

# I HEARD A VOICE

Edited by  
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Text from Revelation 14.13

THOMAS TOMKINS  
(1527 - 1656)

Tomkins was born in St David's in Pembrokeshire. His father was also a musician, a vicar choral of the cathedral of St Davids and organist there; his three half-brothers were musicians as well, but none attained the fame of Thomas. In 1596 he was appointed as a choral instructor at Worcester Cathedral. Most likely he studied with William Byrd for a time in London, for he dedicated a madrigal to him as his teacher. While in London he probably met Thomas Morley. Morley included one of Tomkins' madrigals in his important collection *The Triumphs of Oriana* in 1601.

He became a Gentleman Ordinary of the Chapel Royal sometime before 1620, and senior organist there in 1625. He appears to have withdrawn from the post in about 1628. He was employed by Worcester Cathedral for the next two decades, but when the city was captured by parliamentary forces in 1646, during the Civil War, he lost his job, though he was allowed to continue living near the cathedral. Music, to the victorious side, was something to be abolished in all churches (with the exception of the singing of metrical psalms); the Worcester Cathedral organ (which Tomkins had commissioned in 1614) was destroyed and the choir disbanded. Tomkins moved in with his son, and lived with him until his death in 1656.

I heard a voice from hea - ven, say - ing un -

I heard a voice from hea - ven, say - ing un -

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I heard a voice from hea - ven, say - ing un -

*For Rehearsal Only*

The text for this motet, the last of the four sets of words from the Funeral Sentences of the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, is taken from the Revelation of St John the Divine. The author sees in his vision the people of God worshipping before His throne in heaven. The words set by Tomkins here are spoken by the third of the three angels who call the people of the earth to worship.

5

to me: Write; from hence - forth bless - ed are the dead bless -

to me: Write; from hence - forth bless - ed are bless - ed

to me: Write; from hence - - - forth bless - ed are the dead

to me: Write; from hence - forth bless - ed are the

5

9

ed are the dead bless - ed are the dead which die in the Lord, which die in the

are the dead which die in the Lord, in the

bless - ed are the dead bless - ed are the dead which die in

dead bless - ed are the dead which die in the

9

13

Lord, in the Lord, ev'n so saith the Spir-it, ev'n so saith the Spir - it, the  
 Lord, the Lord, ev'n so saith the Spir-it, so saith the Spir - it, ev'n so ev'n so saith the  
 the Lord, ev'n so saith the Spir-it, ev'n so saith the Spir-it, saith the Spir - - - -  
 Lord, ev'n so saith the Spir - it, ev'n so saith the Spir-

17

Spir-it, for they rest from their la - - - bours for they rest from their  
 Spir-it, for they rest from their la - - - bours for they rest  
 it, for they rest from their la - - - bours for they rest from their la -  
 it, for they rest from their

21

la - - - - bours for they rest from their la - - - - bours  
 from their la - - - - bours la - bours from their la -  
 bours they rest from their la - bours for they rest from their la - bours  
 la - bours for they rest from their la - - - - bours

21

25

their la - bours for they rest from their la - - - - bours  
 bours for they rest from their la - - bours la - bours  
 from their la - bours their la - bours for they rest from their la - bours  
 from their la - - - - bours from their la - bours

25