



# Programme

1. Introduction + Part 1, scenes 1-3
2. Part 1 : scenes 4-5
3. Part 2: scenes 1-3
- 4. Part 2: scenes 4-7**
5. Part 3: scenes 1-2
6. Part 3: scenes 3-4

*Messiah*  
*an Oratorio*



# Layout of the whole Messiah

## Part I

"The prophecy and realisation of God's plan to redeem mankind by the coming of the Messiah" (= **Advent and Christmas**, the life of Jesus)

## 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" (= **Lent, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost**)

## Part III

"A Hymn of Thanksgiving for the final overthrow of Death" (= **the Church year**)

# Part II

## **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" (movements 22–30)

Scene 2: "His sacrificial death, His passage through Hell and Resurrection" (movements 31–32)

Scene 3: "His ascension" (movement 33)

**Scene 4: "God discloses his identity in Heaven" (movements 34–35)**

**Scene 5: "Whitsun, the gift of tongues, the beginning of evangelism" (movements 36–39)**

**Scene 6: "The world and its rulers reject the Gospel" (movements 40–41)**

**Scene 7: "God's triumph" (movements 42–44)**

Scene 4				
34	<i>Unto which of the angels said he at any time</i>	Rec. T	Hebrews 1:5	Epistle to the Hebrews
35 / 31	<i>Let all the angels of God worship Him</i>	Chorus	Hebrews 1:6	
Scene 5				
36 / 32	<i>Thou art gone up on high</i>	Air B (or A)	Psalms 68:18	Psalms 68
37 / 33	<i>The Lord gave the word</i>	Chorus	Psalms 68:11	
38 / 34	<i>How beautiful are the feet of them</i>	Duet AI All Chorus	Isaiah 52:7 Romans 10:15	
39 / 35	<i>Their sound is gone out into all lands</i>	Arioso T	Romans 10:18 Psalms 19:4	Psalms 19, The glory of God Epistle to the Romans
Scene 6				
40 / 36	<i>Why do the nations so furiously rage together</i>	Air B	Psalms 2:1–2	Psalms 2
41 / 37	<i>Let us break their bonds asunder</i>	Chorus	Psalms 2:3	
42	<i>He that dwelleth in heaven</i>	Rec. T	Psalms 2:4	
Scene 7				
43 / 38	<i>Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron</i>	Air T	Psalms 2:9	
44 / 39	<i>Hallelujah</i>	Chorus	Revelation 19:6,16 Revelation 11:15	Book of Revelation

## II.4.34

### **Recitative (Tenor or Soprano)**

Unto which of the angels said He  
at any time: Thou art My Son, this  
day have I begotten Thee?

(Hebrews 1:5)

- Scene 4 covers the Messiah's position in heaven, following the teaching from the Epistle to the Hebrews in two verses, Hebrews 1:5–6.
- In a short recitative the tenor renders the first verse, quoting Hebrews (Hebrews 1:5), "Unto which of the angels said he at any time", about the Messiah as the begotten Son of God.
- Hebrews cites Psalm 2, a “messianic psalm” widely referred to in the New Testament.



# II.4.35/31

## Chorus

Let all the angels of God worship Him.

(Hebrews 1:6)

The musical score is for a chorus in D major, 4/4 time, marked 'Allegro'. It features four vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are 'Let all the an gels of God wor ship'. The piano accompaniment is in the same key and time, with a tempo of 84 beats per minute. The score is written for a choir and piano.

\* Generally omitted

- The second verse "Let all the angels of God worship Him" (Hebrews 1:6) is a festive chorus in D major. The fugue was "borrowed" from J.K. Kerll.
- There is no introduction and the choir start immediately in a strong declamatory style.
- The musical style is a double fugue. The theme is sung by the sopranos and the response is given in the violins.
- Throughout the piece, different pairs of voices state the two themes in different keys, alternating which theme is above and which is below.

## II.5.36/32

### Air (Alto)

Thou art gone up on high; Thou  
hast led captivity captive, **and**  
**received gifts for men**; yea, even  
from Thine enemies, that the Lord  
God might dwell among them.

(Psalms 68:18)

- The immediate reference is to the Ascension.
- Pentecost is referred to rather indirectly, without naming the Holy Spirit. This Psalm was read on Pentecost Sunday in the Book of Common Prayer.
- Hence, the next passages refer to the missionary activity of the church.
- “Thou art gone up on high” from Psalm 68 (Psalms 68:18) reflects “gifts for men” and “that God might dwell among them”, expressed in swinging 3/4 time.
- Commentators do not regard this as Handel’s best response to the text.



# 11.5.37/33

## Chorus

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

(Psalms 68:11)

Andante allegro

SOPRANO

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

The Lord gave the word: great was the com - pa - ny of the

The Lord gave the word: great was the com - pa - ny of the

Andante allegro (♩=80)

- The thoughts are continued in an earlier verse from the same psalm (Psalms 68:11) as a chorus in B-flat major.
- "The Lord gave the word" is sung by just two voice parts, "Great was the company of the preachers" expanded for four parts with long coloraturas on "company".
- This and the next two numbers are all on the same topic of the spread of the Gospel.

# II.5.38/34

## Air (Soprano)

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

Romans x: 15  
Larghetto (♩ = 104)

*p*

SOPRANO SOLO

How beau-tiful are the feet of them that

*pp*

- The preachers are described tenderly in a duet in D minor and 3/4 time, as written first by Isaiah (Isaiah 52:7) and quoted by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (Romans 10:15: "How beautiful are the feet of Him").
- Handel's original version, a duet in D minor for two altos and chorus or soprano, alto and chorus, was later rewritten by him in 1749 as an aria for soprano in G minor and 12/8 time and in 1750 transposed for alto in C minor.
- A siciliano, with pastoral overtones.



# II.5.39/35

## Chorus

Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.

(Romans 10:18 / Psalms 19:4)

A tempo ordinario

The musical score is for a four-part chorus. It begins with the tempo marking 'A tempo ordinario'. The staves are labeled SOPRANO, ALTO, TENOR, and BASS. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: 'Their sound is gone out in - to all lands, their sound is gone out, in - to all lands, Their sound is gone out, their sound is gone out,'. The Soprano part has the most notes, while the Bass part has the fewest, with a long final note.

SOPRANO  
Their sound is gone out in - to all lands, their sound is gone

ALTO  
Their sound is gone out in - to all lands,

TENOR  
Their sound is gone out, their

BASS  
Their sound is gone out,

- Based on a number of Bible references, a tenor arioso describes the preachers further: "Their sound is gone out into all lands" (Romans 10:18, Psalms 19:4).
- In another Handel's version (so called version B), which is commonly preferred by performers now, the same text is set to new music and scored for chorus.
- Scales running up and down: these scales always traverse an octave, a Baroque convention signifying everything or everywhere: north and south, east and west.



## II.6.40/36

### **Air (Bass)**

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed (= Messiah).

(Psalms 2:1-2)

- Scene 6 shows the difficulties and rejection of the preaching, based on four consecutive verses from Psalm 2, Psalms 2:1–4. It is the first text in the oratorio actually referring to the Messiah, the "anointed one" (verse 2)
- An Air for bass in C major, accompanied by an orchestra in continuous motion, tells of the difficulties. "Why do the nations so furiously rage together". Several terms, such as "Rage", are expressed by long melismas in triplets.
- Technically, a "rage" aria, blisteringly fast repeated notes, in an agitated, war-like style.

## II.6.40/36

### Air (Bass)

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rage together, and why do the  
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(Psalms 2:1-2)

- The bass enters in the most powerful part of his range and mounts up through C major to the top of his range.
- The entry of the choir is something of surprise — we would expect some ABA structure.

Allegro ♩ = 112

13

Bass

Why do the na - tions so

17

B.

fu - rious-ly rage\_ to - ge - ther? Why do the peo - ple im - ag - ine a vain

21

B.

thing? Why do the na - tions rage\_

25

B.

so fu - rious-ly\_ to - ge - ther?

29

B.

Why do the peo - ple im - ag - ine a vain thing? im - ag - ine a vain

33

B.

- ine\_ a\_ vain\_ thing?\_ im - ag - ine a vain

37

B.

thing? Why do the na - tions so

## II.6.41/37

### **Chorus**

Let us break their bonds asunder,  
and cast away their yokes from us.

(Psalms 2:3)

- The choir continues the thought.
- The intention "Let us break their bonds asunder" is expressed in a fast succession of entries of the voices.
- The music of the chorus vividly depicts the verbs: "break" with jagged, broken melody lines, and "cast away" with long, descending melismas.



## II.6.42

### Recitative (Tenor)

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

(Psalms 2:4)

- The text continues in a short tenor recitative: "He that dwelleth in heaven".
- God's view of the jocular bravura of the kings and the rules is given.

*Every Note*

THE MESSIAH, PART II

Nº 42. – RECITATIVE FOR TENOR

"HE THAT DWELLETH IN HEAVEN" G. F. Handel

Psalm II: 4

TENOR SOLO

He that dwell-eth in hea-ven shall laugh them to

## II.7.43/38

### **Air (Tenor)**

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

(Psalms 2:9)

- Scene 7 is called "God's triumph" by Jennens.
- A forceful Air for tenor tells of God's power against enemies, again taken from Psalm 2: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron" (Psalms 2:9).
- The emphasis falls on the verbs: to break and to dash. There are extraordinary leaps in the music.
- The music uses an ostinato bass, a short pattern of notes repeated throughout.
- Jennens may have the deists and the atheists in view here.



# Hallelujah Chorus





# II.7.44/39

## Chorus

Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

(Revelation 19:6)

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

(Revelation 11:15)

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

(Revelation 19:16)

Hallelujah!

- Part II closes with the chorus Hallelujah, in the key of D major with trumpets and timpani.
- The choir introduces in homophony a characteristic simple motif on the word, playing with the interval of a second, which re-appears throughout the piece.
- Several lines from the Book of Revelation (Revelation 19:6,16, Revelation 11:15) are treated differently, as in a motet, but unified by "Hallelujah" as a conclusion or as a countersubject in a fugal section.

## II.7.44/39

### **Chorus**

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(Revelation 19:6)

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

(Revelation 11:15)

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

(Revelation 19:16)

Hallelujah!

- The line "for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" is sung by all voices, first in unison, then in imitation with Hallelujah-exclamations interspersed.
- The second line "The kingdom of this world is become" is sung in a four-part setting like a chorale.
- The third idea "and he shall reign for ever and ever" starts as a fugue on a theme with bold leaps, reminiscent in sequence of Philipp Nicolai's Lutheran chorale "Wachet auf".

## II.7.44/39

### **Chorus**

Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

(Revelation 19:6)

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

(Revelation 11:15)

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

(Revelation 19:16)

Hallelujah!

- As a countersubject, the words "for ever – and ever" assume the rhythm of the Hallelujah-motif.
- The final acclamation "King of Kings...and Lord of Lords" is sung on one note, energised by repeated calls "Hallelujah" and "for ever – and ever", raised higher and higher (the sopranos and the trumpets part), up to a rest full of tension and a final solemn "Hallelujah".



Allegro ♩ = 72

# Hallelujah Chorus

G F Handel

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Piano

Sop

Alt

Ten

Bas

Pno

For the Lord God Om - ni - po - tent reign - eth,  
Mein K - nig und mein Br ut - i - gam

The King - dom of this — world  
Wohl - auf der Br ut - gam kommt,



# II.7.44/39

•Canadian Brass version

## Chorus

Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent  
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(Revelation 19:6)

The kingdom of this world is become the  
kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ;  
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King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

(Revelation 19:16)

Hallelujah!

