

# Evening Prayer

SATB a cappella

words by Thomas Ken (1637 – 1711)

music by Sheena Phillips

Thomas Ken's evening hymn is often sung to the tune of Tallis's Canon. Here it is given a new setting using a pentatonic melody and bell-like sonorities. First a soloist and then various sections of the choir sing the verses of the hymn, and the piece builds gradually from inward reflection, penitence, and supplication to ardent praise.

The passage sung by the sopranos in bars 111 – 134 is based on the traditional English bell-ringing pattern Stedman's Triples, and the tune of Tallis's Canon is rung out by the tenors and basses toward the end of the piece.

duration c. 5:00

perusal score – not for rehearsal or performance

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## Evening Prayer

Glory to Thee, my God, this night,  
For all the blessings of the light!  
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,  
Beneath Thine own almighty wings.

Forgive me, Lord, for Thy dear Son,  
The ill that I this day have done,  
That with the world, myself, and Thee,  
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

O may my soul on Thee repose,  
And with sweet sleep mine eyelids close,  
Sleep that may me more vigorous make  
To serve my God when I awake.

When in the night I sleepless lie,  
My soul with heavenly thoughts supply;  
Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,  
No powers of darkness me molest.

O when shall I, in endless day,  
For ever chase dark sleep away,  
And hymns divine with angels sing,  
All praise to thee, eternal King?

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Thomas Ken

Many editions of this text use the first line "All praise to Thee, my God, this night", but Thomas Ken himself is said to have preferred the version given here.

One of the original verses is omitted.

# Evening Prayer

Lyrics by Thomas Ken

Music by Sheena Phillips

The soloist should not be aligned regularly with the pulse of the bells, but observes roughly the marked tempo

$\bullet = 108$  (but felt in one)      solo *mp* freely

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano (for rehearsal only)

8

S

A

T

B

Pno.

chord 1

*p*

*p*

*p*

chord 1

*mp*

chord 1

continue

continue

a few tolls

Glo - ry to Thee, my God, this night,

For all the bless-ings of the light!      Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,

The chord should be gently and regularly tolled, evoking the sound of distant bells. Sing to 'nong', closing to the 'ng' after about a quarter note. If more definition is required (e.g. in a very live acoustic) then experiment with 'dong' or 'bong', but do not make the bells too intrusive.

evening prayer 2

16

S *end solo*  
Be - neath Thine own al - might - y wings.

A *continue*

T

B

Pno. *continue*

25 *chord 2*  
*p*

A *p*

T *a few tolls* *mp evenly*  
For - give me, Lord, for Thy dear Son,

B *p*

Pno. *chord 2* *mp*

*sing just one more chord 1 after end of solo*

evening prayer 3

32 cont.

switch to chord 3 once tenors have cleared the word "done"

chord 3

S

A

T

B

Pno.

cont.

chord 3

The ill that I this day have done,

That with the world, my-self, and Thee,

start after one or two tolls of chord 3

start after one or two tolls of chord 3

switch to chord 4 once tenors have cleared the word "Thee"

42 chord 4

mf

mf

mf

mf

S

A

T

B

Pno.

chord 4

I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

(nong)

start after just one toll of chord 4

start after just one toll of chord 4

evening prayer 4

55 *mp dolce*

S O may my soul on Thee re - pose, And with sweet sleep mine eye - lids

A O may my soul on Thee re - pose, And with sweet sleep mine eye - lids

T O may my soul on Thee re - pose, And with sweet sleep mine eye - lids

B O may my soul on Thee re - pose, And with sweet sleep mine eye - lids

Pno.

63 *mf*

S close, Sleep that may me more vig - 'rous make To serve my

A close, Sleep that may me more vig - 'rous make To serve my

T close, Sleep that may me more vig - 'rous make To serve my

B close, Sleep that may me more vig - 'rous make To serve my

Pno.



evening prayer 6

89 *p* breathe between 'ah's

S Ah, Ah,

A Ah, Ah,

T Ah, Ah,

B Ah, *mp* Ah,

When in the night I sleep-less lie, My soul with heav'n-ly thoughts sup- ply;

Pno.

95 *subito mf*

S Ah, Ah, All *subito mf*

A Ah, Ah, All *subito mf*

T Ah, Ah, All *subito mf*

B Ah, Ah, All *mf*

Let no ill dreams dis- turb my rest, No powers of dark-ness me mol- est. All

Pno. *mf*



evening prayer 7

102 *con moto* ♩ = 56 *rit.*

S  
praise my God, Ah,

A  
praise my God, this night,

T  
praise my God, this night,

B  
praise my God, this night,

Pno.

112 *meno mosso* ♩ = 40 *mp tranquillo*

S  
Ah, Ah,

A  
*subito p* close to 'ng' after a crotchet  
nong nong

T  
*subito p* close to 'ng' after a crotchet  
nong nong *div.*

B  
*subito p* close to 'ng' after a crotchet  
nong nong nong

Pno.

*meno mosso* ♩ = 40 *p*

evening prayer 8

121

S Ah, Ah, Ah,

*mf cantando*

A O when shall I, in end - less day, For ev - er chase dark sleep a - way,

T nong nong nong nong

B nong nong nong nong

Pno.

129

S Ah, Ah,

A And hymns div - ine with an - gels sing, All praise to Thee, e - ter - nal

T nong nong All praise, e - ter - nal

B nong nong All praise, e - ter - nal

Pno.

evening prayer 9

137 *f* *gioioso* **this phrase sung freely by each singer in the section (see box below)**

S  
Praise God, from Whom all bless - ings flow; praise Him,

A  
King? Praise God, from Whom all bless - ings flow;

T  
King? Praise God, from Whom all bless - ings flow; praise Him,

B  
King? praise Him, praise Him,

Pno.

all parts: breathe between each 'praise Him'

Aleatoric sections (marked by square brackets): one or two lead singers in each section should enter where indicated. The rest of the section follows in a cascade, starting within one measure of the leaders. All singers sing the phrase freely and finish it in time to continue with the next phrase.

143

S  
praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, praise Him,

A  
praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, praise Him, praise Him,

T  
*gioioso*  
Praise Him, all crea - tures here be - low;

B  
Praise Him, all crea - tures here be - low; praise Him,

Pno.



evening prayer 11

163 *f* *mf*

S Ah, Ah,

A *mf*  
nong, nong, nong, nong, nong, nong,

T *mf*  
nong, nong, nong, nong, nong, nong,

B *mf*  
nong, nong, nong, nong, nong, nong,

Pno. *mf*

169 *mp* *poco rit.* *pp* *pp*

S A - - - men. close to 'n'

A *p*  
nong, nong, nong, nong, nong...

T *p*  
nong, nong, nong, nong, nong...

B *p*  
nong, nong, nong, nong, nong...

Pno. *p* *poco rit.* *pp*