

Lansing D. McLoskey

# BURNING CHARIOTS



SATB CHOIR

Lansing D. McLoskey

*Written for Boston Secession*

*Dedicated to all who have worked towards peace across the millennia.*

# BURNING CHARIOTS

SATB choir (no fewer than 17)

## PERFORMANCE NOTES:

Accidentals apply to the octave in which they appear and hold throughout the measure. In some highly chromatic passages courtesy accidentals are given.

♩ = ♩ at all meter changes.

**S**  
**M** = *senza misura*, or without measure.

The tempo should be somewhat free and *rubato* as opposed to rigid and metronomic in both the metered and *senza misura* sections. This is left to the interpretation of the conductor.

The phrases are extremely long throughout the piece. Voices within each section should take turns breathing, eliding the breaths so the sound continues seamlessly.

### Special notes regarding the text:

There is a *cantus firmus* text in Hebrew, sung by the whole choir. However, throughout the 1st half of the piece there are 11 different texts - each a single verse or two from the Old Testament - that appear in the score, *albeit* not notated with specific rhythms. These are to be sung by one or two people from the section, who sing the text in a chant-like manner, on the pitch that the rest of the section is singing. The tempo/rhythm of the passage should be text-driven (as in chant). The dynamics should be *mp* to quasi-*mf* but should not protrude prominently from the overall texture; the effect should be that the audience can perceive that the text is being sung, but not so overtly that they must be able to discern the text itself. The Hebrew, Greek, Russian, and Polish texts are given in transliterations in the score.

Approximate duration: 10-11 minutes



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# *BURNING CHARIOTS*

## - NOTES -

It's funny how words written last year can already seem dated, while others from millennia ago can be strikingly fresh and relevant. Certainly there are voluminous sections of thees, thous and "he begats" in the Old Testament which feel foreign and dry as bone. Yet there are also portions that are frighteningly current in both tone and message, and transcend time, place and culture.

Rather than set a single story or text, I decided to set several such passages that resonate today as directly as in any era. A primary *cantus firmus* text sung in Hebrew provides the backdrop, while 11 other texts (sung in 12 languages) slowly filter through, weaving a tapestry of texts and voices. Finally a sole soprano enters with a lament in Latin, acting as the universal voice - the real voice of the choir, of all of us - grieving over the loss of life, love, and humanity. For over four thousand years this message has been repeated, and yet all we have to do is turn on the TV and watch in vivid technicolor how bitterly *apropos* it remains.

LM

# BURNING CHARIOTS - Texts & Translations

## CANTUS FIRMUS:

Psalms 46:9-10

משבית מלחמות עד-קצה הארץ קשת ישבר וקצץ  
חנית עגלות  
ישרף באש:  
הרפו ודעו כי-אנכי אלהים

He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth;  
he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in  
sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.  
Be still, and know that I am God.

## SOPRANO SOLO:

Jeremiah 9

1 O quis dabit capiti meo aquam et oculis meis  
fontem lacrimarum et plorabo die et nocte  
interfectos filiae populi mei  
8 sagitta vulnerans lingua eorum dolum locuta  
est in ore suo pacem cum amico suo loquitur et  
occulte ponit ei insidias  
[Tenors] 17 haec dicit Dominus exercituum  
contemplamini et vocate lamentatrices et veniant  
et ad eas quae sapientes sunt mittite et  
properent  
[soprano solo] 18 festinent et adsumant super  
nos lamentum deducant oculi nostri lacrimas et  
palpebrae nostrae defluant aquis

Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a  
fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night  
for the slain of the daughter of my people!  
Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh  
deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour  
with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait.  
Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and  
call for the mourning women, that they may come;  
and send for cunning [wise/learned] women, that  
they may come:  
And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for  
us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our  
eyelids gush out with waters.

## CHOIR:

Nahum 2:13

I puszczę z dymem twe rydwany, a lwiątko twoje  
miecz pochłonie, i wykorzenie z ziemi twój łup, i  
nie będzie więcej słychać głosu twoich posłów.

...I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the  
sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut  
off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy  
messengers shall no more be heard.

Psalms 20:7

Ceux-ci s'appuient sur leurs chars, ceux-là sur  
leurs chevaux; Nous, nous invoquons le nom de  
l'Éternel, notre Dieu.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we  
will remember the name of the LORD our God.

Micah 4:3

Er wird unter großen Völkern richten und viel  
Heiden strafen in fernen Landen. Sie werden  
ihre Schwerter zu Pflugscharen und ihre Spieße  
zu Sicheln machen. Es wird kein Volk wider das  
andere ein Schwert aufheben und werden nicht  
mehr kriegen lernen.

And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke  
strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their  
swords into plowshares, and their spears into  
pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword  
against nation, neither shall they learn war any  
more.

Genesis 6:11

εφθαρη δε η γη εναντιον του θεου και  
επλησθη η γη αδικιας

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the  
earth was filled with violence.

Jeremiah 9:22

...Los cuerpos de los hombres muertos caerán como estiércol sobre la faz del campo, y como manojos tras el segador, que no hay quien los recoja.

Deuteronomy 32:25

25 **извне будет губить их меч, а в дом их ужас - и юношу, и девицу, и грудного младенца, и покрытого сединою старца.**

Deuteronomy 20:10

Wanneer u de stad waartegen u gaat vechten nadert, stuur dan eerst boodschappers vooruit om de inwoners vrede aan te bieden.

Jeremiah 22:3

...non fate violenza il forestiero, l'orfano e la vedova, e non spargete sangue innocente...

Leviticus 19:17-18

17 Du skal ikke hate din bror i ditt hjerte, men du skal irettesette din næste, forat du ikke skal få synd på dig for hans skyld.

18 Du skal ikke hevne dig og ikke gjemme på vrede mot ditt folks barn, men du skal elske din næste som dig selv; jeg er Herren.

...Even the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather them.

The sword without, and terror within, destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.

When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

Jeremiah 22: 3

...do no violence to the foreigner, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood...

17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

18 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Isiah 43:17

...the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.

Micah 5:10

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:

### *BENEDICTION:*

Psalms 120

Domine libera animam meam a labiis iniquis a lingua dolosa.

Nimium habitavit anima mea cum iis, qui oderunt pacem.

Ego pacem cum loquor, illi urgent bellum.

Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.

# Burning Chariots

Lansing D. McLoskey

$\text{♩} = \pm 60$  20"-30" 10"-15" c.8"

Soprano 1 *fff* *pp no cresc.*  
\*BURN!! (M)ash - - - - - bit

Soprano 2 *fff* *pp no cresc.*  
BURN!! (M)ash - - - - - bit

Alto 1 *fff* *pp no cresc.*  
BURN!! (M)ash - - - - - bit

Alto 2 *pp no cresc.*  
Mash - - - - - bit

Tenor 1 *pp no cresc.*  
Mash - - - - - bit

Tenor 2 *fff* *pp no cresc.*  
BURN!! (M)ash - - - - - bit

Bass 1 *fff*  
BURN!!

\* The word "Burn" should be yelled by all except the 2nd altos and 1st tenors. It must be a non-pitched, full voice yell, not a "stage yell" that sounds false or affected. The entrance of the rest of the choir should be quick but imperceptible, each voice 'sneaking' in on the vowel "a".



14

S  
- tse

A  
- - - - - tse

T  
- - - - - tse

T2  
- - - - - tse

B  
- ke - - - - - tse

*p*

**B** 18

S  
Ha - - - - - a - - - - - rets

A  
"a"  
Ceux-ci s'appuient sur leurs chars, ceux-là sur leurs chevaux; Nous, nous invoquons le nom de l'Éternel, notre Dieu.

T  
Ha - - - - - a - - - - - (a) - - - - -

T2  
Ha - - - - - a - - - - - (a) - - - - -

B  
"a"

*mp*

22

S  
Ye - - -

A  
Ke - - - - - shet

T  
- - - - - rets "o"

T2  
- rets "o"  
Efqarh de h gh enantion tou qeou kai eplhsqh h gh adikias.

B  
Ke - - - - - shet

27

S  
sha - - - - - ber

A  
Ve - - - - - ke - - - - - tsets  
Non fate violenza il forestiero, l'orfano e la vedova, e non spargete sangue innocente..

T  
poco mf

T2  
poco mf

B  
poco mf



41

S A - ga - - lot Yis - - -

A A - ga - - lot

A2 A - ga - - lot

T A - - - ga - - - lot Yis - - -

T2 A - - - - ga - - - - lot Yis - - -

B A - - - - ga - - - - lot Yis - - -

B2 A - - - - ga - - - - lot Yis - - -

*pp*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

46

S *mf*

A *p* *mp* *mf*

A2 *mf*

T *mf*

T2 *mf*

B *mf*

B2 *mf*

Yis - - - - - *rof*

Yis - - - - - *rof*

Non fate violenza il forestiero, l'orfano e la vedova, e non spargete sangue innocente.

*rof*

*rof*

*rof*

*rof*

*rof*

*rof*

I puszcze z dymem twe rydwany, a lwiatka twoje miecz pochlonie, i wykorzenie z ziemi twój lup, i nie bedzie wiecej slychac glosu twoich poslów.

49

**D**

*p* *mp*

S Ba - - - -

A Ba - - - -

A2

T Ba - - - -

T2 Ba - - - -

B

53

All: *mf*

S *esh*  
And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that I will cut  
off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots:

A *esh*  
Wanneer u de stad waartegen u gaat vechten nadert, stuur dan eerst  
boodschappers vooruit om de inwoners vrede aan te bieden.

T *esh*  
Iz-vne bu-dyēt gu-bit' ikh myech, a v dom-akh u-zhas -- i yu-no-shu, i de-vi-tsu, i grud-no-vo  
m-la-den-tsa, i po-kryt-o-vo se-din-o-vo star-tsa.

T2 *esh*

B Ba - - - - *esh*

Sie werden ihre Schwerter zu Pflugscharen und ihre Spieße zu Sichel n machen. Es wird kein Volk wider das andere ein Schwert aufheben und werden nicht mehr kriegen lernen.

**E**

57 *pp sub.*

S Ha - re - - pu Ha - - - re - - - pu *p*

A Ha - re - - pu Ha - - - re - - - pu *p*

T Ha - re - - pu Ha - - - re - - - pu *p*

B Ha - re - - pu Ha - - - re - - - pu *p*

62 *pp* *mp*

S Ha - - - - - re - - - - - pu

A Ha - - - - - re - - - - - pu *mp*

T Ha - - - - - re - - - - - pu *mp*

B Ha - - - - - re - - - - - pu *mp*

**F** (Very free & expressive; should have the feeling of being completely improvised.)

*lamentare e espressivo*

67

Solo *mp*  
O quis da-bit ca-pi-ti me-o a-quam

S *fff*  
BURN!! *pp*  
Ha-re-pu U-de-u  
Ki-a-no-chi E-lo-him.

A *fff*  
BURN!! *pp*  
Ha-re-pu U-de-u  
Ki-a-no-chi E-lo-him.

T *fff*  
BURN!! *pp*  
Ha-re-pu U-de-u  
Ki-a-no-chi E-lo-him.

B *fff*  
BURN!! *pp*  
Ha-re-pu U-de-u  
Ki-a-no-chi E-lo-him.

These 6-chords are repeated as an ostinato until rehearsal **I**. The exact duration of each chord should be not static, but constantly fluctuate slightly.

The basses should sing the low A (A2) on every 3rd A (i.e. A3-A3-A2-A3-A3-A2 etc). Since this does not align symmetrically with the chord pattern, the initial syllable sung on the low A2 constantly rotates.

69

Solo  
et o-cu-lis me-is fon-tem la-cri-ma-rum

S

A

T

B

70 *mf*

Solo

et plo - ra - bo di - e et noc - te in - ter - fec - tos fi - li - ae, fi - li -

S

A

T

B

71 *mf*

Solo

ae po - pu - li me - i. Sa - git - ta vul - ne - rans

S

A

T

B

72

Solo  
lin - gua e - o - rum do - lum lo - cu - ta est in o - re su - o pa - cem cum a - mi - co

S  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

A  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

T  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

B  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

Approx. 2" after the soloist reaches the end of the solo, the 1st sopranos and 1st altos begin the chant passage. The rest of the choir continues the 6-chord ostinato. 1st sop. & altos rejoin the ostinato after the tenors start their chant.

73

Solo  
su - o lo - qui - tur et oc - cul - te po - nit ei in - si - di - as.

S  
*f*  
Haec di - cit Do - mi - nus:

S2

A  
*f*  
Haec di - cit Do - mi - nus:

A2

T

B

*p* **G**

75

S

A

T

B

Tenors start chant as soon as soprano/alto *incipit* concludes.

*mf*

*mp*

Ex - er - ci - tu - um con - tem - pla - - mi - ni et vo - ca - te

76

S

A

T

B

la - ment - ta - tri - ces et ve - ni - ant et ad e - as quae sa - pi - en - tes sunt mit - ti - te et pro - pe -

la - men - ta - tri - ces et ve - ni - ant et ad e - as quae sa - pi - en - tes sunt mit - ti - te et pro - pe -

*p*

*p*

78 **H** *mf* Begin solo as soon as chant ends.

Solo  
Fes-ti-nent et ad - su - mant su - per nos la - men - tum

S  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

A  
-rent. Tenors and altos rejoin  
ostinato at a natural point  
(i.e. not mid-word).  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

T  
-rent.  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

B  
Ha - re - pu U - de - u  
Ki - a - no - chi E - lo - him.

80 *f*

Solo  
la - men - - - tum de-du-cant o - cu - li nos - tri la - - - cri - mas

S

A

T

B

81

Solo et pal - pe - brae no - strae de - flu - ant a - - - quis.

S

A

T

B

\*When the soloist reaches the end of the solo, the choir completes the ostinato sequence they are currently singing, then proceeds directly to the next measure ("oculi") after the word "Elohim."

I *A tempo* (♩ = 60)

82

S *pp* *p* *rit.* *A tempo* *mf* *fff*  
o - cu - li la - cri - - mas. BURN!!

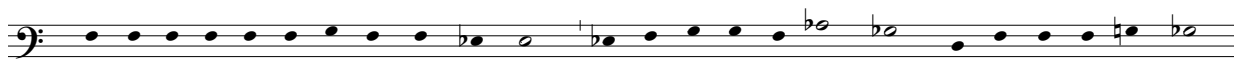
A *pp* *p* *mf* *pp sub. 10"-15"* *fff*  
o - cu - li la - cri - - mas. BURN!! *Glissando n.*

T *pp* *p* *mf* *fff*  
o - cu - li la - cri - - mas. BURN!!

B *pp* *p* *mf* *fff*  
o - cu - li la - cri - - mas. BURN!!

\*After holding the G<sub>2</sub> for 10"-15", altos slowly gliss down as they fade out. The entire section should not be together; rather, each singer gliss down approximately a half-step to whole-step in the time of roughly 4"-7" (no longer than 8"!); fading out individually.

# Benediction



Do-mi-ne li-be-ra a-ni-mam me-um a la-bi-is in-i-quis a lin-gua do-lo-sa.



Ni-mi-um ha-bi-ta-vit a-ni-ma me-a cum i-is, qui o-de-runt pa-cem.



E-go pa-cem cum lo-qu-or, il-li ur-gent bel-lum.