

EASTER TIME

At the right time Christ died for the ungodly. (Rom 5:6)

PART I

Scene 1: Entry into Jerusalem

CHOIR: Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!

Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

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Hail! David's greatest son. All glory be.

Hail! Prophet, priest and King, for all to see.

Sing, all people sing. Celebrate the coming king,
riding on in pomp and majesty.

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!

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Waving palm branches, our welcome bring.

Worship, adore, bow before the king.

Hail! Oh prince of peace,
may your kingdom yet increase,
till you are the Lord of everything.

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!

Scene 2: Jerusalem

CHOIR: He went out teaching and proclaiming good news,
offending pharisees and orthodox jews.

They asked from where his own authority came,
seeking some reason to apportion some blame.

They're looking for some fatal flaw.

They just need half a chance and then they can't lose.

Then in the temple where the tables he turned,

fighting corruption and the profit it earned.
This holy temple is a palace of prayer.
But you have filled it with deceit everywhere.
just whitewashed tombs, empty filled rooms.
Religious leaders there were quite unconcerned.

Then further stories of a kingdom of peace,
warning that wickedness and war will increase;
and then foretelling his return from the sky,
giving the details of the who, what and why.
Eternal day? He knows the way.
From guilt and fear he has the perfect release.

He's the way, the truth, and the life.
He's the way, the truth, and the life.

But troubles brewing. Are the people confused?
This talk of new life. The high priest's not amused.
Chief priests and elders meet to plan and to plot.
Jesus was cool but they did not like it hot.
Must stamp him out. There is no doubt.
Must be a crime for which this man stands accused.
Must be a crime for which this man stands accused.
Must be a crime for which this man stands accused.

Scene 3: High Priest's house

CAIAPHAS: He claims to be the new Messiah.
He claims to be the chosen one.
Speaking of justice and a kingdom of peace
he claims to be God's son.

JUDAS: He claims to show a new way forward;
a future that will stand secure.
The crowds are flocking and believe when he speaks
of life for evermore.

CAIAPHAS: But soon they'll all be disillusioned.
His claims just can't be verified.

JUDAS: And then the mob will turn against the man

who took them for a ride.

CAIAPHAS AND JUDAS: We dare not risk an escalation.
This danger man we must defy.
For all our futures and for all of our sakes
it's clear that this young man must die.

Scene 4: The Last Supper

JESUS: Come share the bread and wine.
See how the two combine.
No more you'll share with me
till a new eternity.
My body is the bread.
The wine my blood soon shed.
Broken upon a tree;
remember this of me.
A covenant restored
by the precious blood outpoured.
A priceless gift is there,
loving grace for all to share.
Yet how is this repaid?
By a friend to be betrayed.
Thirty silver tokens buy
one more man to crucify.

CHOIR: A mission all complete.
For in triumph there's defeat.
One who loses wins the prize.
One who opens life's door dies.
One incarnate living word;
one the all embracing Lord.
One enthroned in splendour came,
freely took the blame

Scene 5: Mount of Olives

JESUS: Father, time is passing. Soon your glory will be seen.
And father, may all people see you in this Nazarene.
Father, can we find how we can take this cup from me?
Can we find a new way that will set the people free?

But father, only your will, there's no "my will" to be done.
Heavenly father, let your purpose now be seen in this, your son.

Scene 6: Gethsemane

CHOIR: There in the garden of Gethsemane,
a crowd arrived in some hostility,
And armed with torches, clubs and swords.
Whipped into frenzy by their lords.

JUDAS: Watch for the one I kiss.
The man you seek you cannot miss

JESUS: Daily I spoke within the temple square.
Yet no-one challenged me or sought me there.
Twelve legion angels are now standing by,
waiting commission from a word on high.
But what must happen is the only way to go.
It must be so.

Scene 7: High Priest's house

MAID: Surely I know you. You were are one of his crew.
You're always with him and you follow him too.

PETER: You are mistaken, I don't know what you mean.
I've never met this man they call Nazarene.
Just passing by. I must deny.
Just who this person is, I don't have a clue.

CHOIR: We're almost certain you are one of his own.
You speak just like him. You are almost his clone.

PETER: You have it wrong. He's very different from me.
I didn't know he came from north Galilee.
It's a mistake. Give me a break.
I do not know this man. Now leave me alone.
I do not know this man. Now leave me alone.

CAIAPHAS: Welcome Jesus. I have heard so much about you.
How you claim that mankind cannot live without you.
On you it seems our future stands.
The whole wide world is in your hands.
It operates at your commands.

Somehow, I doubt you.
But I fear your ministry has gone too far.
You're a threat to government, a rising star.
Normally, we would not care,
misguided men are everywhere.
But you've gone further than you dare,
a festering scar.

All your preaching, all your teaching, what's it for?
Why compare yourself with shepherds, lights, and doors?
Thinking you are highly bred,
you heal the sick and raise the dead,
but I think you a fake instead, and nothing more.

CHOIR: He claims to be the hope of ages past,
the present and the future still the same.
He promises a kingdom that will last.
How can this man support so great a claim?

CAIAPHAS: Well, what is your answer now?
Well, and what have you to say?

JESUS: For three years I have spoken out God's word.
There is no secret plan you do not know.
From mountain tops the message has been heard.
And all you say of me is clearly so.

CAIAPHAS: Blasphemy, he has spoken blasphemy.
Blasphemy, he has spoken blasphemy.
What further need have we for witnesses.

From his own lips the man confesses all.
His guilty plea may be his final breath.
CHOIR: His clarity will bring about his fall.
His crime deserves the punishment of death.

CHOIR: Bethlehem's child. Bethlehem's child.
How long the path you tread?
Distant your manger bed.
But clearly shown in your nativity,
you came to set men free,

leading in time to be
Calvary's man. Calvary's man.
A cruel cross awaits,
the key to heavens gates.
A sacrifice upon the altar laid.
The price of sin is paid.
But now you are
Reigning on high. Reigning on high.
A risen conquering son
triumphant victory won.
And soon we'll see you as the
Returning King. Returning King.
Claiming your own.
Building a throne.
In majesty, returning king.
Bethlehem's child.
Your light can't be concealed.
Your purpose now revealed.
Calvary's man.
Reigning on high.
Returning King.
Bethlehem's child.

PART II

Scene 8: The Praetorium

CHOIR: Calvary's hill, just a green hill, just beyond city walls.
Calvary's hill, deep foreboding as its beckoning calls.
For the place of the skull is a bitter pill
for the one who is destined to appear on Calvary's hill.

Calvary's hill, shades of torment and a dark mystery.
Calvary's hill, now the focus of all history.
Stark and bare in the shadows, an awesome chill
now await the arrival of the man of Calvary's hill.

CAIAPHAS: Pilate we have brought this man who breaks the law.
We ask you to sentence him and nothing more.
Just do what we're asking. Capital is best.
Give us what we ask of you and we will do the rest.

CHOIR: Oh have you seen him? Seen what he's doing?
His every action represents another crime.
He speaks rebellion in every sentence.
We've got to silence him and stop him in his prime.
He talks of hope. He talks of love.
But underneath there's a sinister claim.
It's an illusion, the life he offers.
Though all his healing is appealing,
its just part of wheeler dealing,
only now is he revealing his true aim.
What's more...

Oh have you seen him? Heard what he's saying?
His words are treason for he claims to be the king.
Yet only Caesar deserves that title.
But he says Caesar is a puppet on a string.
He speaks in code. He won't pay tax.
He says he came from a place in the sky.
We have no power, to pass the sentence.
His acts deserving, though un-nerving,
are no more than just self-serving.
For this nation's self-preserving he must die. Yeah!

PILATE'S WIFE: I had a dream and he appeared to me.
I had a dream and he was real.
He called my name.
Spoke of my shame.
Told of his power to cleanse and heal.
And as I looked a thousand angels sang,
praising the precious gift of love.
And then I saw
ten thousand more,
worship his father God above.

And I saw from his throne
love and mercy he has shown,
reaching down to save a fallen world in sin.

And then I saw a host all clothed in white,
washed in life's ever flowing stream.

Ransomed, restored, close to their Lord,
reigning with him or so it seemed,
in my dream.

PILATE: Jesus you are here to face all your accusers.
What have you to say to those who would destroy you?
I have the power to give you your life or pass you to these men.
They want to see you hang on a cross of shame till your life blood slowly
just ebbs away.

Why can you not answer?
I need to hear your side.
There must be more to it.
Why should all these men lie?

I leave it to your choice.
Now here is Barabbas.
Who would you rather have?
Barabbas or Jesus?

CHOIR: Give to us Barabbas.
We don't want this Jesus.

PILATE: What then shall I do with this, the man of Galilee.

CHOIR: Crucify him. Crucify him. Nail him to the tree.

PILATE: I can find no wrong in him to warrant your demands.
See I wash my hands of him, his life is in your hands.

CHOIR: Taken away they stripped and beat him there.
Put on a scarlet robe for him to wear.
With wreath of thorns this man was crowned.
Proclaimed him king to all around.
They had their little day
and then with scorn led him away.

And there upon the hill of Calvary stood
in dark solemnity the cross of wood,
on which his body nailed was left to hang
alone and helpless there, the son of man.
An awesome victim still of justice now denied,
was crucified.

Scene 9: Calvary

MARY: Why was he there? Why did he suffer? Wounded and hanging on a tree.

JOHN: Why was he there? Why take the burden? Why did he go to Calvary?

MARY & JOHN: He pays a debt he doesn't owe. Ends his life, nothing to show,
his work has been in vain.
Why was he there? Why end it this way.
Why leave a memory of a guilty stain?

CHOIR: Why was he there? Why did he suffer? Why that dark cross from which he cried?

MARY: Why was he there? Shamed, bowed and broken?
An ending so undignified.

MARY, JOHN & CHOIR: And it's too late to find what was really on his mind,
his life becomes a loss.
Why was he there? Why no compassion?
Why did God leave him on a cruel cross?

CHOIR: The bitter pain and sorrow of innocence betrayed:
but there's a bright tomorrow, the ransom has been paid.
Defeated, yet victorious, and over death has won.
In dying yet most glorious, a triumph has begun.

A new hope has been spoken through God's incarnate word.
The chains of death now broken and God with man restored.
The power of darkness shaking, all barriers broken down.
The eternal light is breaking with glory all around.

Scene 10: Resurrection

CHOIR: Early in the morning they brought spices to anoint the body of Jesus where he lay.
Early in the morning as they hurried to the graveyard,
there they noticed that the stone had rolled away.

Why seek the living among the dead? He is not here. He has risen. He has risen, as he said.

Early in the morning they discovered how amazing the meaning of that first Easter day,
that first Easter day.

CHOIR: Another day is dawning.
Another bright new morning.
A living hope for all to see.
A perfect work completed.
The enemy defeated now.

Another day is dawning.
Another bright new morning.

Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!
Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

A brighter light is beaming.
The son has set the world ablaze
to share his endless song of praise.