

HANDEL'S *MESSIAH*

*Music by George Fridrich Handel, based on biblical texts chosen
and organized under headings by Charles Jennens.*

PART I: THE PROPHECY AND REALIZATION OF GOD'S PLAN TO REDEEM MANKIND BY THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH

SCENE 1: "Isaiah's prophecy of salvation"

1. **Sinfony** (instrumental)

2. Recitative: *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplish'd, that her Iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Isaiah 40 : 1-3)*

3. Air: *Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. (Isaiah 40:4)*

4. Chorus: *And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. (Isaiah 40:5)*

SCENE 2: "The prophecy of the coming of Messiah and the question of what this may portend for the World"

5. Recitative: *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; Yet once, a little while and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom*

ye delight in: Behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. (Haggai 2:6-7; Malachi 3:1)

6. Air: *But who may abide the day of His coming (soprano, alto or bass)*

7. Chorus: *And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. (Malachi 3:3)*

SCENE 3: "The prophecy of the virgin birth"

8. Recitative: *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, God with us. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23)*

9. Air and Chorus: *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, and be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. (Isaiah 40:9; Isaiah 60:1)*

10. Recitative: *For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. (Isaiah 60:2-3)*

11. Air: *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (Isaiah 9:2)*

12. Chorus: *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)*

SCENE 4: “The appearance of the angels to the shepherds”

13. Pifa ("pastoral symphony": instrumental)

14. Recitative: *There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.* (Luke 2:8-9)

15. Recitative: *And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* (Luke 2:10-11)

16. Recitative: *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,* (Luke 2:13)

17. Chorus: *Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will toward men.* (Luke 2:14)

SCENE 5: “Christ's redemptive miracles on earth”

18. Air: *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Savior. And he shall speak peace unto the heathen.* (Zechariah 9:9-10)

19. Recitative: *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.* (Isaiah 35:5-6)

20. Air: *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; and he shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Come unto Him, all ye that labour, that are heavy laden, and He shall give you rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of Him; for he is meek and*

lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 11:28-29)

21. Chorus: *His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.* (Matthew 11:30)

PART II: THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF REDEMPTION BY THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST, MANKIND'S REJECTION OF GOD'S OFFER, AND MANKIND'S UTTER DEFEAT WHEN TRYING TO OPPOSE THE POWER OF THE ALMIGHTY

SCENE 1: “The redemptive sacrifice, the scourging and the agony on the cross”

22. Chorus: *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.* (John 1:29)

23. Air: *He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: He hid not His face from shame and spitting.* (Isaiah 53:3; Isaiah 50:6)

24. Chorus: *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him.* (Isaiah 53:4-5)

25. Chorus: *And with His stripes we are healed.* (Isaiah 53:5)

26. Chorus: *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* (Isaiah 53:6)

27. Recitative: *All they that see Him laugh him to scorn: they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying:* (Psalm 22:7)

28. Chorus: *He trusted in God that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, if he delight in Him. (Psalm 22:8)*

29. Recitative: *Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on Him but there was no man; neither found He any to comfort Him. (Psalm 69:20)*

30. Air: *Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow! (Lamentations 1:12)*

SCENE 2: “His sacrificial death, His passage through Hell and Resurrection”

31. Recitative: *He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of Thy people was He stricken. (Isaiah 53:8)*

32. Air: *But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. (Psalm 16:10)*

SCENE 3: “His Ascension”

33. Chorus: *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. (Psalm 24:7-10)*

SCENE 4: “God discloses his identity in Heaven”

34. Recitative: *For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? (Hebrews 1:5)*

35. Chorus: *Let all the angels of God worship Him. (Hebrews 1:6)*

SCENE 5: Whitsun, the gift of tongues, the beginning of evangelism (the beginnings of Gospel preaching)

36. Air: *Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for Thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Psalm 68:18)*

37. Chorus: *The Lord gave the word: great was the company of the preachers. (Psalm 68:11)*

38. Duetto and Chorus: *How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings of salvation; that saith unto Sion, Thy God reigneth! Break forth into joy, glad tidings. Thy God reigneth! (Isaiah 52:7,9)*

39. Chorus: *Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. (Romans 10:18)*

SCENE 6: “The world and its rulers reject the Gospel”

40. Air: *Why do the nations so furiously rage together: why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsels together against the Lord and His anointed. (Psalm 2:1-2)*

41. Chorus: *Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. (Psalm 2:3)*

42. “Recitative: *He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision. (Psalm 2:4)*

SCENE 7: “God's triumph”

43. Air: *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (Psalm 2:9)*

44. Chorus: *Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever. King of kings, Lord of lords. (Revelation 19:6, 11:15, 19:16)*

PART III: A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE FINAL OVERTHROW OF DEATH

SCENE 1: The promise of bodily resurrection and redemption from Adam's fall

45. Air: *I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the firstfruits of them that sleep. (Job 19:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:20)*

46. Chorus: *Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)*

SCENE 2: “The Day of Judgment and general Resurrection”

47. Recitative: *Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52)*

48. Air: *The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:52-53)*

SCENE 3: “The victory over death and sin”

49. Air: *Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (1 Corinthians 15:54b)*

50. Duetto: *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. (1 Corinthians 15:55-56)*

51. Chorus: *But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57)*

52. Air: *If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us. (Romans 8:31, 33-34)*

SCENE 4: “The glorification of the Messianic victim”

53. Chorus: *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honour, glory and power to be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 5:12-13)*