

FROM THE DEPTHS I CALL OUT YOUR NAME

Responsorial Song from Psalm 130 for Lent 5A
for Psalmist (Cantor), Assembly & Descant
with Keyboard, Woodwinds & Guitar

TONY BARR

*Turn to God for mercy,
and you will find peace.*

From the depths I call out your Name,
do you listen to my plea?
Open your ears to my cry, to my voice
or have you then abandoned me?

Then, in you, I place all my trust,
in your word I find my hope.
As watchman waits for the dawn,
even more I look out for your coming here.

Have you seen each fault, ev'ry flaw?
Could we ever flee away?
You promised, 'I Shall Be There.'
And for this we turn to you with joyful hearts.

Deep in you is justice and truth,
In your love I am restored.
Soon comes the day of release,
when our dreams unfold within a living land!

The Expectations of a Nightwatch People

This psalm originated in the pre-exilic days of Israel's monarchy, though our current text is post-exilic, to suit the liturgical needs of a more mature Israel, recently returned from Exile. It evidently reflects the changing styles of worship of those in diaspora, who had not returned to Jerusalem but had moved away from Temple to Synagogue, with a redefined focus on piety and reflection rather than on cult. It is an Individual Lamentation, perhaps of the king himself. The language is from the royal court, with parallels in another royal text, Psalm 86. The cry is a voice of one on the brink of Scheol, of extinction, in that bottomless pit, with no life or communion with God. Themes of darkness and light interweave as the King, before the Assembly in the Temple, calls on God for forgiveness and mercy. Our present text transparently reveals the structure of the earlier cultic form of text. It is unmistakably a lamentation in the traditional four sections or stages: vv 1-2: A Cry in deepest distress to God for help; vv 3-4 The reasons for the individual's plight; [] a Private consultation with the priest (Prophetic Oracle); vv 5-6 Joyful expression of returned confidence in God

It may have been for a day of national mourning. At times of crisis (defeat in battle, disease, drought, etc.), the King or Temple Priests would call for a day of fasting, prayer and special observances, to reclaim God's favor. But after the return from the Exile, Israel's feasts became more 'spiritual', 'eschatological'. One of the three meaningful festivals, Tabernacles, was characterized by observing the night vigils. Pre-exilic Judaism knew evening liturgies of sacrifice and praise, but the evening and night psalms found in the psalter today owe their present forms to the Temple Editors redacting and adapting pre-existing materials to meet the needs for contemporary worship. Much of this happened during the Deuteronomic Reform with the fall of the Northern Kingdom (BC 700), its reabsorption into the Southern tradition, and the return from Exile (BC 500).

Our present version is post-Exilic. The superscription which has mistakenly been understood as part of verse 1 is a late editorial addition. *Song of Ascents* indicates that it may have been a night psalm while ascending the sanctuary steps during the Vigil Liturgies, as a rite of humble access. *Song of Ascents* also reflects the literary form of the psalm, where a step device links each verse. This literary form has been imposed on the earlier text which, while still retaining much of its early vocabulary and idiom. It is now the song of the psalmist, reflecting the Assembly's need for God, during the night hours of prayer. The liturgical form has become a song in two sections for god's saving presence:

vv 1-4 The Psalmist addresses God directly, to be attentive and merciful

vv 5-8 The Psalmist exhorts the Assembly to watch (in patient vigil) for the God in Concealment - *Tony Barr*

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INTRO ♩ = ca. 56

Clarinet (or Oboe transposed)

Chords: Ebmaj7, F, Gm

§ REFRAIN

Flute on selected Refrains

Clarinet (or Oboe transposed) on selected Refrains

Descant on selected Refrains

Turn to God for mercy, and you will find peace.

All

Turn to God for mercy, and you will find peace.

Chords: Gm, Ebmaj7, F, Gm

VERSES Psalmist (Cantor) *from the ambo*

1. From the depths I call out your Name do you
 2. Have you seen each fault, ev - 'ry flaw? Could we
 3. Then, in you, I place all my trust, in you
 4. Deep in you is jus - tice and truth, In

E♭ Gm Cm Gm Cm

1. lis - ten to my plea? pen your ears to my
 2. ev - er flee a - way? You prom - ised, 'I Shall Be
 3. word I find my hope As watch - man waits for the
 4. love I am re - store. Soon the day of re -

E♭ F Gm B♭ E♭ Gm

1. cry, my re - or have you then a - ban - doned me? —
 2. There! And this we turn to you with joy - ful hearts.
 3. dawn, ev - more I look out for your com - ing here. —
 4. when our dreams un - fold with - in a liv - ing land! —

Cm F Gm7 Cm+2 Dm7 Gm

rit.

D.S.

From The Depths I Call Out Your Name

Responsorial Song from Psalm 130 for Lent 5A

REFRAIN ♩ = ca. 56

Descant on selected Refrains

Music & text from Ps. 130 Tony Barr

Turn to God for mer - cy, and you will find _____

All

Turn to God for mer - cy, _____ and you _____ find _____

VERSES Psalmist (Cantor) from the ambo

1. From the depths I call out your Name, do you
2. Have you seen each fault, _____ 'ry flaw? Could we
3. Then, in you, I place _____ my trust, in your
4. Deep in you is _____ - tice _____ truth, In your

1. lis - ten to _____ plea? - pen your ears to my
2. ev - er flee _____ You prom - ised, 'I Shall Be
3. word I find my _____ hope. watch - man waits for the
4. love I am re - _____ d. Soon _____ comes the day of re -

to Refrain

1. cry, _____ my _____ ve you then a - ban-doned me? _____
2. There! And _____ we turn to you with joy - ful hearts.
3. dawn, ev - _____ more I look out for your com - ing here. _____
4. _____ whenour _____ dreams un - fold with - in a liv - ing land! _____

The music setting of text driven by both meaning and syllabic structure. This is seen in the leaping of intervals and the patterns of rising and descending phrases. Syncopation allows the text its own voice, freed from the constraints of the structures. This is a determining factor in the verses, where time signatures change constantly, as driven by the meter of the text. The setting also allows space for reflection on the intensity and direction of the text with its simultaneously tight and drawn-out musical expression. - TB