

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

### Memory verse for the week:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, **Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.**

Revelation 19:6

### To Do

Older ones can learn the whole verse, younger ones the part in bold. Tiny ones can learn to say “Alleluia” or “Hallelujah” which is the same word spelled differently!

### Something to Talk About

What does “omnipotent” mean? It mean all powerful. “God is omnipotent” means God can do anything he wants. God is good. If we love and trust him we know that all that happens is for our good. We can remember today that God is in charge of everything that happens.

On **23<sup>rd</sup> March** 1743, one of the most famous pieces of music in the world was performed for the first time in London. Can you guess what it was?

### Something to listen to

It was *Messiah* by George Frederick Handel. Find a recording of the part called *Hallelujah Chorus*.<sup>1</sup> Do you recognise some of the words?

*Messiah* had been performed in Dublin before that first London performance. If you watched the video carefully you will notice that the people listening, the audience, stand up. Do you know why they do that?

When the king of England at the time, George II, first went to hear Handel's *Messiah*. He stood up to acknowledge that the Lord God was king over everything and that he was only king of England.

Handel was a great composer. Find some of his music to listen to.<sup>2</sup>

### Something to read from history

Handel's friend Charles Jennens put together the words for *Messiah* by choosing texts from the Bible. He had a special reason for doing this and it is a sad story.

Charles Jennens had a brother whom he loved very much. His brother made friends with some men who had very wrong ideas. They said that the Bible was not right and that people are not sinners in need of a Saviour. They said that God had made the world like a man might make a clock and wound it up and set it going and then taken no more interest in it. One of them wrote a book called *Christianity [is] not Mysterious*. By this he meant that our poor human minds can understand everything about God! These men said that we must try to do good just because it is good and that God would reward us for that.<sup>3</sup>

Charles Jennens' brother listened to these men and what they said made him very sad. He knew in his heart of hearts that he could not do good just *because it was good*. He did what good he could because he thought that, in some way or other, doing good would be good *for him*. In despair over this he killed himself. Poor Charles Jennens's brother! How sad that he was not told the good news that Jesus died for sinners like us.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LajyjD0nzF4> for instance.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kuw8YjSbKd4>

<sup>3</sup> We learned about where Deists such as Toland's ideas began in England in the Lesson for 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

Charles Jennens chose the words for Handel's music very carefully. He put them together in such a way that they tell the whole story of why Jesus was born, lived, died rose again and will one day come again. He wanted to make sure that everyone who heard it knew what his poor brother had not understood. At the top of the page he wrote a motto (a few words) for the composer Handel to write above the music when it was finished. "...great is the Mystery of Godliness... In whom [that is Jesus] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." He was telling his friend Handel that there *are* mysteries for us but that God knows everything.

### To Do

Find some paper – anything will do – and practice writing. If there are several of you you can get all sorts of different coloured pens and pencils and on a big piece of paper write Hallelujah and Alleluia in big letters, small letters, all sorts of different colours. It is a Hebrew word so if you like you can try writing it in Hebrew: אֱלֹהִים. You can work out what it looks like in Albanian from yesterday's lesson. Maybe you could find out how to write it in other languages too. You can listen to the *Hallelujah Chorus* while you make an Alleluia work of art to go on the fridge door.

### Questions to Answer

Older ones can answer some of these questions in writing on some paper:

What music have we listened to today?

Who wrote it?

From what book did Charles Jennens choose the words for the music?

What does omnipotent mean?

### Map Activity

I told you that before it was performed in London, *Messiah* was performed in Dublin. Find both these cities on a map. Can you find out how far it is from London to Dublin?

### Things to Find Out

Other things that happened on 23<sup>rd</sup> March:

Donald Campbell was born in 1921. He set the world water speed record in his bluebird turbo-jet engined boat. Donald Campbell reached 286mph on Coniston Water in the Lake District in 1957. What is the present world speed record on water?

On March 23<sup>rd</sup> in 1929 Roger Bannister was born. What record did he set?