



...he is the

Messiah,

the Lord...

Luke 2:11



The Hallelujah Chorus is arguably the most powerful piece of music ever written. Though its lyrics are sparse, its meaning is monumental. This song now reverberates so strongly during the holidays that for many, Christmas does not begin until the “Hallelujah Chorus” has been performed.

When he composed his most famous work, the great George Handel was a washed-up has-been, a frail, forgotten man living in abject poverty. While penning what is now widely thought of as the world’s most dynamic musical salute to a birth of the Savior, Handel essentially was reborn himself.

By 1741, his eyesight had failed. The world which had once been in such sharp focus was now little more than a blur. Legally blind, barely able to walk, Handel also lost his creative powers. Desperate, the depressed composer spent his savings trying to find cures for his various illnesses. Nothing worked, and with no income from writing, directing, or teaching, Handel went from riches to poverty. Locked in a tiny home on the wrong side of London, he feared his final stop on this earth would be a debtor’s prison.

Receiving a letter from a friend offering him the chance to write an

oratorio to some Biblical texts, Handel locked himself in his study and set to work. In seven days he created the first segment of his new musical. After reworking the music several times, Handel felt the new oratorio worthy of a Dublin debut. Ultimately, the Irish tour was a monumental success for the composer’s career. At home in England, newspapers were declaring that Handel had made a mighty comeback! A few months later, Handel brought his newest work to the London stage. It

would be Handel’s annual Eastertide performances to benefit his favorite charity, the Foundling Hospital, that would keep him out of debtor’s prison and in the public eye for another seventeen years. He conducted his most beloved work a final time just eight days before his death in 1759.

Charles Burney, the eighteenth-century music historian, remarked that Handel’s Messiah “fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and fostered the orphan.” As a presentation that has raised and continues to raise millions of dollars for charity, it has done all that and more. This wonderful song was more than just a second chance for Handel; it has become perhaps the most powerful musical reminder of the second chance Jesus has given to us all.



...Kandel's Messiah tells the story of
Jesus from Genesis to Revelation.

This Christmas, let us not only
celebrate the birth of the Promised
Messiah, but the whole Redemption
story and the promise that the
Messiah will Return...



Merry Christmas
from the Songtime Staff

Randy Miller

Cheryl Moore

Ann

John Robinson

Madeleine

Jan 11 24



The Hymn Story is an excerpt from

*“Handel’s Hallelujah Chorus:
More Stories Behind the
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Written by Ace Collins

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