



# Biblical Quotations

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in the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building

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The artwork depicted on the  
following pages was created by

**Violet Oakley**

(pages 2-10 and 12-14;  
Biography, page 15)  
and

**Edwin Austin Abbey**

(Page 11; Biography page 16).

You are cordially invited to visit the  
Pennsylvania State Capitol Building to view in person the  
beauty and splendor displayed in these and other works of  
art not pictured in this booklet, as well as the  
beauty and architecture of the  
Capitol Building itself.

In 1906,  
President Theodore Roosevelt  
dedicated the Pennsylvania State Capitol.  
In his dedication speech,  
the President called the Pennsylvania Capitol  
**“The Handsomest Building”**  
he had ever seen.



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*We would like to thank former State Representative  
Jerry A. Stern, 80th District - Blair County  
for his assistance in the creation of this publication.*









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## BIBLICAL QUOTES IN THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE CAPITOL

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Pennsylvania's history and heritage is rooted in religious significance. From William Penn's own vision and statement of establishing a Holy Experiment, to the first laws proposed by the General Assembly, to the first section of the first Constitution, the Charter of Privileges, entitled the freedom of conscience, our founders based their way of life on religious convictions.

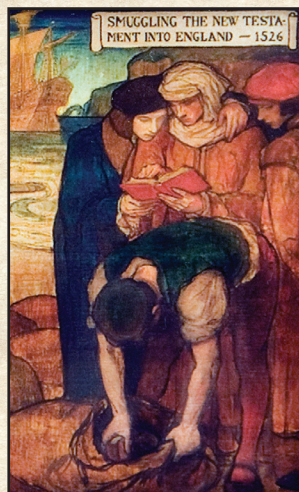
In 1751, upon the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Charter of Privileges, the Speaker of the Pennsylvania House commissioned a bell to be cast with an inscription from the Bible, which later, during the abolitionist movement was adopted as an important symbol - the Liberty Bell. That symbol is now probably the most important symbol of our nation; of America's liberty. The verse reads, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land and unto all the inhabitants thereof," Leviticus 25:10.

Today's beautiful State Capitol Building is filled with Biblical quotations and religious references on its walls and ceilings. The following are the direct quotations in some of the rooms with the Biblical references noted.





## GOVERNOR'S RECEPTION ROOM



**John 16:2** “Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.”

**Matthew 3:3**  
“The voice of one crying in the wilderness.”







**Isaiah 45:13**  
 “He shall  
 build my city,  
 and he shall  
 let go my  
 captives.”



**Joel 2:28** “It shall come to pass that I will pour out my spirit upon all  
 flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy ... your young men  
 shall see visions.”





**Psalms 45:10** “Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house;”



**Isaiah 53:11,12** “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many... Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great,”





**Isaiah 42:1,4,7,10** “Behold my servant, whom I uphold to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. Sing unto the Lord a new song ye that go down to the sea,”



**Exodus 15:16:**  
“By the greatness  
of thine arm they  
shall be as still  
as a stone; till  
thy people pass  
over, O Lord  
which thou hast  
purchased.”

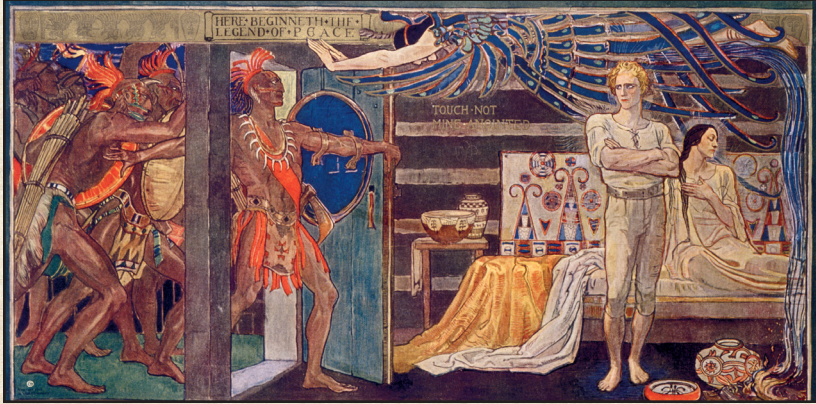




**Deuteronomy 8:7,9** “Thy God bringeth thee into a good land of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.”



## SENATE CHAMBER



**Ezekiel 11:16** “Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.”

**Ezekiel 43:12** “Behold this is the law of the house and this know assuredly that looked and behold the glory of the Lord filled the house.”

**1 Chronicles 16:22** “Touch not mine anointed”

**Luke 22:51** “And he touched his ear, and healed him.”

**Psalms 22:5** paraphrased “And this know assuredly that none ever trusted in the Lord and were confounded.”

**Matthew 5:10** “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake.”

**Matthew 26:53-56** “Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels. And ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves to take me. Then all the disciples forsook him and fled.”

**Matthew 28:2,4** “And behold there was a great earthquake and the angels of the Lord came and rolled back the stone and for fear of him the keepers did quake and became as dead men.”





**Matthew 20:28** “Even as the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.”

**Job 33:23,24** “If there be a messenger, one among a thousand, Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, I have found a ransom.”

**Isaiah 43:1** “Fear not: for I have redeemed thee”

**1 Corinthians 6:20** “Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

**Isaiah 44:22** “Return unto me”

**Revelation 22:1** “pure river of water of life”

**Psalms 107:16** “He hath broken the gates of brass, and burst the bars of iron asunder.”





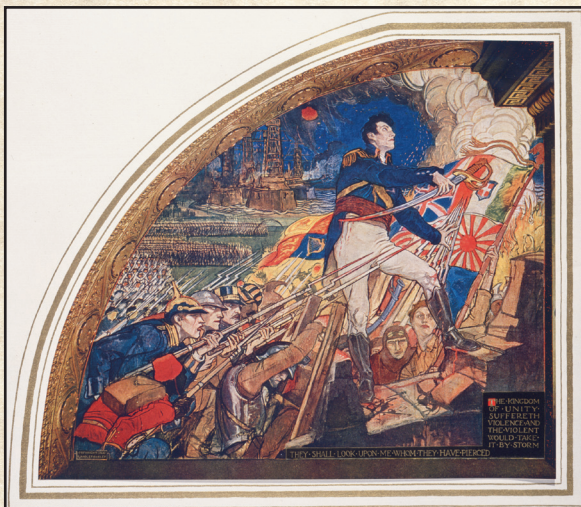
- Revelation 21:10** “He carried me away to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city,”
- Revelation 22:1** “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne”
- Revelation 21:24** “The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.”
- Revelation 22:2** “The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”



**Exodus 1:11-12**

“They did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with burdens. But, the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied”

**Exodus 3:7** “I have seen the affliction of my people, and have heard their cry”



**Matthew 11:12**

“The kingdom of unity suffereth violence, and the violent would take it by storm.”

**Zechariah 12:10**

“They shall look upon me whom they have pierced,”

**John 19:37** “They shall look on him who they pierced.”



## HOUSE CHAMBER

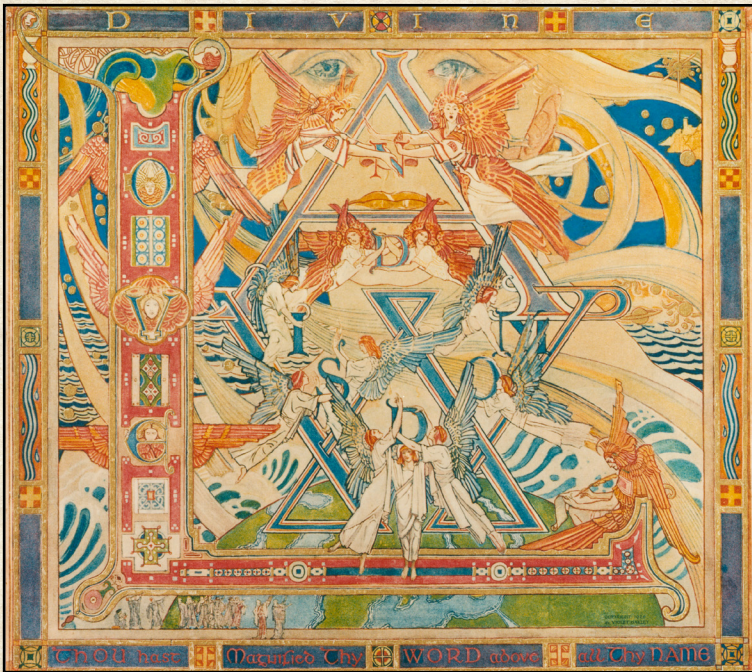


**John 8:32** “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

**Deuteronomy 32:7** “Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.”



# SUPREME COURT



## Psalms 138:2

“Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.”





### Exodus 20:13-17

- “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,
- “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them
- “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
- “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- “Honour thy father and thy mother
- “Thou shalt not kill..
- “Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- “Thou shalt not steal.
- “Thou shalt not bear false witness
- “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.”





### Matthew 5:3-12

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

“Rejoice: great is your reward, so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”





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## VIOLET OAKLEY (1874-1961)

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Violet Oakley was born into a family of artistic tradition. Oakley's formal artistic education was rather sporadic. Although she studied at the Arts Student League in Philadelphia, and at various institutions abroad during summer trips, the bulk of her training came from copying works of the old masters on her own.

The year 1896 was a landmark in Oakley's early career. Her family moved to Philadelphia, where she soon entered Howard Pyle's illustration class at Drexel Institute. She flourished under Pyle's tutelage and soon became one of America's most popular illustrators, designing covers for Century Magazine, Collier's Illustrated Weekly, Everybody's Magazine, St. Nicholas and Woman's Home Companion. At the same time, she also gained a reputation as a talented designer of stained glass.

In 1902, Oakley was asked by the Capital architect to paint thirteen murals for the Governor's Reception Room. Huston believed that his choice of Oakley would "act as an encouragement of women and the State." In fact, the Harrisburg project signified a milestone in the history of American art, for it was the largest public commission given to a woman in the country up to that time. In addition, it allowed Oakley to transcend the conventional roles of women painters as either portrait or genre painters, and to pursue a successful career in the prestigious, but overwhelmingly masculine, field of mural decoration.

Throughout her work on the Governor's Reception Room, Oakley received much publicity. The Harrisburg murals won her the Gold Medal of Honor from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1905, making her the first woman to receive this distinction.

After the death of Edwin Austin Abbey in 1911, she obtained the commission to complete the contract for the Senate Chamber and Supreme Court. Oakley painted a total of 43 murals for the Capitol Building.

Not only was Violet Oakley a talented artist, she was also a social activist involved in the women's suffrage movement, and totally devoted to the ideals of international government and world peace. In fact, when the United States refused to join the League of Nations in 1927, Oakley went to Geneva herself as a self-appointed ambassador.



Through her three cycles of visionary murals in the Pennsylvania State Capitol, Oakley sought to express her desire and hope for “world peace, equal rights, and faith in the work of unification of the Peoples of the Earth.” Violet Oakley’s three series of murals can be seen in the following locations:

**Governor’s Reception Room -**

“The Founding of the State of Liberty Spiritual” (completed 1906)

**Senate Chamber -**

“The Creation and Preservation of the Union” (completed 1920)

**Supreme Court Chamber -**

“The Opening of the Book of Law” (completed 1927)





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## EDWIN AUSTIN ABBEY (1852-1911)

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Edwin Austin Abbey was one of the most celebrated artists of his day. Born in Philadelphia, he briefly studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy under Christian Schuessele. Before he was twenty years old, he was enjoying a brilliant career as an illustrator of poetry and drama for Harper's Weekly. Then in the late 1870s, Abbey left America for England to pursue a career as a large-scale history painter. While in England, he was elected to the Royal Academy and admitted to the elite artistic circle of the Pre-Raphaelites.

As a result of his growing reputation at home, as well as abroad, Abbey was invited by American sculptor Auguste saint-Gaudens in 1890 to undertake what would be his most famous commission – the mural cycle The Quest for the Holy Grail for the McKim, Mead and White Boston Public Library, completed in 1901.

When Abbey was given his largest commission in 1902 to decorate the Rotunda, House and Senate chambers, and the supreme and Superior court Room in the Pennsylvania State Capitol, the artist knew that this monumental project inaugurated a new phase in his career. Thus he turned all of his energies to this project, which he saw as his personal tribute to Pennsylvania and its history.

Abbey executed the Capitol murals in his studio in England. By the spring of 1908, all murals for the Rotunda were complete. They were exhibited at the University of London, where they received the highest acclaim. King Edward VII himself expressed regret that these magnificent paintings were leaving England. By 1909, the murals for the Capitol Rotunda had been shipped to Harrisburg and were placed at the collar of the dome. Four large circular canvases, fourteen feet in circumference, were installed in the pendentives. The four huge crescent-shaped murals, measuring 38 feet by 22 feet, were placed in the lunettes of the Rotunda.

When Abbey died suddenly in 1911, his widow administered the completion and installation of the House murals. The artist had completed three works for the House: **The Apotheosis of Pennsylvania (page 11)**, Penn's Treaty, and The Hours, the latter of which is located on the ceiling. The



Reading of the Declaration of Independence for the House Chamber had been partially completed. This painting was finished by Ernest Board, a member of Abbey's studio, under the supervision of John Singer Sargent. Only one mural had been executed for the Senate Chamber entitled The Camp of the American Army at Valley Forge, February 1778. This painting, completed in 1910, had originally been placed in the Senate Chamber. As a result of Abbey's untimely death, it was removed and relocated onto a north wall in the rear of the House of Representatives' Chamber where it remains today.

Abbey's works located in the Rotunda dome:

### **Lunettes**

"The Spirit of Religious Liberty" (East Wall)

"Science revealing the Treasures of the Earth" (West)

"The Spirit of Vulcan, The Genius of the Workers" (North)

"Spirit of Light" (South)

### **Medallions**

"Religion", "Law", "Science", "Art"

### **House Chamber**

"The Hours" - "Apotheosis of Pennsylvania" -

"Penn's Treaty with the Indians"

"The Camp of the American Army at Valley Forge, February 1778"

"The Reading of the Declaration of Independence."





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## LIST OF BIBLICAL REFERENCES

### SEEN IN PA STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

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All references taken from King James Bible  
and written exactly as seen on murals.  
Separated by different murals.

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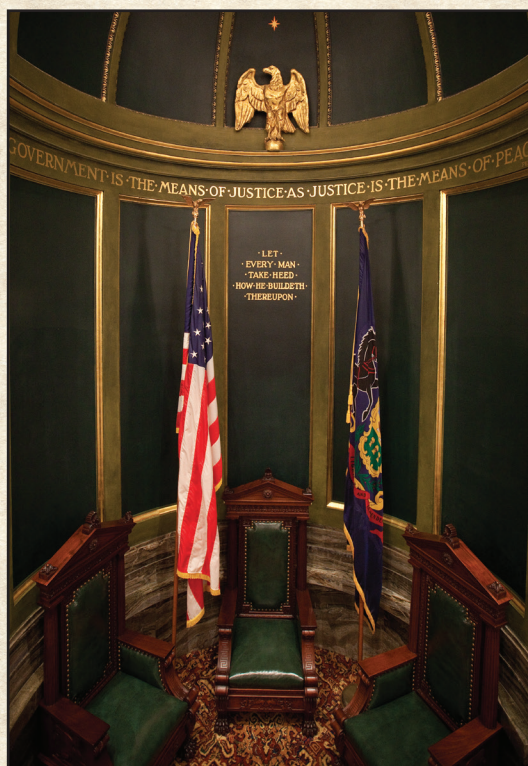
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“Rejoice: great is your reward, so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”



**1 Corinthians 3:10** “Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.”







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