

signum
CLASSICS

LASSUS

Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetæ
Requiem

Collegium Regale
Stephen Cleobury

LASSUS

Lamentationes Jeremiæ Prophetæ (5vv, 1585) - Primi Diei (Thursday in Holy Week)

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Lamentatio Prima | [8.37] |
| 2. Lamentatio Secunda | [8.37] |
| 3. Lamentatio Tertia | [8.52] |
| 4. Motet: In monte Oliveti (6vv, 1568) | [4.10] |
| 5. Tract: Absolve, Domine (Mode VIII) | [3.00] |

Requiem - Missa pro defunctis (4vv, 1578)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 6. Introitus: Requiem æternam | [6.29] |
| 7. Kyrie eleison | [3.35] |
| 8. Graduale: Si ambulem | [5.30] |
| 9. Offertorium: Domine Jesu Christe | [6.20] |
| 10. Sanctus | [4.40] |
| 11. Agnus Dei | [3.19] |
| 12. Communio: Lux æterna | [3.34] |
| 13. Motet: Vide homo (7vv, 1594) | [3.21] |
| Total Time | [70.06] |

COLLEGIUM REGALE
STEPHEN CLEOBURY DIRECTOR

LISSUS LAMENTATIONES JEREMLÆ PROPHETÆ & REQUIEM

During the last thirty years of his life, Orlande de Lassus (1532–1594) was the most celebrated composer in Europe. From the time that he took up the duties of *maestro di cappella* in the court of the Dukes of Bavaria at Munich, he began to be called ‘prince of musicians’ and ‘the divine Orlande’. In this he outstripped the other musical giants of the day, Palestrina, Victoria, and Byrd. The pieces selected for this recording represent Lassus’s treatment of the theme of death during this mature period. The first group considers the death of Christ; the second, the death of the Christian.

The Old Testament ‘Lamentations’ traditionally attributed to the prophet Jeremiah comprise five Hebrew poems about the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC at the hands of the Babylonians. The Lamentations were eventually incorporated into the Christian liturgies of Holy Week. Three passages from the Lamentations were read as part of the office of Matins (or *Tenebrae*) on each of the three days leading up to Easter, the *Triduum sacrum* of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. These passages were sung to a more elaborate recitation tone than that usually used for Biblical lections. This special musical treatment led to the many polyphonic settings of the Lamentations that appeared in the sixteenth century. Lassus himself wrote two. This recording includes the three readings from Lamentations assigned to Maundy Thursday in his five-voice version, published in 1585 (Tracks 1–3).

The Lamentations are acrostic poems arranged according to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This structure was acknowledged in the Latin liturgy, with each verse preceded by its Hebrew letter (Aleph, Beth, Ghimel, etc.). Lassus’s brief and expressive treatments of each letter are the aural equivalent of the sumptuously illuminated initials in a medieval manuscript. To each reading, the liturgy adds the closing non-scriptural phrase, ‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn back to the Lord your God’.

Lassus was most famous as a composer of madrigals—vernacular songs of love, sorrow, battle, and wine. The term ‘madrigalism’ refers to the vivid word-painting so characteristic of this genre, in which composers devised ingenious ways to make the music mimic the meaning of the words. Lassus’s skill in word-painting carried over, albeit subtly, into his sacred compositions, and his Lamentations will reward the attentive listener with many entertaining or moving musical clues. Some are quite obvious, such as the music of the first verse, ‘How solitary sits the city that was once full of people’. Lassus has the word *sola* (solitary) sung by an austere duet, with each voice often heard by itself. At *plena* (full), however, the rest of the choir returns in a dramatic simultaneous entry. Some of the wordplay, however, might only have been noticed by trained singers. The third verse (*Ghimel*) includes the phrase, ‘She dwelt among the heathen and found no rest’. Here, Lassus has the baritones and basses sing the word *requiem* (rest) to the plainsong melody of the Introit of the Mass of the Dead, *Requiem aeternam*. (This may be heard later on this recording at the beginning of Track 6.)

Christians read the Lamentations not just as elegies on the destruction of Jerusalem brought about through Israel’s disobedience, but as a foreshadowing of the sufferings of Christ. Like the Psalms, they may be read in the *vox Christi*, the voice of Christ. Certain verses are particularly appropriate to Jesus’s suffering and death. The second verse (*Beth*), which says of Jerusalem, ‘Weeping she has wept in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. There is no one to comfort her among all that were dear to her,’ is the Old Testament’s ‘type’ of the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus was ‘exceeding sorrowful, even unto death’ (Matt. 26. 38), and later deserted by his disciples. The great text *O vos omnes*, ‘O all you that pass by in the way, hearken, and see if there be any sorrow that is like unto my sorrow’ (*Lamed*, Track 3), has long been read as if spoken by Christ from the cross. Lassus’s simple treatment of this text is just as effective as many more elaborate settings by later composers.

This Christian interpretation of the Lamentations was made explicit in the Great Responses of Maundy Thursday, which quote from the Gospel accounts of Jesus’s agony and betrayal. A response is a chant

sung after a reading, giving the congregation the opportunity to react to what it has just heard. Lassus's motet *In monte Oliveti* takes its text from the responsory after the first reading from the Lamentations on Maundy Thursday, based on Matthew 26. 39–42. In this motet, published in 1568, Lassus divides the six voice parts into high and low groups, with overlapping entries to emphasize Jesus's desperate cries of 'Father! Father!', bringing them together in a grand cascade to mark the impassioned plea, 'let this cup pass from me'.

Unlike the Lamentations, which were sung only once each year, the Mass for the Dead, sometimes called the Requiem Mass, was frequently recited in the Latin liturgy. The development of the doctrine of Purgatory during the Middle Ages led to the recitation of the Requiem Mass not just at funerals but as a daily act of intercession on behalf of all the faithful departed. The 'Church Militant' on earth had the power to alleviate the suffering of the 'Church Expectant' being purified in Purgatory before the Last Judgement. The living were therefore keen to make provision for their souls after death, and could endow a chantry priest to recite daily masses for their benefit. Even when the Requiem Mass was recited at a funeral, its prayers and chants still referred to the dead in the plural.

Lassus's reputation as a composer of Masses rests mainly on his 'parody Masses', which derive their musical themes from well-known motets and madrigals, including his own compositions. The Mass heard on this recording—one of three Requiems by Lassus, this four-voice setting having been published in 1578—is not a parody Mass. Lassus drew instead on the traditional plainsong melodies that for centuries had adorned the Requiem. The Introit (Track 6) comes closest to being a *cantus firmus* composition. The chant is carried in long notes by the second-highest voice, with the other voices in counterpoint around it. In the other chant-based movements—the Gradual, the Offertory, and the Communion—each grammatical phrase of the text is sung to the first few notes of the chant, enough to catch the ear of a trained court musician. The movements of the Mass Ordinary—the Kyrie, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei—are free compositions. Somewhat remarkably, Lassus included the notes for the solo intonation of each movement in the published scores; composers

normally assumed the soloist would sing the chant from memory. In writing them out, Lassus required these intonations to be sung by a bass at an unusually low pitch. He did so again in his five-voice Requiem of 1589, which suggests that this was an important part of how Lassus thought the Mass for the Dead should be sung.

The flowing lines and vivid word-painting of Lassus's madrigals and motets are absent here, replaced by static chords and simple imitative counterpoint. This Requiem has the character of a *Missa brevis*, and may have been performed frequently as an intercession in the ducal chapel, rather than for important funerals. This simplicity nevertheless has a theological dimension as a representation of the peace of heaven, a quality most evident in the Communion (Track 12). Lassus did not provide polyphonic settings of two chants: the Sequence, *Dies irae*, and the Tract, *Absolve, Domine*. The traditional plainsong melody of the Tract is heard on this recording outside its proper liturgical position, serving here to mark the division between the two main sections of the programme (Track 5).

Behind the humour and wit expressed in Lassus's compositions, and especially in his surviving letters, lay a deep personal spirituality. The final motet on this recording comes from Lassus's last work, a cycle of madrigals with texts selected from Luigi Tansillo's devotional work, the *Lagrima di S. Pietro* (Tears of St Peter), a substantial collection of Italian poems about St Peter's grief after his denial of Jesus (see Matt. 26. 75). The Latin text of *Vide homo* (Track 13) is not from Tansillo's work, but was added by Lassus as a conclusion to the madrigals. In it, Christ accuses the reader, saying that of all the pain he has endured, the pain of man's ingratitude is the heaviest to bear. Lassus wrote the dedication to the completed work on 24 May 1594, and died three weeks later. In this motet, Lassus displays his unrivalled mastery of counterpoint, manipulating the seven voices effortlessly to produce the expressive rhetorical effects so admired by his contemporaries. His choice of text for his self-proclaimed 'swansong', however, shows that for all his skill he still considered himself but an 'unprofitable servant' (Luke 17. 10), preparing for his own death by fixing his mind on the death of Christ.

BIOGRAPHIES

THE CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

The Choir of King's College, Cambridge, owes its existence to King Henry VI who, when founding the College in 1441, envisaged the daily singing of services in his magnificent chapel. This remains the Choir's *raison d'être* and is an important part of the lives of its sixteen Choristers, who are educated on generous scholarships at the College choir school, and the fourteen Choral Scholars and two Organ Scholars, who study a variety of subjects within the College itself.

As members of King's College Choir, the Choral Scholars have toured extensively in Europe, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, the USA and Bermuda. As Collegium Regale, the Choral Scholars provide entertainment at dinners and conferences. They also give frequent concerts, especially at Easter when they split into two groups to tour the North and South of England. Collegium Regale's recent international tours have included performances in Boston, Montreal, Toronto and Washington.

Collegium Regale's repertoire embraces styles across 800 years of musical history, from Gregorian chant to the latest top-forty hits. Audiences are perennially delighted to find Byrd rubbing shoulders with the Beach Boys in the same concert programme.

STEPHEN CLEOBURY CONDUCTOR

Stephen Cleobury is associated with two of Britain's most famous choirs. As Director of Music at King's College, Cambridge and Chief Conductor of the BBC Singers, he also works with leading symphony orchestras and period instrument ensembles. His eclectic repertoire ranges from Gregorian chant to newly composed works. At King's he has commissioned a carol annually for *A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols*, thereby refreshing this great tradition of Christmas music with compositions from the foremost composers of our own day. In 2005 he instigated the first Easter Festival of Music at King's, at which he conducted concerts with the Chapel Choir and the Academy of Ancient Music, which were broadcast by the BBC. He has premiered many works with the BBC Singers, notably Giles Swayne *Havoc* and Harrison Birtwistle *Ring Dance of the Nazarene* at the Proms, and Edward Cowie *Gaia*, all with the Endymion Ensemble, and Errolyn Wallen *Our English Heart* with the BBC Concert Orchestra.

As Conductor of the orchestra and chorus of the Cambridge University Music Society, he has directed the major works for chorus and orchestra as well as symphonic repertoire and has also premiered works by Alexander Goehr, Robin Holloway and Robert Saxton. Recently he has directed performances of Mahler *Resurrection Symphony* in Boston, Berlioz *Requiem* in Ely Cathedral, Dvořák *Stabat Mater*, Tippett *A Child of Our Time* and Bach *B Minor Mass* in King's Chapel, and Vaughan Williams *A Sea Symphony* in the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford.

He frequently appears in this country and abroad as a conductor, leader of conducting workshops and solo organist. During the last season he has visited the USA, Italy, Holland and Belgium with King's Choir. Other conducting engagements during this period have seen him working with the Academy of Ancient Music, BBC Concert Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Israel Camerata, Philharmonia, Southbank Sinfonia, Endymion, His Majesty's Sagbutts and Cornetts, Estonian Chamber Choir, Mormon Tabernacle Choir and National Chamber Choir of Ireland. These engagements have taken him to places as varied as Switzerland, Israel, Mexico and Japan, while as an organ recitalist he has played at Haderslev Cathedral in Denmark and Salt Lake's LDS Conference Center.



ALTO

Joseph Adams
David Allsopp
Charles Richardson
Benjamin Williamson

TENOR

Timothy Isted
John McMunn
John Robb
Edward Saklatvala

BASS

Jesse Billett
Peter Foggitt
Peter Lindsay
Christopher Lipscomb
Nicholas Morris
Rupert Reid

LAMENTATIONES JEREMIAE
PROPHETAE
(PRIMI DIEI)

1. **Lamentatio Prima**

Incipit Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetæ

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 ejus in maxillis ejus;
non est qui consoletur eam,
ex omnibus caris ejus;
omnes amici ejus spreverunt eam,
et facti sunt ei inimici.

GHIMEL

Migravit Juda propter afflictionem,
et multitudinem servitutis;
habitavit inter gentes,
nec invenit requiem;
omnes persecutores ejus apprehenderunt eam
inter angustias.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

2. **Lamentatio Secunda**

ZAIN

Recordata est Jerusalem dierum afflictionis suae,
et praevaricationis,
omnium desiderabilium suorum,
quae habuerat a diebus antiquis,
cum caderet populus ejus in manu hostili,
et non esset auxiliator;
viderunt eam hostes,
et deriserunt sabbata ejus.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF THE
PROPHET JEREMIAH
(FOR THURSDAY IN HOLY WEEK)

Lamentations 1.1–3

How solitary sits the city that was full of people!
The mistress of the nations is become like a widow;
the princess of the provinces is made to pay tribute.

Weeping she has wept in the night, and her tears are on
her cheeks. There is no one to comfort her among all that
were dear to her; all her friends have despised her, and
are become her enemies.

Judah was exiled because of her affliction and because of
the greatness of her servitude. She dwelt among the
heathen, and found no rest. All her persecutors seized
her within the narrow places.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn back to the Lord your God.

Lamentations 1. 7–9

Jerusalem has thought on the days of her affliction and
straying, and on all the precious things that she had
from the days of old. When her people fell into the hand
of the enemy, and there was no helper, her enemies
looked on her and derided her sabbaths.

HETH

Peccatum peccavit Jerusalem,
propterea instabilis facta est;
omnes qui glorificabant eam spreverunt illam,
quia viderunt ignominiam ejus:
ipsa autem gemens
conversa est retrorsum.

TETH

Sordes ejus in pedibus ejus,
nec recordata est finis sui;
desposita est vehementer,
non habens consolatorem.
Vide, Domine, afflictionem meam,
quoniam erectus est inimicus.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

3. Lamentatio Tertia

LAMED

O vos omnes qui transitis per viam,
attendite, et videte
si est dolor sicut dolor meus!
quoniam vindemiavit me,
ut locutus est Dominus,
in die irae furoris sui.

MEM

De excelso misit ignem in ossibus meis,
et erudit me;
expandit rete pedibus meis,
convertit me retrorsum;
posuit me desolatam,
tota die moerore confectam.

NUN

Vigilavit jugum iniquitatum mearum,
in manu ejus convolutae sunt,
et impositae collo meo;
infirmata est virtus mea;
dedit me Dominus in manu
de qua non potero surgere.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

Jerusalem has greatly sinned, therefore has she been made to have no abode. All that used to honour her have despised her, because they have seen her shame; and she herself sighed and turned backward.

Her defilement is on her feet, neither has she been mindful of her end. She has been violently cast down, having no comforter. 'Behold my affliction, O Lord, for my enemy is lifted up!'

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn back to the Lord your God.

Lamentations 1. 12–14

O all you that pass by in the way, hearken, and see if there be any sorrow that is like unto my sorrow! For he has plucked me like a grape, as the Lord uttered in the day of his fierce anger.

From on high he sent fire into my bones and disciplined me. He spread a net for my feet and turned me back. He has made me desolate, and all the day I am consumed with sorrow.

The yoke of my iniquities has kept watch. They have been twisted together in his hand and placed on my neck. My strength is weakened. The Lord has given me over into a hand from which I shall not be able to rise.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn back to the Lord your God.

MOTET

4. In monte Oliveti

In monte Oliveti oravit ad Patrem:
Pater, si fieri potest, transeat a me calix iste.
Spiritus quidem promptus est, caro autem infirma.
Fiat voluntas tua.

TRACT

5. Absolve, Domine

Absolve, Domine, animas omnium fidelium
defunctorum ab omni vinculo delictorum.
V. Et gratia tua illis succurre, mereantur
evadere iudicium ultionis.
V. Et lucis aeternae beatitudine perfrui.

MISSA PRO DEFUNCTIS

6. Introitus

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine: et lux perpetua
luceat eis.
V. Te decet hymnus Deus in Sion, et tibi reddetur votum
in Jerusalem: exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis caro veniet.
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine: et lux perpetua
luceat eis.

7. Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

8. Graduale

Si ambulem in medio umbrae mortis, non timebo mala:
quoniam tu mecum es, Domine.
V. Virga tua, et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt.

9. Offertorium

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, libera animas omnium
fidelium defunctorum de manu inferni, et de profundo
lacu: libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas

cf. Matthew 26. 39–42

In the Mount of Olives, he prayed to the Father:
‘Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.
The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak.
Let your will be done.’

Release, O Lord, the souls of all the faithful departed
from every chain of sins.
V. And through your supporting grace, let them be found
worthy to escape the punishment of judgement.
V. And thoroughly to enjoy the blessedness of eternal light.

MASS FOR THE DEPARTED

Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light
perpetual shine upon them.
V. A hymn befits you, O God, in Sion, and a vow shall be paid to
you in Jerusalem. Hear my prayer: to you shall all flesh come.
(Psalm 65. 1–2) Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let
light perpetual shine upon them.

Lord have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Psalms 23. 4

If I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I shall
fear no evils, for you are with me, O Lord.
V. Your rod, and your staff, they have comforted me.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the King of glory, deliver the souls of all
the faithful departed from the hand of hell, and from the deep
pit; deliver them from the mouth of the lion, lest they be

tartarus, ne cadant in obscura tenebrarum loca:
sed signifer sanctus Michael repraesentet eas in lucem
sanctam: Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.
V. Hostias et preces tibi Domine offerimus: tu suscipe
pro animabus illis, quarum hodie memoriam agimus:
fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam.
Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.

10. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

11. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem
sempiternam.

12. Communio

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis tuis in
aeternum, quia pius es.
V. Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.

MOTET

13. Vide homo

Vide homo, quae pro te patior;
Ad te clamo, qui pro te morior;
Vide poenas, quibus afficio;
Vide clavos, quibus confodior;
Non est dolor, sicut quo crucior,
Et cum sit tantus dolor exterior,
Intus tamen dolor est gravior,
Tam ingratum cum te experior.

swallowed up by hell, and lest they fall into the secret place of
shadows; but let holy Michael, the standardbearer, display
them in holy light, as you promised of old to Abraham and his
seed. V. Sacrifices and prayers we offer to you, O Lord. Receive
them for those souls whom we commemorate today. Make
them, O Lord, to pass over from death into life, as you promised
of old to Abraham and his seed.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are filled with your glory. Hosanna in the
highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant unto them rest.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant unto them rest.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant unto them rest eternal.

Let light eternal shine on them, O Lord, in the company of
your saints forever, for you are holy.
V. Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light
perpetual shine on them.
In the company of your saints forever, for you are holy.

See, O man, what things I endure for you;
To you I cry, I who am dying for you;
See the pains with which I am afflicted;
See the nails with which I am pierced.
There is no suffering like unto that with which I am tormented.
And though the outward suffering be so great,
Yet is the inward suffering heavier still,
When I find you to be so ungrateful!

TEXT SOURCES

Lamentationes Jeremiæ Prophetæ (5vv, 1585) - Primi Diei

Sämtliche Werke: neue Reihe,
ed. Siegfried Hermelink et al Vol. 22 pp. 3–36

In monte Oliveti (6vv, 1568)

<http://wso.williams.edu/cpd1/sheet/lass-oli.pdf> ed. Matthias Samuelsson

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Graduale triplex, ed. Marie-Claire Billecocq and Rupert Fischer
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Requiem - Missa pro defunctis (4vv, 1578)

Sämtliche Werke: neue Reihe,
ed. Siegfried Hermelink et al Vol. 4 pp. 95–118

Vide homo (7vv, 1594)

<http://wso.williams.edu/cpd1/sheet/lass-121b.pdf>
ed. Sabine Cassola

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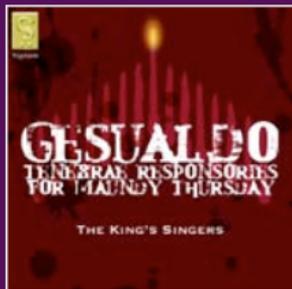
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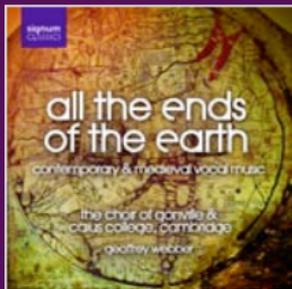
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