

The Music Of Heaven

“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”
Revelation 5:11-12 (KJV)

As a young child I imagined that the only activity for the saints in heaven was playing harps and singing all day long. It seemed to me to be a rather unattractive detail of eternity to be constantly sitting around strumming harps and singing. As an adult I have learned from Scripture that there is much more to heaven than music. But music certainly has a prominent place in all that we shall do through the ages.

God, in His wisdom created music for us to enjoy and to use as a teaching instrument. As an adult I personally derive great pleasure in listening to the masterpieces of the centuries composed by wonderfully gifted people. One such composition that all God's people thrill to hear is Messiah composed by George

Frideric Handel (1685-1759).

The music is majestic and powerful and seems so worthy as an offering to the great God of the universe. Who does not find themselves inspired as the pipe organ fills the air with harmonic sounds that we imagine must be like the music of heaven? As we hear an especially powerful choir singing “Worthy is the Lamb” do we not find ourselves awed by the great words of praise so majestically sung?

The biblical verses around which Handel composed his great work were strung together by a Charles Jennens who was a wealthy friend of Handel. It only took Handel 24 days to compose the music for the Scriptures. In his day that was not thought to be

a remarkably short time. Handel did tweak detail of his famous work over the years that followed but it remained essentially the same as originally composed.

At the end of the manuscript Handel penned “SDG”, short form for Soli Deo Glori, which translates as “To God alone the glory”.

The hymns that best suit Christian worship are those that ascribe most worth to God and describe His great power, wisdom, majesty, and love for sinners. Those are the hymns that deserve our attention every Lord's Day.

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