

# To sing the mercies of the Lord

The Whole Booke of Psalmes (1621) - *Psalm 89*

Thomas TOMKINS (1572 - 1656)

CANTVS  
MEDIVS  
TENOR  
or Playnsong  
BASSVS

*Dumfermeling Tune*

To sing the mer - cies of the Lord my tongue shall ne - ver spare:  
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S.  
A.  
T.  
B.

And with my mouth from age to age thy truth\_ I will de - clare.  
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2. For I have said that mercy shall  
for evermore remain:  
In that thou dost the heavens stay  
thy truth appeareth plain.

3. To mine elect (saith God) I made  
a covenant and behest:  
My servant David to persuade,  
I swore and did protest.

4. Thy seed for ever I will stay,  
and stablish it full fast:  
And still uphold thy throne alway,  
from age to age to last.

5. The heavens shew with joy and mirth  
thy wondrous works O Lord:  
Thy Saints within thy Church on earth  
thy faith and truth record.

6. Who with the Lord is equal then  
in all the clouds abroad ?  
Among the sons of all the Gods  
what one is like our God ?

7. God in assembly of his Saints  
is greatly to be dread:

And over all that dwell about,  
in terror to be had.

8. Lord God of hosts, in all the world  
what one is like to thee ?  
On every side most mighty Lord,  
thy truth is seen to be.

9. The raging sea by thine advice,  
thou rulest at thy will:

And when the waves thereof arise  
thou mak'st them calm and still.

10. And Egypt Lord thou hast subdued,  
and thou hast it destroyed:  
Yea, thou thy foes with mighty arm  
hast scattered all abroad.

## Critical notes:

This setting is similar to the one of Psalm 35;  
text somewhat modernised.

### *The Second part.*

11. The heav'ns are thine and still have been,  
likewise the earth and land:  
The world and all that is therein  
thou foundedst with thy hand.  
12. Both North and South, with East and West  
thy self did'st make and frame:  
Both Tabor Mount and eke Hermon  
rejoice and praise thy name.

13. Thine arm is strong and full of power,  
all might therein doth lie:  
The strength of thy right hand each hour  
thou liftest up on high.  
14. In righteousness and equity  
thou hast thy seat and place:  
Mercy and truth is still with thee,  
and go before thy face.

15. That folk is blest that know'th aright  
thy perfect power O God,  
For in the favour of thy sight  
they walk full safe abroad.  
16. For in thy name throughout the day  
they joy and much rejoice:  
And through thy righteousness have they  
a pleasant fame and noise.

17. For why ? their glory, strength and aid  
in thee alone doth lie ?  
Thy goodness eke that hath us staid  
shall lift our horns on high.  
18. Our strength that doth defend us well,  
the Lord to us doth bring:  
The holy one of Israel,  
he is our strength and King.

19. Sometime thy will unto thy Saints,  
in vision thou dost show  
And thus then didst thou say to them,  
thy mind to make them know.  
20. A man of might I have erect  
yout King and guide to be:  
And set up him whom I elect  
among the folk to me.

### *The Third part.*

21. My servant David I appoint,  
whom I have searched out:  
And with my holy oil anoint  
him king of all the rout.  
22. For why ? my hand is ready still  
with him for to remain:  
And with mine arm also I will  
him strengthen and sustain.

23. The enemies shall not him oppress,  
they shall him not devour:  
Ne yet the sons of wickedness  
on him shall have no power.  
24. His foes likewise I will destroy  
before his face in sight:  
And those that hate him I will plague,  
and strike them with my might.

25. My truth and mercy eke withal  
shall still upon him lie:  
And in my name his horn eke shall  
be lifted up on high.  
26. His kingdom I will set to be  
upon the sea and land:  
And eke the running floods shall he  
embrace with his right hand.

27. He shall depend with all his heart  
on me, and thus shall say:  
My father and my God thou art,  
my rock of health and stay.  
28. As one first born I will him take  
of all on earth that springs:  
His might and honour I shall make  
above all worldly Kings.

29. My mercy shall be with him still,  
as I myself have told:  
My faithful covenant to fulfil,  
my mercy I will hold.  
30. And eke his seed I will sustain  
for ever strong and sure:  
So that his seat shall still remain  
while heav'n and earth endure.

### *The Fourth part.*

31. If that his sons forsake my law,  
and so begin to swerve,  
And of my judgments have no awe,  
nor will not them observe:  
32. Or if they do not use aright  
my statutes to them made:  
And set all my commandments light,  
and will not keep my trade.

33. Then with the rod I will begin  
their doings to amend:  
And so with scourging for their sin  
when that they do offend.  
34. My mercy yet and my goodness  
I will not take him fro:  
Nor handle him with craftiness,  
and so my truth forgo.

35. But sure my covenant I will hold  
with all that I have spoke  
No word the which my lips have told  
shall alter or be broke.  
36. Once sware I by my holiness,  
and that perform will I,  
With David I will keep promise  
to him I will not lie.

37. His seed for evermore shall reign  
and eke his throne of might  
As doth the Sun it shall remain  
for ever in my sight.  
38. And as the Moon within the sky  
for ever standeth fast:  
A faithful witness from on high,  
so shall his kingdom last.

39. But now O Lord thou dost reject,  
and now thou changest cheer:  
Yea, thou art wroth with thine elect,  
thine own anointed dear.  
40. The covenant with thy servant made  
Lord thou hast quite undone:  
And down upon the ground also  
hast cast his royal crown.

### *The Fifth part.*

41. Thou placest his hedges up with might,  
his walls thou dost confound,  
Thou beatest eke his bulwarks down,  
and break'st them to the ground.  
42. That he is sore destroyed and torn  
of commers-by throughout:  
And so is made amock and scron  
to all that dwell about.

43. Thou their right hand hast lifted up  
that him so sore annoy:  
And all his foes that him devour,  
lo, thou hast made to joy.  
44. His sword-edge thou didst take away  
that should his foes withstand:  
To him in war no victory  
thou giv'st nor upper-hand.

45. His glory thou dost also waste,  
his throne, his joy and mirth  
By thee is overthrown and cast  
full low upon the earth.  
46. Thou hast cut off, and made full short  
his youth and lusty days:  
And rais'd of him an ill report,  
with shame and great dispraise.

47. How long away from me O Lord,  
forever wilt thou turn?  
And shall thine anger still alway  
as fire consume and burn?  
48. O call to mind, remember then  
my time consumeth fast:  
Why hast thou made the sons of men  
as things in vain to waste ?

49. What man is he that liveth here  
and death shall never see ?  
Or from the hand of hell his soul  
shall he deliver free ?  
50. Where is O Lord thine old goodness  
so oft declar'd beforen  
Which by thy truth and uprightness  
to David thou hast sworn ?

51. The great rebukes to mind I call  
that on thy servants lie:  
The railing of thy people all  
borne in my breast have I.  
52. Wherewith O Lord thine enemies  
blasphemed have thy name:  
The steps of thine anointed one  
they cease not to defame.

53. All praise to thee O Lord of hosts  
both now and eke for aye:  
Through sky and earth and all the coasts,  
Amen, Amen, I say.