

A Vision of the Tree of Life

for carillon

Carson Cooman (Op. 970)

A Vision of the Tree of Life (2012) for carillon was written for and is dedicated to Neil Thornock, faculty member at Brigham Young University School of Music, a wonderful composer himself, and an advocate for new carillon and organ music.

The work is a rhapsodic poem inspired by a vision appearing in the Book of Mormon (I Nephi 8), one of the most well-known visions from Mormon scripture. In the story, the prophet Lehi is exiled to the wilderness and sees this vision in a dream. The piece begins with “dreaming” music (which unfolds the material for the rest of the piece), and then follows it with brief sections specifically connected to particular images within the story:

Lehi sees “a tree with white fruit” and near the tree a “river of water.” He then sees “a rod of iron” alongside a narrow path and “numberless concourses of people” pressing forward so that they might stay on the path. A mist of darkness arises and only those who cling to the rod of iron are able to stay on the path.

The vision is often viewed as a parable in which the rod of iron represents the word of God, and only those who cling to it are able to stay on the path (to salvation).

After sections that depict the opening images of the tree and water, a sturdy theme is presented that symbolizes the “rod of iron.” Faster music begins symbolizing the “numberless concourses of people,” and finally under it appears the “rod of iron” theme. After this reaches a climax, there is a return to the opening “dreaming” music before a pealing coda representing the joyous praise of God.

Though not of the Mormon faith or background myself, like many composers of the past, I have often found artistic stimulation from exploring the belief of other faith traditions.

Carson Cooman
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Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

20

5 *p* (*p*) *mp* *f*

mp *p* *pp* *mp* *f*

26 (...a tree with white fruit...)

sub. p (*p*) *mf*

29

f

33 (...a river of water...)

f 5 5 5 5 5

35

5 5 5 5 5 5 3

(...I beheld a rod of iron...)

Faster (♩ = 100)

38

ff sempre

mf

46

51

56

60

65

f

p f

72

fff

(long)

(...numberless concourses of people...pressing forward, that they might obtain the path...)

Vigorous (♩ = 132)

76

f

80

f

85

f

(loco)

90

3 3 3 3

8va

95

3 3 3 3

(loco)

100

3

(8va both hands)

8va

105

3 3 3 3

8va

109

(loco)

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

sub. p

112

ff *fff*

116

sub. mf *ff sempre*

121

(...I beheld others...clinging to the rod of iron...)

126

8va

(loco)

131

ff

136 *8va*

141 (loco)

146 *8va* (loco)

150 (loco) *sub. p* *fff*

153 *ff*

157

Musical score for measures 157-160. The treble clef part starts in 5/8 time with a triplet of eighth notes. The bass clef part has a slur over the first two measures. The time signature changes to 4/4 for the final two measures.

161

Musical score for measures 161-163. The treble clef part features a slur over the first two measures. The bass clef part has accents (>) over the notes in all measures.

164

Musical score for measures 164-165. The treble clef part has a *pp* dynamic marking. The bass clef part has a *(fff)* dynamic marking. The time signature is 3/4.

166

Musical score for measures 166-167. The treble clef part has a *fff* dynamic marking. The bass clef part has accents (>) over the notes. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4.

168

169

170

171

173

(long)

(long)

(very long)

mf

mp

p

3

3

178 **Tempo I** (♩ = 66)

(...Hosanna to the Lord, the most high God...)

rit. (grandioso)

a tempo

206

fff

ff

209

212

(non rit.)

fff

=====
fff



June-July 2012
Nantucket, Massachusetts
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Duration: c. 10.5 min.

ver. 9 April 2015