

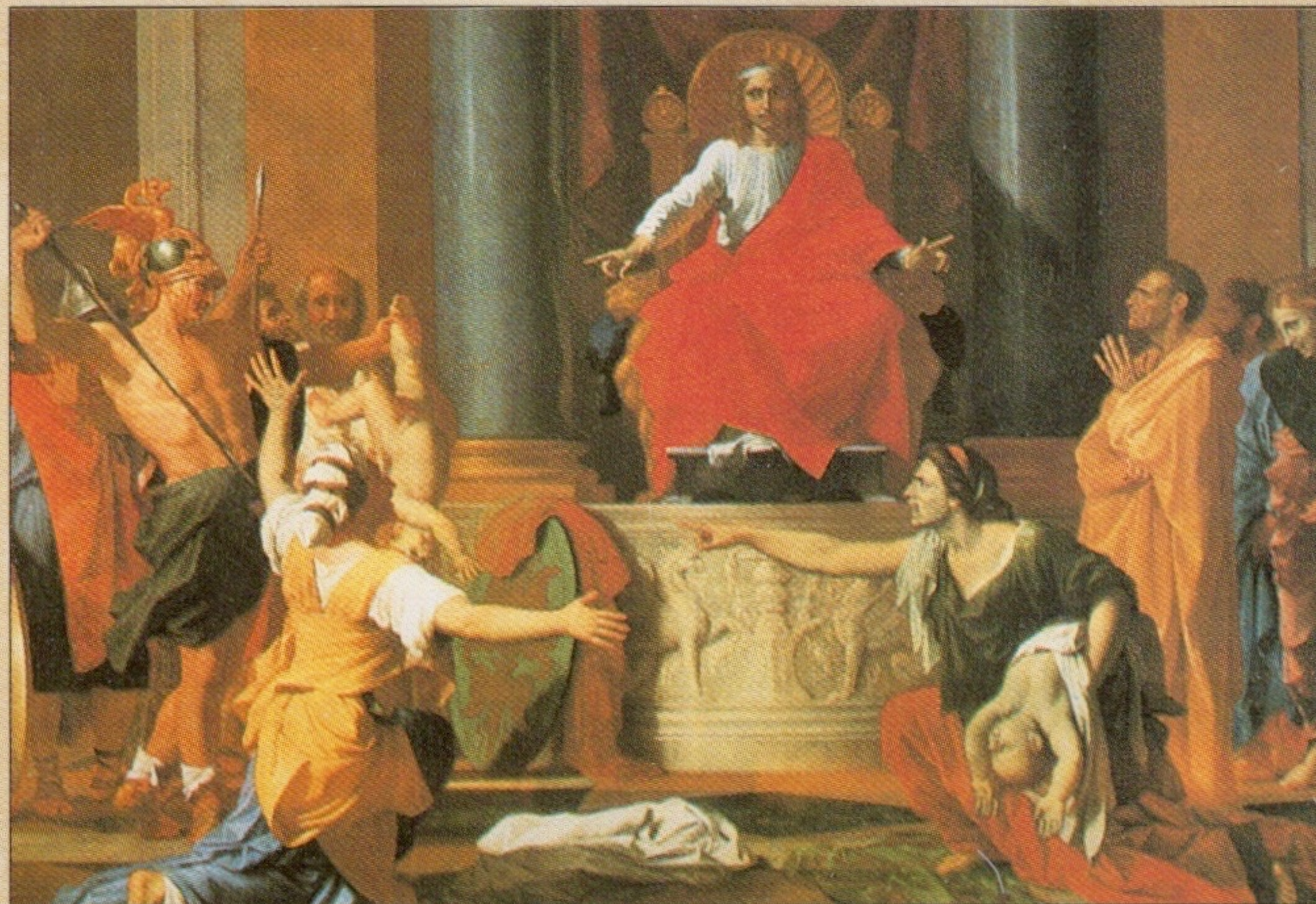
VOL. 6/7

2 CD Set

THE MASTERWORKS

George Frideric Handel

Solomon



BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

CD 1

1. Overture 6'31

ACT 1

Scene 1

2. Chorus of Priests 3'37
 3. A Levite 5'29
 4. Chorus 5'19
 5. Recitativo Solomon 3'00
 6. Recitativo & Aria Zadok 6'10
 7. Chorus 2'19
 8. Recitativo & Aria Solomon 6'41

Scene 2

9. Recitativo Solomon, Aria Queen of Sheba 6'42
 10. Recitativo Solomon, Queen of Sheba 4'47
 11. Recitativo & Aria Solomon 4'08
 12. Recitativo & Aria Queen of Sheba 2'47
 13. Recitativo Zadok; Chorus 3'54

ACT 2

Scene 1

14. Chorus 4'59
 15. Recitativo & Aria Solomon 4'44

Scene 2

16. Recitativo Attendant, Solomon 6'16
 Aria First Harlot & Second Harlot

Total time: 77'30

CD 2

1. Recitativo & Aria Solomon & Second Harlot 4'28
 2. Recitativo & Aria First Harlot 5'15
 3. Recitativo Solomon, First Harlot, Solomon 6'10
 4. Chorus 3'12
 5. Recitativo & Aria Zadok 6'20
 6. Recitativo & Aria First Harlot 8'04
 7. Chorus 3'02

ACT 3

8. Sinfonia 3'15

Scene 1

9. Recitativo & Aria, Queen of Sheba, Solomon, Chorus 5'13
 10. Aria Solomon, Chorus 1'51
 11. Recitativo Solomon, Chorus 4'11
 12. Recitativo Solomon, Chorus 4'11
 13. Recitativo & Aria, Queen of Sheba 1'15
 14. Recitativo & Aria Zadok 4'14
 15. Recitativo & Aria Queen of Sheba 5'38
 16. Recitativo & Aria Solomon, Queen of Sheba, Chorus 8'20

Total time: 74'46

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CD 1

1 OVERTURE

ACT I

Scene 1

2 CHORUS OF PRIESTS

Your harps and cymbals sound
to great Jehovah's praise;
unto the Lord of Hosts
your willing voices raise.

3 A LEVITE

Praise ye the Lord for all His mercies past,
whose truth whose justice will for ever last.

4 CHORUS

With pious heart and holy tongue
resound your Maker's name,
till distant nations catch the song
and glow with holy flame.

5 SOLOMON

Almighty power! who rul'st the earth and skies,
and bade gay order from confusion rise;
whose gracious hand relieved thy slave distressed,
with splendor clothed me and with knowledge blest;
Thy finished temple with Thy presence grace,
and shed Thy heavenly glories o'er the place.

6 ZADOK

Imperial Solomon thy prayers are heard.
See! from the opening skies
descending names involve the sacrifice;
and lo! within the sacred dome
that gleamy light profusely bright,
declares the Lord of Hosts is come.

Sacred raptures cheer my breast,
rushing tides of hallowed zeal,
joys too fierce to be expressed,
in this swelling heart I feel.
Warm enthusiastic fires
in my panting bosom roll,
hope of bliss, that ne'er expires,
dawns upon my ravished soul.

7 CHORUS

Throughout the land Jehovah's praise record,
for full of power and mercy is the Lord.

8 SOLOMON

Blest be the Lord, who looked with gracious eyes
upon His vassal's humble sacrifice,
and has with an approving smile
my work o'erpaid and graced the pile.

What though I trace each herb and flower
hat drinks the morning dew,
did I not own Jehovah's power,
how vain were all I knew!
Say what's the rest but empty boast,
the pedant's idle claim,
who having all the substance lost
attempts to grasp a name.

Scene 2

9 SOLOMON

And see, my queen, my wedded love,
you soon my tenderness shall prove;
a palace shall erect its heads,
of cedar built with gold bespread;
methinks the work is now begun,
the ax resounds on Lebanon,

THE MASTERWORKS

and see bedecked with canvas wings,
the dancing vessel lightly springs,
while Ophir's mines, well-pleased, disclose
the wealth that in their entrails glows.

QUEEN

Blest the day when first my eyes
saw the wisest of the wise!
Blest the day when I was led
to ascend the nuptial bed!
But completely blest the day,
on my bosom as he lay,
when he called my charms divine,
vowing to be only mine.

10 SOLOMON

Thou fair inhabitant Of Nile
rejoice thy lover with a smile!

QUEEN

O monarch! with each virtue blest,
the brightest star that gilds the east:
no joy I know beneath the sun
but what's comprised in Solomon.
With thee, how quickly fled the winter's night,
and short is summer's length of light.

Welcome as the dawn of day
to the pilgrim on his way,
whom the darkness caused to stray,
is my lovely king to me.

11 SOLOMON

Myrtle grove, or rosy shade,
breathing odors through the glade
to refresh the village maid,
yields in sweets, my queen, to thee.

SOLOMON

My blooming fair, come, come away,
my love admits of no delay.

Haste, haste to the cedar grove,
where fragrant spices bloom

and amorous turtles love
beneath the pleasing gloom.
While tinkling down the hill,
avoiding hateful day,
the little murmuring rill
in whispers away.

12 QUEEN

When thou art absent from my sight,
the court I shun, and loathe the light.
With thee the unsheltered moor I'd tread,
nor once of fate complain,
though burning suns flashed round my head
and cleaved the barren plain.
Thy lovely form alone I prize;
'tis thou that canst impart
continual pleasure to my eyes
and gladness to my heart.

13 ZADOK

Search round the world, there never yet was seen
so wise a monarch or so chaste a queen.

CHORUS

May no rush intruder disturb their soft hours;
to form fragrant pillows, arise, O ye flowers!
Ye zephyrs, soft-breathing, their slumbers prolong,
while nightingales lull them to sleep with their song.

ACT II

Scene 1

14 CHORUS

From the censer curling rise
grateful incense to the skies;
heaven blesses David's throne,
happy, happy Solomon!
Live, live for ever, pious David's son;
live, live for ever, mighty Solomon.

15 SOLOMON

Praised be the Lord, from Him my wisdom springs;
I bow enraptured to the King of Kings.

He led me, abject, to imperial state,
when weak, and trembling for my future fate:
strengthened by Him, each foe with horror fled,
then impious Joab at the altar bled:
the death he oft deserved stern Shimei found,
and Adonijah sunk beneath the wound;
forced by his crimes, I spoke a brother's doom.
Ah may his vices perish in his tomb!

When the sun o'er yonder hills
pours in tides the golden day,
or, when quivering o'er the rills,
in the west he dies away;
he shall ever hear me sing
praises to the eternal King.

Scene 2

16 ATTENDANT

My sovereign liege, two women stand,
and both beseech the king's command
to enter here. Dissolved in tears,
the one a newborn infant bears;
the other, fierce and threatening loud,
declares her story to the crowd,
and thus she clamors to the throng:
"Seek we the king, he shall redress our wrong."

SOLOMON

Admit them straight, for when we mount the throne
our hours are all the people's, not our own.

Scene 3

FIRST HARLOT

Thou son of David, hear a mother's grief,
and let the voice of justice bring relief.
This little babe my womb conceived,
the smiling infant I with joy received.
That woman also bore a son,
whose vital thread was quickly spun.
One house we both together kept;
but once, unhappy, as I slept,

she stole at midnight where I lay,
bore my soft darting from my arms away
and left her child behind, a lump of lifeless clay,
and now, oh, impious! dares to claim
my right alone, a mother's name.
Words are weak to paint my fears;
heartfelt anguish, starting tears,
best shall plead a mother's cause.
To thy throne, O king, I bend;
my cause is just, be thou my friend.

SECOND HARLOT

False is all her melting tale.
Then be just, and fear the laws.

SOLOMON

Justice holds the lifted scale.

CD 2

1 SOLOMON

What says the other to the imputed charged?
Speak in thy turn, and tell thy wrongs at large.

SECOND HARLOT

I cannot varnish o'er my tongue
and color fair the face of wrong.
This babe is mine; the womb of earth
entombed conceals her little birth.
Give me my child, my smiling boy,
to cheer my breast with newborn joy.

SOLOMON

Hear me, ye woman, and the king regard,
who from his throne thus reads the just award:
Each claims alike, let both their portions share;
divide the babe, thus each her part shall bear.
Quick, bring the falchion, and the infant smite,
nor further clamor for disputed right.

SECOND HARLOT

Thy sentence, great king,
is prudent and wise,

and my hopes on the wing
quick bound for the prize.
Contented I hear
and approve thy decree;
for at least I shall tear
the loved infant from thee.

2 FIRST HARLOT

Withhold, withhold the executing hand!
Reverse, O king, thy stern command.

Can I see my infant gored
with the fierce relentless sword?
Can I see him yield his breath,
smiling at the hand of death?
And behold the purple tides
gushing down his tender sides?
Rather be my hopes beguiled.
Take him all - but spare my child.

3 SOLOMON

Israel, attend to what your king shall say;
think not I meant the innocent to slay.
The stern decision was to trace with art
the secret dictates of the human heart.
She who could bear the fierce decree to hear,
nor send one sigh, nor shed one pious tear,
must be a stranger to a mother's name -
hence from my sight, nor urge a further claim!
But you, whose fears a parent's love attest,
receive, and bind him to your beating breast;
to you, in justice. I the babe restore,
and may you lose him from your arms no more.

FIRST HARLOT

Thrice blest be the king, for he's good and he's wise:
my gratitude calls streaming tears from my eyes.
How happy are those who in God put their trust!

SOLOMON

The Lord all these virtues has given,
thy thanks be returned all to heaven.
'Tis God that rewards, and will lift from dust

whom to crush proud oppressors endeavor;
for His mercy endureth for ever.

4 CHORUS

From the east unto the west,
who so wise as Solomon?
Who like Israel's king is blest,
who so worthy of a throne?

5 ZADOK

From morn to eve I could enraptured sing
the various virtues of our happy king,
in whom, with wonder, we behold combined
the grace of feature with the worth of mind.

See the tall palm that lifts its head
on Jordan's sedgy side;
its towering branches curling spread,
and bloom in graceful pride.
Each meaner tree regardless springs,
nor claims our scornful eyes;
thus thou art first of mortal kings,
and wisest of the wise.

6 FIRST HARLOT

No more shall armed bands our hopes destroy;
peace waves her wing and pours forth every joy.

Beneath the vine, or fig-tree's shade,
every shepherd sings the maid,
who his simple heart betrayed,
in a rustic measure.

While of torments he complains,
all around the village swains
catch the song and feel his pains,
mingling sighs with pleasure.

7 CHORUS

Swell, swell the full chorus to Solomon's praise,
record him, ye bards, as the pride of our days.
Flow sweetly the numbers that dwell on his name
and rouse the whole nation in songs to his fame.



ACT III

8 SINFONIA

Scene 1

9 QUEEN OF SHEBA

From Arabia's spicy shores,
bounded by the hoary main,
Sheba's queen these seats explores,
to be taught thy heavenly strain.

SOLOMON

Thrice welcome queen, with open arms
our court receives thee and thy charms.
The temple of the Lord first meets your eyes,
rich with the well-accepted sacrifice.
Here all our treasures free behold,
where cedars lie, o'erwrought with gold;
next, view a mansion fit for kings to own,
the forest called of towering Lebanon,
where art her utmost skill displays,
and every object claims your praise.
Sweep, sweep the string, to soothe the royal fair,
and rouse each passion with the alternate air.
Music, spread thy voice around,
sweetly flow the lulling sound.

CHORUS

Music, spread thy voice around,
sweetly flow the lulling sound.

10 SOLOMON

Now a different measure try.
Shake the dome and pierce the sky.
Rouse us next to martial deeds;
clanking arms and neighing steeds
seem in fury to oppose -
Now the hard-fought battle glows.

CHORUS

Shake the dome and pierce the sky.
Rouse us next to martial deeds:
clanking arms and neighing steeds

seem in fury to oppose -
Now the hard-fought battle glows.

11 SOLOMON

Then at once from rage remove.
Draw the tear from hopeless love;
lengthen out the solemn air,
full of death and wild despair.

CHORUS

Draw the tear from hopeless love;
lengthen out the solemn air,
full of death and wild despair.

12 SOLOMON

Next the tortured soul release,
and the mind restore to peace.

Thus rolling surges rise
and plough the troubled main;
but soon the tempest dies,
and all is calm again.

CHORUS

Thus rolling surges rise
and plough the troubled main;
but soon the tempest dies,
and all is calm again.

13 QUEEN OF SHEBA

Thy harmony's divine, great king;
all, all obeys the artist's string.
And now, illustrious prince, receive
such tribute as my realm can give.
Here purest gold, from earth's dark entrails torn,
and gems resplendent, that outshine the morn;
there balsam breathes a grateful smell;
with thee the fragrant strangers wish to dwell.

Yet of every object I behold,
amid the glare of gems and gold,
the temple most attracts my eye,
where, with unwearied zeal,
you serve the Lord on high.

14 ZADOK

Thrice happy king, to have achieved
what scarce will henceforth be believed;
when seven times around the sphere
the sun had led the new-born year,
the temple rose, to mark thy days
with endless themes for future praise.
Our pious David wished in vain,
by this great act to bless his reign;
But Heaven the monarch's hopes withstood,
for ah! his hands were stained with blood.

Golden columns, fair and bright,
catch the mortal's ravished sight;
round their sides ambitious twine
tendrils of the clasping vine.
Cherubims stand there displayed,
o'er the ark their wings are laid;
every object swells with state,
all is pious, all is great.

15 QUEEN OF SHEBA

May peace in Salem ever dwell!
Illustrious Solomon, farewell.
Thy wise instructions be my future care,
soft as the showers that cheer the vernal air,
whose warmth bids every plant her sweets disclose,
the lily wakes, and paints the opening rose.

Will the sun forget to streak
eastern skies with amber ray
when the dusky shades to break
he unbars the gates of day?
Then demand if Sheba's queen
e'er can banish from her thought
all the splendor she has seen,
all the knowledge thou hast taught.

16 SOLOMON

Adieu, fair queen, and in thy breast
may peace and virtue ever rest!

QUEEN OF SHEBA

Every joy that wisdom knows,
mayest thou, pious monarch, share!
Gently flow thy rolling days.
May thy people sound thy praise,
praise unbought by price or fear.

SOLOMON

Every blessing Heaven bestows,
be thy portion, virtuous fair!
Sorrow be a stranger here.
May thy people sound thy praise,
praise unbought by price or fear.

CHORUS

Praise the Lord with harp and tongue!
Praise Him all, ye old and young:
He's in mercy ever strong.
Praise the Lord through every state,
praise Him early, praise Him late:
God alone is good and great.
Let the loud Hosannas rise,
widely spreading through the skies:
God alone is just and wise.

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THE MASTERWORKS

VOL. 6/7

2 CD Set

George Frideric Handel

Solomon

ORATORIO

Justino Diaz, bass: Solomon

Sheila Armstrong, soprano: Pharoh's daughter

Robert Tear, tenor: Zadok, the High Priest

Michael Rippon, bass: A Levite

Sheila Armstrong, soprano: First Harlot

Felicity Palmer, soprano: Second Harlot

Sheila Armstrong: Nicaule, Queen of Sheba

AMOR ARTIS CHORALE

ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA,

Johannes Somary

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