

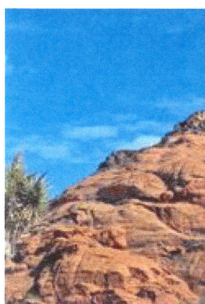


"How Wondrous and Great"

September Hymn of the Month

Just as picturesque scenes can bring peace and calmness to the soul, so does beautiful music

The Hymn



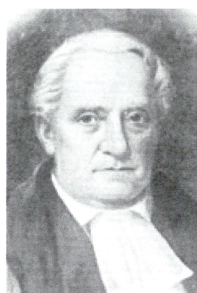
For many students, as a new course of school studies commences at this time of year , principles of science and mathematics will be taught and understanding of

natural processes will increase. Modern science has explained how many things work in our world, and some may think that scientific understanding and religious belief in God cannot coexist.

For others, science is the discovery of how God does his work of creation, and religion is the explanation of why. In this view, science and religion are part of the same quest for truth. The existence of God as an omnipotent, omniscient Heavenly Father has not been proved or disproved by the scientific method, although many efforts have been made on both sides. Spiritual evidence is difficult to measure. Ultimately it becomes a choice to believe or not.

Interestingly, there are good scientific reasons to believe in God. Studies have shown that people who frequently

The Author



Henry Ustic Onderdonk was born to John and Deborah Ustic Onderdonk in March of 1789 at New York City, New York. He was christened the

following month at Trinity Church Parish in this city. There are a number of Trinity Episcopal Churches in the New York City Metropolitan area, however, the Onderdonk family had been residents of Long Island for several generations. The family name evidently evolved from 'Van der Donck.'

Henry was the second of nine children that would come to the family. The oldest brother died as an infant. His father, John, was an eminent physician in New York and had been a young widower, losing his first wife after only two years. He married again after a time and he and Deborah raised a large family. It is likely that they gave their children a religious upbringing. Twenty-two years after his christening at Holy Trinity, Henry

The Composer



Johann Michael Haydn was born to Matthias and Maria Koller Haydn in September of 1737 at Rohrau, Austria. Rohrau was a village near the Hungarian border at the time. Johann Michael, or Michael as he was

known, was the younger brother of Franz Joseph Haydn. Their father was a wheelwright with no formal musical training, but was said to love folk music and taught himself to play the harp. His sons likely inherited some of his natural talent and grew up with music.

It is said the the older brother Joseph had a skilled singing voice that gained him a position as a boy soprano at St. Stephen's cathedral in Vienna. The director of the choir school was very impressed with Joseph's talents and was glad to take on his younger brother, Michael, five years later as a chorister, or choir-boy, at the cathedral. Michael was about eight years old when he left his parents and went to Vienna.

The training Michael received at the cathedral school set him on his future course as a musician. It is said that he

attend religious services live longer than their atheist counterparts. People who pray daily and attend religious services weekly are generally also happier, more generous, and more involved with their families and communities than the less religious.

For those who choose to believe in God, the existence of the earth and the beauties of nature may appear as an expression of love by an intelligent creator, which adds great meaning to life. As expressed in our hymn, these works of God before our eyes and senses are "wondrous (to be marveled at) and great." Included in these wonderful works is the intricate human body. The doctrine of Christianity explains why we exist and what happens when we die. The mission of Jesus Christ in teaching us how to live, providing atonement for our sins and giving the promise of resurrection and immortal life is a companion "wondrous and great" work to the creation. The phrase in the hymn text can be understood to apply to all these works.

The hymn text was written as a poetical paraphrase of two Bible verses found in the New Testament Book of Revelation, Chapter 15. The author's ability as a poet is evident as we compare these verses from the King James Version of the Bible, reproduced below, to the hymn text.

"3. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints.

4. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

was married in the same church to Miss Elizabeth Carter.

At this point in life, Henry had recently returned from studying medicine in London and Edinburgh, having received a medical degree at the University of Edinburgh in 1810, at the age of about twenty-one. If the sources are correct, he must have been very bright, as it is said that he had previously received a bachelor's degree from Columbia College in 1805, when he would have been about sixteen, and a master's degree at nineteen. Columbia College at that time was the predecessor of Columbia University today.

Henry is reported to have followed in his father's footsteps and practiced medicine for a few years. He was reported to have been an associate editor of the New York Medical Journal for a time. He then began to study theology under the Episcopal Bishop of New York. He was ordained Deacon in 1815, and Priest the following year. His first service was as a missionary at Canandaigua, NY. After a few years he returned to New York in 1820 to become Rector of St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn. It was likely during his time here that he wrote the text for "How Wondrous and Great." Other than his hymns, he was not known to have written other poetry. He did, however, publish several scholarly works.

His efforts as an Episcopal Rector were evidently appreciated as after seven years he was consecrated Assistant Bishop of Pennsylvania. This same year, 1827, he also received a Doctor of Divinity degree from Columbia College. On the death of the incumbent in 1836, Henry became the Bishop of Pennsylvania, at the age of about 47. It is interesting to note that his younger brother, Benjamin, became the Bishop of New York in 1830, and they served together for a time.

learned violin and clavier while there. After growing out of the choir school, about 1757 he became 'Kapellmeister' or master of chapel music at the court of the Bishop of Grosswardein, (now Oradea in western Romania.) He was about twenty years old at the time and would serve there until 1762 when he took a position as concert master to the Archbishop of Salzburg.

He would serve in Salzburg for the next forty-three years. During this time he became close friends with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart whom he succeeded as cathedral organist in 1781. He was a teacher of music and he also composed hundreds of works including symphonies, concerti, masses, and sacred choral works. He was believed to have been influenced by his father's strong religious faith and it is said his compositions and his life were God-centered.

Although rather overshadowed by his more famous brother, Michael was said to have been close to Joseph and was highly regarded by him. Joseph was reported to have said that he felt Michael's sacred works were superior to his own.

Johann Michael Haydn's remarkably creative life came to a close in August of 1808, at the age of 71.

He did not create a catalog of his compositions and some of his works have been confused with his brother, Franz Joseph Haydn, over the ensuing centuries, as well as with Mozart and others. This uncertainty still is evident today in the tune LYONS and its origin. The music still lifts our spirits as we sing to the text of "How Wondrous and Great" however, whether or not we know for certain where it came from.

HYMN 109. (IV. 1.)

Rev. xv. 3, 4.

- 1 **H**OW wondrous and great
Thy works, God of praise!
How just, King of saints,
And true, are thy ways!
O who shall not fear thee,
And honour thy name!
Thou only art holy,
Thou only supreme!
- 2 To nations long dark
Thy light shall be shown;
Their worship and vows
Shall come to thy throne:

Digitized by Google

World from HARVARD UNIVERSITY

HYMNS.

Thy truth and thy judgments
Shall spread all abroad,
Till earth's ev'ry people
Confess thee their God.

65

The praise offered in the hymn text eloquently reproduces the Biblical expressions of adoration for God, and desire that all nations and people should have the light of understanding to recognize and worship God. Also, to acknowledge his hand in their lives.

"How Wondrous and Great" is believed to have first appeared in the 1826 edition of "Hymns of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America," published in 1827 at Philadelphia, PA. An image of the original publication is above as available at babel.hathitrust.org.

The author, Henry Onderdonk, was an Episcopal Rector at the time and an influential member of the committee appointed to prepare the hymn collection. He is said to have authored nine of the hymns in the collection, of which "How Wondrous and Great" is the only one of his authorship still in use today. The collection was said to have marked a change from Psalmody to Hymnody and was influential in the development of church music as we know it today.

"How Wondrous and Great" has been set to several tunes over the years, the most frequently used goes by the tune name LYONS. It is said to have been named after the city of the same name in France. The music in 3/4 time matches

After eight years, Henry was found to have succumbed to a weakness for alcohol and was suspended from his office in 1844. He put himself back together, however, and after eleven years, his life was said to be exemplary and the suspension was lifted. He did not resume his jurisdiction, however, and passed away two years later, in December of 1858, at the age of 69.

Although it does not appear that Henry and Eliza were blessed with children, their legacy lives on in the text of "How Wondrous and Great."

"How Wondrous and Great"

Text as found in the 1985 LDS Hymnal

How wondrous and great
Thy works, God of praise!
How just, King of Saints,
And true are thy ways!
Oh, who shall not fear thee
And honor thy name?
Thou only are holy,
Thou only supreme.

To nations long dark
Thy light shall be shown.
Their worship and vows
Shall come to thy throne.
Thy truth and thy judgments
Shall spread all abroad,
Till earth's ev'ry people
Confess thee their God.

well with the text. The authorship of the tune has been the subject of some debate and investigation over the years. Attributed to Johann Michael Haydn, there have also been noted similarities in minuets by Franz Haydn. The tune is also believed to have possibly come from a 1785 work by Joseph Martin Kraus.

The hymn was included in the 1948 edition of "Hymns, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (LDS Hymnal), with only a few changes to punctuation and capitalization from the text found in the 1826 Episcopal publication. It continued in the current 1985 LDS Hymnal in the same key, with only a few minor changes.

A classic hymn of praise, "How Wondrous and Great" continues to remind the current generation of the wonderful gifts of God.



Information in this article came from:

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=Onderdonk&GSfn=Henry&GSby=1789&GSbyrel=in&GSdy=1858&GSdyrel=in&GSst=40&GSctry=4&GSob=n&GRid=121990212&df=all&>

<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VK1K-KLL>

<http://www.columbia.edu/content/history.html>

http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/h/a/y/haydn_jm.htm

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Michael_Haydn

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Michael-Haydn>

Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (Deseret Book Company, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1985, #267)

'Holy Bible, King James Version,' Romans 14:11, p. 1435; Revelation 15:3-4, p. 1581. (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1979)

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, (G & C Merriam Company, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1975)

Karen Lynn Davidson, 'Our Latter-day Hymns,' pp. 271-272, 388, 420. (Deseret Book Company, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1988)

J. Spencer Cornwall, 'Stories of our Mormon Hymns,' p. 163-164 . (Deseret Book Company, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1963)

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044077927630;view=1up;seq=70;size=125>

http://www.hymnary.org/text/how_wondrous_and_great_thy_works_god

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/attending-religious-services-may-help-you-live-longer-study-says/>

<http://www.pewforum.org/2016/04/12/religion-in-everyday-life/>

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/glossary/onderdonk-henry-ustick>

https://archive.org/stream/genealogyonderd00youngoo/genealogyonderd00youngoo_djvu.tx

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=Onderdonk&GSfn=Henry&GSby=1789&GSbyrel=in&GSdy=1858&GSdyrel=in&GSst=40&GScntry=4&GSob=n&GRid=121990212&df=all&>

<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VK1K-KLL>

<http://www.columbia.edu/content/history.html>

http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/h/a/y/haydn_jm.htm

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Michael_Haydn

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Michael-Haydn>