

Although the psalmist was likely writing in praise of a human king, Psalm 45 seems to be Messianic in nature. We do not know the identity of the human king that the psalmist was writing to honor, but the characteristics describing this king and his bride seem to foreshadow Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16), and His marriage to His bride at His return (Rev. 19:6-9).

Commentators believe that this psalm is written to celebrate the king's wedding, although there is some disagreement as to the identity of that king. Some believe it to be Solomon marrying an Egyptian princess, or perhaps David marrying some other woman. However, these people do not seem to match the characteristics listed in the psalm. For this reason many commentators believe that the psalmist is symbolically referring to the LORD as king, perhaps Jesus Christ the Messiah and His marriage to His people.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves.

1 My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

“To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim [a musical instrument; “On the Lilies”]” – Commentators do not agree on the meaning of “Shoshannim.” Some believe it to be the name of a musical instrument that should be played when performing this psalm, while others translate the words as the name of a song whose tune this psalm should be played to. This part of the title seems to be giving instruction to the chief musician (the song leader) about how the musical backdrop of the psalm should be handled.

“for the sons of Korah” – The sons of Korah were a family within the Levites who were apparently in charge of the musical worship of the LORD. Presumably the psalmist wrote this psalm with the intent that the sons of Korah would perform it.

“Maschil [instruction], A Song of loves” – This psalm was written to be instructive, teaching about the glory of the king and the love that he has for his bride. If the king refers to the LORD or Christ, then we are to read this psalm to learn of the love that He has for His people.

“My heart is inditing [to boil or bubble over; to overflow] a good [pleasant; agreeable] matter [utterance; speech]” – The psalmist's heart is overflowing with joy to say good things about the king and his bride.

“I speak of the things which I have made touching the king” – The psalmist will now speak the words he's prepared concerning the king.

“my tongue is the pen of a ready writer” – His words will flow as readily as a writer who can't write fast enough to keep up with words that are coming to his mind. The psalmist is expressing his excitement and enthusiasm in praising the king.

2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

The psalmist begins by praising the king as being more handsome than other men and that his lips have been anointed by God to speak truth and grace. These things prove that the king will enjoy the blessings of God forever, a fact which is true of Jesus Christ.

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.

“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty” – Solomon, being a man of peace, would have no need to wear a sword and sheath. This picture seems to point to Christ's return in glory as a triumphant warrior (Rev. 19:11-16).

“And in thy majesty [honor; glory] ride prosperously because of truth and meekness [humility] and righteousness” – The psalmist pictures this king as one who rides into battle, not for selfish reasons such as capturing territory from the enemy, but humbly for the sake of truth and righteousness. The fact that this king does it prosperously indicates that is victorious in battle. This description applies to Christ's return in Rev. 19, Who will return to destroy the wicked and establish truth and righteousness on the earth.

“and thy right hand shall teach [to show; to demonstrate] thee terrible [awesome] things” – The king's right hand (the hand of power) will do awesome things that demonstrate his strength and authority, as will Christ at His return.

5 Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.

“Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies” – The arrows of the king are sharp, indicating their penetrating power. These arrows strike the king's enemies in the heart, indicating a powerful mortal wound.

“whereby the people fall [to lie prostrate] under thee” – These “people” (likely referring to the king's enemies) will lie prostrate under His feet, either because they are dead, or else because they have surrendered and submitted themselves to the king's will. When Christ returns, His enemies will either submit or be destroyed. We, who have already submitted ourselves to Him and our Lord and Savior, will stand by His side.

6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

“Thy throne, O God [’ēlôhîym – God; ruler; judge; angels], is for ever and ever” – The psalmist addresses the king using the word ’ēlôhîym, which is usually used of God but was also occasionally used to refer to someone in authority. The psalmist is possibly referring to a human king with the idea of an eternal throne referring to the promise of the LORD to David of an eternal kingdom that will be fulfilled in the Messiah. This verse indeed will find its complete fulfillment in Christ's eternal kingdom.

“the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right [upright] sceptre” – In contrast to men who become kings by violently overthrowing their predecessors or defeating them in battle, this king's throne is legitimate. He took the throne in righteousness and he rules in righteousness, an apt description of Jesus Christ.

7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness” – We see the character of this king, who loves righteousness and hates wickedness. This is especially true of Jesus Christ, Who will rule in righteousness and not tolerate wickedness in His kingdom.

“therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness [joy] above thy fellows” – This king has been blessed by God with joy because of his righteous nature. Even though Christ was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Isa. 53:3), His joy came after His death accomplished redemption for us (**Heb. 12:2** “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”).

8 All thy garments *smell* of myrrh, and aloes, *and* cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

Myrrh, aloes and cassia are aromatic substances used to make people and clothes smell good. The fact that his clothes had a pleasant smell was a reminder to the king of his wedding and the joy that it gave him. The ivory palaces alludes to the the beautiful and expensive places that provided his sweet smelling clothes.

9 Kings' daughters *were* among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

“Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women” – These are likely the bridesmaids who were daughters of foreign kings. They were apparently dressed in beautiful attire and were given places of honor during the wedding ceremony.

“upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir” – The gold of Ophir was considered to be the most pure in the ancient world. Surpassing the honor of the king's daughters is the king's bride who stood by him adorned in the purest of gold.

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.

“Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear” – The psalmist wants to give the new queen some advice.

“forget also thine own people, and thy father's house” – She is marrying the king, so she should devote herself to him. Her heart should not look back to where she came from. Instead, she should focus all her affection on her husband, the king.

“So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty” – As a result, the king will reciprocate and focus his love on her.

“for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him” – The reason that she should do this because he is now her lord to whom she should submit herself. There is a parallel to Christ and His bride. The bride of Christ should submit herself to her Lord, Jesus Christ.

12 And the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* with a gift; *even* the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. 13 The king's daughter *is* all glorious within: her clothing *is* of wrought gold.

“And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat [ask; beg] thy favour” – The daughter of Tyre (presumably the daughter of the king of Tyre) will bring a wedding gift as an expression of love and admiration. In addition to that, the rich and powerful people will come in order to seek the favor of the king and his bride.

“The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought [woven] gold” – This line seems to indicate that the bride is a king's daughter, similar to the bridesmaids in v. 9. She is “within” her bridal chamber getting prepared for the wedding. Her wedding dress is glorious because of the gold interwoven in its material.

14 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: 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.

“She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework” – When the bride is brought out to be presented to the king at the wedding ceremony, she will be wearing clothing embroidered with beautiful needlework.

“the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee” – The bridesmaids will accompany the bride and stand with her before the king for the wedding ceremony.

“With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace” – There is joy among the bride and her bridesmaids as well as those bringing them into the palace to the king for the wedding. This wedding is a joyous occasion.

16 Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. 17 I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

“Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth” – The ancestors of the king have died, but they will be replaced with the children of the king. They will become among the great rulers of the earth because they are sons of the king.

“I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations” – Just as the psalmist began this psalm speaking in the first-person (v. 1), he ends this psalm in similar fashion. He declares that he, through his writing, will ensure that the name of this king will be remembered by all generations of people. While we are unsure of the name of the human king, the name of Jesus Christ will be remembered throughout eternity.

“therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever” – Since the king will be remembered, the psalmist promises that the king will be praised forever as well. This is especially true of Jesus Christ.