

Handel's *Messiah*

Time stamps below follow the 2018 Easter performance by the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square and the Orchestra at Temple Square, <https://youtu.be/VlR9AAYMa3A>. Musical notes are adapted from Dr. Luke Howard of Brigham Young University, <https://www.thetabernaclechoir.org/messiah/53-movements-video-and-commentary.html>. For additional background, see <https://www.thetabernaclechoir.org/messiah/2021-messiah.html>.

Charles Jennens's scriptural text followed the King James Version of the Bible, with the exception of most of the Psalm quotations, which he took from the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). Jennens's changes to these sources are marked below by ellipses (...) to show skips and by ~~strikeouts~~ and [square brackets] to show replacements. Poetic passages have been reformatted into poetic stanzas.

TIME	SONG TITLE	MUSICAL NOTES
PART I		
1.1 Ancient prophets testified of coming salvation		
0:00:56	1. Overture	<i>Messiah's</i> overture is in the form a French Overture—a form Handel did not typically use for his oratorios, but one that carried powerful, historical connotations of royalty and majesty, dating back to Louis XIV. With its musical evocation of royalty, this overture introduces not only the oratorio itself, but also the “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords” that <i>Messiah</i> celebrates.
0:04:25	2. <i>Comfort Ye My People</i> Isaiah 40:1–3 Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, 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.	In <i>Messiah</i> , Handel (and Jennens) actually begin with the end of the story. This opening recitative offers comfort and assurance that the House of Israel's warfare has already ended and that “iniquity is pardoned.” The rest of the oratorio is then more like a flashback.
0:07:09	3. <i>Ev'ry Valley Shall Be Exalted</i> Isaiah 40:4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill ... made low: ... the crooked ... straight, and the rough places plain:	In this aria, Handel wrote the tenor melody to directly trace the contours suggested by the words. This text-painting is especially evident on words such as “exalted,” “low,” “mountains,” “hills,” “crooked,” “straight,” and “plain.”
0:10:31	4. <i>And the Glory of the Lord</i> Isaiah 40:5 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.	The long, repeated notes on the text “For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” suggest rock-solid assurance and security. It was a device Handel had used for divine pronouncements in earlier works, too, including the oratorio <i>Israel in Egypt</i> . The final cadence in this chorus is a “plagal” or “Amen” cadence. Handel's use of this particular kind of cadence throughout <i>Messiah</i> helped solidify its now-traditional association with an “Amen” at the conclusion of a hymn.

1.2 The Messiah will purify the earth and all its inhabitants

0:13:37 5. *Thus Saith the Lord*

Haggai 2:6–7

For 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.

This recitative brings back the dotted rhythm from the Overture, signifying royalty, and includes dramatic text-painting on the word “shake.”

Malachi 3:1

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.

0:15:11 6. *But Who May Abide the Day of His Coming?*

Malachi 3:2

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire.

Handel originally set these words for the same bass voice that just sang the recitative, in two versions: as a second recitative and as a bass aria. He later adapted it and expanded it for contralto in the version most frequently performed today.

The lilting Siciliano rhythm of the opening sets up a stark contrast with the fiery second part.

The rapid string tremolos in the aria's second part illustrate instrumentally the flickering flames of the “refiner's fire.”

0:19:59 7. *And He Shall Purify*

Malachi 3:3

And he shall purify the sons of Levi, ... that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

1.3 His birth brought light and peace to a darkened world

0:22:48 8. *Behold, a Virgin Shall Conceive*

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.... God with us.

0:23:16 9. *O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion*

Isaiah 40:9

O ~~Zion~~, [thou] that bringest [tellest] good tidings [to Zion],
get thee up into the high mountain;
O ~~Jerusalem~~, [thou] that bringest [tellest] good tidings [to Jerusalem],
lift up thy voice with strength;
lift it up, be not afraid;
say unto the cities of Judah,
Behold your God!

Handel uses text-painting again on the words “lift up thy voice,” with rising contours in the vocal line.

This is the only part of *Messiah* that combines a soloist with the chorus in the same number.

The choir repeats the rising melodic intervals on the word “arise.”

Isaiah 60:1

Arise, shine; for thy light is come,
and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

0:28:43 10. *For Behold, Darkness Shall Cover the Earth*

Isaiah 60:2–3

For, behold, ~~the~~ 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.

This recitative begins in the key of B-minor, a traditional baroque-period key for denoting grief and pain in sacred music.

0:30:58 11. *The People That Walked in Darkness*

Isaiah 9:2

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.

The sparse octaves at the beginning of this aria, in the same key and using the same motif as the previous recitative, signify emptiness and desolation.

As in the prior recitative, too, the key modulates to D major as the light and glory of the Lord replace darkness.

0:34:23 12. *For unto Us a Child Is Born*

Isaiah 9:6

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.

The music for this chorus comes originally from another of Handel's Italian duets in which the singers playfully tease the twin influences of Love and Beauty.

But the music for the celebrated fanfares of "Wonderful, Counsellor," is newly-composed for this oratorio.

1.4 Angels announced His birth to the shepherds

0:38:54 13. *Pastoral Symphony*

Handel labelled this pasturale a "Pifa," in reference to the Italian pifferari or shepherds who played their pipes at Christmas time.

The 12/8 meter and gentle tempo suggest a cradle song or lullaby.

0:40:00 14a. *There Were Shepherds Abiding in the Field*

Luke 2:8

And there were ... shepherds abiding in the field,
keeping watch over their flock[s] by night.

This recitative is the first time the soprano soloist sings in this oratorio, introducing the Nativity scene.

0:42:13 14b. *And Lo, the Angel of the Lord Came upon Them*

Luke 2:9

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.

Handel had used these rising string arpeggios earlier in his career, as an instrumental introduction to the coronation anthem *Zadok the Priest* in 1727. Here they also prefigure the arrival of a King.

0:42:29 15. *And the Angel Said unto Them*

Luke 2:10–11

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.

0:43:11 16. *And Suddenly There Was with the Angel*

Luke 2:13

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

0:43:30 17. *Glory to God*

Luke 2:14

Glory to God in the highest, and [peace] on earth ~~peace~~, good will toward[s] men.

This is the only passage in *Messiah* that sets actual dialog as part of the dramatic narrative.

It is also the first appearance of the trumpets in *Messiah*, playing celebratory fanfares.

In the chorus, Handel divides the choir into high voices (“Glory to God in the highest”) and low voices (And peace on earth”), symbolizing the distinction between the divine and the earthly. When these words are repeated later in the chorus, however, the whole choir sings both phrases together—heaven and earth are unified in one.

The instrumental postlude suggests the gradual disappearance of the angels back into heaven with a diminuendo and progressive simplifying of rhythms.

1.5 The Messiah healed the sick, ministered, and invited all to come unto Him

0:45:25 18. *Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion!*

Zechariah 9:9–10

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion;
shout, O daughter of Jerusalem:
behold, thy King cometh unto thee:
he is ~~just~~ [the righteous Savior],
and he shall speak peace unto the heathen.

The increasingly wide leaps at the start of the soprano part were a common baroque motif for signifying joy.

Long, elaborate melismas had been used as a musical symbol of rejoicing in sacred music as early as the medieval period.

This is perhaps the most conventionally “operatic” aria in *Messiah*.

0:49:53 19. *Then Shall the Eyes of the Blind Be Opened*

Isaiah 35:5–6

Then [shall] the eyes of the blind ... 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.

0:50:22 20. *He Shall Feed His Flock Like a Shepherd*

Isaiah 40:11

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.

In the same meter as the Pastoral Symphony, this duet also uses the same opening motif, but inverted so that it descends instead of rises.

The blend of pastoral imagery and lullaby was also foreshadowed by the Pastoral Symphony.

Matthew 11:28–29

Come unto ~~me~~ [him], all ye that labour ~~and~~ [and], come unto him ye that are heavy laden, and ~~I~~ [he] will give you rest. Take ~~my~~ [his] yoke upon you, and learn of ~~me~~ [him]; for ~~I am~~ [he is] meek and lowly ~~in~~ [of] heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

0:55:56 21. *His Yoke Is Easy, and His Burden Is Light*

Matthew 11:30

~~For my~~ [His] yoke is easy, and ~~my~~ [his] burden is light.

PART II

2.1 The Messiah suffered for our sins, carried our sorrows, and healed our brokenness

1:00:07 22. *Behold the Lamb of God*

John 1:29

Behold the Lamb of God, ~~which~~ [that] taketh away the sin of the world.

Part II of *Messiah* opens with a funeral march, a reminder that the burden Christ bore was neither easy nor light.

As in the Overture, the dotted rhythms symbolize royalty, while the text refers to the Lamb of God. This juxtaposition of “King” and “Lamb” is the first of a number of sacred metaphorical paradoxes in the ensuing choruses—contrasts that reveal deeper truths about the Messiah’s sacrifice.

The descending melodic line is also a variation on “He Shall Feed His Flock / Come unto Him.”

The open-5th harmony at the end of this chorus symbolizes utter emptiness and desolation. It is the only place in *Messiah* that Handel employs this musical effect.

1:03:51 23. *He Was Despised*

Isaiah 53:3

He ~~is~~ [was] despised and rejected of men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

This is the longest musical selection in *Messiah*, placed at the exact midpoint of the work.

The sighing motifs in the orchestral accompaniment were a traditional baroque device for expressing pain and grief.

Isaiah 50:6

I [He] gave ~~my~~ [his] back to the smiters,
and ~~my~~ [his] cheeks to them that plucked off the hair:
I [he] hid not ~~my~~ [his] face
from shame and spitting.

Relentless dotted rhythms in the middle section (sometimes omitted in performance) illustrate the mocks and whip lashes of Christ’s accusers.

1:08:29 24. *Surely He Hath Borne Our Grievs*

Isaiah 53:4–5

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;

The whip lashes from the previous aria return at the beginning and end of this chorus.

Intense chromaticism at the words “He was wounded for our transgressions” create a harmonic tension that corresponds to the emotional pain.

1:10:32 25. *And with His Stripes We Are Healed*

Isaiah 53:5

and with his stripes we are healed.

“And with His Stripes” is the first of only a small handful of choruses in *Messiah* in which the orchestral instruments simply double the voice parts. This is the original musical definition of a cappella style.

The first four notes in this chorus create a “cross motif,” an angular melodic shape that Bach used extensively in his own sacred music to symbolize the crucifixion.

1:12:45 26. *All We Like Sheep Have Gone Astray*

Isaiah 53:6

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.

1:17:06 27. *And They That See Him, Laugh Him to Scorn*

Psalms 22:7 (BCP)

All they that see ~~me~~ [him] laugh ~~me~~ [him] to scorn:
they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads,
saying,

In this short recitative, the orchestral strings illustrate the words with three symbolic motifs: the dotted-note “whips,” a “laughing” figure, and the rocking neighbor-note motion that had earlier signified “darkness.”

1:17:54 28. *He Trusted in God That He Would Deliver Him*

Psalms 22:8 (BCP)

He trusted in God, that he would deliver him:
let him deliver him, if he ~~will have~~ [delight in]
him.

Another a cappella chorus in which the orchestra doubles the voice parts.

The fugue form of this chorus enhances the drama with repeated taunting entries of “Let him deliver him.”

1:20:44 29. *Thy Rebuke Hath Broken His Heart*

Psalms 69:20 (BCP)

Thy rebuke hath broken ~~my~~ [his] heart;
~~I am~~ [he is] full of heaviness:
~~I~~ [he] looked for some to have pity on ~~me~~ [him],
but there was no man,
neither found ~~I~~ [he] any to comfort ~~me~~ [him].

Intense chromaticism and unexpected chord progressions underscore the text’s expression of loneliness and distress.

As in Bach’s sacred works, it is the solo tenor that narrates the story of Christ’s crucifixion.

1:22:23 30. *Behold, and See If There Be Any Sorrow*

Lamentations 1:12

Behold, and see
if there be any sorrow like unto ~~my~~ [his] sorrow.

The breaking up of the text into short phrases is an imitation of weeping, lamenting, and sighs—a popular device in dramatic baroque music.

2.2 He died, but was raised to life again

1:24:10 31. *He Was Cut Off out of the Land of the Living*

Isaiah 53:8

He was cut off out of the land of the living:
for the transgression of ~~my~~ [thy] people was he
stricken.

This brief recitative covers Christ’s crucifixion and death. It begins in B minor—the key of pain—but turns to E major even before the crucifixion text is complete, foreshadowing the hope of the resurrection.

1:24:29 32. *But Thou Didst Not Leave His Soul in Hell*

Psalms 16:10 (BCP)

[But] thou ~~shalt~~ [didst] not leave ~~my~~ [his] soul in
hell:
~~neither~~ [nor] ~~shalt~~ [didst] thou suffer thy Holy
One to see corruption.

Christ’s resurrection takes place in the quiet space between the preceding recitative and this joyful aria.

2.3 He ascended to heaven in glory

1:26:52 33. *Lift Up Your Heads, O Ye Gates*

Psalm 24:7–10 (BCP and KJV)

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.

Handel divides the choral sopranos to help create the effect of a double chorus in this back-and-forth dialog of questions and answers.

The plagal cadence at the end of this chorus repeats the formula previously heard in the opening chorus, “And the Glory of the Lord.” It consolidates the musical association of this cadence with God’s glory.

2.4 Angelic hosts welcomed Him

1:30:06 34. *Unto Which of the Angels Said He at Any Time*

Hebrews 1:5

Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou
art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?

1:30:23 35. *Let All the Angels of God Worship Him*

Hebrews 1:6

Let all the angels of God worship Him.

D major was favored key in the baroque period for rejoicing.

The main fugue theme is in the style of a trumpet fanfare.

2.5 The good news began to be preached to all the world

1:32:05 36. *Thou Art Gone Up on High*

Psalm 68:18 (BCP)

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.

This aria is both intensely chromatic and joyful—an odd juxtaposition, but one that is called for by the text itself.

The optimistic rising line on “Thou art gone up” is a simple case of text-painting, but it takes place over a descending “baroque lament” bass line.

This tension between victory and death illustrates the doctrine that Christ’s resurrection provides the gift of life “yea even for [His] enemies.”

1:35:40 37. *The Lord Gave the Word*

Psalm 68:11

The Lord gave the word:
great was the company of the preachers.

The majestic statement that opens this chorus is written in similar sturdy rhythms and steady melodic contours as other divine pronouncements in Handel’s music.

The embellished 16th-note runs in this chorus symbolize the proliferation of preachers willing to spread Christ’s gospel.

1:36:56 38. *How Beautiful Are the Feet*

Romans 10:15 (quoting Isaiah 52:7)

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the
gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good
things!

The aria’s Siciliano rhythm again symbolizes peace and pastoral rest, as it had in the Pastoral Symphony.

1:39:30 39. *Their Sound Is Gone Out into All Lands*

Psalms 19:4 (cf. Romans 10:18)

Their sound is gone out into all lands:
and their words ~~into~~ [unto] the ends of the
world.

Rapid entries in this fugal chorus exemplify the global dissemination of God's word. The wide melodic range for the words "unto the ends of the world" illustrates the gamut of the gospel's reach. ("Gamut," by the way, was originally a medieval musical term that referred to the complete range of a musical scale.)

2.6 Many continue to reject Him

1:40:57 40. *Why Do the Nations So Furiously Rage Together?*

Psalms 2:1–2 (BCP)

Why do the ~~heathen~~ [nations] so furiously rage together:
and why do the people imagine a vain thing?
The kings of the earth ~~stand~~ [rise] up,
and the rulers take counsel together:
against the LORD, and against his Anointed.

This is the first text in Handel's *Messiah* to explicitly reference the "anointed [one]," the literal translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah."

Agitated string figures in this aria represent the anger of those whose power and influence are threatened by Christ's gospel.

The fragmented impressions of rage and vain imaginations are expressed in cross-rhythms—the solo voice singing triplet rhythms over duplets in the accompaniment.

1:43:56 41. *Let Us Break Their Bonds Asunder*

Psalms 2:3 (BCP)

Let us break their bonds asunder:
and cast away their ~~cords~~ [yokes] from us.

The jagged, angular theme, closely-spaced vocal entries, and frequent rhythmic syncopations in this fugue illustrate the wanton demolition of faith spoken of in the text.

2.7 Despite opposition, He will reign over heaven and earth forever

1:46:08 42. *He That Dwelleth in Heaven*

Psalms 2:4 (BCP)

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to
scorn:
the Lord shall have them in derision.

1:46:25 43. *Thou Shalt Break Them*

Psalms 2:9

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;
thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Using many of the same musical effects as the previous chorus, this aria manifests that is the Lord who will destroy the plans of the wicked, not the other way around.

Very wide leaps in the strings and fragmentary, disjunct motion depicts the Lord breaking into shards and dashing to pieces the disruptive strategies of the faithless.

1:48:36 44. *Hallelujah*

Revelation 19:6

~~Aleluia~~ [Hallelujah]: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

Revelation 11:15

The kingdoms of this world ~~are~~ [is] become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 19:16

KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

The tradition of standing for the "Hallelujah" chorus began in the 18th century. But there is little direct evidence—only distantly-remembered anecdotes—to connect it to King George II standing during a performance of *Messiah*.

The key of D major here, as in other places in *Messiah*, is a key of triumph and celebration. It was the easiest key for baroque trumpets to play, and so became associated with victory fanfares. The victory celebrated in this chorus is a spiritual victory over the worldly politics of nations and governments.

The fugue theme at the words "And He shall reign" is remarkably similar to the cross-motif in the chorus "And with His Stripes."

The same plagal cadence that has signified "glory" in so many other places in *Messiah* ends the "Hallelujah" chorus with a musical representation of glory.

PART III

3.1 The Messiah redeems us from the effects of the Fall

1:54:15 45. *I Know That My Redeemer Liveth*

Job 19:25–26

For 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:

1 Corinthians 15:20

~~But~~ [For] now is Christ risen from the dead, ... the
firstfruits of them that slept.

Simple, effective text-painting is heard throughout this beloved aria, including long-held notes on “stand,” a leap upward for “Christ risen” followed by a descent on the words “from the dead.”

The contour of the melodic line in this aria traces the same shape as the violin introduction for “Thou Art Gone Up on High.” Both arias speak specifically about the resurrection.

The interval of a rising fourth that accompanies the words “I know” is used elsewhere throughout *Messiah* (e.g., “Rejoice Greatly”) as a musical symbol of firm assurance.

2:00:27 46. *Since by Man Came Death*

1 Corinthians 15:21–22

Since by man came death, by man came also the res-
urrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so
in Christ shall all be made alive.

This chorus contains the only unaccompanied choral passages in *Messiah*.

The two hushed declarations about death are answered by joyful eruptions of faith in the resurrection.

3.2 The dead will be resurrected in immortal glory

2:02:48 47. *Behold, I Tell You a Mystery*

1 Corinthians 15:51–52

Behold, I ~~show~~ [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 trump[et].

2:03:24 48. *The Trumpet Shall Sound*

1 Corinthians 15:52–53

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.

The same rising D-major arpeggio that begins the recitative is used as the main theme of the aria that follows. Both imitate a trumpet fanfare.

The orchestra’s dotted rhythms connote royalty, as they had in the oratorio’s Overture.

Handel, whose English was far from perfect, set the word “incorruptible” with the accent on the second and fourth syllables (in-COR-rup-TI-ble), instead of the first and third syllables (IN-cor-RUP-ti-ble). Most performances since Handel’s day have adjusted the word-setting to make it sound more natural to English-speakers.

3.3 Jesus Christ conquered death and gives us victory

2:07:47 49. *Then Shall Be Brought to Pass*

1 Corinthians 15:54

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is
written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

2:08:07 50. *O Death, Where Is Thy Sting?*

1 Corinthians 15:55–56

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.

This is the only musical number (not including recitative) in *Messiah* in which the orchestra does not participate. Only the continuo instruments of keyboard and cello accompany the two singers.

2:09:15 51. *But Thanks Be to God*

1 Corinthians 15:57

But thanks be to God, ~~which~~ [who] giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A companion to the preceding duet, this chorus uses the same key, rhythms, and musical motifs as the duet.

The word “thanks” is articulated 75 separate times in this chorus.

The fugal treatment of “who giveth us the victory” is a symbol of widespread distribution, as it was in the passage “good will toward men” earlier in *Messiah*.

2:11:41 52. *If God Be for Us, Who Can Be against Us?*

Romans 8:31

If God be for us, who can be against us?

As with the aria “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth,” this aria is an intimate personalization of the global gift of Christ’s atonement.

The melody at the words “who makes intercession for us” quotes a 1524 hymn tune by Martin Luther, “Aus tiefer Not chrei ich zu dir” (“Out of the depths I cry to Thee”).

Romans 8:33–34

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 ... ~~maketh~~ [makes] intercession for us.

3.4 Thanks be to the Lamb of God, who enables us to be blessed beyond anything we can image

2:16:32 53. *Worthy Is the Lamb That Was Slain*

Revelation 5:12–14

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, ~~and~~ glory; and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.... Amen.

Another triumphant chorus, with full orchestra, this opening is also actually a mirror counterpart to the unaccompanied chorus “Since by Man Came Death,” with similar rhythms, textures, and keys.

The two stanzas of “Since by Man Came Death” were in A minor and D minor. The two parallel stanzas of “Worthy Is the Lamb” are in D major and A major.

At the words “Blessing and honor, power, and glory,” the fugue theme includes repeated notes that emphasize the idea of eternity, and also recall the repeated notes from “For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it” in the oratorio’s opening chorus.

At the chorus’s conclusion, the words “forever and ever” are repeated 16 times, using the same rhythm as the setting of those same words in the “Hallelujah” chorus.

The final cadence ends on dominant harmony, setting up a powerful harmonic segue into the “Amen” that follows. Beginning gently and humbly, the “Amen” builds into a majestic blend of counterpoint and chorale.

With the eventual entry of trumpets and drums, the chorus reaches a magnificent apex that conductor Christopher Hogwood described as “the final storming of heaven.”