

Psalm 43 (Richte mich, Gott)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 1847)

Though he is chiefly remembered for his large-scale works, such as the *Violin Concerto*, the *Italian Symphony* and *Elijah*, Mendelssohn also wrote some very fine church music, of which *Hear My Prayer* is of course the most well-known. One of his responsibilities as head of the Berlin Academy of the Arts was to conduct the Berlin cathedral choir, for which he wrote a number of sacred pieces including a group of three unaccompanied psalm settings. They are perhaps the finest of his short choral compositions. *Psalm 43, Richte mich, Gott (Judge me O God)* is for eight-part unaccompanied choir.

programme notes by John Bawden

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*Richte mich, Gott, und führe meine Sache
wider das unheilige Volk,
und errette mich von den falschen und bösen Leuten.
Denn du bist der Gott meiner Stärke;
warum verstössest du mich?*

*Warum lässest du mich so traurig geh'n,
wenn mein Feind mich drängt?
Sende dein Licht und deine Wahrheit, dass
sie mich leiten zu deinem heiligen Berge,
und zu deiner Wohnung.
Dass ich hinein gehe zum Altar Gottes, zu
dem Gott, der meine Freude und Wonne ist,*

*und dir, Gott, auf der Harfe danke, mein
Gott.
Was betrübst du dich, meine Seele, und
bist so unruhig in mir?
Harre auf Gott! denn ich werde ihm noch
danken,
dass er meines Angesichts Hilfe, und mein
Gott ist.*

Judge me, O God, and plead my cause
against an ungodly nation,
O deliver me from deceitful and unjust
men.

For thou art the God of my strength;
O why dost thou cast me from thee?

Wherefore mourn I because the enemy
sorely oppresseth me?
Send out thy light and truth, Lord; O let
them lead me, and bring me unto thy holy
hill and to thy dwelling place.
And then will I go to the altar of God, the

God of my joy, to God, the God of my
gladness and joy,
I will praise thee upon the harp, O my
God,
O my soul, why art thou cast downward,
and why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope in the Lord! O my soul, for I will
praise him who is the health of my countenance,
and my gracious Lord and God.

