DISCUSSION TIPS

Lyrics are in italics. Possible double meaning is printed below.

* D1, 3 Steal Away to Jesus (in the Midnight Hour)

*Steal, steal away to Jesus.*

“Steal away” meant to escape. This came from the idea that slaves were property, and so escape was “stealing themselves”.

“*To Jesus*” was a metaphor for “to freedom”

* D1, 4: WADE IN THE WATER

*Wadin’ in the water*

A metaphor for baptism AND escape.

*If you get there before I do*

*God’s gonna trouble the water*

*Tell my mother I’m comin’ too*

*If you escape first, let others know that I will escape too.*

*the children that Moses led.*

A reference to the Jews escaping from slavery in Egypt. So here it refers to the enslaved people of America.

* D1, #7: SWING LOW SWEET CHARIOT

*Swing low*

Come South, into slave territory.

*sweet chariot*

Any way to travel North.

*coming fore to carry me home*

coming to help the singer to escape: Home=Freedom

*stop and let me ride*

help me to escape

*I got a home on the other side*

My true home is in freedom.

*Jordan*

The Jordan River signifies the border between the slave states and the

free states, especially the rivers between Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, etc.

*band of angels*

Abolitionists, especially those active in the Underground Railroad.

* D1, #13 DANIEL

*wabash shoes*

The intention or means to escape. The Wabash was a river that some

crossed on the way to freedom.

*Slip and slide the streets*

Escape

*Put on your moving shoes*

Escape

*Living on borrowed land*

Living in a place that is not really his: the slave holders land.