

Hymns 101 – Like a River Glorious

For thus says the Lord:

*Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,
and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream*

Isaiah 66:12 (ESV)

*You keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you.*

Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)

For the LORD God is a sun and shield;

The LORD gives grace and glory;

No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly

Psalms 84:11 (ESV)

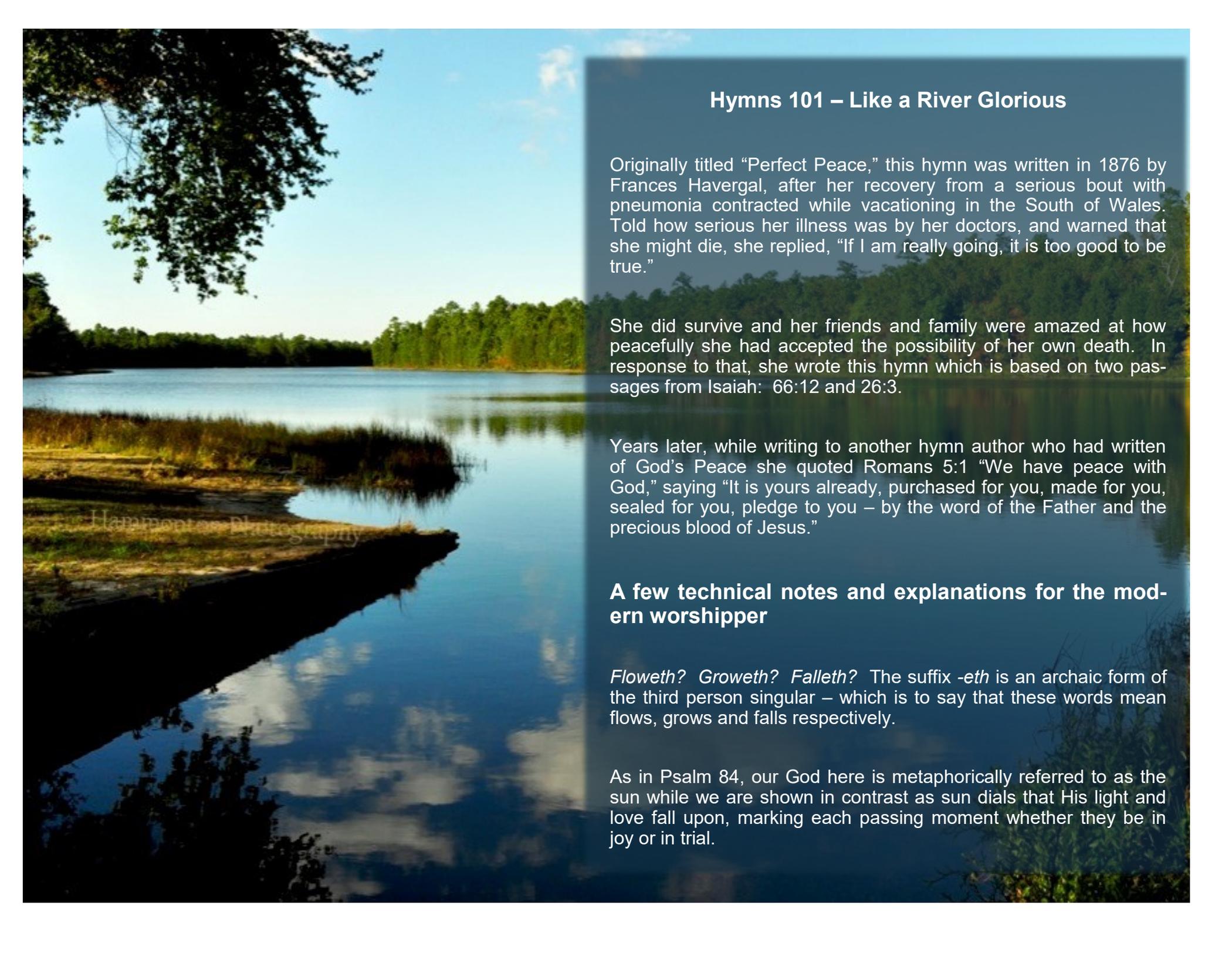
Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious, in its bright increase;
Perfect, yet it floweth fuller every day,
Perfect, yet it groweth deeper all the way.

Refrain

*Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.*

Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry touch the spirit there.

Every joy or trial falleth from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of Love;
We may trust Him fully, all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly find Him wholly true.



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Originally titled “Perfect Peace,” this hymn was written in 1876 by Frances Havergal, after her recovery from a serious bout with pneumonia contracted while vacationing in the South of Wales. Told how serious her illness was by her doctors, and warned that she might die, she replied, “If I am really going, it is too good to be true.”

She did survive and her friends and family were amazed at how peacefully she had accepted the possibility of her own death. In response to that, she wrote this hymn which is based on two passages from Isaiah: 66:12 and 26:3.

Years later, while writing to another hymn author who had written of God’s Peace she quoted Romans 5:1 “We have peace with God,” saying “It is yours already, purchased for you, made for you, sealed for you, pledge to you – by the word of the Father and the precious blood of Jesus.”

A few technical notes and explanations for the modern worshipper

Floweth? Groweth? Falleth? The suffix *-eth* is an archaic form of the third person singular – which is to say that these words mean flows, grows and falls respectively.

As in Psalm 84, our God here is metaphorically referred to as the sun while we are shown in contrast as sun dials that His light and love fall upon, marking each passing moment whether they be in joy or in trial.