

Three Days

THAXTED; Gustav T. Holst; Jeffrey
Honoré; M.D. Ridge

SATB

Organ

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Performance Notes

In February 1999, Richard Clarke commissioned this new text on Holst's great tune *THAXTED* for his choir to sing at Easter. Let us "unpack" its meaning in order to sing with understanding.

"Three Days" begins in history, in the period of transition after Jesus' death. The first verse connects us, believers of the present day, with the Lord's followers during that time of confusion and uncertainty: Our Lord is dead. What will we do now? Will the Romans kill us too? John's gospel relates that "the disciples had locked the doors of the place where they were for fear" (Jn. 20:19). It could well have been the same upper room where they had shared his Last Supper.

In verse two, the women discovered the empty tomb. All four gospels agree on the disciples' reluctance to believe the Lord had risen; the story seemed like nonsense ("the dead do not arise") and, besides, who could believe hysterical women? Yet who had stood by the cross? Who had braved the soldiers to anoint the Lord's body in the tomb? The men had fled and hid. The evangelists themselves couldn't get the names of the women straight, except for Mary Magdalene. We present-day Christians may also be slow to believe, but verse two transitions from history into a strong, personal affirmation of faith in the risen Lord, present here in bread and wine and community.

Christ has died and is risen. Though the Body of Christ is still being crucified wherever there is war or violence or injustice, death is not the end. We who have known sorrow know delight. We rise with Christ. We rejoice.

—*M.D.R.*

This beautiful and descriptive text is set to a noble and sturdy tune that carries the weight of these most holy events of our faith. Take your time. Sing carefully from the depths of your personal experience of our Christ. Feel the sorrow and despair (verse 1); the bright light of early morning dawn (verse 2); and the supreme joy of new life (verse 3). Use the indicated dynamics to their fullest extent. The build from verse 1 to 3 is a gradual crescendo, a musical expression of resurrection.

The brass and timpani add to, but must never dominate, the sound of the human voice. As the best option, have your assembly (if they know the tune) join in on verse 3.

—*J.H.*

Three Days

for Richard Clarke

M. D. Ridge

THAXTED, 13 13 13 11 13 13
Tune by Gustav Holst (1874–1932)
Arranged by Jeffrey Honoré

INTRO *With breadth and strength* (♩ = ca. 69)

Trumpet I & II in C *mp*

Trombone I & II *mp*

Timpani in Bb, Eb *mp*

Organ *mp*
Sw. 8', 4' flutes
Ped. 16', 8'

4 Tpt

Trb *p* *pp*

Timp *p* *pp*

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Instrument parts are available from the publisher, edition 70263.

VERSE 1

Timp

8

pp

VERSE 1

Tenor/Bass

pp

1. Three — days our world was bro - ken; the Lord of life lay dead.

— flutes
+ string celestes

no Ped.

Timp

12

1. "Take — up your cross," he told — us who fol - lowed where he led.

Trb

16

*p**p*

1. Would — we now hang in tor - ment with — thieves on ev - 'ry side,

p
+ 8' flute

Trb I *p* 20 *pp*

1. our Pass - o - ver shat - tered, our hope — cru - ci - fied?

pp

pp

Timp 24 *pp*

1. Three — days we hid in si - lence, in bit - ter fear and grief.

- 8' flute

Trb I *p* 28 *p*

Timp

1. Three — days we clung to - geth - er where he had washed our feet. —

p + 8' flute

32 Tpt

Trb

Timp

1. —

+ 4'

+ Sw./Ped.
Ped.

p

mp

mf

tr

VERSE 2

Soprano/Alto

36

2. Three — days— and on the third — day, the wom-en came at dawn.

Gt. 8', 4'
(boxes closed)

+ Gt./Ped.

40

S

A

2. His — tomb, they said, was emp - ty, his bro-ken bod - y gone.

44

Tpt

II *mf*

I *f*

Timp

tr

mf

S

A *mf*

a - rise *f*

2. Who — could be - lieve their sto - ry? The — dead do not a - rise, yet —

T *mf*

B

a - rise — *f*

(open boxes) + 2'

f

48

Tpt

Timp

f

(no breath)

2. he walks a - mong us, and with — our own eyes — we've —

(no breath)

52 Tpt

Trb

Timp *tr*

2. seen him at this ta - ble; we've shared his bread and wine. Hearts —

56 Tpt

Trb

Timp *tr*

2. burn - ing bright with - in us, we've seen his glo - ry shine. —

ff *mp marcato*

ff *mf*

ff *mf* Sw. 8', 4', 2'

+ mxt.

- Gt./Ped.

61 Tpt

Trb

mf marcato

f

ten.

Timp

tr

E♭-F B♭-C

+ 8' reed

ten.

ten.

VERSE 3: (♩ = ca. 64)

Timp

66

more broadly

f

VERSE 3: (♩ = ca. 64)

S/A

f more broadly

3. Three — days our world was bro - ken and in an in - stant healed,

T/B

f more broadly

(♩ = ca. 64)

+ Sw./Gt. Gt.

f more broadly

+ Gt./Ped.

Tpt I 70 *f*

Timp

S
A

3. God's — cov — e - nant of mer - cy in mys - ter - y re - vealed.

T
B

Tpt 74 *mf*

Trb I

mf

3. Two — thou - sand years are one day in — God's e - ter - nal sight,

f

mf

f

- mxt. mf

78

Tpt I *mf*

Trb I *f*

3. and yes - ter - day's sor - rows are this — day's de - light —

f

82

Tpt *f*

Trb *f*

Timp

più f

3. Though — still Christ's bod - y suf - fers, pierced dai - ly by the sword,

più f

f + mxt.

86

Tpt

Trb

ff

Timp

tr

ff

rit.

ff

rit.

3. yet ____ death has no do - min - ion: the ____ ris - en Christ is

ff + reeds

rit.

89

Tpt

Trb

Timp

allargando

marcato

sfz *p* *ff*

tr

sfz *p* *ff*

allargando

div.

fff

3. Lord! Al - le - lu - ia!

div.

allargando

div. *fff*

full organ

sfz

(Ped.)

Three Days

(Hymn Version*)

M. D. Ridge

THAXTED, 13 13 13 11 13 13
Tune by Gustav Holst (1874–1932)

Arranged by Jeffrey Honoré

B♭ E♭ F7/C B♭/D E♭ F Gm

1. Three — days our world was bro - ken; the Lord of life lay dead.
2. Three — days— and on the third — day, the wom-en came at dawn.
3. Three — days our world was bro - ken and in an in - stant healed,

Dm/F E♭ F7/C B♭/D B♭ E♭ Cm/E♭ B♭

1. "Take — up your cross," he told — us who fol-lowed where he led.
2. His — tomb, they said, was emp - ty, his bro - ken bod - y gone.
3. God's — cov - e - nant of mer - cy in mys - ter - y re - vealed.

B♭/D F Gm F/A B♭/D F B♭ E♭

1. Would — we now hang in tor - ment with — thieves on ev - 'ry side,
2. Who — could be - lieve their sto - ry? The — dead do not a - rise,
3. Two — thou - sand years are one day in — God's e - ter - nal sight,

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*Melody and keyboard.

Adim/C Gm Bbmaj7/F Eb Bb/D Cm7 Bb Cm/Eb Cm Gm/Bb F/A Gm

1. our Pass - o - ver shat - tered, our hope — cru - ci - fied?
 2. yet he walks a - mong us, and with — our own eyes
 3. and yes - ter - day's sor - rows are this — day's de - light.

Dm/F Eb F7/C Bb/D Eb F Gm

1. Three — days we hid in si - lence, in bit - ter fear and grief.
 2. we've — seen him at this ta - ble; we've shared his bread and wine.
 3. Though — still Christ's bod - y suf - fers, pierced dai - ly by the sword,

Dm/F Eb F7/C Bb/D Bb Eb F7sus4 Bb

1. Three — days we clung to - geth - er where he had washed our feet.
 2. Hearts — burn - ing bright with - in — us, we've seen his glo - ry shine.
 3. yet — death has no do - min - ion: the ris - en Christ is Lord!

Assembly Edition

THREE DAYS

THAXTED

1. Three ___ days our world was bro - ken; the
 2. Three ___ days— and on the third ___ day, the
 3. Three ___ days our world was bro - ken and

1. Lord of life lay dead. "Take ___ up your cross," he
 2. wom - en came at dawn. His ___ tomb, they said, was
 3. in an in - stant healed, God's ___ cov - e - nant of

1. told ___ us who fol - lowed where he led. Would ___
 2. emp - ty, his bro - ken bod - y gone. Who ___
 3. mer - cy in mys - ter - y re - vealed. Two ___

1. we now hang in tor - ment with ___ thieves on ev - 'ry side,
 2. could be - lieve their sto - ry? The ___ dead do not a - rise,
 3. thou - sand years are one day in ___ God's e - ter - nal sight,

1. our Pass - o - ver shat - tered, our hope ___ cru - ci - fied?
 2. yet he walks a - mong us, and with ___ our own eyes
 3. and yes - ter - day's sor - rows are this ___ day's de - light.

1. Three ___ days we hid in si - lence, in
 2. we've ___ seen him at this ta - ble; we've
 3. Though ___ still Christ's bod - y suf - fers, pierced

1. bit - ter fear and grief. Three ___ days we clung to -
 2. shared his bread and wine. Hearts ___ burn - ing bright with -
 3. dai - ly by the sword, yet ___ death has no do -

1. geth - er where he had washed our feet. _____
 2. in ___ us, we've seen his glo - ry shine. _____
 3. min - ion: the ris - en Christ is Lord! _____

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