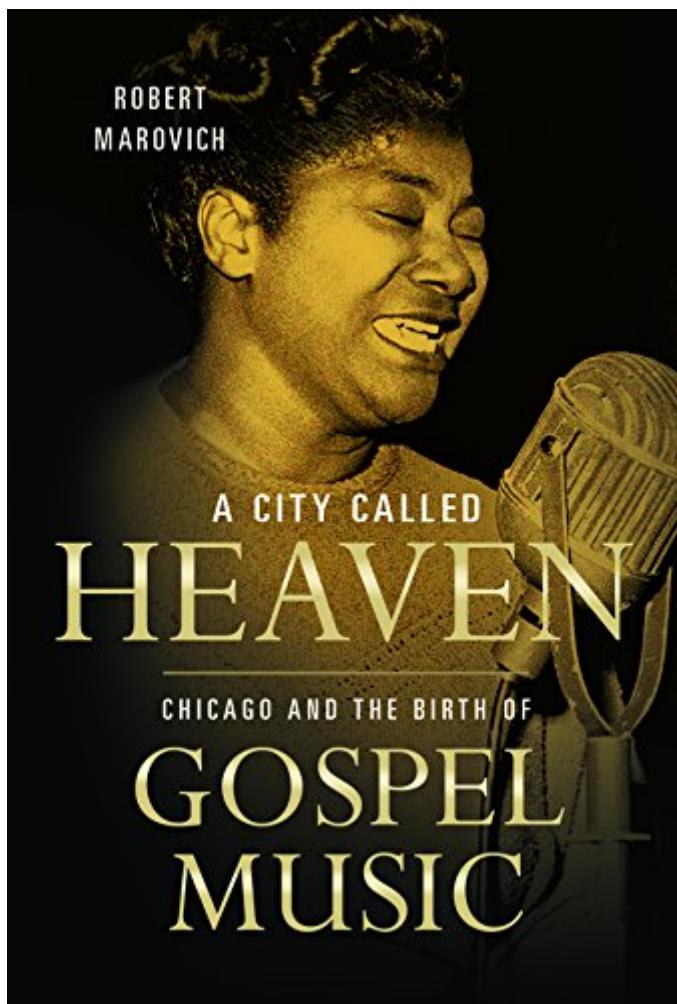


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# A City Called Heaven: Chicago And The Birth Of Gospel Music (Music In American Life)



## **Synopsis**

In *A City Called Heaven*, gospel announcer and music historian Robert Marovich shines a light on the humble origins of a majestic genre and its indispensable bond to the city where it found its voice: Chicago. Marovich follows gospel music from early hymns and camp meetings through the Great Migration that brought it to Chicago. In time, the music grew into the sanctified soundtrack of the city's mainline black Protestant churches. In addition to drawing on print media and ephemera, Marovich mines hours of interviews with nearly fifty artists, ministers, and historians--as well as discussions with relatives and friends of past gospel pioneers--to recover many forgotten singers, musicians, songwriters, and industry leaders. He also examines how a lack of economic opportunity bred an entrepreneurial spirit that fueled gospel music's rise to popularity and opened a gate to social mobility for a number of its practitioners. As Marovich shows, gospel music expressed a yearning for freedom from earthly pains, racial prejudice, and life's hardships. In the end, it proved to be a sound too mighty and too joyous for even church walls to hold.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

If Erik Larson's "Devil in the White City" uncovered the dark side of Chicago, Bob Marovich's "A City Called Heaven" casts a heavenly light on African Americans whose singing of the good news helped transform their trials and tribulations into a potent force that would forever change American music.

"A City Called Heaven" by Robert Marovich is indeed a great book. He gives 5 subjects to consider when he tells of the African American's quest for the "Promised Land" in the early industrialized North of Chicago.... I love his final paragraph of the introduction when he states: " African Americans were looking for their promised land and realized what they needed to accomplish was within themselves".... (my emphasis).

Being a Dutch Fan of Old School Black Gospel, not only from Chicago, but hey, isn't always easy, because there're not so many fans here and even in the whole of Europe, it's a 'foreign' thing. I've learned a lot by scanning the www, following dedicated YouTubers as Rowoches c.s. and reading Heilbut and Just Mahalia Baby. That isn't much, and life experience of the impact and the beauty of church, praise and service is unknown to me. This book is a goldmine, because every page is packed with information, names and anecdotes, and all of this brought to us with love and dedication from a formidable writer. I'll cherish it, in my small Gospel library, and will read it again and again, if only because it's so full of knowledge. I may a lifetime to digest it all, but I will! Thank you, Bob Marovich.

This was a pretty thick book, but it gave great information regarding the history of Gospel music that came out of Chicago and how it started. It also gave information that I was unaware of regarding Music icons like Rev. Clay Evans and others.

This book offers an insightful glimpse into the origins of gospel music. Robert Marovich peels back the intricate layers of this genre that has woven its way into the American fabric. Marovich's book seems very well researched and is served up with an adequate dose of respect and admiration for the pillars of gospel music. A must-have for any music lover.

Awesome, well researched book by one of the top gospel historians of the last two decades. Robert really did the world of musicology a great service when he added this book to the public lexicon.

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