Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

AN ANTHEM

for a Mezzo-Soprano Solo, with Chorus and accompaniment for the organ or piano forte

MWV B 33

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Why, O Lord, delay forever smiles of comfort to impart? Oh if Thou for
get me, never more shall gladness cheer this heart, never shall gladness
cheer this heart.

Why, O Lord, delay forever smiles of comfort to impart? Oh if
fain - ting shall the mor - row bring thine aid to me no more?  

cresc.  

Shall my soul still pine in sorrow?  

soul still pine in sor - row? pine in sor-row?  

Shall my soul still pine in sor - row? pine in sor - row?  

Shall my soul still pine in sorrow?  

soul still pine in sor - row?  

Shall my soul still pine in sorrow?  

Shall my soul still pine in sorrow?  

Still shall foes still pine in sor-row?  

sor - row? Shall my soul still pine in sor-row?  

still shall
foes their insults pour? Weak and fainting shall the morrow bring thine

Why, aid to me no more? no more? no more?

bring thine aid no more? no more? no more?

O Lord, delay for ever smiles of comfort to impart?
Oh if Thou forget me, never shall gladness cheer this heart,
never shall gladness cheer this heart, never more! never more!
never more!
never more!
No. 2. Choral  
Non lento.

Oh thy love my heart re-poses, hear me draw my falt'ring breath:
raise me while mine eyelid closes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.

Lest my haughty foes prevailing proudly boast, we laid him low;
lest the scorner hear my wailing, and his triumph in may woe.

Oh thy love my heart re-poses, hear me draw my falt'ring breath:
raise me while mine eyelid closes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.

Lest my haughty foes prevailing proudly boast, 'we laid him low';

lest the scorner hear my wailing, and he triumph in may woe.
Lord! my heart's devotion raises of f'ring to thy throne above,
glad to sing thy hallowed praises, aye rejoicing in thy love, aye rejoicing
in thy love.

Con moto e vivace.

Lord! my heart's devotion raises of f'ring to thy throne above,
of f'ring of f'ring to thy throne above,
Lord! my heart's devotion raises of f'ring to thy throne above,
my heart's devotion raises of f'ring to thy throne above.
Aye rejoicing in thy love.

Aye rejoicing in thy love.

Aye rejoicing in thy love.

Aye rejoicing in thy love.

Lord! my heart's devotion raises of'frings to thy throne above,
glad to sing thy hal-low'd prais-es, aye re-joicing in thy love.

in thy love.

Lord! my heart's de-v-o-tion ra-is-es of f'rings

Lord! my heart's de-v-o-tion ra-is-es

f'rings to thy throne a-bove.

of f'rings to thy throne a-
Lord! my heart's devotion raises offerings to thy throne above,

Lord! my heart's devotion raises offerings to thy throne above.
Lord! my heart's devotion raises
of offerings to thy throne above,
Lord! my heart's devotion raises Lord! my heart's
devotion raises Lord! my heart's devotion raises
of offerings to thy throne above,

Lord! my heart's devotion raises of offerings to thy throne above,
glad to sing thy hallow'd prais-es, aye rejoicing in thy love,

aye rejoicing in thy love,

aye rejoicing in thy love,

in thy love, aye rejoicing in thy love,

aye rejoicing aye rejoicing in thy

aye rejoicing aye rejoicing in thy

aye rejoicing aye rejoicing in thy
Singing in thy love, Rejoicing in thy love,

Singing in thy love, Rejoicing in thy love,
The Anthem MWV B 33 was commissioned by Dr. Charles Bayles Broadley (1800-1866), Deputy Queen's professor of civil law at Trinity College, Cambridge, who asked Mendelssohn for a setting of one of his own metrical Psalm paraphrases (for 20 guineas). Broadley also studied composition under Mendelssohn's friend Ignaz Moscheles, who lived at that time in London and acted as an intermediary. His son Felix described Broadley as "ein excentrischer, reicher Musikliebhaber, der selbst unglückliche Compositionsversuche machte".

Mendelssohn accepted the commission in September 1840 at his 6th visit to England. He could choose between versions of Psalm 13, 100 or 126; Broadly described the first as "suitable for a solo Anthem", the other two as "for a Full or Choral Anthem".

In December Mendelssohn selected Psalm 13 ("Why, O Lord, delay for ever"), sent the finished work to Moscheles on 20 December 1840 and wrote:

"You will receive with this letter my Psalm for Broadley (isn't it his name), and a letter to him. ... If he can give me the date of publication in England, maybe I'd issue it here on the same day in German words too, I wrote to him. ... I do not know if I preserved the tone of the English Anthem, but I made an effort and worked with more pleasure in the matter, as I had previously thought. ..."

As planned, the English version appeared at Cramer & Co. in London 1841 at the same time as the German version at Simrock in Bonn with the titles: "An Anthem for a Mezzo-Soprano Solo, with Chorus and accompaniment for the organ or piano forte" and "Drei geistliche Lieder für Solo, Chor und Orgel", respectively. The German title could give the false impression of a certain independence of the songs.

In October 1842 Moscheles wrote again on behalf of Broadley to Mendelssohn concerning the Anthem:
"Mr. Broadley authorised me to ask you to orchestrate the Psalm that you wrote for him and to send him the MS score, for which he is asking you to accept 10 guineas."

Once again Mendelssohn accepted and was able to write on 16 January 1843:
"Enclosed you will receive a score for Mr Broadley. I have added him a extra fugue, and think this is now the best part of the whole. ..."

This orchestral version was printed finally five years after the composer's death as a "hymn" op. 96 (Simrock, Bonn 1852, now labeled MWV A 19).

Mendelssohn died at the age of 38.