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**C** Choral Society

**MUSIC DIRECTOR: MARCIO DA SILVA**

**MENDELSSOHN**

# *Elijah*

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# TONIGHT'S CONCERT



## *ELIJAH MENDELSSOHN*

HELEN MAY: Soprano

NATHAN MERCIECA: Counter-Tenor

JOHN TWITCHEN: Tenor

JACK LAWRENCE-JONES: Baritone

DAVID MOORE: Organist

HELEN RIDOUT: Pianist

### **PART ONE**

**NUMBERS 1 - 20**

*~~INTERVAL~~*

### **PART TWO**

**NUMBERS 21 - 42**



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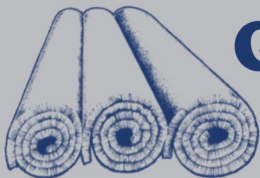
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# MARCIO DA SILVA

## MUSIC DIRECTOR

Marcio was born in Brazil in 1983 and began his music studies at the age of 9 with piano lessons and choral singing. He travelled to the United States where he studied in Arizona for six months, graduating from the renowned Phoenix Boys Choir in 1998. In 2006 Marcio received his Diplôme d'études Musicales in voice from the Conservatoire de Toulouse, France. He moved to Germany in April 2008 to join the Musikhochschule, Freiburg, where he studied choral and orchestral conducting under Professor Scott Sandmeier. He obtained his Bachelor of Music in July 2011 and, moving to London, secured his Master's degree in July 2013 at the Royal College of Music.



In 2014 Marcio founded Ensemble OrQuesta Opera Academy and has organised a number of highly regarded opera academies in venues across the UK each year. These have given many singers from across the world the opportunity to study and perform an operatic work at a high artistic level. During these intensive courses, Marcio and his team offer coaching in languages, vocal technique, style, interpretation and staging. Marcio himself is fluent in seven languages.

In recent years Marcio has conducted and directed over 30 fully staged productions of operas, ranging from less regularly performed works such as Lully's *Armide*, to popular works such as *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute* and *La Bohème* with a significant focus on Baroque opera repertoire. In these productions, Marcio usually serves as music and stage director, but he also acts as lighting designer and choreographer, and plays a central role as continuo and Baroque guitar player. Together with lutenist Cédric Meyer, Marcio has also undertaken a number of new editions of rarely performed Baroque operas including: *Xerse* (Cavalli), *Céphale et Procris* (Jacquet de La Guerre), *Euridice* (Caccini) and *L'Agisto* (Cavalli). In these editions, Marcio not only reviews the material from the manuscripts, but re-works the entire piece, producing a unique new version of each opera.

Marcio is the founder and artistic director of the Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra and Ensemble OrQuesta. He took up the baton for BCS in 2021 and also conducts the Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra Singers and the Hastings Philharmonic. He works extensively as a vocal coach and continues to enjoy performing professionally both as baritone and counter-tenor.



# HELEN MAY

## SOPRANO

Helen holds a Master's in Vocal Performance with Distinction from the Royal Academy of Music, where she was awarded a DipRAM for an outstanding final recital. She studied on the Royal Academy of Music's prestigious Preparatory Opera Course under the tutelage of Nuccia Focile, Iain Ledingham and Philip Sunderland. Her studies were generously supported by the William Gibbs Trust and the Josephine Baker Trust.

Helen's undergraduate studies in music took place at Cardiff University, where she held the David Lloyd Vocal Scholarship and was awarded the Geraint Evans Prize for outstanding recital performance. Helen is an alumna of Wells Cathedral School, one of the UK's five specialist music schools, where she was awarded a sixth-form place as a 'Special Provisions' musician. Helen has enjoyed public masterclasses with renowned singers such as Nelly Miricioiu, Toby Spence and Isobel Buchanan. She continues to benefit from private coaching with Nuccia Focile.

Helen is married to Marcio da Silva and is a member of the Ensemble OrQuesta Company. She is also the Company Manager of Ensemble OrQuesta and the General Manager of Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra. Through both organisations, Helen is active in developing a range of community-based Outreach projects.

# NATHAN MERCIECA

## COUNTER-TENOR

Nathan Mercieca started singing as a boy chorister in the London Oratory School Schola, with whom he recorded the soundtracks to, among others, *The Lord of The Rings* and *Finding Neverland*. He went on to study at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, where he was Senior Choral Exhibitioner, and subsequently completed postgraduate studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Theresa Goble.



He has appeared as a soloist at venues including the Wigmore Hall, LSO St. Luke's, West Road Concert Hall, St John's Smith Square, Cadogan Hall, the London Handel Festival, and the Aldeburgh Festival, working with groups such as Solomon's Knot, the Irish Baroque Orchestra (Peter Whelan), and Wond'rous Machine (Joel Sandelson).

Much in demand as an ensemble singer, Nathan has performed across Europe with, among others, Solomon's Knot, le Concert d'Astrée, Siglo de Oro, Sestina, the Southbank Sinfonia, and the Armonico Consort. In addition, he is a member of Sacred Bones, a consort of vocal soloists and sackbuts, with whom he won the inaugural Brian Nesbit Early Music Competition at their debut performance in March 2018; he has appeared with them at the London International Festival of Early Music and the Barbican Centre's 'Sound Unbound' festival. As a member of His Majesty's Chapel Royal he is honoured to have sung at several State events of international importance, including most recently the funeral of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Engagements in the 2022/23 season include a return with Solomon's Knot to the London International Festival of Early Music, as well as the Concertgebouw Bruges, and in a new solo-voices recording of the Motets by J. S. & J. C. Bach. He will also perform with the chorus of Le Concert d'Astrée under Emmanuelle Haïm in Barrie Kosky's production of Handel *Semele* at the Opéra de Lille.

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# JOHN TWITCHEN

## TENOR

London based tenor John Twitchen is a musical singer with a keen interest in both art song and opera. He completed his BMus in Vocal Performance at the Chichester Conservatoire with a first-class honours degree under the tuition and guidance of Ian Kennedy, but also spent a year in the London College of Music with Anthony Roden. John was awarded the silver medal in the Ealing Music Festival.



Growing up in Sussex and Kent, John took part in the Hastings Music Festival as a boy treble and won first prize with honours in the unaccompanied folk song competition. He then went on to perform for another nine years with singing tuition from Louise Winter placing second and third in various classes and competitions in Hastings, Sevenoaks, Eastbourne as well as Woodbridge in Suffolk. John continued having lessons with Louise up until the pandemic.

John's most recent engagements included chorus in *Beatrice di Tenda* with London Bel Canto Festival; tenor roles in Barefoot Opera's *Carmen*; and chorus in *Le Cid* and *La Bohème* with Dorset Opera Festival.

Other roles include chorus in *Roméo et Juliette* with Riverside Opera in Kingston; Orpheus in *Orphée aux Enfers* with Chichester Conservatoire Opera; as well as chorus in *Ceremony of Carols* with Glyndebourne Youth Opera.

# JACK LAWRENCE-JONES

## BARITONE

Jack is a classically trained baritone, based in London. He is a Britten Pears Young Artist, a London Festival Opera Young Artist, a Garsington Alvarez Young Artist and a Live Music Now Artist. He studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Jack sings in operas, concerts and recitals.



Recent concert work includes Fauré and Brahms *Requiem* (The Cornerstone Choir and Orchestra), Fauré and Duruflé *Requiem* (Bromley Philharmonic Choir), Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem* (New Sussex Singers), Mozart *Requiem* and *Coronation Mass*, and Haydn *The Creation* (Maldon Choral Society), Vaughan Williams *Five Mystical Songs* (London Concert Choir), and Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* for the Grenfell Tower Benefit Concert at the Cadogan Hall.

Recent recitals include recitals around England with Live Music Now, a solo recital at the Red House, Aldeburgh, and Jack's Aldeburgh Festival debut as part of a recital of Korngold and Schumann songs. As an ensemble singer, Jack trained with the Choir of Clare College, Cambridge, and has sung with groups including Ensemble Pygmalion and Tenebrae.

Jack is a member of Shards, a London based experimental vocal group. They released their first album, Find Sound, in August 2019 (available on iTunes, Spotify, Bandcamp, and more).

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# DAVID MOORE

## ORGANIST

David hails from Sussex and was educated at Warden Park School and Ardingly College. He read music at Oxford as organ scholar of Corpus Christi College and has also held organ scholarships at Sherborne Abbey and Truro Cathedral. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists.



Now living back in Sussex in the Horsham area, David teaches at The London Oratory School and Coloma Convent Girls' School and is Organist at St Mary's Beddington, having previously been Assistant Director of Music and Director of the Junior Choir at Hampstead Parish Church from 2008 to 2019.

In addition to being accompanist to Arun Choral Society, David is also accompanist to the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir.

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# HELEN RIDOUT

## PIANIST

Helen lives in Lewes, East Sussex. She is an experienced accompanist having studied at Chetham's School of Music and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where she won prizes for chamber music and accompaniment.

Helen is available for exams, coaching, concerts etc. She particularly enjoys playing in a jazz-style and also likes light music as well as the more traditional classical repertoire.



Helen's specialisms include Jazz, Instrumental Accompaniment, Vocal Accompaniment, Vocal Repetiteur and Musical Theatre.



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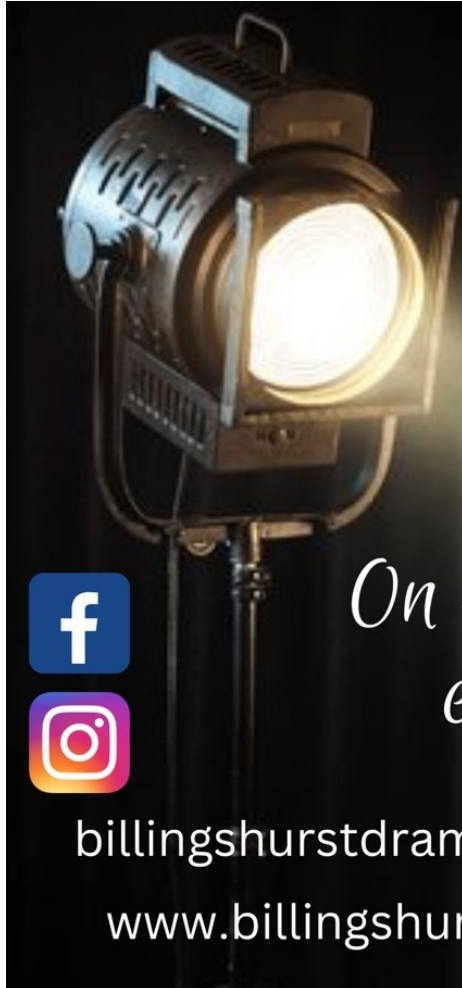
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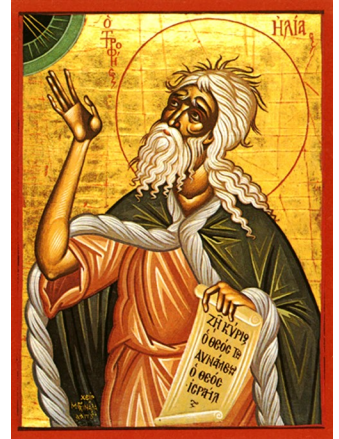




# MENDELSSOHN - *ELIJAH*

*“I imagined Elijah as a grand and mighty prophet of a kind we would do well to have in our own day: Powerful, zealous, but also harsh and angry and brooding; in contrast to the court sycophants and the rabble, indeed, in contrast to almost the whole world, and yet borne aloft on the wings of angels.”*

Felix Mendelssohn 1838



The last and greatest masterwork of Mendelssohn's vibrant life, *Elijah*, combines the focused energy of opera with the balance and universality of the oratorio. The piece is a dramatisation of the life and deeds of Elijah the Tishbite (as told in the first Book of Kings circa 9<sup>th</sup> century BC). He came to play a central rôle in all three major Abrahamic faith traditions: ruthless enforcer of the one true God, herald of the Messiah, a prophet of fire and brimstone, but capable of words of great tenderness.

The tale begins suddenly! Elijah appears without warning to Ahab and proclaims a dreadful curse: *For the king's corrupt and wicked governance, the people of Israel will suffer years of drought, sealed off from the Word of God.* As He withholds rain from their crops, so too will He turn a deaf ear to their prayers. An unmistakable “curse theme”, a series of falling tritones, (the most remote and dissonant of musical intervals) illustrates Elijah's awful words. It will return again and again throughout the work.

The overture depicts the famine with a rumbling theme, a pang of hunger that begins quietly, in the pit of the stomach, but rapidly intensifies into a general crisis. In the opening chorus and duet that follow (Nos.1-2), the people of Zion lament their suffering to an absent God. Obadiah, a prominent figure in Ahab's court and covert supporter of Elijah, exhorts the people to “rend your hearts, and not your garments,” reminding them that salvation lies within, not in the observance of hollow ritual (Nos.3-4). But his words are unavailing. The people stand ignored, mocked, with only the memory of God's mercy to sustain them (No.5).

Meanwhile, Elijah is spirited away to a distant brook. Protected from the famine, he is fed there by a flock of ravens and serenaded by angels (Nos.6-7). God dispatches him to the house of a widow woman to the north, who finds her food wondrously multiplied. When her son becomes sick, Elijah works a double miracle; restoring life to the child as well as faith to his mother (No.8). It is this widow, a foreigner, who first recognizes Elijah as God's truth-sayer. One of Mendelssohn's signature choruses, “Blessed are the men who fear Him” (No.9), concludes the scene.

After three years of drought, Elijah materialises again at Ahab's court (No.10), this time bearing a challenge. Jehovah (represented by Elijah) and the animist god Baal (worshipped by Ahab's queen, Jezebel) will receive sacrifices from their respective champions. The god who rains down fire to consume the sacrifice will be the one to reverse the course of the famine. Goaded by Elijah, the priests of Baal call upon their god three times, all to no avail (Nos.11-13). As the idolaters look on in stunned silence, the prophet humbly beseeches the God of Abraham (Nos.14-15) to reveal his power.

Elijah draws himself up to full strength, and an otherworldly blaze of light descends from heaven to consume his sacrifice (No.16). Prostrate with awe, the Israelites reaffirm the ancient covenant: “The Lord is God, The Lord is One!” and the Word is restored to them. Incited by Elijah, the people set upon and slaughter the wicked priests (No.17). A mournful alto aria (No.18, “Woe unto them”) ends the scene with an unexpected note of pathos.

Obadiah reminds Elijah of his people's suffering (No.19) and implores him to end the drought. Twice, using the same words Solomon used to consecrate the Temple, the prophet calls upon God's aid. A child is sent up to look for the promised rain. Each time, the lookout reports an absence of cloud. Able to stand the suspense no longer, Elijah summons God a third time. A cloud forms on the horizon, “like a man's hand,” and the people flock with excitement to witness the oncoming storm. The torrent is unleashed, and all Israel rejoices (No.20).

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## THE PATH WE CHOSE

By Becky Penfold MNAEA, Co-founder of  
Penfolds Estate Agents

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Part One of *Elijah* gives us a prophet confident in word, mighty in deed, and victorious over all foes. In Part Two, we experience the prophet's inner journey, as he grapples with feelings of isolation, futility, and the ingratitude of the people on whose behalf he has interceded.

The stirring soprano aria and chorus (Nos.21-22) that open this section galvanise the listener against the rough road that lies ahead. We are thrust immediately back into the action. Queen Jezebel, aggrieved at the loss of her priestly caste, poisons her subjects against Elijah (No.23). She spins his actions as a ruthless power grab: the prophet, shielded from the famine, used the people to wipe out his opposition, and now would dictate to the king himself. Whipped into a frenzy, the fickle mob sets out to hunt down and destroy Elijah (No.24). Stunned at this sudden reversal of fortune, the prophet flees. Given safe passage by Obadiah, he slinks into exile (No.25).

Just as Elijah had earlier cut off the people from physical and spiritual sustenance, he is now cut off by a thankless and backsliding nation, left to wander the desert. With the epic aria "It is enough" (No.26, a direct tracing of "Es ist vollbracht" ("It is finished") from Bach's *St. John Passion*), he begs God to end his unworthy life and sinks into a dejected sleep (No.27).

At this point, Mendelssohn springs some of his most inspired and thought provoking music. With two of his most sublime choruses (No.28, "Lift thine eyes" and No.29, "He watching over Israel"), the listener suddenly takes the vantage point of the angels who encamp around the slumbering prophet. (The composer hit upon the idea for setting "Lift thine eyes" as an a cappella angel trio while walking along the Birmingham industrial canal flush from the oratorio's première. For Mendelssohn, the search for beauty and order was compelling even in the grittiest of surroundings.)

An angel appears and orders the sullen prophet to the holy mountain, where he is to remain in a cave for forty days and forty nights (No.30). Elijah raises his fist to God, demanding a vanquishing miracle; none is forthcoming. The angel counsels patience (No.31), and the chorus lights a beacon of endurance (No.32). Another angel stands him up and dusts him off to prepare for a visitation from the divine (No.33). The entire natural world quivers at God's approach (No.34). Mendelssohn depicts the storm, the earthquake, the lightning, and the ferocious wind with all the expressive certainty of the great landscape artist he surely was. But God is not to be found in all this tumult. He instead reveals himself as the "still, small voice" of calm, steadying reason. Having achieved perfect serenity, we are brought before the presence of God (No.35).

The angels bear a message: Thousands of good men, hidden away by Obadiah and other loyalists, stand ready to come to Elijah's aid; he is to return to his task (No.36). Instilled with kindness and understanding to last him a lifetime, Elijah bids farewell to the plane of action (No.37) with one of the work's many great melodies. In the fiery chorus "Then did Elijah the prophet break forth" (No.38), Mendelssohn depicts the prophet's great deeds and blazing ascent into heaven, a departure as sudden as his original appearance.

The final scene of the oratorio offers a meditation on the place of Elijah in both the Old and New testaments, the correspondences to Jesus (No.39, invoking the parable of The Sower), his rôle in the prophecy surrounding the end of days (No.40, with its rendering of the "last trumpet"), and his rôle in restoring God's people to their sacred covenant (Nos.41-42, the final chorus-quartet-chorus triptych). Having begun the evening in a land cracked with drought, in the end we are invited to "come to the waters," to share in a common understanding. The curse theme is strongly recapitulated by the bass voices and instructions at the "Amen," this time to be thrillingly, irrevocably resolved. With this grand, unifying gesture, the curtain falls. Elijah's crisis of conscience, and his spiritual victory, have been ours.

*Elijah* was the culmination of Mendelssohn's life's work, the triumph of authenticity over brilliance! Around the stark figure of the quarrelsome prophet, with uncommonly robust writing for the chorus, and daring orchestration, the composer was able to construct a self-sustaining musical drama of the kind he had long sought. The composer gave us the grandeur and dignity expected from the oratorio form, but lit it ablaze with a riveting plot and memorable characters, most especially Elijah and the chorus, in its rôles as people, priests, angels and commentators. Great epics can only communicate if they do so in human terms.



# ELIJAH - THE TEXT

## PART ONE

### Introduction

#### *Elijah*

As God the Lord of Israel liveth, before whom I stand: There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

### Overture

#### 1. Chorus

##### *The People*

Help, Lord! Wilt Thou quite destroy us? The harvest now is over, the summer days are gone, and yet no power cometh to help us! Will then the Lord be no more God in Zion? The deeps afford no water, and the rivers are exhausted! The suckling's tongue now cleaveth for thirst to his mouth! The infant children ask for bread! And there is no one breaketh it to feed them

#### 2. Duet & Chorus

##### *The People*

Lord, bow Thine ear to our prayer . . .

##### *Two Women*

Zion spreadeth her hands for aid, and there is neither help nor comfort.

#### 3. Recitative

##### *Obadiah*

Ye people, rend your hearts and not your garments. For your transgressions: the prophet Elijah hath sealed the heavens through the word of God. I therefore say to ye: forsake your idols, return to God; for He is slow to anger, and merciful, and kind, and gracious, and repenteth Him of the evil.

#### 4. Aria

##### *Obadiah*

'If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me, ye shall ever surely find Me.' Thus saith our God. Oh! that I knew where I might find Him, that I might even come before His presence!

#### 5. Chorus

##### *The People*

Yet doth the Lord see it not, He mocketh at us; His curse hath fallen down upon us, His wrath will pursue us till He destroy us.

For He, the Lord our God, He is a jealous God, and He visiteth all the fathers' sins on the children to the third and the fourth generation of them that hate Him.

His mercies on thousands fall on all them that love him and keep his commandments.

#### 6. Recitative

##### *An Angel*

Elijah! Get thee hence, Elijah! Depart and turn thee eastward: thither hide thee by Cherith's brook. There shalt thou drink its waters; and the Lord thy God hath commanded the ravens to feed thee there: so do according unto His word.

#### 7. Double Quartet

##### *Angels*

For He shall give His angels charge over thee; that they shall protect thee in all ways thou goest; that their hands shall uphold and guide thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

### Recitative

#### *An Angel*

Now Cherith's brook is dried up, Elijah, rise and depart, and get thee to Zarephath; thither abide: for the Lord hath commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. And the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

#### 8. Recitative & Aria

##### *A Widow*

What have I to do with thee, O man of God? Art thou come to me, to call my sin unto remembrance? To slay my son art thou come thither? Help me, man of God! My son is sick! And his sickness is so sore, that there is no breath left in him! I go mourning all the day long; I lie down and weep at night. See mine affliction. Be thou the orphan's helper. Help my son! There is no breath left in him.

##### *Elijah*

Give me thy son. Turn unto her, O Lord my God, O turn in mercy; in mercy help this widow's son. For Thou art gracious, and full of compassion, and plenteous in mercy and truth. Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

##### *Widow*

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? There is no breath in him!

##### *Elijah*

Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

##### *Widow*

Shall the dead arise and praise thee?

##### *Elijah*

Lord, my God, O let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

##### *Widow*

The Lord hath heard thy prayer, the soul of my son reviveth!

##### *Elijah*

Now behold, thy son liveth.

##### *Widow*

Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that His word in thy mouth is the truth. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me?

##### *Both*

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, love Him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. O blessed are they who fear Him!

#### 9. Chorus

Blessed are the men who fear Him, they ever walk in the ways of peace. Through darkness riseth light, light to the upright. He is gracious, compassionate; He is righteous.

#### 10. Recitative & Chorus

##### *Elijah*

As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth, before whom I stand, three years this day fulfilled, I will show myself unto Ahab; and the Lord will then send rain again upon the earth.

##### *Ahab*

Art thou Elijah? Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

##### *The People*

Thou art Elijah, thou he that troubleth Israel!

*Elijah*

I never troubled Israel's peace: it is thou, Ahab, and all thy father's house. Ye have forsaken God's commands, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now send, and gather to me the whole of Israel unto Mount Carmel; there summon the prophets of Baal, and also the prophets of the groves who are feasted at Jezebel's table. Then we shall see whose God is the Lord.

*The People*

And then we shall see whose God is the Lord.

*Elijah*

Rise then, ye priests of Baal; select and slay a bullock, and put no fire under it; uplift your voices and call the god ye worship, and I will call upon the Lord Jehovah; and the god who by fire shall answer, let him be God.

*The People*

Yea, and the God who by fire shall answer, let him be God.

*Elijah*

Call first upon your god, your numbers are many. I, even I only, remain one prophet of the Lord. Invoke your forest gods, and mountain deities.

11. Chorus

*Priests of Baal*

Baal, we cry to thee, hear and answer us! Heed the sacrifice we offer! Hear us, Baal! Hear, mighty god! Baal, oh answer us! Baal, let thy flames fall and extirpate the foe!

12. Recitative & Chorus

*Elijah*

Call him louder, for he is a god! He talketh, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey; or, peradventure, he sleepeth: so awaken him! Call him louder, call him louder!

*Priests of Baal*

Hear our cry, O Baal! Now arise! Wherefore slumber?

13. Recitative & Chorus

*Elijah*

Call him louder! He heareth not. With knives and lancets cut yourselves after your manner. Leap upon the altar ye have made, call him and prophesy! Not a voice will answer you: none will listen, none heed you.

*Priests of Baal*

Baal! Baal! Hear and answer, Baal! Mark how the scorner derideth us! Hear and answer!

14. Aria

*Elijah*

Draw near, all ye people, come to me . . .

Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, this day let it be known that Thou art God, and that I am Thy servant! Lord God of Abraham! Oh show to all this people that I have done these things according to Thy word. Oh hear me, Lord, and answer me! Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, oh hear me and answer me, and show this people that Thou art Lord God. And let their hearts again be turned!

15. Quartet

*Angels*

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. He never will suffer the righteous to fall: He is at thy right hand. Thy mercy, Lord, is great, and far above the heavens. Let none be made ashamed, that wait upon Thee!

16. Recitative

*Elijah*

O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits; Thou, whose ministers are flaming fires: let them now descend!

*The People*

The fire descends from heaven! The flames consume his offering! Before Him upon your faces fall! The Lord is God, the Lord is God! O Israel hear! Our God is one Lord, and we will have no other gods before the Lord.

*Elijah*

Take all the prophets of Baal, and let not one of them escape you. Bring them down to Kishon's brook, and there let them be slain.

*The People*

Take all the prophets of Baal and let not one of them escape us: bring all and slay them!

17. Aria

*Elijah*

Is not His word like a fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock into pieces? For God is angry with the wicked every day. And if the wicked turn not, the Lord will whet His sword; and He hath bent His bow, and made it ready.

18. Aria

*A Woman*

Woe unto them who forsake Him! Destruction shall fall upon them, for they have transgressed against Him. Though they are by Him redeemed, yet have they spoken falsely against Him, from Him have they fled.

19. Recitative & Chorus

*Obadiah*

O man of God, help thy people! Among the idols of the Gentiles, are there any that can command the rain, or cause the heavens to give their showers? The Lord our God alone can do these things.

*Elijah*

O Lord, Thou hast overthrown Thine enemies and destroyed them. Look down on us from heaven, O Lord; regard the distress of Thy people. Open the heavens and send us relief: help, help Thy servant now, O God!

*The People*

Open the heavens and send us relief. Help, help Thy servant now, O God!

*Elijah*

Go up now, child, and look toward the sea. Hath my prayer been heard by the Lord?

*The Boy*

There is nothing. The heavens are as brass, they are as brass above me.

*Elijah*

When the heavens are closed up because they have sinned against Thee: yet if they pray and confess Thy Name, and turn from their sin when Thou didst afflict them: then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin! Help! send Thy servant help, O God!

*The People*

Then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin! Help! send Thy servant help, O God!

*Elijah*

Go up again, and still look toward the sea.

*The Boy*

There is nothing. The earth is as iron under me!

*Elijah*

Hearest thou no sound of rain? Seest thou nothing arise from the deep?

*The Boy*

No, there is nothing.

*Elijah*

Have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, O Lord my God! Unto Thee will I cry, Lord, my rock; be not silent to me; and Thy great mercies remember, Lord!

*The Boy*

Behold, a little cloud ariseth now from the waters; it is like a man's hand! The heavens are black with clouds and wind: the storm rusheth louder and louder!

*The People*

Thanks be to God for all his mercies!

*Elijah*

Thanks be to God, for He is gracious, and His mercy endureth forevermore!

20. Chorus

*The People*

Thanks be to God, He laveth the thirsty land! The waters gather, they rush along; they are lifting their voices! The stormy billows are high; their fury is mighty. But the Lord is above them, and Almighty!

~~INTERVAL~~

## PART TWO

21. Aria

Hear ye, Israel; hear what the Lord speaketh: 'Oh, hadst thou heeded my commandments!' Who hath believed our report: to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to him oppressed by tyrants: thus saith the Lord: 'I am He that comforteth; be not afraid, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee. Say, who art thou, that thou art afraid of a man that shall die; and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, who hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the earth's foundations? Be not afraid, for I, thy God, will strengthen thee.'

22. Chorus

'Be not afraid,' saith God the Lord. 'Be not afraid, thy help is near.' God, the Lord thy God, sayeth unto thee, 'Be not afraid!' Though thousands languish and fall beside thee, and tens of thousands around thee perish, yet still it shall not come nigh thee.

23. Recitative & Chorus

*Elijah*

The Lord hath exalted thee from among the people, and o'er His people Israel hath made thee king. But thou, Ahab, hast done evil to provoke Him to anger above all that were before thee; as if it had been a light thing for thee to walk in the sins of Jeroboam. Thou hast made a grove and an altar to Baal, and served him and worshipped him. Thou hast killed the righteous, and also taken possession. And the Lord shall smite all Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and He shall give Israel up, and thou shalt know He is the Lord.

*Jezebel*

Have ye not heard he hath prophesied against all Israel?

*Courtiers*

We heard it with our ears.

*Jezebel*

Hath he not prophesied also against the king of Israel?

*Courtiers*

We heard it with our ears.

*Jezebel*

And why hath he spoken in the name of the Lord? Doth Ahab govern the kingdom of Israel while Elijah's power is greater than the king's? The gods do so to me, and more; if by tomorrow about this time, I make not his life as the life of one of them whom he hath sacrificed at the brook of Kishon!

*Courtiers*

He shall perish!

*Jezebel*

Hath he not destroyed Baal's prophets?

*Courtiers*

He shall perish!

*Jezebel*

Yea, by the sword he destroyed them all!

*Courtiers*

He destroyed them all!

*Jezebel*

He also closed the heavens...

*Courtiers*

He also closed the heavens...

*Jezebel*

And called down a famine upon the land!

*Courtiers*

And called down a famine upon the land!

*Jezebel*

So go ye forth and seize Elijah, for he is worthy to die; slaughter him! do unto him as he hath done!

24. Chorus

*The People*

Woe to him! He shall perish; for he closed the heavens! And why hath he spoken in the Name of the Lord? Let the guilty prophet perish! He hath spoken falsely against our land and us, as we have heard with our ears. So go ye forth; seize on him! he shall die!

25. Recitative

*Obadiah*

Man of God, now let my words be precious in thy sight. Thus saith Jezebel; 'Elijah is worthy to die'. So the mighty gather against thee, and they have prepared a net for thy steps; that they may seize thee, that they say slay thee. Arise then, and hasten for thy life; to the wilderness journey. The Lord thy God doth go with thee: He will not fail thee, He will not forsake thee. Now begone, and bless me also.

*Elijah*

Though stricken, they have not grieved. Tarry here my servant: the Lord be with thee. I journey hence to the wilderness.

26. Aria

*Elijah*

It is enough! O Lord, now take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers! I desire to live no longer: now let me die, for my days are but vanity.

I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts, for the children of Israel have broken Thy covenant, and thrown down Thine altars, and slain all Thy prophets, slain them with the sword. And I, even I only am left: and they seek my life to take it away! It is enough! O Lord, now take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers. Now let me die, Lord, take away my life.

27. Recitative

See, now he sleepeth beneath a juniper tree in the wilderness, but the angels of the Lord encamp round about all them that fear Him.

28. Trio

*Angels*

Lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh help. Thy help cometh from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He hath said, thy foot shall not be moved, thy keeper will never slumber.

29. Chorus

*Angels*

He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps. Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish, He will quicken thee.

*Elijah*

O Lord, I have labored in vain; yea, I have spent my strength for nought.

O that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down; that the mountains would flow down at Thy presence, to make Thy name known to Thine adversaries, through the wonders of Thy works! O Lord, why hast Thou made them to err from Thy ways and hardened their hearts that they do not fear Thee? O that I now might die!

31. Aria

*An Angel*

Oh rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him, and He shall give thee thy heart's desires. Commit thy way unto Him, and trust in Him, and fret not thyself because of evil-doers.

32. Chorus

He that shall endure to the end, shall be saved.

33. Recitative

*Elijah*

Night falleth round me, O Lord! Be Thou not far from me! Hide not Thy face, O Lord, from me, my soul is thirsting for Thee, as a thirsty land.

*An Angel*

Arise now, get thee without, stand on the mount before the Lord: for there His glory will appear, and shine on thee! Thy face must be veiled, for He draweth near.

34. Chorus

Behold, God the Lord passed by! And a mighty wind rent the mountains around, brake in pieces the rocks, brake them before the Lord. But yet the Lord was not in the tempest.

Behold, God the Lord passed by! And the sea was upheaved, and the earth was shaken. But yet the Lord was not in the earthquake.

And after the earthquake there came a fire. But yet the Lord was not in the fire.

And after the fire there came a still small voice. And in that still voice onward came the Lord.

35. Recitative, Quartet & Chorus

*Angel*

Above Him stood the Seraphim, and one cried to another:

*Seraphim*

Holy, holy, holy is God the Lord, the Lord Sabaoth! Now His glory hath filled all the earth.

36. Recitative & Chorus

*Angels*

Go, return upon thy way! For the Lord yet hath left Him seven thousand in Israel, knees which have not bowed to Baal. Go, return upon thy way! Thus the Lord commandeth.

*Elijah*

I go on my way in the strength of the Lord. For Thou art my Lord; and I will suffer for Thy sake. My heart is therefore glad, my glory rejoiceth; and my flesh shall also rest in hope.

37. Aria

*Elijah*

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but Thy kindness shall not depart from me; neither shall the covenant of Thy peace be removed.

38. Chorus

Then did Elijah the prophet break forth like a fire; his words appeared like burning torches. Mighty kings by him were overthrown. He stood on the mount of Sinai and heard the judgments of the future, and in Horeb its vengeance. And when the Lord would take him away to heaven, lo! there came a fiery chariot with fiery horses; and he went by a whirlwind to heaven.

39. Aria

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in their heavenly Father's realm. Joy on their heads shall be for everlasting, and all sorrow and mourning shall flee away for ever.

40. Recitative

Behold, God hath sent Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children unto their fathers; lest the Lord shall come and smite the earth with a curse.

41. Chorus & Quartet

But the Lord from the North hath raised one, who from the rising of the sun shall call upon His Name and come on princes.

Behold, my servant and mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth!

On him the spirit of God shall rest: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of might and of counsel, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord: 'I have raised one from the North, who from the rising, on My Name shall call.'

O come everyone that thirsteth, O come to the waters: O come unto Him. O hear, and your souls shall live for ever.

42. Chorus

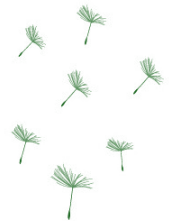
And then shall your light break forth as the light of morning breaketh: and your health shall speedily spring forth then: and the glory of the Lord ever shall reward you. Lord, our Creator, how excellent Thy Name is in all the nations! Thou fillest heaven with Thy glory.

Amen.



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Gill Parish  
Elizabeth Pratt  
Helen Pullen  
Sue Roberts  
Carol Terry  
Lou Thorpe  
Katharine Webb  
Izzy Wilson

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Kay Chordia  
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David Eckford  
Christopher Edwards  
Elizabeth Gregory  
Graham Johnson  
Chris Kirk  
Simon Moore  
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## BASS

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\* BCS are delighted to have as one of its members, a direct descendent of tonight's composer the great Felix Mendelssohn!

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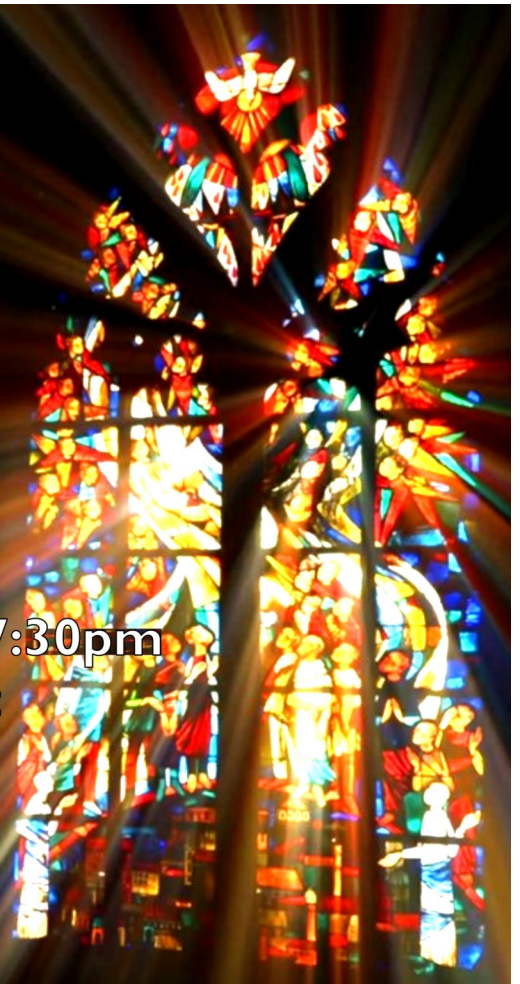
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Saturday 18<sup>TH</sup> November 2023 7:30pm  
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In order for BCS to flourish we rely on other sources of income. One of these is the generosity of our Patrons.

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For more information and to register your interest, please contact our Membership Secretary, Kate Nye: either by email: [membership@billingshurstchoralsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@billingshurstchoralsociety.org.uk) or call 07455 129077

BCS is grateful for the continuing support and loyalty of its Patrons during our 2022/2023 season.

Richard Collard  
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