

THE Story of the Ages!

I. Slide #1 Intro:

- A. **Prayer:** Jesus, You are the fairest of 10,000.
- B. **Slide #2** We all remember last years Royal Wedding.
1. Prince William & Catherine Middleton were united in Holy Matrimony Friday April 29 2011, at Westminster Abbey.
 2. The pomp & circumstance, the crowds, the media trying to make drama, the procession, the service, the hats, the reception, the money, the Duke driving his dad's Aston Martin, military helicopters doing a flyby (flypast in the UK), the children on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, her dress, her beauty.
 - a) Most weddings focus on **the bride**, in Rev.19 the song, *Here comes the Groom* would be more appropriate.
- C. **Slide #3** This is a song of Love (see intro) that was composed by a **court poet(1)** upon the occasion of the marriage of **his king to a foreign princess**.
1. Later interpreted by the Jews as the Messiah & His bride as Israel
 2. Later to be interpreted as the Messiah & His bride as the Church.
 3. Alexander Maclaren, "Either we have here a piece of poetical exaggeration far beyond the limits of poetic license, or 'a greater than Solomon is here'."
 - a) So the poet is writing about a **specific king**, but also looking ahead & upward to that **ideal promised King** whose perfect & eternal reign was foreshadowed by the Jewish monarchy.
- D. This Royal Wedding evokes all the **sights, sounds, movement, splendor, & emotion** of such an important occasion.
- E. **We do not know** which earthly king & bride this was originally composed for.
1. **Might fit:** Solomon to the princess of Egypt; or, Solomon to the princess of Tyre; or, Joram & Athaliah (a Persian king & his bride).
- F. **This is specifically a messianic psalm.** Others include, **Ps.2,16,22,110** where **all** or **most** of the material refers to Jesus.
- G. **Outline:** we have a **short introduction(1)** & a **short conclusion(16,17)** & **in between**, the poet addresses the **groom(2-9)** & then addresses the **bride(10-15)**.
- H. **Slide #4 Title:** *THE Story of the Ages!*
- I. **Slide #5a The Background:** *Ancient Wedding Customs:*
1. **Betrothal** - A very **formal** act. **Arranged** by parents of bride & groom. **Legal** procedure enacted before witnesses, confirmed by oaths taken by the couple. **No physical union**, yet they could be called husband & wife (as with Joseph & Mary). Required a **divorce** to break this covenanted union.

- a) The husbands family was required to provide a **dowry**. Also there was usually a long delay between the betrothal & the time of the wedding itself.
2. **Slide #5b The Wedding Day** - The friends & attendants of the **bride** gathered at her house, where she prepared herself in her finest clothing & jewelry. The attendants of the **groom** would gather at his house.
 - a) **Slide #5c To the Brides house** - Then there would be *a grand procession* through the streets of the city as the groom & his attendants went to **fetch the bride**.
 - b) **Slide #5d Back to the Grooms house** - Then the entire wedding party would go from the brides home **to the grooms home**.
 - (1) At the grooms house there would be **joyful wedding feast**, which could last usually **1 week** (depending on the status & wealth of the groom's family).
 - (a) Jesus' parable about the *5 wise & 5 foolish virgins* envisions such a setting with a returning procession & feast. *Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.*
3. **So**, keep these *movements* in mind as we study Ps.45.
 - a) In **2-9** the **king comes** for his bride; In **10-12** **advice** is given to the waiting bride; In **13-15** the wedding **party enters** the palace.

II. **Slide #6 THE POETS INTRO! (1)**

- A. The theme assigned to him as court poet has stirred his emotions.
 1. A moving challenge **if** the wedding were only that of an **earthly** monarch & his bride.
 2. But to describe **the heavenly wedding** of Jesus Christ taking to Himself, His bride?
 - a) This isn't only a **noble theme**; it is *the theme of themes*.
 - b) It is the **ultimate meaning of all history**, *the story of the ages!*
 3. The language is so unusual that some commentators believe the poet is claiming **special inspiration**, *"My heart overflows with inspired words."* Herman Gunkel

III. **Slide #7 HERE COMES THE GROOM! (2-9)**

- A. **Slide #8a HIS CHARACTER! (2)**
- B. It starts with praise to the king, the bridegroom, who ultimately is Jesus.
- C. **Fairer** - he speaks of his **beauty**, [**yet**, Jesus while on earth had **no special beauty** that would attract people (Is.53:2)] - **It is the the beauty of His character, His words, & His works that makes us love Him.** [1 Pet.1:8 *whom having not seen you love*]
- D. **The most excellent of men**(NIV)
- E. **Gracious speech/words** - **Grace is poured upon your lips.**
 1. **Jesus**: He spoke w/authority. When His enemy sent soldiers to arrest Him, they returned & said, **"no one ever spoke the way this man does."** (Jn.7:46). Peter said,

You have the words to eternal life. He had power to calm the storm. To send demons away. Restrain enemies. And was able to draw men & women who were trapped by sin to faith. **And, His words still do this today!**

F. **Slide #8b HIS CONQUESTS!** (3-5)

- G. Though expressed in **graphic battle language**, really in Jesus' lifetime & in ours, it is not by *military conquests* but **victories** won on behalf of "truth, humility, & righteousness."
1. See, from a purely physical point of view it looked like Jesus' **enemies** were **victorious**, since they succeeded in having Him condemned & executed.
 2. **But**, in terms of **truth, humility, & righteousness**, Jesus **won**, since He upheld these characteristics in His person & conduct, **even when** He was being **unjustly treated**.
 - a) **We must remember, our victories come in the same way! Not by** force or coercion.
 - b) History showed when Christians used force as a way of asserting Christian truths/values (eg. middle ages) it had lost the spiritual battle.
 - c) The only sword we're supposed to use is **the sword of Jesus**, the truth of **the Word of God**

H. **Slide #8c HIS CROWN!** (6,7)

- I. God gave the king the throne because he loves what is right & just.
- J. **See**, Heb.1:8,9 *But to the Son He says...*

K. **Slide #8d HIS CLOTHING!** (8a)

- L. His clothes were prepared with **expensive perfumes** from distant lands.
1. **Myrrh** = a **resin** from East Africa or Arabia.
 2. **Aloes** = an aromatic **wood** from India.
 3. **Cassia** = a kind of **cinnamon** found in warm climates.

M. **Slide #8e HIS COURTS!** (8b)

- N. **Ivory palaces** - inlaid ivory paneling.
- O. **They have made you glad** - or, *the stringed instruments have made you glad* (ESV). [Festive music]
- P. (6,7) His **Throne**, **Scepter**, & **Anointing** all point to His sovereignty.
1. **Throne** – His rule will never end.
 2. **Scepter** – His authority will be executed in righteousness.
 3. **Anointing** – His Anointing w/the oil of gladness was truly *the joy that was set before Him!*

IV. **Slide #9 PRINCESS-BRIDE!** (10-15)

- A. Joyful expectancy & a touch of anxiety since the arrival of her groom will mean leaving her family & ancestral home...forever.
1. The writer turns to the bride in a **fatherly manner** to reassure her that **the future is bright!** - So, he gives her 3 words of counsel...
- B. **Slide #10a FORGET THE PAST!** (10) [she must be from a foreign country]
- C. Reminds us of **Abraham's call** to "leave your own country, your people & your father's household & go to a land I will show you." Gen.12:1
- D. Reminds us of **the Christians call**, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Lk.9:23 and, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." Lk.14:26
1. No human relationships must be allowed to restrain us from a wholehearted following after Jesus, if we would be his.
- E. Reminds us of **the marriage call**, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Gen.2:24
- F. **Slide #10b HONOR YOUR LORD/HUSBAND!** (11)
- G. **Honor** actually means to **bow to Him** (ESV). *Honor Him* (NIV).
- H. This is a **holy relationship** in which the sublime(excellent) love of the bridegroom for the bride & the humble reverence of the bride for the groom are both beautifully maintained. Boice, pg.385
- I. **Slide #10c LOOK AHEAD!** (11-15)
- J. The Poet sees **3 things** in her future:
1. **Love** (11) - her kings/husbands love for her.
 2. **Honor** (12) - honor will be given her because of her relationship to him.
 3. **Gladness & rejoicing** (13-15; esp.15) - **Joy & gladness** will be hers with Him forever.
- K. **Now**, the Poet looks ahead by returning to his description of the wedding procession(13-15).
1. He describes her being led out to the king. And then back to the palace, where they enter with rejoicing.
 2. **This is what I really like...**the Poet seems to **Stop at the door!**
- L. After a wedding ladies ask, **What did the bride wear?** Her gown draws everyones attention.
1. **But notice** what the bride wore at this wedding(13), **The royal daughter is all glorious within** (*the palace*, not in orig.)
 - a) And then it says, **her clothing is woven with gold**. All dolled up on the **outside**, but even more gorgeous on the **inside!** [like Rev.19:7-9]

V. **Slide #11 THE POETS CONCLUSION! (16,17)**

- A. Since **you & your** are **masculine**, the writer is turning back to the king once again.
- B. This is kind of a blessing or benediction on the marriage.
 - 1. He's saying(16), "**Your sons will take the place of your fathers**" & "**you will make them princes throughout the land.**"
- C. As for the poet, he says, I will **perpetuate** your memory through all generations; therefore the nations will praise you forever & ever.
- D. **Slide#12,13 Are we waiting for His coming?** His took care of our betrothal on His first coming.
- E. He is returning again, He promised. **I will return again & receive you to Myself.**
- F. The whole bible ends with, **He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."** And **then** the church rightly replies, **"Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."** Rev.22:20