

# **The Splendor of the King**

## **Psalm 45**

We're in between sermon series right now. [Explain] So this is a one-off sermon. It was difficult for me to know what to preach because I'm so used to just preaching the passage that's up next. But I really wanted to preach a passage that would be an encouragement to you.

Sometimes, we just need to experience joy. In the midst of so much pain and loss and confusion, we need joy. But not fickle joy. Not joy rooted in temporary, petty pleasures like...

- A new job/promotion.
- The latest toy: phone, video game, car.
- Or even a relationship.

We need a rooted joy. Joy in that which will give us full and lasting joy. Anything less is settling. You should aim for the fullest and longest lasting joy. Not half-full or even mostly full, but a cup overflowing. AND not one that will be here one moment and gone at the slightest change of circumstance, but one that will last forever.

What can give us that kind of joy? The writer of Psalm 45 found it. Psalm 45 has one of the most joyful tones of all the Psalms. This Psalmist is so happy! He's ecstatic! He's thrilled! The affections of his heart at 110%. Why? **[v1]**

What's he saying? "I'm so happy I just can't contain it. I have to write it down! My heart is filled with such joy and satisfaction." For what? Whom? The king. This Psalm is addressed TO the king." Who's that?

In the mind of the Psalmist, at least in part, it's a reference to his current king—the king of Israel—which makes this Psalm very unique. Most Psalms praise GOD, but this one praises a MAN—the king. Why would he do that?

We get a hint from the superscription **[read superscription]**. The "sons of Korah" likely musically performed this Psalm, but it seems an *individual* (maybe one of the sons of Korah) wrote the Psalm; he refers to himself in the first person in **[v1, "my, I"]**

So an individual is writing this Psalm to praise the king—BUT there's something more going on than just that. Notice the last part of the **[Superscription, "A love song."]** That could be translated as "a wedding song." As you may know, the Psalms are songs. And this song was played and sung by the sons of Korah *in a wedding*.

This is a Psalm about the love that exists between the king and his bride. More accurately: this is a song of praise for the king's love for his bride. The Psalmist's heart is not mainly stirred up by the love these two individuals have *for each other*. His heart is stirred up by the WAY the king loves his bride. His heart is overjoyed by both the splendor of the king AND the splendor he bestows on the one he loves.

My aim for this message is that your heart might overflow with THIS pleasing theme: *Your King is full of splendor and his splendor overflows upon you because he loves you*. So let's highlight the

various “splendors” of the king that the Psalmist delights in, beginning with...

**The Splendor of the King HIMSELF—Who He Is**

**[vv2-3]** He’s described as the most *handsome*. His *speech* is like *grace pouring from his lips*. He is blessed by God *forever*. He’s called “*the mighty one*.” His inherent being is *splendor and majesty*. This is who he is! That’s quite the description, isn’t it? Who’s he talking about? Can any man, king or not, live up to this?

NO ONE matches his beauty. NO ONE talks like him; he pours forth gracious, kind words all the time. His strength is unmatched. He IS splendor and majesty. One person said, “None of the historical kings [of Israel] who occupied the royal throne in Jerusalem ever lived up to the lavish praise in the psalm during their reigns, not even [king] David [the greatest king in Israel].” (NIV Zondervan Study Bible, 1038) There is no one like this king! He is full of splendor *in himself*!

***Secondly, the Psalmist delights in The Splendor of the King’s VICTORY*** (This is different in your

bulletin! Just insert this between points 1&2!)  
[vv4-5] That riding out pictures him on a horse leaving a batter he just won. And the Psalmist says, “That’s what he does. He wins his battles! All of them. He is undefeated.” What’s his battle? What is he fighting for? [v4b, “**for the cause of truth & meekness & righteousness**”]  
This is a king who fights for truth, and yet he does so in meekness and gentleness. That’s how he wins! That’s how he is victorious!

*His is about the truth*—he doesn’t lie, nor is he swayed by deceit. He fights with *righteousness*—he always *does* what’s right. And yet, he wins his battles in *meekness*. How can a king win a battle by being meek and gentle and lowly? That’s how you lose battles! So what kind of battle is he fighting? This is a unique king.

It makes you wonder who the Psalmist has in mind. It doesn’t sound like any of the kings of Israel, especially when mentions his delight in...

**The Splendor of the King's REIGN.** (That's our third point—it was point 2 in the bulletin.) **[v6a]** What? Who's he talking to NOW? Up until this point, the Psalmist has been explicitly directing his attention to the king. V2—"YOU are the most handsome of the sons of men..." V3—"Gird YOUR sword on your thigh, O mighty one..." V4—"In YOUR majesty, ride out victoriously..." And then in v6, he says, "YOUR throne, O GOD, is forever and ever."

Did the Psalmist change who he's talking to? He was talking TO the KING. Is he now talking to GOD? What's going on here? There's debate here. Some think he changed the subject. And they would say he simply means that the king's reign is *representative* of God's reign. And there's truth to that. But listen to how he continues to describe the king's reign. **[vv6-7]**

Catch that? Did he just refer to the king as "God." It was common in that day for the surrounding nations, like Egypt and Mesopotamia, to view their king as a god. But

LISTEN, that was NOT the case of Israel. Israel did not view her king as a god, because they were a monotheistic nation—meaning, they believed in ONE God.

So how in the world can the Psalmist address THE KING like this? “God, YOUR God, has anointed you...” Maybe he’s only addressing God, and then he qualifies it by saying that God is the king’s God. “God, who is your God, has anointed you.”

At the very least, it seems the Psalmist is intentionally blurring the lines of the king’s reign and God’s reign to such a degree that it sounds like more than just, “The king’s reign REPRESENTS God’s reign.” It sounds more like, “The king’s reign IS God’s reign BECAUSE...the king is himself God.”

That’s why he says in v6 that his reign goes on forever and forever. And why his reign is described in v7 as characterized by uprightness

and righteousness. And his reign bursts with beauty and splendor. **[v7b-9]**

His royal reign is full of splendor. And did you notice who's standing by his side? **[v9b, "the queen"]** This leads to the fourth point...

**The Splendor of the King's LOVE [vv10-12]**

Who's this "daughter"? This is not just some random woman. This is a woman in whom the king delights! V11 says the king desires her beauty." Why? We get a clue from what the Psalmist tells this "Daughter" to do.

**[v10—"forget your people and your father's house."]**

What does that sound like? The second part ("forget your father's house") sounds like Genesis 2:24, "Leave your father and mother and hold fast to your wife." So this "daughter" is his wife who will stand by his side as queen.

But what about the first part? "Forget your PEOPLE." This is not merely talking about a



woman who is leaving her family to marry this king. This is talking about a FOREIGN woman who's leaving her PEOPLE to marry this king and become part of his people. In other words, this is a GENTILE woman marrying the king of Israel.

“Forget your people...” He would NOT say that to an Israelite woman because his point is NOT “You should no longer identify yourself with your ethnic people group...” His point is: “You should forsake the WAYS of your people who worship false gods because the king is taking you as his bride.”

(Is this reminding you of anything? Doesn't this kind of picture show how you got saved? I don't wanna get ahead of myself.) But we're getting a picture of the setting of this Psalm. **[vv13-15]**

This is a picture of a bride being led to her groom. She's beautifully clothed (v13). She's being led to the king with her companions following behind her (v14). With much joy, they're escorting her to the king's palace (v15).

This is a wedding ceremony!

But notice: Though there is much glorious imagery describing the soon-to-be bride/queen, the focus is not mainly on her. HER beauty and HER joy are reflections of the KING'S LOVE for her. HE'S the one who provides her with her beautiful garments, and she is led to HIM.

It's almost like the Psalmist wants us to say, "Man, is she lucky to be chosen and loved by the king!" The emphasis is on pure, undivided, extravagant, intimate, precious, exclusive love that the king has for his bride. No one loves like this king! His love for his bride is so intense and so extravagant and so deep and so intentional and so secure and so glorious...it is unmatched!

And the joy of his bride is unmatched. She is so happy as she is led to see her husband, her king... anticipating: She's about to be HIS!

*Isn't that your favorite part of wedding ceremonies? When the bride walks down the*

*isle, being led to her groom. Whenever I do weddings, I love to look at the facial expressions of the bride and groom as they move closer and closer to each other. But most people fixate on the bride as she walks down the aisle. And that's good, but I like to (at least) catch a glimpse of the face of the groom. What does his face show he's feeling?*

*In one of mine and my wife's wedding pictures, it's a shot of me from the side, and I think I got an ugly cry going. In the background, you can see everyone looking towards the direction of my wife, except for my step-mom. Her eyes are looking over at me, and she has a big smile on her face, because she can see how happy I am to be receiving this beautiful bride as my own.*

The Psalmist delights in the king's love for his bride that brings her unhindered joy and delight.

Finally, ***the Psalmist delights in The Splendor of the King's LEGACY. [vv16-17]*** He's back to addressing the king, but the focus is now on his

future. Many sons will come from this king, and those sons will become princes over all the earth. (Clearly, there are echoes not only of the promise of David but the promise of Abraham, that kings shall come forth from his offspring.) And then it closes with these amazing words: “Nations will praise you FOREVER and EVER.”

Not only will his renown and legacy and royal reign last forever, but it will last forever OVER nations. Not just one nation. Not just Israel. His reign will be over the whole world!

### **No Ordinary King**

This...is...no...ordinary...King. There's just no way the king of Israel (at that time) could fit all the descriptions of the splendor of this King.

- His beauty surpasses every person.
- Grace gushes from his lips.
- His might and strength leave NO ROOM for defeat from his enemies!
- His throne is not only eternal, but HE is eternal, because he is God.

- His love for his bride is purer than the purest of loves.
- His legacy extends into infinity.
- And he will be praised by people from all over the world forever.

Do you know this King? Do you know how he is? We read about him in Hebrews 1, which quotes Psalm 45, "...of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.'" He says that "OF THE SON!" Who's that? Jesus! Which tells us, Psalm 45 is ultimately about JESUS!

Now, the Psalmist didn't know that fully when he wrote it, but he knew this King was coming; a King who would be this splendorous! And WE KNOW that King *has come*. Do you know him? Do you delight in him?

*Do you delight in the **splendor of who he is in HIMSELF**?* Jesus Christ is the most HANDSOME of the sons of men...NOT because he was necessarily pleasant to look at. Isaiah 53:2 says, "He had no form or majesty that we should look at him and no beauty that we should desire

him.” BUT RATHER, he is the most handsome of all men because of WHO HE IS! His beauty in his PERSONHOOD is unmatched!

GRACE gushes from his lips. Jesus Christ pours forth grace and kindness as he speaks. Why? Because this is WHO HE IS! John 1:14, “He is FULL of grace!” He is a King READY to lavish grace upon sinners like us. As one person puts it, “...his [grace] is not calculated and cautious, like ours. It is unrestrained, flood-like, sweeping, mag-nan-i mous ” (Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly*, 179) This is who he is! Do you delight in the splendor of who Christ is *in himself*?

*Do you delight in **the splendor of his VICTORY?***

Jesus defeated sin and death for us. How? With meekness and lowliness by dying himself! And listen, because of our sin, we were on the other side of the battle line. We were in enemy territory because we were his enemies. But instead of wiping us out in one fell swoop, he decides, “I’m gonna lay down my life for them.” Romans 5:10, “While we were enemies we were

reconciled to God by the death of his Son.” Do you delight in the splendor of his victory?

*Do you delight in **the splendor of his REIGN?*** No other king, no ruler, no monarch, no President has ever or will ever REIGN like King Jesus... because Jesus is not just a human king who reigns temporarily. He is truly God, and therefore, his reign will last forever.

*Do you delight in **the splendor of his LOVE?*** No one LOVES more purely or more extravagantly than Jesus Christ, as Eph. 5:25 puts it, “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...” That doesn’t include people only from the nation of Israel; he died for peoples from ALL nations! He secured a people/a bride for himself made up of foreigners and outcasts and unwanted and unlovable and those who were far off, and he paid a dowry for them, and the dowry was his life! No one loves like Jesus Christ loves.

There's a reason why the church (God's people) is described as the BRIDE of Christ. That metaphor is picking up on this major theme of the OT....a theme so vividly depicted in Psalm 45: Christ woos his people by his love, beautifies them by his love, and wins them by his love, like a faithful groom does for his bride.

Listen, Jesus Christ loves you with an unquenchable love. And he demonstrated that so clearly when he died and rose again for your sins. **[Gospel: Appeal to non-Christian]**

Would you receive this love? One person, for Jesus to stop loving you, he "would have to be sucked down out of heaven and put back in the tomb... [Therefore,] You're that safe" in his love. (*Gentle and Lowly*, 178) Do you delight in his love?

*Do you delight in the **splendor of his lasting legacy?*** A legacy where his name will NEVER be forgotten and his praise will never fizzle out. When we are 10 trillion years into eternity, we will not grow tired of praising him. Why?



Because the brightness of the splendor of King Jesus will never grow dim and our hearts will never grow dull towards him.

We will, for all eternity, be like that bride on her wedding day, full of delight and joy, as she is led to her groom.

## **Conclusion**

Do you know this King? Does your heart overflow with this pleasing theme: “YOUR King is full of splendor”? This is what we were made for! We were made to...

- Delight in this King—in who he is!
- Find security in his victory!
- Rest in his royal reign!
- Lavish in his love!
- Long for his lasting legacy!

O Kinney, behold the splendor of the King and may our hearts burst with full and lasting joy.