

# Listening Guide

## Brahms: *A German Requiem*, Fourth Movement

DATE OF WORK: 1868  
GENRE: Protestant Requiem  
MEDIUM: 4-part chorus, soloists, and orchestra  
MOVEMENTS: 7

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: Lyrical choral melody unifies 5-part rondo structure.  
Changes in mode (major-minor) and texture (homorhythmic/polyphonic).  
Use of word painting—quicker in C section, and drawn out at end.  
Emotional expressions of loss and acceptance of death.

### Fourth Movement: *Mässig bewegt* (moderately agitated)

Text: Psalm 84  
Form: Rondo (A-B-A'-C-A')  
Character: Lilted triple meter, marked *dolce* (sweetly)

Opening melody—clarinets and flutes  
invert first phrase in chorus:



#### TEXT

Wie lieblich sind deine  
Wohnungen, Herr Zebaoth!

#### TRANSLATION

How lovely is Thy dwelling  
place, O Lord of Hosts!

#### DESCRIPTION

**A**—a flowing, arched melody,  
SATB homophonic setting,  
answers orchestral opening, in E-  
flat major; text repeated in  
tenors, joined by other voices.

Meine Seele verlangt und  
sehnet sich nach den  
Vorhöfen des Herrn;  
mein Leib und Seele freuen sich  
in dem lebendigen Gott.

My soul longs and  
even faints for  
the courts of the Lord;  
my flesh and soul rejoice  
in the living God.

**B**—shift to minor, builds  
fugally with word repetition  
from lowest to highest voices;  
sudden accents on first beat of  
measures, with plucked strings;  
text is repeated, climax on  
“lebendigen.”

Wie lieblich . . .  
Wohl denen, die in deinem  
Hause wohnen,

How lovely . . .  
Blessed are they that  
live in Thy house,  
that praise Thee evermore!

**A'**—opening returns in E-flat  
major, with new text and  
varied setting.

die loben dich immerdar!

**C**—martial quality, faster  
movement in polyphonic setting.

Wie lieblich . . .

How lovely . . .

**A'**—coda-like return,  
reminiscent of opening; soft  
orchestral closing, in E-flat major.