Biblical Allusions Help Sheet Biblical Allusions in Literature

**Popular Phrases/Concepts Biblical Sources**

My brother’s keeper Genesis 4:9-10

Eye for an eye; Tooth for a tooth Exodus 21:24-25

The apple of his eye Deuteronomy 32:10

God save the king 1 Samuel 10:24

Out of the mouths of babes Psalm 8

To eat, and to drink, and to be merry Ecclesiastes 8:15

A drop in the bucket Isaiah 40:15

Holier than thou Isaiah 65:5

Salt of the earth Matthew 5:3

Lilies of the Field Matthew 6:20

The signs of the times Matthew 16:3

Be of good cheer John 16

Doubting Thomas John 20:24-25

All things to all men 1 Corinthians

The love of money is the root of all evil 1 Timothy

Do not give in to temptation Genesis chapters 1-3 Garden of Eden

Hope is the answer to unforeseen and Pandora’s box

unmanageable problems

Jealousy is not a virtue Genesis chapter 4 Cain and Abel

Build your future on high ground Genesis chapters 6-9 Noah and the Flood

Understanding is the key to cooperation Genesis chapter 11:8-9 The Tower of Babel

Corruption often leads to destruction Genesis chapters 18-19 The Destruction of

Sodom and Gomorrah

The true test of humankind involves

Faithfulness, obedience, unwavering trust Genesis chapters 21-22 Abraham and Isaac

The gift of life is not given without struggle Genesis chapter 25 Jacob and Esau

Strength of character helps overcome Genesis chapter 37 Joseph, his brothers,

obstacles the coat of many colors

**More Biblical Allusions**

**Interpretation**

Adam’s rib Genesis 2:18

Alpha and Omega Revelation 1:7-8

Ark of the covenant Exodus 25:10-22

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust Genesis 3:17-19

Be fruitful and multiply Genesis 1:22-23

Bitter as Wormwood Proverbs 5:4

Burning Bush Exodus 3:1-2

Cast the first stone John 8:4-7

By their fruits shall ye know them Matthew 7:20

Water into wine John 2:1-11

Chariot of fire 2 Kings 6:8-23

Consider the lilies of the field Matthew 6:28

Crown of thorns Matthew 27:27-29

David and Goliath Samuel 17:4, 8-9

Daniel in the lion’s den Daniel 6:16

Golden calf Exodus 32:4

Word made flesh John 1:14

Camel through the eye of the needle Matthew 19:23-25

Forty days and forty nights Genesis 7:4

Harden your heart Exodus 4:21

Jonah and the whale Jonah 1 and 2

Horsemen of the Apocalpyse Revelation 6:1-15

Lamb to the slaughter Isaiah 54:6-7

Let my people go Exodus 5:1

Gain the whole world but lost your own soul Mark 8:36

Loaves and fishes Matthew 14:15-18

Manna from heaven Exodus 16:14-15

Gold, frankincense and myrrh Matthew 2:11

Mark of Cain Genesis 4:15-16

Ye cannot serve God and Mammon Matthew 6:24

Methuselah Genesis 5:25-27

Noah’s ark Genesis 6:13-16

Parting of the waters Exodus 14:15-17

Pearls before swine Matthew 7:6

Prodigal son Luke 15:11-14

Sackcloth and ashes Genesis 37:34

Seven pillars of Wisdom 1 Kings 3;16-28

Thirty pieces of silver Matthew 26:14-16

This is my body Luke 22:19

Tree of knowledge Genesis 2:9, 16-17

Turn the other cheek Luke 6:29

Voice crying in the wilderness Isaiah 40:3, John 1:23

Water into wine John 2:7-10

Way of all flesh 1 Kings 2:2, Genesis 6:12

Whited sepulchers Matthew 23:27

Wisdom of Solomon Book of Solomon

**Symbols often used with Biblical Allusions**

Fox slyness; cleverness

Lamb gentleness, purity; sacrifice, innocence

Lion nobleness; ferocity; royalty

Barrenness infertility (trees, plants, land)

Birds: Bird on the wind freedom

Caged bird imprisonment

Cock crowing morning; warning

Dove peace; purity; peaceful person

Eagle power; vision; protection

Falcon greed; vanity

Hawk war

Owl wisdom

Robin spring

Vulture evil waiting to devour

Blood life, sacrifice

Bread life

Chaff foolish ideas or people

Chains imprisonment; binding together

Colors: Black death; poverty; famine; evil

Green envy; vegetation; fertility; nature

Grey(Gray) sickness; frailty

Red passion; sensuality; revolution; violence; war;

blood

White purity; power; conquest; good;

Yellow light; brightness; comprehension

Cross crucifixion, Christianity

Darkness mystery; gloom; confusion

Fire/burning hell; punishment; passion

Fisherman searcher for truth; Jesus

Fountain/well life source

Fruit fertility

Gold wealth

Hair: Long flowing freedom; femininity; sexuality

Pulled back tightly prudish; prim

Heart life force; love

King father; authority

Money labor; evil

Nakedness naturalness; primitive instincts; savagery; innocence

Numbers: One unity; unity with God

Seven sacred; lucky

Twelve sacred

Thirteen unlucky

Petals dropping from flowers life ebbing away

Queen mother; authority

Rain sadness; sorrow

River journey journey of life

Rose love; lips; kindness

Sackcloth repentance; mourning

Sapphire chastity; spiritual peace

Scaffold justice

Sea danger; evil

Seasons: Autumn last few years of life

Spring new beginnings; birth

Summer prime of life

Winter end of life

Shadows ominous foreboding; mystery

Shrine devotion

Sun happiness; power; clearness of vision

Thunderstorm impending danger; violence

Warmth security

Water birth; cleansing

Wheat divine ideas or people; fertility

Wine blood