



Tenebrae

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

(Original air date Wednesday, April 17, 2019)

Seven o'clock in the evening

Sung by The Gentlemen of the Choir

Officiant & Dean: The Very Rev. Penny Bridges

Notes on the service

TENEBRAE (Latin for “darkness” or “shadows”) is the term that has for centuries been applied to the ancient monastic night and early morning services (Matins and Lauds) of the last three days of Holy Week. In Medieval times these services came to be celebrated on the preceding evenings. Our service will draw from each of these three offices of Tenebrae. In this form the service provides an extended meditation upon—as well as a prelude to—the events in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ between the Last Supper and the Resurrection.

Apart from the singing and reading of the Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah, the most conspicuous feature of this service is the gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights in the church until just a single candle—a symbol of our Lord—remains. Near the end of the service, this candle is hidden from view of the congregation, typifying the apparent victory over the forces of evil. To conclude the service, a very loud noise is made, symbolizing the great earthquake at the time of the resurrection (Matthew 28:2); the hidden candle is restored to its place, and by its light all depart in silence.

The musical base of this service is *The Lamentations of Jeremiah*, scored for unaccompanied male voices (altos, tenors, and basses) by Thomas Tallis. This work, which comprises the first two of three lessons at Tenebrae, is thought to date from 1585 and includes not only the biblical text but also the Hebrew letters separating the verses (Aleph, Beth, etc.). The text is from Lamentations 1; it is sung in the Vulgate’s Latin and shown here alongside The King James Version.

Regarded as probably Tallis’ final composition—and also highly respected—this fine dramatic piece contains wonderful melodies, finely wrought counterpoint, and surprising dissonances and cross relations. For its wealth of invention and expressive intensity, it is unique not only in Tallis’ output but in English Renaissance music as a whole.

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Please light your candle from the candelabras located near the entrance in the nave.

For your safety, hold candles upright and away from flammable objects including paper, clothes and hair.

The ministers and choir enter the church in silence.

The Office then begins with the Antiphon on the first Psalm as soon as they have taken their places.

Antiphon I

Officiant Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

Choir Psalm 69:1-23 *Salvum me fac* Tone II

- 1 Save me, O God, *
for the waters have risen up to my neck.
- 2 I am sinking in deep mire, *
and there is no firm ground for my feet.
- 3 I have come into deep waters, *
and the torrent washes over me.
- 4 I have grown weary with my crying;
my throat is inflamed; *
my eyes have failed from looking for my God.
- 5 Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs
of my head;
my lying foes who would destroy me are mighty. *
Must I then give back what I never stole?
- 6 O God, you know my foolishness, *
and my faults are not hidden from you.
- 7 Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me,
Lord God of hosts; *
let not those who seek you be disgraced because of me,
O God of Israel.
- 8 Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach, *
and shame has covered my face.
- 9 I have become a stranger to my own kindred, *
an alien to my mother's children.

- 10 Zeal for your house has eaten me up; *
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.
- 11 I humbled myself with fasting, *
but that was turned to my reproach.
- 12 I put on sack-cloth also, *
and became a byword among them.
- 13 Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, *
and the drunkards make songs about me.
- 14 But as for me, this is my prayer to you, *
at the time you have set, O Lord:
- 15 “In your great mercy, O God, *
answer me with your unfailing help.
- 16 Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; *
let me be rescued from those who hate me
and out of the deep waters.
- 17 Let not the torrent of waters wash over me,
neither let the deep swallow me up; *
do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me.
- 18 Answer me, O Lord, for your love is kind; *
in your great compassion, turn to me.’
- 19 “Hide not your face from your servant; *
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.
- 20 Draw near to me and redeem me; *
because of my enemies deliver me.
- 21 You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; *
my adversaries are all in your sight.”
- 22 Reproach has broken my heart, and it cannot be healed; *
I looked for sympathy, but there was none,
for comforters, but I could find no one.
- 23 They gave me gall to eat, *
and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

Antiphon II

Officiant Let them draw back and be disgraced who take pleasure in my misfortune.

Choir Psalm 70 *Deus, in adiutorium* Tone IV

- 1 Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; *
O Lord, make haste to help me.
- 2 Let those who seek my life be ashamed
and altogether dismayed; *
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune
draw back and be disgraced.
- 3 Let those who say to me “Aha!” and gloat over me turn back, *
because they are ashamed.
- 4 Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; *
let those who love your salvation say for ever,
“Great is the Lord!”
- 5 But as for me, I am poor and needy; *
come to me speedily, O God.
- 6 You are my helper and my deliverer; *
O Lord, do not tarry.

Antiphon III

Officiant Arise, O God, maintain my cause.

Choir Psalm 74 *Ut quid, Deus?* Tone II

- 1 O God, why have you utterly cast us off? *
why is your wrath so hot against the sheep of your pasture?
- 2 Remember your congregation that you purchased long ago, *
the tribe you redeemed to be your inheritance,
and Mount Zion where you dwell.
- 3 Turn your steps toward the endless ruins; *
the enemy has laid waste everything in your sanctuary.

- 4 Your adversaries roared in your holy place; *
they set up their banners as tokens of victory.
- 5 They were like men coming up with axes to a grove of trees; *
they broke down all your carved work with hatchets
and hammers.
- 6 They set fire to your holy place; *
they defiled the dwelling-place of your Name
and razed it to the ground.
- 7 They said to themselves, "Let us destroy them altogether." *
They burned down all the meeting-places of God
in the land.
- 8 There are no signs for us to see;
there is no prophet left; *
there is not one among us who knows how long.
- 9 How long, O God, will the adversary scoff? *
will the enemy blaspheme your Name for ever?
- 10 Why do you draw back your hand? *
why is your right hand hidden in your bosom?
- 11 Yet God is my King from ancient times, *
victorious in the midst of the earth.
- 12 You divided the sea by your might *
and shattered the heads of the dragons upon the waters;
- 13 You crushed the heads of Leviathan *
and gave him to the people of the desert for food.
- 14 You split open spring and torrent; *
you dried up ever-flowing rivers.
- 15 Yours is the day, yours also the night; *
you established the moon and the sun.
- 16 You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; *
you made both summer and winter.
- 17 Remember, O Lord, how the enemy scoffed, *
how a foolish people despised your Name.
- 18 Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts; *
never forget the lives of your poor.

- 19 Look upon your covenant; *
the dark places of the earth are haunts of violence.
- 20 Let not the oppressed turn away ashamed; *
let the poor and needy praise your Name.
- 21 Arise, O God, maintain your cause; *
remember how fools revile you all day long.
- 22 Forget not the clamor of your adversaries, *
the unending tumult of those who rise up against you.

Officiant Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked:
Congregation **From the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.**

Lesson I *(choir)*

from The Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah for men's voices
by Thomas Tallis (1505-1585); Lamentations 1

Incipit lamentatio Ieremiae prophetarum.

ALEPH. Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo: facta est quasi vidua domina gentium, princeps provinciarum, facta est sub tributo.

BETH. Plorans ploravit in nocte, et lacrimae eius in maxillis eius: non est qui consoletur eam ex omnibus caris eius: omnes amici eius spreverunt eam, et facti sunt ei inimici.

Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum tuum.

A reading from the Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah.

ALEPH. How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!

BETH. She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God.

Responsory I

In monte Oliveti

Officiant On the Mount of Olives Jesus prayed to the
Father:

Choir Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from
me.

Officiant The spirit is indeed willing,

Choir but the flesh is weak.

Officiant Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.

Choir The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak.

YODH. The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things: for she hath seen that the heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thy congregation.

KAPH. All her people sigh, they seek bread; they have given their pleasant things for meat to relieve the soul: see, O LORD, and consider; for I am become vile.

LAMEDH. Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

MEM. From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: he hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate and faint all the day.

NUN. The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand: they are wreathed, and come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall, the Lord hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God!

Responsory II

Ecce vidimus eum

Officiant Lo, we have seen him without beauty or majesty;

Choir With no looks to attract our eyes.

Officiant He bore our sins and grieved for us,

Choir he was wounded for our transgressions,
and by his scourging are we healed.

Officiant Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows:

Choir And by his scourging are we healed.

Lesson III *(choir)*

De lamentatione Ieremiae prophetae.

GIMEL. *Migravit Iuda propter afflictionem ac multitudinem servitutis: habitavit inter gentes, nec invenit requiem.*

DALETH. *Omnes persecutores eius apprehenderunt eam inter angustias: Lugent eo quod non sunt qui veniant ad solemnitatem. Omnes portae eius destructae, sacerdotes eius gementes, virgines eius squalidae, et ipsa oppressa amaritudine.*

HETH. *Facti sunt hostes eius in capite, inimici illius locupletati sunt; Quia Dominus locutus est super eam propter multitudinem iniquitatum eius: parvuli eius ducti sunt captivi ante faciem tribulantis.*

Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum tuum.

The Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah.

GIMEL. Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest:

DALETH. All her persecutors overtook her between the straits: The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

HETH. Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.

Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God.

Responsory III

Tristis est anima mea

Officiant My soul is very sorrowful,

Choir even to the point of death;

Officiant Remain here, and watch with me.

Choir Now you shall see the crowd who will surround me;

Officiant you will flee,

Choir and I will go to be offered up for you.

Officiant Behold, the hour is at hand,

Choir and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Officiant You will flee,

Choir and I will go to be offered up for you.

Antiphon

Officiant God did not spare his own Son,
but delivered him up for us all.

Choir Psalm 63

Deus, Deus meus

Tone I

- 1 O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; *
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.
- 2 Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, *
that I might behold your power and your glory.
- 3 For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; *
my lips shall give you praise.
- 4 So will I bless you as long as I live *
and lift up my hands in your Name.
- 5 My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, *
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,
- 6 When I remember you upon my bed, *
and meditate on you in the night watches.

People **Let everything | that hath bréath: ***
Pra | ise thé Lord!

*During the singing of the following Canticle,
the People extinguish their candles,
all the candles at the Altar and elsewhere in
the church*

*(except for the one remaining at the top of
the triangular candlestick)
are extinguished.*

Canticle 16

Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel Tone I

1. Bless-ed be the Lord the God of Is-ra-el: he has come
of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to pre-pare his way,
8. To give his people knowledge of sal-va-tion, by the forgive-ness of
their sins. 9. In the tender com-pas-sion of our God the dawn from on high shall
break up-on us, 10. To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the
shad-ow of death, and to guide our feet in-to the way of peace.
Glo-ry to the Fa-ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly Spi-rit:
As it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for ev-er. A-men.

Setting: Plainsong, Tone 1; adapt. The Standing Commission on Church Music, 1979.
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all the days of our life. 7. You, my child, shall be called the prophet

§ During the singing, the remaining candle is taken from sight of the congregation.

Anthem *Christus factus est* Giovanni Matteo Asola (1532-1609)

Christ was made obedient for us unto death, even death upon a cross, wherefore God hath exalted him, and hath given a name unto him which is above all names.

Psalm 51:1-11, 18-19

Miserere mei, Deus

Tone IV

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your
loving-kindness; *
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- 2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness *
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 18 The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; *
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
- 19 Be favorable and gracious to Zion, *
and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

§ *The Psalm having ended, any remaining lights in the Cathedral are extinguished.*

The Officiant then says the following collect.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross.

§ *Nothing further is said; but a loud noise is made, and the hidden candle is brought forth and placed on the stand.*

By its light the ministers and people depart in silence.



ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL
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