

## THE BRIDEGROOM AND HIS BRIDE (Ps. 45)

The psalm introduces itself as a ‘song of loves’, or a ‘song of the beloved’. It was composed by the temple director of music (the ‘chief musician’) for the bride and groom, very probably for the wedding of Solomon to the Pharaoh’s daughter (I Kings 3:1). With great joy, *My heart is inditing a good matter [My heart is stirred by a noble theme]*, the psalmist’s purpose is to relate the beauty and grandeur of the auspicious occasion, <sup>1</sup> *I speak of the things which I have made touching the king [I address my words to the king]: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer*. The title ‘Shoshannim’ (‘lilies’) refers to the springtime and Passover season, and the music was performed by the sons of Korah, for teaching and instruction (‘maschil’), **Ps. 45:1** *To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves*.

Almost immediately, though, the psalmist veers off to aspects not associated with King Solomon for the psalm speaks about putting on the sword and riding into battle, v.3-5, but Solomon never fought in any battles, - he wasn’t a soldier or a warrior. Indeed, the Lord told David his father, **I Chron. 22:9** *Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. ...* So, while the psalm began with an event in the life of Solomon, the Messiah becomes the prominent character.

The psalmist begins to describe the Messiah using a human perspective, <sup>2</sup> *Thou art fairer than the children of men ...* The Messiah is a man who stands higher than all the rest of the men. This is complimented in v. 8, *All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces ... He comes from the ivory palaces ... His home is greater and grander than any earthly individual’s. And from His ‘ivory palaces’ He came to this world and His garments smelled of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia. ...* When the Lord Jesus lay in the manger, the Magi brought Him myrrh and frankincense (Mt. 2:11) ... Also, when He lay in the tomb, Nicodemus brought Him myrrh and aloes (Jn. 19:39), and the psalmist using these spices to relate to the Messiah’s humanity.

Then the Messiah is described as a vessel, ... *grace is poured into thy lips ...* There could be two aspects to this ... Firstly, as Isaiah wrote concerning Him, **Is. 61:1** *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me [i.e. poured upon Me]; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings. He was chosen and set aside for the Gospel of God’s grace to be ‘poured’ out upon sinners. The Messiah Who was the ultimate ‘treasure in earthen vessels’, - God made flesh to dwell among us, yet at the same time - wrote John, - those around Him beheld His glory, - His divinity, His Godhood, - and testified of His grace and truth ... grace was ‘poured into’ Him.*

Secondly, the Messiah described as a vessel correlates with His experience in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He cried out to His Father in prayer, **Mt. 26:39** *O my Father,*

if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. ... The bitter wine of the cup of suffering from which He drank at Calvary was every drop by Him consumed ... and He received sufficient grace to drink it in full. ... He came as a man, but as the Son of God on the cross, He took upon Himself every drop of the punishment God's wrath required ... as grace was poured into His lips to do the Father's will ... And so, the psalmist proclaims ... **Ps. 45:2** therefore God hath blessed thee for ever ... Jesus Christ, The eternal and glorious God.

His work when He came to earth and left behind the 'ivory palaces' was formidable because He entered a battlefield raging with demonic conflict, but He was prepared because He was dressed in obedience to the Divine command, **3** Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. **4** And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. **5** Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. ... As the hymnwriter wrote,

Ride on, ride on in majesty!

... Then take, O Christ, Thy power and reign"

And that is where the psalmist comes to next ... When the Messiah came the first time, many people *excluded* Him, but when He comes again He will be *exalted*, - Jesus Christ the *exalted* King, **Ps. 45:6** Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre [*righteousness, - He will judge by His own righteous standards. He will not compromise on the Divine requirement but He will rule by His holy Law ... His authority unchallenged and unchanged*]. **7** Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows [*He is the crowned King of kings, the only Ruler, at Whose feet every knee shall bow*] ... and what the Psalmist prophesied about Him is so significant he is quoted in Hebrews ... **Heb. 1:8** But unto the Son [*that's the Lord Jesus Who is the Recipient in Ps. 45:6*] he [*God the Father*] saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever – *That's God the Father acknowledging the Godhood of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ!* ... It's the same truth contained in Ps. 110:1, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. **2** The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies ... **5** The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. **6** He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.

He is the glorified King upon the Throne of Heaven, and He will return to earth and be the King of kings. He Who made Himself of no reputation for the sake of the salvation of His people, has had that glorious reputation of His Godhood restored, and there is coming a day when the whole **Hab. 2:14** earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. The next time He comes, they will know immediately Who He is, - some will rejoice, and some will mourn ... but *all*

will recognise Jesus Christ as the King of kings, the Sovereign God, the *only* God! That is the ultimate for Him, to be worshipped. That is the desire He initially had for all His creation, to worship Him, and glorify Him forever ... Has He ‘given up’ on that desire, though, and ‘handed in the towel’? Does He reckon it is not possible anymore? Is He going to make do with ‘whipping us away off’ somewhere and not seeing the earth filled with the knowledge of His glory, as it was before the Fall? ... No, He has not given up for this world was created in all its beauty for His glory ... and He will restore for that purpose, for what kind of a God would He be if He settled for anything less than His best!

I don’t know how He is going to do it, but *I know* He will because *nothing* can deflect from His plan ... <sup>6</sup> *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever* ... He is the King and He is in control, and in Whose company is He? ... <sup>9</sup> *Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir* ... That’s the King’s new Bride, the Bridegroom and the Bride, - remember, this is a wedding psalm. The Hebrew word for king is *melek*, and the Hebrew word for queen is *malkah*, however, a different word is used in Ps. 45:9 ... and it is only used four times in the Old Testament and it always refers to *Gentile* queens. It is the word *shegal*, and it is found here, Neh. 2:6 (*And the king [Artaxerxes] said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him),*) and in Dan. 5:2,3 (<sup>2</sup> *Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.* <sup>3</sup> *Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.*), and it is the word *shegal*.

Is there any significance in why this word is used, and not the normal word, *malkah*? If so, what might it be? ... Solomon has married a daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh ... a *Gentile* ... Israel is God’s beloved for He had chosen them out of all the nations, **Zech. 2:8** *he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye* ... Then in the same passage He said, - concerning the coming of the Messiah, - **10** *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee [Zion, Jerusalem], saith the LORD.* **11** *And many nations [i.e. goyim, Gentiles] shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people [... Jews and Gentiles].* When God uses the term ‘my people’ in the Old Testament, He is always referring to the Jews (e.g. **Ex. 5:1** *Let my people go;* **Is. 51:16** ... *say unto Zion, Thou art my people.* However, the Lord’s plan of salvation also includes Gentiles, **Zech. 2:11** *And many nations [Gentiles] shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people* ... As also Simeon quoted when he held the baby Jesus in his arms, **Lk. 2:32** *A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.*

The Lord’s plan includes the salvation of Gentiles, so the Church consists of both Jews and Gentiles (cf. Rom. 11) ... and what a beautiful way this Psalm 45 could be

hinting at, by using this word for ‘queen’ which always relates to Gentiles ... Look at it again, **Ps. 45:9** Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: *upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.* ... The Bridegroom with His Bride (consisting of both Jew and Gentile).

The remainder of this Messianic Psalm relates to the Bride’s beauty. The Bridegroom has transported her away from her former life in Godless Egypt, - the country known for its enslavement of God’s people, - He has taken her out of the world and brought her into His home in Zion, **10** Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; **11** So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. She is in a new family now, and she will be attended by those from the nations out of which she was taken, and she will be in the King’s presence with them, **12** And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour ... Zechariah sheds light on who these are as he writes, **Zech. 14:16** And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

... It will be a changed world when Jesus comes to reign, and He rejoices in His family, **13** The king's daughter is all glorious within [*Eph. 5:27 ... a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but ... holy and without blemish*]: her clothing is of [*precious*] wrought gold. **14** She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework [*perfect precision*]: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. **15** With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace. ... They are all one in *the King's palace* ... as the psalmist concludes, **16** Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children [*continuous succession*], whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. **17** I will make thy name [*... the Name which is above every name*] to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

Sing we the King who is coming to reign,  
 Glory to Jesus, the Lamb that was slain;  
 Righteousness, peace then His empire shall bring,  
 Joy to the nations when Jesus is King.

Kingdom of Christ, for thy coming we pray,  
 Hasten, O Father, the dawn of the day  
 When this new song Thy creation shall sing,  
 Satan is vanquished, and Jesus is King.