

Alexander Massey

Halleluyah No.1

Psalm 150
(voice & piano)

including an essay-commentary
on the text and music



Shir Publications

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Halleluyah

Psalm 150

הַלְלוּיָהּ, הַלְלוּ אֱלֹהֵי בְּקִדְשׁוֹ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקְיעַ עֵזוֹ
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְרֹתָיו, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרַב גְּדֻלוֹ: הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתַקְעַ שׁוֹפָר, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר
הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתוֹף וּמְחֹל, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנִּים וְעִנָּב: הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי שִׁמְעַ, הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה
בְּל הַנְּשֻׁמָּה תִהְיֶה יָהּ הַלְלוּיָהּ. בְּל הַנְּשֻׁמָּה תִהְיֶה יָהּ הַלְלוּיָהּ

1. Hallelujah! Praise God in his sanctuary! Praise him in the firmament of his power!
2. Praise him for his mighty acts! Praise him according to his exceeding greatness!
3. Praise him with the sound of the shofar! Praise him with the harp and the lyre!
4. Praise him with the tambourine and dance! Praise him with stringed instruments and the pipe!
5. Praise him with sounding cymbals! Praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
6. Let every thing that breathes praise the Lord! Hallelujah!

Psalm 150 not only completes Book 5 of the Psalms (*tehillim*), but is the last of all the Psalms. As such, its themes are particularly important as a summation - a vision - of what our central intention should be in prayer and liturgical song. The Psalms cover a huge range of human experience and emotion, including anger, pain, doubt, sorrow, yearning, hope, pleading, revenge, wonder, as well as - of course - praise and thanksgiving. Psalm 150 focuses on *hallel* 'praise', a word used many times in this text. While musical settings of this text are often loud, or loud and fast, I imagine this text as arising from a deep sense of inner quietness and gratitude.

This piece was first performed at the 44th Jewish-Christian Bible Week at Haus Ohrbeck in Germany (2012). It is dedicated to Betty Wainer, my mother-in-law, who passed on three weeks earlier.

Performance notes:

1. The piece should never rush, but have a feeling of courtly grandeur.
2. I have put only one dynamic marking in this piece (*mp* at the start). However, the piece clearly has a natural rise and fall in dynamics, and there are places (for example in the penultimate and last verses) where the musicians will want to swell the music, even to *forte*. My sparse use of dynamics here is intended to leave room for the musicians to respond personally to moments in the text as well as the cumulative impact of the piece.
3. I have created a multi-lingual version of this, with different verses in Hebrew, English, German, French and Italian, which was the version performed at the International Bible Week.

Halleluyah

Music: Alexander Massey

Words: Psalm 150

With poise ♩ = 84

1. Hal - l' -

Piano

The first system of the musical score is in 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a whole rest for four measures, followed by a half note G4 and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment consists of a treble and bass clef. The treble clef part has a melodic line with a long slur over the first four measures, followed by a half note G4 and a quarter note A4. The bass clef part has a simple harmonic accompaniment of quarter notes.

5

lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu, hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' -

(2) lu - hu bigvu-ro - tav, hal - l' - lu, hal - l' - lu - hu hal - l' - lu - hu k' -

Pno.

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal and piano parts. It starts with a measure rest for five measures. The vocal line has a melodic line with a long slur over the first four measures, followed by a half note G4 and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment continues with a treble and bass clef. The treble clef part has a melodic line with a long slur over the first four measures, followed by a half note G4 and a quarter note A4. The bass clef part has a simple harmonic accompaniment of quarter notes.

10

lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah. Hal - l' - lu el b' - kod - sho, hal - l' -

rov gud - lo, hal - l' - lu hu 3. Hal - l' - lu - hu b' - tei - ka sho - far, b' -

Pno.

The third system of the musical score continues the vocal and piano parts. It starts with a measure rest for ten measures. The vocal line has a melodic line with a long slur over the first four measures, followed by a half note G4 and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment continues with a treble and bass clef. The treble clef part has a melodic line with a long slur over the first four measures, followed by a half note G4 and a quarter note A4. The bass clef part has a simple harmonic accompaniment of quarter notes.

Halleluyah

15

lu, hal - l' - lu - yah; hal - l' - lu - hu bir - ki - a, bir - ki - a u -
tei - ka sho - far, Hal - l' - lu - hu b' - nei - vel, b' - nei - vel v' - chi -

Pno.

20

zo Hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah! 1. Hal - l' - lu - yah! 2. Hal - l' - lu - yah!
nor. Hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah.

Pno.

25

yah! 2. yah! 4. Hal - l' - lu - hu b' - tof u - ma - chol, b' - tof u - ma - chol. Hal - l' - lu - yah!

Pno.

Halleluyah

30

lu - hu b'-mi - nim v'-u-gav hal - l' - lu - hu. 5.Hal-l' - lu - hu b' -

Pno.

35

tzil-tze-lei sha-ma b' - tzil-tze-lei sha - ma, _____ hal-l' - lu - hu b' - tzil - tze - lei, b' -

Pno.

40

tzil - tze - lei tru' - ah. Hal-l' - lu _____ yah, hal-l' - lu - yah, hal-l' - lu -

Pno.

Halleluyah

45

yah! 6.Kol han' - sha - ma - t' - hal - lel

Pno.

49

yah. Hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu

Pno.

53

yah! Hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu - yah, hal - l' - lu -

Pno.

57

yah!

Pno.