

## **Psalms 45, 49**

**Psalms 45:6,7 Your throne O God is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than all Your companions.**

The occasion of the 45th Psalm appears to be a royal wedding. The 49th Psalm turns to the funeral for perspective on the inequities of life.

**Psalms 45:** A wedding is a happy and optimistic event. In spite of the marital woes of so many, the loving couple chooses to believe in themselves and in the ability of their love to overcome all obstacles. The focus, on wedding day is always on the strengths and hopes of both bride and groom. All that needs to go wrong to ruin a marriage is a change of mind that focuses on weaknesses and fears.

In our Psalm the beginning place is with a description of the groom and all that he brings to the relationship. He is a king. He possesses "truth, humility, and righteousness." He has been chosen and blessed by God. The bride is called to commit entirely to her new husband - to

"forsake her own people." She will be lifted by her husband to new heights of respect. She will be dressed royally and cared for delicately. She will be transformed from daughter to mother and her name will be remembered and celebrated.

The quotation of the Psalm by Hebrews and the wedding motif invite the New Testament believer to spiritualize the Psalm. The King is Christ and the bride the church. The nobility of Christ invites the commitment of the bride who is lifted by the relationship to an experience of honor and blessing available in no other way.

**Psalms 49:** Our psalm addresses the disparity and tension that so often exists between the rich and poor. The psalmist offers counsel to both, inviting them to a new level of understanding. He assumes that his readers see strength in the wealthy and weakness in the poor. Many among the poor have been oppressed or victimized by those more wealthy than themselves and so there was in the poor a fear of what the rich might do. The psalm responds by naming what the rich cannot do. They cannot redeem their loved ones from the grave. They will not live forever. They will leave their wealth to others. As in the case of the poor, their eternal destiny will

depend on their relationship with God. In the grave there will be no distinction between the rich and the poor.

The concluding verse of the psalm is an apt summation of the message of the entire poem. "A man who is in honor, yet does not understand, is like the beasts that perish." Rich or poor, we are graced with life by God and we will all stand before Him and be judged according to how we have lived. From the perspective of this world, the rich hold the power of blessing and even life and death in their hands. The poor are helpless if they seek to achieve any more self-determination than they are allowed by the powerful.

In reality, both rich and poor live their lives before the Lord. The poor's judgment of the rich will carry more weight than any opinion held by the rich of the poor. The difference is seen in the contrast between time and eternity. Your boss may determine whether or not you get a raise and for how much. He may hire and fire. He may be respectful and kind or abusive and demeaning. As an employee you will be blessed or harmed by your boss's decisions. But God sees it all and every decision and choice made by the powerful will be reviewed by God.