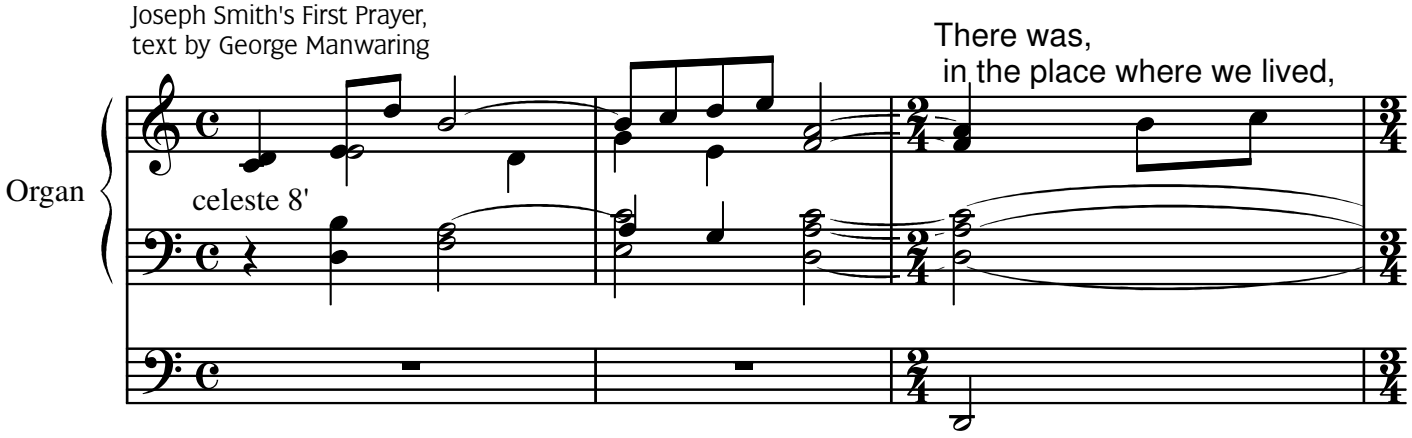
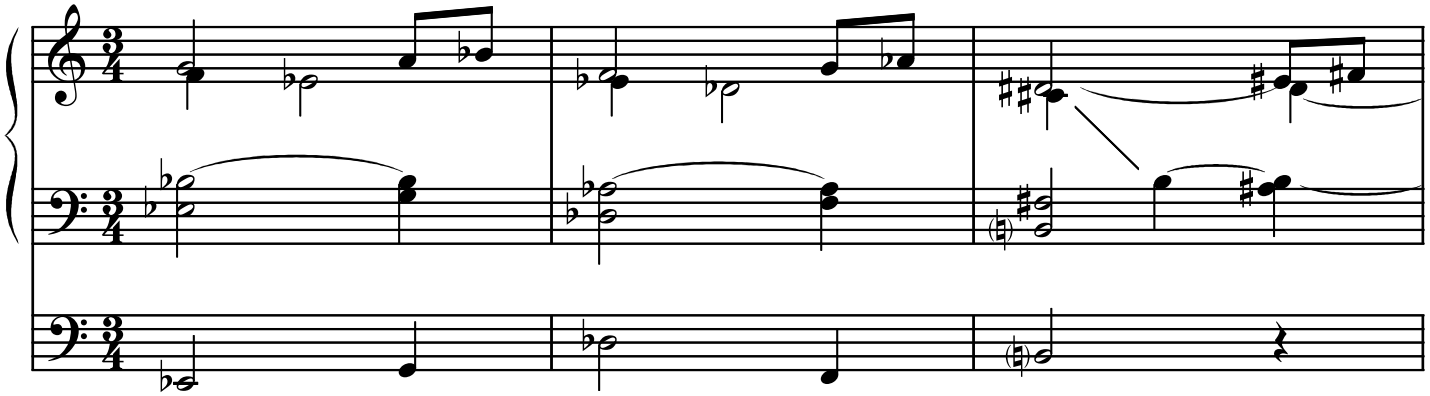
The First Vision

Narration arranged
by David Van Alstyne
from Pearl of Great Price:
Joseph Smith - History
and
LDS Hymns #26
Joseph Smith's First Prayer,
text by George Manwaring

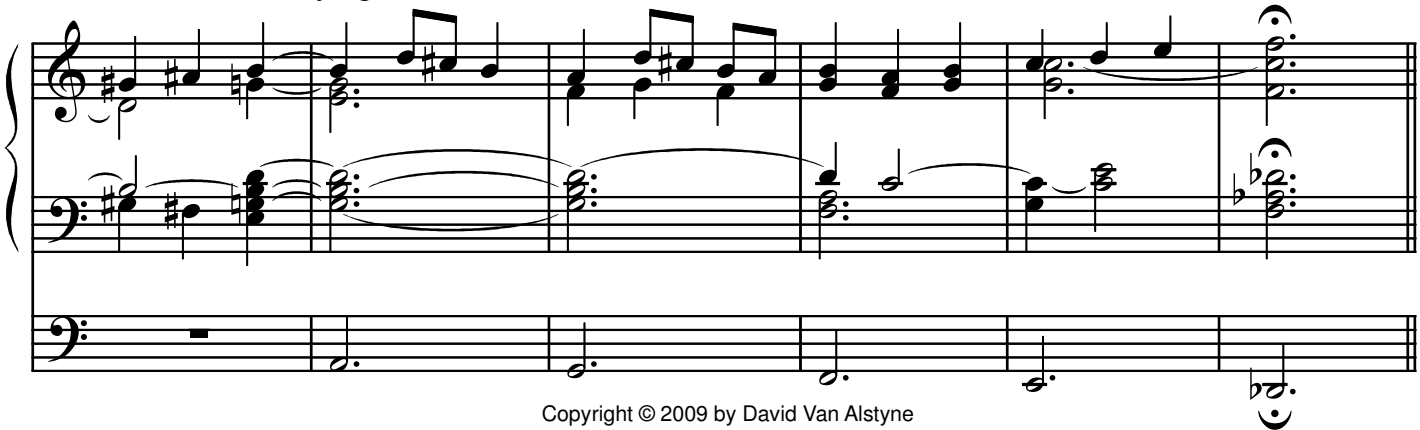
Music by David Van Alstyne
and
LDS Hymns #26
Joseph Smith's First Prayer,
by Sylvanus Billings, arr. by David Van Alstyne



an unusual excitement on the subject of religion.
It commenced with the Methodists,
but soon became general among all the sects in that region.



And great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties,
which created no small stir and division amongst the people,
some crying, "Lo here!" and others, "Lo there!"



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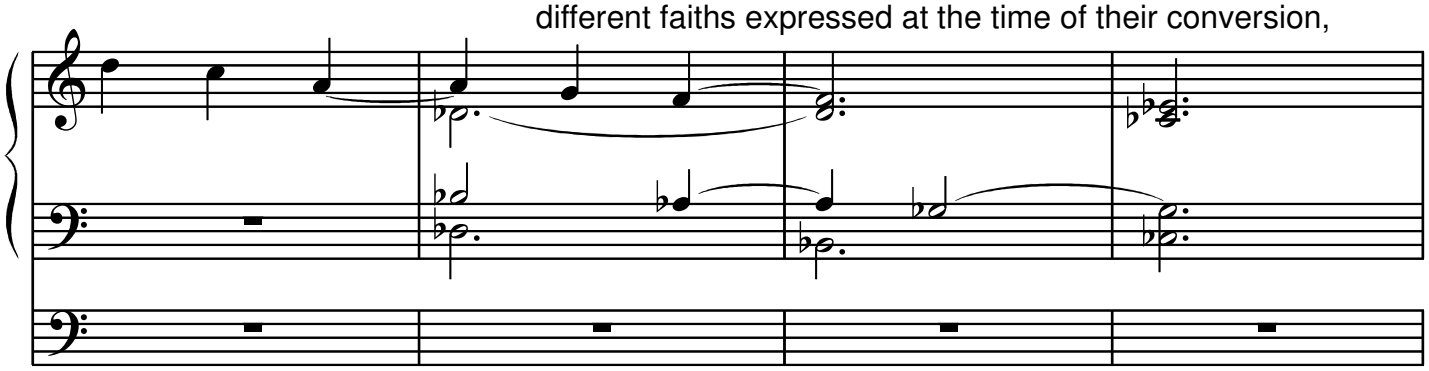
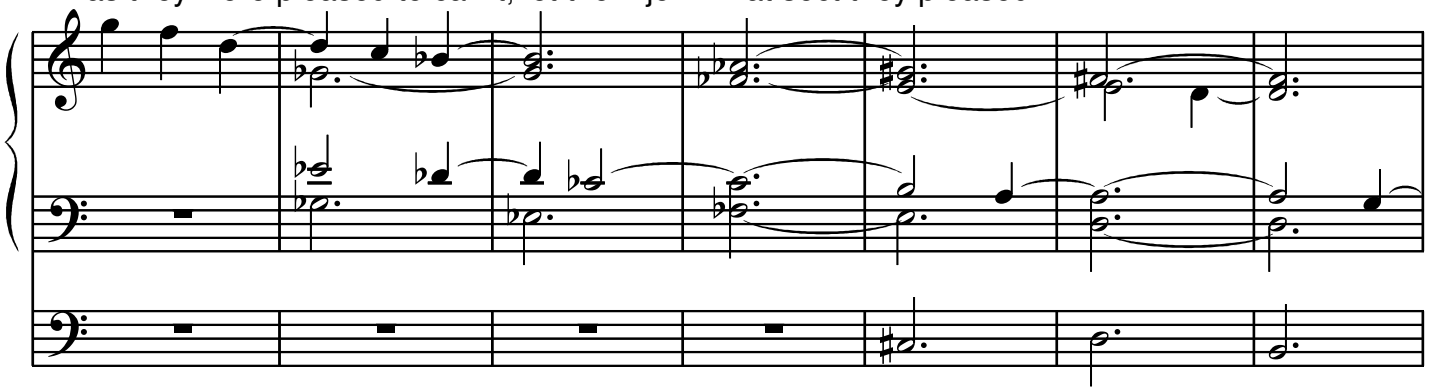
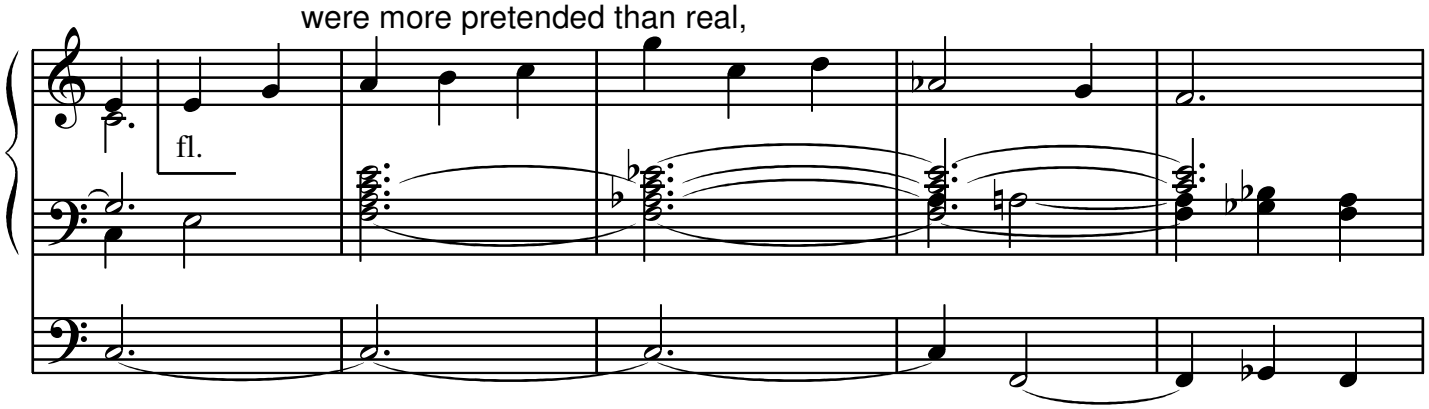
For notwithstanding the great love which the converts to these different faiths expressed at the time of their conversion,



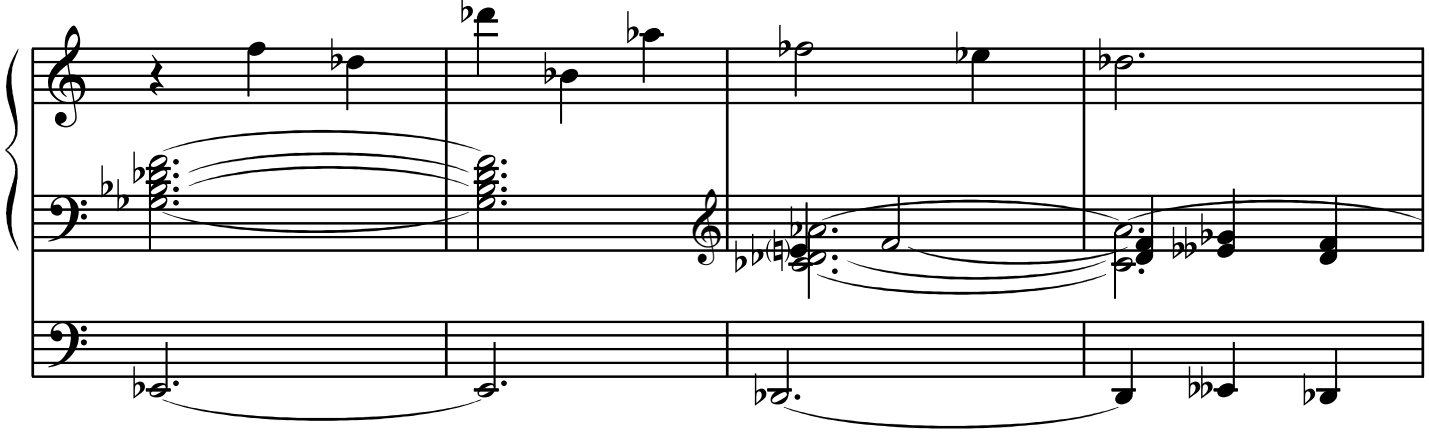
and the great zeal manifested by the respective clergy who were active in getting up and promoting this extraordinary scene of religious feeling in order to have everyone converted as they were pleased to call it, let them join what sect they pleased -



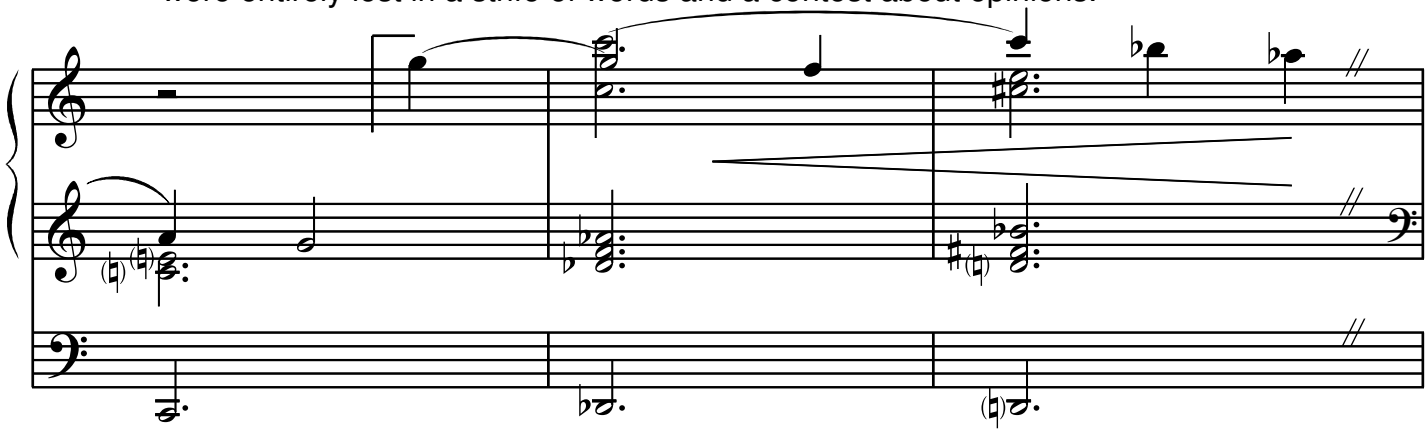
Yet when the converts began to file off, some to one party and some to another, it was seen that the seemingly good feelings of both priests and converts were more pretended than real,



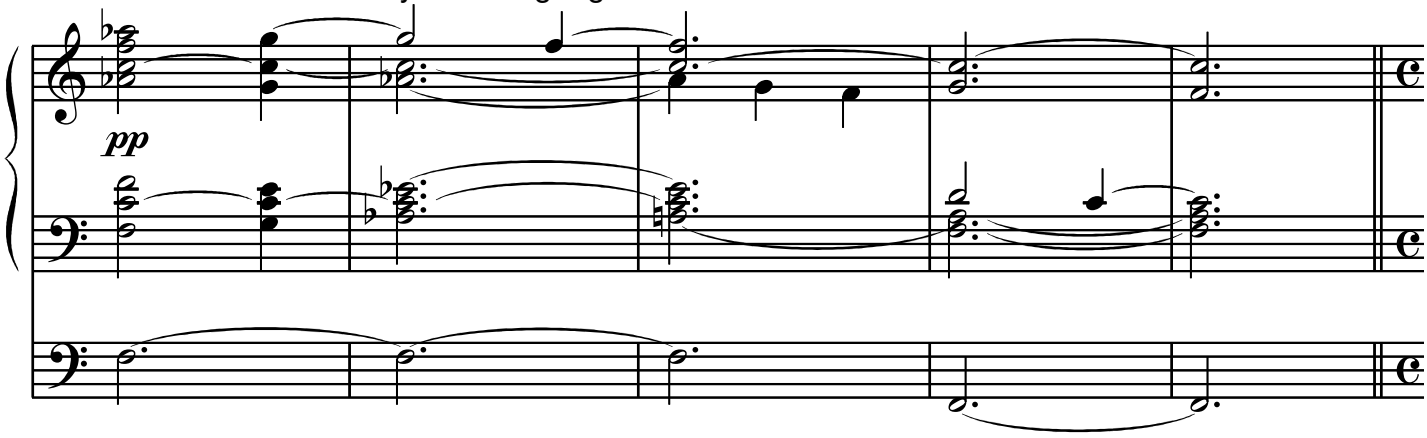
for a scene of great confusion and bad feeling ensued,
priest contending against priest and convert against convert,



so that all their good feelings one for another, if they ever had any,
were entirely lost in a strife of words and a contest about opinions.



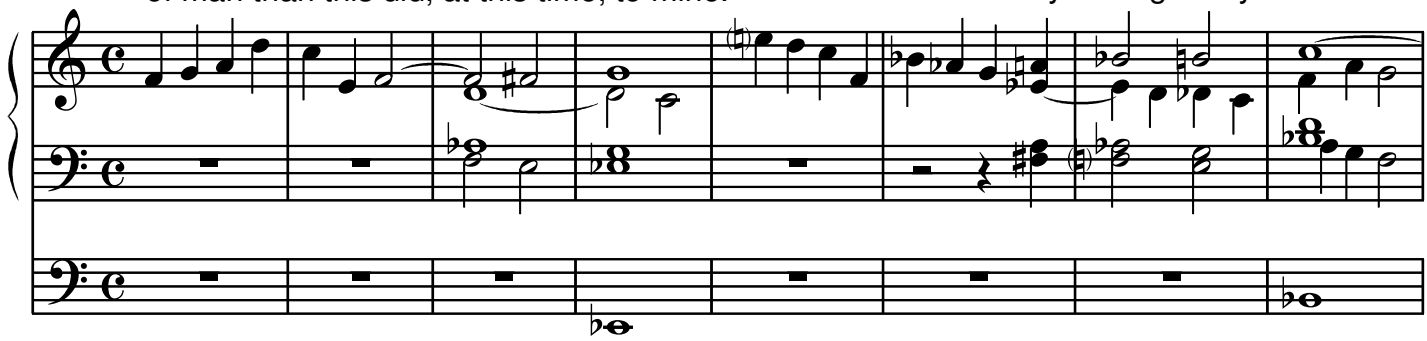
My mind at times was greatly excited. I often said to myself, who is right,
or are they all wrong together? And how should I know?



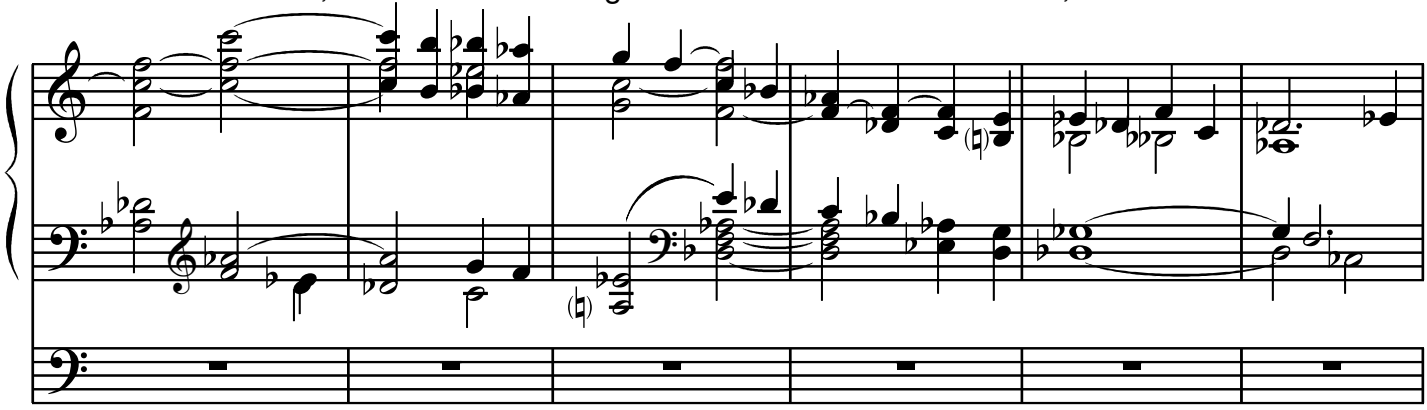
I was one day reading the Epistle of James, first chapter and fifth verse, which reads:
"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally,
and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

Never did any passage of scripture
come with more power to the heart
of man than this did, at this time, to mine.

It seemed to enter
with great force into
every feeling of my heart.

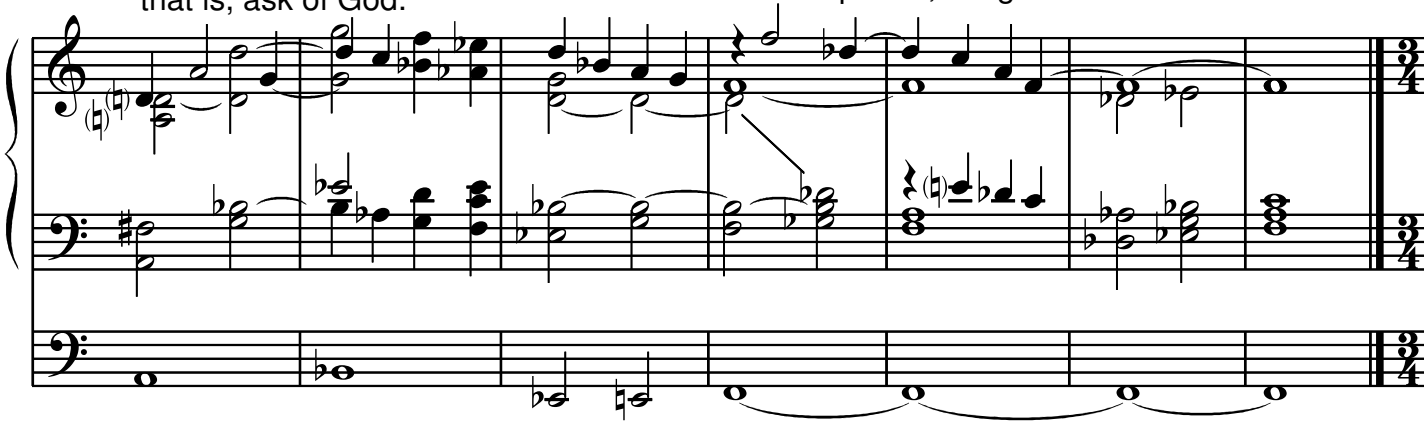


I reflected again and again that if any person needed wisdom from God, I did; for how to act
I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom that I then had, I would never know.



At length I concluded that I must either
remain in darkness and confusion,or else
I must do as James directs,
that is, ask of God.

I at length determined that if He gave wisdom to
them that lacked, and would give liberally, and
not upbraid, I might venture.

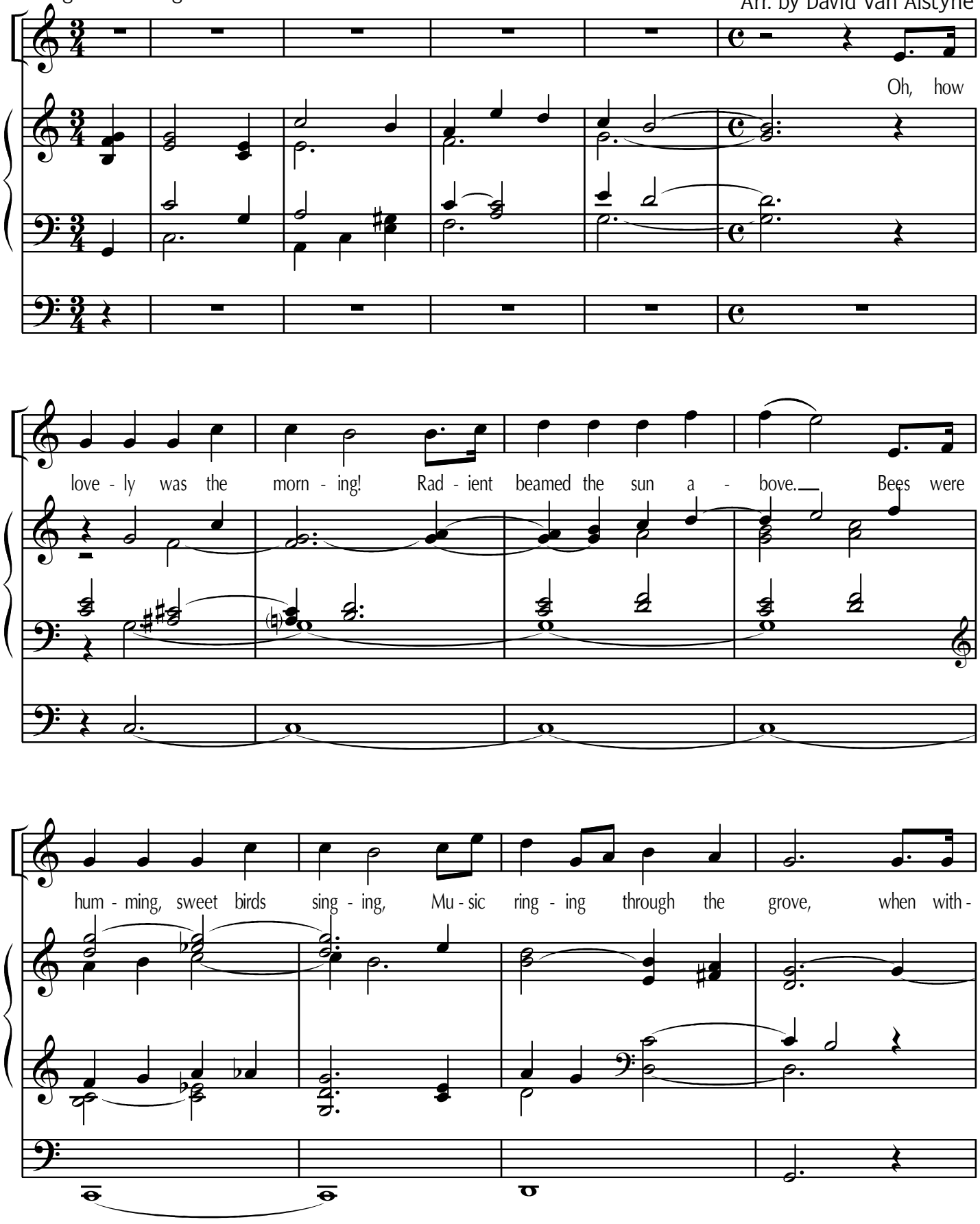


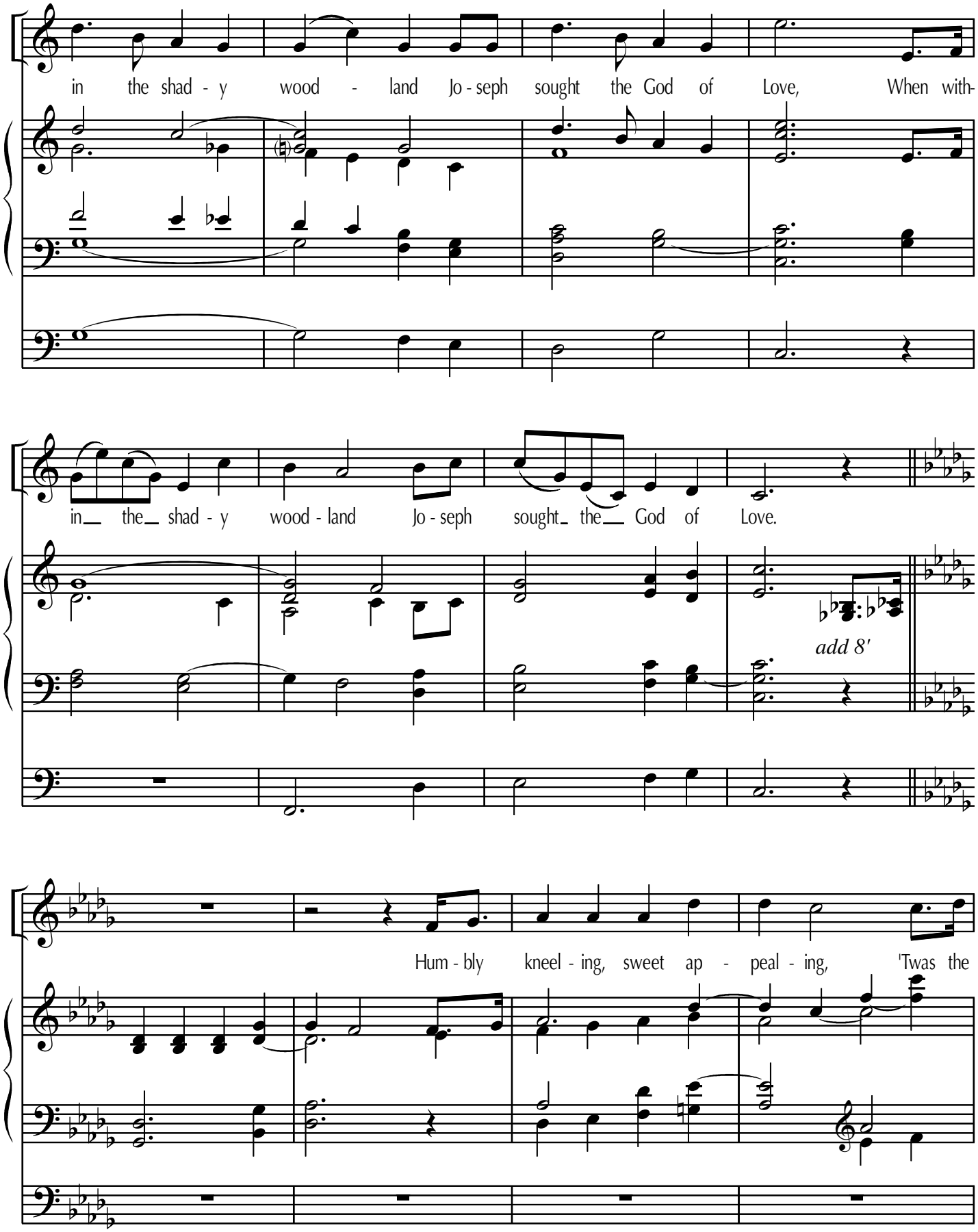
So, in accordance with this, my determination to ask of God,
I retired to the woods to make the attempt.

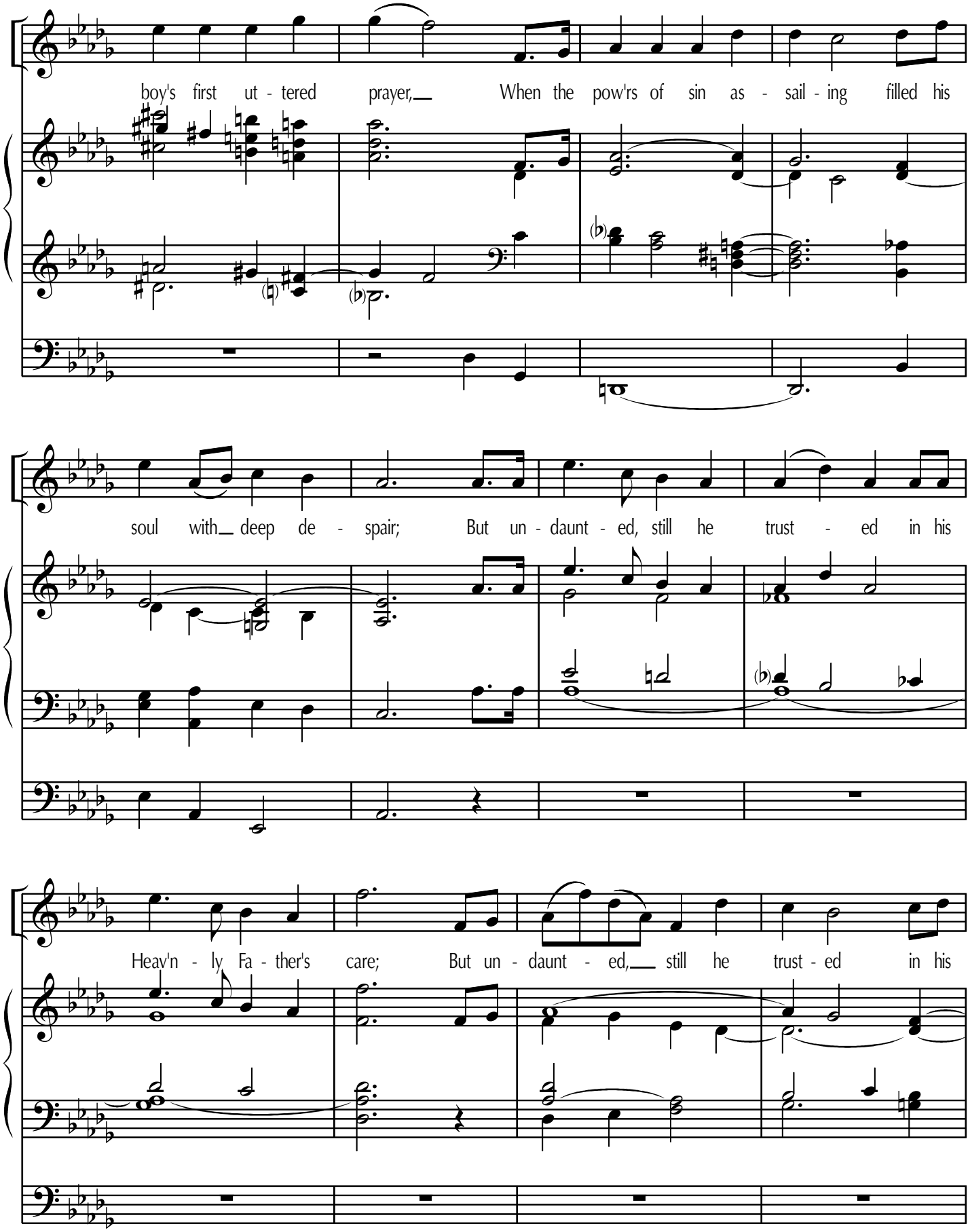
Joseph Smith's First Prayer

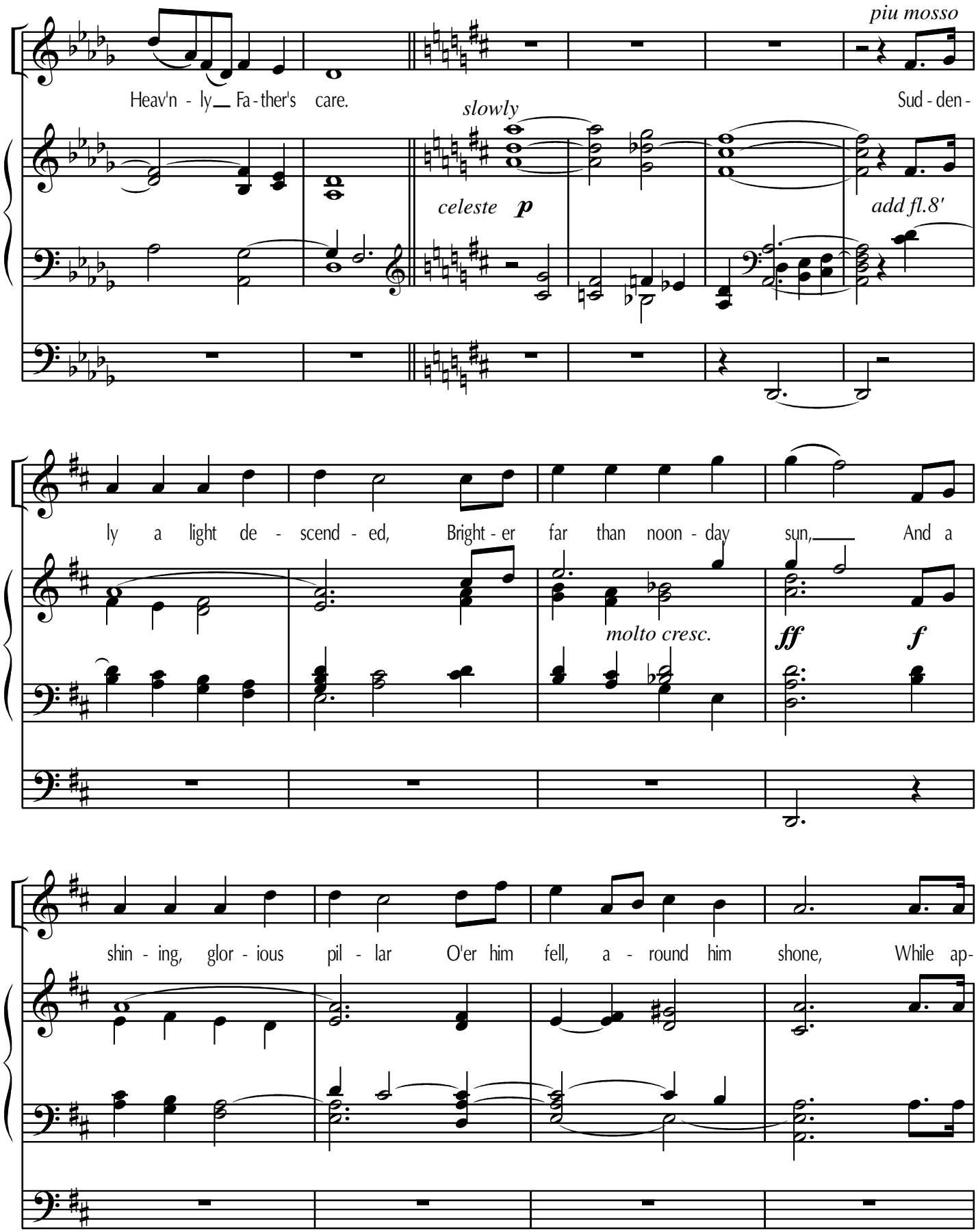
George Manwaring

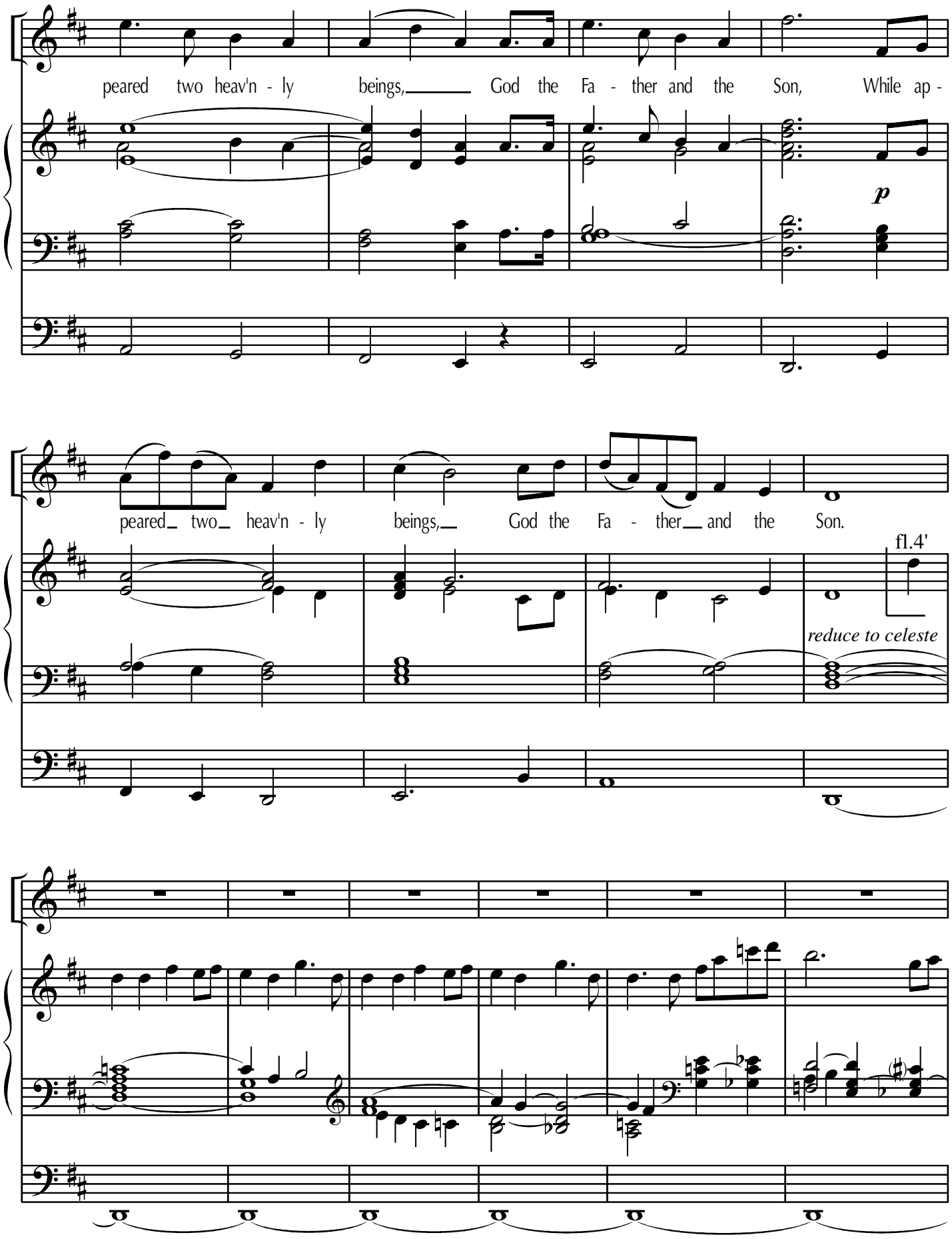
Sylvanus Billings
Arr. by David Van Alstyne

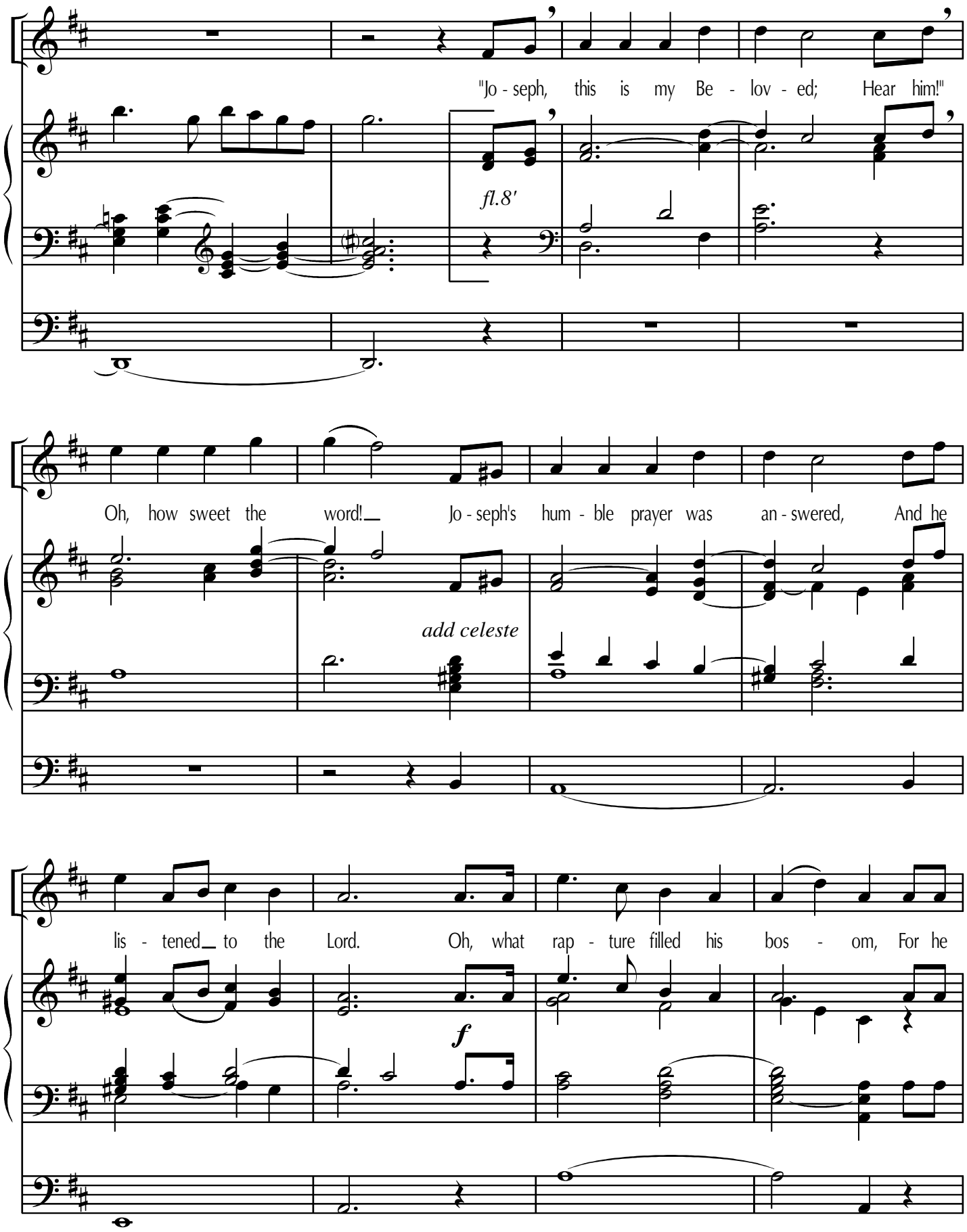


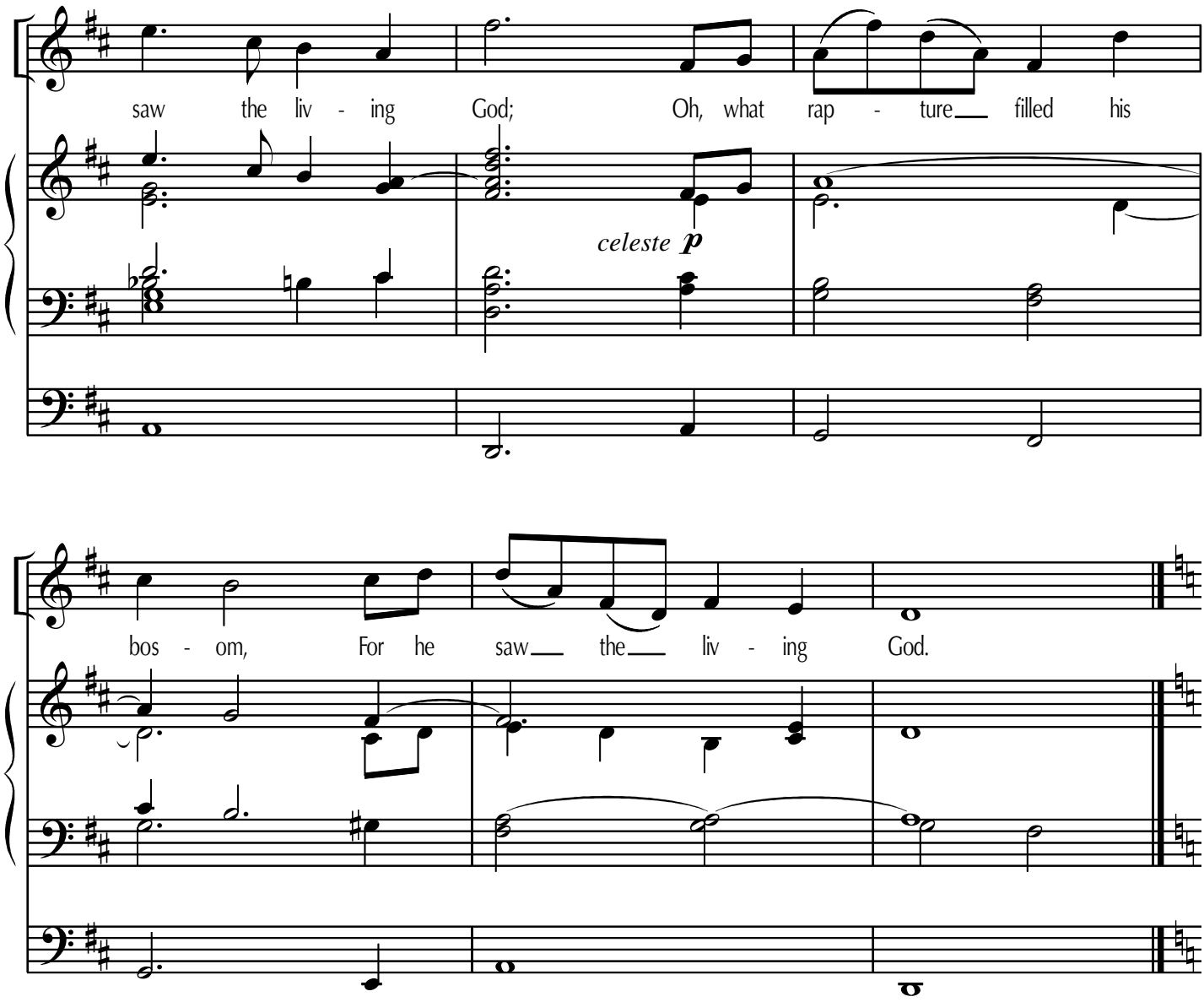

in the shad - y wood - land Jo - seph sought the God of Love, When with-
in_ the_ shad - y wood - land Jo - seph sought_ the_ God of Love.
add 8'
Hum - bly kneel - ing, sweet ap - peal - ing, 'Twas the


boy's first ut - tered prayer, When the pow'rs of sin as - sail - ing filled his
soul with deep de - spair; But un - daunt - ed, still he trust - ed in his
Heav'n - ly Fa - ther's care; But un - daunt - ed, still he trust - ed in his

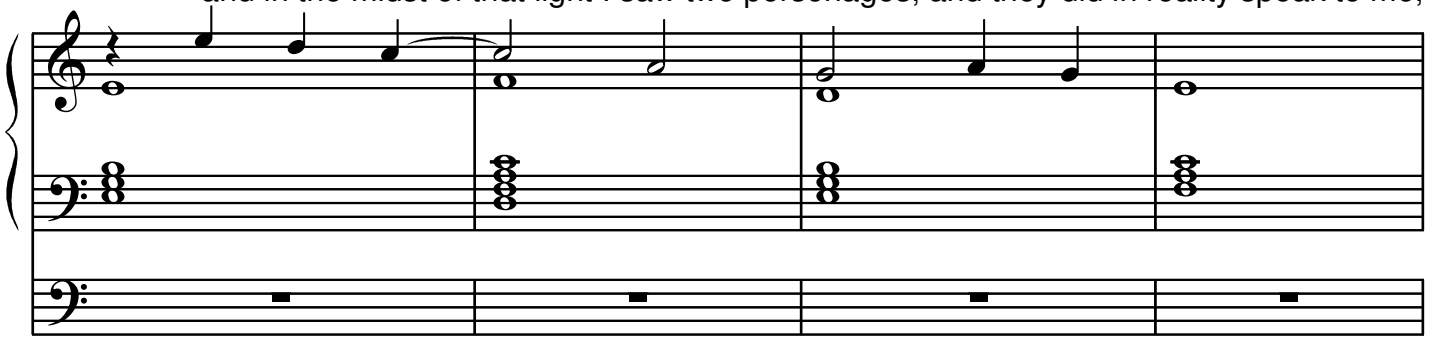

piu mosso
Heav'n - ly Fa - ther's care.
slowly
Sud - den -
celeste p
add fl.8'
ly a light de - scend - ed, Bright - er far than noon - day sun, And a
molto cresc.
ff
f
shin - ing, glor - ious pil - lar O'er him fell, a - round him shone, While ap-


peared two heav'n - ly beings, God the Fa - ther and the Son, While ap -
p
peared two heav'n - ly beings, God the Fa - ther and the Son.
fl.4'
reduce to celeste

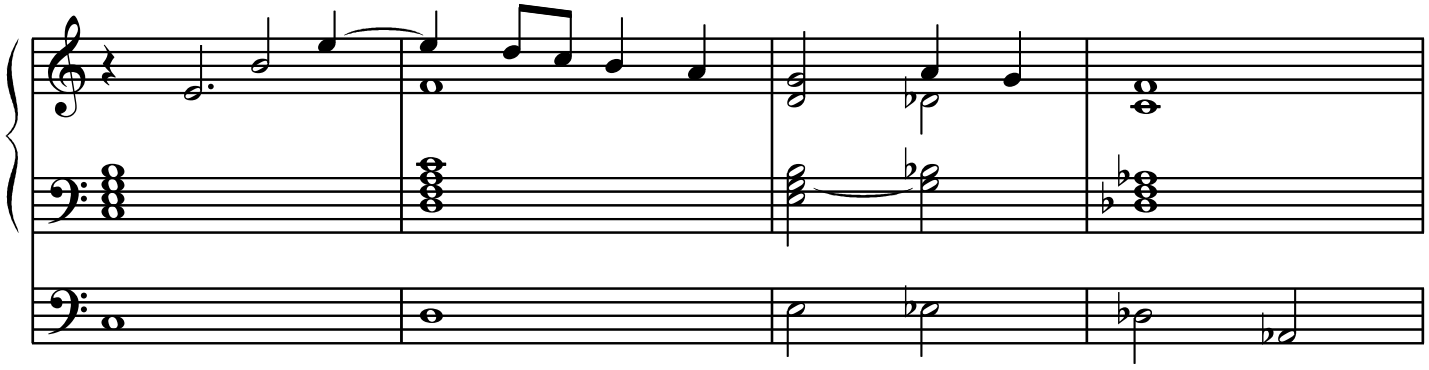

"Jo - seph, this is my Be - lov - ed; Hear him!"
fl.8'
Oh, how sweet the word! Jo - seph's hum - ble prayer was an - swered, And he
add celeste
lis - tened to the Lord. Oh, what rap - ture filled his bos - om, For he
f


saw the liv - ing God; Oh, what rap - ture filled his
celeste p
bos - om, For he saw the liv - ing God.

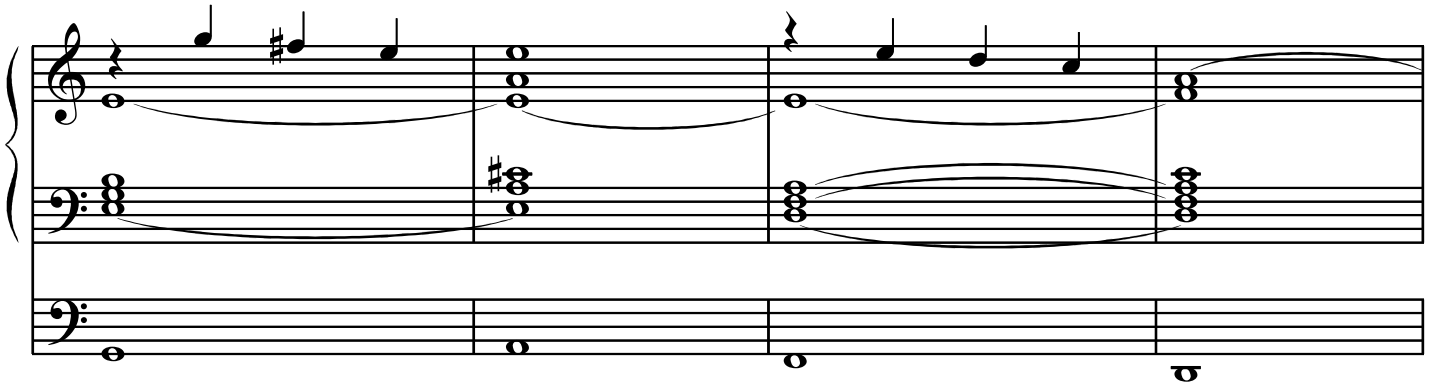
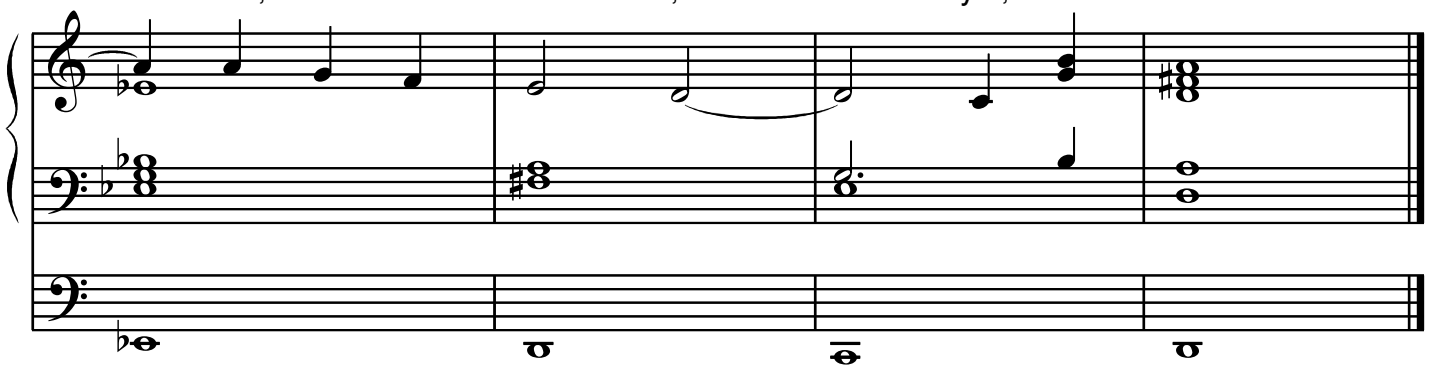
I had actually seen a light,
and in the midst of that light I saw two personages, and they did in reality speak to me,



and though I was hated and persecuted for saying I had seen a vision, yet it was true;



and while they persecuted and reviled me,
speaking all manner of evil against me falsely for so saying, I was led to say in my heart,



why persecute me for telling the truth?
I have actually seen a vision and who am I that I can withstand God, or why does
the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen? For I had seen a vision.
I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do so.