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THE **WATCHTOWER**

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**Hail Christ,
the Glorious King!**

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April 14-20

**Rejoice Over
the Marriage of the Lamb!**

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Large-Print Edition

PART 1

STUDY ARTICLES

■ Hail Christ, the Glorious King! ■ Rejoice Over the Marriage of the Lamb!

The Messianic King, Jesus Christ, straps on his sword and rides forth to conquer his enemies. After his complete victory, he marries a beautiful bride, who is accompanied by virgin companions. These exciting events are described in the 45th Psalm. Discover how they concern you.

Hail Christ, the Glorious King!

“In your splendor go on to victory.”—PS. 45:4.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

In what ways did Jehovah anoint Jesus more than his “companions”?

When did Christ strap on his sword, how did he first use it, and when will he use it again?

What is the greatest truth that the Warrior-King Jesus Christ defends?

A GLORIOUS king rides in the cause of truth and righteousness and goes forth to conquer his enemies. After winning a final victory over them, he weds a lovely bride. The king is remembered and lauded throughout all generations to come. That is the basic theme of Psalm 45.

2 The 45th Psalm, though, is much more than an exciting story with a happy ending. The events mentioned there have meaning for us. They concern our very lives now, as well as our future.

1, 2. Why is Psalm 45 of interest to us?

With keen attention, then, let us carefully examine this psalm.

“MY HEART IS STIRRED BY SOMETHING GOOD”

3 Read Psalm 45:1. “Something good” that touches the heart of the psalmist and causes it to be “stirred” concerns a king. The Hebrew verb translated “is stirred” originally meant “to bubble up,” or “boil.” This matter made the psalmist’s heart boil over with enthusiasm and made his tongue become like “the stylus of a skilled copyist.”

4 What about us? The good news of the Messianic Kingdom is something good that touches our heart. The Kingdom message became especially “good” in 1914. Since then, the message no longer concerns a future Kingdom but has to do

3, 4. (a) What is “something good” that concerns us, and how can it affect our heart? (b) In what way ‘is our song about a king,’ and how does our tongue become like a stylus?

with a real government now functioning in the heavens. This is the “good news of the Kingdom” that we preach “in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations.” (Matt. 24:14) Is our heart “stirred” by the Kingdom message? Do we preach the good news of the Kingdom with zeal? Like the psalmist, our “song is about a king”—our King Jesus Christ. We proclaim him as the enthroned heavenly King of the Messianic Kingdom. Moreover, we invite all—the rulers and the ruled—to submit to his kingship. (Ps. 2:1, 2, 4-12) And our tongue becomes like “the stylus of a skilled copyist” in that we make extensive use of the written Word in our preaching work.

‘GRACIOUS SPEECH FLOWS FROM THE KING’S LIPS’

5 Read Psalm 45:2. The Scriptures say very little about Jesus’ physical appearance. As a perfect

5. (a) In what ways was Jesus “handsome”? (b) How did ‘gracious speech flow from the King’s lips,’ and how can we endeavor to follow his example?

man, doubtless he was “handsome.” However, his outstanding handsomeness came from his faithfulness to Jehovah and his unbending integrity. In addition, Jesus used “gracious speech” when he preached the message of the Kingdom. (Luke 4:22; John 7:46) Do we personally endeavor to follow his example in our preaching work and try to use words that will touch people’s heart?—Col. 4:6.

6 Because of Jesus’ wholehearted devotion, Jehovah blessed him during his ministry on earth and rewarded him after his sacrificial death. The apostle Paul wrote: “When he [Jesus] came as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, yes, death on a torture stake. For this very reason, God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the

6. How did God bless Jesus “forever”?

name of Jesus every knee should bend—of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground—and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:8-11) Jehovah blessed Jesus “forever” by resurrecting him to immortal life.—Rom. 6:9.

THE KING IS MADE GREATER THAN HIS “COMPANIONS”

7 Read Psalm 45:6, 7. Because of Jesus’ profound love of righteousness and hatred of anything that might dishonor his Father, Jehovah anointed him as King of the Messianic Kingdom. Jesus was anointed with “the oil of exultation” more than his “companions,” that is, the kings of Judah of the line of David. How so? For one thing, Jesus was anointed by Jehovah himself. Furthermore, Jehovah anointed him as both

7. In what ways did God anoint Jesus more than his “companions”?

King and High Priest. (Ps. 2:2; Heb. 5:5, 6) In addition, Jesus was anointed not with oil but with holy spirit, and his kingship is not earthly but heavenly.

8 Jehovah installed his Son as his Messianic King in the heavens in 1914. ‘The scepter of his kingdom is a scepter of uprightness,’ so the righteousness and equity of his reign are guaranteed. His authority is legitimate, since ‘God is his throne.’ That is, Jehovah is the foundation of his kingdom. Moreover, Jesus’ throne will last “forever and ever.” Are you not proud to be serving Jehovah under such a mighty, God-appointed King?

THE KING ‘STRAPS ON HIS SWORD’

9 Read Psalm 45:3. Jehovah instructs his King

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8. How can it be said that ‘God is Jesus’ throne,’ and why can we be sure that his kingdom is righteous?
 - 9, 10. (a) When did Christ strap on his sword, and how did he immediately put it to use? (b) How will Christ yet use his sword?

to ‘strap his sword on his side,’ thus authorizing Jesus to wage war against all who oppose God’s sovereignty and to execute His judgments on them. (Ps. 110:2) Because Christ is an invincible Warrior-King, he is addressed as “O mighty one.” He strapped on his sword in 1914 and was victorious over Satan and his demons, whom he hurled out of heaven to the vicinity of the earth.

—Rev. 12:7-9.

10 That was only the beginning of the King’s victorious ride. He must yet “complete his conquest.” (Rev. 6:2) Jehovah’s judgments are still to be executed on all elements of Satan’s system on earth, and Satan and his demons must be neutralized. First to go will be Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. It is Jehovah’s purpose to use the political rulers to destroy this wicked “prostitute.” (Rev. 17:16, 17) Next, the Warrior-King will proceed against Satan’s

political system, bringing it to nothing. Christ, who is also called “the angel of the abyss,” will then complete his conquest by abyssing Satan and his demons. (Rev. 9:1, 11; 20:1-3) Let us see how Psalm 45 prophesied these exciting events.

THE KING RIDES “IN THE CAUSE OF TRUTH”

11 Read Psalm 45:4. The Warrior-King does not wage a war of conquest in order to occupy territories and subjugate peoples. He wages a righteous war with noble objectives. He rides “in the cause of truth and humility and righteousness.” The greatest truth that must be defended is that of Jehovah’s universal sovereignty. Satan challenged the legitimacy of Jehovah’s rulership when he rebelled against Him. Since then, that fundamental truth has been disputed by both demons and humans. Now the time has come for Jeho-

11. How does Christ ride “in the cause of truth”?

vah's anointed King to ride forth to establish the truth of Jehovah's sovereignty once and for all.

12 The King also rides 'in the cause of humility.' As God's only-begotten Son, he himself has provided a sterling example of humility and loyal subjection to his Father's sovereignty. (Isa. 50: 4, 5; John 5:19) All loyal subjects of the King must follow his example and humbly submit to Jehovah's sovereignty in all things. Only those who do so will be allowed to live in God's promised new world.—Zech. 14:16, 17.

13 Christ also sallies forth 'in the cause of righteousness.' The righteousness that the King defends is "God's righteousness"—Jehovah's standards of what is right and what is wrong. (Rom. 3:21; Deut. 32:4) About the King Jesus

12. In what way does the King ride 'in the cause of humility'?

13. How does Christ sally forth 'in the cause of righteousness'?

Christ, Isaiah prophesied: “A king will reign for righteousness.” (Isa. 32:1) Jesus’ reign will usher in the promised “new heavens” and “new earth,” wherein “righteousness is to dwell.” (2 Pet. 3:13) Every inhabitant of that new world will be required to conform to Jehovah’s standards.—Isa. 11:1-5.

THE KING ACCOMPLISHES “AWE-INSPIRING THINGS”

14 As he rides forth, the King has a sword strapped on his side. (Ps. 45:3) But the time comes for him to take the sword and wield it with his right hand. The psalmist prophesies: “Your right hand will accomplish awe-inspiring things.” (Ps. 45:4) When Jesus Christ rides forth to execute Jehovah’s judgments at Armageddon, he will accomplish “awe-inspiring things” against his en-

14. How will the right hand of Christ accomplish “awe-inspiring things”? (See opening image of the standard edition.)

emies. Just what means he will use to destroy Satan's system, we do not know. But that action will strike terror in the heart of the inhabitants of the earth who have not heeded the divine warning to submit to the King's rule. (Read Psalm 2:11, 12.) In his prophecy regarding the time of the end, Jesus said that people would become "faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." He added: "And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."—Luke 21:26, 27.

15 Announcing the King's coming "with power and great glory" to execute judgment, the book of Revelation states: "I saw heaven opened, and look! a white horse. And the one seated on it is called Faithful and True, and he judges and

15, 16. Who will make up "the armies" that follow Christ into battle?

carries on war in righteousness. Also, the armies in heaven were following him on white horses, and they were clothed in white, clean, fine linen. And out of his mouth protrudes a sharp, long sword with which to strike the nations, and he will shepherd them with a rod of iron. Moreover, he treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.”—Rev. 19:11, 14, 15.

16 Who will be Christ’s fellow warriors making up the heavenly “armies” that follow him into battle? When he first girded on his sword to expel Satan and his demons from heaven, Jesus was accompanied by “his angels.” (Rev. 12:7-9) It seems logical to conclude that at the war of Armageddon, Christ’s armies will include the holy angels. Will his armies include others? Jesus made this promise to his anointed brothers: “To the one who conquers and observes my deeds

down to the end, I will give authority over the nations, and he will shepherd the people with an iron rod so that they will be broken to pieces like clay vessels, just as I have received from my Father.” (Rev. 2:26, 27) So Christ’s heavenly armies will also include his anointed brothers, who by then will have received their heavenly reward. The anointed corulers will be at his side when he accomplishes “awe-inspiring things” while shepherding the nations with an iron rod.

THE KING COMPLETES HIS CONQUEST

17 Read Psalm 45:5. The King is mounted on a white horse, representing warfare that is clean and righteous in Jehovah’s eyes. (Rev. 6:2; 19:11) In addition to a sword, he is equipped with a bow. We read: “I saw, and look! a white horse, and the one seated on it had a bow; and a crown was given

17. (a) What does the white horse that Christ rides represent? (b) What do the sword and the bow stand for?

him, and he went out conquering and to complete his conquest.” Both the sword and the bow represent the means that Christ will use to execute judgment on his enemies.

18 In poetic language, the psalmist prophesies that the King’s ‘arrows are sharp, piercing the hearts of his enemies’ and ‘making peoples fall before him.’ The carnage will be earth wide. Jeremiah’s prophecy foretells: “Those slain by Jehovah in that day will be from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth.” (Jer. 25:33) A parallel prophecy states: “I saw also an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice and said to all the birds that fly in midheaven: ‘Come here, be gathered together to the great evening meal of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of military commanders and the flesh of strong men and the flesh of

18. How will Christ’s “arrows” prove to be “sharp”?

horses and of those seated on them, and the flesh of all, of freemen as well as of slaves and of small ones and great.’’—Rev. 19:17, 18.

19 After destroying Satan’s wicked system of things on earth, Christ ‘in his splendor’ will “go on to victory.” (Ps. 45:4) He will complete his conquest by abyssing Satan and his demons for the full length of the Thousand Year Reign. (Rev. 20:2, 3) With the Devil and his angels then in a state of deathlike inactivity, earth’s inhabitants will be free of satanic influence and will be able to live in total subjection to their victorious and glorious King. Before they see the earth gradually transformed into a global paradise, however, they will have another reason to rejoice with their King and his heavenly associates. That joyful event will be examined in the following article.

19. How will Christ “go on to victory” and complete his conquest?

Rejoice Over the Marriage of the Lamb!

“Let us rejoice and be overjoyed . . . because the marriage of the Lamb has arrived.”—REV. 19:7.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

At the Lamb’s marriage, who is the bride, and how has Christ been preparing her for the wedding?

When is the marriage of the Lamb due to take place?

How do we know that the “other sheep” will share in the universal rejoicing over the marriage of the Lamb?

IT ALWAYS takes time to prepare for a wedding. But we will focus on a very special wedding—a royal one at that. Just imagine! It has been in preparation for about 2,000 years. Now the time is rapidly approaching when the bridegroom will be united with his bride. Soon, joyful music will fill the King’s palace, and heavenly throngs will sing out: “Praise Jah, because Jehovah our God,

1, 2. (a) Whose wedding will be a particular cause for joy in heaven? (b) What questions arise?

the Almighty, has begun to rule as king! Let us rejoice and be overjoyed and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has arrived and his wife has prepared herself.”—Rev. 19:6, 7.

2 “The Lamb” whose marriage will be a cause for joy in heaven is none other than Jesus Christ. (John 1:29) How is he dressed for the wedding? Who is his bride? How has she been prepared for marriage? When does the wedding take place? This marriage will cause joy in heaven, but will those who hope to live forever on earth join in that rejoicing? With eager anticipation, we will consider such questions as we continue our examination of Psalm 45.

‘HIS GARMENTS ARE PERFUMED’

3 Read Psalm 45:8, 9. The Bridegroom, Jesus

3, 4. (a) What is said of the Bridegroom’s wedding garments, and what adds to his joy? (b) Who are “the daughters of kings” and “the royal consort” who share the Bridegroom’s joy?

Christ, puts on his glorious royal wedding garments. Fittingly, his attire gives off a delightful fragrance like that of “the choicest perfumes,” such as myrrh and cassia, which were among the ingredients of the holy anointing oil used in Israel.—Ex. 30:23-25.

4 The heavenly music that fills his palace adds to the joy that the Bridegroom feels as his marriage approaches. His joy is shared by “the royal consort,” the heavenly part of God’s organization, which includes “the daughters of kings,” that is, the holy angels. What a thrill it is to hear celestial voices declare: “Let us rejoice and be overjoyed . . . because the marriage of the Lamb has arrived”!

THE BRIDE IS PREPARED FOR THE WEDDING

5 Read Psalm 45:10, 11. We have identified

5. Who is “the Lamb’s wife”?

the Bridegroom, but who is his bride? She is a composite bride made up of the members of the congregation headed by Jesus Christ. (Read Ephesians 5:23, 24.) They will become a part of Christ's Messianic Kingdom. (Luke 12:32) These 144,000 spirit-anointed Christians "keep following the Lamb no matter where he goes." (Rev. 14:1-4) They become "the Lamb's wife" and reside with him in his heavenly abode.—Rev. 21:9; John 14:2, 3.

6 The future bride is addressed not only as "O daughter" but also as "the king's daughter." (Ps. 45:13) Who is this "king"? Anointed Christians are adopted as "children" of Jehovah. (Rom. 8:15-17) Since they are to become a heavenly bride, the anointed are instructed: "Forget your people and your [fleshly] father's house."

6. Why are the anointed referred to as "the king's daughter," and why are they invited to 'forget their people'?

They are to keep their minds “fixed on the things above, not on the things on the earth.”—Col. 3: 1-4.

7 Over the centuries, Christ has been preparing his future bride for the heavenly wedding. The apostle Paul explained that Christ “loved the congregation and gave himself up for it, in order that he might sanctify it, cleansing it with the bath of water by means of the word, so that he might present the congregation to himself in its splendor, without a spot or a wrinkle or any of such things, but holy and without blemish.” (Eph. 5:25-27) Paul told the anointed Christians in ancient Corinth: “I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I personally promised you in marriage to one husband that I might present you as a chaste virgin to the Christ.” (2 Cor.

7. (a) How has Christ been preparing his future bride?
(b) How does the bride view her future Bridegroom?

11:2) The Bridegroom-King Jesus Christ appreciates the spiritual “beauty” of his future bride. And the bride recognizes him as her “lord” and ‘bows down to him’ as her future husband.

THE BRIDE IS “BROUGHT TO THE KING”

8 Read Psalm 45:13, 14a. The bride is presented as “absolutely magnificent” for the royal wedding. At Revelation 21:2, the bride is compared to a city, New Jerusalem, and is “adorned for her husband.” This heavenly city has “the glory of God” and is radiant, “like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone shining crystal clear.” (Rev. 21:10, 11) The resplendence of New Jerusalem is beautifully described in the book of Revelation. (Rev. 21:18-21) No wonder the psalmist portrays the bride as “absolutely magnificent”! After all, the royal wedding is taking place in heaven.

8. Why is it appropriate that the bride is described as being “absolutely magnificent”?

9 The One to whom the bride is brought is the Bridegroom—the Messianic King. He has been preparing her, ‘cleansing her with the bath of water by means of the word.’ She is “holy and without blemish.” (Eph. 5:26, 27) His bride must also be fittingly attired for the occasion. And she is! Indeed, “her clothing is adorned with gold,” and “she will be brought to the king in richly woven garments.” For the marriage of the Lamb, “it has been granted to her to be clothed with bright, clean, fine linen—for the fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the holy ones.”—Rev. 19:8.

‘THE MARRIAGE HAS ARRIVED’

10 Read Revelation 19:7. When is the Lamb’s marriage due to take place? Although “his wife has prepared herself” for the marriage, what is stated subsequently does not describe the actual

9. Who is “the king” to whom the bride is brought, and how is she attired?

10. When is the Lamb’s marriage due to take place?

wedding. Rather, it provides a vivid description of the final phase of the great tribulation. (Rev. 19: 11-21) Does this mean that the marriage takes place before the Bridegroom-King completes his conquest? No. The visions in the book of Revelation are not presented in chronological order. In the 45th Psalm, the royal wedding occurs *after* the King Jesus Christ girds on his sword and ‘goes on to victory’ over his enemies.—Ps. 45: 3, 4.

11 We can therefore conclude that the order of events will be as follows: First, judgment will be executed upon “the great prostitute,” Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. (Rev. 17:1, 5, 16, 17; 19:1, 2) Then, Christ will go forth to execute God’s judgments on the rest of Satan’s wicked system on earth by destroying it at Armageddon, “the war of the great day of

11. In what order will Christ complete his conquest?

God the Almighty.” (Rev. 16:14-16; 19:19-21) Finally, the Warrior-King will complete his conquest by abyssing Satan and his demons, reducing them to a state of deathlike inactivity.—Rev. 20:1-3.

12 As anointed Christians finish their earthly course during Christ’s presence, they are resurrected to heavenly life. Sometime after the destruction of Babylon the Great, Jesus will gather to himself all the remaining members of the bride class. (1 Thess. 4:16, 17) Before the outbreak of the war of Armageddon, therefore, all members of the “bride” will be in heaven. After that war, the marriage of the Lamb can take place. What a joyful occasion that marriage will be! “Happy are those invited to the evening meal of the Lamb’s marriage,” states Revelation 19:9. Happy
12, 13. (a) When will the marriage of the Lamb take place? (b) In heaven, who will rejoice over the marriage of the Lamb?

indeed will be the 144,000 members of the bride class. And the Bridegroom-King will be overjoyed to have the total number of his royal associates symbolically ‘eating and drinking with him at his table in his Kingdom.’ (Luke 22:18, 28-30) However, rejoicing over the marriage of the Lamb will not be limited to the Bridegroom and his bride.

13 As we noted earlier, heavenly throngs unitedly sing: “Let us rejoice and be overjoyed and give him [Jehovah] glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has arrived and his wife has prepared herself.” (Rev. 19:6, 7) What, though, about Jehovah’s servants on earth? Will they also share in such exultation?

“THEY WILL BE BROUGHT WITH REJOICING”

14 Read Psalm 45:12, 14b, 15. The prophet

14. As mentioned in Psalm 45, who are “the virgin companions” of the bride?

Zechariah foretold that in the time of the end, people of the nations would gratefully associate themselves with the remnant of spiritual Israel. He wrote: “In those days ten men out of all the languages of the nations will take hold, yes, they will take firm hold of the robe of a Jew, saying: ‘We want to go with you, for we have heard that God is with you people.’” (Zech. 8: 23) At Psalm 45:12, these symbolic “ten men” are spoken of as “the daughter of Tyre” and “the wealthiest of men.” They come to the anointed remnant with gifts, ‘seeking their favor’ and spiritual help. Since 1935, millions of people have allowed the remnant to ‘bring them to righteousness.’ (Dan. 12:3) These loyal companions of the anointed Christians have purified their lives, becoming spiritual virgins. These “virgin companions” of the bride have dedicated themselves to

Jehovah and have proved themselves to be faithful subjects of the Bridegroom-King.

15 The remnant of the bride class have been particularly grateful to these “virgin companions” for their zealous help in preaching “this good news of the Kingdom” throughout the inhabited earth. (Matt. 24:14) Not only do “the spirit and the bride keep on saying, ‘Come!’” but those hearing say, “Come!” (Rev. 22:17) Yes, the “other sheep” heard the members of the anointed bride class say “Come!” and have joined the bride in saying “Come!” to earth’s inhabitants. —John 10:16.

16 The anointed remnant love their companions and are happy to know that the Bridegroom’s Father, Jehovah, has granted these other

15. How have “the virgin companions” worked together with those of the bride class still on earth?

16. Jehovah has granted the other sheep what privilege?

sheep on earth the privilege of joining in the jubilation over the heavenly marriage of the Lamb. It was foretold that these “virgin companions” would be “brought with rejoicing and joy.” Yes, the other sheep, who hope to live forever on earth, will share in the universal rejoicing when the marriage of the Lamb takes place in heaven. Appropriately, the book of Revelation represents the members of the “great crowd” as “standing before the throne and before the Lamb.” They render Jehovah sacred service in the earthly courtyard of his spiritual temple.—Rev. 7:9, 15.

“YOUR SONS WILL TAKE THE PLACE OF YOUR FOREFATHERS”

17 Read Psalm 45:16. “The virgin companions” of Christ’s heavenly bride will have further **17, 18**. How does the Lamb’s marriage become fruitful, and to whom will Christ become a father during his Millennial Reign?

cause for rejoicing when they see the marriage become fruitful in the new world. The Bridegroom-King will turn his attention to the earth and will resurrect his earthly “forefathers,” who will become his earthly “sons.” (John 5:25-29; Heb. 11:35) From among these he will appoint “princes in all the earth.” Doubtless, Christ will appoint others from among faithful elders of today to take the lead in the new world.—Isa. 32:1.

18 During his Millennial Reign, Christ will become a father to others also. In fact, all earth’s inhabitants who receive everlasting life will gain it because they exercise faith in Jesus’ ransom sacrifice. (John 3:16) He thus becomes their “Eternal Father.”—Isa. 9:6, 7.

MOVED ‘TO MAKE HIS NAME KNOWN’

19 Read Psalm 45:1, 17. Indeed, the events
19, 20. How do the exciting events mentioned in Psalm 45 affect all true Christians today?

recorded in Psalm 45 concern all Christians. The remaining anointed on earth are enthralled by the prospect of soon being united in heaven with their brothers and with their Bridegroom. The other sheep are moved to be ever more submissive to their glorious King and are grateful for the privilege of being associated with the remaining members of his bride on earth. After their marriage, Christ and his Kingdom associates will bestow untold blessings upon the inhabitants of the earth.—Rev. 7:17; 21:1-4.

20 As we look ahead to the fulfillment of “something good” concerning the Messianic King, are we not moved to ‘make his name known’? May we be among those who ‘will praise the King forever and ever.’

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