

MY SHEPHERD WILL SUPPLY MY NEED Worksheet

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Verse 1

My Shepherd will supply my need:
Jehovah is His Name;
In pastures fresh He makes me feed,
Beside the living stream.
He brings my wandering spirit back
When I forsake His ways,
And leads me, for His mercy's sake,
In paths of truth and grace.

Verse 2

When I walk through the shades of death
His presence is my stay;
One word of His supporting grace
Drives all my fears away.
His hand, in sight of all my foes,
Doth still my table spread;
My cup with blessings overflows,
His oil anoints my head.

Vocabulary

In one or two words define the following terms from the poem.

Verse 1: Jehovah, forsake

Verse 2: foes, doth, anoints

Verse 3: provisions, attend, Thy, abode

Word Pictures Word pictures is another way of saying *imagery*. *Imagery* or *figurative language* helps us form a picture of what the author is trying to present. Discuss what these word pictures mean and, perhaps, draw your idea of the *imagery* or *figurative language* the author uses!

Verse 1: supply my need, pastures fresh, living stream, wandering spirit, paths of truth and grace

Verse 2: table spread, cup ... overflows, anoints my head

Verse 3: sure provisions, settled rest, child at home

Mechanics Verbally discuss

Who is the speaker?

What does the poem reveal about the speaker's character?

Is the speaker addressing someone in particular or is it to anyone?

Does the poem have a setting?

Is the poem about a particular event? Is the event past or present? If it is about a past event, does the remembrance of the event have a particular meaning to the speaker?

Is the theme of the poem stated directly or indirectly?

What point of view or perspective is the speaker?
How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time?

Comprehension Questions Verbally discuss

Verse 1: Why is “Shepherd” capitalized? According to the author, the Shepherd will supply “my need.” What does this mean and do you agree/disagree with the author? How can a stream be “living”? Explain and discuss “wandering spirit.” Where is the author led back to?

Verse 2: What drives the author’s fears away? Did you notice the use of the term “doth”? What does it mean and why do you think the author used it? Explain and discuss “My cup with blessings overflows.”

Verse 3: What attends the author? Did you notice the use of the term “Thy”? What does it mean? Why is it capitalized? Why do you think the author used this word? Why would the author’s work be praise? Does that mean the work of a student -- math, essays, reports, grammar lessons, literature study, civics, etc. -- are works of praise? Explain and discuss “There would I find a settled rest.” Do you think the author thinks of work as a noble, honorable calling?

After reading this poem, what character traits did you think of? What does the Bible have to say about these character traits?

What Does the Bible Say?

Find Scripture proofs for each of the assertions or statements made for each of the five verses and the refrain.

Discuss the message of this poem in light of Psalm 23:1, “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

What does the Bible have to say about trust? Give Biblical examples of those demonstrating trust. Give historical examples, past and present, of those role modelling trust.

What is the opposite of trust? Give Biblical examples and historical examples of same.

The Author/Poet

Based on what you have studied about this poem so far, would you guess that the author was a Christian or a humanist? How did you arrive at your decision?

The name of the author for this poem or lyric is Isaac Watts (1674-1748). He was born 17 July 1674, in Southampton, England, and died 25 November 1748, in Stoke Newington, England. He is buried at Bunhill Fields Cemetery, London, England. Watt’s had an interesting father who was imprisoned two times for his religious views. Mr. Watts studied Greek and Latin but declined an offer for a standard university education preferring to attend the Nonconformist Academy at Stoke Newington in 1690. When Mr. Watts was 20-22 he stayed at home and wrote the majority of the hymns for *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* that were published 1707-1709. For six years he was the tutor for Mr. John Hartopp’s son. Mr. Watts was ordained in 1702.

"Give 'em Watts, boys, give 'em Watts!"

Interestingly, Isaac Watts is intimately connected with the American War of Independence. In an attack upon Springfield when the patriots' wadding gave out, Rev. James Caldwell (of Huguenot descent) ran into a Presbyterian church returning with his arms and pockets crammed full with *Watts' Psalms and Hymns* saying, "Now, boys, give them Watts!" The British offered large rewards for the capture of Rev. Caldwell, but to no avail. Therefore, the British burned his church, shot his wife while she was in the midst of their nine children, dragged her body into the street, and burned his home and out buildings.

Geography

Locate Southampton, England, and London a globe, map and atlas.

Challenge Locate Stoke Newington (England) on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast England's weather with your own for one week.

Make an English meal for your family.

Activities

1) Make your own book! Without making an image of Christ, draw pictures representing each verse. (Note: that will be three different illustrations). With construction paper and other items readily available at home, make a title page with the name of the song and the author's name which will be your book's cover. You may want to illustrate your cover and include this poem in your book.

2) Make your own play! Re-enact with your siblings or friends the message discussed in this poem. Keep it lively, simple, and short. You may want to end your play with singing a rousing chorus of this poem or reading Scripture verses. Videotape your creation.

3) Radio Drama! With a handheld tape recorder, create your own radio show dramatizing the message of this poem.

4) Be a Reporter! Either with your family camcorder or with a handheld tape recorder, "interview" various individuals this poem reflects (e.g., parents/grandparents, Alfred the Great, Daniel Boone, Dolley Madison, Charlemagne, etc.). In order to have the fast paced style of a reporter, watch and/or listen to the news with your parents' permission. Keep the interviews lively, quick, and to the point.

Remain objective! Being objective means just reporting the facts and not giving your opinion of the situation.

5) What is one of the things you most enjoy? Is it literature? math? science? sports? cooking? Take that area of interest and relate that to this poem. If you enjoy dance, for example, develop a dance routine that physically expresses the sentiments of this poem. If you enjoy shop, create something out of wood that helps to clarify this poem. Do you enjoy creating stories? Write a story based on any time period you desire that expresses the sentiments of this poem. Do you enjoy creating things in the kitchen? Make an ancient meal from this time or develop your own meal that symbolizes the many different points this poem makes.

6) Poster. Create a poster illustrating the the author's view of the impact of *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need*.

7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about Isaac Watts and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.