

Psalm 45 appears to be a song written in honor of an unknown king's wedding. The first portion is about the king and the second half about the queen. It is not revealed whether he was from the United Kingdom of Israel, or after the division of the kingdom into the north (Israel) and the south (Judah).

The Fathers of the Church saw in this Psalm the great love relationship and union of Christ and his Church. It is also quoted in New Testament of the divinity of Jesus Christ the King.

While on the radio discuss the Queenship of Mary I made the point that in Judah (not in the tribes of the north who ceded from the United Kingdom), actually starting with Solomon, the kings had queens but they were their mothers, not their wives.

A caller commented that the readings at Mass often include Psalm 45 which says, "daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor; at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir. Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house; and the king will desire your beauty" (Psa. 45:9-11).

The question was, and I paraphrase, "If the queen of Israel is the mother, how could this wife then be the queen." I don't think verse 9 *has* to be read as referring to the "bride" as the queen. In other words, the word "queen" is only used once in this Psalm and is there any room for suggesting that "queen" and "bride" might not be the same person? That queen might actually be the mother. Though I am certainly not with the majority here, just thinking outside the box, it seems to me that it is not impossible that it could be interpreted that the queen is already at the king's right hand as he prepares to marry his new bride. Is the queen actually the mother standing at her son the king's right hand as he steps forward to marry his new bride? This is probably not the case but interesting to speculate about.

And even if the bride is the queen, it could have been written about a king from Israel (northern ten tribes) who did not have the stabilizing institution of Queen Mother or it could be about a king prior to the Solomon. The practice of a Queen being the mother of the king appears to be an exclusive to the southern tribe of Judah through which the line of Christ was traced. In other eastern kingdoms and even in the northern tribes of Israel, the wife was the queen not the mother.

Scripture makes the parallel between Jesus the king and the Church as his bride. But we as the church are never, at least I don't recall it, referred to as the queen. However, Mary in Revelation 12:1 is portrayed as the Queen of Heaven and we are the "rest of her offspring."

In any case, this Psalm does not invalidate the suggestion that those kings in the line of Jesus, from Solomon (who appointed the first queen mother) down to the deportation to Babylon had queen mothers which would become the pattern for the eternal fulfillment through Christ and Mary his Queen Mother.

The Fathers of the Church saw 1) great Christological meaning in Psalm 45, as well as 2) deep significance for Jesus and his mother Mary and 3) a picture or allegory of Christ and his bride the Church. One example comes from a quote used by Pope John Paul II in his catechesis on this Psalm,

“As is known, many Fathers of the Church have seen Mary in the portrait of the queen, beginning with the initial call: "Listen, my daughter, and understand; pay me careful heed ..." (verse 11). This occurs, for example, in the Homily on the Mother of God of Crispinian of Jerusalem, a Cappadocian who was, in Palestine, among the founding monks of the monastery of St. Euthymius and, who, once a priest, was custodian of the Holy Cross in the Basilica of the Anasthasis in Jerusalem.

"To you I dedicate my address," he says turning to Mary, "to you who are the bride of the great sovereign; to you I dedicate my address, to you who are to conceive the Word of God, in the way He knows. ... 'Hear, O daughter, and consider; incline your ear'; in fact, the happy event of the redemption of the world is verified. Incline your ear and what you will hear will lift up your heart. ... 'Forget your people and your father's house': do not pay attention to your earthly relations, because you will be transformed into a heavenly Queen. And hear," he says, "how much he loves you who is the Creator and Lord of all things. 'In fact, the King,' he says, 'desires your beauty': the Father himself will take you as his bride; the Spirit will predispose all the conditions that are necessary for this marriage. Do not think you will give birth to a human child 'because he is your Lord and you will adore him.' Your Creator has become your child; you will conceive him and, with the others, you will adore him as your Lord" (Marian Texts of the First Millennium, I, Rome, 1988, pp. 605-606).