

Tov L'Hodot (Psalm 92)

for unaccompanied SATB choir

RUSSELL NADEL (ASCAP)
(2016)

Duration: c. 4'30"



Program Notes:

I composed this setting of *Tov L'Hodot* for the Guild of Temple Musicians' 2017 Ben Steinberg Young Composer's Award, and is intended for an advanced volunteer choral group. I aspired to incorporate as much literal "text-painting" in this setting as possible, in the interest of "illustrating" the poetry of the Psalm and highlighting the subtle mood changes in the text. To that end, the music incorporates ear-catching rhythmic motives and techniques, including echoing and call-and-response. The setting shifts from declamatory homophonic textures to multiple interweaving parts as the text suggested. Finally, the melodic and harmonic language throughout the piece was strongly influenced by traditional Jewish prayer modes; the primary, triumphant text passages are largely set in (or near) the "Adonai Malach" mode, while the more emotionally-charged passages often shifts to the Ukrainian-Dorian Hexachord or the "Magen Avot" mode.* I also tried to evoke some of the drama, glory, and pathos I find in the best works of Janowski, Lewandowski, Davidson, Steinberg, and other notable Jewish composers of the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries whose music I have had the privilege to sing over the years.

This setting was requested by Mitch Bassman, director of the Choir of Congregation Adat Reyim in Springfield, VA. I am grateful to him, and to all the members of the Adat Reyim Choir, for their years of support and encouragement.

Performance Notes:

Small lyrics in parentheses indicate alternative, non-preferred pronunciations. If the director chooses to use these alternative pronunciations, the singers should observe the rhythm ties indicated by the associated dotted slurs.

Other dotted slurs indicate places where the singers should not breathe.

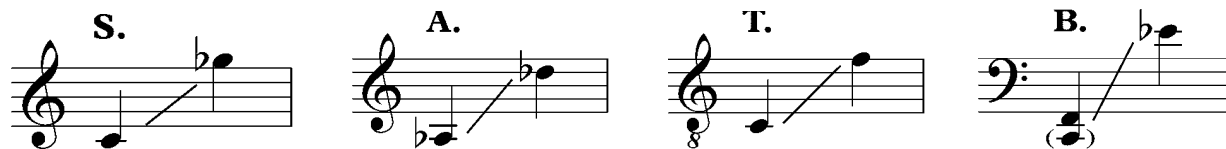
The opening solo could be performed by any singer, with octave transposition if necessary.

The "echo effects" – when words travel from voice part to voice part, becoming quieter each time – should be clear, and may be exaggerated at the choir director's discretion.

Baritones can sing the tenor part, at the choir director's discretion.

If shorter versions of this work are desired for worship services, possible cuts are marked. A drastic cut skips measures 38-94, is marked with *, and requires that measures 95-127 be sung a half-step lower than written for tonal continuity; a less drastic cut skips measures 68-94 and is marked with **.

Vocal Ranges:



– Russell Nadel
July 2016

* I am indebted to Chazzan Charles Davidson for the gift of his textbook, *Imunim be-nusach ha-tefilah: A Study Text and Workbook for the Jewish Prayer Modes*, which was a valuable resource in composing this piece.

Text:

A Song for the Sabbath Day. מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר לַיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת:

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing hymns to Your name, O Most High! טוֹב לְהַדוֹת לַיהוָה וּלְזַמֵּר לְשִׁמְךָ עֲלֵינוּ: ²

To tell of your love in the morning, to sing at night of your faithfulness; לְהַגִּיד בַּבֶּקֶר חַסְדְּךָ וְאַמּוּנַתְךָ בַּלַּיְלוֹת: ³

to pluck the strings, to sound the lute, to make the harp vibrate. עֲלֵי־עֲשׂוֹר וְעֲלֵי־נָבֶל עֲלֵי הַגִּיּוֹן בְּכִנּוֹר: ⁴

Your deeds, O Lord, fill me with gladness, your work moves me to song. כִּי שְׂמַחְתַּנִּי יְהוָה בַּפְעֻלָּהּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יְדִידֵי אַרְנֹן: ⁵

How great are your works, O Lord! How profound Your design! מֵהַגְדֹּלּוֹ מַעֲשֵׂיךָ יְהוָה מְאֹד עֲמֻקּוֹ מַחְשְׁבֵי־יָדְךָ: ⁶

The fool will never learn, the dullard [will] never grasp this: אִישׁ־בָּעַר לֹא יִדְעֶה וְכֹסֵיל לֹא יִבִּין אֶת־זֹאת: ⁷

the wicked may flourish like grass, בְּפֶרֶחַ רְשָׁעִים | כִּמוֹ עֵשֶׂב וַיִּצְיָצוּ כָל־פְּעֻלֵי אָוֹן לְהַשְׁמָדָם עַד־יָעֵד: ⁸

all who do evil may blossom, / while You, O Lord, are exalted for all time. וְאַתָּה מְרוֹם לְעֹלָם יְהוָה: ⁹

See how Your enemies, O Lord, כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבֹיֶיךָ | יְהוָה בִּיהִנֵּה אֵיבֹיֶיךָ יִאֲבָדוּ וְתִפְרְדוּ כָל־פְּעֻלֵי אָוֹן: ¹⁰

see how Your enemies shall perish, how all who do evil shall be scattered.

You lift up my head in pride, I am bathed in freshening oil. וַתִּרָם כְּרִאִים קִרְנִי בְלִתִּי בְשִׁמּוֹן רַעְנָן: ¹¹

I shall see the defeat of my foes, my ears shall hear of their fall. וַתִּבֶט עֵינֵי בְשׁוֹרֵי בְקִמִּים עָלַי מִרְעִים תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנֵי: ¹²

The righteous shall flourish like palms, grow tall like cedars in Lebanon. צַדִּיק כַּתְּמָר יִפְרַח כְּאַרְז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשְׁגָה: ¹³

Rooted in the house of the Lord, שְׁתוּלִים בְּבַיִת יְהוָה בְּחִצְרוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִפְרִיחוּ: ¹⁴

they shall ever be fresh and green, עוֹד יִנוּבּוֹן בְּשִׁיבָה דְשָׁנִים וְרַעֲנָנִים יִהְיוּ: ¹⁵

proclaiming that the Lord is just, my Rock, in whom there is no wrong. † לְהַגִּיד כִּי־יָשָׁר יְהוָה צוּרִי וְלֹא־עוֹלָתָהּ בּוֹ: † ¹⁶

Pronunciation Notes for the Hebrew transliteration, with English equivalents:

“a” as in “father” “i” as in “see” “e” as in “bed”

“o” as in “home” “ei” as in “way” “u” as in “too”

’ can be approximated with the schwa vowel (like the “i” in “pencil”).

“ch” is gargled in the back of the throat, as in the German “ach” or Scottish “loch.”

† Hebrew text from [The Westminster Leningrad Codex](http://tanach.us/Tanach.xml) (<http://tanach.us/Tanach.xml>). Used under Creative Commons license.

‡ English translation from *Shaarei T'filah: Gates of Prayer, The New Union Prayer Book*, ©1975 Central Conference of American Rabbis, New York, NY.

Dedicated to Mitch Bassman and the Choir of Congregation Adat Reyim, Springfield, VA

PSALM 92: "TOV L'HODOT"

From the Jewish liturgy

RUSSELL NADEL

1 **Allegro** (♩ = 68)
mf *leggiere*

Maestoso, freely

SOPRANO
Tov, tov, tov l'ho-dot, tov l'ho-dot la-do

ALTO *Solo*
Miz-mor shir, l' - yom ha-Shab-bat. Tov, tov, tov l'ho-dot, tov l'ho-dot la-do

TENOR
Tov, tov, tov l'ho-dot, tov l'ho-dot la-do

BASS
Tov, tov, tov l'ho-dot, tov l'ho-dot la-do (dot,)

Piano *Solo*
(for rehearsal only)

6

S. *f*
nai. Tov, tov, tov l'ho-dot, ul-za-meir l'-shim-cha el- yon; yon;

A. *mp* *cresc.*
nai. Tov, tov, tov l'ho-dot, ul-za-meir l'-shim-cha el- yon; yon;

T. *mp* *cresc.* *f*
nai. Tov, tov, tov l'ho-dot, ul-za-meir l'-shim-cha el, el- yon; el- yon; l'-ha-

B. *mp* *cresc.* *div. unis.*
nai. Tov l'ho - dot, tov, tov l'ho-dot, ul-za-meir l'-shim-cha el- yon. Tov l' - ho - yon. Tov l' - ho -

Pno. *f*
1. 2.

2

S. *mp* l'ha-gid, *p* chas-de-cha, *mp* l'ha-

A. *mf* l'ha-gid, *legato* l'ha-gid ba-bo-ker chas-de-cha. *mf* l'ha-gid,

T. *mp* gid, l'ha-gid, *f* l'ha-gid,

B. *p* dot. *f sub., legato* l'ha-gid, l'ha-gid ba-bo-ker chas-de-cha.

Pno. 2

S. gid... *f* Tov l'-ho-dot la-do-nai,

A. *mf* ve-e-mu-na-t'-cha ba-lei-lot, *f* Tov l'-ho-dot la-do-nai,

T. *p* ve-e-mu-na-t'-cha ba-lei-lot, *mf* L'ha-gid ba-bo-ker, *mp* ve-

B. *p* l'ha-gid, *f* a-lei a-sor, *mf distinto* va-a-lei na-

Pno. 3

22 *mp* **poco rit.**

S. ul-za-meir l'shim-cha el - yon.

A. *mf legato* *mp*
a - lei hi-ga-yon b'chi-nor, tov l'ho-dot la-do-

T. *p*
e-mu-na-t'cha ba - lei - lot.

B. *mp div.* *p*
vel, ba - lei - lot.

Pno. **poco rit.**

4 **Dolce, poco più calmato** (♩ = 63)

27 *mp legato* *cresc.* *f*

S. Ki si-mach - ta - ni, A - do nai, b' - fa - a - le - cha;

A. *mf legato* *mf*
nai. Ki si-mach - ta - ni, A - do - nai, b' - fa - a - le - cha;

T. *mp legato* *mf*
Ki si-mach - ta - ni, A - do - nai, b' - fa - a - le - cha;

B.

Pno. **Dolce, poco più calmato** (♩ = 63)

4

molto rit.

33

S. *p* ar - a - nein, ar - a - nein, ar - a - nein. Ga - d² *f* (Gad -)

A. *ff* b¹ - ma - a - sei ya - de - cha a - ra - nein. Mah - ga - d² (gad -)

T. *p* b¹ - ma - a - sei ya - de - cha a - ra - nein. Mah - ga - d² (gad -)

B. *unis. mf legato* b¹ - ma - a - sei ya - de - cha a - ra - nein. Mah - ga - d² (gad -) *ff*

Pno. **molto rit.**

38 **5** **Maestoso** (♩ = 60)

S. *ff* lu ma - a - se - cha, A - do - nai! M² - od a - m¹ - ku mach - sh² - vo - te - cha, m¹ - od am - *f* (am -) *> mf*

A. *f* lu ma - a - se - cha, A - do - nai! M² - od a - m¹ - ku mach - sh² - vo - te - cha, m¹ - od am - *f* (am -) *> mf*

T. lu ma - a - se - cha, A - do - nai! M² - od a - m¹ - ku mach - sh² - vo - te - cha. (am -)

B. *div. mf* lu ma - a - se - cha, A - do - nai! M² - od a - m¹ - ku mach - sh² - vo - te - cha. *f* *mf* (am -)

Pno. **5** **Maestoso** (♩ = 60)

* If a much shorter version of this setting is needed, it is possible to cut directly from this measure (with the sopranos singing "nein" as a half note, and omitting the other voices' entrances) to measure 95 ("Tzadik"). In that case, measure 95 to the end should be sung a half-step lower than written.

45 6

S. *mp*
ku. Ish ba -

A. *mf*
ku. Ish ba - ar lo yei -

T. *f marcato*
Ish ba - ar lo yei - da;

B.

Pno. 6

48

S. *mp < mf*
ar lo yei - da; Uch - sil lo - ya - vin,

A. *mp < mf*
da; Uch - sil lo - ya - vin,

T. *mp < mf* *mp*
Uch - sil lo - - ya - vin et -

B. *unis. p*
Ish ba - ar lo yei - da;

Pno.

52 **poco rit.** . . . **Moving forward** (♩ = 63) *mp*

S. lo-ya-vin, lo-ya-vin et-zot. Va-ya-

A. lo-ya-vin, lo-ya-vin et-zot. *f* Bi - fro-ach r'sha-im k'mo ei-sev, va-ya- *mp*

T. zot. *f* Bi - fro-ach r'sha-im k'mo ei-sev, va-ya- *mp*

B. *ff marcato* *mf* Bi - fro - ach r'sha - im, bi - fro-ach r'sha-im k'mo ei-sev,

Pno. **poco rit.** **7** **Moving forward** (♩ = 63)

58 *f* *p cresc. poco a poco*

S. tzi-tzu kol-po-a-lei a-ven: a-dei-ad.

A. tzi-tzu kol-po-a-lei a-ven: *mp* a-dei, a-dei-ad. *f*

T. tzi-tzu kol-po-a-lei a-ven: a-dei, a-dei-

B. *div. f* *dim.* l'-hi-sha-m'dam a-dei-ad, a-dei-
(sham -)

Pno.

63

S. *ff* *mf espr.*
V'-a-tah ma - rom, l'-o-lam A-do-nai. Ki hi -

A. *mp* *mf* *f*
V'-a-tah ma - rom, l'-o-lam A-do-nai.

T. *mp* *f* *pp*
ad. V'-a-tah ma - rom, l'-o-lam A-do-nai. l'-o-

B. *unis. mf leggiero* *p*
ad; l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, (lam, —) *pp*

Pno.

68

8

S. *mp*
nei o - y' - ve - cha, A - do - nai, o - y' -

A. *mp* *f espr.* *mp sub.*
Ki hi - nei, o - y' - ve - cha, yo - vei - du, o - y' -

T. *mf sub.*
lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, Yo - vei - du:

B. *mp*
lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, l'-o-lam, o - y' -

Pno.

8

** If a shorter version of this setting is needed, it is possible to cut directly from this measure (with the basses singing the cue-note "lam" half-note, and omitting the sopranos' and tenors' entrances) to measure 95 ("Tzadik").

73

S. *f feroce* *mp* 3
 ve-cha yo-vei-du: yit-pa-r'-du kol po-a-lei a-ven.
 (par -)

A. *f feroce* *mp* 3
 ve-cha yo-vei-du: yit-pa-r'-du kol po-a-lei a-ven.
 (par -)

T. *f espr.* *f maestoso*
 yit-par-du, yit-pa-r'-du kol po-a-lei a-ven. Va-ta-rem ki-
 (par -)

B. *f feroce* *mp* 3 *div. unis. f maestoso*
 ve-cha yo-vei-du: yit-pa-r'-du kol po-a-lei a-ven. Va-ta-rem ki-
 (par -)

Pno.

79

S. *mf non legato* 3 *mf* 3
 Va-ta-rem ki-reim kar-ni; ba-lo-ti b'-she-men

A. *mf non legato* 3 *mf* 3
 Va-ta-rem ki-reim kar-ni; ba-lo-ti b'-she-men

T. *mf* 3
 reim kar-ni; ba-lo-ti b'-she-men ra-a-nan.

B. *mf* 3
 reim kar-ni; ba-lo-ti b'-she-men ra-a-nan.

Pno.

10

85

S. *mp espr.* *f* *mf dolce*
 ra - a-nan. B'shu - rai, ta-beit ei - ni, ba-ka -

A. *mp* *f espr.* *mp dolce*
 ra - a-nan. B'shu-rai, ta - beit ei - ni, ba-ka -

T. *mp*
 Va-ta - beit ei - ni b'shu - rai;

B. *mp* *p*
 Va-ta - beit ei - ni b'shu - rai; ba-ka-

Pno.

10

90

S. *mf*
 mim a - lai m'rei - im tish - ma - na az - nai, tish-ma-

A. *mf*
 mim a - lai m'rei - im tish - ma - na az - nai, tish-ma-

T. *mp distinto*
 ba-ka-mim a - lai m'rei - im tish-ma-na az - nai, az - nai, tish-ma-

B. *cresc. poco a poco*
 mim a - lai, tish-ma-

Pno.

94 **11** *ff*

S. na az - nai. Tza - dik ka - ta-mar yif - rach; k'-

A. na, tish-ma-na az-nai. *ff* Tza - dik ka - ta-mar yif - rach, *mf* yif-rach, k'-

T. *ff* *div.* *unis.* *mp sub.* na az - nai. Tza - dik ka - ta-mar yif - rach; ka-ta-mar yif-rach; k'-

B. *ff* *mp* na, tish-ma-na az-nai. Tza - dik ka-ta-mar yif - rach, ka-ta-mar yif-rach; k'-

Pno.

99 **12** *mp* 3 *p dolce*

S. e - rez ba-l'-va-non yis - geh, *mp* 3 ba-l'-va-non. Shtu - lim b'-

(bal -) (bal -)

A. *ff* e - rez ba-l'-va-non yis - geh. *mf legato* Shtu-lim b' - veit A-do

(bal -)

T. *ff* *div.* *unis.* e - rez ba-l'-va-non yis - geh, ba-l'-va-non yis - geh. *p dolce* Shtu - lim b'-

(bal -) (bal -)

B. *ff* *div.* e - rez ba-l'-va-non yis - geh, ba-l'-va-non yis - geh. *mf legato* Shtu-lim b' - veit A-do

(bal -) (bal -)

Pno.

104

S. *p*
 veit A-do-nai, b'chatz-rot E-lo - hei-nu ya-fri-chu.

A. *f*
 nai, b'chatz - rot E - lo - hei - nu ya - fri - chu.

T. *mp*
 veit A-do-nai, b'chatz-rot E-lo - hei-nu ya-fri-chu.

B. *f*
 nai, b'chatz - rot E - lo - hei - nu ya - fri - chu.

Pno.

109

S. *mp*
 Od y'-nu - vun b'-sei - va;

A. *mf molto espr.* *mp* *cresc.*
 Od y'-nu-vun b'-sei - va; d'shei - nim v' - ra - a - na - nim yi -

T. *mp*
 Od y'-nu - vun b'-sei - va;

B. *mf molto espr.* *mp* *cresc.*
 Od y'-nu-vun b'-sei - va; d'shei - nim v' - ra - a - na - nim yi -

Pno.

113 13

S. *f* *ff*
 d'shei-nim v'-ra-a-na-nim yi - hyu. L'-ha - gid ki - ya - shar A - do -

A. *f* *ff*
 -hyu. L'-ha - gid ki - ya - shar A - do -

T. *cresc.* *f* *ff*
 d'shei-nim v'-ra-a-na-nim yi - hyu. L'-ha - gid ki - ya - shar A - do -

B. *f* *ff* *div.*
 -hyu. L'-ha - gid ki - ya - shar A - do -

Pno.

117

S. *mf* *cresc.*
 nai; tzu - ri, tzu - ri v' - lo av - la - ta

A. *mf*
 nai; tzu - ri, tzu - ri, tzu - ri v'-lo av - la - ta...

T. *mf*
 nai; tzu - ri tzu - ri v'-lo av - la - ta...

B. *mf*
 nai; tzu - ri.

Bass ossia: mf
 tzu - ri, tzu - ri v' - lo av - la - ta...

Pno.

14

123 *f* *div.*

S. *f*
bo. _____ Tov!

A. *f*
Tov, tov, tov l'-ho-dot, tov l'-ho-dot la-do-nai. Tov!

T. *f*
Tov, tov, tov l'-ho-dot, tov l'-ho-dot la-do-nai. Tov!

B. *f* *unis.*
Tov, tov, tov l'-ho-dot, tov l'-ho-dot la-do-nai. Tov l' - ho - dot!

Pno. *f*
14