



Hallelujah

J.S. Featherstone

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Hallelujah is the remarkable story of one of the greatest events in musical history, the creation of George Frederic Handel's masterpiece, Messiah. Composed in just twenty-four days, Handel's -Grand Oratorio which rendered him immortal- was birthed in the darkest and most desperate hours of his life. His health was failing. Critics ridiculed him. Creditors hounded him. Enemies persecuted him. Pride had nearly destroyed him. Yet, out of Handel's night emerged the dawn of Messiah.

Anyone who has thrilled at hearing the Hallelujah Chorus will feel -profound attachment- to Handel's story of hope and redemption as timeless and poignant as the music itself.

Hallelujah Details

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Author : J.S. Featherstone

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From Reader Review Hallelujah for online ebook

Keysha Stutz says

It is a great time of the year to read how the Messiah came about. It is a good historical fiction

Kathy Marler says

The fictional representation of the life of Frederick Handle. The story is wonderful and you could hear his music coming from the pages of the book. A wonderful insight into court life to extreme poverty in the 1700's.

Adrienne says

I loved this book so much. I do feel there was a lot that was fictionalized, but it was so long ago that it would be hard not to. I actually wish I had read the author's notes first because they helped amend my concerns.

At first I had a hard time with all the characters who didn't seem to cross paths with Handel's story, but when I described it to my husband he said it reminded him of British period dramas which are very episodic and have characters that don't necessarily fit with the main mold the way American writing would. Once he suggested that it clicked and I was able to enjoy the rest of the book for what it is.

I love the premise for this book so much. Read the prologue!

The audio narration was well done.

Mark Smiley says

I first saw a rendition of The Messiah at the St George Tabernacle, while still in my teens. I remember joining the congregation in singing the Hallelujah Chorus. The flutterings of my heart, the tears in my eyes, the girls across the way winking their eyes at me and my friend...ah, a special day. And listening to the soundtrack most every P-day in the mission field was a special treat.

So when my friend Mary invited me to read this book, I gladly accepted. There are several plots going on at the same time and while they do cross paths upon occasion, it is not until quite near the end when they are all flowing together in harmony. I was a little sad that this was a novel and not actual events, though of course there are certain historical occurrences that happen.

Did I get the same feelings as the first time I heard The Messiah when I read this? Oh yes indeed. Does it make me want to dig out my copy of the libretto and sing along with the stereo, cranked to high volume? I should say so. I was warmed by the author's take on the influence on Handel, how it changed him and brought about this oratorio.

Thanks Mary for the great read. I will be sure to recommend it to others!

Jenifer says

I had the intention of totally skimming this almost-six-hundred page book but the beginning totally sucked me in with Peter the Packrat. He remained my favorite character throughout though the story got really stale in the middle and I, committed by this time, was slogging a bit. It is the fictionalized story of how George Frederic Handel wrote "The Messiah". If you love this music and/or religious literature, it is a fine book and I recommend it. In the tradition of Dickens, the good characters are saintly, and the bad folks truly evil.

This description of the composer reminds me of a favorite Coldplay member (who has his own hair) that we all love; "Each time he had an entrance, people would rise up in their seats for a better look. During the more active harpsichord sections, Handel would bounce on his stool, causing his wig to dance on his head. By the time the first act was over, the audience could judge his interest and enthusiasm for the piece by the shake of his wig."

Juergen John Roscher says

I read Hallelujah because it was the book chosen for December 2009 Book Club discussion. I doubt I would have read this book if not required for the book club, but I am grateful that I read it.

The oratorio "Messiah" composed by George Frideric Handel has always been a favorite of mine during Christmas and Easter. This historical fiction book portrays the life of Handel and the creation of the beloved musical masterpiece. The book follows the life of Handel with several subplots using minor characters; some historical and others not.

I found this book about the life of Handel to be very interesting and inspiring. His life is interesting given the historical period and his role in it, in addition, to him creating one of the most popular works in Western choral literature. His life is inspiring because of the heights and depths that he experienced in his musical career showing his determination and courage to continue on when all others had given up on him. His life, as depicted in the book, shows the redemptive powers of the love of the Savior.

Furthermore, this book helped me understand better the difference between the poor (lower class) and the aristocracy during the 1700s. The subplots of Jonathan and Rachael and the Packrat illustrated the difference between the rich and the poor as well as added depth to the story.

I know that the author J. Scott Featherstone is LDS and his descriptions, especially with the spiritual matters, have an LDS influence. I wonder how those who are not LDS receive some of the depictions of Handel being so greatly influenced by the spirit when composing the oratorio.

I would recommend this book to those who love historical fiction and interest in great choral literature or musical composers.

Danielle says

Historical fiction.

Pinch says

I loved the book. What an eye opener

Mel says

I haven't read too many historical fiction novels, but I really enjoyed this one and now have the desire to read more. There are several interesting characters woven through the book, I especially liked Peter the Packrat. The writing style is a bit wordy for me and I would have liked to see more character development, but overall a great read that I would recommend.

Barbara says

This is one of those long books with several subplots. It's a historical novel about Handel's writing of the Messiah. Featherstone is a very good descriptive writer, my only complaint is that it is a long book and if you don't read it continuously; a few days later the story connects the plot with something else and I forgot the importance of what I'm reading today from a week ago. Am I making any sense? I know someone who read it in three days wow, I can't do that. I also had to have a dictionary by my side to get the meaning of some words like -gaol, inexorably, malevolent, dolce, specious to name a few. I know, I know I'm showing my ignorance, but it's always good to be learning right? I thought it was a wonderful book about the story of Handel. Featherstone handled the topic very well. Wonderful how that work (Messiah) changes people's lives for the better. That is probably why the Savior asked us to study the words of Isaiah so we'll become a changed people. Does anyone know what a librettoist is?

Angela says

Lovely book. Somewhat predictable but such a delight to read. Good messages throughout.

Brian says

A bit long, but well written and very entertaining. I listened to the audio book version on a road trip, and it took me awhile to get into, but once I did I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Launette Shaw says

Reading this book, I gained an appreciation of the life-changing events that George Handel experienced while writing the Messiah. It was very well written. I would have given it 5 stars if it had been completely non fiction.

Ruth says

very good book, I have a much better appreciation for the genius that is Handel and the wonderful gift of revelation he received to bring us "Messiah"

Gayla Dalton says

This was my book club's pick for the month. I listened to the audible book that was 17 hours long, loved every bit. Also great to listen to the book because the music was played along with the story. Brought tears to my eyes.
