

HAPPY ARE YOU WHO LIVE IN AWE

Responsorial Psalm 128 for Sunday 33A
for 3 voice choir, assembly & descant
piano, keyboard, flute & guitar

TONY BARR

Happy are you who live in awe and in wonder of God.

Happy are you who live in awe and wonder of God.
You shall enjoy your handiwork, for God has found favor with you.

Then shall your wife be plentiful, a vine in your house
Fertile as olives, see your children gathered round your table.

So are you blest, who live in awe and wonder of God
May you be happy, may you prosper and joy fill your days.

Psalm 128 is one of the Songs of Ascent, sung by Pilgrims entering the Temple and climbing the steps into the inner courts. This collection of fifteen psalms (134-148) was a 'pilgrimage song book' to accompany the various processions in Jerusalem to celebrate the great Feast of Tabernacles. Other reasons for calling them songs of ascent is because of a literary device, where each verse develops an idea from the previous verse and is taken up in the next. Another suggestion is that the fifteen psalms correspond to the fifteen steps which lead from the Court of Women to the Court of Israel (or Court of the People), with the singers reciting this complete collection while two men behind the gate and inside the Court of the People blew on their shofar-horns.

In this Feast, the pilgrims give thanks for the blessing of Exodus and turn their thoughts to the New Messianic Age. This would be an era of blessing when all earth, united under one God, would enjoy the fruits of the Restoration. The scattered tribes of Israel would be together. Justice, harmony, equality. Lost by 'the Fall', would be restored. All of earth's resources, human and natural, would coexist for each other's mutual benefit in the Kingdom ordained by God, the source of all justice. This surely commands awe, wonder and due reverence.

This psalm is an extended blessing. Berakah, berakah, means thanksgiving. The psalm anticipates these blessings: abundant wealth from the earth, the household likewise rich and fertile. Unlimited blessings are symbolized in the fruitful vine (an allusion to the great wedding feast between God and Israel, found at the heart of Psalm 80, which celebrates the time of the vine harvest and the wedding rituals). Likewise, the bounteous olive shall, symbols of peace, shall be enjoyed by all who honor the Lord as God and who have sought to establish justice as the first step on the pilgrimage towards Restoration.

A Blessing of the One who dwells with God
A Blessing from the God-who-is-for-us
A Blessing for the God-fearing person
A Blessing from the Temple in Jerusalem

Originally a song of ascent or blessing, the text in its present form was re-shaped in a Wisdom tradition during the late post-exilic period.

- Tony Barr

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Flute $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$



Descant

All Hap - py are you who live in awe and in wonder of

SA Hap - py are you who live in awe and in wonder of

TB Hap - py are you who live in awe and in wonder of

Em Am7 Em Bm7

1-3

VERSE Cantor Final

God. God. God. God.

Then shall your

3. So are you

Em B Em Em Am7 D+2 B E

1. you who live in awe, and won - der, God.
 2. wife be plen - ti - ful, a vine in house
 3. blest, who live in awe, and won - der, G

Em C Am Bm Em

1. You shall en - joy your hand - i - work, for God has found fav - or with
 2. Fer - tile as o - lives, see your chil - dren ga - thered at your
 3. May you be hap - py, may your pros - perity and peace and joy fill your

C Am Bm G Am G Em

1. you.
 2. ta - ble
 3. days.

Hap - py are *D.S.*
 Hap - py are *D.S.*
 Hap - py are *D.S.*

B B Am Em *D.S.*

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Descant



Hap - py are you who live in awe and in won - der of

All



Hap - py are you who live in awe and in won - der of

VERSES Cantor

Em

Em

Am

Bm



1. Hap - py are you who live in awe, and won - der, of
2. Then shall your wife be fruitful, a vine in your
3. So are you blessed who live in awe, and won - der, of

Em

C

A

Bm

C



1. God. You shall en - joy your hand - i - work, for
2. house. Fer - ty as o lives, see your chil - dren
3. God. May hap - py, may you pros - per,

Descant

D.S.



Hap - py are

Am

G

B

B7

Am

Em

All



1. God has found - or with you. Hap - py are
2. glad thered and your ta - ble.
3. joy fill your days.