

## July 2nd Daily Devotional:

Today's Psalm—a song of praise to a human king—is pretty challenging to the modern ear. I nearly laughed at the elaborate fawning over the king's appearance ("you are the most handsome of men") and definitely bristled at the patriarchal language ("the princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes; in many-colored robes she is led to the king"). Ewww.

J. Clinton McCann's commentary in the New Interpreter's Bible prods me (a little bit) past those initial reactions:

"It would be possible to dismiss Psalm 45 as a relic of the ancient Near Eastern ideology of kingship or as a piece of Israelite or Judean political propaganda. Indeed, if its portrayal of women is taken as a criterion, Psalm 45 should be dismissed. But it seems that the psalm was preserved as Scripture, because it has the potential to facilitate theological reflection about the nature of legitimate political authority. Such reflection is crucial, especially...in the light of the persistent human tendency to be fascinated with powerful people, be they royalty or politicians or even self-appointed dictators."

Often now in our liturgy, we use the word "kin-dom" to think about the "kingdom of God" less as a "top-down monarchy" and instead "a more horizontal structure of power in which everyone is a beloved child of God" (to use the words of Prof. Deborah Krause from Eden Theological Seminary).

What does kin-dom look like? How is it different from "kingdom"? How can we, as a church, work together to build the inclusive kin-dom of God?

### Psalm 45

1 My heart overflows with a goodly theme; I address my verses to the king; my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.

2 You are the most handsome of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore God has blessed you forever.

3 Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one, in your glory and majesty.

4 In your majesty ride on victoriously for the cause of truth and to defend the right; let your right hand teach you dread deeds.

5 Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; the peoples fall under you.

6 Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity;

7 you love righteousness and hate wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;

8 your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia. From ivory palaces  
stringed instruments make you glad;

9 daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor; at your right hand stands the  
queen in gold of Ophir.

10 Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your people and your  
father's house,

11 and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your lord, bow to him;

12 the people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the richest of the people

13 with all kinds of wealth. The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven  
robes;

14 in many-colored robes she is led to the king; behind her the virgins, her companions,  
follow.

15 With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king.

16 In the place of ancestors you, O king, shall have sons; you will make them princes in  
all the earth.

17 I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations; therefore the peoples will  
praise you forever and ever.