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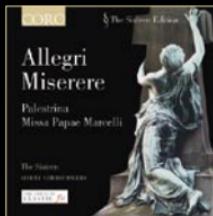


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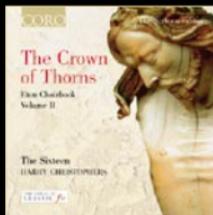
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CORO

§ The Sixteen Edition

Esther

George Frederic Handel

LYNDA RUSSELL

NANCY ARGENTA

MICHAEL CHANCE

TOM RANDLE

MARK PADMORE

MICHAEL GEORGE

The Sixteen

The Symphony of Harmony and Invention

HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

THE VOICES OF CLASSIC *fm*

To find out more about The Sixteen, concerts, tours, and to buy CDs, visit www.thesixteen.com COR16019



The art of recording is a highly specialist technique and one which ultimately succeeds or fails on the relationship between conductor, producer and engineer. I consider myself highly fortunate that over the years I have forged a unique partnership with Mark Brown and Mike Hatch. Those of you who listen regularly to our discs will have noted that they have been The Sixteen's recording team for the majority.

We find it very important to vary our style of recording and we always discuss what sound we are attempting to achieve.

Do we want to be clean and precise or full of ambience? Are we attempting to recreate St Mark's Venice or the Chapel Royal? Unfortunately, there are remarkably few suitable recording venues in London; we have to rely mainly on churches because, after all, most of the music we record is sacred and therefore in need of a church acoustic. In addition, the setting has to be conducive to bringing the best out of the performers.

Handel's oratorios vary greatly in their presentation. In many ways, Esther is a rarity; it is by far the most intimate, not surprisingly as it was composed for the Duke of Chandos. The Duke's Palladian palace near the village of Edgware had not been completed in time for the first performance so this may have taken place (as did Acis and Galatea) in the intimate surroundings of a small church, St Lawrence, Whitchurch. We decided, therefore, that we should attempt to convey that intimacy of performance on disc; so we performed in the round with microphones in the middle, the orchestra in front of me, the choir behind and the soloists alongside. The result is everything that chamber music should be where players and singers can enjoy every aspect of Handel's genius in close proximity.

Harry Christophers,

SOLOISTS

ESTHER
SOPRANO
Lynda Russell

ISRAELITE WOMAN
SOPRANO
Nancy Argenta

PRIEST OF THE
ISRAELITES ALTO
Michael Chance

AHASUERUS/SECOND
ISRAELITE TENOR
Tom Randle

MORDECAI/FIRST
ISRAELITE TENOR
Mark Padmore

OFFICER/FOURTH
ISRAELITE TENOR
Matthew Vine

HABDONAH/THIRD
ISRAELITE TENOR
Simon Berridge

HAMAN BASS
Michael George

DUET BASS 1
Robert Evans

DUET BASS 2
Simon Birchall

HARRY CHRISTOPHERS THE SIXTEEN

SOPRANO
Fiona Clarke
Libby Crabtree
Sally Dunkley
Helen Groves
Carys Lane
Rebecca Outram

ALTO
Andrew Giles
Michael Lees
Philip Newton
Christopher Royall

TENOR
Simon Berridge
Philip Cave
David Roy
Matthew Vine

BASS
Simon Birchall
Robert Evans
Timothy Jones
Francis Steele

THE SYMPHONY OF HARMONY AND INVENTION

VIOLIN 1
David Woodcock
(*Leader*)
Walter Reiter
James Ellis
Kirsten Linder
Claire Sansom

VIOLIN II
William Thorp
Peter Fender
Stefanie Heichelheim
Pauline Smith

VIOLA
Nicholas Logie
David Brooker

CELLO
Susan Sheppard
Imogen Seth-Smith

BASS
Peter Buckoke

OBOE
Anthony Robson

BASSOON
Sally Jackson
Noel Rainbird

HORN
Roger Montgomery
Martin Lawrence

TRUMPET
Crispian Steele-Perkins

HARPSICHORD
Ian Watson

ORGAN
Laurence Cummings

THEORBO
Robin Jeffrey

TRIPLE HARP
Jan Walters

CD1

- [1] *Overture* ANDANTE –
LARGHETTO – ALLEGRO 7.00

SCENE 1

- [2] *Recitative*
HABDONAH, HAMAN
“Tis greater far to spare” 0.38

- [3] *Aria* HAMAN
“Pluck root and branch
from out the land” 1.56

- [4] *Recitative*
PERSIAN OFFICER
“Our souls with
ardour glow” 0.08

- [5] *Chorus*
“Shall we the God
of Israel fear?” 1.38

SCENE 2

- [6] *Recitative*
FIRST ISRAELITE
“Now persecution shall
lay by her iron rod” 0.17

- [7] *Aria*
“Tune your harps to
cheerful strains” 3.53

- [8] *Chorus*
“Shall we of servitude
complain” 1.20

- [9] *Aria* ISRAELITE WOMAN
“Praise the Lord with
cheerful noise” 5.35

- [10] *Recitative*
ISRAELITE WOMAN
“O God, who from the
suckling’s mouth” 0.20

- [11] *Aria* SECOND ISRAELITE
“Sing songs of praise,
bow down the knee” 3.33

- [12] *Chorus*
“Shall we of servitude
complain” 1.17

SCENE 3

- [13] *Recitative*
PRIEST OF THE ISRAELITES
“How have our sins
provoked the Lord!” 1.00

- [14] *Chorus*
“Ye sons of Israel mourn” 2.01

- [15] *Aria* PRIEST OF THE
ISRAELITES
“O Jordan, Jordan,
sacred tide” 6.48

- [16] *Chorus*
“Ye sons of Israel mourn” 2.07

OBOE SONATA IN G
MINOR (HWV 404)
ANTHONY ROBSON, OBOE

- [17] *Andante* 2.20

- [18] *Allegro* 1.48

- [19] *Adagio* 1.08

- [20] *Allegro* 2.28

Total timing: 47.31

CD2

SCENE 4

- [1] *Recitative*
ESTHER, MORDECAI
“Why sits that sorrow
on thy brow?” 0.58

- [2] *Aria* Mordecai
“Dread not, righteous
Queen, the danger” 4.10

- [3] *Recitative* ESTHER
“I go before the King to stand” 0.15

- [4] *Aria* ESTHER
“Tears assist me, pity moving” 2.59

- [5] *Chorus*
“Save us, O Lord” 0.58

SCENE 5

- [6] *Recitative*
AHASUERUS, ESTHER
“Who dares intrude
into our presence” 1.16

- [7] *Duet* ESTHER, AHASUERUS
“Who calls my parting soul
from death?” 2.30

- [8] *Aria* AHASUERUS
“O beauteous Queen,
unclose those eyes!” 6.43

- [9] *Recitative* ESTHER
“If I find favour in thy sight” 0.20

- [10] *Aria* AHASUERUS
“How can I stay when
love invites?” 3.21

- [11] *Recitative* THIRD
ISRAELITE, FOURTH ISRAELITE
“With inward joy his visage glows” 0.18

- [12] *Chorus*
“Virtue, truth and innocence” 2.39

- [13] *Arioso* PRIEST
OF THE ISRAELITES
“Jehovah, crown’d
with glory bright” 1.33

- [14] *Chorus*
“He comes, he comes
to end our woes” 4.00

SCENE 6

- [15] *Recitative*
AHASUERUS, ESTHER
“Now, O Queen,
thy suit declare” 1.27

- [16] *Arioso* HAMAN
“Turn not, O Queen,
thy face away” 2.31

- [17] *Aria* ESTHER
“Flat’ring tongue,
no more I hear thee!” 5.00

- [18] *Recitative* AHASUERUS
“Guards, seize the traitor,
bear him hence!” 0.35

- [19] *Aria* HAMAN
“How art thou fall’n
from thy height!” 5.05

- [20] *Chorus*
“The Lord our enemy has slain” 11.00

Total timing: 57.49

George Frideric Handel Esther

Following the famous Water Concert of July 1717, Handel disappeared from the London scene for nearly a year and a half. The only references to him during that period place him at Cannons, the estate of James Brydges, Earl of Carnarvon.

Brydges, who with his cousin and second wife, the former Cassandra Willoughby (1670-1735), seems to have entertained a genuine though perhaps not deep interest in music, also supported a private musical establishment, the ‘Cannons Concert’. Beginning in late 1715 with the hiring of the cellist, librettist and composer Nicola Francesco Haym (1678-1727), the ensemble grew until by 1720 it contained some 24 members.

During his time at Cannons, which may have lasted until February 1719, Handel composed the eleven so-called ‘Chandos Anthems’ (more accurately termed ‘Anthems for Cannons’), the ‘Chandos’ Te Deum in B flat major, some chamber works, and a number of keyboard pieces. During 1718 he also seems to have undertaken a pair of contrasting works on a larger scale. The first, referred to in several early sources as ‘The Pastoral’, later became known as *Acis and Galatea*, HWV 49a. The second, initially known as ‘The Oratorium’, eventually became established as *Esther*, HWV 50a. These permanent names were probably not attached to the two works until they were performed in London in 1732. A single manuscript copy of HWV

50a dating from the mid-1720s calls the work 'Haman & Mordecai, a Masque', and this was the title used by Friedrich Chrysander in his 1882 edition for the Handel Gesellschaft.

The genesis of *Esther* remains unclear. The libretto is based on Racine's biblical play of the same title, first performed in 1689 but published in an English version by Thomas Brereton as recently as 1715. The earliest attribution of Handel's libretto, by Viscount Perceval in 1732, is to Alexander Pope (1688-1744), while some word-books from the 1740s identify the author as the physician Dr. John Arbuthnot (1667-1735), who together with Pope, John Gay (1685-1732) and Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), was a member of the Scriblerus Club, and who seems to have introduced Handel to Brydges. It has been suggested that the libretto of *Esther* was undertaken by Arbuthnot with oversight and revision by Pope.

The autograph score of *Esther*, though fragmentary and lacking the end of the final chorus where Handel customarily wrote the date of completion, provides evidence of substantial revision. As Winton Dean first noted, Handel seems to have composed more than half the work before returning to the beginning and setting additional texts which apparently had been inserted to expand the libretto. The revisions help somewhat to clarify the plot and the motivations of the characters. They also contain the lines which Dean identifies as being most like Pope's in style.

Regardless of who was responsible for the libretto, it remains problematic. Nowhere is it made clear that Ahasuerus has divorced his first

wife for disobeying Persian court law or that he has married Esther as his second wife without knowing that she is a member of the exiled Jewish community living in his country. Nor is it stated that Haman, the King's chief minister, has demanded that all who attend at court should bow down to him and that Esther's kinsman Mordecai has refused to do so because Haman is a descendant of the Israelites' ancient enemies, the Amalekites. The authors may have felt that the story of Esther was sufficiently well known from the Bible and from Racine's telling to dispense with this information, but its omission obscures Esther's reasons for fearing to appear before Ahasuerus unsummoned, and it deprives Haman of a motive for his vendetta against the Israelites.

The libretto's structural problems are more serious. Although it is written in one continuous act with six scenes, Esther herself does not appear until scene 4. Her entrance is preceded by an inordinate amount of Israelite rejoicing over her recent marriage and lamenting over their forthcoming doom. Ahasuerus, when he eventually enters in scene 5, sings his only three numbers – a duet followed by two arias – in rapid succession. Finally, the anthem of rejoicing which concludes the oratorio seems out of proportion to the rest of the work.

Handel's music in its final form goes a long way toward overcoming many of these difficulties. In the first place, he exploits the sounds available from his small orchestra in surprising ways, introducing new vocal and instrumental colours gradually. Thus, in scene 2, 'Tune your harps'

(which was in the first compositional layer) is scored for tenor accompanied by oboe and pizzicato strings.

The next aria, 'Praise the Lord' (from the second compositional layer), calls for treble with strings without double bass but with harp. The alto voice makes its first solo appearance in scene 3, while in Ahasuerus' aria in scene 5 we hear paired bassoons for the first time. The horns make their entrance to thrilling effect in the concluding chorus to scene 5, 'He comes to end our woes', while the trumpet is reserved for the finale to the entire work where it functions in a rondo-like chorus.

In the second place, the choruses in *Esther*, whether of rejoicing or mourning, are musically distinguished and, even allowing for the somewhat rambling nature of the finale, dramatically apt. Finally, at the two moments of confrontation – that between Esther and Ahasuerus in scene 5 and between Esther and Haman in scene 6 – Handel supplied music of genuine dramatic intensity. All in all, despite the shortcomings of the libretto and the extensive re-use of earlier material – nine of the twenty-one arias and concerted movements are borrowed from the recently completed Brookes Passion, HWV 48 – *Esther* in its original form succeeds remarkably well as a musical and dramatic entity.

Handel's musical revisions provide clues to the early history of *Esther*. The first compositional layer is scored for canto, alto, bass, two tenors, accompanied by a single oboe, paired violins and bassoons, and undesignated bass instruments (plus, presumably, an organ or harpsichord).

The second layer of music for *Esther* calls for additional canto and bass soloists, as well as paired horns, viola, trumpet and harp.

It seems clear that Handel completed his revisions in 1718, because the copy which was made for Elizabeth Legh (c.1695-1734), one of Handel's most enthusiastic early patrons, gives that date both on the title page and in her handwritten endorsement. Of course, the complete work could have been performed in that year if the Cannons Concert were augmented by singers and players from London. This scenario seems unlikely, however, in view of Brydges' customary practice.

The only explanation which seems to fit the circumstances is that Handel composed the first layer of music to *Esther* in 1718, anticipating a performance by the Cannons Concert in that year. For some reason – perhaps because the nature of the story itself demanded a larger canvas, or because Brydges anticipated expanding his musical establishment – the libretto was revised and additional music was written for forces which could be expected to be available at some future date.

During the 1720s, Handel was occupied with the composition and performance of Italian opera and his Cannons compositions seem to have been largely forgotten; nevertheless, copies of *Esther* got abroad and occasional performances are known. For example, on 1 May 1724 Claver Morris, the physician and avid amateur musician from Wells, notes in his diary that he 'perform'd very justly Hendl's Oritorio, & some of his Anthems' while on a visit to the Harrington family at Kelston, near Bath. Likewise, a benefit concert for the Bristol

organist Nathaniel Priest on 22 November 1727 included several songs ‘ in an Oratoria of Mr. Handell’s’.

So far as is known, *Esther* was not performed in London until 23 February 1732 when Bernard Gates, Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal, arranged the first of three performances at the Crown and Anchor Tavern to celebrate Handel’s birthday.

The version performed on this occasion was apparently the original Cannons form, divided into three acts with the instrumental introduction to the Coronation Anthem ‘Zadok the Priest’ inserted before the final chorus. According to the published libretto the fourteen solo roles were divided among ten singers in a manner similar but not identical to that employed in the present recording. Likewise the soloists were augmented by ‘a number of voices from the Choirs of St. James’s (i.e. the Chapel Royal) and Westminster (Abbey)’ for the choruses.

A pirate public performance of *Esther* given at the Great Room in York Buildings, Villiers Street on 20 April 1732 prompted Handel to mount a revised and expanded version of his own at the King’s Theatre on 2 May. It featured the insertion of portions of the Coronation Anthems ‘Zadok the Priest’ and ‘My Heart is Inditing’, together with additional arias and choruses to newly written texts by Samuel Humphreys (c1698-1738). This version, HWV 50b which Handel revived several times (often with alterations) bears little resemblance to the compact ‘Oratorium’ in six scenes which he wrote for Cannons in 1718 and which Gates performed in 1732.

The Oboe Sonata in G Minor, HWV 404, is a piece from the Cannons period about which very little is known. Handel’s autograph is lost, and the work survives only in a single manuscript copy made for Elizabeth Legh and now in the Earl of Malmesbury’s collection. It seems clearly to be identical to the ‘Sonata for 2 Violins, 1 Hautboi and Bass composed by Mr. Handel’ listed as item 117 in the Catalogue of the Cannons Music Library preserved in the Huntingdon Library. There can be no doubt of Handel’s authorship. The first movement borrows heavily from the aria ‘Cara pianta co’ miei pianti’ in the cantata *Apollo e Dafne*, HWV 122, and Handel later used the same material in the coro ‘Dall’ orror di nottecieca’ in the opera *Alcina*, HWV 34. The last movement is a version of the fugal second movement of the keyboard Suite ~8 in F Minor, HWV 433, published in the *Suites de Pièces pour le Clavecin* of 1720 but almost certainly composed during the Cannons period.

The original function of the Sonata in G Minor is unknown. It may have been one of the ‘Overtures to be plaied before the first lesson’ of Morning Prayer which Brydges told Dr. Arbuthnot that Handel was composing in September 1717. It seems more likely that it was intended for the sort of evening entertainment described by Brydges’ cousin William of Tyberton, Herefordshire, in January 1718: *After Supper we drank 2 or 3 glasses of Wine whilst the Musிக்க Instruments wre Tuned, and then wre entertained with a Consort for an hour or more.*

GRAYDON BEEKS, JR.

CD1

1 Overture

Andante

Larghetto

Allegro

SCENE 1

2 Recitative

Habdonah

‘Tis greater far to spare, than to destroy.

Haman

I’ll hear no more; it is decreed,

All the Jewish race shall bleed.

Hear and obey, what Haman’s voice commands.

Hath not the Lord of all the East

Giv’n all his power into my hands?

Hear, all ye Nations far and wide,

Which own our monarch’s sway,

Hear and obey.

3 Aria

Haman

Pluck root and branch from out the land:

Shall I the God of Israel fear?

Let Jewish blood dye ev’ry hand,

Nor age nor sex I spare.

Raze, raze their temples to the ground,

And let their place no more be found.

4 Recitative

Persian Officer

Our souls with ardour glow

To execute the blow.

5 Chorus

Shall we the God of Israel fear?

Nor age nor sex we’ll spare.

Pluck root and branch from out the land,

Nor age nor sex we’ll spare.

SCENE 2

6 Recitative

First Israelite

Now persecution shall lay by her iron rod;

Esther is Queen, and Esther serves the living

God.

7 Aria

*Tune your harps to cheerful strains,
Moulder idols into dust!
Great Jehovah lives and reigns,
We in great Jehovah trust.*

8 Chorus

*Shall we of servitude complain,
The heavy yoke and galling chain?*

9 Aria

Israelite Woman

*Praise the Lord with cheerful noise,
'Wake my glory, 'wake my lyre!
Praise the Lord each mortal voice,
Praise the Lord, ye heav'nly choir!
Zion now her head shall raise:
Tune your harps to songs of praise!*

10 Recitative

Israelite Woman

*O God, who from the suckling's mouth
Ordainest early praise:
Of such as worship thee in truth,
Accept the humble lays.*

11 Aria

Second Israelite

*Sing songs of praise, bow down the knee;
Our chains we slight,
Our yoke is light,
The worship of our God is free.
Zion again her head shall raise,
Tune all your harps to songs of praise!*

12 Chorus

Israelites

*Shall we of servitude complain,
The heavy yoke and galling chain?*

SCENE 3

13 Recitative

Priest of the Israelites

*How have our sins provoked the Lord!
Wild persecution has unsheath'd the sword:
Haman hath sent forth his decree:
The songs of Israel all
Shall in one ruin fall.
Methinks I hear the mother's groans,
While babes are dashed against the stones!
I hear the infant's shriller screams,
Stabb'd at the mother's breast!
Blood stains the murd'rer's vest,
And through the city flows in streams.*

14 Chorus

*Ye sons of Israel, mourn,
Ye never to your country shall return!*

15 Aria

Priest of the Israelites

*O Jordan, Jordan, sacred tide,
Shall we no more behold thee glide
The fertile vales along?
As in our great forefathers' days,
Shall not thy hills resound with praise
And learn our holy song?*

16 Chorus

*Ye sons of Israel, mourn.
Ye never to your country shall return!*

OBOE SONATA IN G MINOR (HWV 404)

Anthony Robson, oboe

17 Andante

18 Allegro

19 Adagio

20 Allegro

CD2

SCENE 4

1 Recitative

Esther

*Why sits that sorrow on thy brow?
Why is thy rev'rend head
With mournful ashes spread?
Why is the humble sackcloth worn?
Speak, Mordecai, my kinsman, friend,
Speak, and let Esther know
Why all this solemn woe?*

Mordecai

*One fate involves us all!
Haman's decree,
To strike at me,
Hath said that ev'ry Jew shall fall.
Go, stand before the King with weeping eye.*

Esther

Who goes unsummon'd, by the laws shall die.

2 Aria

Mordecai

*Dread not, righteous Queen, the danger;
Love will pacify his anger;
Fear is due to God alone.
Follow great Jehovah's calling!
For thy kindred's safety falling,
Death is better than a throne.*

3 Recitative

Esther

*I go before the King to stand.
Stretch forth, O King, thy scepter'd hand!*

4 Aria

Esther

*Tears assist me, pity moving,
Justice cruel fraud reproving.
Hear, O God! thy servant's prayer.
Is it blood that must atone?
Take, O take my life alone,
And thy chosen people spare.*

5 Chorus

*Save us, O Lord,
And blunt the wrathful sword!*

SCENE 5

6 Recitative

Ahasuerus

*Who dares intrude into our presence without
our leave?
It is decreed,
He dies for this audacious deed.
Hah! Esther there!
The law condemns, but love will spare.*

Esther

My spirits sink, alas! I faint.

Ahasuerus

*Ye powers, what paleness spreads her beauteous
face!
Esther, awake, thou fairest of thy race.
Esther, awake and live, 'tis my command!
Behold the golden sceptre in my hand,
Sure sign of grace.
The bloody stern decree
Was never meant, my Queen, to strike at thee.*

7 Duet

Esther

Who calls my parting soul from death?

Ahasuerus

Awake, my soul, my life, my breath!

Esther

Hear my suit, or else I die.

Ahasuerus

Ask, my Queen, can I deny?

8 Aria

Ahasuerus

*O beauteous Queen, unclosethose eyes!
My fairest shall not bleed;
Hear love's soft voice that that bids thee rise,
And bids thy suit succeed.
Ask, and 'tis granted from this hour;
Who shares our heart, shall share our power.*

9 Recitative

Esther

*If I find favour in thy sight,
May the great Monarch of the East
Honour my feast,
And deign to be his servant's guest.
The King, and Haman, I invite.*

10 Aria

Ahasuerus

*How can I stay, when love invites?
I come, my Queen, to chaste delights.
With joy, with pleasure I obey,
To thee I give the day.*

11 Recitative

Third Israelite

*With inward joy his visage glows,
He to the Queen's apartment goes.*

Fourth Israelite

*Beauty has his fury charm'd,
And all his wrath disarm'd.*

12 Chorus

*Virtue, truth, and innocence
Shall ever be her sure defence.
She is Heaven's peculiar care,
Propitious Heaven will hear her prayer.*

13 Arioso

Priest of the Israelites

*Jehovah, crown'd with glory bright,
Surrounded with eternal light,
Whose ministers are flames of fire:
Arise, and execute thine ire!*

14 Chorus

*He comes, he comes to end our woes,
And pour his vengeance on our foes.
Earth trembles, lofty mountains nod!
Jacob, arise to meet thy God!
He comes, he comes to end our woes,
And pour his vengeance on our foes.*

SCENE 6

15 Recitative

Ahasuerus

*Now, O Queen, thy suit declare;
Ask half my Empire, and 'tis thine.*

Esther

*O gracious King, my people spare!
For in their lives, you strike at mine.
Reverse the dire decree!
The blow is aimed at Mordecai and me.
And is the fate of Mordecai decreed,
Who, when the ruffian's sword
Sought to destroy my Royal Lord,
Brought forth to light the desperate deed?*

Ahasuerus

*Yes, yes, I own:
To him alone
I owe my life and throne.
Say then, my Queen, who dares pursue
The life to which reward is due?*

Esther

*'Tis Haman's hate
That signed his fate.*

Ahasuerus

*I swear by yon great globe of light
Which rules the day, that Haman's sight
Shall never more behold the golden ray!*

16 Arioso

Haman

*Turn not, O Queen, thy face away.
Behold me, prostrate on the ground!
O speak, his growing fury stay,
Let mercy in thy sight be found!*

17 Aria

Esther

*Flatt'ring tongue, no more I hear thee!
Vain are all thy cruel wiles!
Bloody wretch, no more I fear thee,
Vain thy frowns, and vain thy smiles!
Tyrant, when of power possess'd;
Now thou tremblest when distress'd.*

18 Recitative

Ahasuerus

*Guards, seize the traitor, bear him hence!
Death shall reward the dire offence.
To Mordecai be honour paid:
The Royal garment bring;
My diadem shall grace his head;
Let him in triumph through the streets be led,
Who sav'd the King.*

19 Aria

Haman

*How art thou fall'n from thy height!
Tremble, ambition, at the sight!
In power let mercy sway.
When adverse fortune is thy lot,
Lest thou by mercy be forgot,
And perish in that day.*

20 Chorus

*The Lord our enemy has slain,
Ye sons of Jacob, sing a cheerful strain!
Sing songs of praise, bow down the knee.
The worship of our God is free!
The Lord our enemy has slain,
Ye sons of Jacob, sing a cheerful strain!
For ever blessed be thy holy name,
Let heav'n and earth his praise proclaim.*

Solo

Alto

*Let Israel songs of joy repeat,
Sound all ye tongues Jehovah's praise.
He plucks the mighty from his seat,
And cuts off half his days.*

Chorus

*For ever blessed be thy holy name,
Let heav'n and earth his praise proclaim.*

Duet

Esther, Mordecai

*The Lord his people shall restore,
And we in Salem shall adore.*

Chorus

*For ever blessed be thy holy name,
Let heav'n and earth his praise proclaim.*

Duet

Bass 1, Bass 2

*Mount Lebanon his firs resigns,
Descend, ye Cedars, haste ye Pines,
To build the temple of the Lord,
For God his people has restored.*

Chorus

*For ever blessed be thy holy name,
Let heav'n and earth his praise proclaim.*

Producer: Mark Brown
Engineer: Mike Hatch (Floating Earth)
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