

'Ke Bona Leseli

(I Have Seen the Light)

Inspired by Chief Moshesh,
founder of the Lesotho Nation

Barbara Bridge

(♩ = 110-120)

Soprano Alto

Tenor Bass

mp 'Ke bo-na le-se-li! *mf* 'Ke bo-na le-se-li!

bo-na le-se-li! 'Ke bo-na le-se li! 'Ke bo-na le-

mf div. 'Ke bo-na le-se - li! 'Ke bo-na le-se-li! 'Ke bo-na le-se-li! 'Ke

f div. 'Ke bo-na le-se - li! *mp* 'Ke bo-na le-se-li! *mf* 'Ke

bo-na le-se - li! *f* 'Ke bo-na le-se-li! *mp* 'Ke bo-na le-se-li! *mf* 'Ke

bo-na le-se - li! *f* 'Ke bo-na le-se-li! *mp* I have

bo-na le-se - li! *mp* I have seen the light! I have

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Phonetic pronunciation: Kee BOH-nah leh-SEH-dee. (Some "L's" in the Northern Sotho language are pronounced as "D".)

seen the light!— I have seen the light!— I have seen the light!— I have

seen the light!—

mf *sub. p* *sub. p* *mf*

seen the light, the light of God. I have seen the light, the

light of God. I have seen the light! I have seen the light! 'Ke

mp *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *f*

light of God. I have seen the light! I have seen the light! 'Ke

bo - na le - se - li! 'Ke bo - na le se - li! I will

ff *ff* *mp*

bo - na le - se - li! 'Ke bo - na le se - li! I will

bo - na le se - li! 'Ke

mp

walk in the light!— I will walk in the light— of God.—

mf

bo - na le - se - li! _____ 'Ke bo - na le - se - li!

I will walk in the light. I will

'Ke bo - na le - se - li! _____ mf

walk in the light of God 'Ke

f

f

bo - na le - se - li! - na le -

1 se - li! I have seen the light! I have

mp D.S.

2 *sub. p*

se - li! Ke bo - na le - se - li! Ke bo - na le -

sub. p

f

se - li! I will walk in se - li! Ke

f *ff* 'Ke

molto rit.

bo - na le - se - li!

bo - na, *molto rit.* bo na le - se - li!

WASAS

Performance Notes

As dawn broke each day, Moshesh, founder of the Lesotho nation, would emerge from his hut with the greeting, “Ke bona leseli!” *I have seen the light!* According to tradition, Moshesh adopted this habit during the terrible Difaqane wars between 1820 and 1830, when the probability of being murdered in the night by marauding tribes was so great that the dawning of each new day brought this grateful cry. Under his leadership the kingdom was able to defend itself against overwhelming odds. Moshesh, a man of compassion and kindness, was loved and revered by all around him. In 1833, he welcomed the first Christian missionaries to his country. That day was regarded by Moshesh as one of the most important days in the history of Lesotho.

Geographically surrounded by South Africa, Lesotho is a small country with much beauty and much suffering. Today the country is ravaged by drought and the spread of the AIDS virus. In spite of their hardships, the people of Lesotho, possessing exceptional musical abilities, sing continuously, spontaneously breaking into four-part harmony.

A common greeting in Lesotho is the lovely phrase, “Motho, Pula, Nala!” *Peace, rain, and plenty*—in that order. And in Lesotho, “nala” means sufficiency; not more than one needs, but to be a human being, and to be free.

An SSAA arrangement of this song is also available, edition 12770. This song was first performed in a benefit concert for the people of Lesotho, and the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, who served as missionaries in Lesotho for nearly 75 years.

—Barbara Bridge

LES
PE
S
A
M
S