Psalm 45

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 dads 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:
      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)
1. 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