

Messianic Implications of Psalm 45

Psalm 45:1-7 “My heart overflows with a pleasing theme; I address my verses to the king; my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe. You are the most handsome of the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore G-d has blessed you forever. Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one, in your splendor and majesty! In your majesty ride out victoriously for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness; let your right hand teach you awesome deeds! Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; the peoples fall under you. Your throne, O G-d, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness; you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore G-d, your G-d, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions; your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia. From ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad; daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor; at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.”

The Psalm opens with a superscription that occurs in all of the earliest manuscripts. It is a love song in praise of the King of Israel. The context of the Psalm is that of a bride awaiting her bridegroom. We are not told which king is being described but tradition has associated him with Solomon. Ibn Ezra, the great Jewish scholar and philosopher of the middle ages understood the king as King David. Rashi draws a connection to Proverbs 8:15 and claims the king as Torah scholars.

All of these sages fail to consider the full implication of the text. The description of the king goes far beyond David and Solomon, or the Great Assembly.

While it is not without difficulties the most fitting explanation as to the identity of the king is given from the Targum Jonathan translation of Psalm 45:3.

It is important to note that Targum Jonathan is considered the most authoritative Aramaic translation of the Tanakh, often being read in conjunction with the Hebrew text during the Talmudic age.

Targum Jonathan Psalm 45:3(2) “Your beauty, O’ King Messiah, is greater than the sons of men; the spirit of prophecy has been placed on your lips; because of this, Ad-nai G-D has blessed you forever.”

The implications of this translation are nothing short of astounding. Jonathan ben Uzziel is so assured of the author’s inspiration that he inserts the person of King Messiah into the translation. We can clearly see the heart of Jonathan ben Uzziel and his Messianic hope. This Messianic hope was shared by many of his contemporaries as well.

Genesis Rabbah 99:8 “he scepter shall not depart from Judah” (Gen. 49:10): this refers to the throne of kingship --- “thy throne O’ G-d is forever and ever; a scepter of equity is the scepter of thy kingdom” (Psa. 45:7). When will that be?... “Until Shiloh cometh”: he to whom kingship belongs (shelo). “And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.” This alludes to him who will set on edge the teeth of all the nations, as it says, “The nations shall see and be put to shame for all their might; they shall lay their hand upon

their mouth, their ears shall be dead (Micah 7:16). Another interpretation of “and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be”: him to whom the nations of the world will flock, as it says, “The root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek” (Isa. 11:10).”

Here we see that the Midrash Rabbah conjoins Genesis 49:10 with Psalms 45:7 (5) and Isaiah 11:10 which are each Messianic prophecies.

At first glance it seems that the beauty of the king in Psalm 45 stands in contrast to prophecies of Y’shua found in Isaiah 52 and 53, *“he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.”* A closer look reveals that the beauty of the Messiah King is not found in his appearance but in his words. Did anyone speak words so beautiful as Y’shua of Natzaret? *Luke 4:22 “And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth.”*

Hebrew transliteration of verse 5.

“kis’aka ’El-him ’olam va’ed shevet mishor shevet malkhuteka”

Parsing:

kis’aka [כִּסְאֶךָ] = “your throne”

’El-him [אֱלֹהִים] = “G-d”

’olam va’ed [וְעַד עוֹלָם] = “forever and ever”

shevet [שֵׁבֶט] = “a scepter of” or “a rod of”

mishor [מִישׁוֹר] = “uprightness, integrity”

shevet [שֵׁבֶט] = “the scepter of” or “the rod of”

malkuteka [מַלְכוּתְךָ] = “your kingdom”

English translation, Hebrew text:

“Your throne, O’ G-d, is forever and ever; the scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness.”

Not all translations agree. For many the association of King Messiah and G-D in versus 3 and 5 make them all too uncomfortable.

“Thy throne given of G-d is for ever and ever; a sceptre of equity is the sceptre of thy kingdom”

Mechon Memra Tanakh translation renders “El-him” as “given of G-D”. Aside from the fact that “...given of G-d...” makes absolutely no sense in English, the passive participle required for this translation would be “natun”, meaning “given of”, yet no such word is present in the Hebrew text.

The Artscroll translation which renders “El-him” as “judge” rather than G-D. This translation is purely anti Messianic polemic, for what earthly judge can rule forever accept for the Son of G-D.

Hebrew translation of verse 7

'ahavta tzedeq vattisna' resha' 'al-ken meshachaka 'El-him 'El-heika shemen sason mechavereka

Parsing:

'ahavta [אָהַבְתָּ] = "you loved"

tzedeq [צֶדֶק] = "righteousness"

vattisna' [וַתִּשְׂנֵא] = "and [you] hated"

resha' [רָשָׁע] = "wickedness"

'al-ken [כֵּן-עַל] = "therefore"

meshachaka [מָשַׁחְךָ] = "has anointed you *with*"

'Elohim [אֱלֹהִים] = "G-d"

'Eloheika [אֱלֹהֶיךָ] = "your G-d"

shemen [שֶׁמֶן] = "oil of"

sason [שִׂשׂוֹן] = "gladness"

mechavereka [מִתְחַבְּרְךָ] = "above your fellows"

English translation, Hebrew text:

"You loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore G-d, your G-d, has anointed you with oil of gladness above your fellows."

The words of the Psalmist are unmistakable. Verse 5 clearly indicates the King of Israel as G-D. Verse 7 is not speaking in the double emphatic but to G-D as the King who will be anointed by His G-D. This understanding is so strong that it is agreed upon by virtually all translations. It can only be understood as referring to Y'shua as the Son of G-D and in Himself bearing the very perfect likeness of the Father.

John 14:11 "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me."

Notice how the Psalm ends. A wedding procession is being described. In Jewish tradition the prospective bride and groom would meet with their families to announce a formal betrothal. Once this betrothal was announced the marriage was legally binding. The groom would then return home to prepare a place of honor for his bride. On the day appointed by the groom's father, the groom would lead the procession that would make its way to the home of the father of the bride. The bride would then be led from her father's house as the entire procession would make its way to the home of the groom for a wedding celebration. This is the picture that is presented in verses 12-17. It is a wedding procession for a king and his bride.

Psalm 45:12-17 "The people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the richest of the people. All glorious is the princess in her chamber, with robes interwoven with gold. In many-colored robes she is led to the king, with her virgin companions following behind her. With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king. In place of your fathers shall be your sons; you will make them princes in all the earth. I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore nations will praise you forever and ever. The people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the richest of the

people. All glorious is the princess in her chamber, with robes interwoven with gold. In many-colored robes she is led to the king, with her virgin companions following behind her. With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king. In place of your fathers shall be your sons; you will make them princes in all the earth. I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore nations will praise you forever and ever. Notice the tense used here.

It is the Hebrew imperfect, used for incomplete action. It is used here to express the future tense. The bride groom has announced His betrothal to His bride and has returned to His Fathers house to prepare a place for her. Today we wait for the coming of the King. On that day He will gather His Bride unto Him and their will be a great and mighty procession as King retunes to His throne.

Mashiach Malkenu bo!

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