to boil over—
 - He so filled with joy when he considered this subject that he could hardly contain himself!
 - There was a heat of affection that boiled over from within!
- Too often, we are bubbling forth with things far less noble...

- we boil up inside with a piece of juicy gossip that breaks forth...
 - or we boil over with anger against our spouse or our children, saying things that ought not to have been said.
- How much better it is to bubble forth with the good theme of this Psalm...
 - The theme, as the Psalm writer says, “of the King.”
- For the Psalmist,
 - these words were given to him by the Holy Spirit,
 - but remember that the Holy Spirit has also given these words to **us** to sing by putting them in the Bible’s song book for us.
 - The Book of Psalms is the Holy Spirit’s hymnbook for the church.
 - And so when you sing and start of with verse one, saying,
 - “My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King,”
 - You need to know that these words are meant to be on your tongue...
 - The Holy Spirit has given them to you to sing...
 - And that if He means them to be your tongue,
 - He surely means them to be a genuine expression of your heart!
 - He does not want mere words from us, but words that come from within.
 - And so I hope as you become more and more acquainted with the words of this Psalm that it will bubble forth from your soul!
 - How excellent that would be!
 - It is my prayer that every one in our congregation would have a heart that overflows with these excellent words!
 - May ever be so!

TRANS> Well then, without any further delay, let us turn to see what the Holy Spirit has given us to sing about our King!

- We will see that this psalm has two parts...
 - In verses 2-9, we sing to King Jesus about His glory...
 - And in verses 10-16, we sing about His blessed bride...
 - Then in verse 17 we have the conclusion of the song.

I. So first, see what we are given to sing to King Jesus about His glory.

A. We begin by singing to Him

- (notice that we are not just signing **about** Him now, but **to** Him now)...
- but we begin by singing to Him of His incomparable excellence!

1. Verse 2 says,

- “You are fairer than the sons of men...”

a. Of course the word “fair” here means “handsome” or “excellent.”

- The word is actually doubled in the Hebrew so as to emphasise it.
 - Jesus is “fairer, fairer,” than the sons of men...
- This is similar to what we read in the Song of Solomon,
 - “He is the fairest of ten thousand.”
 - How helpful it is to remember this when some competitor, some temptation, comes calling for your attention!
 - Look that temptation in the face and say,
 - “No, my Lord is the fairest of ten thousand.”
 - “How can I leave Him for this sin?”

b. And understand that this is not comparing His divine nature to our human nature...

- It is not even possible to compare these...
 - but this is speaking of Him with respect to His human nature as the One who came in our flesh.
- What a marvellous difference there is in Him!
 - He alone is the one in whom the Father was pleased!
 - All the other sons of Adam are corrupted...
 - There is so much defilement, so much uncleanness, so much that is corrupt and twisted about them in their fallen estate.
 - But with Him, there is nothing but perfection, nothing but what is beautiful and excellent.
 - He alone is fair.
 - No one else can be compared with Him!
 - This is our praise to Him is to begin...

2. Next, you are led to praise Him for His excellent speech!

- You say to Him in this song (still in v. 2):
 - “Grace is poured upon Your lips!”
- a. This speaks of our Lord Jesus in His prophetic office by which He speaks to His bride so that she hears His voice and follows Him...
 - He comes to us announcing the good news of the kingdom of God.
 - He comes telling us that though we are sinners,
 - there is forgiveness with God.
 - He comes telling us that though the Father was justly angry with us,
 - That He has come at the Father’s command to put away our sin by His death for our sake.
 - He tells us that He loves us and has offered Himself a sacrifice to take away our sins!
 - He speaks to us the most gracious words in the most gracious manner!
 - He bids us to come to Him and live forever,
 - to come to Him and be justified by His righteousness.
- b. And we are told that because He says this, the Father has blessed Him!
 - The Father blesses Him because what He says is in full agreement with the Father’s will...
 - He speaks nothing on His own authority, but only what the Father has given Him!
 - Though His promises to us may seem too good to be true if we once admit our sin and wickedness,
 - They are not empty promises...
 - God has truly blessed His work of mediation for us...
 - He has accepted His sacrifice for our sins and has proven that by raising Him from the dead.
 - His work is not cursed of God, but blessed and effective.
 - All we have been told in the gospel is true.
 - Jesus I not like those wretched ministers that have always plagued the church by telling people that God loves them apart from Christ...
 - Those who speak words of peace to flatter those persons who suppose that they do not need to repent...

- and that God will accept them apart from the offering of Christ for their sins.
- Such prophets do not receive God's blessing, but His curse.
- Only the words of King Jesus are fully authorised by the Father...
 - God will do all that His Son has promised.
 - Jesus is His faithful prophet and servant who has done all His will in order that we might obtain God's favour.

TRANS> And so you see the superior excellence of King Jesus to the sons of men.

B. And because the Father is with King Jesus, we call upon Jesus to put down all that is evil and unjust...

- In verse 4-5, say to Him,
 - "Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty. And in Your majesty ride prosperously"

1. You are to get excited about Him going to war!

- a. You are to rejoice because you know that He is the Mighty One,
 - And as the Mighty One, He will certainly prosper in battle!
 - No foe can stand against Him.
 - He needs only to speak a word and His enemies are either eternally miserable or eternally reconciled.
 - He is able to bring down great men, great nations, and great movements.
 - The strongholds of this world may seem indestructible to us at time, but He needs only to blow them down.
 - And He will!
 - He will reign until all His enemies are brought under His feet.
 - Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord.
 - There is no power that can resist Him in the end.

b. In verse 5 we rejoice in the mighty weapons He uses which always hit their mark...

- His sharpened arrows strike to the very heart of His enemies so that they fall down before Him...
 - You may think of these arrows as His powerful word...

1) For His elect enemies who are chosen for salvation...

- His sharp arrows pierce their hearts with conviction of sin.
- a) He thunders against them with His holy law,
 - He causes them not only to tremble before Him,
 - but also to loath their sinful condition—
 - to be utterly disgusted with themselves and ashamed of their wicked deeds and their corrupt heart.
- b) How many mighty men have been stopped in their tracks and brought to their knees before mighty King Jesus!
 - Not one of His elect is ever able to escape His sharpened arrows,
 - Every one of them is brought to repentance...
 - There is ravenous Saul, humbled and brought down to His knees on the Damascus road...
 - There is an intellectually proud Augustine, humbled to the dust before the King of Glory and made a servant in His house...
 - There is a gutter drunk brought to his senses and given a whole new beginning through the arrows of King Jesus.
 - Right here in our church, we have many fascinating stories of those who have been struck in the hearts by the arrows of King Jesus.
- 2) And then there is another kind of enemy that He also strikes with His darts.
 - There are those enemies He leaves to their own way until at last He strikes them with a fiery dart of judgement...
 - There are those Goliath's who fall to their death uttering blasphemies against our King...
 - There are those Jezebels that fall to their death and are eaten by the dogs...
 - There are those boasting Herods and Antichoses that are eaten with worms.
 - In His unsearchable wisdom, His arrows always accomplish their intended purpose...
 - All that the Father gives to Jesus will come to Him...
 - All that the rest will feel His arrows of judgement.
 - He will not allow anyone to continue to rage against His Father—which we all do until He brings us down!
- c. If you love God,

- how glad you should be when you see the Lord Jesus strapping on His sword to go to war!
 - Things always happen when goes forth to war!
 - Things cannot remain the same...
- How you ought to pray that the sword of His word would go forth in our day...
 - Tell the Lord to gird on His sword and to ride prosperously into the battle...
 - Tell Him to bring every enemy to his knees!

TRANS> But the fact that He always prospers is not the only reason to encourage Him to ride forth to battle!

- It would be a terrible thing to one so mighty and prosperous going forth if His cause were not good—
 - if He was going forth for wickedness instead of righteousness!
 - To see a powerful Stalin or a powerful Devil going forth to war is a dreadful spectacle indeed...
 - For they go forth to undo all that is right...
2. But you can fully rejoice to see Jesus go to war because He always goes forth to put things right that are wrong!
- a. The conclusion to His work is that everything that is wrong will be made right.
 - As verse 4 declares, “He rides forth because of truth, humility and righteousness!”...
 - that is, **for the sake** of truth, humility, and righteousness.
 - b. Truth, humility, and righteousness are lost in our fallen world...
 - 1) Consider:
 - Instead of truth,
 - we live in world of empty lies and falsehood...
 - Instead of humility,
 - we have such arrogance that we think we can make a life without God’s help.
 - Though He feeds us daily, we do not give thanks to Him,

- Though He gave us our lives, we do not look to Him to uphold them...
- Though we are desperate sinners, we think we are okay.
- Instead of righteousness,
 - We live in a world of wickedness and cruelty
 - a world where innocent children are killed by their own mothers,
 - a world where parents are not honoured,
 - a world where men abuse their wives,
 - a world full of malicious gossip that spreads like wildfire.
 - And that is not even to speak of the sins that dominate the heart of every human being but for the grace of Jesus Christ!

TRANS> Oh it is a sad condition that we are in...

2) And what is perhaps worst of all,

- We are so accustomed to it, that we don't even see what a mess it is!
- We are like a child who lives in a slum with a sewer running through his front yard and doesn't know any difference...
 - Until Jesus opens our eyes, we do not know that we are missing the truth...
 - Until Jesus shows us that we live only by the mercy of God, we do not see the vileness of our pride...
 - And until Jesus shows us the holy law of God and what we ought to be a human beings,
 - we do not see our unrighteousness!

c. But blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ!

- He rides forth prosperously to restore what is fallen!
 - His glorious work that He will certainly accomplish by His almighty majesty and power is the restoration of truth, humility and righteousness!
 - He goes forth to establish a kingdom where there will be no more lies and no more pride and no more unrighteousness...
 - He builds a glorious city whose builder and maker is God...
 - a Kingdom of eternal happiness and rectitude!

- How glad you should be to see Him mounting His horse to go forth to battle!
 - Good will come of it!
 - Call Him with gladness to gird His sword on His thigh and ride forth!
 - For His reign is altogether glorious!

TRANS> And that brings us to the next thing we are taught to sing praises to Him for...

C. We are to praise Him concerning His glorious reign!

- We shall examine four things about the glory of His reign:
 - that it is a lasting reign, that it is a righteous reign, that it is a joyful reign, and that it is an influential reign.
 - But before we look at these particulars,
 - I want you notice the change here from the king praised as a mighty war-hero to the king praised as the head of a beautiful and glorious kingdom.
 - We have seen that He is a mighty war-lord who subdues all His enemies,
 - but now we see that He is also one who establishes the kind of kingdom that anyone in His right mind would be delighted to live in!
 - He is a conqueror indeed, but He is also a builder of a glorious city.

1. First, we praise Him that His is a lasting, eternal reign!

- a. In verse 6, we are here taught to say something very remarkable to our king!
 - Something that would be utterly inappropriate to say to any other king!
 - “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever!”
- b. With these words we are taught to confess that His kingdom is inviolable because He Himself is very God!
 - 1) His kingdom is indestructible because He is indestructible.
 - All other kings pass on and their kingdoms soon fade, however glorious they may have been,
 - but King Jesus is the very author of life and has been raised from death to reign forever and ever at God’s right hand.
 - He is the One who speaks and the world is created...
 - Who speaks again, and it is destroyed!
 - It is in Him that we live and move and have our being!
 - No angel, no devil, no king, no man has his being apart from our mighty Lord!

2) His throne cannot fail

- Of Him and through Him and too Him are all things.
- All history must be referenced to the glory of God.
- His throne will never be shaken because He is God.
 - He will reign forever and ever, and He will reign to perfection.
 - The day is coming when we will know His glory.

TRANS> And so we praise Him as the one who builds a kingdom that will never be destroyed...

2. Second, we praise Him that His reign is a righteous reign

- In the second half of verse 6, we tell Him:
 - “A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness.”
- a. We have already seen how He rides forth for the cause of truth, humility, and righteousness,
 - and so now it is repeated again and highlighted...
 - Righteousness is said to be His sceptre because it is the chief characteristic of His kingdom...
 - It is what makes His kingdom so different than what we are accustomed to in this world!
 - We live in a world where love—real love that would sacrifice for another—is the exception rather than the rule...
 - We have to constantly look out for our rights and defend ourselves and protect ourselves from the selfishness of our neighbour.
- b. But worst of all, we live in a world that lies under the wrath and curse of god because of our unrighteousness...
 - The whole world is justly sentenced to everlasting damnation because of our unrighteousness—the whole world lies in wickedness...
 - But in this fallen world there is this kingdom of the Lord Jesus that is set up, and this kingdom is characterised by perfect righteousness!
 - It is a kingdom that God is pleased with—right here in the midst of this fallen world!
 - Jesus is the Lord of this righteous kingdom, and He calls you to enter it.

- He has made the way for fallen miserable sinners to become righteous by His death on the cross...
 - He hates wickedness and He loves righteousness—
 - so much so that He has given Himself to be cursed in order that He might restore us to righteousness!
 - He has actually taken upon Himself the curse that we justly deserve—even the pains of Hell—in order that we might be established in this righteous kingdom.

TRANS> And so this kingdom that He establishes is not only eternal, but it is also righteous... everything about it is in the fullest sense virtuous.

3. Third, we praise Him that that His reign is a joyful reign...
 - a. The subjects of His kingdom are happy subjects because He is a happy king.
 - 1) He is said to be anointed with oil of gladness.
 - Kings were anointed with oil at that coronation to show that they were set apart to their office...
 - Prophets and priests were also anointed for their offices.
 - This was done by pouring oil upon them—
 - fragrant oil that ran down upon their garments.
 - 2) The oil represented the pouring upon them of the Holy Spirit to fulfil their offices by the help of God.
 - Jesus, coming as man, was in need of the Holy Spirit in order to carry out His work.
 - As mediator, He is one person with two natures,
 - but these natures are not confused...
 - He needed what every man needs—
 - not every fallen man—but what every person would need even if he were not fallen.
 - You see, human beings were not made to live apart from God's anointing.
 - We think rightly that God's Spirit is given to restore us to holiness...
 - But we need to understand that even if we had never fallen, we would be dependent on the Spirit to live for God.
 - The Spirit is the one who enables us to live in intimate communion with God,

- receiving His grace to saturate and fill our lives with beautiful, holy living.

3) The fall cut us off from God's Spirit,

- But King Jesus is called "the Messiah" which means "the anointed one."
- His name "Christ" also means "the anointed one."
- **Messiah** is based on the Hebrew word and **Christ** is based on the Greek word. Both mean "the anointed one."
- And so it is that Jesus is **the** anointed one...
 - He is anointed with the oil of gladness more than His companions.
 - In fact, in this fallen world,
 - He is the source by which all others are anointed.
 - He alone, as the one who loves righteousness and hates iniquity, is given the Holy Spirit by right...
 - And it is only through His gift that any one else has the Spirit.

b. But notice what the oil is called...

- It is called the **oil of gladness** that comes out of the ivory palaces and that makes Him glad.
- 1) The Spirit is called the oil of gladness because it is the Spirit that makes us glad!
- A truly happy man is a man who walks with God, knowing Him, delighting in Him, serving Him, and so on...
 - And it is the Spirit who gives us gifts and graces to do this.
 - And so it is that those who are full of the Spirit are as those whose garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia...
 - Their lives are a sweet savour...
- 2) Jesus is glad because His garments are saturated with these delicious odours,
- and He provides garments for all who live in His house.
 - The Spirit is given to them and flows out of them like river (as a smell fills the room) for the enrichment and delight of others...
 - Jesus promised to give this blessed anointing to all who believe in John 7 when he stood and cried out, saying:

- “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

TRANS> And because His reign is eternal, righteous, and joyful, we need to be surprised that fourthly,

4. We have occasion to praise Him because His reign is influential.
 - a. A king’s influence is seen by those who are brought into subjection to Him.
 - 1) We have already seen that He will bring all into subjection to Him—
 - either by passing them over to destruction...
 - or by bringing them into glad submission to His rule...
 - 2) But in verse 9 He is praised as the one who brings the nations into glad submission...
 - The picture has become that of a wedding and we are told that King’s daughters are among His honourable women...
 - King’s daughters are the nations, brought to honour Him and serve Him.
 - I will have more to say about this later,
 - but for now, understand that these who come actually make up His bride...
 - They too become one with the church, His Bride and are made His own.
 - b. And so you see here that the nations come in great numbers to honour Jesus.
 - He is honoured as the One who rescues the world from ignorance, pride, and wickedness...
 - and who brings them to truth, humility, and righteousness!
 - He has rescued us from our ruin and brought us into this wonderful kingdom
 - this kingdom that lasts forever,
 - this kingdom that He rules with a righteous sceptre,
 - this kingdom that is full of the joy of the Holy Spirit...
 - and yes, full of glad subjects from all the families of the earth!

TRANS> And so now our song turns from the praise of our king to address His glorious happy bride.

II. Consider what we are given to sing concerning the bride of King Jesus.

A. We begin an exhortation to chastity on her wedding day!

- v. 10: “Listen O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your own people also and your father’s house; so the King will greatly desire your beauty...

1. What an appropriate exhortation for the bride of Jesus!

a. She is to leave everything in order that she might devote herself entirely to her glorious husband!

- O bride of Christ, there is nothing in your old way that is worth holding on to!
 - You have left all those dark ways, all those proud ways, all those wicked ways.
 - You have come to live a blessed new life in the house of King Jesus...
 - The old things are passed away, all things are become new!
 - You must count them all as dung that you may enter into the joy of your new relationship with King Jesus!

b. Oh bride of Christ, you understand nothing if you think you are losing something by this new relationship to Jesus!

1) It is all gain!

- Yes, you live in a world that hates Him, but it will not always be so.
- When He has finished His work,
 - the world will be a world of pure love.
 - Satan and all who are in league with him will be cast into the outer darkness where they belong—where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth...
 - But you will live in a kingdom of love.

2) A kingdom where the riches of the world are used to do good rather than to do evil.

- The daughter of Tyre will come with a gift and the rich among the people will seek your favour...
 - Tyre was the nation of commerce—the trading giant of the world.
 - And she is seen bringing her riches to Christ’s bride.

- We too often see the abuse of riches and it makes us think that riches are bad and opposed to God...
 - But they are not—they are God’s good gifts to man-kind...
 - Riches are altogether lovely when they are used for His glory with gratitude to Him and as an expression of love to one another.
- Heaven is no Gnostic ideal, stripped of all material beauty and glory...
 - It is a place where the industry of man is brought to its full height to bestow gifts of beauty drawn forth from God’s creation upon one another.
 - Riches do not belong to Satan, but to Christ, and He will take them back for His own purposes.
 - Yes, you are called to make many sacrifices in this fallen world now,
 - you are called to follow Your Lord, to deny yourself, and take up your cross daily...
 - but we will no longer bear the cross in heaven!
 - We will live in the glory of Christ’s kingdom, enjoying gold and silver and sumptuous banquets and beautiful things without the corrupting selfishness and pride that ruins them in this fallen world!
 - You lose nothing when you forsake all for Christ!
 - You are exhorted to be His pure and chaste bride, completely devoted to your husband.

2. And when you do this, O bride of Christ,

- verse 11 reminds you that the King will greatly desire your beauty!
 - a. This is a marvellous thing!
 - Your Lord Jesus desires your beauty when you are chaste and holy bride!
 - It was the purpose of His work to restore you to the image of God,
 - to replace what was defiled and stained and ruined with what is pure and spotless and lovely!
 - to put your garments of pride and put on garments of gratitude and dependence on your Maker.
 - to put off lying and put on garments of truth...
 - to put off envy and covetousness and make you into one who considers the interests of others more than your own...

- to bring you into a kingdom where everyone is doing that so that everyone is blessed!
- b. This is what Jesus wants to see!
- 1) This is the beauty of His bride!
 - This is the thing He delights in!
 - In Ephesians 5, we are told that:
 - Eph 5:25-27: Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.
 - 2) I know that you have not yet obtained this beauty...
 - There is still much that is corrupt and defiled in you...
 - But the good news is that Jesus is at work in you to make you beautiful!
 - It is for you to gladly leave behind your old ways and to submit to His work in you...
 - submit to the chastisements and to the hard things that are necessary to complete His work in you.
 - He is not a harsh husband, but neither is He as weak and indifferent husband...
 - He has a definite agenda and He will accomplish His work in you.
 - He greatly desires your beauty, and He will see to it that you are beautiful...
 - 3) And let me add that He already delights in the fruits He has given you...
 - Yes, bride of Christ, He delights in what is lovely in you!
 - He greatly delights in your beauty and remembers even the cup of cold water given in His name!
 - Do not see Him as an every frowning husband.
 - He is nothing of the kind—
 - He looks at whatever small steps we take in holiness and He rejoices, just as a glad parent rejoices when his child begins to stammer out his first words...
 - not because he has perfect speech, but because there is a beginning.

- c. How glad you should be to leave all for King Jesus!
 - He is now your Lord!
 - It is for you to worship Him!
 - To live your life for Him and to lose yourself in absolute devotion to Him.
- B. And so the song continues in verse 13-15 with the praise of the bride's beauty!
1. She is said to be "all glorious within"
 - a. The beauty of her new heart and her new life is hidden for her Lord...
 - The world does not yet see what you will be...
 - The world does not appreciate the work that Christ has done in us.
 - It is a work that is in many ways hidden from their eyes.
 - They don't see what it is for a heart to be reconciled to God.
 - They have very little regard for such a thing.
 - b. But her first goal is not to impress the world...
 - Her beauty is first of all for her husband.
 - The picture here is of the bride gloriously apparelled, yet hidden away until she is presented to her husband.
 - It was the custom that no one should see her but her bridesmaids until she was presented to her husband on the day of her espousals.
 2. But here her beauty is described as one who will be presented to her husband on her wedding day!
 - a. She is all glorious within the palace, her clothing is woven with gold...
 - She is arrayed in the robes of the righteousness of Jesus Christ!
 - She is presented to Him as one who has been washed in His own blood that was shed on the cross to take away her sins.
 - b. But I want you to understand that this wedding day has a two-stage fulfilment.
 - 1) There is a sense in which it speaks of the time when Christ, after He had suffered, took His place at the right hand of God and took the church to be His bride...
 - He had purchased her by the blood of the cross and she became His own.
 - She was presented to Him with her companions to live with Him forever.

- She was brought to Him with joyfulness, arrayed in the glorious robes of righteousness that He had given to her...
 - There was a great sense of rejoicing when Jesus' sacrifice had been accepted,
 - and the people of God were then brought into a closer stage of fellowship with their Lord.
 - This is the first stage of her wedding...
 - Really, this is what we might call the betrothal period...
 - She is pledged to him, and to give herself to another is adultery,
 - she has been fully accepted because of His sacrifice...
- 2) but she still preparing herself for the day of her wedding in two ways...
- a) First, that she is being sanctified and purified for Him...
 - As we have seen, He is at work in her to make her beautiful, to cause her to be wholly devoted to Him and chaste.
 - This work will not be complete until we are at presented to Him at the last day without spot or blemish... a glorious perfected bride.
 - b) Secondly, that she is completing her number...
 - and that in two ways...
 - She is drawing companions to herself...
 - and she is bearing children for Him.

TRANS> And this leads to the third thing we are taught to sing concerning Christ's glorious bride...

C. We sing of her fruitfulness as the bride of Christ!

1. In verse 14, we see her coming to the her marriage with the king,
 - a. But she is not alone! It says:
 - Ps 45:14-15: "The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to you. With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; they shall enter the King's palace!"
 - b. Who are these virgins that are called her companions?
 - They are the nations of the world...
- 1) Like the woman at the well,

- She goes to them and she says, “Come see a man” and she returns with all her companions following her...
 - She cannot but speak to them of the glories of her bridegroom!
 - Of His fairness, of the grace that is upon His lips, of power and glorious kingdom or righteousness, or His eternal gladness and His love for her!
- 2) And they look at her and they see the change in her...
- They see the hope she has and her joy in the King and her love for them...
 - And they say, let us go with you and see your beloved!
 - And so the prophecy of Zechariah 8 is fulfilled:
 - Zech 8:21-23: The inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying, “Let us continue to go and pray before the LORD, And seek the LORD of hosts. I myself will go also.” Yes, many peoples and strong nations Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, And to pray before the LORD. Thus says the LORD of hosts: “In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard *that God is with you.*’”
 - And they come from all around, virgins who have been purified from all their idolatry to serve the King alone—
 - They come with joy and with gladness to the wedding...
 - And in so doing, they do not just come to watch the wedding,
 - but they become one with the bride so that they too are wed to the king and enter His eternal palace to live with Him forever.
 - They are not ever so many individual brides because the bride is the church, the assembly of those who belong to Christ...
 - And they conquered by Him and by His church because they were already chosen by Him to complete the church.
 - The bride will continue adding to herself until all the elect have been brought in and the number is complete.
 - As we saw in verse 3, the bride bids her bridegroom to put on His sword and go out to conquer the nations.
 - She bids Him to ride valiantly for truth, humility and righteousness, knowing that it is by His sword that the nations are brought to honour Him!

- O brothers and sisters, let us offer up such prayers to our bridegroom!

- What a beautiful picture as they come with joy and gladness from all around to the great wedding!

TRANS> But it is not only in gathering the nations that the Bride of Christ is fruitful...

2. She is also fruitful in that she conceives and bears sons for Him!

a. Verse 16 says,

- “Instead of Your fathers shall be Your sons, whom you shall make princes in all the earth.”

- This speaks of a glorious succession—

- They are sons who come along in the body of Christ to take the place of their fathers as the history of the church unfolds from one generation to the next.

b. These are not rebellious sons, but sons who honour the King and who serve Him in the land according to His will.

1) The Bride of Christ is a faithful mother who trains them up to love her husband... because she loves Him...

- She serves Him with glad submission and teaches them His glorious ways...

- She tells them of His goodness and valour and love, and chastens them when they rebel.

- She rejoices in the riches of His grace and spreads a rich table for them at which they feast...

- a table that is supplied by Her husband!

2) And so her children join her in glad service to Him... they become princes in all the earth to the royal household who speak with their enemies in the gate!

a) But interestingly verse 16 is not actually addressed to the bride, but to the bridegroom, and perhaps the bride with her...

- We can't see this in our translation, but in the original it changes from the feminine to the masculine.

b) This reminds us that the bride herself—the church—is not able to bring forth sons for the kingdom

- It is only because of her union with the king that she brings forth children for honour instead of children for shame...
 - It is not her own, but the nurture and admonition of the Lord that she brings them up under...
 - If she does not, then she brings forth children of rebellion for sorrow and destruction.
 - She must set before them His pure word and not her own.

- c) Did not God say this concerning Abraham when He promised to bless his seed in Genesis 18:19?
 - Did He not say:
 - “I have known him in order that he may command his children and his household after him that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has promised?”
 - And what had He promised but that His descendants would belong to God?
 - But you see, this promise depended on Abraham commanding his children to keep the way of the Lord...
 - The church is filled with the history of unfaithfulness in the bride of Christ to do this...
 - It behoves us to look to our husband to help us bring forth children for His honour and not for shame.
 - And though we may lament the bride’s unfaithfulness, let us never cease to rejoice that there has also been a glorious succession to princes who have taken the place of their fathers in the kingdom.

TRANS> So you see then that we are a fruitful bride for Christ in two ways—

- In gathering His elect from the nations by the preaching of the gospel...
- In bearing children for Him and bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
- So in our song,
 - We call the glorious bride of Christ to be chaste, we admire her beauty, and we rejoice in her fruitfulness.
 - All this because of her most excellent husband who has come to make her His own and to make her lovely!

Brothers and sisters, this is our song with which our hearts are to overflow!

- And we conclude our song with a pledge:
 - Ps 45:17: "I will make Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the people shall praise You forever and ever."
 - We are to see to it that the bride of Christ continues to rejoice in her Lord forever...
 - Here we promise to the groom that we will do our part to cause His name to be remembered from generation to generation!
 - We cannot possibly make this happen by the strength of our own endeavours...
 - But we make this pledge in the confidence of the One of whom we sing...
 - The One who is fairer than the sons of men!
 - who has grace poured out on his lips...
 - who rides in majesty and glory to conquer the earth for the sake of truth, humility and righteousness
 - The God who came to earth to establish His throne on earth forever and ever,
 - a righteous throne
 - a joyful house for His lovely bride!
- It is a good theme!
- May the song continue forever!