

### **Study 3: Rejoicing in Jesus' Kingly Beauty**

Psalms 45 is a royal wedding psalm.

There are 14 verses divided between the descriptions of the groom and bride. 8 are given to the groom and 5 to the bride.

It is a song likely sung by someone close to the king, someone who knows him and has seen the type of man and king he is.

What is it about this king that has so captured the attention of the psalmist?

#### **The First Aspect of the King's Beauty - Speech**

The king is more excellent than other men.

What stands out about him is, in the first instance, his speech. The king speaks with lips covered in grace.

Because of his gracious speech, God has blessed him with his favour forever.

#### **The Second Aspect of the King's Beauty - War**

The psalmist is amazed at his ability to wage war.

He is described as a mighty one, glorious and majestic.

How does this king wage war? He doesn't love war or the shedding of blood. Nor does he do it to make a name for himself. He wages war to establish a kingdom of truth, humility and justice. He wages war to bring all other nations into his blessed kingdom.

What do wars and weddings have in common? It is a royal wedding. Royal weddings and war are connected.

The bride is from another country. V10. The bride is instructed to forget her people and her father's house. A standard instruction and practice when marrying for diplomatic reasons. It is a peaceful way of waging warfare. He is avoiding bloodshed by bringing people willingly into his family. Second, a wedding provides hope for a future lineage of kings. Heirs to the throne. Establishing a strong and ongoing kingdom that would have no end.

#### **The Third Aspect of the King's Beauty – Rulership**

The third aspect of the king's beauty is his skill in ruling a kingdom.

V6-7 God's kingdom, not the kings, is described as enduring forever. It is led by God with equality and a love for righteousness. Partway through V7, the Psalm swaps back to speaking of the king and his kingdom. V7 starts with a "therefore", making the descriptions above of

how God rules his kingdom seem to be attributed to the king. The king will then receive the blessing for ruling in the same way as God.

Who are these beautiful descriptions of rulership describing? God or the King? The king rules so that God is present in every action, proclamation, and decision. The king's rulership is Godly rulership. One cannot separate the king's actions from God's.

The king receives a blessing of the oil of gladness beyond his companions. This is the second blessing that is mentioned in the Psalm.

A king that is joyful to be around. His blessings overflow into his halls, filling them with pleasant and beautiful things. He smells wonderful; he has stringed instruments playing for his delight, and the women of his courts are the daughters of kings. And his mother, the queen, is dressed in gold as a mark of the king's success.

### **The Fourth Aspect of the King's Beauty - The beauty of the bride**

Not a description of her beauty but a series of instructions to listen and consider the psalmist's words.

First, forget your people and your father's house. The bride is from a foreign land and has left her family and people behind. She has entered a new culture and is about to marry the king. But it is hard to let go of her family from the past. If she lets go of where she came from and secures her future to Him, she will not be left unwanted or uncertain of her future. Her fate will be assured, a future where this wonderful king desires her as treasure... as a thing of beauty. He is all she will have, so how he sees and treats her is vital. But this king will see her as nothing less than beautiful and desirable.

Secondly, she is instructed that the king will be her lord. She is to bow... or worship him. She is likewise to be humble and know her place inside the kingdom. She will be the desired wife and queen. But the king is her lord and her husband. As the queen, many people from neighbouring nations will seek her favour. Through her marriage, she would be above many people. Still, she will not be above the king, and her attitude and relationship with him will be one of worship.

Instruction and encouragement complete the psalmist's moves to describe the bride on her wedding day and her procession from the preparation chamber to the king.

First, what does the wedding dress look like? Instead of a pure white gown, she is dressed in many-coloured robes threaded and woven with gold. She is eye-catching with her colour and display of wealth. It is not just that she is beautiful in her own right... but the king has made her beautiful. Her beauty comes from his wealth.

Second, as she walks toward the king, she has a train of attending women following behind her. She is unique among these women in the procession. She will be the first to be married among all the virgin companions. She is first among the women.

### **The Fifth Aspect of the King's Beauty - His Future Kingdom**

Now, the psalmist sings of the beauty of the future kingdom of this king.

How is it beautiful? It will go on forever. The king's gracious speech, method of warfare for justice, humility and truth, and way of ruling in a godly manner will be passed from generation to generation. His sons will become princes, emissaries, and agents of the king in the world. They will operate in his power. And V16 says they will take up places within all the earth. And for generations, the world will celebrate this king and praise him.

They will praise the king by singing this Psalm: "I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations; therefore, the peoples will praise you forever and ever".

### **Who is this king?**

The question we are left wondering is, who is this king in history? Some have thought of Ahab in his marriage to Jezebel. However, Ahab was an evil king, and Jezebel was known for killing prophets and feeding them to her dogs. Together, they promoted the worship of Baal.

Solomon is another likely choice, as he was the most successful king in Israel's history. Known for his God-given wisdom, he led the nation into a time of immense prosperity. But he also made many decisions that were wise according to the world but not according to God. His marriage alliance to Egypt was in direct disobedience to the decrees of God in Deuteronomy.

This song was also sung during the time of exile. When the kingdom of Babylon captured Jerusalem, the Davidic line was lost. Who were the Israelites singing about at the time when the promise of this king and his forever kingdom appeared all but impossible?

These attributes and beautiful descriptions of a perfect king apply only to one person. The grace covered lips in the speech and words we see in scripture. His victorious warfare on behalf of truth, humility, and righteousness when he defeated death and the devil. The way that he rules his kingdom in total harmony with the remaining figures of the Godhead, with equality, righteousness and a hatred of wickedness. He is above every other man, blessed by God and anointed with gladness.

When the people in exile sang, although they no longer had a Davidic king, they sang in hope for Jesus. Hope that a king like this would rise, defeat their enemies and establish a beautiful kingdom that would last forever. And a king did come.

We sing, not with questions of the accuracy of the description of a mortal king, not with a hope that a king will appear, but with total assurance. This is Jesus, and he is a beautiful king.

We are his bride, the church. Taken from a foreign land of darkness, instructed to intentionally forget where we have come from and our old love for that land so that we might be bound to the king. Desired, found and made beautiful by the king and for the king.

And we are placed in incredible power and desire among the heavenly realms. We will call him king and husband and worship at his feet.

Martin Luther used to tell the gospel as the story of a king (representing Jesus) marrying a poor girl of "ill repute" (representing us). At their wedding, she would say to him, "All that I am I give to you, and all that I have I share with you." In that moment, she shares with him all her debts and shame. Then the king would reply, "All that I am I give to you, and all that I have I share with you." At which the wretched girl becomes the queen, and all the kingdom is hers. Just so, our great bridegroom has taken all our sin, our death, our judgment, and he shares with us all his life and perfect righteousness. He has become poor that we might share his riches. It is the great marriage swap, or what Luther called the "joyful exchange." Christ is one with his people, and so all theirs is his, and all his is theirs.

Spotify - Matt Searles – O King (Psalm 45)