

THE JERUSALEM PASSION

by Murray Wylie

Excerpts presented by Small Group Libretto and Notes

Our programme is divided into three brackets, the first two containing pieces from Part One of the oratorio (The Earthly Jerusalem), and the third bracket and the final song being from Part Two of the Oratorio (The New or Heavenly Jerusalem).

1. The Overture

Composer's notes

The opening choral anthem takes the challenging words from The Revelation - '*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches*'. Those who overcome are promised '*the name of the city of God, the New Jerusalem*'.

Declaration Anthem

*Listen to the trumpet!
Hearken to the trumpet!*

He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit's saying to the churches. Listen to the trumpet, listen to the trumpet sound. Hearken to the trumpet, hearken to the trumpet sound!

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life. To him that overcometh the same shall be clothed in raiment of white.

To him that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give the power to rule with an iron rod over the nations.

To him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of God. And he will go out no more for I will write upon him the Name, the new name, Which no man knows, but he who has received it, the Name of the Lord, and the name of the city of God, the New Jerusalem. He that hath an ear, let him hear. Hearken to the trumpet, hearken to

the trumpet sound. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, He that, she that, overcomes.
[Revelation 1:10, 2:7, 2:11, 26-27, 3:4, 12]

First Bracket

2. Sweet Galilee

4. One Shepherd; One Flock

5. The Shepherd's Song

Composer's notes

This describes the land and time of Christ's popularity, which He must soon leave behind for the harshness of Jerusalem. The Good Shepherd laments over the condition of His sheep, but looks beyond the giving of His life to the time when His sheep will hear His voice and gather together as one flock.

Narrations

In Galilee, in Galilee, where water laps and ancient shore and falls from many a boatman's oar, in Galilee. In Galilee, in Galilee, they came to know Him by the sea. By the sea He called those fishermen to leave their nets and follow. Gladly people heard Him and gladly people came. The poor and heavy-laden gathered - the blind, the sick, the lame. It's a land that I remember... My children gathered without number for loaves and fishes and friendship warm. O Galilee, sweet Galilee.

I am the good shepherd, I enter by the door. My flock is led by thieves and robbers, and wolves have torn the young ones sore. But I have come to save the sheep, and lay My life down for them. I know My own - They'll hear My voice; my voice will surely draw them. And then I'll gather them together - They will surely come. They'll hear My voice, I know they will. Of flocks and folds, there'll be just one.

Ballad - Solo and harmonies

I am the good shepherd, but look at My sheep. They are scattered and forlorn. I am the door of the sheepfold, but where are My sheep? They are scattered and forlorn. Scattered and forlorn. I will lay My life down for them, and they will surely come. They will hear My voice and gather, they will surely come. Yes, they will hear My voice and gather, they will surely come. Surely,

surely come, they will surely come.. I will provide some pastures for them, some pastures green. I'll lead them out so they can find some, some pastures green. I know My own and My own know Me, I will bring them too. I have some others in other sheepfolds, I will bring them too. And I will bring them all together, they shall be one. Yes, I will bring them all together, they shall be one. They shall, shall be one, and they shall be one.

[John 10:1-17]

6. They shall be One

Composer's notes

The (abbreviated) 'Pastorale' flute solo sets the scene for the processional anthem, which describes the gathering together of His sheep from every nation and tribe, from every mountain and valley. This future gathering will be made possible through the laying down of Christ's life.

Processional Anthem

From the mountains and the valleys, from the hills and from the plains, every tribe and every kindred and tongue shall come, and they shall be one. From the rising of the sun to the setting of the same, out of great tribulation they shall come and shall be one in My name. Every flock and every family of God shall be united, they will hear My voice and know My voice, and they shall come and they shall be one. From the highlands they shall march, from the deserts they shall ride, from the canyons they shall fly as the eagles, and they shall be one. And they shall be one, and they shall be one. And they shall be one, and they shall be one.

Chorale

This is my commandment: 'I have power to lay it down'. Wherever there is liberty, I can lay it down. We can be together, wherever we lay it down. We can be one, we can be one. Wherever this song is sung, we can be together. Wherever this word is heard, 'I can lay it down'. We can be one, we can be one, we can be one....

[Rev 7:9, 14; John 10:16,18]

Second Bracket

7. Galilee Farewell,

9. My Temple: My Body

Composer's notes

Christ must now face the city of His destiny, the city that will soon be made desolate for her rejection of Him. *'Weep, and weep, and weep, and cry, for Jerusalem'*. The disciples are told of His coming passion, and of the destruction of the earthly temple in preparation for the raising up of the new temple, which is His body. They are introduced at the 'last supper' to the elements of participation in His broken body and shed blood.

Narrations

Galilee, sweet Galilee, before Me lies My destiny. My Father calls, I've set My face, to walk the course, to run the race - but even still, it's sad to leave this place.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, fortress of intolerance, of ruthless pride and arrogance. Thou sepulchre of holy ones that silenced gospel words and quenched prophetic fire. Defiant mountain, how you stand - A lion poised and ready, crouched and watchful, waiting for the kill.

But there beyond, I see a joy - A hope, a goal, a mystery, a city bright is coming into view. Beyond the cross I see - Jerusalem the New.

Then what shall become of all this here - This building proud and standing here - This people, nation, gathered here - This kingdom badly scattered here? There shall not be one stone here, that's left upon another here.

And now I leave this temple here, Never to return. And men will look to find me here, or maybe in the desert near, or perhaps inside the temple here. But you will know where I will be, for where My body is, there the eagles will gather.

Now I will show you what I mean, at this our last and farewell meal; for here is bread and here is wine - Gather now, Eat and drink, and so be mine. For it shall always be that where the eagles eat and drink and gather there as

one - There is my body, There is my blood, there am I.

11. In Your Name

Composer's notes

Jesus then prays for His disciples of all ages, that the Father will keep them in His name and make them one just as He and the Father are one. Jesus then prays for His disciples of all ages, that the Father will keep them in His name and make them one just as He and the Father are one. The depth of this timeless prayer is translated into the confident certainty of the unity for which He prayed.

Responsive Chorale

In Your name, in Your name, Father keep them in Your Name. I have glorified Your name, and will glorify Your name. Father, glorify Your name. In Your name, In Your name, Father keep them in Your Name. So that they may all be one, just as You and I are one, I in them and Thou in me.

[John 17:1-23]

12. The Cup

Composer's notes

The Son proceeds to the garden called Gethsemane where He must take from His own Father 'the cup' of the sin of mankind. *'If it be possible...'* He cries, but *'nevertheless...I'll take the cup'*. Thus commences His solemn anguish.

Narration

In anguish to the garden now - to pray, to ask the Father now - to take the cup. In anguish to the Father now - All things are possible to You - if it be possible for You - Nevertheless, I'll take the cup. Sleep on, I go to be the offering now. To trial and cruel death. Alone I go.

[Mark 14: 34-36, 41]

15. O Lamb, most pure

Composer's notes

As an elegy for Christ's death, the soloist laments the death of the Saviour of the world. The spotless Lamb of God is lifted up; now we see His face and adore Him, with a humility and reverence echoed in the 'consummation' harp postlude which is represented by a piano in our excerpts.

Elegy

As the swifts fly over the walls, and the walls are alive with the echo of violent cries, and

the cries are alive with the torment and pain of mankind; there the Lord is crucified.

Adoration hymn

O Lamb, most pure, Your face of light brings all my darkness to Your sight, for You alone are wholly right. Your blood, Your blood, O Lamb of God, can make me holy white.

18. The Consolation

Composer's notes

The faith of His commitment to the Father, and the ecstasy of His consolation in the Father's bosom are expressed in both the arioso and the chorale *'Into Your Hands I commit My Spirit'*.

Arioso - ladies' duets and solo

He drew me out of many waters, receiving Me into his bosom, therefore I say, therefore I say:

Into Your hands I commit My spirit, into Your arms I commit My soul, for You are my rock, Jehovah, provider, You are my rock, El Shaddai, My hiding place.

Mercy and truth have met together, peace and righteousness have kissed each other, therefore I say, therefore I say:

Chorale

Into Your hands I commit My spirit, Into Your arms I commit My soul, For You are my rock, Jehovah, provider, You are My rock, El Shaddai, My hiding place.

[Psalm 18:16, 85:10; Luke 23:46]

In the full work, a choral "Amen" is sung at this point, signifying our acceptance of the sacrifice made by Christ for us.

Third Bracket - Resurrection

Composer's notes

The victory of the resurrection is first announced in the pipe organ prelude, then in the choral anthem (neither being presented in excerpt form). An essential Christian understanding is woven into this anthem, viz that when the physical body of Christ was raised after three days, this resurrected body included all those throughout the ages who would

become members of Christ through faith. This body, or temple, replaced the physical temple in Jerusalem as the centrepiece of the covenant.

23. Searching for the body

Composer's notes

A ritual dance called '*searching for the body*' is still performed in Jerusalem to this day. Those involved act out the disciples' search in the empty tomb. Against the background of this ritual, this contralto ballad carries us down through the ages of mankind's search for the true body of Christ, and for the reality of Christ's presence.

Ballad - ladies voices and harmonies

Searching for the body, searching for the body, Searching for the body of Christ.

When His disciples gathered, the angel said, 'Why come to find one who's alive among the dead?' No man has found His body, nor yet His bones, His body is a living house of living stones. Through time and through the ages, through history, We've tried to find the body of reality. Through all of man's religion from east to west, Through all the mystic ritual observances. We've tried to find His body in empty rooms, In many empty forms, in many empty tombs. Through all the congregations, from church to church, Through all the good and bad and right and wrong we've searched. Where will we find Your body, to worship You? Not on the mountain, but in Spirit and in Truth.

[John 4:21-24]

24. My Body: My People,

25. Where are the eagles?

Composer's notes

Where is the body? Where is His temple? What is the New Jerusalem? For whom has He wept and cried? In the soliloquy, when accompanied, the violin reflects on the themes and leads us to the answer - His people, the eagles.

Eagles are used in the scriptures as symbolic of believers. The fact that they are creatures of vision that feed on a slain body, provides the background to the poetic question '*where are the eagles?*' The narrator declares that 'eagles' know where the body of Christ is. It is to be found where believers gather as the living body to partake of the broken body of

Christ. '*Where are the eagles?*'... where are those whose instinct is to gather in unity as the body of Christ; why don't they see and fly home?

Narration

I said before, that men would look to find Me here, and some would search the desert near, or wait inside the temple here. I said before that you would know, and do you know where the body is? I said before, where my body is, there the eagles will gather together.

For My body is where the eagles are, eating and drinking, gathered as one; and there am I, in the midst of them. Here is my body, where are the eagles?

Chorale

Where are the eagles? Where are the eagles? Why don't they hear, why don't they see? And why don't they fly home? Make your flight in the summer, make your flight before the winter, before iniquity makes love of many cold. Make it right with your brother before the night hour is over, before the lightning flash when the Son will then appear. Some will say 'here', some will say 'there', only a few will say 'prepare' Now is the end, the time it is near, nations are failing now for fear.

There's an Eagle, there's a Man, there's a Lion, there's a Lamb, there's a body gathered here, but where, Lord....Where are the eagles, where are the eagles? Why don't they hear, why don't they see? And why don't they fly home?

No, He is not in the desert, No He will not come to the temple, but where the body is found - there will eagles fly! Those who are there He will gather, those who are not He will scatter before the lightning flash when the Son will then appear.

There's an Eagle, there's a Man, there's a Lion, there's a Lamb, there's a body gathered here but where, Lord?aaah....Why don't they fly home? Why don't they fly home?

Young men be swift, old men be strong, knowing the time is not too long. All men

repent, all men believe, come with the eagles, come receive. Oo oo oo oo.....

[Matt 24:12, 20, 23; 24:26, 27, 28; Lk 21:26; Rev 4:7; Rev 5:5,6]

26. Gather Now, 27. Hope of Unity

Composer's notes

It is the time for God's people to come together and express the unity of the body of Christ. The chorale declares the certain hope of such a unity.

Narration

Young men be swift, old men be strong, knowing that the time is not too long. All men repent, all men believe, come with the eagles, Come receive. The poet said, 'There's a time for this, and a time for that'... But now it's time to gather. It's time to hope, it's time to love. It's time to believe and cleave together - To be the body, to be the eagles. The time has come to leave all else. The time has come to lay it down. No price is too great, No enemy too strong. The time is short, the time has come, To gather now, together now. As one.

Aria

Gather now, together now, to the throne of My great power. Here is My body, the cup of blessing; take it now, drink it now, all together. This is My body, My broken body, This is My body broken for you.

Chorale

O how I love - the Spirit from above is planting deeply in me the hope of unity. O how I love, O how I love, the hope of unity is planted deeply within me. O how I love - the Spirit from above is planting deeply in me the hope of unity. O how I love, O how I love, the hope of unity is planted deeply within me. The hope of unity is planted deeply within me. Aaaaah.

Final Song

31. Communion Chorus

Composer's notes

In the certain hope of Christian unity, this celebration anthem looks forward to when believers will be able to eat and drink at one table of friends;

no longer divided by separate doctrinal distinctions and traditional divisions; whereupon the blood of Christ, the royal blood, will be able to flow and bring life to the world.

Celebration Anthem

I'll meet you here at one table of friends, we'll meet at last at one table of friends. Where there once were many, let there now be one, and let the royal blood begin to flow.

And I exchange the betrayer's kiss, and I exchange my denying lips, for a mouth filled with praise and a heart filled with love.

The End

The Composer

Murray Wylie is a graduate from the Brisbane Conservatorium of Music, and is a prolific writer of worship music used in a number of churches around Australia and overseas. He is also a recognised "Minister of the Word", and was aged 33 at the time (February 1987) that he composed this work.

He has recorded ten albums over the years, though the earlier ones are unfortunately out of print. He teaches extensively, as both a Minister of the Word and as a worship and worship music specialist, and co-authored the book "*Unto Perfection*" where the apostle's instruction to all Christians "...let us, therefore, go on unto perfection..." is examined in the context of the rest of scripture and of mortal living in the perfection of the "*Body of Christ*" rather than that of the imperfect individual bodies that we are and always shall be.

He ministers in a 'renewal' church whose teachings had their origins in pre-World War II Seattle's *Bethel Temple* under the leadership of W H Offiler, W W Patterson and R J Jackson. Missionaries were sent to Japan and Indonesia in the 1930s, taking and teaching the gospel of Christ; this activity being cut short in 1942 by World War II in the Pacific.

The Seattle message, coupled with some of the teachings from the Saskatchewan "*Latter Rain Revival*" of 1948, were brought by Ray Jackson and Dewey Burkett to Australia in the 1950s, and the composer's own church was formed over a number of years from the joining together of several congregations who felt the need for a unity of faith and doctrine according to God's will, following on to show their obedience to this biblical "word" to combine and meet in practical application of the "*Hope of Unity*" expressed in our penultimate song