

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

CHARLES A. SINK, PRESIDENT

THOR JOHNSON, CONDUCTOR

Christmas Concert

1940-1941

Complete Series 2812

“Messiah”

GEORG FRIEDRICH HANDEL

SOLOISTS:

THELMA VON EISENHAUER, *Soprano* JOAN PEEBLES, *Contralto*
WILLIAM HAIN, *Tenor* RICHARD HALE, *Baritone*

PALMER CHRISTIAN, *Organist*
UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION
UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
THOR JOHNSON, *Conductor*

WEDNESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 18, 1940, AT 8:00
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

(In order that the continuity of the work be maintained, it is requested that the audience refrain from applause until the end of each part.)

Overture

Recitative (Tenor)		<i>Comfort ye my people</i>
Air (Tenor)		<i>Every valley shall be exalted</i>
Chorus		<i>And the glory of the Lord</i>
Recitative (Bass)		<i>Thus saith the Lord</i>
Air (Bass)		<i>But who may abide the day of His coming?</i>
Recitative (Contralto)		<i>Behold, a virgin shall conceive</i>
Air (Contralto) and Chorus		<i>O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion</i>
Chorus		<i>For unto us a Child is born</i>
Recitative	} (Soprano)	<i>There were shepherds abiding in the field</i>
Recitative		<i>And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them</i>
Recitative		<i>And the angel said unto them</i>
Recitative		<i>And suddenly there was with the angel</i>
Chorus		<i>Glory to God</i>
Air (Soprano)		<i>Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion</i>
Recitative (Contralto)		<i>Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened</i>
Air (Contralto)		<i>He shall feed His flock like a shepherd</i>
Air (Soprano)		<i>Come unto Him</i>
Chorus		<i>Behold the Lamb of God</i>
Air (Contralto)		<i>He was despised</i>
Recitative (Tenor)		<i>Thy rebuke hath broken His heart</i>
Air (Tenor)		<i>Behold, and see if there be any sorrow</i>
Chorus		<i>Surely He hath borne our griefs</i>

INTERMISSION

Recitative (Bass)		<i>Behold, I tell you a mystery</i>
Air (Bass)		<i>The trumpet shall sound</i>
Recitative (Contralto)		<i>Then shall be brought to pass</i>
Duet (Alto and Tenor)		<i>O death, where is thy sting</i>
Air (Soprano)		<i>I know that my Redeemer liveth</i>
Chorus		<i>Worthy is the Lamb</i>
Chorus		<i>Hallelujah</i>

“MESSIAH,” An Oratorio for

Soli, Chorus, Orchestra, and Organ *Handel*

Unlike many works to which immortality may be accorded, the success of the “Messiah” was immediate, and with the passage of the years we discover no abatement of its power to charm and inspire. Its association with Christmas—for some inexplicable reason—has given to it special significance, and, to many, a Christmas season that brings with it no performance of the “Messiah” loses much of its meaning.

“Messiah,” as one writer puts it, “was improvised on paper in twenty-four days” (from August 22 to September 12, 1741). This is but one instance of the remarkable rapidity with which Handel composed. It must not be forgotten, however, that the orchestration of the “Messiah” was very often fragmentary and simple, in certain numbers merely sketched. Again three of the most important choruses were adaptations of former compositions. Handel, in his art, anticipated the modern mechanical principle of interchangeable parts, and one looks in vain for any real differences between his operas and oratorios—other than obvious distinctions in the nature of the text and use of the chorus.

The first performance of “Messiah” was given in Dublin, April 18, 1742. On the occasion of its first performance in England on March 23, 1749, at the words in the Hallelujah Chorus, “For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,” the auditors were so transported that, led by the King, they all rose to their feet and remained standing until the chorus ended. This practice has become as much a part of succeeding performances as the Christmas date. It is a hopeful sign when an English-speaking audience really breaks loose; therefore—long may the custom endure!

OVERTURE

RECIT. *Accompanied*—(TENOR)

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.

AIR—(TENOR)

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

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.

RECIT. *Accompanied*—(BASS)

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.

AIR—(BASS)

But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?

For He is like a refiner's fire.

RECIT.—(CONTRALTO)

Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name EMMANUEL, God with us.

AIR—(CONTRALTO) 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, 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.

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.

RECIT.—(SOPRANO)

There were shepherds abiding in the field keeping watch over their flocks by night.

RECIT. *Accompanied*—(SOPRANO)

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.

RECIT.—(SOPRANO)

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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

RECIT. *Accompanied*—(SOPRANO)

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

CHORUS

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men.

AIR—(SOPRANO)

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.

RECIT.—(CONTRALTO)

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.

AIR—(CONTRALTO)

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.

AIR—(SOPRANO)

Come unto Him, all ye that labor and 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.

CHORUS

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

AIR—(CONTRALTO)

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

RECIT. *Accompanied*—(TENOR)

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.

AIR—(TENOR)

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow.

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.

RECIT.—(BASS)

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

AIR—(BASS)

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

RECIT.—(CONTRALTO)

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

DUET—(ALTO AND TENOR)

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.

AIR—(SOPRANO)

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 first-fruits of them that sleep.

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 honor, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

CHORUS

HALLELUJAH: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.

KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.
HALLELUJAH!

Choral Union Concerts

HILL AUDITORIUM

8:30 P.M.

VLADIMIR HOROWITZ, *Pianist* Wednesday, January 15

MINNEAPOLIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Tuesday, January 28
DIMITRI MITROPOULOS, *Conductor*

BUDAPEST STRING QUARTET Thursday, February 20
JOSEF ROISMANN, *First Violin* BORIS KROYT, *Viola*
ALEXANDER SCHNEIDER, *Second Violin* MISCHA SCHNEIDER, *Violoncello*

GEORGES ENESCO, *Violinist* Tuesday, March 4

The UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY announces a Chamber Music Festival of three concerts to be given by:

THE MUSICAL ART QUARTET OF NEW YORK

SASCHA JACOBSEN, *First Violin* WILLIAM HYMANSON, *Viola*
PAUL BERNARD, *Second Violin* MARIA ROEMAET-ROSANOFF, *Violoncello*

The concerts will be given Friday evening, Saturday afternoon, and Saturday evening, January 24 and January 25, 1941, in the Main Lecture Hall of the Rackham Building.

Tickets are on sale at the offices of the University Musical Society in Burton Memorial Tower. Season tickets (3 concerts), \$2.00; individual concerts, \$1.00.

NOTICES: The right is reserved to make such changes in the dates and artists announced as necessity may require. While wide and prompt publicity is given to dates thus changed, to avoid inconvenience it is suggested that, so far as possible, out-of-town guests confirm the dates in advance.