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Chanting the Psalms in the 21st-Century

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CHANTING THE
PSALMS IN THE
21ST CENTURY

CHANTING IS NOT....

- ▶ an ancient, irrelevant practice
- ▶ only for “high-church” traditions
- ▶ only for advanced choirs

CHANTING IS....

- ▶ unmetered singing
- ▶ rhythms match irregular patterns of speech

WHY CHANT THE PSALMS?

- ▶ reconnects us with one of our earliest worship practices
- ▶ embeds the Psalms in our memory, forms our thinking
- ▶ beautiful, different, evocative
- ▶ puts the *primacy of the Psalm text* over all other factors

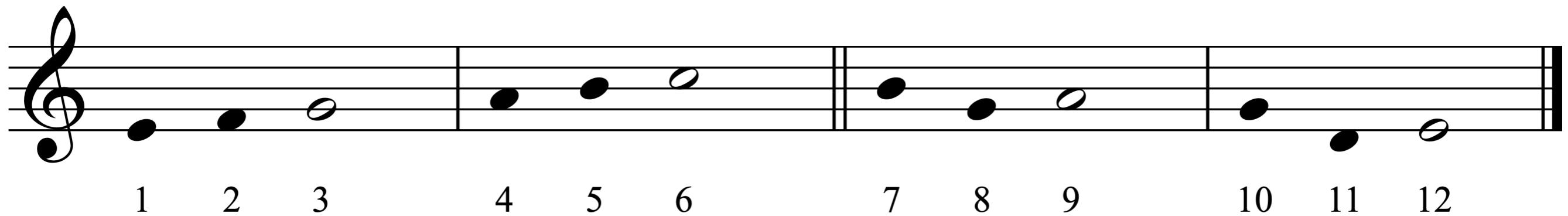
PROBLEMS WITH TODAY'S CHANTING METHODS

- ▶ Too difficult: better for choirs/soloists
- ▶ Too simple: defeats the purpose

A NEW WAY: TWELVE- POINT CHANT

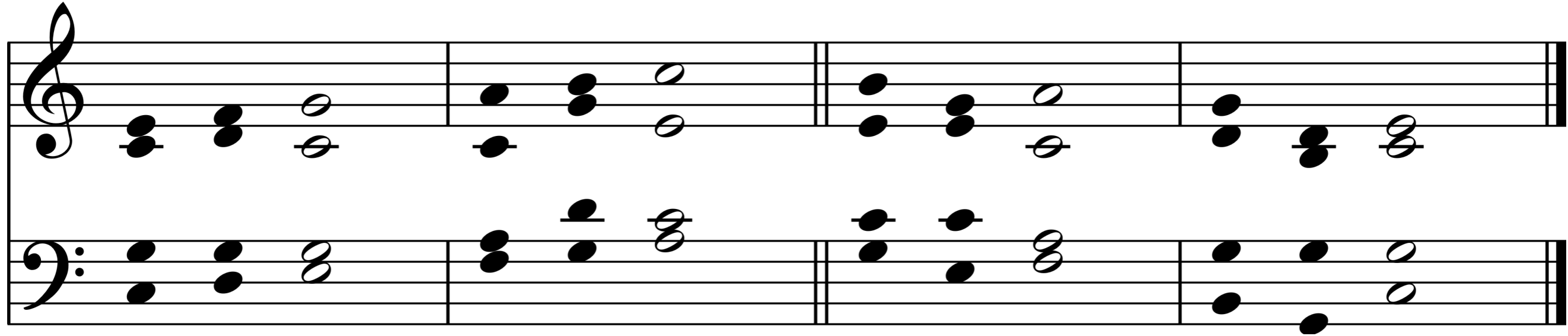
- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
- 2 My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not let your foot be moved
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
- 4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel
shall neither slumber nor sleep;

TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 121



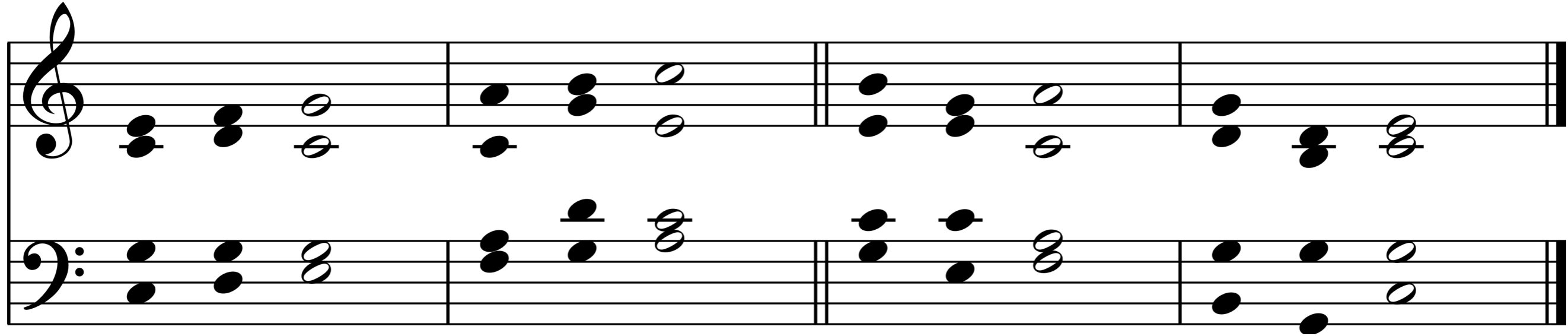
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TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 121



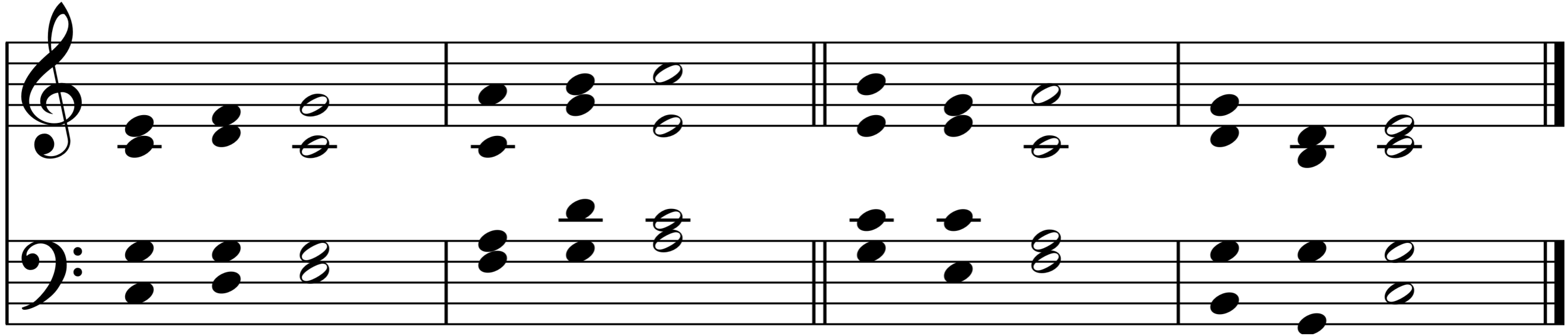
- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills;
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TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 121



- 3 He will not let your foot be moved
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
- 4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel
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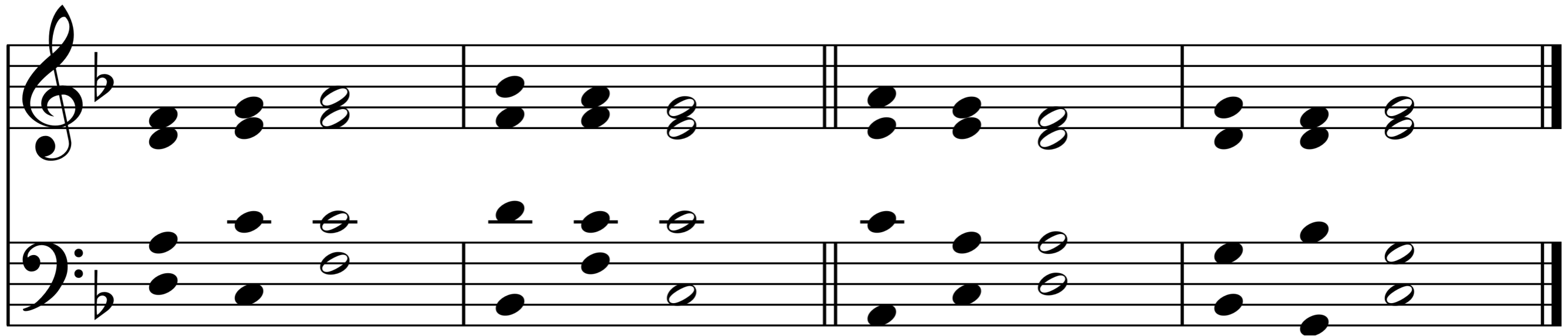
TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 121



5 The LORD himself watches over you;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand,

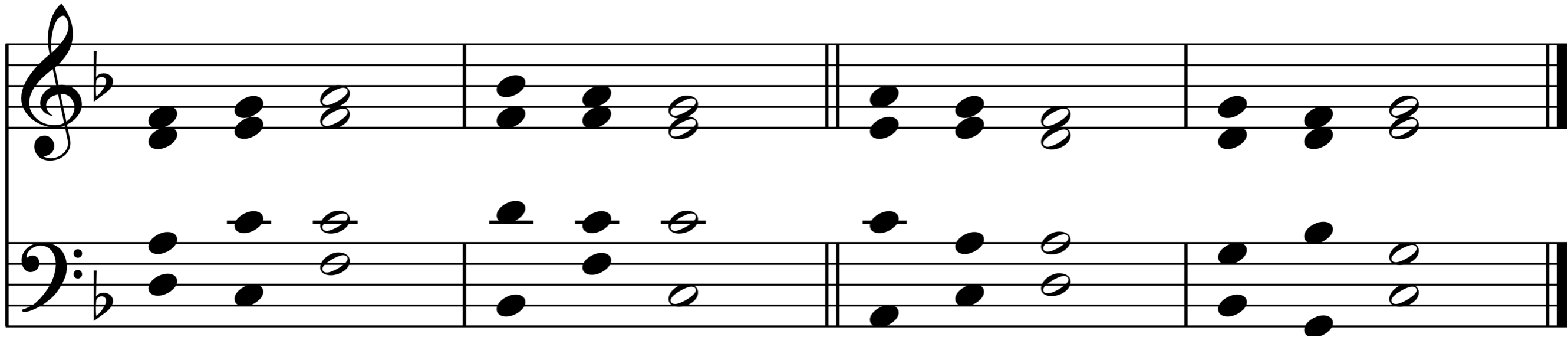
6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 51



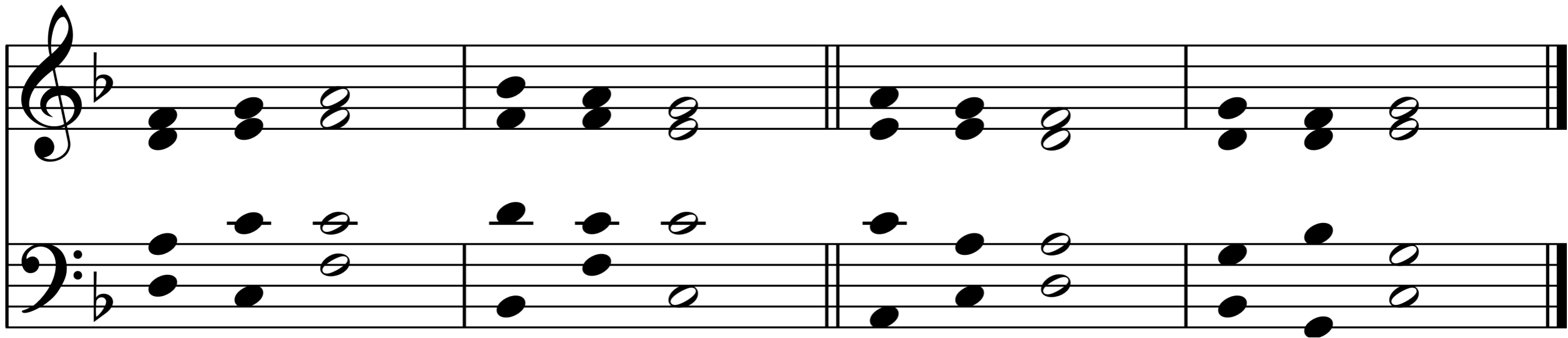
- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindr
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- 2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin.

TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 51



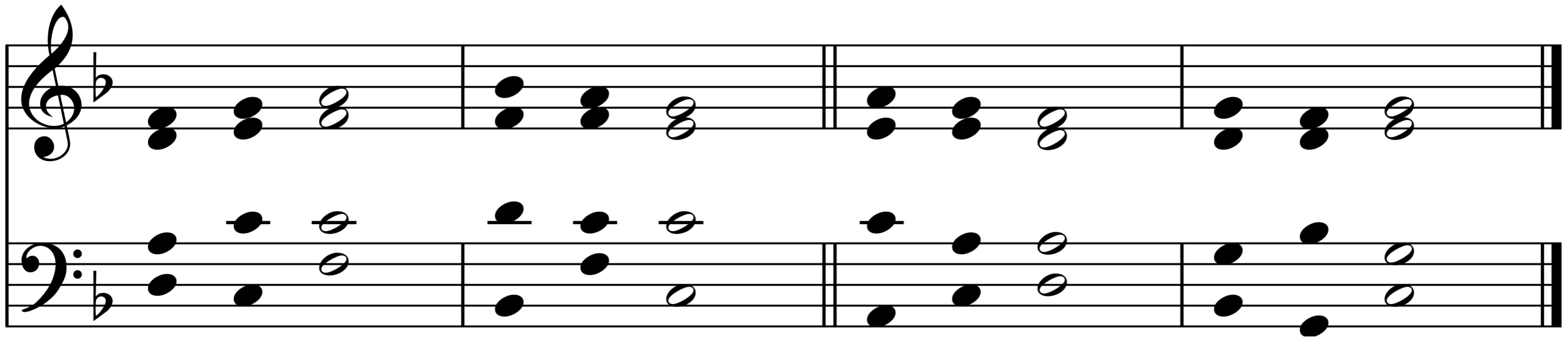
- 3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.

TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 51



- 5 And so you are justified when you speak
and upright in your judgment.
- 6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,
a sinner from my mother's womb.

TWELVE-POINT CHANT: PSALM 51



- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly
- 8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

- ▶ www.davidmadeira.com
- ▶ *The Twelve-Point Chant Psalter*
 - ▶ All 150 Psalms pointed for chanting
 - ▶ 8 tones in contrasting styles
 - ▶ More examples & demonstrations online