

PART I

depicts the emergence of divine light, the vast firmament of heaven, radiant celestial bodies, surging waters below, atmospheric wonders, and the first flowering of Earth.

1. Overture. The Representation of Chaos (orchestral)

1a. Recitative and chorus: In the beginning God created

RAPHAEL

In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth;
and the earth was without form, and void;
and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

CHORUS

And the Spirit of God
moved upon the face of the waters;
and God said: Let there be Light,
and there was Light.

URIEL

And God saw the Light, that it was good:
and God divided the Light from the darkness.

2. Aria (Uriel) and chorus: Now vanish before the holy beams

URIEL

Now vanish before the holy beams
the gloomy, dismal shades of dark;
the first of days appears!
Disorder yields to order fair the place.
Affrighted fled hell's spirits, black in throngs;
down they sink in the deep of abyss to endless night.

CHORUS

Despairing, cursing rage
attends their rapid fall.
A new-created world
springs up at God's command.

3. Recitative (Raphael): And God made the firmament

RAPHAEL

And God made the firmament,
and divided the waters
which were under the firmament
from the waters which were above the firmament,
and it was so.

Outrageous storms now dreadful arose;
as chaff by the winds are impelled the clouds.
By heaven's fire the sky is enflamed
and awful rolled the thunders on high.
Now from the floods in steams ascend
reviving showers of rain,
the dreary wasteful hail, the light and flaky snow.

4. Aria (Gabriel) and chorus: The marv'ulous work beholds amaz'd

GABRIEL

The marvellous work beholds amaz'd.
The glorious hierarchy of heav'n,
And to the ethereal vaults resounds
the praise of God, and of the second day.

CHORUS

And to the ethereal vaults resounds
the praise of God, and of the second day.

5. Recitative (Raphael): And God said: Let the waters under the heaven

RAPHAEL

And God said: Let the waters under the heaven
be gathered together unto one place,
and let the dry land appear;
and it was so.

And God called the dry land: earth,
and the gath'ring of waters called he seas;
and God saw that it was good.

6. Aria (Raphael): Rolling in foaming billows

RAPHAEL

Rolling in foaming billows
uplifted roars the boisterous sea.
Mountains and rocks now emerge;
their tops into the clouds ascend.
Thro' th'open plains, outstretching wide
in serpent error, rivers flow.
Softly purling, glides on
thro' silent vales the limpid brook.

7. Recitative (Gabriel): And God said: Let the earth bring forth grass

GABRIEL

And God said: Let the earth bring forth grass,
the herb yielding seed,
and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind,
whose seed is in itself upon the earth;
and it was so.

8. Aria (Gabriel): With verdure clad the fields appear

GABRIEL

With verdure clad the fields appear
delightful to the ravish'd sense;
by flowers sweet and gay
enhanced is the charming sight.
Here vent their fumes the fragrant herbs;
here shoots the healing plant.
By load of fruits th'expanded boughs are press'd;
To shady vaults are bent the tufty groves;
The mountain's brow is crown'd with closed wood..

9. Recitative (Uriel): And the heavenly host proclaimed

URIEL

And the heavenly host proclaimed
the third day, praising God and saying:

10. Chorus: Awake the harp

CHORUS

Awake the harp, the lyre awake!
In shout and joy your voices raise!
In triumph sing the mighty Lord!
For he the heavens and earth
has clothed in stately dress.

11. Recitative (Uriel): And God said: Let there be lights

URIEL

And God said:

Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven
to divide the day from the night,
and to give light upon the earth;
and let them be for signs and for seasons,
and for days, and for years.
He made the stars also.

12. Recitative (Uriel): In splendor bright is rising now the sun

URIEL

In splendor bright
Is rising now the sun, and darts his rays;
an am'rous, joyful, happy spouse,
a giant proud and glad
to run his measur'd course.
With softer beams and milder light
steps on the silver moon thro' silent night.
The space immense of th'azure sky
Innum'rous host of radiant orbs adorns,
and the sons of God announced the fourth day
in song divine,
proclaiming thus his power:

13. Chorus with soli: The heavens are telling the glory of God

CHORUS

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
the wonder of his works displays the firmament.

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

To day, that is coming, speaks it the day;
the night, that is gone, to following night.

CHORUS

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
the wonder of his works displays the firmament.

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

In all the lands resounds the word,
never unperceived, ever understood.

CHORUS

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
the wonder of his works displays the firmament.

PART II

reveals the teeming waters filled with sea creatures, birds soaring through the air, and the Earth's animals, culminating in the creation of Adam.

14. Recitative (Gabriel): And God said: Let the waters bring forth

GABRIEL

And God said: Let the waters bring forth abundantly
the moving creature that hath life,
and fowl that may fly above the earth
in the open firmament of heaven.

15. Aria (Gabriel): On mighty pens uplifted soars

GABRIEL

On mighty pens uplifted soars the eagle aloft,
and cleaves the sky in swiftest flight to the blazing sun.
His welcome bids to morn the merry lark
and cooing, calls the tender dove his mate.
From ev'ry bush and grove
resound the nightingale's delightful notes.
No grief affected yet her breast,
nor to a mournful tale were tun'd
her soft enchanting lays.

16. Recitative (Raphael): And God created great whales

RAPHAEL

And God created great whales,
and ev'ry living creature that moveth,
and God blessed them, saying:
Be fruitful all, and multiply!
Ye winged tribes, be multiplied,
and sing on ev'ry tree!
Multiply, ye finny tribes,
and fill each wat'ry deep!
Be fruitful, grow and multiply!
And in your God and Lord rejoice!

RAPHAEL

And the angels struck their immortal harps,
and the wonders of the fifth day sang.

17. Recitative (Raphael): Most beautiful appear

GABRIEL

Most beautiful appear, with verdure young adorn'd
the gently sloping hills.

Their narrow, sinuous veins distil in crystal drops
the fountain fresh and bright.

URIEL

In lofty circles play
and hovers thro' the sky
the cheerful host of birds.

And in the flying whirl the glitt'ring plumes
are dyed as rainbows by the sun.

RAPHAEL

See flashing thro' the wet in thronged swarms
the fry in thousand ways around
Upheaved from the deep, see th'immense Leviathan
sports on the foaming wave.

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

How many are thy works, O God!
Who may their numbers tell?

18. Chorus with soli: The Lord is great

GABRIEL, URIEL, RAPHAEL and CHORUS

The Lord is great, and great his might;
his glory lasts for ever and for evermore.

20. Recitative (Raphael): Straight opening her fertile womb

RAPHAEL

Strait opening her fertile womb,
the earth obey'd the word,
and teem'd creatures numberless,
in perfect forms and fully grown.

Cheerful roaring, stands the tawny lion.

In sudden leaps the flexible tiger appears.

The nimble stag bears up his branching head.

With flying mane and fiery look,

Impatient neighs the sprightly steed.

The cattle in herds already seeks his food
on fields and meadows green.

And o'er the ground, as plants,

Are spread the fleecy, meek and bleating flock.

Unnumber'd as the sands,
in whirl arose the host of insects.
In long dimension creeps
with sinuous trace the worm.

22. Recitative (Uriel): And God created Man

URIEL

And God created man in his own image.
In the image of God created he him.
Male and female created he them.
He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,
and man became a living soul.

23. Aria (Uriel): In native worth and honour clad

URIEL

In native worth and honour clad,
with beauty, courage, strength adorn'd,
to heav'n erect and tall he stands
a man, the Lord and King of nature all.

The large and arched front sublime
of wisdom deep declares the seat,
and in his eyes with brightness shines the soul,
the breath and image of his God.

With fondness leans upon his breast
the partner for him form'd,
a woman fair and graceful spouse.
Her softly smiling virgin looks,
of flow'ry spring the mirror,
bespeak him love and joy and bliss.

24. Recitative (Raphael): And God saw everything

RAPHAEL

And God saw everything that he had made;
and behold, it was very good;
and the heavenly choir
in song divine thus closed the sixth day.

25. Chorus: Achieved is the glorious work

CHORUS

Achieved is the glorious work;
the Lord beholds it and is pleased.
In lofty strains let us rejoice!
Our song let be the praise of God!

26. Trio: On thee each living soul awaits

GABRIEL AND URIEL

On thee each living soul awaits;
from thee, O Lord, they beg their meat.
Thou openest thy hand, and sated all are they.

RAPHAEL

But as to them thy face is hid,
with sudden terror they are struck.
Thou tak'st their breath away; they vanish into dust.

GABRIEL, URIEL and RAPHAEL

Thou lett'st thy breath go forth again,
and life with vigour fresh returns.
Revived earth unfolds new force and new delights.

27. Chorus: Achieved is the glorious work

CHORUS

Achieved is the glorious work,
our song let be the praise of God!
Glory to his name for ever;
he sole on high, exalted, reigns.
Alleluia.

PART III

portrays the awakening of Adam and Eve in Paradise, their growing wonder at the world around them, and their celebration of God's creation through songs of devotion and love.

33. Finale, chorus and soli: Sing the Lord ye voices all

CHORUS

Sing the Lord, ye voices all!
Utter, utter thanks ye all his works!
Celebrate his pow'r and glory!
Let his name resound on high!
The Lord is great; his praise shall last for aye.
Amen.