

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

**Jesus as Bridegroom Warrior King:
The Use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19**

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Abstract

While the book of Revelation includes no direct quotes from the OT, it is no secret that allusions to the OT permeate the text of John's apocalyptic vision. In alluding to the OT, John develops thematic links and imagery, resulting in theological messaging that informs his readers of the reality of Christ's rule and reign.

This thesis investigates John's theological messaging in Revelation 19. Primarily this thesis will examine the themes and imagery of Revelation 19 in light of Psalm 45. It is my proposal that John borrows both imagery and language from Psalm 45 to depict Jesus as the all-inclusive messianic bridegroom warrior king. Overall, this study will seek to show that the themes and motifs of Psalm 45 influenced John in his writing of Revelation 19.

Several links reveal this connection. First, Revelation 19 and Psalm 45 speak of a kingly figure who rides out in battle under the banner of "truth and meekness and righteousness" (Ps. 45:3-5; cf. Rev. 19:11-21; 19:2). Second, both texts present the kingly figure as a warrior and a bridegroom king (Ps. 45:8-15; cf. Rev. 19:6-21). Third, the bride in both contexts is arrayed in wedding clothes and made ready for the king (Ps. 45:14; cf. Rev. 19:7-8). Fourth, Psalm 45 and Revelation 19 present themes of joy and gladness for those who submit to the king (Ps. 45:10-15; cf. Rev 19:7), as opposed to destruction for the king's enemies (Ps. 45:3-5; cf. Rev. 19:11-21). These connections and several others will be explored in the body of the thesis.

Ultimately by alluding to several key motifs and themes found in Psalm 45, John portrays Jesus as the ideal eschatological Davidic king. Jesus, as the ultimate Davidic king, victoriously conquers his enemies and consummates his kingdom and eternal rule at his second coming. The result of this theological messaging is a call for his readers to flee idolatry, remain loyal to the "King of kings and Lord of lords"(Rev. 19:16), and wait for their sure vindication at his coming.

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List of Abbreviations

ANE	Ancient Near East
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the NEW Testament
BTNT	Biblical Theology of the New Testament Series
LXX	Septuagint
<i>Jo. As.</i>	<i>Joseph and Aseneth</i>
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
NA28	<i>Nestle Aland 28th Edition</i>
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
SBLD	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>T. Jud.</i>	Testament of Judah
WBC	World Biblical Commentary Series

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I. Introduction

More than two thousand years have passed since John, a prisoner exiled to the isle of Patmos, received his visions of "the things that must soon take place" (Rev. 1:1).¹ It was upon being overwhelmed by the glorious and majestic presence of the one who is called "the first and the last" (Rev. 1:17), the "living one"(Rev. 1:18), the one who holds the "keys of death and hades"(Rev 1:18), that John fell "as though dead"(Rev. 1:17) at the feet of the exalted and glorious Son of man. After laying his right hand upon John, Jesus commanded John to "Write...the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this"(Rev. 1:19). Thus, John begins his book of the visions on the isle of Patmos with the words, Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Rev. 1:1).

The context of the opening phrase Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ suggests that Jesus is the source of this apocalyptic vision.² However, as Beale notes, "the phrase may also include the idea that the revelation is about Jesus (objective genitive) since Ἰησοῦ ('Jesus') could be understood in this sense in a number of passages in the book (1:9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10a, b, 20:4; cf. 6:9; 12:17; 19:10)."³ Hence, much of the details recorded in the book of Revelation unveil Jesus as the sovereign Lord to the benefit of the reader. Despite the immense persecution⁴

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016).

² See, e.g., Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 52; Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, rev. ed. NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 64; Paul M. Hoskins, *The Book of Revelation: A Theological and Exegetical Commentary* (North Charleston, SC: Christo Doulos Publications, 2017), 44-45; George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 21.

³ G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 183.

⁴ Scholars debate the immensity or frequency of persecution at the time of John's writing of the Apocalypse. For example, Beale notes, "The issue of persecution is closely connected to the debate about emperor worship, since Revelation depicts the latter as the basis for the former. The internal evidence of the book points

facing the first-century Church and the seeming advance of the enemy against the Church, John declares Jesus to be the true sovereign Lord. John makes this declaration by providing a wide array of images, motifs, and themes concerning Christ, the sovereign king.

It is no secret that John frequently supplies imagery, motifs, and themes found directly in the OT in his apocalyptic vision. Moreover, many have noted that the book of Revelation references the OT with more frequency than any other NT book.⁵ While statistics vary, Beale notes, "Roughly more than half the references are from the Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel."⁶ For John, Jesus fulfills the eschatological messianic expectation revealed in the OT. Thus, John borrows these images, motifs, and themes from the OT to inform his readers of the reality of Jesus's perpetual rule and reign as "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16).

Two particular noteworthy themes in connection with Jesus' rule and reign as "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16) are (1) Jesus as "bridegroom" as depicted in Revelation 19 and (2) Jesus as "divine warrior" also depicted in Revelation 19. Revelation 19 begins with a great multitude in heaven celebrating the judgment of the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality (πορνεία) (Rev. 19:1-5). Many have noted the contrast between the "great prostitute" and the "bride of the Lamb" portrayed in Revelation 19:7-9.⁷ While the multitude rejoices that the great whore is finally judged (Rev. 19:1-5), the multitude also rejoices because (1) the "γάμος τοῦ ἀρνίου" (marriage of the Lamb) has finally come, and (2) the Lamb's "Bride

toward a situation of relative peace and selective persecution, with an imminent expectation of intensifying persecution on a widening and programmatic scale" (Beale, *Revelation*, 12).

⁵ For a general study on the use of the OT in the book of Revelation, see, G. K. Beale, "Revelation," in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture*, ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 318-336.

⁶ Beale, *Revelation*, 77.

⁷ See, e.g., Yohanes Adrie Hartopo, "The Marriage of the Lamb: The Background and Function of the Marriage Imagery in the Book of Revelation" (PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2005), 181-190.

has made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7).

In Revelation 19:11, the scene quickly shifts from joyful feasting and celebration to a scene of judgment and war. Christ, the divine warrior, rides out in battle array to destroy his enemies (Rev. 19:11-16). This war results in the "great supper of God," the antithesis of the marriage supper of the Lamb, where the birds of the air gorge themselves on the flesh of the slain kings, captains, mighty men, horses, riders of horses, slave men, and free men, both small and great (Rev. 19:17-21).

Scholars typically note that John's depiction of the banqueting scene (Rev. 19:6-9), as opposed to the battle scene (Rev. 19:11-19), forms a contrast between joy and judgment. For example, Grant R. Osborne states, "Jesus is the Warrior Messiah who has come not just to rescue the saints but also to destroy the sinners."⁸ On a similar note, E. Peterson speaks of these two events in regards to two sides of salvation: "Salvation is the intimacies and the festivities of marriage; salvation is aggressive battle and the defeat of evil. Salvation is neither of these things by itself. It is the two energies, the embrace of love and the assault on evil, in polar tension, each defined by the other, each feeding into the other."⁹

Thus, John uses the themes of Jesus as bridegroom, warrior, and king to portray Christ in different respects, but John also connects these themes together. In other words, John's use of the theme of Jesus as bridegroom and king is reinforced by John's reflection of Jesus as the divine warrior and *vice versa*. Overall, John weaves together these three images to present Jesus as the ultimate eschatological bridegroom warrior king.

⁸ Osborne, *Revelation*, 692.

⁹ E. H. Peterson, *Reversed Thunder: The Revelation of John and the Praying Imagination* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1988), 159.

A. Statement of the Problem

Given the extent of John's use of the OT, one might expect to find some source material in the OT where the themes of bridegroom, divine warrior, and king are intricately connected. Several commentators note connections to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Hosea due to their use of nuptial imagery between God and his people. However, given the hymnic style of Revelation 19:1-6, one need not neglect Psalm 45 as a potential source for John's use of the bridegroom, warrior, and king themes.

Phillip J. Long notes, "Psalm 45 seems to be the best candidate for potential source material for the idea of the eschatological age as a wedding in the Psalter."¹⁰ Furthermore, Long states, "Psalm 45 may also be the basis for Rev. 19:6-8."¹¹ Long is not alone in determining this connection. Commenting on Psalm 45, Michael D. Goulder notes, "The only marriage quite like this is the wedding of the Lamb in Rev. 19-21, where the Word of God rides forth on a white horse to smite the nations, and is enthroned, crowned and acclaimed."¹²

While some, like Goulder and Long, recognize similarities between the themes of Psalm 45 and Revelation 19, it is rarely argued¹³ that John had Psalm 45, particularly in mind, when he penned the nineteenth chapter.¹⁴ For example, the Nestle Aland 28th edition recognizes up to 100 allusions to the Psalter in the book of Revelation, but of those 100 references, not once is Psalm

¹⁰ Philip J. Long, "The Origin of the Eschatological Feast as a Wedding Banquet in the Synoptic Gospels: An Intertextual Study" (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2012), 227.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 228.

¹² Michael D. Goulder, *The Psalms of the Sons of Korah* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 1983), 125-126.

¹³ See exceptions below.

¹⁴ This is not to say that John had Psalm 45 in mind only, but that John borrows imagery from Psalm 45 and thus includes that imagery in his panoply of images as a key to portray a certain theological message.

45 documented.¹⁵ Is there a reason for this absence? Does John allude to Psalm 45 in Revelation 19? If so, what are the parallels, connections, and similarities between Revelation 19 and this royal wedding psalm?

B. Statement of Purpose

This study seeks to determine the extent of John's use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19. The primary emphasis of this thesis will be an exegetical examination of Revelation 19 with particular attention to Psalm 45. This thesis will also seek to show the importance of Psalm 45 as a source text for John's portrayal of Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom warrior king.

Perhaps the strongest statement in favor of John's use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19 comes from J. Webb Mealy, who notes, "Attention has rightly been drawn to the rapport between the first vision in 19:11-21 and Psalm 45.... That John had this passage in mind as he wrote Revelation 19 seems clear."¹⁶ However, Mealy further states, "the ties are not to be found so much on the verbal level, as on the level of theme."¹⁷ It is my proposal that John links Revelation 19 to Psalm 45 not only thematically but also verbally with the direct intention to depict Jesus as the ultimate eschatological messianic bridegroom warrior king.

As Mealy observes,¹⁸ established in both texts are several key themes. First, Revelation

¹⁵ Steve Moyise divides John's use of the Psalter in Revelation into four categories: (1) "unmarked quotations" (Pss. 2:1-2, 8-9; 86:8-10; 89:28, 38), (2) psalms that "contributed the leading idea in a passage, though certain aspects could have come from elsewhere" (Pss. 69:29; 75:8; 99:1; 106:48; 115:4-7, 13; 137:8; 141:2; 144:9), (3) psalms "where a particular psalm text appears to have contributed one of the ideas in a passage" (Pss. 7:10; 23:1-3; 47:9; 62:13; 78:44; 79:1; 96:13; 119:137), and (4) psalms that "could be in the background but verbal agreement is minimal and thematic links slight" (Pss. 7:10; 10:16; 17:15; 19:9; 104:2; 111:2; 135:1; 139:14; 141:2; 145:17) (Steve Moyise and Maarten J.J. Menken, *The Psalms in the New Testament: The New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel* [London: T&T Clark, 2004], 231-232).

¹⁶ J. Webb Mealy, *After the Thousand Years: Resurrection and Judgment in Revelation 20* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 64; See also, Austin Farrer, *A Rebirth of Images: The Making of St. John's Apocalypse* (Beacon Press, 1963), 168-70.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

19 and Psalm 45 speak of a kingly figure who rides out in battle under the banner of "truth and meekness and righteousness" (See, Ps. 45:3-5; Rev. 19:2, 11-21). Second, both texts present the kingly figure as a warrior and a bridegroom king (Ps. 45:8-15; Rev. 19:6-21). Third, the bride in both contexts is arrayed in wedding clothes and made ready for the king (Ps. 45:14; Rev. 19:7-8). Fourth, both Psalm 45 and Revelation 19 present themes of joy and gladness for those who submit to the king (Ps. 45:10-15; Rev. 19:7), as opposed to destruction for the king's enemies (Ps. 45:3-5; Rev. 19:11-21). Fifth, Psalm 45 is set within the first set of Korah Psalms (Pss. 42-49), which in some regards presents an eschatological program in expectation for the future eschatological messianic king.

These connections and several others will be explored in the body of this thesis. Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to provide a thorough examination of the verbal and thematic connections between Revelation 19 and Psalm 45. In doing so, this thesis argues that John uses the language and themes of Psalm 45 to depict Jesus as the anticipated eschatological bridegroom warrior king revealed in the OT.

C. Statement of Importance of the Problem

In Revelation 19:7, a worshipful multitude calls for heaven and earth to rejoice and be full of gladness. As mentioned above, John states that the grounds for this rejoicing and exultation are twofold. First, the multitude rejoices "because" (ὅτι), "the marriage of the Lamb has come (ἦλθεν ὁ γάμος τοῦ ἀρνίου)" (Rev. 19:7). And second, the multitude expresses exuberant joy because "his [Jesus'] Bride has made herself ready (ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ἠτοίμασεν ἑαυτὴν)" (Rev. 19:7). The aorist verb ἦλθεν stresses the arrival of this great occasion.¹⁹ However, while the anticipation is high, and

¹⁸ Ibid.

John has brought the reader to a climax regarding this great event, John does not follow this magnificent declaration with the wedding scene but instead depicts Christ as a great warrior riding forth into battle to judge and rule the nations (Rev. 19:11-21).

One may see this battle scene as an interruption or a shift away from the nuptial scene of Revelation 19:7-9. However, in light of Psalm 45, the themes of conquest and war are neither out of place nor an interruption but instead connect the nuptial imagery of the "bridegroom Lamb" to the "conquering warrior king." Thus, the importance of recognizing this connection between Revelation 19 and Psalm 45 is that it helps one better understand John's purpose in depicting these two scenes (wedding banquet and battle) together and in sync with one another.

In other words, to miss this connection is to miss John's purpose in portraying these images together. As Köstenberger notes, Jesus "fulfilled the entire fabric of scriptural messianic material...in Jesus *all* of salvation history finds its climactic fulfillment."²⁰ Therefore, by presenting Jesus as both the "bridegroom" and the "divine warrior king," John declares Jesus' coming to be the fulfillment of the messianic king anticipated in Psalm 45 and other OT texts. The coming of Jesus' kingdom brings peace and prosperity for perpetual generations (Ps. 45:6, 17) and vindication for his suffering people. As David C. Mitchell notes, this king is "the redeemer, the bridegroom-king, who will turn Israel's sorrow to Joy."²¹

Like the kingly figure of Psalm 45, Jesus, in his coming, will "ride out victoriously for

¹⁹ The verb ἦλθεν in this context is likely a consummative aorist. Fanning notes that the consummative aorist occurs with verbs that indicate climax, accomplishment, activities, and punctual notions (Buist M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* [New York, NY: Oxford University Press], 263-264); See also Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 559.

²⁰ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters: The Word, the Christ, the Son of God*, BTNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 316.

²¹ David C. Mitchell, *The Message of the Psalter: An Eschatological Programme in the Books of Psalms*, vol. 252, JSOT (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 85.

the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness" (Ps. 45:4; cf. Rev. 19:11-21; 19:2). He will subdue the nations and thus, "the peoples" will "fall under" him (Ps. 45:5; cf. Rev. 19:15). Like the bride of Psalm 45, the Lamb's bride (the Church) will "bow to him" (Ps. 45:11; cf. Rev. 19:7, 9). The bride will be "led to the king"(Ps. 45:14; cf. Rev. 19:7) and "enter the palace [temple] of the king" (Ps. 45:15; cf. Rev. 21:27), resulting in eternal communion and joy in the presence of the king (Ps. 45:14, 15; cf. Rev. 21:2-5).

Furthermore, the importance of this connection provides hope and confidence for the Church (the Lamb's bride) amid intense persecution. Jesus, as the faithful warrior bridegroom, will vindicate his bride, reign victorious, and usher in the new heavens and the new earth. The reward for the faithful is the Lamb himself (Rev.19:9) and their communion with him (Rev. 21:2-3). In this eternal communion, God will deliver his people from the pains of the curse of sin, for he will "wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away... these words are trustworthy and true" (Rev. 21:4-5).

D. Statement of Position on the Problem

It is my proposal that John links Revelation 19 to Psalm 45 thematically and verbally with the direct intention to depict Jesus as the ultimate eschatological messianic bridegroom warrior king. By examining the text of Revelation 19 in light of Psalm 45, one discovers several thematic and verbal links between the two. Considering these discoveries and the importance of Psalm 45 as an eschatological messianic royal psalm, one may argue that John (by portraying Jesus as the bridegroom warrior king) seeks to reveal Jesus' true identity to his audience. For John, Jesus is the "ideal eschatological messianic king" anticipated in the OT. John follows the messianic tradition of the author of Hebrews and other early interpretations concerning the

eschatological king of Psalm 45.

By presenting Jesus as both bridegroom and warrior, John connects the victory of the Lamb (represented by the marriage feast [Rev. 19:6-9]) to the vindication of the Lamb's bride (represented by the great supper of God [Rev. 19:11-21]). This vindication results in communion, joy, and consummation of Christ's eternal reign. Thus, this connection provides hope and confidence for the Church (the Lamb's bride). Jesus, the faithful warrior bridegroom king, will vindicate his bride and reign eternally.

John's portrayal of Jesus also presents a grave warning to those who choose to rebel against this "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). Therefore, it is also a call for those in opposition to Christ and his kingdom to cease from their rebellion, submit to the king, and escape the coming wrath of the Lamb. John provides this eschatological warning and hope through the lens of Psalm 45, a picture of the true eschatological bridegroom warrior king, namely Jesus of Nazareth, the Lamb of God.

E. Limitations/Delimitations

While the thesis will seek to answer the question as to whether or not John made use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19, several limitations and presuppositions may hinder the proposal. First, this paper is grounded in some respects in a messianic interpretation of Psalm 45. Evidence of the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 is present in both the early Church and second temple Judaism;²² however, this does not prove that John interpreted Psalm 45 in this manner. The purpose of this thesis is not to prove how John interpreted Psalm 45; instead, it argues John borrowed imagery and language from Psalm 45 to portray Jesus as the messianic figure.

²² See, *chapter 3*.

Second, there is also a limitation in doing a thorough analysis of the interpretation of Psalm 45 historically. While some historical analysis is needed,²³ space would not allow such a crucial topic to be developed and appropriately researched alongside the other aspects presented in the thesis. In other words, this topic could be a thesis or dissertation in itself.

Third, much of the argument relies heavily on the "eschatological" themes in the "royal psalms." While John certainly makes use of Psalms 2, 72, 89, and 144, a thorough investigation of John's use of the royal psalms may provide further evidence of John's use of Psalm 45 in general. Furthermore, this thesis presupposes that these psalms present an eschatological program. That is, they anticipate the coming of the eschatological king. Again, this study could not possibly exhaust this vast topic and therefore is limited in its scope.

Fourth, because there are no direct quotes and very few indirect quotes in the book of Revelation, the difficulty in determining what defines a true allusion presented by John is debatable. In order to thoroughly examine what constitutes a true allusion, some research of types of references, especially in the field of the NT use of the OT, is necessary.²⁴ Thus one delimitation in this study is that it does not seek to define or analyze what constitutes a true allusion to the OT.

Finally, this thesis does not provide a thorough analysis of Psalm 45 in relation to other OT texts such as Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or Hosea. While these connections

²³ See, *chapter 3*.

²⁴ For studies and definitions of "types of references," see, e.g., Paul L. Trudinger, "Some Observations Concerning the Text of the Old Testament in the Book of Revelation." *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1966): 82-88; Jon Paulien, "Allusions, Exegetical Method, and the Interpretation of Revelation 8:7-12" (PhD diss., Andrews University, 1987); Jon Paulien, "Elusive Allusions: The Problematic Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *Biblical Research* 33 (1988): 37-53; Jon Paulien "Dreading the Whirlwind: Intertextuality and the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 39 (2001): 5-22; Merrill C. Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957).

may offer further evidence for John's use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19, in some respects, this thesis delimits these texts.

F. Method

The method of research will be primarily exegetical. The majority of exegetical analysis will focus on Psalm 45 and Revelation 19 to determine whether or not Psalm 45 contributes to an understanding of Jesus as the bridegroom warrior king presented in Revelation 19. Thus, the exegetical work will lay the foundation for an intertextual analysis of John's use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19.

Also, a historical analysis of several key areas will be crucial for the discussion. For example, it will be necessary to analyze the interpretation of the kingly figure of Psalm 45 historically, especially given the varying interpretations of this Psalm throughout history.²⁵ Of particular interest is the designation of the kingly figure as the Messiah amongst first-century Christians and second-temple Judaism. While one may not be able to conclude definitively how John interpreted Psalm 45,²⁶ examining how others have interpreted the psalm historically may shed further light on the development of the themes in Psalm 45 and John's use of these themes in Revelation 19.

G. Chapter Summaries

Following chapter 1 (Introduction), chapter 2 will begin by examining the genre and setting of Psalm 45. Exploring the genre of Psalm 45 will provide a context to several themes presented in the royal psalms. These themes provide critical links to John's use of Psalm 45 and

²⁵ See, *chapter 3*.

²⁶ See, *Limitations and Delimitations* above.

other royal psalms in Revelation 19. Thus, the chapter will begin by defining the central theme of the royal psalms while discussing several subthemes, such as the king's military conquest and righteous rule. Overall, this section will reveal the grand image portrayed in the royal psalms, namely the "ideal divine king."

After examining the genre of Psalm 45, the thesis will address specific details regarding the placement of Psalm 45 within the Psalter and, more specifically, within the first set of the Korah Psalms. The editorial work in arranging the psalms reveals an eschatological expectation within second temple Judaism. This work is significant in light of the fact that the political monarchy was practically nonexistent at the time of this arrangement.

In chapter three, the thesis will discuss various hermeneutical methods used to interpret Psalm 45 historically. These include (1) a strictly historical interpretation, (2) a messianic interpretation, and (3) an allegorical interpretation. In some respects, allegorical, messianic, and historical interpretations overlap. That is, one may see a strictly historical interpretation before the fall of the monarchy but also an eschatological expectation after its fall. Furthermore, the messianic interpretation is in some respects allegorical in that it goes beyond the historical interpretation and points to a future king. This section will also pay special attention to the interpretation of Psalm 45 within the early Church and second-temple Judaism.

In chapter four, the thesis will examine the use of Psalm 45 in the OT *Pseudepigrapha*, noting particular themes and language therein. Then, in chapter five, the thesis will discuss a few OT texts which thematically and intertextually link Psalm 45 to Revelation 19, again noting similarities in theme and language. Finally, chapter six will focus on the exegesis of Revelation 19 with particular attention to Psalm 45. The paper will conclude by commenting on some implications of this study and give other implications for further research.

II. Genre and Eschatological Setting of Psalm 45

This chapter will explore the form-critical category known as the "royal psalms" and the central theme and subthemes therein. It will also explore the setting or placement of Psalm 45 within the Psalter as a whole, particularly its placement within the first set of the Korah psalms (Pss. 42-49). By analyzing this form-critical category, the chapter will reveal the unique nature of Psalm 45 in its theme and setting. Furthermore, it will demonstrate how the Korah psalms (Pss. 42-49) are eschatological in scope, with Psalm 45 revealing the eschatological messianic figure. These details provide a basis for understanding why John may have utilized Psalm 45 and its themes in his writing of Revelation 19.

A. Genre of Psalm 45 (A Royal Psalm)

1. Central Theme of the Royal Psalms

Due to its central focus on the king, scholars typically categorize Psalm 45 as a "royal psalm."²⁷ Recognizing specific psalms as a form-critical category known as "royal psalms" was popularized by Hermann Gunkel.²⁸ Commenting on Gunkel's form-critical method, Daniel J. Estes notes, "By identifying groups of songs that shared a uniform setting in cultic life, a uniformity of meaning and mood, and similar style and structure, Gunkel organized the psalms into several literary types, including hymns, laments of the community, laments of the individual, thanksgiving songs of the individual, royal psalms, and wisdom psalms."²⁹

²⁷ See, e.g., Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas, 2 vols. (New York: Abingdon, 1967); Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 25.

²⁸ See, Hermann Gunkel, *The Psalms: A Form-Critical Introduction*, trans. Thomas M. Horner, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967); Hermann Gunkel, *Introduction to Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel*, Edited by Joachim Begrich, trans. James D. Nogalski (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1998).

²⁹ Daniel J. Estes, *Handbook on the Wisdom Books and Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 148.

While Gunkel did not consider these psalms a separate "genre" or "literary type" in the strict sense, he did recognize the similarities they held in content.³⁰ In other words, while the royal psalms include a variety of literary forms, they focus upon one major *Sitz im Leben*, namely the dynasty of the king. Thus, in studying the psalms and their literary forms, it is necessary to include these psalms in a class of their own.

2. Subthemes of the Royal Psalms

Along with the central theme of "the king," the royal psalms present a variety of subthemes. Mark D. Futato lists four separate subthemes found in the royal psalms, including: (1) the king's coronation and enthronement (Pss. 2; 72; 101; 110); (2) the ideology of the monarchy (Pss. 78; 89; 132); (3) divine help in battle (Pss. 20; 21; 144); and (4) thanksgiving for victory in battle (Ps. 18).³¹ Essentially, the royal psalms are a collection of psalms that record prayers for the king and celebrate key events in the life and rule of the king. These prayers and celebrations find their foundation in the Davidic covenant, in which Yahweh promises David that he will preserve his dynasty forever.³² As God's earthly representative, the Davidic king takes on a unique relationship with God as his adopted son (Ps. 2:7).³³ Psalm 45 is unique among the royal psalms in that it is the only psalm that presents the ceremony of a "royal wedding." It is also

³⁰ Gunkel considers the following list of psalms as "royal psalms": Psalm 2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 101; 110; 132; 144:1-11; 89:46-51 (Gunkel, *The Psalms*, 23-24).

³¹ Mark D. Futato, *Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook*, ed. David M. Howard Jr., *Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2007), 182.

³² See, 2 Samuel 7 for David Covenant.

³³ A. A. Anderson notes that the language used in Psalm 2:7 is "a formula of adoption (cf. the code of Hammurabi 170-1, in ANET, p. 173), but it does not imply that the king was deified (cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chr. 28:6). It is noteworthy that, although the OT prophets often criticized the kings, they were not accused of claiming deity" (A. A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms*, vol. 1, ed. Ronald E. Clements, NCBC [Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972], 68).

unique in the respect that it contains, as Croft states, "one of the highest estimates of the relationship between the king and God found in the Old Testament ... the king is actually addressed as אֱלֹהֵי יָם."³⁴

Much of the content in the royal psalms deals with the king's military conquests and exploits. For example, Psalm 20 and Psalm 144 record prayers for the king as he prepares for battle. In Psalm 2, the king subdues the rebellious nations and "rules" them with a "rod of iron" (Ps. 2:9 LXX). The warrior king's power, strength, and victory come from the divine warrior, Yahweh himself (Pss. 21:1; 144:1, 110:1). Thus, the king's victory is secure. In Psalm 45, the king, praised for his military exploits, is depicted as a great warrior whose "sharp arrows" find themselves in the heart of the "king's enemies," and thus, the "peoples fall under him" (Ps. 45:5). W. H. Bellinger notes, "The images that these texts use thus often relate to the king— as victor, as the one whom God has honored, as the defender of the faith and the powerless— who represents the faithful God who has guaranteed the king's rule."³⁵

The royal psalms also present the king's rule as one established upon justice and righteousness. Just as God's throne is one of righteousness (Ps. 89:14), so must the scepter of God's earthly king be one of righteousness. Thus, Psalm 45 depicts the king victoriously riding in battle, "for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness" (Ps. 45:4). Because the king "loved righteousness and hated wickedness," the psalmist states, God has "anointed" him "with the oil of gladness beyond [his] companions" (Ps. 45:7). Thus, as Bullock notes, "the Israelite monarch, whom God himself has set on his throne, will rule by the scepter of justice (Ps. 45:6).

³⁴ Steven J. L. Croft, *The Identity of the Individual in the Psalms*, ed. Robert D. Haak (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 1987), 131.

³⁵ Bellinger, W. H. Jr., *Psalms: A Guide to Studying the Psalter* (Baker Academic, 2012), 172.

That is, justice will characterize the king's rule."³⁶

Mitchell notes that the language used in the royal psalms "far exceeds the reality of any historical king or battle. For instance, Psalms 2, 72, and 110 anticipate worldwide conquest by Israel's king. Psalms 21, 45, and 110 describe his invincibility in battle."³⁷ Thus, the royal psalms present a kingly figure who towers above all other kings. Truly, as Mitchell notes, these psalms "describe a superhero king and the golden age of his *malkut*, with all its blessings of just government, security and honour for Israel, the homage of the nations, the fecundity of the earth, and so on."³⁸

The NA28 recognizes references to only four royal psalms in the book of Revelation. These include Psalms 2, 72, 89, and 144. Of those four royal psalms, the NA28 recognizes fifteen references altogether.³⁹ With seven of the fifteen references, Psalm 2 is by far the most referenced royal psalm in the book of Revelation. As noted in the introduction, the NA28 shows no connection to Psalm 45 as a reference in the book of Revelation. However, John clearly makes use of the thematic imagery discussed above, which so pervades the royal psalms.

Furthermore, of the fifteen references, six references are located within the context of Revelation 19.⁴⁰ This reveals that the themes present in the royal psalms were of particular interest for John in his writing of the book of Revelation. However, the question remains: does

³⁶ C. Hassell Bullock, *Encountering the Book of Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction*, ed. Walter A. Elwell and Eugene H. Merrill, Second Edition., Encountering Biblical Studies (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 174.

³⁷ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 85.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ The NA28 lists the following as references to the "royal psalms" in the book of Revelation: Ps 2:2 (Rev 11:15,17:18,19:19), 2:8 (Rev 2:26), 2:9 (Rev 2:26f, 12:5, 19:15), Ps 72:2 (Rev 19:11), 72:10f (Rev 21:26), Ps 89:7 (Rev 13:4), 89:28 (Rev 1:5,17:18) 89:38 (Rev 1:5), Ps 144:9 (Rev 5:9,14:3).

⁴⁰ Ps 2:2 (Rev 17:18, 19:19), 2:9 (Rev 19:15), Ps 72:2 (Rev 19:11), 72:10f (Rev 21:26), 89:28 (Rev 17:18).

John make use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19?

B. Setting of Psalm 45 (Eschatological)

While Gunkel popularized the term "royal psalms," these psalms were undoubtedly recognized as a form category much earlier. Mitchell states, "the very inclusion of the royal psalms in the Psalter suggests that the redactor understood them to refer to a future *mashiah*-king. For otherwise their presence in a collection for use in second temple times, when the house of David was in eclipse, would have made little sense."⁴¹ On a similar note, Philip J. Nel states, "From the New Testament midrashic interpretation it is evident that dimensions of the royal psalms were understood in a certain way and that the realization of the ideal Messiah had been sought in the life and rule of Christ."⁴²

1. Strategic Canonical Placement

Several studies have shown that the placement of the royal psalms within the Psalter deems them significant and of great importance.⁴³ For example, Psalm 2, linked with Psalm 1, forms the introduction to the Psalter as a whole. Psalm 72, A psalm "of Solomon," completes Book II. Like Psalm 72, Psalm 89 concludes Book III. Finally, Psalm 110 is placed directly before the *Hallel* Psalms (Pss. 111-18). Hence, the strategic placement of these "royal psalms" emphasizes the importance of the kingship theme at strategic times throughout the Psalter.

While Psalm 45 does not begin or end a major section within the Psalter, it does seem to

⁴¹ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 86.

⁴² Philip J. Nel, "The Theology of the Royal Psalms," *Old Testament Essays* 11, no. 1 (1998): 88.

⁴³ See, e.g., John Forbes, *Studies on the Book of Psalms: The Structural Connection of the Book of Psalms and in the Psalter as an Organic Whole* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1888), 4; Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 515-17; Gerald Henry Wilson, "The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter," *SBLD*, Vol. 76. (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985).

have a strategic placement within the first set of the Korah Psalms (Pss. 42-49) and perhaps the Psalter as a whole. Forbes notes, "The eighty-nine Psalms which constitute the three Amen Books are divided into two equal halves by Ps. xlv., there being two alphabets (2x22) of Psalms on the one side and two on the other."⁴⁴ In other words, Psalm 45 is strategically placed directly midway between Psalm 1 (the beginning of Book I) and Psalm 89 (the end of Book II). Surely this placement is designed for emphasis.

2. Eschatological Canonical Context

In commenting on the literary context of Psalm 45, Seth D. Postell notes, "The psalms of Korah have clearly been grouped together according to their superscriptions, and as a cohesive group, these psalms contain numerous lexical and thematic links one with another."⁴⁵ Read in its canonical context, Psalms 42-49 present an eschatological orientation, with Psalm 45 as the central turning point in the eschatological program. In a study concerning the shape of Psalms 42-49, Francis Xavier Kimmitt concludes that Psalms 42-49 represent "a unified and coherent whole."⁴⁶

Kimmitt argues for a deliberate design in Psalms 42-49 that presents two particular themes: (1) Yahweh's role as Israel's faithful deliverer from enemy oppression and (2) Yahweh's role as king over all creation.⁴⁷ After categorizing the lexical and thematic links between Psalm 45 and the other Korah Psalms, Kimmitt concludes, "Psalm 45 reveals a large number of lexical

⁴⁴ Forbes, *Studies on Psalms*, 7.

⁴⁵ Seth D. Postell, "Psalm 45: The Messiah as Bridegroom," in *The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy: Studies and Expositions of the Messiah in the Old Testament*, ed. Michael Rydelnik and Edwin Blum (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2019), 579–580.

⁴⁶ Francis Xavier Kimmitt, "The Shape of Psalms 42-49" (PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2000), 263.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

interconnections with the remaining psalms of the corpus...10 key-lexeme links, 27 thematic lexeme links, and 58 incidental repetitions."⁴⁸ Furthermore, Kimmitt sees Psalm 45 as filling a "precise and important niche"⁴⁹ in this collection of psalms.

Kimmitt argues that Psalms 42-44 represent the people of Israel's cries unto God for deliverance from enemy oppression. Psalm 45 then brings a partial solution in that God installs his earthly king upon the throne in Zion. Kimmitt states, "the answer to the plea for help was first answered in the person of the king of Israel, God's blessed and anointed representative on earth."⁵⁰ Concerning the importance of Psalm 45, Kimmitt states that Psalm 45 "is there to show the value of a godly earthly king to his people."⁵¹

However, Kimmitt believes the final answer to their solution moves beyond the earthly king (Psalm 45) to a divine king (Psalm 46-48). In other words, Kimmitt does not see the king of Psalm 45 as a future anticipated messianic king but rather a representative that points to the real solution, namely Yahweh himself. Kimmitt concludes, "the final answer to the complaints of Psalms 42-44 is not found in the earthly king. The reader must progress to Zion and her divine King (Psalms 46-48)."⁵² An important question to consider is whether or not the king of Psalm 45 is simply an earthly king, or does Psalm 45 (read in its canonical context) reflect the anticipation of the future eschatological divine messianic king?

In his thesis entitled *A King in Context: Reading Psalm 45 in Light of Psalms 42, 43, 44, and 46*, Andy Dvorocek gives a brief critique of Kimmitt's conclusion regarding the king of

⁴⁸ Ibid., 223.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 266.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

Psalm 45 being only a "partial solution."⁵³ Dvorecek states, "while Kimmitt rightly understands the king as a solution to the concerns expressed in Ps. 42/3 and 44, his conclusion that this represents only a 'partial and intermediate solution' is questionable."⁵⁴ According to Dvorecek, Kimmitt's conclusion is "questionable" because it "seems contrary to the language of Ps. 45; in particular, its emphasis upon the king's eternal blessing (45:2), dominion (45:6, 16), and praise (45:17)."⁵⁵ Dvorecek further argues, "the remarkable similarities between God and the king suggests that the solution provided by the king (Ps. 45) and the solution provided by God (Ps. 46) are to be viewed in tandem."⁵⁶

Like Dvorecek, Mitchell also argues for an eschatological orientation of Psalms 42-49, with Psalm 45 presenting the eschatological messianic king. Concerning this eschatological orientation, Mitchell states, "the Hebrew Psalter was designed by its redactors as a purposefully ordered arrangement of lyrics with an eschatological message."⁵⁷ For Mitchell, this message, portrayed in many Jewish documents of second temple times, "consists of a predicted sequence of eschatological events."⁵⁸ These events include: (1) Israel's exile, (2) the appearance of a messianic superhero, (3) the ingathering of God's covenant people Israel, (4) the nation's rebellion and attack against God's people, (5) the hero's suffering, (6) the scattering of Israel in the wilderness, (7) their ingathering and further imperilment, (8) the appearance of a superhero

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Andy Dvorecek, "A King in Context: Reading Psalm 45 in Light of Psalms 42, 43, 44, and 46." (Th. M. thesis., Western Seminary, 2012), 31-32.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 15.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

from the heavens to rescue them, (9) the establishment of his *malkut* from Zion, and (10) the prosperity of Israel and the homage of the nations.⁵⁹

Regarding the importance of Psalm 45 in the orientation of this eschatological message, Mitchell notes:

Psalms 42 and 43 represent Israel in exile, separated from the temple (42:3–5 [2–4]), taunted by the heathen, crying to God for redemption, and anticipating its coming (42:10–11 [9–10]; 43:1–5). Psalm 44 rehearses the events of the exodus (vv. 2–4 [1–3]), celebrates God’s saving power (5–9 [4–8]), laments Israel’s sorrows that God has brought upon them (10–23 [9–22]), and culminates with a plea that God redeem them (vv. 24–27 [23–26]), presumably just as he formerly did at the exodus, by leading them out of heathen oppression to the promised land. Psalm 45 therefore becomes the answer to this prayer, revealing the redeemer, the bridegroom-king, who will turn Israel’s sorrow to joy. Psalms 46–48 then celebrate the ultimate triumph of God’s cause (46), kingdom (47) and city (48), before the divine command to gather Israel is issued at Asaph Ps. 50:5.⁶⁰

Thus, the eschatological significance of Psalm 45 is that it introduces the eschatological king who will deliver his people and end Israel's sorrow. As a great warrior, this ideal king triumphs over Israel's enemies and, as the extension of Yahweh, rules over the nations with righteousness. Moreover, because the king's lineage is perpetual, his dominion and fame will be everlasting and extend throughout the whole earth, thus ending the exile of his people forever. As Brevard S. Childs states, the royal psalms, including Psalm 45, are a "witness to the messianic hope which looked for the consummation of God's kingship through his Anointed One."⁶¹

Seth Postell, in agreement with Mitchell and Dvorecek, argues that Psalms 42-44 present two urgently felt problems: (1) "failure on the battlefield"⁶² and (2) "distance from God’s

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 250.

⁶¹ Childs, *Introduction Old Testament*, 517.

⁶² Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 580.

presence (i.e., separation from the house and mountain of the Lord)."⁶³ Psalm 45 then provides a transition or "hinge" that turns the people from lament (Pss. 42–44) to joyous celebration (Pss. 46–49).⁶⁴ Postell concludes:

This stark reversal from God's distance from His people and their defeat on the battlefield in Pss. 42–44 to His glorious presence with His people and the total defeat of Israel's enemies in Pss. 46–49 demands an explanation. What happened?! This reversal is best explained by the details of Ps 45, where both problems (distance and defeat) are solved in reverse order, a solution that makes most sense when considering the interpretive significance of the relationship of juxtaposed psalms throughout the Psalter.... Having defeated Israel's enemies, the divine warrior King takes his seat upon his eternal throne (Ps 45:6), in order to address the second problem: divine absence. The earlier longing and calls in Pss. 42–43 to come into God's presence (Pss. 42:2; 43:34) are now depicted by the means of a marital metaphor: the bride is brought joyfully into the King's palace (Ps 45:10–15).⁶⁵

3. Eschatological Context of Psalm 45 and the Book of Revelation

In light of the eschatological layout of Psalms 42-49, as discussed above, one may also note several parallels with John's context in the final stages of the Apocalypse. First, the people's cry and anticipation for deliverance in Psalms 42-44 may be echoed in the cry for vindication and salvation by the persecuted martyrs of Revelation (Rev. 6:10; 16:5-7; 18:20, 24; 19:2). Concerning the people's cries for deliverance in Korahite 1,⁶⁶ Dvorecek notes, "the fervent pleas for deliverance (43:1, 44: 23-26) will be answered in their fullest sense when God subjugates the unruly nations (46:6, 10), decimates the rebellious earth (46:8), and eliminates war itself (46:9)."⁶⁷ This deliverance also depicts a new exodus. Thus, like the redemptive exodus theme of

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Psalms 42-49.

⁶⁷ Dvorecek, "A King in Context," 223.

Psalms 42-49, the book of Revelation presents a new exodus for the persecuted people of God.⁶⁸

Second, Korahite 1⁶⁹ and Revelation depict imagery of the future eschatological city of God. Concerning the central focus of the city of God in Psalm 46, Dvorcek notes, "while Zion denotes a *present* (Pss. 2:6, 9:11, 14, 48:2, 11-12, etc.), and *future* reality (Pss. 13:7, 20:2, 53:6, 69:35-36, etc.), the phrase *city of God* (Pss. 48:1, 8, 87:3), and its related designations, *city of the LORD* (Ps. 48:8) and *city of the Great King* (48:2), are exclusively used in eschatological contexts."⁷⁰ In the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21-22), God's divine presence makes his dwelling amongst his people, thus fulfilling the people's expressed hope and expectation to "see God" (Rev. 21:3; Rev 22:4; Ps. 42:3; cf. Ps.27:4).

Furthermore, Beale notes, "the LXX of Ps. 45(46):5a [4a] says, 'the flowings of the river gladden the city of God,' which is a metaphor in vv 4b–5 for God's presence, which provides the security of the city and its temple."⁷¹ In other words, John depicts the "New Jerusalem" as utterly secure from all chaos and rebellion against God and his people. Like the "city of God" described in Psalm 46, the "New Jerusalem" is a secure and safe refuge, for God is in her midst (cf. Ps. 46:5, 7; Rev. 21:2-4).⁷²

Third, both the Korah Psalms and the book of Revelation preview the eschatological judgment upon the wicked through cataclysmic earth-shaking events (Ps. 46:6; Rev. 6:12-17;

⁶⁸ See, e.g., Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014) 70-71; Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (London; New York: T&T Clark: A Continuum Imprint, 1993), 296–306.

⁶⁹ Psalms 42-49.

⁷⁰ Dvorcek, "A King in Context," 222.

⁷¹ Beale, *Revelation*, 1104.

⁷² See also, Jerome F. D. Creach, *Yahweh as refuge and the Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996). Creach argues for the arrangement of Korahite 1 around the theme of "refuge."

11:19; 16:18-21). In Psalm 46:6, the earth's melting in the presence of God displays an eschatological reality found in contexts of future eschatological judgment.⁷³ These cataclysmic events are redemption for the faithful and judgment for the wicked. For example, Mitchell notes, "With the opening of Psalm 46, we begin to hear the distinctive rumble of Korahite Sheol imagery. It tells of a cataclysmic day when...the earth will convulse and open up, revealing the underworld. But the faithful will not fear.... They will be delivered, while the rebellious nations who advance against Jerusalem will fall alive into Sheol."⁷⁴

C. Implications

In the conclusion of chapter two, the thesis outlines several implications. First, given the canonical emphasis, royal context, and eschatological setting of Psalm 45, one may begin to see why John might have reason to make use of this royal psalm. As Mitchell notes, the prominence of the royal psalms within the psalms as a whole "suggests that the messianic theme is central to the message of the Psalter."⁷⁵ Perhaps, John recognized this prominence and thus employed Psalm 45 to reveal Jesus' messianic role as both deliverer and "King of kings and Lord of lords"(Rev. 19:16). As the ultimate bridegroom warrior king, John portrays Jesus as coming to rescue his people, bring forth justice, establish his kingdom, and reign forever. Second, it is not hard to see why John might employ Psalm 45 in light of the numerous thematic parallels that echo the imagery portrayed in the Apocalypse. These thematic parallels include redemption, deliverance, joy, judgment, war, peace, security, glory, the presence of God, the people of God, the city of God, the worship of God, and the enemies of God, to name a few. Thus, John utilizes

⁷³ C.f. Psalm 75:2-10; Amos 9:5; Nahum 1:5; Psalm 46:6.

⁷⁴ David C. Mitchell, "God Will Redeem My Soul from Sheol: The Psalms of the Sons of Korah." *JSOT* 30, no. 3 (March 2006): 365–84.

⁷⁵ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 244.

Psalm 45 for its eschatological significance in both language and theme. The thesis will further address this use in the following chapters.

III. Interpretation of Psalm 45 Historically

Having examined the eschatological themes and setting of the royal psalms, the thesis will now focus on Psalm 45 and its interpretation historically. Perhaps no other psalm has evoked as much discussion regarding the Davidic kingship and its relation to God as Psalm 45. Much of the debate revolves around questions regarding the origin of Psalm 45, its *Sitz im Leben*, and the address to the king as *Elohim* in verse 7 [6]. While most scholars consider the psalm pre-exilic and thus part of the monarchic period, suggestions regarding its origin and *Sitz im Leben* abound. This thesis aims not to establish the origin or the *Sitz im Leben* of Psalm 45. However, some discussion regarding its interpretation historically is necessary to understand why John following the messianic tradition may allude to this royal *epithalamion*⁷⁶ in his apocalyptic vision.

In discussing the importance of understanding how individuals interpreted a particular text through history, Fekkes notes, "Whether or not a passage and its current interpretation is known to a writer's audience will probably affect the way in which it is presented."⁷⁷ Therefore, Fekkes further notes, "It is essential for the exegete to trace the history of each OT text in previous Jewish and Christian interpretation if possible."⁷⁸ If one can provide evidence that contemporaries with John viewed Psalm 45 as a critical eschatological text which highlights the Messiah and his kingdom's reign, then one may further presuppose that John may have had good reason to make use of Psalm 45 for the same purpose. Furthermore, if one can trace this tradition back to second-temple Jewish sources, especially within apocalyptic literature or

⁷⁶ The Greek word ἐπιθαλάμιον is a poem or song specifically written in honor of a bride and bridegroom.

⁷⁷ Jan Fekkes III, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and Their Development* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 1994), 65.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

sources that revolve around eschatological themes, then again, one may further presuppose that John may have good reason to make use of Psalm 45 in the book of Revelation.

Thus, in the following subsections, the thesis will examine the interpretation of Psalm 45 in the early Church and second temple Judaism. Furthermore, the thesis will also explore how interpreters of this psalm began to view it as an allegory for the people of God and their union with God. First, this section will briefly discuss the historical interpretation of Psalm 45. This interpretation seeks to understand the king of Psalm 45 as a historical figure during Israel's monarchic period. Second, the thesis will examine the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 in two sections beginning with second temple Jewish sources, then moving forward to the early Church. Most notable is the quotation by the author of Hebrews in Hebrews 1:8-9. Third, this chapter will examine the allegorical interpretation of Psalm 45, paying careful attention to the allegorical understanding regarding the bride and bridegroom figures. Lastly, this chapter will conclude with several implications concerning these interpretations and their significance regarding the possibility of John's use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish evidence that a messianic and allegorical interpretation of Psalm 45 existed in the early church and second temple Judaism and thus may also be present in John's writing of the Apocalypse.

A. Historical Interpretation of Psalm 45

In many respects, the attempt to provide a particular historical figure and setting for Psalm 45 is difficult at best. For example, Seth Postell notes, "attempts to identify the historical king to which this psalm originally referred have been particularly challenging, given the lack of specific historical details."⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 577.

The nineteenth century saw a shift in Psalms studies from the traditional approach to a historical approach in which scholars primarily focused on the historical background of the psalms.⁸⁰ There are many strengths to the historical approach; however, it is not without its weaknesses. Daniel J. Estes notes, "Because historical criticism could not establish certain criteria for determining the literary strands that it purported, its results became increasingly subjective and fragmented, with no strong consensus in regard to the background, date, composition history, and use of the various psalms."⁸¹ Due to this fragmented and subjective analysis, Estes further states, "Consequently, many scholars have found this approach unpersuasive."⁸²

Concerning the historical origin of Psalm 45, Peter C. Craigie notes, "There can be little doubt that this poetic composition originated in the wedding celebration for a particular king."⁸³ However, Craigie points out the difficulty in establishing a historical connection when he states, "But having affirmed in principle that the song, in its initial setting, should be related to a particular occasion, it should also be admitted that no firm decision can be made with respect to its historical origin."⁸⁴

While some have suggested a late date within the Persian⁸⁵ or Ptolemaic periods,⁸⁶ most

⁸⁰ See, e.g., Estes, *Wisdom Books and Psalms*, 146-273.

⁸¹ Estes, *Wisdom Books and Psalms*, 147.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Peter C. Craigie and Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 1-50*, Vol. 19 in *WBC*, Second edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 338.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ See, e.g., J. J. Stewart Perowne, *The Book of Psalms: A New Translation with Introductions and Notes: Explanatory and Critical*, 4th ed., 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 1:367.

⁸⁶ See, e.g., Moses Bottenwieser, *The Psalms* (New York: KTAV, 1969) 84.

consider the psalm pre-exilic. Suggestions for the king of Psalm 45 in the pre-exilic period include (1) King Solomon,⁸⁷ (2) Ahab and Jezebel,⁸⁸ (3) Jehoram and Athaliah,⁸⁹ (4) Jeroboam,⁹⁰ and (5) Josiah.⁹¹ However, all of these proposals contain problems. For example, King David neither married a daughter of Tyre nor lived in a lavish ivory palace. Likewise, King Solomon was scarcely known as a great warrior king since his reign was characterized as a time of peace. While King Ahab did marry a daughter of Tyre (1Kg. 16:31), he, like King David and King Solomon, fails to fit the description of the king of Psalm 45, for his rule was undoubtedly anything but righteous.

Gordon H. Johnston notes, "While Psalm 45 might have been composed to celebrate the occasion of one particular historical king, it was likely reused on the occasion of subsequent royal marriages."⁹² Johnston further states, "Such a reuse of this psalm throughout the history of the dynasty provided the theological and hermeneutical segue for the decisive connection of this psalm to the ultimate Davidic king."⁹³

While Psalm 45, in its original setting, most likely depicted a particular historical king, it quickly became something more in the ideology of post-exilic Judaism. Overall, the psalm laid a foundation for the hope of a future messianic figure who embodies all of this king's

⁸⁷ Perowne, *Psalms*, 1:366–69.

⁸⁸ Buttenwieser, *The Psalms*, 84-89; Goulder, *Psalms of Korah*, 133–35.

⁸⁹ Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955) 1:74–76.

⁹⁰ Buttenwieser, *The Psalms*, 84.

⁹¹ J. Mulder, *Studies on Psalm 45* (Witsiers, OSS, 1972), 158.

⁹² Gordon H. Johnston, "Messianic Trajectories in the Royal Psalms," in *Jesus the Messiah: Tracing the Promises, Expectations, and Coming of Israel's King* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2012), 84.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

characteristics. As Derek Kidner notes, "This king is no figurehead, but the embodiment of all that gives kingship its unique glory."⁹⁴

In commenting on Psalm 45 and its place after the exile, Johnston notes, "The dismantling of David's throne in 586 BCE threatened to turn this psalm into little more than a romantic relic of the past."⁹⁵ However, Johnston states, "the inclusion of this royal wedding poem in the Psalter, whose final form was settled much later—long after the Davidic throne was excavated and so long after the last royal wedding—reveals that hope of future royal nuptials continued to live in the hearts of the postexilic community."⁹⁶

With the Israelite's failure to restore the Davidic dynasty in the second temple period, the psalm gave way to a future eschatological messianic hope concerning this "ideal king." As J. McCann notes, Psalms 45-49 "assisted the community to face the disorienting reality of exile and also to affirm the hope that was still possible."⁹⁷

B. Messianic Interpretation of Psalm 45 in Second Temple Judaism

Although the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 may reach beyond the author's original intent in that it separates itself from the historical context, it is easy to see how Psalm 45 came to be recognized as both an eschatological and messianic psalm. Estes, commenting on the royal psalms, notes, "By their references to the Davidic king as the human representative of the sovereign rule of Yahweh and their use of the language of ideology, the psalms prepare the way

⁹⁴ Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, 188.

⁹⁵ Johnston, "Messianic Trajectories," 87.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ J. McCann, "Books I-III and the Editorial Purpose of the Hebrew Psalter," in *Shape and Shaping of the Psalter*, ed. J. Clinton McCann, JSOTSup, no. 159 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 102.

for the Messiah, the ideal king. It is not surprising, therefore, that the early Christians read these psalms in messianic terms as anticipating Christ.⁹⁸

In agreement with Estes, Mitchell notes, "after the downfall of *bet*-David, the continuing belief in its future resurgence would have led to the psalm's being regarded as referring to a future Davidic king."⁹⁹ Mitchell further states that the bridegroom figure of Psalm 45 was "regarded from early times as representing the anticipated future Davidic hero-king, and this interpretation...is a likely explanation for its preservation in the Psalter."¹⁰⁰

Postell agrees with Mitchell that Psalm 45 looks forward to a future Messiah figure but further argues that Psalm 45 "did not accrue a messianic meaning over time" but is instead a "direct messianic prophecy."¹⁰¹ As a "direct messianic prophecy," Postell believes that "this king of superlative beauty and divine attributes is the same king of whom the Law and the Prophets spoke."¹⁰² Postell makes four arguments in favor of viewing the king of Psalm 45 as the Messiah. His arguments include (1) divine descriptions of the king (Ps. 45:6), (2) the larger context of the Sons of Korah Psalms, (3) the call for the bride to "bow down" to the king (Ps. 45:11), and (4) the call to praise or to give thanks¹⁰³ to the king (Ps. 45:17).¹⁰⁴

In arguing for John's use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19, it will benefit the argument to

⁹⁸ Estes, *Wisdom Books and Psalms*, 178–179.

⁹⁹ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 248.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 248-249.

¹⁰¹ Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 585.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Postell notes that the act of giving thanks or praise to someone is "a particular action which is only properly and exclusively rendered to God in the book of Psalms, the sole exceptions being the exalted king who appears in the introduction and conclusion to Book II of the Psalms (Pss. 45:11; 72:11)" (*Ibid.*, 576).

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

establish a Christological hermeneutic in the early Church in which they applied the king of Psalm 45 directly to Jesus of Nazareth. However, before providing this evidence, it will benefit to show how the Christian tradition of interpreting Psalm 45 as a messianic psalm evolved out of an earlier tradition within second temple Judaism. Several Jewish sources predating the NT provide evidence of this messianic hope.

1. The Dead Sea Scrolls

There are a few possible allusions to the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 found in the *Dead Sea Scrolls*. Concerning the dating of the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, John Collins notes, "The scrolls come from approximately the same period as the settlement the ruins of which stand at Qumran. The date of the settlement is fixed on archaeological grounds as extending from the mid-2nd century B.C.E. to 68 C.E."¹⁰⁵ Collins further notes, "The scrolls can be dated paleographically from the mid-3rd century B.C.E. to the third quarter of the 1st century C.E."¹⁰⁶ This most likely places these writings before the NT period and certainly before John penned the Apocalypse.

Commenting on the text of 4Q252:1-4, Guthrie states, "Where, speaking of the hope for a Davidic king and alluding to Gen. 49:10, the author describes the 'scepter' that represents his rule (V, 1), and the Messiah is called 'the Messiah of righteousness' (V, 3), for whom the kingship will be 'for everlasting generations' (V, 4)."¹⁰⁷ While the author of 4Q252:1-4 is commenting on Genesis 49:10, he seems to borrow language from Psalm 45 in order to apply this text to the

¹⁰⁵ John J. Collins, "Dead Sea Scrolls," ed. David Noel Freedman, in *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 86.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 919–993 (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, UK: Baker Academic; Apollos, 2007), 938.

Messiah figure. For example, while Genesis 49:10 does mention the "scepter" of Judah, the word "righteous" is absent from the text of Genesis 49:10. Thus, it may be that the author borrows the language of "righteousness" from Psalm 45:6, where the king's scepter is said to be a "righteous" scepter.

Furthermore, in relation to Genesis 49:8-11, the king of Psalm 45 is said to be "anointed...with the oil of gladness beyond" his "companions" (Ps. 45:7). Thus, the king of Psalm 45 receives a blessing that resembles Judah's blessing in that his "companions" (Ps. 45:7) shall "praise him"(Gen 49:8a; c.f. Ps. 45:17) and "bow down before"(Gen 49:8b; c.f. Ps. 45:11) him, for he is blessed "beyond" (Ps. 45:7) them. Moreover, Genesis 49:10 states, "to him [Judah], shall be the obedience of the peoples" (Gen. 49:10). Commenting on this "obedience," the author of 4Q252 states, "For to him and to his seed the covenant of the kingdom of His people has been given for the eternal generations."¹⁰⁸ The phrase "eternal generations" is echoed in Psalm 45 when it speaks of the generations praising and remembering the king "forever and ever" (Ps. 45:17). Thus, the author of 4Q252 possibly links Genesis 49:10 to Psalm 45, referencing both as messianic texts.¹⁰⁹

Second, 4Q171 preserves brief comments on Psalm 37 with recognizable remains of Psalm 45. The commentary on Psalm 37 describes the destiny of the wicked as opposed to the just. Michael O. Wise notes, "The largest surviving fragments of 4Q171 preserve a running commentary on Psalm 37, which deals with the necessity of the righteous to keep faith in God despite the apparent successes of the wicked. God will ensure that both righteous and wicked get

¹⁰⁸ Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg Jr., and Edward M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (New York: HarperOne, 2005), 355.

¹⁰⁹ For further comments on Psalm 45 and its connection to Genesis 49:8-12 see *chapter five* below.

their due: for the righteous, a reward for their faithfulness; for the wicked, punishment."¹¹⁰

While the commentary in this section on Psalm 45 is minimal and includes no mention of the Messiah, one must note the eschatological nature of the annotation that precedes and follows. In commenting on 4Q171, Wise notes, "The psalm and its attendant commentary are shot through with a passionate desire to see the injustices of the world put right.... These commentaries, then, have an eschatological fervor that the more historical commentaries... only occasionally display."¹¹¹ Mitchell plainly argues, "4Q171 interprets Psalms 37 and 45 eschatologically, as does 4Q173 for Psalm 128."¹¹²

2. Aramaic *Targum*

Third, like the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, the Aramaic *Targum* Ps 45 also supports a messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 within Judaism. Beale notes, "*Targ.* Ps. 45 identifies the king as the Messiah, who will marry both Israel and the converted nations at the eschaton."¹¹³ Beale further states, "In this connection it is significant that later Judaism identified the king of Psalm 45 with the Messiah."¹¹⁴

Targum Ketuvim Psalm 45:3 provides a messianic interpretation of Psalm 45:2, which states, "You are the most handsome of the sons of men" (Ps. 45:2). The *Targum* reads, "Your beauty, O King Messiah, surpasses that of ordinary men."¹¹⁵ Deilitzsch notes, "This messianic

¹¹⁰ Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 248.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 26; See also Long, "The Origin of the Eschatological Feast," 264-265.

¹¹³ Beale, *Revelation*, 944.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Samson H. Levey, Trans. *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation*, Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 2 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1977), 109.

interpretation must be very ancient. Just as Ezek. 21:32 refers back to אֵל גְּבוּרָה Gen.49:10, among the names of the Messiah in Isa. 9:5 (cf. Zech. 12:8) refers back in a similar manner to Ps. 45."¹¹⁶ McWhirter states, "a messianic interpretation of Ps 45 in the Aramaic Targum demonstrates that it is not out of the question for Jews to read Ps 45 as a messianic psalm."¹¹⁷ Furthermore, McWhirter notes, "the fact that messianic interpretation of Ps 45 survives in both Jewish and Christian documents indicates that it probably pre-dates Jesus."¹¹⁸

C. Messianic Interpretation of Psalm 45 in the Early Church

The evidence of a pre-Christian messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 within Judaism reveals that the early Church's understanding of Psalm 45 flowed out of an earlier Judaic messianic tradition pre-dating the Christian community. In other words, the author of Hebrews and others within the early Church followed an earlier tradition concerning the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45. Several sources provide clear evidence that the early Church interpreted the king of Psalm 45 to reference Jesus of Nazareth. While this does not prove that John interpreted the psalm in this way, it at least establishes that some contemporary with John did. The following subheadings will examine these early Christian sources revealing a longstanding tradition of interpreting Psalm 45 as a "messianic psalm."

1. Hebrews 1:8-9

The most substantial evidence for a Christological application of Psalm 45 in the early Church is the author of Hebrews' quotation in Hebrews 1:8-9. Mitchell notes, "The New

¹¹⁶ Delitzsch, *Psalms*, 1:74.

¹¹⁷ Jocelyn McWhirter, "The Bridegroom-Messiah and the People of God: Allusions to Biblical Texts About Marriage in the Fourth Gospel" (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2001), 157.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

Testament writer of Heb. 1:5-13 cites Psalms 2, 45, and 110 in sequence, and alludes in v. 6 to Ps. 89:28 [27], in the context of a discussion about messianic belief. This suggests that these psalms were understood as a related group with a messianic message even in temple times."¹¹⁹

In quoting Psalm 45:6-7, the writer of Hebrews seeks to establish (1) Jesus' divine nature as God, (2) Jesus' distinct person as the "Son" of the Father, (3) Jesus' superiority to the angels, and (4) Jesus' role as the messianic king whose kingdom reign is for perpetual generations. Guthrie notes, "the application of the Psalm¹²⁰ by the author of Hebrews, to Jesus as the Messiah, is much in keeping with traditions within Judaism that apply the Psalm to the Messiah and his kingdom."¹²¹ Guthrie further states, "It is clear that the author of Hebrews walks the path of other Jewish interpreters of the era in understanding the Psalm as messianic, and thus, for him, as Christological."¹²²

The quotation of Psalm 45:6-7 supplied by the author of Hebrews is part of a larger chain¹²³ of OT quotations strategically picked by the author to portray several Christological implications concerning Jesus the "Son." Guthrie notes, "Teachers in broader Judaism, among both the rabbis and the interpreters of Qumran, at times, used 'catchwords' to string together OT texts revolving around a particular theme. These chain quotations, or *ḥāraz*, brought to bear a quantity of scriptural evidence to support the teacher's topic."¹²⁴ Guthrie further states, "These

¹¹⁹ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 243–244.

¹²⁰ The Psalm Guthrie refers to here is Psalm 45.

¹²¹ Guthrie, "Hebrews," 938.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ The chain consists of seven OT quotations broken into three sections: Hebrews 1:5-6 (Ps. 2:7; 2 Sam. 7:14; Deut. 32:43/Ps. 96:7 LXX [97:7 MT/ET]); 1:7-12 (Ps. 103:4 LXX [Ps 104:4 MT/ET]; Ps. 44:7-8 [45:7-8 MT; 45:6-7 ET]; Ps. 101:26-28 LXX [102:26-28 MT; 102:25-27 ET]); 1:13-14 (Ps. 110:1 [109:1 LXX]).

¹²⁴ Guthrie, "Hebrews," 925.

connections suggest once again that the broader context of these psalms had an influence on the author's choice of which passages to include in the chain, or perhaps that they had been grouped prior to the author's use of them."¹²⁵ Essentially, these OT quotations provided by the author of Hebrews furnish details to bolster the author's claim regarding Jesus' exalted position as the divine "Son."

It is essential to note that the author of Hebrews employs each quotation due to its contextual thematic link with the other references. In other words, each quotation furnished by the author of Hebrews revolves around supporting themes relating to the messianic king and his eternal reign. For example, Psalm 45, Psalm 2, Psalm 110, and 2 Samuel 7 all contain imagery of God's throne, rule, and victory over his enemies. Likewise, Psalm 45:6, Psalm 110:2, Psalm 2:9, and 2 Samuel 7:14 all mention the "scepter" of the king. Furthermore, exhibited in Psalm 45:2; 2 Samuel 7:13-16; and Psalm 110:4 is the perpetual duration of the king's reign. In addition, some have argued for a link between Psalm 45:7 and Psalm 2:2 due to the language of the king as the "anointed." Finally, Guthrie notes the use/link of the term "*himation* ('garment') ... found at 45:8, as well as Ps. 104:2, 6; 102:26."¹²⁶

Herbert Bateman argues that the author of Hebrews, "Realizing that he was living in 'the last days' (Heb 1:2a), selects and intentionally intermingles OT passages, some of which were primed culturally and employed frequently to address, however indirectly, the restoration of the Davidic dynasty or a realized kingdom."¹²⁷ On a similar note, William L. Lane argues that the writer of Hebrews employs Psalm 45:6-7 due to its ties in motif to the Davidic covenant. Lane

¹²⁵ Ibid., 933.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 937.

¹²⁷ Herbert W. Bateman IV, "Psalm 45:6-7 And its Christological Contributions to Hebrews," *Trinity Journal* 22, no. 1 (Spring, 2001): 2.

states, "The motif of an eternal kingdom brings Ps. 45 within the orbit of 2 Sam 7, where the establishment of an eternal throne is promised: 'I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever' (v 13); 'Your throne shall be established forever (v 16).'"¹²⁸ Thus, the writer of Hebrews understands Jesus' exaltation to the right hand of the Father to be the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, with Psalm 45 bolstering his claim.

In connection with Psalm 45 and the author of Hebrews' use of Psalm 45, it is interesting to note that the thematic links mentioned above are all found in the context of Revelation 19. First, Revelation 19 places the throne of God as the central image in the text, for the multitude described in Revelation 19:1-6 worships God, who is "seated on the throne" (Rev. 19:4). Furthermore, the worshipping assembly celebrates God's victory and reign over the enemy by crying out in exuberant joy, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns" (Rev. 19:6). Second, the "smoke" of the great prostitute, also known as Babylon the great, ascends "forever and ever" (Rev. 19:3), thus revealing the eternal reign, complete victory, and rule of the kingdom of God. Third, borrowing from Psalm 2, John notes that the rider on the white horse comes to "strike down the nations, and... rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 19:15). Thus, Jesus rules the nations with his "righteous scepter" (Ps. 45:6). Finally, Revelation 19:13 describes the warrior king's garments (*himation*) in some detail.

2. Justin Martyr

In addition to the author of Hebrews' use of Psalm 45, Justin Martyr (ca. 100-165), a significant second-century Christian apologist, provides some evidence of a messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 within the early Church. In his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Martyr cites

¹²⁸ William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, Volume 47A, WBC (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2015), 29.

Psalm 45 on four separate occasions.¹²⁹ On each occasion, Martyr seeks to establish Jesus' divinity as the Messiah. In his citations, Martyr presumes Rabbi Trypho also understands Psalm 45 as a messianic psalm. In *Dial.* 38:3, Martyr prefaces his citation of the entire psalm with, "The Forty-fourth Psalm speaks thus of Christ."¹³⁰ In *Dial.* 56:14 and 63:4-5, Martyr argues for Jesus' divinity by noting that David addresses the king of Psalm 45 as "God."¹³¹ In *Dial.* 86:3, Martyr cites Psalm 45:7 as the grounds for interpreting "every chrism, whether of oil, or myrrh, or any other balsam compound" as "a figure of Christ."¹³² Finally, after citing Psalm 44:7-13 LXX, Martyr states, "These words show clearly...that he [Jesus] is to be worshipped as both God and Christ."¹³³

3. Irenaeus

Along with Justin Martyr, Irenaeus (ca.140-ca.202), a student of Martyr and former Bishop of Lyons, also provides evidence of a messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 within the early Church. While Irenaeus postdates the first century, his associations with Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John, deem him noteworthy.¹³⁴ Irenaeus, like Martyr, cites Psalm 45 as an argument for the deity of Christ.¹³⁵ After quoting Psalm 45:6, Irenaeus states, "For the Spirit designates both [of them] by the name of God—both Him who is anointed as Son, and Him who

¹²⁹ See, Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 38:3; 56:14; 63:4-5; 86:3.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 38:3.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 56:14; 63:4-5.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 86:3.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 63:4-5.

¹³⁴ See, Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 3.3.4; also, Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 5.20.4-8.

¹³⁵ See, Irenaeus. *Adversus Haereses*, 3.6.1.

does anoint, that is, the Father."¹³⁶

What is of particular interest is Irenaeus' chain of quotations regarding the second advent of Christ in *Against Heresies* book 4, chapter 33, paragraph 11. After quoting Isaiah 6:1; Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10; Luke 18:8; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8; Matthew 3:12; Matthew 25:41; and 2 Thessalonians 1:9-10; all of which portray Christ in his second coming, Irenaeus then quotes Psalm 45:2, 7, 3, and 4 and provides commentary regarding these verses in which he states, "Whatever other things of a like nature are spoken regarding Him, these indicated that beauty and splendor which exist in His kingdom, along with the transcendent and pre-eminent exaltation [belonging] to all who are under His sway, that those who hear might desire to be found there, doing such things as are pleasing to God."¹³⁷ Thus, by linking Psalm 45 with the texts mentioned above, Irenaeus clearly interprets Psalm 45 as eschatological in scope with direct links to Christ's second coming.

Along with Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and the author of Hebrews, the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 may also be traced in others such as Theophilus of Antioch (late 2nd century), Origen (2nd-3rd century), Tertullian (3rd century), Cyprian (3rd century), Novation (3rd century), and Hippolytus (3rd century). While Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and those listed above post-date the Book of Revelation (and thus are somewhat irrelevant in the argument for John's use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19), they do at least reveal the ease with which one may apply a Christological/messianic interpretation to Psalm 45. Given the contemporary witnesses listed above, it is likely that John either held to this same interpretation or at least knew of this

¹³⁶ Ibid. For translation see, Irenaeus of Lyons, *The Writings of Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, trans. Alexander Roberts and W. H. Rambaut, vol. 1, Ante-Nicene Christian Library (Edinburgh; London; Dublin: T. & T. Clark; Hamilton & Co.; John Robertson & Co., 1868–1869), 269.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

interpretive tradition.

D. Allegorical Interpretation of Psalm 45

In this section, the thesis will examine the allegorical interpretation of the bride's identity in Psalm 45. While the figurative interpretation is not without its problems, providing evidence of such an interpretation may give additional weight for the possibility of John's use of Psalm 45. While it is easy to see how aspects of the kingly figure in Psalm 45 became a representation of the "ideal king," it becomes more challenging to tie the king of Psalm 45 to a single divine messianic figure. For example, if one understands the royal figure of Psalm 45 to be the Messiah, then who or what does the bride's identity represent? Likewise, who or what is the symbolic representation of the bride's bridal companions? Moreover, what does one do with the reference to the "daughter of Tyre" in verse 12?

This is where the allegorical/messianic interpretation becomes problematic. As Long notes, the allegorical interpretations are difficult "because they separate the psalm from the historical context (a royal wedding) and the original intention of the Psalm."¹³⁸ However, others argue that several "textual clues" are set within the text of Psalm 45 and within the context of Psalms 42-49 that point to a figurative interpretation.¹³⁹ In the following subsection, the thesis will discuss these "textual clues" and then provide some historical examples where Psalm 45 was interpreted allegorically within the early Church.

1. The Identity of the Bride

One problem with the allegorical interpretation discussed above is the bride's identity.

¹³⁸ Long, "The Origin of the Eschatological Feast," 227.

¹³⁹ See, Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 573-586.

Concerning the symbolic approach to understanding the identity of the bride, Seth Postell notes, "Several textual clues suggest the author of the book of Psalms presents the daughter in Ps 45:10 as a figurative depiction of the speakers of the three previous Sons of Korah psalms (Pss. 42-44) who long to come into God's presence."¹⁴⁰

Postell provides four textual arguments for interpreting the bride in this manner. First, Postell argues, "there are only two verses in the entire Hebrew Bible that refer to 'coming' (*bw*) into someone's presence with 'joy' and 'rejoicing' (Pss. 43:4; 45:15)."¹⁴¹ The psalmist in Psalm 43:4 looks forward to a time when he will be in the presence of God, and describes this occasion as "exceeding joy" (Ps. 43:4). This follows the psalmist question in Psalm 42:2: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. 42:2). This question is then answered when the bride and her companions are led into the presence of the king with "joy and gladness" (Ps. 45:14-15).

Next, Postell argues, "A second reason for interpreting the king's bride figuratively is the identification of one of the bride's companions as the 'daughter of Tyre,' clearly used as a metaphor to represent an entire people, as the second half of v. 12 makes clear: 'The daughter of Tyre, the wealthy people, will seek your favor with gifts' (Ps 45:12)."¹⁴²

The Hebrew Bible frequently personifies a city or country by referring to it as the "daughter of," followed by the name of the city or people group to which it referred. For example, Israel and Jerusalem are metaphorically called the "daughter of Zion" (Isa. 62:11; Zech. 9:9; Ps. 9:14), the "daughter of Jerusalem" (Zech. 9:9), the "daughter of my people" (Isa. 22:4;

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 577.

¹⁴¹ Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 577-578.

¹⁴² Ibid.

Jer. 4:11; Lam. 3:48; 4:3, 6, 10), and the "daughter of Judah" (Lam. 2:2).¹⁴³ Likewise, the Hebrew Bible speaks of the "daughter of Edom" (Lam. 4:21), the "daughter of Egypt" (Jer. 46:24), and the "daughter of Babylon" (Zech. 2:7).¹⁴⁴ If the "daughter of Tyre" in Psalm 45:12 is metaphorical for an entire people group, then may the bride also be a metaphor for the people of God?

Postell bases his third argument on reading Psalm 45 in relation to Psalms 42-44 and Psalms 46-49. By reading these Psalms together, Postell argues the bride is "a metaphor for God's people...in which the distance between the people of Israel from their God and His Temple (Pss. 42-44) is clearly overcome in Pss. 46-49 with the joyful celebration of God's presence with His people in the Temple (cf. Pss. 45:15; 48:9)."¹⁴⁵ Finally, Postell notes, "many other passages in the prophetic literature depict the redemption of God's people as a wedding banquet."¹⁴⁶ Therefore, it is not mere subjective reasoning to interpret the bride of Psalm 45 as a symbolic representation of the people of God.

If Postell's conclusions are correct, then, through the eyes of a second temple Jew, Psalm 45 looked forward to the hope of a deliverer who would bring in everlasting righteousness through the rule of his kingdom. This deliverer would usher in the eschatological age, often viewed through the lens of a lavish banquet, in which the people of God are brought out of exile in a new exodus and reunited with God. The bride (as a representation of God's people) is expected to be united once again with God in the coming eschatological age. Evidence of this

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

allegorical interpretation provides background to other texts which look forward to an eschatological age that depicts the end of the exile of the people of God, leading to their restoration and union with God.

2. Historical Examples of Allegorical Interpretation in the Early Church

The OT frequently presents the image of Israel as the bride of Yahweh.¹⁴⁷ This OT metaphor led to the view that the Church's relationship with Jesus could be metaphorically understood through the lens of a marital relationship. In commenting on this marital metaphor, Jefferey E. Miller notes, "The Bride of Christ metaphor illustrates the relationship between Jesus and His followers, the Church, and Jesus' authority over the Church."¹⁴⁸ Miller further notes, "Jesus, who serves as the Church's bridegroom, loves His bride by offering Himself as a sacrifice for her (Eph. 5:25–27). In response, the Church submits to Jesus and remains faithful to Him as His bride (Eph. 5:22–24, 31–32)."¹⁴⁹ Psalm 45 likely played a crucial role in developing this messianic metaphor between Christ and the Church.

As discussed earlier, Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* supplies evidence for a messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 within the early Church. Furthermore, he also provides an excellent example of the allegorical hermeneutic in which one interprets the bride of Psalm 45 to represent the people of God. In commenting on Ps. 44:7-13 LXX, Justin notes, "the Word of God speaks to those who believe in him (who are of one soul and one synagogue and one church) as to a daughter."¹⁵⁰ Thus, Justin understands the daughter-bride of Psalm 45 as a metaphor for the

¹⁴⁷ See, e.g., Isa. 54:5-6; 61:10; 62:4-5; Jer. 33:10-11; Ezek. 16:15-43; Hosea 1.

¹⁴⁸ Jeffrey E. Miller, "Bride of Christ," ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 63:4-5.

Church. Justin argues that, just as "the daughter"(Ps. 45:10) is to "bow"(Ps 45:11) to the king, so must the Church "worship" Christ. Just as the daughter-bride of Psalm 45 is to "forget her people" (Ps 45:10), so must the Church "forget the ancient customs of our ancestors."¹⁵¹

Like Martyr, Irenaeus also interprets the bride of Psalm 45 as the Church. Concerning the glorification and immortality given to the saints, Irenaeus states, "His hand fashioned thy substance; He will cover thee over [too] within and without with pure gold and silver, and He will adorn thee to such a degree that even 'the King Himself shall have pleasure in thy beauty.'"¹⁵² In this statement, Irenaeus alludes to Psalm 45:10-11, which calls for the bride of Psalm 45 to "forget" her "people" and her "father's house," resulting in the king's desire for her "beauty" (Psalm 45:10-11).

E. Implications

Chapter three provides clear evidence of a messianic and allegorical interpretation of Psalm 45 in the early Church. With the exile of the Jewish people and the fall of the monarchy, the Israelites longed for a day when the Davidic kingship would again be established and secured in Zion. Thus, Psalm 45 provided a future hope for this anticipation. The Jews in the Second Temple period looked forward to this "ideal king," a king who would rule with righteousness and whose kingdom would exist throughout perpetual generations. In many ways, the first-century Christian community followed the earlier Judaic hermeneutic of interpreting Psalm 45 as a messianic psalm.

This hermeneutic, as Mitchell notes, was "inherited... from Israel through the early

¹⁵¹ Ibid. The "customs" here is in reference to the practices of Judaism.

¹⁵² Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 4.39.2.

Israelite Church and its leaders. It is therefore unsurprising that patristic writers share by and large the same hermeneutical principles as the rabbis with regard to the Psalter."¹⁵³ However, with the life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth, first-century Christians (unlike many second temple Jews) found this messianic expectation fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, the author of Hebrews and other early Christ-followers quote or make use of Psalm 45 as a proof-text for Jesus' rightful rulership as the anticipated messianic king.

Given the clear evidence that contemporaries with John viewed Psalm 45 as a critical eschatological text highlighting the Messiah and his kingdom's reign, it seems likely that John interpreted Psalm 45 in this manner. Furthermore, by reading Psalm 45 and the surrounding Songs of Korah psalms together as a single unit, one can see the allegorical interpretation in which the people of God longed to be in God's presence, waiting for the coming deliverer who would bring victory and vindication against their enemies. This longing ends when the people of God gain deliverance from their enemies by the rule and reign of the divine bridegroom warrior king. At that time, the expectant hope and eschatological joy of the exiled people of God will find its fulfillment as the people of God (the faithful bride) are led into the king's presence and are united to him.

¹⁵³ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 33.

IV. The Use of Psalm 45 in OT Pseudepigrapha

Having discussed the interpretation of Psalm 45 historically, the thesis will now examine a few relevant texts in the Old Testament *Pseudepigraphal* writings that reveal an early messianic interpretation of Psalm 45. While these texts are limited, they are significant in that they shed further light on the interpretation of Psalm 45 pre-dating the writing of John's apocalypse.

A. Testament of Judah 24

First, the use of Psalm 45 by the author of *Testament of Judah* provides significant evidence for a messianic interpretation of this royal wedding psalm. Phillip J. Long notes, "It is difficult to know how early this messianic interpretation is since there is little use of the psalm in the intertestamental literature. A potential pre-Christian use of Ps 45 to describe a messianic expectation is *T. Jud. 24*."¹⁵⁴

The *Testament of Judah* is a portion of the *Pseudepigraphal* writings known as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Concerning the dating of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, H. C. Kee notes, "Apart from the Christian interpolations, which seem to have a special affinity with Johannine thought and probably date from the early second century A.D., the basic writing gives no evidence of having been composed by anyone other than a Hellenized Jew."¹⁵⁵ Kee goes on to state, "Its use of the Septuagint suggests that it was written after 250 B.C., which is the approximate year the Septuagint translation was completed."¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Long, "The Origin of the Eschatological Feast," 228

¹⁵⁵ H. C. Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), 777.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

T. Jud. 24:1 reads, "And after this, there shall arise for you a Star from Jacob in peace: And a man shall arise from my posterity like the Sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of men in gentleness and righteousness, and in him will be found no sin" (*T. Jud.* 24:1).¹⁵⁷ The allusion to Psalm 45 is found in the description of the "Sun of righteousness" as one who walks with the sons of men in "gentleness and righteousness" (πραότητι και δικαιοσύνη). The author seems to refer to the LXX Psalm 44:5, which describes the king as one who "stretches out his bow on account of "truth" and "gentleness and righteousness" (πραότητι και δικαιοσύνη)."¹⁵⁸

Kee believes *T. Jud.* 24 to be a "mosaic of eschatological expectations based on Num.24:17; Mal. 4:2; Ps 45:4; [and] Isa 53:9."¹⁵⁹ McWhirter further expounds upon this mosaic when he states, "Testament of Judah 24 identifies the expected descendant of Judah with the subject of several other messianic prophecies. He is the Star of Jacob from Num. 24:17 (v. 1), the sun of righteousness from Mal. 4:2 (v. 1), The Shoot from Isa. 11:1 and Zech. 6:12 (vv. 4, 6), and the gentle and righteous king from Ps 45:4."¹⁶⁰ McWhirter goes on to state, "The author of this passage assumes the messianic import of all these prophecies—including Ps. 45:4."¹⁶¹

Along with *T. Jud.* 24:1, one may also find an allusion to Psalm 45 in *T. Jud.* 24:4-6, which reads, "This is the Shoot of God Most High; this is the fountain for the life of all humanity. Then he will illumine the scepter of my kingdom, and from your root will arise the Shoot, and through it will arise the rod of righteousness for the nations, to judge and to save all

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 801.

¹⁵⁸ Translation mine.

¹⁵⁹ Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction," 801.

¹⁶⁰ McWhirter, "The Bridegroom-Messiah," 158.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 159.

that call on the Lord."¹⁶²

This text is significant in that the "scepter," also deemed as the "rod of righteousness," is yielded by the Messiah to "judge and to save."¹⁶³ This language of the king's "righteous scepter" may evoke Psalm 45:6-7, which reads, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness; you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness" (Ps. 45:6-7). These texts look forward to the messianic figure who will rule with righteousness. The significance here is that the author of *T. Jud. 24* borrows language from Psalm 45 in order to speak of this coming eschatological figure.

B. 1 Enoch

Like the text of *T. Jud. 24*, there may also be significant allusions to Psalm 45 in the *Pseudepigraphal* book of *1 Enoch*. According to Pierpaolo Bertalotto, "Psalm 45 may be counted among the most relevant sources behind the shaping of the special figure of the Son of Man in the Book of Parables."¹⁶⁴ Moreover, Bertalotto argues, "the affinities between the protagonist of Psalm 45 and the Enochic Messiah in the Parables make it highly likely that the latter figure was modeled on the former."¹⁶⁵

First, Bertalotto notes a similarity in the description of the "Son of man" in 1 Enoch 46:1 to that of the description of the "king" in Psalm 45:2. Bertalotto states, "According to Ps. 45.2, the king is the 'most handsome' of the 'sons of men', being filled with the grace 'poured' on his lips. Similarly, the Son of Man in the Parables has the appearance of a man, but, because of the

¹⁶² Trans., Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A New Translation and Introduction," 801.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Pierpaolo Bertalotto, "The Enochic Son of Man, Psalm 45, and the *Book of the Watchers*," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 19.3 (2010): 216.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 207.

graciousness of his face, he also resembles 'one of the holy angels.'¹⁶⁶

Bertalotto further recognizes similarities in 1 Enoch 46:3 and Psalm 45:8. He argues, "the description of the 'Son of Man' in terms of justice establishes a clear connection between 1 En. 46:3 and Ps. 45:8. Consequently, it can be argued that the Semitic original had in this passage a quotation from Ps. 45:3, rather than from Dan. 7:13."¹⁶⁷ Like the figure of Psalm 45, the Son of Man in 1 Enoch 62:2 is seated on a throne (c.f. Ps. 45:7). Concerning this throne, Bertalotto notes, "In the Psalm this throne is everlasting, and in the Parables, it is even the same throne of Glory, the Most High's throne, that would be occupied by the eschatological figure, in order to perform the final judgment."¹⁶⁸ Bertalotto further notes, "The only scriptural precedent for an image of the shared throne is the one in Ps. 45.7, through the mediation of 1 En. 9.4, where the 'everlasting throne' of Ps. 45.7 is explicitly identified with the throne of God."¹⁶⁹

Perhaps the appellatives assigned to both figures are the most substantial similarities between the figure of Psalm 45 and the Enochic Son of Man. Bertalotto notes that the Son of Man in 1 Enoch is called "the Righteous One, the Chosen One, and the Messiah, like the Davidide of the psalm, who is anointed beyond his companions (Messiah), and therefore chosen (Chosen One), because of his love for righteousness (Righteous One)." Concerning these appellatives, Bertalotto goes on to note, "In other words, the king of Psalm 45 is not only אלוהים but also a 'son of men,' a Messiah, a Chosen One and a Righteous One."¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 199.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 210.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 205.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 206.

C. Joseph and Asenath

The similarities between the text of *Joseph and Aseneth* and Psalm 45 are quite alarming, considering the nuptial context and language employed in each text. Burchard notes, "As a Greek Jewish writing, *Joseph and Aseneth* is part of the background of early Christianity and its literature."¹⁷¹ Burchard further states, "New Testament parallels to *Joseph and Aseneth* are certainly not caused by literary influence on either side; these similarities are due to a common Jewish heritage."¹⁷² In other words, Burchard believes neither text was influenced by the other; instead, they reflect a common tradition of "Jewish heritage." Perhaps this "common Jewish heritage" finds its roots in the messianic canonical reading of Ps. 45.

There are several affinities in both motif and language between Psalm 45 and *Joseph and Aseneth* 19:1-9.¹⁷³ Interestingly, the bride Aseneth, described as a "glorious refuge city," echoes themes and motifs found in Psalm 46 and Revelation 21 (cf. Ps. 46:1, 5; Rev. 21:2 ff.; Jo. As. 19:8-9). Below is supplied a table reflecting these affinities between these two nuptial texts. It will benefit the reader to see these verbal and thematic connections side by side.

¹⁷¹ C. Burchard "Joseph and Aseneth: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), 233.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ *Joseph and Aseneth* 19:1-9 reads: "And while they were still speaking this (way) a boy came and said to Aseneth, 'Behold, Joseph is standing at the doors of the court.' And Aseneth hurried and went down the stairs of the floor with the seven virgins to meet Joseph and stood in the entrance of the house. And Joseph entered the court and the gates were closed, and all strangers remained outside. And Aseneth went out of the entrance to meet Joseph, and Joseph saw her and was amazed at her beauty, and said to her, 'Who are you? Quickly tell me.' And she said to him 'I am your maidservant Aseneth, and all the idols I have thrown away from me and they were destroyed. And a man came to me from heaven today, and gave me bread of life and I ate, and a cup of blessing and I drank. And he said to me, 'I have given you for a bride to Joseph today, and he himself will be your bridegroom for ever (and) ever.' And he said to me, 'Your name will no longer be called Aseneth, but your name will be called City of Refuge and the Lord God will reign as king over many nations for ever, because in you many nations will take refuge with the Lord God, the Most High....And Joseph said to Aseneth, 'Blessed are you by the Most High God, and blessed (is) your name for ever, because the Lord God founded your walls in the highest, and your walls are adamantine walls of life, because the sons of the living God will dwell in your City of Refuge, and the Lord God will reign as king over them for ever and ever" (C. Burchard "Joseph and Aseneth: A New Translation and Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 1, ed. James H. Charlesworth [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983], 233).

Table 1: Comparison of Psalm 45 and *Jos. As.* 19:5-9 ¹⁷⁴

	Psalm 45	<i>Jos. As.</i> 19:5-9
The bride and her virgin companions are led to meet the bridegroom	"...she is led to the king, with her virgin companions following behind her" (Ps. 45:14).	"And Aseneth hurried and went down the stairs of the floor with the seven virgins to meet Joseph.... And Aseneth went...to meet Joseph"(<i>Jo. As.</i> 19:2, 4).
The bridegroom delights in the bride's beauty	"...the king will desire your beauty" (Ps. 45:11).	"...and Joseph saw her and was amazed at her beauty" (<i>Jo. As.</i> 19:4, 5).
The bride casts away her idols	"...forget your people and your father's house" (Ps. 45:10).	"...all the idols I have thrown away from me and they were destroyed" (<i>Jo. As.</i> 19:5).
The bride's glory described	"All glorious is the princess in her chamber, with robes interwoven with gold" (Ps. 45:13)	"...your walls are adamantine wall of life" (<i>Jo. As.</i> 19:5).
Praise ascribed forever and ever	"I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore nations will praise you forever and ever" (Ps. 45:17)	"Blessed are you by the Most High God, and blessed (is) your name for ever" (<i>Jo. As.</i> 19:5).

Hartapo notes, "It is plausible to argue that Aseneth's image as the City of Refuge has an eschatological significance. Her status as 'City of Refuge' places her in some sort of relationship to others of the eschatological community, the community which will 'enter the rest provided for those who have been chosen' (8:9; 19:8)."¹⁷⁵ Hartapo further notes, "In this case, the story of Aseneth's marriage to a son of God reflects biblical imagery about the marriage of Yahweh and Jerusalem (Israel)."¹⁷⁶

C. Implications

Chapter 4 provides further evidence of a messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 in the

¹⁷⁴ Trans., Burchard, "Joseph and Aseneth," 195

¹⁷⁵ Hartapo, "The Marriage of the Lamb," 73.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

second-temple period. Given the evidence above, it is highly likely that the authors of *T. Jud. 24* and *1 Enoch* borrowed language from Psalm 45 to describe the messianic figure who was to rule with a righteous scepter. Given John's description of Jesus in Revelation 19, one may ask whether John, like the authors of *T. Jud. 24* and *1 Enoch*, also borrows language from Psalm 45. In the following chapters, the thesis will further explore the question of whether or not John makes use of Psalm 45 in Revelation 19. For now, it is essential to note that Psalm 45 is intertextually linked to other messianically related texts such as *T. Jud. 24* and *1 Enoch*. The *Pseudepigraphal* book of *Joseph and Aseneth* also shares affinities with Psalm 45. This is significant due to its intertextual connection between Revelation 19 and Psalm 45. The text of *Joseph and Aseneth* reveals at least a common "Jewish heritage" of interpreting the people of God metaphorically as a bride and a city. This "Jewish heritage" may find its roots in the allegorical interpretation of Psalm 45 discussed in chapter 3.

In the following chapter, the thesis will discuss several other well-known messianic texts in the OT that share an intertextual relationship to Psalm 45. These links to Psalm 45, both *Pseudepigraphal* and OT, reveal that Psalm 45 was highly regarded as a messianic text. Therefore, given its messianic tone, it is highly likely that John may have also recognized Psalm 45 for its messianic nature.

V. Intertextual Links to Psalm 45 in the OT

As noted in the introduction, John makes frequent use of the OT in the Book of Revelation. Several OT messianic texts alluded to by John in Revelation 19 are also intertextually linked to Psalm 45. If a connection can be shown between the passages alluded to by John in Revelation 19 and Psalm 45, then it is highly likely that John may also have Psalm 45 in mind. Thus, this chapter takes three messianic texts from the OT (Ps. 72; Gen. 49:8-12; Zech. 9:9) and shows the intertextual connection between these texts and Psalm 45. The three passages listed above were explicitly chosen on account of John's use of these passages in Revelation 19. The purpose of this chapter is to further reveal the eschatological messianic nature of Psalm 45 and provide more evidence for the plausibility of John's use of the royal wedding psalm.

A. Psalm 72

First, the thesis will explore the associations between Psalm 72, Psalm 45, and Revelation 19. The NA28 cites Psalm 72:2 as a reference for Revelation 19:11. This reference is substantial in that Psalm 45 is closely linked to Psalm 72 by several connections.¹⁷⁷ First, Psalm 45, as part of the Korahite psalms (Pss. 42-49), begins Book II of the Psalter, and Psalm 72 ends Book II. As shown above (see chapter two), this placement is particularly arranged to emphasize the royal psalms and their messianic context. In other words, the content and arrangement of Psalms 45 and 72 canonically link these two psalms together. Mitchell argues, "Psalm 72 symbolizes the initial kingdom of the one who came to Daughter Zion like a bridegroom in Psalm 45, and represents it in terms of its ultimate extent in the final *malkut*, when all opposition shall be

¹⁷⁷ Concerning the connection between Psalm 72 and Psalm 45 Gordon H. Johnston notes, "Psalms 72 and 45, written on the occasions of the king's enthronement and marriage, respectively, celebrate God's promise of the universal rule of the Davidic king" (Johnston, "Messianic Trajectories in the Royal Psalms," 75).

overcome.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, in canonical placement, they begin¹⁷⁹ and end Book II of the psalter; in their content, they are linked by several affinities.

First, both share the language of "bowing down" to the king. In Psalm 72, the desert tribes "bow down" before the king (Ps. 72:9), and "all kings fall down before him" (Ps. 72:11). This "bowing down" echoes the call for the daughter bride to forget her people and "bow" to the king in Psalm 45:11. The fact that Psalm 45 and Psalm 72 use the language of "bowing down" to the king is significant. It hints toward a connection between the two Psalms.

Second, both share the language of the king's righteous rule. In Psalm 72:1-2, the people pray, "Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son! May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice!" (Ps. 72:1-2). This prayer echoes the description of the king of Psalm 45, whose scepter is a scepter of "uprightness"(Ps. 45:6). As he yields his righteous scepter, he conquers "for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness"(Ps. 45:4).

Third, both Psalm 72 and Psalm 45 speak of the perpetual praise of the king. In Psalm 72, the people pray that all may "fear" the king as long as "the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!" (Ps. 72:5). Similarly, in Psalm 45, the Psalmist states, "I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore nations will praise you forever and ever" (Ps. 45:17). Thus, in both Psalm 72 and Psalm 45 the king is recognized eternally as one to be praised and feared.

Fourth, in Psalm 72, the people pray that "the kings of Tarshish" and the kings "of the

¹⁷⁸ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 253.

¹⁷⁹ Psalm 45 begins Book II in the sense that it is Joined to the Korahite 1 collection (Pss. 42-49), which begins Book II.

coastlands" would render "tribute to the king" (Ps. 72:10). Furthermore, the kings of Sheba and Seba would "bring gifts" to the king (Psalm 72:10). The tributes and gifts brought to the King in Psalm 72 echo Psalm 45:12, which depicts the people of Tyre seeking the king's favor with "gifts," even from the wealthiest people (Ps. 45:12). Interestingly, many commentators see a connection between Psalm 72:10 and Revelation 21:24-26. For example, David Aune, in commenting on Revelation 21:24-26, notes, "The place of the Gentiles in Jewish eschatological expectation was understood in at least four ways,"¹⁸⁰ one of which "saw the Gentiles as subservient to Israel and as making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to pay tribute."¹⁸¹

Fifth, in Psalm 72:15, the people pronounce a blessing of prosperity upon the king "may the gold of Sheba be given to him!" (Ps. 72:15). Likewise, in Psalm 45:9, the queen is said to stand at the king's right side in the "gold of Ophir" (Ps. 45:9). Furthermore, robes of "interwoven with gold" (Ps. 45:13) clothe the princess. Hence both Psalm 72 and Psalm 45 allude to the king's wealth by mentioning precious metals and attire.

Finally, in Psalm 72:19, the people pronounce a worldwide blessing upon the king and the earth by stating, "Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory" (Ps. 72:19). In Psalm 45, rather than the king's glory, it is the king's sons that fill the earth: "In place of your fathers shall be your sons; you will make them princes in all the earth" (Ps. 45:16). Thus, in both Psalm 45 and Psalm 72 the earth is filled with blessings from the king's glory. The king's glory fills the world as his offspring extends his kingdom throughout the earth.

¹⁸⁰ David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, vol. 52C, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 1172.

¹⁸¹ Ibid. In this statement, Aune lists the following texts in support of this view: "(Isa. 18:7; 49:22–26; 55:5; 60:1–22; 61:5–6; 66:18–21; Jer. 3:17–18; Zeph. 3:9–10; Hag. 2:7–9; Zech. 2:11–12; 8:20–23; 14:16–19; Ps 72:8–11; *Pss. Sol.* 17:30–31; *Jub.* 32:19; *Sir* 36:11–17; *Sib. Or.* 3.772–74; 1QM 12:14; 1QpPs frag. 9; *Tg. Isa.* 16:1; 25:6–10; *Gen. Rab.* 78.12)."

The reference to Psalm 72 by John in Revelation 19:11 and the affinities between Psalm 45 and Psalm 72 brings one question to bear. Does John's allusion to Psalm 72 in Revelation 19:11 also reveal a connection to Psalm 45? Given the affinities between Psalm 45 and Psalm 72, it is likely that John may have had both Psalm 72 and Psalm 45 in mind. In Revelation 19:11, the rider on the white horse who is called "faithful and true" judges and makes war "in righteousness" (Rev. 19:11). This echoes Psalm 45:4, which describes the warrior king riding out in battle "for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness" (Ps. 45:4). The context of riding out in battle and the language of "righteousness" makes a clear connection between Psalm 45:4 and Revelation 19:11. The thesis will address the question above and the connection between Revelation 19:11 and Psalm 45 further in the following chapter; however, it is essential to note at this point the intertextual relationship between Psalm 72, Psalm 45, and Revelation 19 as discussed above.

B. Genesis 49:8-12

A second intertextual text of significance is Genesis 49:8-12. Concerning the importance of Genesis 49:8-12 as a messianic prophecy, Eugene H. Merrill states, "One of the earliest, most cited, and most important of the messianic texts of the OT is Gen. 49:8–12."¹⁸² Merrill notes that the content of this passage which references key terms such as "praise," "scepter," "ruler's staff," "Shiloh," "foal," "colt," "wine," and "blood" are all "redolent of eschatological and messianic import."¹⁸³

John, in recognizing Genesis 49:8-12 as a key messianic text, gives Jesus the title "the

¹⁸² Eugene H. Merrill, "Genesis 49:8–12: The Lion of Judah," in *The Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy: Studies and Expositions of the Messiah in the Old Testament*, ed. Michael Rydelnik and Edwin Blum (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2019), 271.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

lion of the tribe of Judah"(Rev. 5:5). This title stems from Jacob's blessing on Judah in Genesis 49:9-10, "Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples" (Gen. 49:9-10). In commenting on the ordering of the tribes by John in Revelation 7:4-8, Beale notes, "The priority of Judah...emphasizes the precedence of the messianic king from the tribe of Judah (cf. Gen. 49:10; 1 Chron. 5:1-2) and thus refers to a fulfillment of the prophecy in Gen. 49:8 that the eleven other tribes 'will bow down to Judah.'"¹⁸⁴

The prophecy of Genesis 49:8-12 may be further alluded to in Revelation 7:13-14 and Revelation 19:13. In Revelation 7:13-14, one of the elders identifies the saints clothed in white robes and describes them as "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14). Concerning this text Beale notes, "The image of washing robes in blood could also be derived from Gen. 49:11, where the prophesied ruler from the tribe of Judah is said to 'wash his robe in wine and his garment in the blood of the grape' when he defeats his enemies in the last days (cf. 49:1, 7)."¹⁸⁵ Beale further states, "If there is such an allusion, the saints would be seen in Rev. 7:14 as corporately participating in the ironic victory that the Messiah has inaugurated at the cross."¹⁸⁶ In Revelation 19:13, John provides further imagery of the Messiah's victory over the enemy which may also allude to Genesis 49:8-12. If the blood-stained garments of Christ in Revelation 19:13

¹⁸⁴ Beale, *Revelation*, 417.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 438.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

have a judgment context in view,¹⁸⁷ and the blood is a result of that judgment, then John may likely have Genesis 49:11 along with Isaiah 63:1-3 in mind. Either way, Genesis 49:8-12 is an essential text for John in revealing Jesus as the Messiah.

John borrows from Genesis 49:8-12 because of its messianic tone, the author of Psalm 45 seems to do the same. Concerning the relationship between Psalm 45 and Genesis 49:8-12, Postell notes, "Given the extreme rarity of praise (*ydh*) being offered to a human in the Hebrew Bible, and given the overtly royal overtones in this prophecy about Judah, the numerous lexical and thematic links strongly suggest that Ps 45 intentionally alludes to Gn 49."¹⁸⁸

Postell lists six thematic and lexical links between Psalm 45 and Genesis 49:8-12.¹⁸⁹ In both texts, the king is "bowed down" to (Gen 49:8; cf. Ps. 45:), "praised" (cf., Ps. 45:11, 17b), victorious over Israel's enemies (Genesis 49:8b; cf. Ps. 45:5), yielding a "scepter" (Gen. 49:10a; cf. Ps 45:6a), revered by the peoples (Gen. 49:10; cf. Ps, 45:17), riding upon a mount (Gen 49:11; cf. Ps. 45:4), and described as superlative in appearance (Gen. 49:12; cf. Ps. 45:2).¹⁹⁰ The table below reflects these connections revealing critical links between Psalm 45 and Genesis 49:8-12. It will benefit to see both the thematic and verbal connections between these two texts. Several of these themes and verbal connections are also found in the text of Revelation 19. These connections will be discussed in chapter six.

¹⁸⁷ Scholars debate whether or not the blood of Christ's blood-stained garments in Revelation 19:13 is a result of Christ's own blood and, therefore, a reminder of the work of Christ on the cross or the blood of Christ's defeated enemies (Isa. 63:1-3). For a discussion regarding this debate see: Beale, *Revelation*, 958; Osborne, *Revelation*, 682; Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1057.

¹⁸⁸ Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 583.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

Table 2: Comparison of Gen 49:8-12 to Psalm 45¹⁹¹

	The Messiah in Genesis 49	The King in Psalm 45
The king is praised and bowed down to	Judah, your brothers will <i>praise you</i> [yôḏûḱā] ... your father's sons <i>will bow down</i> [yîštaḥawû] to you. (v. 8)	and the king will desire your beauty. <i>Bow down</i> [wehištaḥawi] to him, for he is your lord ... therefore the peoples <i>will praise you</i> [yhôḏûḱā] forever and ever. (vv. 11, 17b)
The king's victory over Israel's enemies	Your hand will be on the necks of your enemies (v. 8b)	Your arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies; the peoples fall under you. (v. 5)
The king's scepter	The <i>scepter</i> [šebet] will not depart from Judah (v. 10a)	the scepter [šebet] of Your kingdom is a scepter of justice. (v. 6a)
The king is revered by the peoples	and the obedience of the <i>peoples</i> ['ammim] belongs to Him.	therefore the peoples ['ammim] will praise you forever and ever. (v. 17)
The king rides upon a mount	He ties his donkey to a vine, and the colt of his donkey to the choice vine. (v. 11)	in your splendor ride triumphantly in the cause of truth, humility, and justice. (v. 4)
The king's superlative appearance	His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth are whiter than milk. (v. 12)	You are the most handsome of men (v. 2)

It is no coincidence that these six themes are also found in Revelation 19. First, Revelation 19 begins with shouts of praise from a great multitude in heaven, crying out, "Hallelujah!" (Rev. 19:1, 3, 4). David Aune notes, "The term ἁλληλουϊά, 'hallelujah,' is a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew liturgical formula הללוּ-יָהּ *halēlû-yāh*, meaning 'praise Yahweh' (occurring twenty-four times in the MT), which was taken over into Christian hymns and occurs for the first time in Christian literature in Rev 19:1–6."¹⁹² In Revelation 19:5, a voice comes from the throne commanding the servants of God to "praise" (αἰνεῖτε) God. The same Greek word in the aorist active is used in the LXX of Genesis 49:8 "Judah may your brothers praise (αἰνέσαισαν) you" (Gen. 49:8 LXX). While the LXX changes the Hebrew הָיָה (praise) used in Psalm 45:17 to "On account of this, peoples will give thanks [ἐξομολογήσονται] to you" (Ps.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1024.

44:18 LXX),¹⁹³ and therefore does not lexically connect with Revelation 19:5, the thematic parallel is still present. The reason for the people's praise is because they are thankful that God has finally "judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality"(Rev. 19:2) and that he has "avenged on her the blood of his servants" (Rev. 19:2).

Second, in Genesis 49:8, Judah's brothers "bow down" (LXX προσκυνήσουσίν) to him, and in Psalm 44:13 LXX, the "Daughters of Tyre" "bow down" (προσκυνήσουσιν) to the king. Likewise, in Revelation 19:4, the "twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped (προσεκύνησαν) God who was seated on the throne"(Rev. 19:4). Furthermore, in Revelation 19:10, John "fell down" at the feet of the angel to "worship" (προσκυνῆσαι) him, but was then rebuked by the angel and told, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship (προσκύνησον) God" (Rev. 19:10).

Third, like Genesis 49:8-12 and Psalm 45, Revelation 19 describes the Messiah's victory over the enemies of God and his people. In Revelation 19:11-20, the divine warrior makes war against the enemies of God and judges them with the sword of his mouth (Revelation 19:11, 15). In Psalm 45:5, the warrior king's arrows pierce the "heart" of the king's enemies, in Genesis 49:8, Judah's hands shall be on the "neck" of his enemies, and in Rev. 19:5, the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of the divine warrior will "strike down the nations" (Rev. 19:15).

Fourth, like Genesis 49:10a and Psalm 45:6 (44:7 LXX), Revelation 19:15 also references the Messiah's "scepter." In Revelation 19:15, Christ rules the nations "with a rod (ῥάβδῳ) of iron" (Rev. 19:15). John employs the language of the "rod (ῥάβδῳ) of iron" from

¹⁹³ *The Lexham English Septuagint*, Second Edition. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), Ps 44:18. Unless otherwise noted, all translated LXX passages referenced are in *The Lexham English Septuagint*, Second Edition. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020).

Psalm 2. However, it is interesting to note that Psalm 44:7 LLX uses the same Greek word (ῥάβδος) when the psalmist writes, "The rod (ῥάβδος) of your kingdom is a rod (ῥάβδος) of uprightness" (Ps. 44:7 LXX).

Fifth, like Genesis 49:11 and Psalm 45:4, Revelation 19:11 also depicts the king riding upon a mount. The following subsection will further address this connection as it relates to Zechariah 9:9 and Psalm 45.

Sixth, like Genesis 49:12 and Psalm 45:2, the king in Revelation 19:11-16 is also described in "superlative appearance."¹⁹⁴ "His eyes are like a flame of fire" (Rev. 19:12); he has on his head "many diadems" (Rev. 19:12); "he has a name written that no one knows but himself" (Rev. 19:12); "He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood (Rev. 19:13); a sharp sword proceeds from his mouth (Rev. 19:15a), he is called the "faithful and true" (Rev. 19:11); on his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed: "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16).

Once again, the evidence points to Revelation 19 being intertextually linked to Psalm 45 via other significant messianic texts. As stated above, this cannot be a mere coincidence. Given the common themes and similarities found in these texts, it seems highly likely that John also made these same connections. Furthermore, one may also trace the themes listed above in Psalm 72, which the thesis has already referenced as an intertextually linked text to Psalm 45 and Revelation 19. This further reveals that the thematic parallels in these texts are intricately linked with one another.

C. Zechariah 9:9

A third intertextual text which connects Revelation 19 and Psalm 45 is Zechariah 9:9. In

¹⁹⁴ Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 583.

commenting on Revelation 19:11, Beale states, "The prophetic image from Zech. 9:9-10 of a king riding forth in triumph in direct connection with the defeat of the pagan enemies of God's people in the end time could be partly formative for the similar portrayal here, though in Zechariah the king rides humbly on a donkey and not on a horse."¹⁹⁵ Mitchell sees a "number of similarities"¹⁹⁶ between the king of Psalm 45 and Zechariah 9:9.

First, Mitchell notes, "the king in both cases is a representative of the house of David, intimately associated with Yhwh, and exalted, even divine, in being."¹⁹⁷ Second, Mitchell observes that the king in both contexts is depicted as a "bridegroom."¹⁹⁸ Interestingly, the bride in Psalm 45 and in Zechariah 9:9 is "addressed as בַּת (Ps. 45:11 [10]; Zech. 9:9)."¹⁹⁹ Third, in Zechariah 9:9 and Psalm 45 the king is described as "riding, the verb רָכַב being used in each case (Ps. 45:5 [4]; Zech. 9:9)."²⁰⁰ Fourth, both kingly figures are characterized as kings who rule with justice and humility (Ps. 45:5; cf. Zech. 9:9). In conclusion Mitchell notes:

Such similarities seem more than fortuitous, and suggest some kind of link between the ideas of the psalm and Zech. 9:9. The prophetic writer may have borrowed from the psalm, already arranged into some kind of programmatic proto-Psalter. Or the psalm's place in the Psalter may have been inspired by the Zecharian reference to it. Or other alternatives might be proposed. But this much is clear: in the eschatological programmes of Zechariah 9–14 and the Psalter, the latter-day Davidic king is represented as a bridegroom coming to Israel, mounted, and identified with the concepts עֲנָה and צִדֵּק.²⁰¹

The same can be said of the link between Revelation 19 and Psalm 45. Given the similarities

¹⁹⁵ Beale, *Revelation*, 951.

¹⁹⁶ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 249.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

between the rider on the white horse in Revelation 19 and the kingly figure in Psalm 45,²⁰² it seems likely that John also made a connection between Zechariah 9:9 and the royal figure of Psalm 45. In the words of Mitchell, "Such similarities seem more than fortuitous."²⁰³ While not in perfect agreement with Mitchell, Long also recognizes a connection between Zechariah 9:9 and Psalm 45. However, Long argues, "While it is possible Ps 45 provided Zech. 9:9-10 with some imagery of the bridegroom-king as Messiah, it is better to see Ps 45 as part of a network of texts²⁰⁴ that describe the coming of the Messiah in marriage-like terms."²⁰⁵

While Mitchell covered several essential links between Psalm 45 and Zechariah 9:9, the thesis has observed several other links between Psalm 45 and Zechariah 9 not mentioned by Mitchell. These links reveal a greater connection to Psalm 45 and may also provide additional connections to Revelation 19. First, both Psalm 45 and Zechariah 9 depict the divine warrior shooting out his arrows in battle (Psalm 45:5; Zechariah 9:14). Second, both kingly figures are depicted as pouring forth gracious speech (Psalm 45:2; Zechariah 9:10). Third, both texts describe the king as being splendid in beauty (Psalm 45:2; Zech. 9:17). Fourth, both texts mention the word "sword." In Zechariah 9:13, Zion is wielded like the sword of a "mighty man" (Zech. 9:13). In Psalm 45:3, the "mighty one" is called to gird his sword on his thigh (Ps. 45:3). Fifth, both contexts present the presence of the king as the cause of joy and rejoicing (Ps. 45:15; Zech. 9:9). In Psalm 45:14 the bride rejoices as she is brought unto the king, while in Zechariah

²⁰² See Chapter 6, Exegesis of Revelation 19 with Special Emphasis on Ps. 45 for details on these similarities.

²⁰³ Mitchell, *Message of the Psalter*, 249.

²⁰⁴ Long includes in this "network of texts," Isaiah 62, Jeremiah 31, and Zephaniah 3:16-17.

²⁰⁵ Long, "The Origin of the Eschatological Feast," 235.

9:9, the daughter of Zion is called to rejoice as the king comes unto her (Zech. 9:9). Again, these connections reveal an intertextual link in content and language. In the following chapter, the thesis will address the language and themes mentioned above as they relate specifically to Revelation 19 and Psalm 45.

D. Implications

This chapter concludes with several important implications. First, this chapter further reveals the messianic nature of Psalm 45. Psalm 45 and the texts listed above all share common themes that make up much of the messianic material. Furthermore, the common messianic themes connecting Psalm 72, Genesis 49:8-12, Zechariah 9:9, and Psalm 45 find their place in Revelation 19. This highly suggests that John, borrowing from Psalm 72, Genesis 49:8-12, and Zechariah 9:9, also makes the connection to Psalm 45. As stated above, in the following chapter, the thesis will discuss in further detail the links between Psalm 45 and Revelation 19.

VI. Exegesis of Revelation 19 with Special Emphasis on Ps 45

Before the thesis begins the exegesis of Revelation 19 as it relates to Psalm 45, it will benefit the reader to reassess the discussion thus far. This thesis proposes that John links Revelation 19 to Psalm 45 thematically and verbally with the direct intention to depict Jesus as the eschatological messianic bridegroom warrior king. For this claim to be validated, the thesis must show both verbal and thematic links between Psalm 45 and Revelation 19, along with sufficient evidence as to why John would desire to make use of Psalm 45. The question of what makes Psalm 45 a significant text for John is an essential question that this thesis has attempted to address in the previous chapters. Thus far, the thesis has provided several conclusions as to why John might desire to employ the forty-fifth psalm in his writing of the Apocalypse.

First, in chapter two, the thesis explored the nature of Psalm 45 as a "royal psalm." The central theme that permeates the royal psalms is the king of Israel and his reign as king. The thesis sought to show that the central theme and subthemes of the royal psalms provide good material for John to depict Jesus as the reigning king who rules over the nations. John's use of Psalm 2 in the book of Revelation provides an excellent example of his use of the imagery so often portrayed in the royal psalms. Psalm 45, however, is unique among the royal psalms in that it is the only psalm that presents the ceremony of a "royal wedding." The picture of the king as both bridegroom and warrior in Psalm 45 provides John the material to connect the union of Christ and his bride with the final vindication and victory of Jesus, the ultimate King. Thus, in light of John's use of nuptial imagery in Revelation 19-22, Psalm 45, being the only royal psalm that presents the king as both a warrior and bridegroom, makes it highly likely that John utilized this unique royal psalm as a source text.

Furthermore, chapter two sought to show how the canonical reading and placement of

Psalm 45 within the first set of Korah psalms provide the eschatological framework to read Psalm 45 as the revelation of the expected messianic king. As the thesis has shown, with the fall of the monarchy, the people of God anticipated this deliverer looking forward to the time when he would end Israel's sorrow and establish his perpetual rule and dominion over the nations. In light of the canonical or eschatological reading of Psalms 42-49, it is easy to see why John would make use of Psalm 45 in order to present Jesus as this deliverer and ruler. In many ways, the context of Revelation 19, 21, and 22 parallel the canonical reading of Psalms 42-49. For example, the people's cry for vindication (Ps. 42-44), the hope of a secure city in which the people of God dwell with God in their midst, safe a secure from all opposition (Ps. 46), the future judgment of the enemies of the people of God (Ps. 46), and the union of the people with their God, are all themes found in Psalms 42-49 and Revelation 19-22. The hinge that brings the people of God from separation and sorrow (Ps 42-44) to deliverance, joy, peace, and communion (Ps 46), is Psalm 45, and more specifically, the rule and reign of the king of Psalm 45. John understands this king to be Jesus, the "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16).

In chapter three, the thesis examined the various interpretations of Psalm 45 historically and gave evidence of a longstanding tradition that interpreted Psalm 45 as a messianic text. The fact that contemporaries with John viewed Psalm 45 as a critical eschatological and Christological text suggests that John would perhaps also interpret Psalm 45 in this manner. Furthermore, the early Church's allegorical interpretation of the king's bride as the people of God lends further weight to why John would borrow imagery from this royal wedding psalm.

In chapter four, the thesis gave further evidence of the messianic interpretation of Psalm 45 in the second-temple period. The authors of *T. Jud. 24* and *1 Enoch* borrow language from Psalm 45 to describe a sovereign figure who was to rule with a righteous scepter. Furthermore,

several affinities between Psalm 45 and *Joseph and Asenath* reveals a Jewish heritage of viewing the people of God as a glorious bride. Overall, the intertextual links between these texts give additional weight to the eschatological tone of Psalm 45 and, therefore, John's possible use of it.

Chapter five continued looking at texts intertextually linked with Psalm 45 out of the OT. Supplied were three texts (Ps. 72, Gen. 49:8-12, and Zech. 9:9), each of which John alludes to in Revelation 19. The chapter revealed several common themes which connect Psalm 72, Genesis 49:8-12, Zechariah 9:9, and Psalm 45 together. These connections are meaningful because each of these themes are also found in Revelation 19. This again highly suggests that John borrowing from Psalm 72, Genesis 49:8-12, and Zechariah 9:9 also alludes to Psalm 45.

The evidence presented above makes the likelihood of John borrowing from Psalm 45 plausible. As Aune notes, "The view that Rev 19:11–16 presents Christ as the royal bridegroom, based on the royal wedding song in Ps 45 is suggestive."²⁰⁶ J. Webb Mealy agrees with Aune when he states, "Attention has rightly been drawn to the rapport between the first vision in 19:11-21 and Psalm 45, which has been entitled 'the Royal Wedding Psalm.'"²⁰⁷ If Revelation 19 is based in some part on Psalm 45, how can one understand or see this connection in the text of Revelation 19? Or in other words, what are the themes and verbal links that connect Revelation 19 to Psalm 45? This chapter will trace these details and provide a brief exegesis of Revelation 19, emphasizing its connections to Psalm 45.

The purpose of this exegesis is not to give a detailed exegetical commentary on Revelation 19 but rather to show both verbal and thematic links between Psalm 45 and Revelation 19. Thus, while much more could be said about this text exegetically, the exegetical

²⁰⁶ Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1046–1047.

²⁰⁷ Mealy, *After the Thousand Years*, 64.

emphasis of this chapter will primarily focus on the influence of Psalm 45 upon John in his writing of Revelation 19.

Given the central themes of "joy" and "judgment" in Revelation 19 and Psalm 45, the thesis outlines the exegetical analysis into two sections: (1) Eschatological Joy (Rev. 19:1-10) and (2) Eschatological Judgment (Rev. 19:11-21). As stated in the introduction, the joy and vindication of the bride (Rev. 19:1-10) are intimately connected to the victory and conquest of the king (Rev. 19:11-21). While these are two contrasting scenes, they share a connection in metaphor and imagery, which reveals the bridegroom "Lamb" as the divine warrior king who vindicates his bride through judgment upon her enemies.

A. Rev. 19:1-10 (Eschatological Joy)

Revelation 19:1-8 describes the victory celebration of a great multitude in heaven who praises God because "he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality" (Rev. 19:2). Aune describes this section as "the longest, most complex, and final hymnic section in Revelation" which "functions as an *intermezzo*, composed to connect two sections of the composition by concluding 17:1–18:24 and introducing 21:9–22:9."²⁰⁸

Concerning Revelation 19:1-8, Richard Bauckham notes, "Although chapter 18 has often been treated as a unit in itself, it should be clear that the scene of rejoicing in heaven in 19:1–8 is part of the depiction of the fall of Babylon and is needed to complete the unit."²⁰⁹ Thus, the praises that fill Revelation 19:1-8 provide the response to the command in Revelation 18:20 "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for

²⁰⁸ Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1021–1022.

²⁰⁹ Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (London; New York: T&T Clark: A Continuum Imprint, 1993), 340.

you against her!" (Rev. 18:20). Babylon, portrayed as a woman prostitute (Rev. 17-19:5), is contrasted with the bride of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6-9). The fate of the prostitute is judgment and eternal destruction (Rev. 19:2-3). The bride's fate is eternal communion and joy with the Lamb (Rev. 19:6-8; 21:2-3). Thus, Revelation 19:1-10 provides a transition from the corruption and terror of the prostitute Babylon (Rev. 19:1-5) to the vindication of the bride of the Lamb, metaphorically described as the holy city, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 19:6-8; cf. Rev. 21:2-3).

Revelation 19:1-10 consists of three minor sections: (1) The judgment of the great whore (Rev. 19:1-5), (2) the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6-8), and (3) a blessing for those invited to the marriage supper (Rev. 19:9-10). In the following subheadings, the thesis will examine these sections exegetically, noting any thematic or verbal connections to Psalm 45.

1. Hallelujah! The Great Whore is Judged (Rev. 19:1-5)

Revelation 19:1 begins with the phrase "After these things" (μετὰ ταῦτα), which points the reader back to the fall of Babylon in Revelation 18. This phrase also presents a new vision (cf. 4:1; 7:1, 9; 15:5; 18:1), which transitions from the destruction of Babylon (Rev. 18) to the multitude in heaven praising God for this destruction (Rev. 19:1-5). The praises offered to God in Revelation 19:1-5 answer the call of exhortation for the saints to "rejoice" in Revelation 18:20. As Tremper Longman notes, "The only proper response, upon recognition that the victory was God's gift to his people, was praise. The primary vehicle for that praise was song."²¹⁰

By viewing Revelation in light of Psalm 45 and the canonical context of Psalm 45, the call for the saints to "rejoice" in Revelation 18:20 may echo the call to sing praises in Psalms 47 and 48 (see, Pss. 47:1-3, 6-8; 48:1-3, 11). It was common for the Israelites to sing triumph songs wherein the victors praised God for his military success (e.g., Ex. 15:1-18, Judges 5:4-5).

²¹⁰ Tremper Longman III and Daniel G. Reid, *God is a Warrior* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 43.

Longman notes, "Close analysis of the Psalter reveals that a number of the psalms... find their setting within the context of holy war. Common are psalms that celebrate God's salvation, better translated in most psalmic contexts as 'deliverance' or 'victory.'"²¹¹ By providing a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew liturgical formula²¹² הלל יהוה *halēlū-yāh*, which is most often found in the psalms, John points the reader to the psalms and the themes of victory presented in the psalms. The multitude in heaven cries out "Hallelujah" on account of God's "Salvation and glory and power" (Rev. 19:1). Interestingly, all three of these attributes describe characteristics of the king of Psalm 45.

First, the multitude in heaven cries out "Hallelujah" on account of God's "Salvation (σωτηρία)" (Rev. 19:1). The context of this "salvation" is the people of God's deliverance from the oppression of the great whore (Rev. 18:20; 19:2), the anti-bride, the persecutor of the saints. John receives a vision of this prostitute in Revelation 17, in which he describes the woman as being "drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. 17:6). Furthermore, in Revelation 18:24, John notes, "in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth"(Rev. 18:24).

In chapter two, the thesis discussed the canonical reading of Psalms 42-49, in which the people of God cry out for vindication and deliverance from the enemy in Psalms 42-44. The psalmist then answers these cries with Psalm 45 by presenting the king who conquers the enemy opposition and thus "delivers" the people of God from enemy oppression. Psalms 46-49 further reflects the people of God safe and secure from opposition because God fights on their behalf and dwells in their midst as their king (see, e.g., Pss. 46:4-7; 47:6-9).

²¹¹ Longman III and Reid, *God is a Warrior*, 44.

²¹² Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1024.

Thus, in the eschatological canonical reading of Psalms 42-49, the psalmist presents the king of Psalm 45 as the answer to the cry for "salvation" in Psalms 42-44. This mirrors the praises of the people in Revelation 19:1. Psalm 42 and Psalm 43 are connected by the repeated phrase, "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my *salvation* (תַּיְשׁוּבָה) and my God" (Ps. 42:5, 11; 43:5; emphasis mine). Here the psalmist speaks of the hope of the deliverer. The LXX reads, "Why are you deeply grieved, O soul, and why do you trouble me? I hoped in God, for I will give thanks to him. My God is the salvation (σωτηρία) of my face" (Ps. 41:6, 12; 42:5 LXX). Thus, Psalm 41-42 LXX employs the same Greek word (σωτηρία) uttered by the multitude in Revelation 19:1, "Hallelujah! Salvation [σωτηρία]...belong[s] to our God" (Rev. 19:1).

In Psalm 44:4-5, the psalmist declares, "You are my King, O God; ordain salvation for Jacob! Through you, we push down our foes; through your name, we tread down those who rise up against us" (Ps. 44:4-5). Again, the LXX reads, "You are my King and my God, who commands the salvation (σωτηρία) of Jacob" (Ps. 43:5 LXX). In the same way that the people in Psalms 42-49 praise God as the one who brings salvation (σωτηρία) for his people, so too the great multitude in heaven praises God for his "salvation (σωτηρία)" from the oppression and persecution of the great whore. As the thesis observes, in both texts, this "salvation" comes about through the king's deliverance.

Second, the multitude in heaven cries out "Hallelujah" on account of God's "glory" (δόξα) (Rev. 19:1). That is, God is praised for his glory and victory over the enemy. As Beale notes, "The saints offer praise only to God because he alone deposed Babylon and deserves glory for this deed, which accomplished 'salvation' for his people and demonstrated his power."²¹³

²¹³ Beale, *Revelation*, 926.

Again, here one can see a verbal connection to the king of Psalm 45. The Greek word for glory (δόξα) in Revelation 19:1 is also found in Psalm 44:14 LXX to describe the beauty of the bride "All her glory (δόξα) is as a daughter of the king, clothed with golden tassels, adorned with embroidery" (Ps. 44:14 LXX). The bride is not said to be a "daughter" of the king; rather, she is "as" the king's daughter. Thus, the bride in this text takes on the glory (δόξα) of the king; her glory (δόξα) reflects the king's glory, for she is his glory. Just as the holy city "New Jerusalem" has "no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb" (Rev. 21:23), so too the bride in Psalm 45 is "All glorious" (Ps. 45:13) because she reflects the glory of the king. Just as the holy city, the New Jerusalem, "which comes down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... having the glory of God" (Rev. 21:2, 11), so too the bride in Psalm 45 has the glory (δόξα) of the king.

The king's glory in Psalm 45, like the glory of God, praised in Revelation 19:1, is first seen through his victory in battle. Thus, the psalmist declares, "Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one, in your splendor and majesty! In your majesty ride out victoriously" (Ps. 45:3-4). It is in his "splendor" and "majesty" that the king takes victory over his enemies. These terms speak of the glory of the king and his ability to overcome the enemy. Furthermore, the glory of the king is reflected in his attire. Just as the bride is adorned with "robes interwoven with gold" (Ps. 45:13), so too, the king's robes are fragrantly and gloriously adorned with "myrrh and aloes and cassia" (Ps. 45:8).

Third, the multitude in heaven cries out "Hallelujah" on account of God's "power" (δύναμις) (Rev. 19:1). God, as the ultimate Sovereign, holds power over the nations, and through his power and might, he brings about the fall and destruction of Babylon. Again, John provides a link to the king of Psalm 45. In Psalm 45:3, the psalmist declares, "Gird your sword on your

thigh, O mighty one" (Ps. 45:3). The Hebrew word used here for "mighty one" is גִּבּוֹר, which represents a mighty warrior or superhero who valiantly fights with strength and power. Interestingly, the LXX of Psalm 44 uses the same root word employed in Revelation 19:1 to describe God's power. Psalm 44:4 LXX reads, "Gird your sword upon your thigh, Δυνατέ (O Mighty One)" (Ps. 44:4 LXX). Again, Psalm 44:6 "Your arrows are sharpened, Δυνατέ (O Mighty One)" (Ps. 44:6 LXX). In Psalm 45:1 LXX, God is said to be a "place of refuge and strength (δύναμις)" (Ps. 45:1 LXX). Psalm 45:8 and 12 LXX declare, "The Lord of powers (δυνάμεων) is with us" (Ps. 45:8 LXX). Overall, the king of Psalm 45 is the mighty warrior who battles in splendor and majesty and brings salvation unto his people. Each of these characteristics mirrors the praises ascribed unto God in Revelation 19:1.

Revelation 19:2 provides the grounds for the doxology in Revelation 19:1.²¹⁴ Four possible connections to Psalm 45 may be observed in this text. First, the multitude ascribes "Salvation and glory and power" (Rev. 19:1) to God because (ὅτι), "his judgments are true and just" (Rev. 19:2). The designation that God is a righteous king whose "judgments (κρίσεις)" are "true (ἀληθινὰ)" and "just (δίκαια)" is echoed in Psalm 45 and the surrounding context of Korahite 1²¹⁵ (see, e.g., Ps. 48:11). For example, in Psalm 45:4, the king rides out victoriously "for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness" (Ps. 45:4). Again, Revelation 19:2, as shown above, uses similar language to Psalm 44:5 LXX which states, "Stretch your bow and prosper and reign on account of truth (ἀληθείας)...and righteousness (δικαιοσύνης)" (Ps. 44:5 LXX). Furthermore, the king of Psalm 45 is said to love "righteousness (δικαιοσύνην)" (Ps. 44:8 LXX). Therefore, the scepter of his kingdom is "a scepter of uprightness" (Ps. 45:6). Again, in

²¹⁴ Beale, *Revelation*, 927.

²¹⁵ Psalms 42-49.

the canonical context of Psalms 42-49 one may also see God described as one who brings about righteous judgments. For example, in Psalm 42:1, the psalmist cries out, "Consider (Κρῖνόν) me, O God, and judge (δίκασον) my cause from nations that are not holy. Rescue me from the unjust person and the treacherous one" (Ps. 42:1 LXX): Likewise, in Psalm 47:12 LXX, the psalmist declares, "Let the mountain of Zion be cheerful! Let the daughters of Judah rejoice exceedingly because of your judgments (κριμάτων), O Lord!" (Ps. 47:12 LXX). Overall, true and just judge of Revelation 19:2 mirrors the righteous judge of Psalm 45.

Second, like the king of Psalm 45, God in Revelation 19:2 vindicates his suffering people by judging the enemy oppressor. The multitude in Revelation 19:2 further ascribes "Salvation and glory and power" (Rev. 19:1) to God because (ὅτι), "he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants" (Rev. 19:2). Beale notes, "The second ὅτι ('because') clause makes it clear that the 'judgments' in mind are specifically the judgment of Babylon portrayed in ch.18. God will demonstrate his truth and justice when he judges Babylon."²¹⁶ Thus, it is essential to note that God exacts justice on behalf of his servants. These servants are those who suffered affliction at the hands of the great whore (Rev. 17:6; 18:24). In other words, God's judgment upon the harlot Babylon is also a vindication of those who were persecuted by her wickedness.

The theme of vindication through judgment is present throughout Psalms 42-49. In Psalm 43:1, the psalmist cries unto God, "Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people, from the deceitful and unjust man deliver me!" (Ps. 43:1). In Ps. 44:3, the psalmist declares his confidence in God to bring about vindication for his people. The psalmist states, "For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me. But you have saved us from our

²¹⁶ Beale, *Revelation*, 927.

foes and have put to shame those who hate us" (Ps. 44:6-7). Again, Psalm 44 closes with the people of God calling for vindication, "Why do you hide your face? Why do you forget our affliction and oppression? For our soul is bowed down to the dust; our belly clings to the ground. Rise up; come to our help! Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love! (Ps. 44:24-26). The answer to their prayer at the close of Psalm 44 is met with the king of Psalm 45. God, through the reign of the messianic bridegroom warrior king brings about vindication against the enemies of his people (Ps. 45:3-7).

Third, several scholars recognize an allusion in Revelation 19:2 to 2 Kings 9:7.²¹⁷ The connection of Babylon to Jezebel creates a contrast between the unfaithful idolater and the faithful servant. In 2 Kings 9:7, God avenges "on Jezebel" the blood of his "servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD" (2 Kings 9:7). Jezebel, a harlot and sorcerer (2 Kings 9:22), led the people of Israel into idolatry and shed the blood of God's servants. Thus, the great whore of Revelation 17-18 takes on the characteristics of Jezebel.

J. Nelson Kraybill notes, "John evokes the memory of Jezebel to underscore Rome's seductive influence on the Christian church."²¹⁸ In relating the words of Christ to the Church of Thyatira, John has already warned the Christians in that region concerning the judgment which shall come on those who "tolerate that woman Jezebel" (Rev. 2:20). Those who "commit adultery with her," Jesus will "throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works" (Rev. 2:22-23). Concerning this allusion in Revelation 19:2, Hoskins notes, "Babylon has enticed people to worship the Beast, has practiced sorcery, and has killed God's prophets and saints

²¹⁷ Hoskins, *Revelation*, 360; Beale, *Revelation*, 927; Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1025; Osborne, *Revelation*, 665.

²¹⁸ J. Nelson Kraybill, *Imperial Cult and Commerce in John's Apocalypse* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 39.

(17:2-4; 18:20; 23, 24). As was the case with Jezebel, God will avenge the blood of his servants. The great Harlot will perish. The Beast and his ten kings will eat her flesh, just as the dogs ate Jezebel (Rev. 17:16)."²¹⁹

Perhaps by contrasting the great whore (Babylon) with the Bride of the Lamb (New Jerusalem), John also makes a contrast between Jezebel (the typological OT harlot or spiritual idolater) and the faithful bride (the ideal typological OT bride or faithful worshipper of Yahweh). If Psalm 45 presents the "ideal king," then could not the same be said of the bride? Hartopo notes, "The description of Babylon as a prostitute echoes the harlot imagery in the OT."²²⁰ Throughout the OT, the people of Israel are depicted as an unfaithful wife guilty of spiritual adultery and prostitution (cf. Hos. 2:5; 3:3; Jer. 2:20; 3:3-10; Ezek. 16; 23; Isa. 1:21).²²¹ Their spiritual idolatry is rooted in the abominable worship of foreign pagan deities. The bride of Psalm 45, however, is called to "forget her people and her father's house" (Ps. 45:10). She leaves behind her foreign pagan customs and religion and gives her loyalty to the king.

As Culp notes, the royal bride depicted as a foreign bride "is surprising given the context of Ps 45, which evokes a vision of Israel's ideal king from Deut. 17:14–20 who, it says, should not marry foreign women."²²² Culp further states, "Perhaps this is why the later Jewish Targum of Ps 45 glosses v. 10, from 'Hear, O daughter' to 'Hear, O congregation of Israel.'"²²³ It could be,

²¹⁹ Hoskins, *Revelation*, 360.

²²⁰ Yohanes Adrie Hartopo, "The Marriage of the Lamb: The Background and Function of the Marriage Imagery in the Book of Revelation" (PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2005), 183.

²²¹ For a study on this theme, see, Raymond C. Ortlund Jr., *God's Unfaithful Wife: A Biblical Theology of Spiritual Idolatry* (Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 2002).

²²² A. J. Culp, "Of Wedding Songs and Prophecies: Canonical Reading as the Clue to Understanding Psalm 45 as Prophecy" *Crucible* 8:2 (November 2017), 6.

²²³ *Ibid.*

however, that the gloss mentioned above depicts the eschatological canonical reading discussed in chapter two, which understands the bride of Psalm 45 to represent the people of God. Thus, the psalmist calls the people of God to leave their idolatry ("forget her people" [Ps. 45:10]) and serve the king.²²⁴ Concerning this eschatological view, Culp notes:

Behind the call for the bride to 'forget' her people lay two possibilities, represented biblically in the figures of Jezebel and Ruth. Jezebel, the princess from Tyre who King Ahab took as his wife (1 Kgs 16:31), embodied the danger of a foreign wife. Under her influence, the effects of false worship were writ large in the land of Israel and the people suffered greatly (1 Kgs 17–21; 2 Kgs 9). On the other hand, though, is the example of Ruth. She too was of foreign descent, a Moabitess, though of a very different disposition. To her Israelite mother-in-law Naomi, Ruth famously said: 'Your people shall be my people, and your God my God' (Ruth 1:16). The example of Ruth, then, is the kind of 'forgetting' the poet of Ps 45 has in mind, where the bride turns wholly to Yahweh and commits herself to him. In so doing, she as an individual represents the eschatological vision of the nations, who turn to Yahweh. The Targum's gloss of 'king' as 'King Messiah' and 'daughter' as 'congregation of Israel' would suggest this kind of thinking.²²⁵

Therefore, Psalm 45 presents the proper response to idolatry. Those who practice idolatry have "forgotten" the Lord their God (Judg. 3:7). Those who "forget" their idolatry and give their loyalty to the king find themselves in union with him. Just as the psalmist calls for the people of God to "forget" her people and leave behind their idolatry, so too the angel of Revelation 18 calls the people of God to "come out" of Babylon lest they "take part in her sins" and "share in her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). The bride of Revelation 19, in contrast to the harlot Jezebel/Babylon, is faithful and therefore does not take part in the abominations of the harlot's idolatry. To do so is to "commit adultery" (Rev. 2:22) with Babylon/Jezebel, the great harlot, and receive her judgment.

²²⁴ See Ezekiel 16:3, where Israel is described as a daughter of an Amorite father and a Hittite mother.

²²⁵ Culp, "Of Wedding Songs and Prophecies," 7; For a historical reference of this interpretation, Jonathan Edwards in commenting on the book of Ruth writes, "We are all born in sin, as Ruth was born in Moab, and was born a Moabitess. A state of sin is as it were our father's house, and sinners are our own people. When we are converted, we forsake our own people and father's house, as the church in the 45th Psalm" (Jonathan Edwards, *Notes on Scripture*, ed. Harry S. Stout and Stephen J. Stein, vol. 15, The Works of Jonathan Edwards [London; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998], 85).

Fourth, Revelation 19:2 may also allude to Psalm 79:10, which reads, "Why should the nations say, 'Where is their God?' Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants be known among the nations before our eyes!" (Ps. 79:10). Concerning this allusion, Beale notes, "19:2 is the answer to the cry of 6:10, which likewise alluded to Ps. 79:10... God's judgment now answers the saints' plea in 6:10 that God demonstrates his truth by punishing those who reject the truth."²²⁶ The persecuted saints of Revelation 6:10 cry out unto God for vindication, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:10).

By reading Psalms 42-44 together, one can sense the people's anticipation for the coming deliverer. The cries of the saints in Rev. 6:10, in a sense, echo the cries of deliverance by the psalmist in Psalms 42-44 (see, e.g., Ps. 42:2, 9; 43:1-2; 44:23-24, 26). In Psalm 79:10, the psalmist asks, "Why should the nations say, 'Where is their God?'" (Ps. 79:10). This taunt from the enemy is repeated twice in Psalm 42 (vv. 3, 10). Thus, Psalm 42 and Psalms 43-49, by extension, are connected to this plea. Again, the answer to the psalmist's pleas in Psalms 42-44 is supplied in the revelation of the king in Psalm 45. The reigning king in Psalm 45 transitions the people from lament (Ps 42-44) to rejoicing in Psalms 47-49. Revelation 19 echoes this victory, for it is the revelation of the king and his victory over Babylon that brings the saints from longing to fulfillment. The saints thus transition from cries of "how long" (Rev. 6:10) to shouts of joy (Rev. 19:1-10).

A comparison between these two states may be noticed by comparing the closing plea of Psalm 44 ("Rise up;²²⁷ come to our help! Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love!" [Ps.

²²⁶ Beale, *Revelation*, 928-929.

²²⁷ LXX reads "αναστα" (rise up).

44:26]) to the rejoicing and praise of Psalm 47:1-3 ("Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth. He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet" [Ps. 47:1-3]). Overall, the vindication and rejoicing in Revelation 19:2 mirrors that of Psalms 42-49 in both thematic parallels and verbal connections.

In Revelation 19:3, the people "once more" cry out "Hallelujah!" on the basis of God's divine judgment of the great whore. The smoke which ascends "forever and ever" (αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων) points to the finality and eternal duration of the judgment upon the prostitute Babylon and is most likely an allusion to Isaiah 34:9-10. However, one may also see a textual link to Psalm 45 in the phrase "forever and ever" (αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων). The phrase, "forever and ever" (αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων), is repeated throughout the Apocalypse (Rev. 1:6, 4:9, 10; 5:13; 7:12; 10:6; 11:15; 14:11; 15:7; 19:3; 20:10; 22:5), signifying the eternal reign of God.

Cheung notes, "Everlastingness is ... a prominent quality of God's dominion."²²⁸ The smoke from Babylon's destruction rises forever and ever as an eternal reminder of God's righteous judgment, for which the multitude praises God throughout eternity. John contrasts the smoke of the harlot rising forever with the prayers of the saints in Revelation 8:4. Concerning the judgment of Babylon, Osborne notes, "the destruction of Babylon in Rev. 18:9, 18 centered on 'the smoke of her burning,' a natural picture of devastation caused by war (probably the final war of 19:14–21). But this is not so much the smoke of war as eternal 'smoke of torment' that accompanies the lake of fire (19:20; 20:10, 14–15)."²²⁹ Osborne further states, "the 'eternal

²²⁸ Simon Chi-Chung Cheung, "'Forget Your People and Your Father's House': The Core Theological Message of Psalm 45 and Its Canonical Position in the Hebrew Psalter," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 26.3 (2016), 328.

²²⁹ Osborne, *Revelation*, 665.

torment' of the unbelievers is in direct contrast to the God 'who lives forever and ever' (1:18; 4:9, 10; 10:6; 15:7) and 'reigns forever and ever' (11:15) and especially to the eternal reward awaiting the righteous (22:5)."²³⁰ The royal wedding psalm further reflects this eternal reign of God and the eternal praise of his saints. In Psalm 44:18 LXX, the nations give thanks unto the king "for eternity (αἰῶνα) and for eternity of eternity (αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος)" (Ps. 44:18 LXX; cf. Dan. 7:18; Rev. 22:5). Again, one can see a verbal connection in this eternal praise with the words "αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος" (forever and ever).

In Revelation 19:4, John calls attention to the one who is "seated on the throne" (Rev. 19:4). The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures respond to the praises of the multitude by prostrating themselves in worship as they shout affirmations of praise "Amen, Hallelujah" unto God. Osborne notes, "As in 4:10; 5:14; 7:11; 11:16, they once again 'fall down and worship' God. Both terms speak of worship and are virtual synonyms (prostrating oneself rather than praying with 'raised hands' [Ps. 24:4; Luke 24:50; 1 Tim. 2:8] was the more serious form of worship, symbolizing total surrender)."²³¹ The psalmist in Psalm 45, calls for the bride to "bow" to the king for the king is her "Lord" (Ps. 45:11). As the thesis has already shown, this is most likely a call to worship. The LXX reads, "Daughters of Tyre will bow down (προσκυνήσουσιν) to him with gifts" (Ps. 44:13). Just as the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures "fell down and worshiped (προσεκύνησαν) God who was seated on the throne (θρόνον)" (Rev. 19:4), the daughters of Tyre "bow" (προσκυνήσουσιν) (Ps. 44:10 LXX) and present gifts to the one whose "throne (θρόνος) is for eternity of eternity (αἰῶνα αἰῶνος)" (Ps. 44:7 LXX).

This is the third occurrence in the book of Revelation where the four living creatures and

²³⁰ Osborne, *Revelation*, 665.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 665–666.

the twenty-four elders shout "Amen!" as they "fall down" and worship God who is "seated on the throne" (Rev. 5:14; 7:12; 19:4). The first occurrence (Rev. 5:8-14), reflects the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders' response to Christ's authority to take and open the scroll (Rev. 5:7-8). In Revelation 5:9-10, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders sing a new song in which they praise the Lamb because (1) he "ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation"(Rev. 5:9) and (2) he "made them a kingdom of priests"(Rev. 5:10). In the song, the elders and the creatures also praise the Lamb because he has made the redeemed "a kingdom" and "priests unto God" and they will "reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). This language echoes the psalmist's praise directed towards the king in Psalm 45:16-17, "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" (Ps. 45:16-17; cf. Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6).

Concerning the praise of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders, Mounce notes, "Their words, 'Amen Hallelujah,' echo the close of the doxology which marked the end of Book IV of the Psalter (Ps. 106:48)."²³² Beale notes that these words function in the Psalter and Revelation "as part of the people's thanksgiving to God for gathering them to himself after delivering them from 'their enemies' who 'oppressed them' (cf. Ps. 106:42-48 with Rev. 19:1-2, 7-9)."²³³ The context and praises to the king in Psalm 45 are also grounded in the king's ability to deliver his people from enemy oppression (Ps. 45:5-6). Therefore, the worship of God by the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures mirrors the worship of the king who delivers his people and reigns from his eternal throne (Ps. 45:6-7; Ps. 47:6-7).

²³² Mounce, *Revelation*, 249.

²³³ Beale, *Revelation*, 930.

In Revelation 19:5, a voice from the throne summons the people to praise God: "praise our God all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great" (Rev. 19:5). Concerning this text, Aune notes, "This summons to praise is directed to those on earth, in contrast to vv 1b–4, which are directed to those who dwell in heaven. This same pattern is found in Ps 148, in which vv 1–6 center on the praise of God from the heavens and vv 7–14 focus on the praise of God from the earth."²³⁴ The psalmist in Psalm 47 gives a comparable call to that of Revelation 19:5. In Revelation 19:5 the summons to praise God goes out to those who "fear" God. In Psalm 47:1-2, the psalmist calls for the people to rejoice and praise God, "Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of Joy!" because "the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth" (Ps. 47:1-2). The context of Psalm 47 is praise unto the king who reigns over all "the earth." In Psalm 47:6, the psalmist again calls the people to praise God on account of his sovereign rule over the nations: "Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm! God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne" (Ps. 47:6-7).

In the canonical reading of Psalm 42-49, this song of victory mirrors the image of the king of Psalm 45, who subdues the nations ("Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; the peoples fall under you" [Ps. 45:5]), and reigns supreme ("Your throne, O God, is forever and ever" [Ps. 45:6]). Many commentators have rightly deemed Revelation 19:1-8 as the final hymn or the hymn finale. Concerning this hymn finale, Zimmerman notes,

This entire section adopts elements of OT Psalms. Based on the κύριος-έβασίλευσεν-formula, one recognizes a reference to the so-called JHWH-King-Psalms (Ps [LXX] 92,1; 96,1; 98,1) while the introduction of v. 6a (rushing water) seems to be an allusion to Ps. 92,4. Further, the call to joy in V. 7a could have been inspired by Ps. [LXX] 117,24b (άγαλλιασώμεθα Καί εύφρανθώμεν). However, the motif of the wedding, a central component of the exultation, is not yet explained with these references. Within the hymn-

²³⁴ Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1027.

like texts of the tradition, there is Ps. 45 (44 LXX) that creates exactly this connection between sovereignty and the wedding image and clearly shows proximity in both motif and language to the doxology of Rev. 19,6-8.²³⁵

As Zimmerman notes, Revelation 19:1-5 shows several verbal and thematic connections to the context and language of Psalm 45. Thus, Revelation 19:1-8 provide a complete picture, revealing components of "sovereignty" and "nuptial imagery" found in Psalm 45. Revelation 19:1-5 deals with the judgment of the great whore, which magnifies God's sovereignty over the enemies of his people. In the following section (Revelation 19:6-8), John depicts the communion and unity between the Lamb and his people, magnifying the beauty and hope of God's eternal plan of redemption for his bride, the church. Judgment comes upon the harlot, but the bride is made ready for her king! This wedding announcement brings the victory celebration to its climax and ultimate fulfillment, setting the stage for the consummation and reign of God's kingdom.

2. Hallelujah! The Marriage of the Lamb has Come (Rev. 19:6-8)

With the judgment of the great whore, the wedding of the Lamb is finally announced (Rev. 19:6-8). While the bride is introduced to the reader, her identity is not revealed until chapter 21. Zimmerman notes, "The commencement of the reign of the eschatological king and the wedding come together here and take up the tradition of the royal bridegroom that, emerging from Ps 45, describes the royal messiah and eschatological savior with wedding motifs."²³⁶ While the "merry sounds of bridal festivities" have ceased in Babylon (Rev. 18:23; cf. Jer. 7:34; 16:9; 33:11), the resounding joy of the union between the Lamb and his bride fills the heavenly scene of Revelation 19:6-8.

²³⁵ Ruben Zimmerman, "Nuptial Imagery in the Revelation of John." *Biblica* 84, no. 2 (2003): 163.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 179.

In Revelation 19:6, John hears "the voice of a great multitude...crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns" (Rev. 19:6). This is the fourth and final "Hallelujah" in the Apocalypse. First, the multitude praises their redeemer by declaring him to be (1) "the Lord," (2) "our God," and (3) "the Almighty" (Rev. 19:6). A connection to Psalm 45 can be established by showing that the psalmist attributes each title listed above to the king of Psalm 45.

First, in Psalm 45:11 (44:12 LXX), the bride is called to "bow down" to her "Lord" (Psalm 45:11). While the title used in Psalm 45 could resemble simply an act of reverence in that the bride is to call him "lord" out of respect for his title as king,²³⁷ the canonical context, and other related texts such as Genesis 49:8-12 and Psalm 72 (see discussion above), seem to imply an act of worship on the part of the bride.

Second, in Psalm 45:6-7, the psalmist ascribes unto the king the title "God" אֱלֹהִים [’elōhim]. While scholars heavily debate this text, the traditional rendering which understands the designation of אֱלֹהִים [’elōhim] as a vocative, as opposed to a genitive, seems best.²³⁸ Furthermore, Postell notes that the larger context of Psalm 45 "supports the divine identity of the king."²³⁹ Concerning this identity, Postell states:

[The king's divine identity] is seen most notably in the call to the bride to bow down to her lord (v. 11) and the call to praise or give thanks (*yhōdukā*) to this king forever in the final verse (v. 17), an action that is only fittingly offered to God in the book of Psalms.²⁴⁰

²³⁷ See e.g., Genesis 18:12, where Sarah calls Abraham "lord" out of reverence for her husband.

²³⁸ For an assessment of Psalm 45:6-7 see, Murrac J. Harris, "The Translation of Elohim Psalm 45:7-8," *Tyndale Bulletin*, no. 35 (1984): 65-89. Harris concludes, "the objections to taking [God] אֱלֹהִים [’elōhim] as a vocative in Psalm 45:7 [6], whether they are drawn from grammar, the structure of the poem, the context of v. 7 [6], or from general theological considerations, are by no means insuperable. The traditional rendering, 'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever,' is not simply readily defensible but remains the most satisfactory solution to the exegetical problems posed by the verse" (Murrac J. Harris, "The Translation of Elohim Psalm 45:7-8," *Tyndale Bulletin*, no. 35 [1984]: 87).

²³⁹ Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 576.

²⁴⁰ Postell provides the following references for examples: "Ps 6:5; 7:17; 9:1; 18:49; 28:7; 30:4, 9, 12; 32:5; 33:2; 35:18; 42:5, 11; 43:4-5; 44:8; 52:9; 54:6; 57:9; 67:3, 5; 71:22; 75:1; 76:10; 79:13; 86:12; 88:10; 89:5; 92:1;

In fact, the praise being offered to the king in Ps 45:17 is remarkably similar to the praise being offered to God in Ps 44:8, the psalm just preceding Ps 45: Ps 44:8: 'We boast in God all day long; we will praise Your name forever. Selah.'²⁴¹

In other words, Postell argues that the king of Psalm 45, like God, receives praise and worship as "Lord" and "God" אֱלֹהִים [’elōhim]," and is therefore divine.

Third, in Psalm 45:3, the psalmist refers to the king as "the mighty one" (רַב־בָּרָא). As a mighty warrior, he subdues his enemies, trampling them under his feet (Ps. 45:3-5).²⁴² The translators of the LXX oddly capitalize the ascription of the king as the "Mighty One" (Δυνατέ) twice in the royal wedding psalm (Ps. 44:4; 6 LXX). This may imply that they understood this as a "title" and not simply a description of the king's impeccable strength and ability in battle.²⁴³ Either way, as Cheung notes, "Ps 45...creates a number of common features between the king and the deity...Many expressions or images used for the king in this psalm are usually associated with the Israelite God elsewhere."²⁴⁴

The titles "Lord," "God," and "Almighty" are titles of supreme authority. Thus, John grounds the multitude's praise in Revelation 19:6 on the fact that "the Lord our God the Almighty *reigns*" (Rev. 19:6; emphasis mine). Here again, one can see a connection to the king of Psalm 45. Beale notes, "κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν ("[the] Lord reigned") may be a sweeping allusion to a series of psalms and other OT passages using the same expression to refer, in context, to God establishing his kingship after judging Israel's enemies."²⁴⁵ Beale further states,

97:12; 99:3; 100:4; 105:1; 106:1, 47; 107:1, 8, 15, 21, 31; 108:3; 109:30; 111:1; 118:1, 19, 21, 28–29; 119:7, 62; 122:4; 136:1–3, 26; 138:1–2, 4; 139:14; 140:13; 142:7; 145:10" (Postell, "The Messiah as Bridegroom," 576).

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Perhaps an echo of Gen. 3:15.

²⁴³ See for example Ps. 41:10 LXX where the translators capitalize "Ἀντιλήμπτωρ" (Helper).

²⁴⁴ Cheung, "Theological Message of Psalm 45," 327.

²⁴⁵ Beale, *Revelation*, 932.

"Ps. 46(47):9(8) and Isa. 52:7 may be uppermost in John's mind because they alone, among the other OT references, place the verb before God's name."²⁴⁶

Psalm 46 (47):9 (8) reflects, in the canonical reading, the praises of God's people in connection with the king of Psalm 45, who delivers the people of God from their oppression. Furthermore, it reflects the reign of the king in the psalmist's call for the king to "Stretch your bow and prosper and reign (βασίλευε)" (Ps. 44:5). The "reign" (βασίλευε) of the king in Psalm 45 is represented by his conquest of and victory over the enemy nations who are in opposition to his rule. In the same way, John depicts the "reign" of God through God's judgment of and victory over the great whore.

In the book of Revelation, the verb βασιλεύειν "reign" (used in context with God as its subject) occurs only three separate times (Revelation 11:15, 17, 19:6).²⁴⁷ In John's use of this verb, Aune sees a possible connection between Revelation 19:6 and the *Pseudepigraphal* book *Joseph and Aseneth* 19:5, 8. Aune notes, "The verb is twice used in the future tense in the phrase κύριος ὁ θεὸς βασιλεύσει, 'the Lord God will reign,' in *Jos. As.* 19:5, 8."²⁴⁸ This is significant in light of the numerous similarities between Psalm 45 and *Joseph and Aseneth* discussed above in chapter 4.

In Revelation 19:7, the heavenly multitude, full of joy and praise, exclaims, "Let us rejoice and exult and give him glory" (Rev. 19:7). First, the multitude rejoices "because" (ὅτι), "the marriage of the Lamb has come (ἦλθεν ὁ γάμος τοῦ ἀρνίου)" (Rev. 19:7). Second, the multitude expresses exuberant joy because "his [the Lamb's] Bride has made herself ready (ἡ

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ See, Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1028.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

γυνὴ αὐτοῦ ἠτοίμασεν ἑαυτὴν)" (Rev. 19:7). Concerning the shared nuptial imagery between Revelation 19:7-8 and Psalm 45, Zimmerman notes:

The similarity to the royal wedding of Rev becomes obvious based simply on the parallels of motif. The inter-textual connection between PS 45 (44 LXX) and Rev 19:4-8 increases, however, in plausibility above all because Ps 45 (44 LXX) has been interpreted in a messianic sense both in rabbinical (*Tg. Pss, MPss*) as well as the ancient Christian (Heb. 1,7-8) tradition. Additionally, together with Cant 3,11, it may have made a substantial contribution to the metaphor of the messiah-bridegroom that then gained a central meaning in ancient Christianity. Even the ambiguity already created in Ps 45 (44 LXX) as to the relation between God and king fits into the image of the 'Lamb-King' as it is imparted in Revelation. The Lamb, whose royal wedding is announced here in Rev 19,5-9, is drawn directly into the realm of God without, however, being identified with God. Thus, the specific Christology of Revelation receives in advance a traditional character in its imagery.²⁴⁹

Revelation 19:7-8 and Psalm 45 share several thematic connections in their use of nuptial imagery. First, both Psalm 45 and Revelation 19 reflect the marriage ceremony as a jubilant and joyful juncture. The Bible often uses nuptial imagery as a picture of eschatological joy. For example, in Isaiah 61:10, the restoration of Jerusalem is compared to a joyous wedding "in which a bridegroom and a bride express their joy in their festive apparels."²⁵⁰ In Revelation 19:7, the multitude exclaims, "Let us rejoice and be glad (*ἀγαλλιῶμεν*) and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7). This joyful occasion is reflected in Psalm 44:16 LXX, wherein the bride and her maidens are "carried away with merriment and great joy (*ἀγαλλιᾶσθε*)" as they are "led into the temple of the King" (Ps. 44:16 LXX). If one interprets the bride of Psalm 45 as a representation of the people of God, the psalmist's portrayal of the bride rejoicing as she is led into the presence of the king reflects the reunion of the people of Israel with their God. The bride's joy is grounded in the fact that she is coming into the presence of the king to be united with him.

²⁴⁹ Zimmerman, "Nuptial Imagery in the Revelation of John," 164-765.

²⁵⁰ Hartapo, "The Marriage of the Lamb," 114.

It is interesting to note that the LXX of Psalm 44:16 states that the bride is "carried away (ἀπενεχθήσονται)²⁵¹ with merriment and great joy (ἀγαλλιάσει)" and led into the "temple" (ναόν) of the king (Ps. 44:16 LXX). In the book of Revelation, the "temple" (ναός) becomes a major motif uniquely tied to the nuptial theme. Overall, the temple is a representation of the presence of God. To be in the temple is to be in God's presence. According to John, the "temple" in the New Jerusalem "is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (Rev. 21:22). In Revelation 7:13, the saints, who are "washed in the blood of the lamb," and "clothed in white" are also "before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple"(Rev. 7:15). Because they are in his temple, "he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence" (Rev. 7:14:15). In Revelation 3:12, Jesus states, "The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name" (Rev. 3:12). Rev. 21:2, bookends Jesus' statement in Revelation 3:12 and describes the "new Jerusalem" as a "bride adorned for her husband" which comes down out of "heaven" (Rev. 21:2).

When considering the canonical context of Ps. 42-49, the significance of the LXX using the Greek word (ναός) to describe the king's palace is even more intriguing. In Psalm 42, the psalmist, as an extension of the people of Israel, longs to be in the presence of God "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. 42:2). He remembers a time when he used to "go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival" (Ps. 42:4). The

²⁵¹ Note, John is twice "carried away" (ἀπήνεγκέν) by the Spirit. Once into the wilderness to behold the woman sitting on the scarlet beast" (Rev. 17:3), and once to a great, high mountain to behold "the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal" (Rev. 21:11).

psalmist then prays that God would "send out" his "light and truth;" that they would "lead" him and "bring" him to his "holy hill and...dwelling!" (Ps. 43:3). The psalmist answers this prayer with the picture of the bride being led into the "temple" of the king to meet her newlywed husband (Ps. 44:16 LXX). Psalm 46 follows with the people of God in the city of refuge, secure from enemy oppression, for "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved" (Ps. 46:5). This structure and metaphor follow closely the motif of the temple in the book of Revelation along with the bridal and city metaphors used to describe the people of God. As Beale notes, "in the new creation God's presence will not be limited to a temple structure, with the people outside the structure, but the people themselves will be both the city and the temple in which God's presence resides (so 21:2–3, 12–14)."²⁵²

Second, a connection can be made between the bride's wedding attire in Psalm 45 and the bride in Revelation 19. First, the word (περιβαλλο), which the psalmist employs to describe the clothing attire of the bride in Psalm 44:14 LXX, is the same word used throughout the book of Revelation to refer to the saints as those who are "clothed"(περιβαλλο) in white (Rev. 3:5, 18; 4:4; 7:9, 13; 12:1; 19:8). Consequently, this same word John employs to describe the bride of Revelation 19, "it was granted her to clothe herself (περιβάλλεται) with fine linen, bright and pure" (Rev. 19:8). In contrast, the prostitute Babylon is "clothed (περιβεβλημένος) in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls!" (Rev. 18:16). The bride of Psalm 45 is said to be "clothed with golden tassels, adorned with embroidery" (Ps. 44:14 LXX). The Masoretic Text reads, "All glorious is the princess in her chamber, with robes interwoven with gold. In many-colored robes she is led to the king" (Ps. 45:13–14). Beale notes, "Rev. 18:16 describes the impure harlot/city in such a way as to contrast her with Christ's pure

²⁵² Beale, *Revelation*, 1066.

bride/city (21:1, 10–23; see on 17:4, 16). Indeed, the Lamb's bride/city is also 'adorned with every kind of precious stone' and 'gold.'"²⁵³ Furthermore, the queen mother or bride stands at the right hand of the king clothed in the "gold of Ophir" (Ps. 45:9).²⁵⁴

The "bright and pure" garments of the bride in Revelation 19:7 reflects the corporate purity of the Church.²⁵⁵ Hartapo notes several contrasts between the appearance of the pure bride of the Lamb with that of the appearance of the prostitute Babylon. Hartapo notes:

There seems to be little difference in the outward appearances of these two γυνή (19:7; 21:9 and 17:3-4, 9, 18). The bride is clothed in bright and shining linen (βύσσινος), whereas the prostitute also wears an attractive clothing (βύσσινος). Just as Babylon is adorned with gold, jewels, and pearls (17:4, 16-17; 18:12, 16), so the new Jerusalem sparkles with precious jewels and pearls (21:18-21). In reality, however, the prostitute is the 'counterfeit' image of the bride. One is an evil woman, the other is a holy and faithful woman. The βύσσινος of the prostitute is a symbol of her evil seduction through economic attractiveness (18:16; cf. 17:4), whereas the βύσσινος of the bride is a symbol of her righteous deeds. The impurities (ἀκάθαρτα; 17:4) of the prostitute's cup of fornications contrasts with the purity (καθαρός) of the bride's linen.²⁵⁶

Scholars generally recognize in Revelation 19:7-8 an allusion to Isaiah 61:10. Beale notes "the bridal garments of Ps. 45:14 [13] are interpreted to represent a worthiness associated with the purity of priestly garments in Tanhuma Gen., parashah 8.12".²⁵⁷ Furthermore, Beale notes that in Psalm 45, "the external garments symbolize the fact that the bride is 'all glorious within' (v 13), which is close to the imagery of the 'linen, bright and pure' representing the righteous and

²⁵³ Beale, *Revelation*, 912.

²⁵⁴ Cf. Tob. 13:15-17: My soul blesses the Lord, the great King! For Jerusalem will be built as his house for all ages. How happy I will be if a remnant of my descendants should survive to see your glory and acknowledge the King of heaven. The gates of Jerusalem will be built with sapphire and emerald, and all your walls with precious stones. The towers of Jerusalem will be built with gold, and their battlements with pure gold. The streets of Jerusalem will be paved with ruby and with stones of Ophir. The gates of Jerusalem will sing hymns of joy, and all her houses will cry, 'Hallelujah! Blessed be the God of Israel!' and the blessed will bless the holy name forever and ever.

²⁵⁵ Mounce, *Revelation*, 340.

²⁵⁶ Hartapo, "The Marriage of the Lamb," 212.

²⁵⁷ Beale, *Revelation*, 940-944.

vindicated condition of the saints in Rev. 19:7–8."²⁵⁸ While John certainly alludes to Isaiah 61:10 in Revelation 19:7-8, it is hard not to see a connection also to Psalm 45 given the verbal and thematic connections presented above.

3. Joy to those Invited to the Marriage Supper (Rev. 19:9-10)

In Revelation 19:9-10, John provides a second nuptial metaphor in the form of a beatitude. Osborne notes, "This is the fourth beatitude²⁵⁹ and introduces another metaphor for the believers. In 19:7, they are the bride of the Lamb, while here they are οἱ εἰς τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ γάμου τοῦ ἄρνιου κεκλημένοι...those invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb. Thus, the saints are both the bride and the invited guests."²⁶⁰ Upon hearing this glorious truth, John, overcome with worship, falls down at the feet of the angel, who, as a fellow servant of God relays the "true words of God"(Rev. 19:9) unto John. The angel rejects John's worship, rebukes John, and commands that he "Worship God" (Rev. 19:10). While there are no verbal links to Psalm 45 in this section, a few observations may be observed.

First, John moves from the wedding imagery in Revelation 19:7-8 to imagery of the Lamb's wedding banquet, which reflects the eschatological feast often depicted in Jewish thought. Concerning the origin of the eschatological wedding feast, Long notes, "Psalm 45 seems to be the best candidate for potential source material for the idea of the eschatological age as a wedding in the psalter."²⁶¹ Long sees Psalm 45 as part of a "network of texts that describe the coming of the Messiah in marriage-like terms."²⁶² While it is hard to pinpoint precisely which

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 944.

²⁵⁹ See, Rev. 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 20:6; 22:7, 14.

²⁶⁰ Osborne, *Revelation*, 675; see also Beale, *Revelation*, 945.

²⁶¹ Long, "The Origin of the Eschatological Feast,"227.

text John had in mind when referring to the eschatological banquet (Zeph. 3:16-17, Isa. 25:6-8; 62; Jer. 31; Ps. 45), he likely drew the idea from multiple source texts, which all depict the eschaton as a great nuptial meal representing victory and joyous fellowship with God in the new age.

Concerning Revelation 19:9-10 and its depiction of the eschatological banquet, Hartapo notes, "There is a possibility that John's reference to the wedding banquet here is influenced by an early Christian tradition that speaks of an eschatological wedding banquet (cf. Matt 22:1-14). The reference to the 'feast' or 'banquet' (δεῖπνον) here, however, primarily echoes the OT promise of an eschatological banquet for the people of God in Isa 25:6-10."²⁶³ In Isaiah 25:6-10, Yahweh prepares "a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined" (Isa. 25:6). The feast is the celebration of God's victory over the fortified city (Isa. 25:1-5). Hartapo notes, "The manifestation of God's kingship is specifically related to his victory and defeat over his enemies, especially his defeat and judgment of Babylon."²⁶⁴ Hartapo further states, "The sequence of Rev 19:1-10, which moves from the destruction of Babylon to the marriage of the Lamb, is important. In the narrative context of Revelation, the marriage of the Lamb takes place because Babylon was destroyed. Thus, the wedding is presented as a climactic celebration of God's victorious reign."²⁶⁵

Adela Yarbro Collins contends that the wedding banquet imagery depicted in Revelation 19 falls into the pattern of "ancient combat myth," which highlights the wedding banquet as a

²⁶² Ibid., 235.

²⁶³ Hartapo, "The Marriage of the Lamb," 119.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 198.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 197.

victory celebration.²⁶⁶ Collins argues the ancient combat myth pattern moves from "threat" (17:3, 6, 8, 12-13) to "combat-victory" (17:14), "victory shout" (18:1-3, 19:1-5, 19:6) to "fertility/sacred marriage" (19:7), then finally to the "banquet" or victory celebration (19:9).²⁶⁷ Longman also sees a connection to Revelation 19-22 in the pattern of divine warfare depicted in ANE texts such as the *Enuma Elish* and the Ugaritic text of the Baal cycle. Longman argues the ANE pattern follows the following progression: (1) "warfare," (2) "victory," (3) "kingship," (4) "housebuilding," and (5) "celebration."²⁶⁸ The eschatological canonical context of Psalms 42-49 also displays aspects of these patterns. Furthermore, Psalm 45 alone depicts the themes of warfare (Ps. 45:3-5), victory (Ps. 45:5), kingship (Ps. 45:6-7), housebuilding (Ps. 45:16), and celebration (Ps. 45:17), basically in the same order or pattern. Overall, Psalm 45, as a wedding psalm coupled with other eschatological banquet texts, provides the material for John's merging of the two. The eschatological feast becomes the eschatological messianic wedding banquet of the Lamb and his invited guests/bride.

B. Revelation 19:11-21 (Eschatological Judgment)

Revelation 19:11-21 consists of three minor sections: (1) the description of the divine warrior king (Rev. 19:11-16), (2) the invitation for the birds to attend the great supper of God (Rev. 19:17-18), and (3) the victory of the divine warrior over the beast, the false prophet, and their great army (Rev. 19:19-21). Concerning this section, Hartapo notes, "The sudden appearance of the final battle in Rev 19:11-21 seems to be an intrusion into the wedding scene. However, it is

²⁶⁶ Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation* (Missoula, Mont: Scholars Press, 1976), 224.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Longman III and Reid, *God is a Warrior*, 83-87.

still related to the use of marriage imagery in 19:6-9."²⁶⁹ John intentionally ties the bridegroom motif and its wedding imagery to the eschatological battle because the battle reflects the vindication of the Lamb's bride. The Lamb is both the bridegroom (Rev. 19:7-9) and the divine warrior (Rev. 19:11-21). J. Webb Mealy notes:

If it seems odd that Rev. 19:5-8 should announce the wedding theme only to have the appearance of the bride postponed until 21:1, then this oddity clears up when one recognizes in 19:11-21 the theme of the groom as victor-king. Attention has rightly been drawn to the rapport between the first vision in 19:11-21 and Psalm 45, which has been entitled 'The Royal Wedding Psalm.' The psalm not only celebrates the beauty of the king's bride and the joy of the occasion, but begins by praising the handsome appearance and valour of the king, and by blessing him with victory in battle. That John had this passage in mind as he wrote Revelation 19 seems clear, even though the ties are not to be found so much on the verbal level, as on the level of theme.²⁷⁰

Thus, in light of Psalm 45, the theme of conquest is neither out of place nor an interruption but instead connects the nuptial imagery of the "bridegroom Lamb" to the "conquering warrior king." As Hartapo notes, "in the narrative context of Revelation, four different judgment scenes come between the heavenly rejoicing for the marriage of the Lamb in 19:6-10 and the vision of the bride-new Jerusalem in Rev 21:1-8. Through this arrangement, John makes sure that the appearance of the heavenly bride-city is connected to the destruction of the evil ones."²⁷¹

1. Woe! The Bridegroom Warrior King is Coming (Rev. 19:11-16)

In Revelation 19:11-16, John provides symbolic description²⁷² of Jesus, the divine warrior king, his identity, and his judgment upon his enemies. Aune notes, "The imagery in this passage is very complex and exhibits parallels with a number of texts in the OT and early Judaism in

²⁶⁹ Hartapo, "The Marriage of the Lamb," 202.

²⁷⁰ Mealy, *After the Thousand Years*, 64-65.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² See, Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1046.

which either God or the Messiah (particularly in the later targumic texts) is depicted as a warrior."²⁷³ In addition, there are several connections between John's description of the divine warrior king in Revelation 19:11-16 and the description of the warrior king in Psalm 45.

In Revelation 4:4, a door opens in heaven, and John is summoned into the heavenly throne room of God. In Revelation 11:19 and 15:5, the temple is opened, and the ark of heaven is revealed. Here, in verse 11, heaven itself is opened! John begins this new vision with an overall description of the divine warrior, Jesus Christ, the faithful and true judge. In Psalm 45, the psalmist calls for the king to "ride out victoriously for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness" (Ps. 45:4). Along with similarities in thematic imagery, this text supplies several verbal connections to John's description of the divine warrior in Revelation 19:11.

First, John describes the warrior as one who is called "Faithful (πιστὸς)" and "True (ἀληθινός)" (Rev. 19:11). John's description mirrors the warrior of Psalm 45 who rides out victoriously for the cause of "truth" (מִן־הַאֱמֻנָה; LXX: ἀληθείας). Second, John states that the divine warrior judges and makes war "in righteousness (δικαιοσύνη)" (Rev. 19:11). Again, John's description of the divine warrior mirrors the warrior king of Psalm 45. The king of Psalm 45 wages war "for the cause of truth meekness and righteousness (רָצַף; LXX: δικαιοσύνης)" (Ps. 45:4). He rules with a "scepter of uprightness" (Ps. 45:6b), loves "righteousness" (LXX: δικαιοσύνην) (Ps. 45:7a), and hates "wickedness" (Ps. 45:7a).

The divine warrior riding out to war in Revelation 19:11 provides a thematic connection to the warrior of Psalm 45, who also "rides" out to battle against the enemy. Concerning the color of the horse which Christ rides in Revelation 19:11, Beale notes, "the white color of the horse here suggests the same idea of vindication in introducing the following judgment scene,

²⁷³ Ibid.

especially because of its close connection to vv 7–8 and especially to the 'white linen' of v 14, which also contains the idea of vindication."²⁷⁴ Beale further states, "This meaning is also supported by the ideas of holiness and vindication through victory conveyed by the white horse in 6:2, though there the image is probably intended as a parody of Christ in 19:11."²⁷⁵

Revelation 19:11 supplies the second time in the Apocalypse that John introduces a new vision with the phrase "and behold, a white horse and the one sitting on it" καὶ ἰδοὺ ἵππος λευκός καὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπ' αὐτόν (Rev. 19:11). The first, John supplies in Revelation 6:2, which Aune notes, "suggests some kind of literary correlation between the two passages, perhaps even the identity of the two cavaliers."²⁷⁶ Beale notes that the description of the rider on the white horse carrying a "bow" in Revelation 6:2 "may be may be an allusion to Ps. 45:3–5 (MT), where the rider is an Israelite king who defeats his enemies with arrows as he 'rides on victoriously' (Ps. 45:6 is understood by Heb. 1:8 as a messianic prophecy)."²⁷⁷ The LXX reads, "Stretch your bow and prosper and reign on account of truth and gentleness and righteousness. And your right hand will guide you wonderfully. Your arrows are sharpened, O mighty one, —peoples will fall under you— in the heart of the enemies of the King" (Ps. 44:5-6 LXX). While there is much debate on the identity of the rider of Revelation 6:2,²⁷⁸ the possible connection to Psalm 45 in Revelation 6:2 lends further weight to John having Psalm 45 in mind when describing the divine warrior in Revelation 19.

²⁷⁴ Beale, *Revelation*, 950.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, vol. 52B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 393.

²⁷⁷ Beale, *Revelation*, 375.

²⁷⁸ For a discussion on the identity of the rider on the white horse in Revelation 6:2 see, Beale, *Revelation*, 375; Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 395.

In Revelation 19:13, John describes the attire of the divine warrior: "He is clothed in a robe (ἱμάτιον) dipped in blood" (Rev. 19:13). Beale suggests that the description of Christ clothed in a blood-stained robe (ἱμάτιον) is "a clear allusion to the description of God judging the nations in Isa. 63:1–3...John thus affirms Isaiah's prophecy of God as a warrior and identifies Christ as that divine warrior. In Isaiah, the warrior judges to achieve 'vengeance' and 'redemption' on behalf of his people (so Isa. 63:4), and the same goal is implicit in Revelation 19."²⁷⁹ Another possible allusion to John's depiction of Christ's blood-stained garments is found in Genesis 49:11: "Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes" (Gen. 49:11). As the thesis has shown above, the psalmist borrows imagery from Genesis 49:8-12 in his depiction of the warrior king. While the psalmist does not depict the king of Psalm 45 in blood-stained garments, the psalmist does provide a description of the robes (ἱμάτιον) of the king along with a depiction of the robes of the bride. Thus, Like Revelation 19:11-16, Psalm 45 describes the clothing attire of both the warrior and the bride. The king's robes (ἱμάτιον) are "all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia" (Ps. 45: 8; cf. Rev. 19:13), while the bride's robes are "interwoven with gold" (Ps. 45:13; cf. Rev. 19:14) and "many colored" (Ps. 45:14).

In Revelation 19:16, John further describes the robe (ἱμάτιον) of Christ in order to reveal the name which was ambiguous in verse 12: "On his robe and on his thigh (μηρὸν) he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). The sword of the warrior was typically strapped to the warrior's side:²⁸⁰ "Gird your sword on your thigh (LXX: μηρὸν), O mighty one, in your splendor and majesty! (Ps. 45:3). Jesus' sword, however, comes "out of his mouth" (Rev.

²⁷⁹ Beale, *Revelation*, 957.

²⁸⁰ See, Osborne, *Revelation*, 686.

1:16; 19:15; cf. Isa.11:4; 49:2; 2 Thess. 2:8). As the divine warrior, he executes judgment by his word (Rev. 19:13). Beale notes:

The metaphor of a 'sword,' representing God's 'word,' is attested also in Heb. 4:12 and Wis. 18:15–16, the latter of which equates God's 'word' and 'commandment,' which leaped from God's heavenly throne, with a 'sharp sword,' which chastised the Egyptians. The metaphor in both passages connotes God's word as the agent of judgment. The sword girded on the rider of Ps. 45:3–5, possibly alluded to in Rev. 19:11, is explained as representing 'the words of Torah' in *b. Shabbath* 63a.²⁸¹

In the place of the sword, the warrior's name is found: "On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords." (Rev. 19:16). The use of the terms "thigh" (μηρὸν) and sword (ρόμφαίον) in Psalm 44 LXX along with the thematic connections of the king riding in battle reveal a further verbal and thematic connection to Revelation 19:11-16 (cf. Ps. 44:4 LXX). The "sword" (ρόμφαία), which proceeds out of the mouth of the divine warrior, is used "to strike down the nations" (Rev. 19:15). The nations will submit to his rule, for he will "rule them with a rod (ῥάβδος) of iron" (Rev. 19:15).

In Revelation 19:15, John supplies an allusion to Psalm 2:9, where the psalmist declares that the anointed Son of God, the king of Zion, will "rule"(LXX; "Break" MT) the rebellious nations "with a rod ῥάβδος of iron" (Psalm 2:9). Psalm 45 as a royal psalm is closely linked with Psalm 2. In Psalm 45:6 (44:7 LXX), the psalmist praises the righteous rule of the king "The rod (ῥάβδος) of [his] kingdom is a rod (ῥάβδος) of uprightness" (Ps. 44:7). Here again a verbal and thematic connection between the rule of the warrior king of Revelation 19:11-16 and the rule of the warrior king of Psalm 45 may be observed. In Revelation 2:26-27, the conquering saints take part in this rule, "The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will

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²⁸¹ Beale, *Revelation*, 962.

give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26-27). In Psalm 47:2-3, the people rejoice in the victory of the king, for "He subdued people under us, and nations under our feet" (Ps. 47:2-3; cf. Ps. 18:47-50).

In Revelation 19:16, John climaxes the revelation of the divine warrior by revealing his name, "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). This revelation also reveals that the warrior is none other than the Lamb, the bridegroom of the chosen and faithful bride (cf. Rev. 19:16 and 17:14). Because they are "with him" (Rev. 17:14) and "follow him" (Rev. 19:14), they also witness and partake in the judgment upon the nations which likewise brings about their vindication. As Hartapo notes:

It is the privilege of the saints not only to celebrate God's and the Lamb's victory but also to participate in it. The saints are not only 'invited' to the wedding banquet of the Lamb, but they are, in fact, the Lamb's (corporate) bride. The saints prepare themselves as the Lamb's bride by their bright pure linen (a symbol of their righteous deeds). Their 'righteous deeds'...refers to their faithfulness and perseverance despite suffering and persecution. Thus, the bride wearing her wedding garment is ready for the wedding ceremony. The wedding banquet is the time of her vindication, because it is held in her honor.²⁸²

2. Woe! The Birds are Gathering (Rev. 19:17-18)

In Revelation 19:17-18, John receives a new vision in which he beholds "an angel standing in the sun" (Rev. 19:17). This "angel" gives an invitation to "the birds that fly directly overhead" that they might "Come" and "gather for the great supper of God," to feast on "the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great" (Rev. 19:17-18).²⁸³ Concerning this vision, Hartapo notes:

²⁸² Hartapo, "The Marriage of the Lamb," 200-201.

²⁸³ See also 1 En 60:7-10, 24, and 4 Ezra 6:49-52 where the flesh of Behemoth and Leviathan are the dishes or food prepared for the righteous in the eschatological banquet.

The imagery is derived from Ezekiel's description of the defeat of Gog and Magog in 39:17-20 (cf. Isa 34:1-7)...The difference between Ezekiel and Revelation regarding this banquet is the fact that in Ezekiel the call to the birds comes after the defeat and burial of Gog, while in Revelation, the call comes before those events. Thus, the outcome of the battle is already predicted."

Beale notes the bird's invitation to the great supper of God is a "'macabre parody' of the invitation to come 'to the supper of the Lamb's wedding.' The connection between the two feasts is suggested by the occurrence of εἰς τὸ δεῖπνον ('to the dinner') in both 19:9 and 19:17; the link implies that judgment is but the other side of the coin of salvation."²⁸⁴

Beale further states, "The link may be that the meal in v 9 is a metaphor partly for vindication and the meal in v 17 is a metaphor for the judgment that vindicates."²⁸⁵ Aune believes this vision to be a parody of "ancient dinner invitations to share a sacred meal with various pagan deities such as Sarapis. The phrase 'the great supper of God' suggests more specifically that this is a parody of the messianic banquet, a symbol of eschatological joy."²⁸⁶

While there are no verbal links to Psalm 45 in Revelation 19:17-18, the contrast between the marriage supper and the great supper of God links the destruction of the Lamb's enemies to the vindication of the bride. The contrast between the invitation to the marriage supper (Rev. 19:9), and the invitation to the great supper of God (Rev. 19:17-18) presents the two connected yet opposing themes of joy and judgment. As the thesis has shown, the eschatological canonical context presents the king of Psalm 45 as the deliverer of God's people. Through the king's reign, the enemies are subdued, securing the people of God and his kingdom forever. As Hartapo notes, "what we see in the contrasting parallelism between these two banquets are the dual sides of the

²⁸⁴ Beale, *Revelation*, 965.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 966.

²⁸⁶ Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1063.

same coin of divine victory. The grim and grisly banquet of God commemorates the victory of God over his enemies. The joyful wedding feast of the Lamb celebrates God's victory for his people. One is the metaphor for judgment; the other is the metaphor for vindication."²⁸⁷

3. Judgment to those Who War Against the Lamb (Rev. 19:19-21)

The judgment announced in the invitation of Revelation 19:17-18 finds its fulfillment in the climactic war of Revelation 19:19-21. Here the vindication of the bride also finds its fulfillment. Aune notes "After the beast and the false prophet are captured, they are consigned to the eternal torment of the lake of fire (vv 19–21). Since the beast and his allies have already destroyed 'Babylon' in accordance with God's will (17:16–17), this victory seems to represent the conquest and destruction of all human opponents of God and the Lamb (but see 20:7–9)."²⁸⁸

John's description of the war is brief. Perhaps this is because as Osborne notes, "when the sword comes from the Lord's mouth (19:15), the battle is over instantly."²⁸⁹ As the psalmist declares, "The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts" (Ps. 46:6), "behold, the kings assembled; they came on together. As soon as they saw it, they were astounded; they were in panic; they took to flight. Trembling took hold of them there, anguish as of a woman in labor" (Ps. 48:4-6). Hoskins notes, "The beasts defeat will vindicate the truth spoken by God's saints and prophets, like John, who predicted his downfall in both the Old and New Testaments. No one will want to be on the wrong side on the day when Jesus the Messiah comes."²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ Hartapo, "The Marriage of the Lamb," 202.

²⁸⁸ Aune, *Revelation 17–22*, 1069.

²⁸⁹ Osborne, *Revelation*, 689.

²⁹⁰ Hoskins, *Revelation*, 392.

VII. Summary and Conclusion

The text of Revelation 19 reveals the mind of an author whose thoughts and meditations lingered long in the Psalms and OT prophecy. Revelation 19 records the Hymn finale, a glimpse into the glorious final victory of God and the bridegroom Lamb. The author of this text, caught up in the glorious reign and triumph of the Lamb, could find no better metaphor to display God's glorious joy, victory, salvation, and union with his people than that of a wedding. As one searches the pages of Scripture, Psalm 45 presents this picture in great detail.

Like the author of Hebrews, John follows the messianic tradition of interpreting the king of Psalm 45 as the Messiah. The central theme and subthemes of the royal psalms, the eschatological canonical reading of Psalms 42-49, the placement of Psalm 45 in the Psalter, the nuptial imagery of Psalm 45, the depiction of the divine warrior in Psalm 45, the eternal duration of the king's reign in Psalm 45, and the numerous verbal connections presented above make this text an important source for John in Revelation 19. Its importance lies in its canonical context. The people of God no longer experience exile, but are delivered by their king and united to him, resulting in vindication, peace, victory, and celebration. This deliverance ushers in the communion between the people of God (the bride) and their bridegroom king (Jesus of Nazareth). Jesus as the bridegroom king defeats the enemy, wins the battle, and as a result wins the bride. By depicting Jesus as the divine bridegroom warrior king, John reveals Jesus' true identity, which gives hope and encouragement to the saints to maintain their loyalty to the "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). By alluding to Psalm 45, John declares that their final deliverance is near and the king's victory will result in the glorious wedding feast.

By understanding John's connection of Revelation 19 to Psalm 45, the reader may better grasp John's portrayal of Jesus as the messianic bridegroom warrior king. In light of Psalm 45,

the themes of bridegroom and warrior are no longer simply a contrast between judgment and blessing but rather a holistic portrait of the eschatological messianic king as anticipated in the royal wedding psalm. Through John's portrait of Jesus as both bridegroom and warrior, John connects the victory of the Lamb (represented by the marriage feast [Rev. 19:6-9]) to the vindication of the Lamb's bride (represented by Jesus' judgment upon the wicked [Rev. 19:11-21]). Jesus, as the faithful warrior bridegroom king, will vindicate his bride and reign eternally.

This vindication ushers in Christ's eternal reign, communion, joy, and consummation with his people as depicted in John's wedding banquet metaphor. Furthermore, John's portrait of Christ, the divine bridegroom warrior king, also presents a grave warning to those who choose to rebel against the "King of kings and Lord of lords"(Rev. 19:16). All in opposition to the king will become the great supper of God (Rev. 19:17-21). In contrast, all in union with the king will dine at the Lamb's table (Rev. 19:9). Overall, Psalm 45 in its eschatological context is uniquely fulfilled through Christ the true bridegroom warrior king.

Further Research

This study also lends itself to further research in areas regarding the imagery of the bridegroom warrior king. For example, one may survey the Scriptures and other extra Biblical texts and provide a study on the relationship between marriage imagery and war texts. In one respect, Revelation 19 reveals Christ as the faithful covenant keeping bridegroom who vindicates his bride. This imagery may be reflected by Paul's statement in Ephesians 5:23 that "Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior" (Eph. 5:23). Longman notes, "Covenants have been successfully related to Ancient Near Eastern treaties. Yahweh (or in the case of the NT, Christ) has covenanted with his people. He has pledged to protect them. Thus, Israel's enemies become his enemies (Psalm 83). When Israel is attacked by a foreign power, the

sovereign, Yahweh, responds by protecting his people."²⁹¹ Thus, Jesus, in keeping covenant, vindicates his bride through the judgment of the wicked (Rev. 19:11-21). By viewing Christ as both warrior and bridegroom, one can see a clear picture of the marriage covenant and the responsibility of the husband to be the "savior" or "deliverer/ protector" of his bride.²⁹²

Or perhaps one may find a unique connection between marriage imagery and spiritual warfare. The preacher describes the beauty of the bride in the Song of Songs in a warrior like description, "You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners" (Song of Sol. 6:4). As Edwards notes:

In some parts of Ps. 45, the Psalmist makes use of more magnificent representations of the bridegroom's excellency. Vv. 3-4, 'And gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty; and in thy majesty, ride prosperously.' So we find it also with respect to the bride. Cant. 6:10, 'Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?' And in both these representations the excellencies of these lovers are represented as martial excellency, or the glorious endowments of valiant warriors.²⁹³

John, in many respects, presents the prostitute in the book of Revelation as the anti-bride who is at war with the true bride, the Church. The Church's greatest tactic against the anti-bride and her seductive schemes lies in remaining faithful to their chief commander and bridegroom, Jesus. It is to the one who "conquers and keeps" his works "until the end" that he will "give authority over

²⁹¹ Tremper Longman III, 1982. "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif." *The Westminster Theological Journal* 44 (2): 297.

²⁹² Concerning the husband as "savior," S.M. Baugh notes, "As Christ is "Savior"—with the loaded term σωτήρ (sōtēr) (cf. 2:5, 8)—so also the husband is to express his role as head with his wife's welfare as his constant aim. 'Savior' is a familiar title on many of the Ephesian public monuments for their state goddess Artemis "Soteira," kings, emperors, and others who acted as benefactors (εὐεργέτης, euergetēs) for those under their authority and would have conveyed that sense here." S. M. Baugh, *Ephesians: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, ed. Wayne H. House, Hall W. Harris III, and Andrew W. Pitts, *Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 480. See also, Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians an Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 741-743.

²⁹³ Jonathan Edwards, *Notes on Scripture*, ed. Harry S. Stout and Stephen J. Stein, vol. 15, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (London; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 612.

the nations" (Rev. 2:26; cf. Rev. 3:5, 12, 21; 12:11; 17:14; 21:7).

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