

Sing to the Lord Ye Distant Lands Worksheet

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Verse 1

Sing to the Lord, ye distant lands!
Ye tribes of every tongue!
His new discovered grace demands
A new and nobler song.

Verse 2

Say to the nations, "Jesus reigns,
God's own almighty Son;
His power the sinking world sustains,
And grace surrounds His throne."

Verse 3

Let heav'n proclaim the joyful day;
Joy through the earth be seen;
Let cities shine in bright array,
And fields in cheerful green.

Verse 4

Let an unusual joy surprise
The islands of the sea;
Ye mountains! sink; ye valleys, rise;
Prepare the Lord His way.

Verse 5

Behold, He comes—He comes to bless
The nations as their God;
To show the world His righteousness,
And send His truth abroad.

Verse 6

But when His voice shall raise the dead,
And bid the world draw near,
How will the guilty nations dread
To see their Judge appear!

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

Verse 1: Ye, tribes, tongue, grace, nobler

Verse 2: reigns, sustains, surrounds

Verse 3: heav'n, proclaim, array

Verse 4: Ye

Verse 5: Behold, bless, righteousness, abroad

Verse 6: bid, guilty, Judge, appear

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, without making an image of God, draw your idea of the *imagery* or *figurative language* the author uses!

Verse 1: distant lands; tribes of every tongue

Verse 2: Say to the nations, "Jesus reigns;" sinking world

Verse 3: heav'n proclaim the joyful day; Joy through the earth; cities shine; bright array; fields in cheerful green

Verse 4: unusual joy surprise; islands of the sea; Ye mountains! sink; ye valleys, rise

Verse 5: show the world His righteousness; send His truth abroad

Verse 6: voice shall raise the dead; bid the world draw near; guilty nations dread

Mechanics are the nuts and bolts of a poem. Verbally discuss.

Who is the speaker? (Does the speaker have a specific personality or has the author remained in the background so the message of the poem will be more clear?)

What does the poem reveal about the speaker's character? (Sometimes, poems reveal nothing about the speaker's personal thoughts, feelings, or attitudes. Yet, the poem may demonstrate those character traits that are important to the author like courage, loyalty, perseverance, etc.)

Is the speaker addressing someone in particular or is it to anyone? (Sometimes poems are not directed to anyone in particular, but to anyone that may read it.)

Does the poem have a setting? (Does the author tell where the poem occurs? Is the poem about a specific event?)

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? (Some poems are straightforward and are meant to be taken literally. In songs, the theme may be presented in the refrain or in the last few lines. Sometimes the theme is a little bit more difficult to discern as it is made with figurative language or symbols.)

What point of view or perspective is the speaker? (What meaning do you think the poem has for the author?)

How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time? (Did your thoughts and feelings change after you took time to study it?)

Comprehension Questions Verbally discuss

Verse 1: What command is given in the first line? Tongue means a foreign language. Explain and discuss: "Sing to the Lord, ye distant lands! Ye tribes of every tongue!" What is newly discovered? What kind of song is now required?

Verse 2: Who reigns? Who should be told this message? What does His power do? What, according to the author, does His grace do?

Verse 3: Who or what should proclaim the joyful day? What should cities do? What about the fields?

Verse 4: Explain and discuss: "Let an unusual joy surprise, The islands of the sea." What should mountains and valleys do?

Verse 5: What does He come to do? Explain and discuss: "To show the world His righteousness, And send His truth abroad."

Verse 6: What shall His voice raise? What shall He bid the world do? How will the guilty nations respond? Who is the Judge?

Did this historical event or message become more real to you after reading this poem? Why?

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 six verses.

Discuss this poem in light of the ...

Cultural Mandate (what God said to Adam and Eve) ... And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. (Genesis 1:28)

Dominion Mandate (what God said to Noah after the Flood) ... And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. (Genesis 9:1)

Great Commission (Jesus' command that reaffirmed the Cultural and Dominion Mandates) ... And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 18:18-20)

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 in 1707-1709. For six years he was the tutor 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 Lond on 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 six 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 connected with this poem (e.g., tyrants, heads of nations either current or past, Oliver Cromwell, Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, crusaders, St. Patrick, George Mason, 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 *Sing to the Lord, Ye Distant Lands*.

7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about Isaac Watts (1674-1748) and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.