

Thou Lord hast beene our sure defence

The Whole Booke of Psalmes (1621) - *Psalm 90*

Thomas RAVENSCROFT (1590 - 1630)

CANTVS
MEDIVS
TENOR
or Playnsong
BASSVS

Dundy Tune

Thou Lord has been our sure de - fense, our place of ease and rest:
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3
S.
A.
T.
B.

In all times past, yea, so long since as can - not be ex - pressed.
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2. Ere there was made mountain or hill,
the earth and all abroad:
From age to age and always still
for evere thou art God.

3. Thou grindest man through grief and pain
to dust or clay, and then,
And then thou sayest again, return
again ye sons of men.

4. The lasting of a thousand year,
what is it in thy sight?
As yesterday it doth appear,
or as a watch by night.

5. So soon as thou dost scatter them,
then is their life and trade
All as a sleep, and like the grass,
whose beauty soon doth fade.

6. Which in the morning shines full bright
but fadeth by and by:
And is cut down ere it be night,
all withered, dead and dry.

7. For through thine anger we consume
our might is much decayed:
And of thy fervent wrath and fume
we are full sore afraid.

8. The wicked works that we have wrought
thou sett'st before thine eye:
Our privy faaults, yea, eke our thoughts
thy countenance doth spy.

9. For through thy wrath our days do waste,
thereof doth nought remain:
Our years consume as words or blasts
and are not call'd again.

10. Our time is threescore years and ten
that we do live on mould:
If one see fourscore, surely then
we count him wondrous old.

The Second part.

11. Yet of this time the strength and age
the which we count upon:
Is nothing else but painful grief,
and we as blasts are gone.

12. Who once doth knew what strength is there,
what might thine anger hath?
Or in hiss heart who doth thee fear
according to thy wrath?

13. Instruct us Lord to know and try
how long our days remain:
That then we may our hearts apply
true wisdom to attain.

14. Return O Lord, how long wilt thou
forth on in wrath proceed?
Shew favour to thy servants now,
and help them at their need.

15. Refresh us with thy mercy soon,
and then our joy shall be:
All times so long as life doth last
in heart rejoice shall we.

16. As thou hast plagued us before,
now also make us glad:
And for the years wherein full sore
affliction we have had.

17. O let thy work and pow'r appear
and on thy servants light:
And shew unto thy children dear
thy glory and thy might.

18. Lord let thy grace and glory stand
on us thy servantss thus:
Confirm the works we take in hand
Lord prosper them to us.

Critical notes:

This setting is similar to the one of Psalm 36;
text somewhat modernised.