

Commissioned by Cantori New York,
Mark Shapiro, Artistic Director
Premiere performance: December 14, 2013,
Church of St. Luke in the Fields, New York City

PROGRAM NOTES

Ravta et rivam is a setting of a portion of the Hebrew prayer *Al HaNissim* (“On the Miracles”), recited on the Jewish festival of Chanukah. The prayer is an expression of gratitude for God’s intervention on behalf of the Jews in their revolt against their Syrian-Greek oppressors in the 2nd century BC, one of the miracles associated with Chanukah. For Jews, the eight-day holiday is both a celebratory and solemn observance. Chanukah, which means “dedication” in Hebrew, commemorates both the Jewish victory and the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem following their triumph, each described in this text. This setting captures both the joyous and reverent nature of Chanukah.

—Rex Isenberg

HEBREW TEXT IN TRANSLITERATION

Ravta et rivam, danta et dinam,
nakamta et nikmatam, masarta giborim b’yad halashim,
v’rabim b’yad m’atim, ul’meyim b’yad t’horim, ursha’im
b’yad tzadikim, v’zeidim b’yad oskei torateha.

Ul’ha asita sheim gadol v’kadosh ba’olameha,
ul’amha yisrael asita t’shuah g’dolah ufurkan
k’hayom hazeh.

V’ahar kah ba’u vaneha lidvir beiteha, ufinu et heihaleha,
v’tiharu et mikdasheha, v’hidliku neirot b’hatzrot kad’sheha.
V’kav’u sh’monat y’mei Hanukkah eilu,
l’hodot ul’haleil l’shimha hagadol. Amen.

Excerpt from *Al HaNissim*

ENGLISH VERSION

*You, Almighty God, boundless in Your mercy,
stood by Your loyal people in the time of their distress.
You fought all their fights, and defended them from destruction.
You delivered the wicked and mighty to the hands of the
righteous few, and the faithless to those who abide by Your Torah.*

*You made a great and holy Name for Yourself within Your nation,
and redeemed Your people Israel, and brought to them salvation
and deliverance that shields them from harm to this day.*

*Then came Your children to cleanse Your sacred temple,
and restore Your holy places, and kindle lights within Your
courtyards to shine forever.
And they established these eight days to honor Your
greatness, and give thanks and praise to You, O God.
May Your Name be most blessed. Amen.*

English Translation by Rex Isenberg

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE FOR THE HEBREW TEXT

(The bold syllables are the ones that are stressed;
h is pronounced as the ch in the German word, “ach.”)

Rahv-tah et ree-vahm, dahn-ta et di-nahm,
nah-kahm-tah et neck-mah-tahm, mah-sahr-tah gee-boh-rim b’-yahd hah-lah-sheem,
v’-rah-beem b’-yahd m’-ah-teem, ut’-meh-yeem b’-yahd t’-hoh-reem, oor-sha’-eem
b’-yahd tzah-dec-keem, v’-zay-deem b’-yahd ohs-kay toh-rah-teh-ha.

Ool’-ha ah-see-tah shaym gah-dohl v’-kah-dohsh bah’oh-lah-meh-ha,
ool’-ahm-ha yees-rah-ail ah-see-tah t’-shoo-ah g’-doh-lah oo-foor-kahn
k’-hah-yohm hah-zeh.

V’-ah-har kah bah’-oo vah-neh-ha leed-veer bay-teh-ha, oo-fee-noo et hay-hah-leh-ha,
v’-tee-hah-roo et meek-dah-sheh-ha, v’-heed-lee-koo nay-roht b’-hahitz-roht kahd’-sheh-ha.
V’-kav’-oo sh’moh-naht y’-may ha-nook-kah ay-loo,
l’-hoh-dohht oo-l’-hah-layl l’-sheem-ha hah-gah-dohl. Awe-mayn.

Rex Isenberg (b. 1987)

For biographical information visit: www.rexisenberg.com

dedicated to Martin Isenberg, in celebration of his 60th birthday

Ravta et rivam

(You Fought Their Battles)

for SATB Chorus unaccompanied

Excerpt from *Al HaNissim*
R. I., tr.

Rex Isenberg

Adagio ♩ = 72

Soprano
p
 Rav - ta et ri - vam, dan - ta et di - nam, na -
 You, Al - might - y God, bound - less in Your mer - cy, stood

Alto
p
 Rav - ta et ri - vam, dan - ta et di - nam, na -
 You, Al - might - y God, bound - less in Your mer - cy, stood

Tenor
p
 na -
 stood

Keyboard
 (for rehearsal only)
 Adagio ♩ = 72

S
 5 *mf*
 kam - ta et nik - ma - tam, ma - sar - ta gi - bo - rim b' - yad
 by Your loy - al peo - ple in the time of their dis - tress. You fought

A
mf
 kam - ta et nik - ma - tam, ma - sar - ta gi - bo - rim b' -
 by Your loy - al peo - ple in the time of their dis - tress. You

T
mf
 kam - ta et nik - ma - tam, ma - sar - ta gi - bo - rim b' -
 by Your loy - al peo - ple in the time of their dis - tress. You

B
 b' -
 You

Kbd.

9 *cresc.*

— ha - la - shim, v' - ra - bim b' - yad m' - a - tim, ut' - me -
 — all their fights, and de - fend - ed them from de - struc - tion. You de -

yad ha - la - shim, v' - ra - bim b' - yad m' - a - tim, ut' - me -
 fought all their fights, and de - fend - ed them from de - struc - tion. You de -

yad ha - la - shim, v' - ra - bim b' - yad m' - a - tim, ut' - me -
 fought all their fights, and de - fend - ed them from de - struc - tion. You de -

yad ha - la - shim, v' - ra - bim b' - yad m' - a - tim, ut' - me -
 fought all their fights, and de - fend - ed them from de - struc - tion. You de -

13 *f* *mf* *f* *p*

yim b' - yad t' - ho - rim, ur - sha' - im b' - yad tza - di - kim, v' - zei -
 liv - ered the wick - ed and might - y to the hands of the right - eous few, and the

yim b' - yad t' - ho - rim, ur - sha' - im b' - yad tza - di - kim, v' - zei -
 liv - ered the wick - ed and might - y to the hands of the right - eous few, and the

yim b' - yad t' - ho - rim, ur - sha' - im b' - yad tza - di - kim, v' - zei -
 liv - ered the wick - ed and might - y to the hands of the right - eous few, and the

yim t' - ho - rim, ur - sha' - im b' - yad tza - di - kim,
 liv - ered the might - y to the hands of the right - eous few,

17 *cresc.* *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p* *mf*

dim b' - yad os - kei to - ra - te - ha, to - ra - te - ha. Ul' - ha —
 faith - less to those who a-bide by Your To-rah, by Your To-rah. You made,

cresc. *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p* *p*

dim b' - yad os - kei to - ra - te - ha, to - ra - te - ha. Ul' -
 faith - less to those who a-bide by Your To-rah, by Your To-rah. You

cresc. *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p* *p*

dim b' - yad os - kei — to - ra - te - ha, to - ra - te - ha. Ul' -
 faith - less to those who a-bide by To-rah, by Your To-rah. You

cresc. *mf* *f* *p* *f* *p* *p*

b' - yad os - kei to - ra - te - ha, to - ra - te - ha. Ul' -
 faith - less to those who a-bide by To-rah, by Your To-rah. You

21 *p* *cresc.*

— a si - ta sheim ga - dol v' - ka - dosh ba' - o - la -
 — made a great and ho - ly Name for Your - self with - in Your
cresc.

ha a - si - ta sheim ga - dol v' - ka - dosh ba' - o - la -
 made made a great and ho - ly Name for Your - self with - in Your
cresc.

ha ul' - ha a - si - ta sheim ga - dol v' - ka - dosh ba' - o - la -
 made You made a great and ho - ly Name for Your - self with - in, with - in Your
cresc.

ha ul' - ha a - si - ta sheim ga - dol v' - ka - dosh, ka - dosh ba' - o - la -
 made, You made, made a great and ho - ly Name for Your-self with - in, with - in Your

25 *mf* > *p* *mf* *p* *cresc.*

me - ha, ul' - am - ha yis - ra - el a - si - ta t' - shu -
 na - tion, and re - deemed Your peo - ple Is - ra - el, and brought to them sal -

mf > *p* *mf* *p* *cresc.*

me - ha, ul' - am - ha yis - ra - el a - si - ta t' - shu -
 na - tion, and re - deemed Your peo - ple Is - ra - el, and brought to them sal -

mf > *p* *mf* *p* *cresc.*

me - ha, ul' - am - ha yis - ra - el a - si - ta t' - shu -
 na - tion, and re - deemed Is - ra - el, and brought to them sal -

mf > *p* *mf* *p* *cresc.*

me - ha, ul' - am - ha yis - ra - el t' - shu -
 na - tion, and re - deemed Is - ra - el, brought to them sal -

29 *mp* *p cresc.* *mf* *p* *f*

ah g' - do - lah u - fur - kan k' - ha - yom ha - zeh, ha -
 va - tion and de - liv - er - ance that shields them from harm to this day, to this

mp *p cresc.* *mf* *p* *f*

ah g' - do - lah u - fur - kan ha - zeh, ha -
 va - tion and de - liv - er - ance to this day, to this

mp > *p* *p cresc.* *mf* *p* *f*

ah g' - do - lah u - fur - kan k' - ha - yom ha - zeh, ha -
 va - tion and de - liv - er - ance that shields them from harm to this day, to this

mp *p cresc.* *mf* *p* *f*

ah g' - do - lah u - fur - kan ha - zeh, ha -
 va - tion and de - liv - er - ance to this day, to this

33 *p* *p* *cresc.*

zeh. ba' - u va - ne - ha lid - vir bei -
 day. Then came Your chil - dren to cleanse Your sa - cred

p *p* *cresc.*

zeh. ba' - u va - ne - ha lid - vir bei -
 day. Then came Your chil - dren to cleanse Your sa - cred

p *f* *pp* *p* *cresc.*

zeh. V' - a - har kah lid - vir lid - vir bei -
 day. Then came to cleanse to cleanse Your

p *f* *pp* *p* *cresc.*

zeh. V' - a - har kah lid - vir lid - vir bei -
 day. Then came, to cleanse Your sa - cred

37 *mf* , *f* *ff* , *f*

te - ha, u - fi - nu et hei - ha - le - ha, v' - ti - ha - ru et mik - da -
 tem - ple, and re - store Your ho - ly plac - es, and kind - le lights with - in Your

mf , *f* *div.* *ff* , *f* *unis.*

te - ha, u - fi - nu et hei - ha - le - ha, v' - ti - ha - ru et mik - da -
 tem - ple, and re - store Your ho - ly plac - es, and kind - le lights with - in Your

mf , *f* *ff* , *f*

te - ha, u - fi - nu et hei - ha - le - ha, v' - ti - ha - ru,
 tem - ple, and re - store Your ho - ly plac - es, and kind - le lights,

mf , *f* *ff* , *f*

te - ha, u - fi - nu et hei - ha - le - ha, v' - ti - ha - ru,
 tem - ple, and re - store Your ho - ly plac - es, and kind - le lights,

41

mf *f* *p* *f*

she - ha, nei - rot b' - hatz - rot kad - she - ha, kad -
 court-yards, kind - le lights to shine for - ev - er, for -

mf *f* *p* *f*

she - ha, nei - rot b' - hatz - rot kad - she - ha, kad -
 court-yards, kind - le lights to shine for - ev - er, for -

mf *f* *p* *f*

v' - hid - li - ku nei - rot kad she - ha, kad -
 and kind - le lights to shine for - ev - er, for -

mf *f* *p* *f*

v' - hid - li - ku nei - rot kad she - ha, kad -
 and kind - le lights to shine for - ev - er, for -

45

p *(p)*

she - ha. V' - kav' - u sh'mo - nat y' - mei Ha - nuk - kah ei - lu, l' - ho -
 ev - er. And they es - tab - lished these eight days to hon - or Your great - ness, and give

p *(p)*

she - ha. V' - kav' - u sh'mo - nat y' - mei Ha - nuk - kah ei - lu, l' - ho -
 ev - er. And they es - tab - lished these eight days to hon - or Your great - ness, and give

p *(p)*

she - ha. V' - kav' - u sh'mo - nat y' - mei Ha - nuk - kah ei - lu, l' - ho -
 ev - er. And they es - tab - lished these eight days to hon - or Your great - ness, and give

p *(p)*

she - ha. V' - kav' - u sh'mo - nat y' - mei Ha - nuk - kah ei - lu, l' - ho -
 ev - er. And they es - tab - lished these eight days to hon - or Your great - ness, and give

Quasi rubato

(46)

f div.

a tempo

dot u - l' - ha - leil I' - shim - ha ha - ga -
 thanks and praise to You, O God, May Your Name be most

48

p unis.

pp

dol. A - men, a - men.
 blessed. A - men, a - men.