

For Lowly People

Huub Oosterhuis, from Ps 72
Translation by Tony Barr

Tom Löwenthal

INTRO: *Cantabile, con moto* (♩ = ca. 110)

Piano

The piano introduction consists of two staves. The right hand starts with a series of chords in the upper register, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

This section continues the piano accompaniment. The right hand features chords and some melodic fragments, while the left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment. A large watermark 'PREVIEW' is visible across the score.

REFRAIN: All*
Soprano (Melody)

Alto For low - ly peo - ple your hands are o - pen, —

Tenor

Bass

The vocal refrain is written for three voices: Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "For low - ly peo - ple your hands are o - pen, —". The music is in a simple, homophonic style with a key signature of one sharp.

The piano accompaniment for the refrain consists of two staves. The right hand plays chords, and the left hand plays a simple accompaniment. A large watermark 'PREVIEW' is visible across the score.

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*Unison first time.

you give hope _____ to the a - ban - doned. _____

This system contains the first two systems of music. The top system has a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features chords in the right hand and a moving bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment.

Their blood is pre - cious in your sight, _____ you

poch. rit. ,

poch. rit.

poch. rit.

This system contains the third and fourth systems of music. The vocal line continues with lyrics and includes a fermata over the word "sight". The piano accompaniment continues with a similar texture. The word "poch. rit." is written above the vocal line and below the piano accompaniment in three places.

a tempo

buy — their free - dom from slav - er - y.

a tempo

a tempo

1-3

to Verses **Final** *Fine*

y.

to Verses **Final** *Fine*

Final *Fine*

VERSE 1: Sopranos and Altos (unison)

con spirito

1. You shall stand up a - long - side the poor.

1. You shall sup - press the pow'r of the ruth - less,

1. break and re - strain it. You shall live for

1. ev - er, in - fi - nite as the sun. *D.S.*

VERSES 2 & 3: SATB Choir

(unison) *con spirito*

2. As morn - ing dew falls on thirst - y ground,

3. then shall the moun - tains bear sheaves of peace,

Piano accompaniment for Verse 2 and Verse 3.

2. so is your com - ing, and on that day

3. and the hill - sides a har - vest of right - eous - ness, —

Piano accompaniment for Verse 2 and Verse 3.

2. faith - ful - ness shall bloom and truth — shine, and

3. — wheat in full flood and fields — of gold, a

VERSE 3:

2. peace shall flow like a stream in full flood. — 3. And

S
A
T
B

3. cit - y ris - ing from a sea of — green. —

D.S.

2nd time D.S.

VERSE 4: SATB Choir
con spirito

4. Your name shall last for ev - er and ev - er, —

This system contains the first two staves of music. The top staff is for the SATB choir, and the bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "4. Your name shall last for ev - er and ev - er, —". The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and a treble line with chords and moving lines.

4. — just as the sun stands in the heav - ens.

This system contains the next two staves of music. The top staff is for the SATB choir, and the bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "4. — just as the sun stands in the heav - ens.". The piano accompaniment continues with a similar texture to the first system, providing harmonic support for the choir.

4. Your name shall spread o - ver the earth, from

This system contains the first two systems of music. The top system features a vocal line in G major with lyrics "4. Your name shall spread o - ver the earth, from" and a bass line with a similar harmonic structure. The bottom system shows the piano accompaniment, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a melodic line. A large, semi-transparent watermark "PREVIEW" is overlaid across the page.

4. heart to heart leaps a word of _____ peace. _____

D.S. alfine

D.S. alfine

This system contains the next two systems of music. The top system features a vocal line with lyrics "4. heart to heart leaps a word of _____ peace. _____" and a bass line. The bottom system shows the piano accompaniment. The system concludes with the instruction "D.S. alfine" in both the vocal and piano parts. A large, semi-transparent watermark "PREVIEW" is overlaid across the page.

For Lowly People

SOLO INSTRUMENT

Tom Löwenthal

INTRO: *Cantabile, con moto* (♩ = ca. 110)



REFRAIN:

16

VERSE 1:

9

REFRAIN:



[You shall stand...infinite as the sun. _____]



VERSE 2:

11

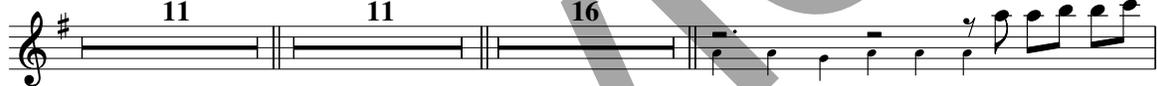
VERSE 3:

11

REFRAIN:

VERSE 4:

16



[Your name shall last for ev -]

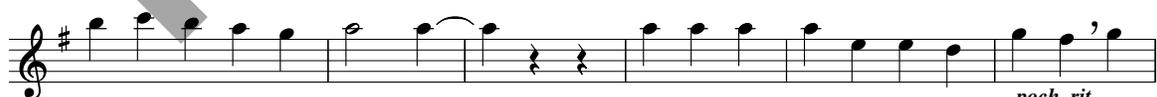


[just as the sun stands in the heav - ens.]



[Your name shall spread o - ver the earth, from...]

REFRAIN:



poch. rit.



a tempo

Performance Notes

Israel's temple and court scribes followed neighboring customs of lavishly praising the king. Every national event generated new hymns to honor the king. On the day of coronation songs were composed for a successful reign. At the annual commemoration of enthronement, no flattery was too great, no exaggeration too small. Every victory in battle had its own song.

Psalms 72 is a collection of blessing songs to honor Israel's earthly ruler. It may have been written during the prosperity of David and Solomon (BC 1000). The nation prayed God would protect the new king. May he be the great one, heralding the messianic era! May he champion the poor, this hero of the downtrodden. May his wise stewardship secure boundaries, annex kingdoms, produce abundant harvest, and fill the treasury. May he be the Shepherd to accomplish the restoration, undoing the effects of the Fall! May he restore justice through Israel to all kingdoms of earth. (2 Sam 7)

Perhaps this ancient palace hymn was a rite of intercession, a blessing wish. It appears to be *the* rite of anointing within an enthronement liturgy, sealing the king, as God's chosen one, to lead the nation to an age of endless peace and justice. Songs and prayers accompanied a handing over of the written law to the new king, that he might be wise and rule with God's own justice. Other ritual activities may have occurred: prisoners of war kneeling before him, neighboring rulers offering tribute, representatives of the nation bearing produce. Perhaps he processed around the temple and palace *taking possession* of his newly acquired kingdom.

A Blessing for the King (vv 1–7)

- 1–2 May he be a wise and just administrator of the Law (Torah)
- 3–7 May he establish unending justice and universal peace

A Blessing for the Kingdom (vv 8–11)

- 8 May his rule cover the earth
- 9 May the enemies acknowledge his greatness
- 10–11 May all ruling monarchs pay him tribute

A Blessing for the Poor of the Land (vv 12–14)

- 12 May he rescue the poor
- 13 May he champion the downtrodden
- 14 May he avenge the blood of the oppressed

A Blessing for the Length of the Reign (vv 15–16)

- 15 May he enjoy long life and prosperity
- 16 May earth's resources be abundant
- 17 May his name be great

A Blessing for the God of Israel (vv 18–19)

- 18 God is all powerful on Israel's behalf
- 19 God's glory fills the whole world

The psalm is now a doxology to end the *Second Book of Psalms* (42–72). The concept of *five books of psalms* is an editorial device to parallel the *five Books of the Law*. As such, it has no ritual function, being included in a psalter for pious and reflective synagogue use. Psalm 72 continued to be important in later Judaism and in Christianity, celebrating the messianic hopes of a people born of promise. It has long been associated with Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, the appearance of God's glory on earth. This was a baptismal season in the Eastern church. The neophyte proclaims the return of the Risen Lord to the community each time the waters of baptism are poured. The baptized are empowered to build a new social order of justice and peace. The psalm is appropriate for any occasions celebrating discipleship, stewardship, justice and peace, thanksgiving and ministerial empowerment.

—Tony Barr

Assembly Edition

FOR LOWLY PEOPLE

Huub Oosterhuis, from Ps 72
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REFRAIN: All



For low - ly peo - ple your hands are o - pen, you give
hope to the a - ban - doned. Their blood is pre - cious in your
sight, you buy their free - dom from slav - er - y.

VERSES: Choir

1. You shall stand up alongside the poor,
you shall suppress the power of the ruthless,
break and restrain it.
You shall live for ever, infinite as the sun. **(to Refrain)**
2. As morning dew falls on thirsty ground,
so is your coming, and on that day
faithfulness shall bloom and truth shine,
and peace shall flow like a stream in full flood. **(to Verse 3)**
3. And then shall the mountains bear sheaves of peace,
and the hillsides a harvest of righteousness,
wheat in full flood and fields of gold,
a city rising from a sea of green. **(to Refrain)**
4. Your name shall last for ever and ever,
just as the sun stands in the heavens.
Your name shall spread over the earth,
from heart to heart leaps a word of peace. **(to Refrain)**

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