

GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN Worksheet

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Verse 1

God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day;
To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone
astray.

Refrain

Verse 2

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy
In Bethlehem, in Israel, this blessed Babe was born,
And laid within a manger upon this blessed morn;
The which His mother Mary did nothing take in scorn.

Refrain

Verse 3

From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.

Refrain

Verse 4

"Fear not, then," said the angel, "Let nothing you afright
This day is born a Savior of a pure Virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in Him from Satan's power and
might."

Refrain

Verse 5

The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding in tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethl'em straightaway this blessed Babe to
find.

Refrain

Verse 6

But when to Bethlehem they came where our dear Savior
lay,
They found Him in a manger where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling unto the Lord did pray.

Refrain

Verse 7

Now to the Lord sing praises all you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood each other now
embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.

Refrain

Verse 8

God bless the ruler of this house, and send him long to
reign,
And many a merry Christmas may live to see again;
Among your friends and kindred that live both far and
near-

That God send you a happy new year, happy new year,
And God send you a happy new year.

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

Verse 1: merry, dismay, Saviour, astray

Verse 2: tidings

Verse 3: manger, scorn

Verse 5: afright

Verse 6: rejoiced, tempest

Verse 8: reign, kindred

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: rest ye merry gentlemen; save us from Satan's power

Refrain: tidings of comfort and joy

Verse 2: Mary did nothing take in scorn

Verse 3: a blessed angel came ... unto certain shepherds

Verse 4: Fear not ... said the angel; Saviour ... free all those who trust in Him from Satan's power and might

Verse 5: rejoiced much in mind; left their flocks a-feeding in tempest, storm and wind

Verse 6: oxen feed on hay; Mary kneeling unto the Lord did pray

Verse 7: sing praises; each other now embrace; holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface

Verse 8: God bless the ruler of this house;

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: Why should these merry gentlemen rest? (*Hint: It has something to do with victory*) Why should these gentlemen allow nothing to dismay them? Who was born on Christmas? What did He do?

Refrain: Why should this bring “tidings of comfort and joy”? Do you agree with the author? Why?

Verse 2: Why is Babe capitalized? Where was this Babe born? Why is it important to know where this Babe was born? Explain and discuss: “The which His mother Mary did nothing take in scorn.” Why is this important?

Verse 3: Who came to the shepherds? Where did this messenger come from? What did this messenger tell the shepherds? Why would this be important?

Verse 4: Why would the sheperds be told to “fear not”? Would you have been frightened or, at least, uneasy if this happened to you late at night? Explain and discuss: “This day is born a Savior of a pure Virgin bright, To free all those who trust in Him from Satan’s power and might.”

Verse 5: With respect to their thoughts, how did the shepherds react to the message? Why? Remember, thoughts have consequences. We act on what we think. What did the shepherds do with their flocks? Why?

Verse 6: What did the shepherds find in Bethlehem? Why do you think would Mary be praying?

Verse 7: Who should “sing praises”? Why should praises be sung? What does the author of this poem tell us to embrace? Why do you think this is so? Do you agree with the author? Explain and discuss: “This holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.”

Verse 8: Who, does the author say, should be blessed? Explain and discuss: “ send him long to reign.” What is being sent to “friends and kindred that live both far and near”?

Did this historical event 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 eight verses and the refrain.

Re-read the Gospel accounts of the Nativity along with Isaiah 53.

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?

This is a traditional English carol

Geography

Locate England and Israel on a globe, map and atlas.

Challenge Locate Bethlehem and two important English rivers on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast the weather from England and Israel with your own for one week.

Make an English and or Israelite 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 nine 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 event or 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 historical event or 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., angels, heads of nations either current / past, Joseph, Mary, repentant sinners, merry gentlemen, 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 *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*.

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