

Psalm 139

The Scottish Psalter (1650)

Brian Collins

Moderato (not too slowly) mf

Voices

O Lord, thou hast me searched and known. Thou know'st my sit - ting down And ris - ing

Organ

mf

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up; yea all my thoughts A - far to thee are known. My foot - steps and my ly - ing down Thou com - pas -
For in my tongue be - fore I speak, Not an - y

Org.

15

sest al - ways; Thou al - so most en - tire - ly art ac - quaint_ with all my ways. Be - hind, be -
 word can be, But al - to - geth - er, lo, O Lord, It is_ well known to thee. From thy Sprite

Org.

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20

fore, thou hast be - set, And laid_ on me thine hand. Such know - ledge is too strange for me, too high_ to
 whi - ther shall I go Or from_ thy pre - sence fly? As - cend I heav'n, lo, thou art there; there if_ in

20

Org.

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25

un - der - stand. Take I the mor - ning wings, and dwell In ut - most parts of sea; Ev'n there, Lord,
 hell I lie. If I do say that dark - ness shall Me co - ver from thy sight, Then sure - ly

25

30

30

Org.

35

shall thy hand me lead, Thy right hand hold shall me. Yea, dark - ness hi - deth not from thee, But night doth
 shall the ve - ry night A - bout me be as light. For thou pos - ses - sed hath my reins, And thou hast

Org.

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40

shine as day: To thee the dark - ness and the light Are both a - like al - way. Thee will I
 co - vered me, When I with - in my mo - ther's womb En - clo - sed was by thee. My sub - stance

40

Org.

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45

praise; for fear - ful - ly And strange - ly made I am; Thy works are mar'v' - lous, and right well My soul doth
 was not hid from thee, When as in sec - ret I Was made; and in earth's low - est parts Was wrought most

45

Org.

50

know the same. Thine eyes my sub-stance did be-hold, Yet be-ing un-per-fect; And in the
 cu-ri-ous-ly. Which af-ter in-con-tin-u-ance Were fash-ioned ev'-ry one, When as they

Org.

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55

vol-ume of thy book My mem-bers all were writ. How pre-cious al-so are thy thoughts, O gra-cious
 yet all shape-less were, And of them there was none. If I should count them, than the sand They more in

60

60

Org.

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65

God, to me! And in their sum how pas-sing great And num-ber-less they be! Thou, Lord, will
 num-ber be: What time so-ev-er I a-wake, I ev-er am with thee. Do not I

65

Org.

70

sure the wic - ked slay: Hence from_ me bloo - dy men. Thy foes a - gainst thee loud - ly speak, And take_ thy
 hate all those, O Lord, That ha - tred bear to thee? With those that up a - gainst thee rise Can I_ but

Org.

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name in vain. With per - fect hat - red them I hate, My foes_ I them do hold. Search me, O
 grie - ved be?

75

Org.

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80

God, and know my heart, Try me, my thoughts un - fold. And see if a - ny wic - ked way there be_ at

80

Org.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of three staves: a vocal line at the top, and two organ (Org.) staves below it. The vocal line is in a 3/2 time signature and contains the lyrics: "all in me; And in thine ever-lasting way to me a leader be. A - men." The organ staves provide accompaniment. There are box numbers 85 and 90 above the first and last measures of the vocal line, respectively. A large pink watermark "albionis music services" is overlaid across the organ staves.

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This metrical psalm is in Common Metre (8-6-8-6) so the melody and one of the associated harmonisations can be used for any other CM hymn. Try singing it (or bits of it) to "While shepherds watched their flocks by night", "O God our help in ages past" etc. My intent was to emulate the metrical-psalm singing of earlier ages when such universal pieces would have been sung in church, at home and, indeed, on the field of battle (by both sides).

I have changed "Sp'rit" in verse 5 to "Sprite". It's easier to sing and is the same word anyway.

It is also a setting of the whole psalm. You might choose to omit some of the verses. In the past its very duration would have been considered a merit.

Try varying the texture: although it is intended for congregational use some lines or verses can be sung by soloists or a choir. The melody might be metrically