

O Lord thou hast me tride and knowne

The Whole Booke of Psalmes (ed. Ravenscroft, 1621) - *Psalm 139*

Richard ALLISON (ca. 1560 - ca. 1610)

CANTVS

MEDIVS

TENOR
or *Playnsong*

BASSVS

Rochester Tune

O Lord thou hast me tried and known, my sit-ting thou dost know:
O Lord thou hast me tried and known, my sit-ting thou dost know:
O Lord thou hast me tried and known, my sit-ting thou dost know:
O Lord thou hast me tried and known, my sit-ting thou dost know:
O Lord thou hast me tried and known, my sit-ting thou dost know:

3

S.
A.
T.
B.

And ri - sing eke, my thoughts a - far thou un - der-stand'st al - so.
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And ri - sing eke, my thoughts a - far thou un - der-stand'st al so.

2. My paths, yea, and my lying down
thou compassest always:

3. And by familiar custom art,
acquainted with my ways.

4. No word is in my tongue (O Lord)
but known it is to thee:

5. Thou me behind hold'st and before,
thou lay'st thy hand on me.

6. Too wonderful above my reach
(Lord) is thy cunning skill;
It is so high that I the same
cannot attain untill;

7. From sight of thy all-seeing sp'rit
Lord whither shall I go?

Or whither shall I fly away
thy presence to 'scape fro?

8. To heaven if I mount aloft,
lo, thou art present there:

In hell if I lie down below,
e'en there thou dost appear.

9. Yea, let me take the morning wings,
and let me go and hide

E'en there where are the farthest parts,
where flowing sea doth slide.

10. Yea, even thither also shall
thy reaching hand me guide:
And thy right hand shall hold me fast,
and make me to abide.

11. Yea, if I say the darkness shall
yet shroud me from thy sight:
Lo, e'en also the darkest night,
about me shall be light.

12. Yea, darkness hideth not from thee,
but night doth shine as day:
To thee the darkness and the light
are both alike alway.

Critical notes:

editorial *natural* added in Tenor bar 3/note 7;
this setting is similar to the one of Psalm 24 & 82;
text somewhat modernised.

The Second part.

13. For thou possessed hast my reins,
and thou hast covered me:
When I within my mother's womb
enclosed was by thee.

14. Thee will I praise, made fearfully,
and wondrously I am:
Thy works are marvelous, right well
my soul doth know the same.

15. My bones they are not hid from thee
although in secret place
I have been made, and in the earth
beneath I shaped was.

16. When I was formless then thine eye
saw me, for in thy book
Was written all, nought was before,
that after fashion took.

17. The thoughts therefore of thee O God
how dear are they to me?
And of them all, how passing great
the endless numbers be?

18. If I should count them, lo their sum
more then the sand I see:
And whensoever I awake
yet am I still with thee.

19. The wicked and the bloody men,
oh, that thou wouldest slay:
Even those (O God) to whom depart,
depart from me I say.

20. Even those of thee O Lord my God,
that speak full wickedly:
Those that are lifted up in vain,
being enemies to thee.

21. Hate I not them that hate thee Lord,
and that in earnest wise:
Contend I not against them all,
against thee that arise?

22. I hate them with unfainted hate,
e'en as my utter foes:
Try me (O God) and know my heart,
my thoughts prove and disclose.

23. Consider Lord if wickedness
in me there any be:
And in thy way (O Lord my guide)
for ever lead thou me.