

Today's Bible Versess

1 DECEMBER 2018

Today's 3 verses are from David's plea to God for rescue from those who would do him harm.

"Be gracious to me, God, for I take refuge in You. I will seek refuge in the shadow of Your wings until danger passes."

Psalms 57:1 (1 of 3 for Dec 1)

"I call to God Most High, to God who fulfills His purpose for me."

Psalms 57:2 (2 of 3 for Dec 1)

"He reaches down from heaven and saves me, challenging the one who tramples me. God sends His faithful love and truth."

Psalms 57:3 (3 of 3 for Dec 1)

(ALL VERSES ARE EXCERPTED FROM THE HOLMAN CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE, HCSB.)

The Bible verses in the box above are this day's verses which I selected for my daily posting on both [FACEBOOK](#) and [TWITTER](#).

SEE ALSO:

ChristOurPassover.org

ADDITIONAL VERSES:

GEORG FRIEDRICH HANDEL
ISRAEL IN EGYPT

Welcome to this "Additional Verses" Bible Study of the text of Handel's choral masterpiece, *Israel in Egypt*.

*Sing ye to the Lord,
for He hath triumphed gloriously!
The Lord shall reign for ever and ever!
The Lord is my strength and my song;
He is become my salvation.
The Lord shall reign for ever and ever!*

PART TWO

PART 2f The Song of Moses

HOLMAN CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE

27a. Chorus

SELECTION BEGINS AT 1:31:12

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

28. Recitative (tenor)

SELECTION BEGINS AT 1:32:03

For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

27b. Double Chorus

SELECTION BEGINS AT 1:32:28

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

29. Recitative (tenor)

SELECTION BEGINS AT 1:33:18

And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them: —

30. Soprano Solo and Chorus

SELECTION BEGINS AT 1:33:39

Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever!

FINI

Yahweh will reign forever and ever!

When Pharaoh's horses with his chariots and horsemen went into the sea, Yahweh brought the waters of the sea back over them. But the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground.

Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her with their tambourines and danced.

Miriam sang to them:

*Sing to Yahweh,
for He is highly exalted;
He has thrown the horse
and its rider into the sea.*

EXODUS 15:18-21

PARALLEL VERSES:

Yahweh is King forever and ever;
the nations will perish from His land.

PSALM 10:16

Yahweh sat enthroned at the flood;
Yahweh sits enthroned, King forever.
Yahweh gives His people strength;
Yahweh blesses His people with peace.

PSALM 29:10-11

When David was returning from killing [Goliath] the Philistine, the women came out from all the cities of Israel to meet King Saul, singing and dancing with tambourines, with shouts of joy, and with three-stringed instruments. As they celebrated, the women sang:

Saul has killed his thousands,
but David his tens of thousands.

1 SAMUEL 18:6-7

Praise Him with harp and lyre.
Praise Him with tambourine and dance;
Praise Him with flute and strings.
Praise Him with resounding cymbals;
Praise Him with clashing cymbals.
Let everything that breathes praise Yahweh.
Hallelujah!

PSALM 150:3-6

Handel used the last actual line of the Song of Moses three different times at the end of *Israel in Egypt*. "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever." It is a fitting affirmation of worship and praise to close out such a long and joyous song. Wording similar to this can be found in Psalm 10 and Psalm 29 (see *Parallel Verses, above*), and in other places throughout the Bible.

After this declaration, and the end of the song, the Book of Exodus continues to document what happened to save the Israelites: "When Pharaoh's horses with his chariots and horsemen went into the sea, Yahweh brought the waters of the sea back over them. But the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground." Handel then answers that part of the story by having the chorus again sing, "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever."

The Bible then goes back to the narration of events, leading to one last song: "Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her with their tambourines and danced." The four-line song that Miriam sang, with one last reprise of the "Lord shall reign for ever and ever," are combined by Handel into the glorious finale to the story of *Israel in Egypt*.

Parallel examples are given above (from 1 Samuel 18 and from Psalm 150) of the use of music and dance, accompanied by all the musical instruments available, to praise and worship the God of Israel. (Side note: I know that they do it out of an attempt to serve God in the way they think best, but I confess – based on verses like these – I have never understood the justification for some denominations not allowing musical instruments, and certainly not dancing, in joyful worship.)

Do we remember the story about David, when he brought the Ark of the Covenant into the City of David? Here's an abridged version of the Bible's story:

"David went and had the ark of God brought up to the City of David with rejoicing. David was dancing with all his might before Yahweh wearing a linen ephod. He and the whole house of Israel were bringing up the ark of Yahweh with shouts and the sound of the ram's horn. As the ark of Yahweh was entering the city of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked down from the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before Yahweh, and she despised him in her heart. They brought the ark of Yahweh and set it in its place inside the tent David had set up for it. Then all the people left, each to his own home. When David returned home to bless his household, Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet him. 'How the king of Israel honored himself today!' she said. 'He exposed himself today in the sight of the slave girls of his subjects like a vulgar person would expose himself.' David replied to Michal, 'I was dancing before Yahweh who chose to appoint me ruler over Yahweh's people Israel. I will celebrate before Yahweh, and I will humble myself even more and humiliate myself. I will be honored by the slave girls you spoke about.'"

[2 Samuel 6:12, 14-17, 19-22]

Why do I bring up this event in this Bible Study?

Handel wrote all of his great Biblically based works (*Israel in Egypt*, his masterpiece *Messiah*, and many others) to be performed in public theaters – not in churches. He wrote them in the same musical style that he wrote his great works of musical theater, the "popular music" style of his day. (Another side note: Actually, there was no separation of "classical" and "popular" music then. It was all the same style.)

What would be the reaction today to musical works telling Biblical stories to praise God, written to be performed in music halls and jazz clubs?

And what if they were written in the "popular" or "rock" or "modern ethnic" styles of today? Could that really happen without great controversy? There would be criticism from the atheist-humanists for bringing God to a "public" venue. And there would be criticism from the Christian-Jewish God believers for "demeaning" the message with "inferior or vulgar" musical styles.

Think about it. There have been, of course, examples of this in *Godspell*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and even Bernstein's *Mass* – though none of these can remotely lay claim to the strict Bible adherence that Handel had. So the question is, what does God consider “permissible” in terms of music (or art in general) for the express purpose of praising God? I don't pretend to know the full and entire answer to that, but consider this: In the Resurrection, might David once again be found “leaping and dancing” (perhaps to Biblically based words set to rock or rap or Broadway melodies) to express his ecstasy at his and all of humanity's salvation by the Great God? Will B.B. King sing his blues melodies to words from the Psalms? Could M.C. Hammer rap and dance, in his inimitable style, to once again tell the story of the Exodus? Like I said, I don't have the answer, but I think it is a question that can teach us about “intent” in art, and devoting all of our praise to the Creator of the Universe. What do you think?

Even though today ends our study of the portions of the Bible used in Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, tomorrow we will take one additional look at the Exodus. Then, two days from now, we will have a brand new Bible Study series. The subject matter for that new series came to me from a recent re-reading of 1 Corinthians 10:1-4. I'll see you then!

INFORMATION ON THIS STUDY

German-turned-English composer George Friedrich Handel (1685-1759) is most famous, I think, for his sweeping, powerful, majestic



choral masterpieces. The grand “Hallelujah” Chorus from his masterpiece, *Messiah* invites (urges!) all who hear it to be swept up in its grandeur. Mozart said of Handel, “When he chooses, he strikes like a thunderbolt!” Beethoven once said, “I bow the knee to Handel,” and on his deathbed, he held up a score by Handel and said, “This is truth!”

In our recent study of the Biblical text of *Messiah*, I introduced you to Handel's friend Charles Jennens, a wealthy landowner and devout Anglican, who selected the text for that great work directly from Scripture. Three years earlier, Jennens also provided (from the Bible) the libretto (book) for another Handel choral masterpiece, *Israel in Egypt*. And that is the subject of the current study.

Israel in Egypt, as you may suspect from the title, is the story of the freeing of the Israelite slaves from Egypt and the start of their journey through Sinai. Some have described this work as more of a “choral symphony” because of the dominant role the chorus (often double choruses) plays throughout. As we did in the previous “Additional Verses” Bible Study, we will read (and, if you like, listen to) the original text of Handel's work – **AND** we will mirror them with an expanded, context-laden study of the Scriptures surrounding those Jennens chose and Handel set to music.

We will work our way through the entire text of *Israel in Egypt*, day by day. You will find each day's excerpt from Handel's libretto in the left column, and the expanded (but wholly Biblical) context for each of the musical numbers in the right column. (See above.) Since this work is far more narrative in nature than *Messiah*, there will be less need for my own commentary – though I will give some when I think it necessary. As before, that will appear in the right column, and it will be in this burgundy color. (I was taught by a truly great man and mentor of mine that true

learning and understanding happens best when you are asked the “next question,” so that’s what I will endeavor to do for you.)

I have designed it so that either column can be read straight down, in order to get the narrative (left column for Handel’s message in his music; right column to see that message in magnified Biblical context). I have also put each musical number in its own row, so you may read across the columns for each selection to compare the Handel/Jennens text with the HCSB translation with context.

I have added a special bonus to this series: If you should wish to *listen* to a scintillating performance of the musical number in each day’s section of Handel’s *Israel in Egypt*, there are links in the left column you can use to take you there! I would listen, if I were you. (Unlike before, when the musical selections were in individual Youtube files, this one is contained in one, very large file. As such, each time I give you a link for a specific selection, I have embedded the URL so that it will go directly to the location where it begins. Always therefore go to the musical selections from the links I have provided. There is more information on the audio file, this performance, and *Israel in Egypt* below.)

Just as in *Messiah*, Handel shows a great devotion to God and to praising Him through this work. Let us approach the inspired words and glorious music with this same devotion.

*Sing ye to the Lord,
for He hath triumphed gloriously!
The Lord shall reign for ever and ever!
The Lord is my strength and my song;
He is become my salvation.
The Lord shall reign for ever and ever!*



ADDITIONAL NOTES ON ISRAEL IN EGYPT

Charles Jennens (right) pulled together the passages that became the “little book” (Italian: *Libretto*) for his friend, composer ***George Friedrich Handel*** (left) to use in his massive choral work, *Israel in Egypt*.

The libretto compiled by Jennens comprises passages from the book of Exodus in Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible and Psalms 105 and 106 from the Psalter of the Anglican *Book of*



Common Prayer (which come from the poetic 1535 Miles Coverdale translation).

When *Israel in Egypt* was first performed in 1739, it had three sections: (1) a lament over the death of Joseph; (2) the Exodus, from the enslavement of Israel to the crossing of the Red Sea; and (3) The Song of Moses (found in Exodus 15). Handel soon thereafter dropped the first part, and the work has been performed with just the second and third parts ever since.

As Christians, we share a belief in the inspiration of Scripture, and so a study of these “Additional Verses” makes perfect sense, I believe, in the context of these daily emails. However, we have the added bonus in this case of the gloriously and spectacularly powerful music associated with our study.

(The links to the music file are found in the left column, in the description of each selection. Just click, and it will open your browser, take you to YouTube, and play that selection. The LP of this recording came out in 1971, and even though it was recorded in analog, the quality of all records on this label is tremendous. So with that in mind, I absolutely encourage you to use good quality headphones!)

(There is complete information about this recording in the Credits section, at the bottom of this email.)

I would welcome any comments or questions you may have about this (admittedly unusual) form of Bible study. Thank you!

USAGE OF THE NAME OF GOD IN THESE STUDIES

As I do in all my Daily and Additional Verses, whenever an OT passage contains the four-letter Name of God יהוה (transliteration: YHVH or YHWH), I change the translation from The LORD to Yahweh.

I don't do this for reasons of doctrine (*or because I think my prayers won't be heard if I don't pronounce God's name correctly!*) – but simply because in the original Hebrew, **the word is a proper name**. (See Exodus 3:15 below.)

And as such, I believe to read the text in a way that uses a proper name (and not a title, like Lord) conveys more accurate information. Paul told us that “All Scripture is inspired by God,” and so why wouldn't we want to read it the way He inspired it? While it is true that the correct pronunciation of YHWH has been lost, “Yahweh” is probably our era's most commonly used equivalent.

God also said to Moses, “Say this to the Israelites: Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever; this is how I am to be remembered in every generation.”
[Exodus 3:15]

*All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable
for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,
so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 (HCSB)

The additional verses which are below the Daily Verses will only appear in these emails (which are also posted on some websites). The current series (began 31 October 2018) of these “Additional Verses” takes the Scriptural words from the great choral work *Messiah* by Handel and uses them as a springboard to examine the context of the birth, ministry, character, death, and Kingdom of Jesus the Christ.

If you know of others who would like to receive these Daily Verses emails – free of charge, of course – just have them send me their email address. I will never allow anyone but me to see or to use the email addresses entrusted to me, and I will use them only for the purpose of these Daily Verses. Promise.

–GBP2

How Did All of This Get Started?

In early 2017, I wrote a computer app that “knows” all 66 books and 1189 chapters which the Bible comprises. When run, it selects a totally random chapter in the Bible, and keeps track of the ones that have been selected. That way, I can work my way through all 1189 chapters, without the app ever giving me a duplicate.

I first used this for Bible study, and later decided that choosing one or more verses from each chapter would make a good series of Facebook posts.

I began posting them on December 8, 2017, and have been doing it daily ever since. I later added them to my Twitter account, and am now sending them by email, for those who prefer to get them this way.

TO UNSUBSCRIBE:

If you do not wish to receive these daily emails, please feel free any time to hit "Reply" and tell me. I know that mailbox clutter is greatly annoying, and that is certainly not my intention for this!



Research for this publication was assisted by Faithlife Corporation's [Logos Bible Software 7](#).

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CREDITS:

Portrait of G.F. Handel: attrib. Balthasar Denner (1685-1749); National Portrait Gallery, London (75 x 63 cm).

Portrait of Chas. Jennens: Thomas Hudson (1701-1779); Handel & Hendrix, London (122 x 98 cm).

Israel in Egypt banner & Egyptian hieroglyphic illustration: Original cover of DG Archiv recording which is used here.

Handel: Israel in Egypt (recording): Archiv Produktion (DG) edition (1971). Heather Harper, Patricia Clark, Paul Esswood, Alexander Young, Michael Rippon, Christopher Keyte, Leeds Festival Chorus, English Chamber Orchestra, Sir Charles Mackerras, conductor..