

Alas ! Did My Saviour Bleed? Worksheet

© 2003 Beverly Schmitt, all rights reserved

*Verse 1*

Alas! and did my Savior bleed  
And did my Sovereign die?  
Would He devote that sacred head  
For sinners such as I?  
[originally, For such a worm as I?]

*Refrain*

At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,  
And the burden of my heart rolled away,  
It was there by faith I received my sight,  
And now I am happy all the day!

*Verse 2*

Thy body slain, sweet Jesus, Thine—  
And bathed in its own blood—  
While the firm mark of wrath divine,  
His Soul in anguish stood.

*Verse 3*

Was it for crimes that I had done  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity! grace unknown!  
And love beyond degree!

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

*Verse 1:* Alas, Sovereign, devote, sinners

*Refrain:* burden

*Verse 2:* slain, Thine, wrath, divine, anguish

*Verse 3:* crimes, pity, grace

*Verse 4:* glories, sin

*Verse 5:* dissolve

*Verse 6:* grief, debt, 'Tis

**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, without drawing a picture of Christ, draw your idea of the *imagery* or *figurative language* the author uses!

*Verse 1:* sinners such as I

*Refrain:* At the cross

*Verse 2:* wrath divine

*Verse 3:* crimes I had done, grace unknown

*Verse 4:* the sun in darkness hide

*Verse 5:* I hide my blushing face

*Verse 4*

Well might the sun in darkness hide  
And shut his glories in,  
When Christ, the mighty Maker died,  
For man the creature's sin.

*Verse 5*

Thus might I hide my blushing face  
While His dear cross appears,  
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,  
And melt my eyes to tears.

*Verse 6*

But drops of grief can ne'er repay  
The debt of love I owe:  
Here, Lord, I give my self away  
'Tis all that I can do.

Verse 6: debt of love

**Mechanics** 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.)

How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time?

***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 is the author asking in this first verse? Why would it be important?

***Refrain:*** What happened to the author at the cross? What was rolled away? How did the author receive sight?

***Verse 2:*** Whose body was slain? Did you notice the author's use of the term "Thine"? Why do you think the author used this term? Explain and discuss: "While the firm mark of wrath divine, His Soul in anguish stood."

***Verse 3:*** What does the author mean by "crimes"? Does this include folks other than the author? Why? Explain and discuss: Amazing pity! grace unknown! And love beyond degree!"

***Verse 4:*** What does the author mean by the sun hiding and shutting in his "glories"? What did the Maker do? Why is this important?

***Verse 5:*** Why would the author's face be "blushing"? Should our faces blush? Why? What should be dissolved into thankfulness? Why?

***Verse 6:*** What can never be repaid? Explain and discuss: "Here, Lord, I give my self away. 'Tis all that I can do.

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.

What does the Bible have to say about mercy? Identify Biblical characters that were demonstrated mercy. Can you think of anyone else in history that demonstrated this character trait in the Biblical sense? What will you tell your grandchildren about mercy? How will you encourage your grandchildren in this character trait?

What does the Bible say about love? Identify Biblical characters that were demonstrated love. Can you think of anyone else in history that demonstrated this character trait in the Biblical sense? What will you tell your grandchildren about love? How will you encourage your grandchildren in this character trait? For more scriptural helps in learning what the Bible says about love, go to the internet page <http://www.lovetolearnplace.com/SpecialDays/Valentines/Bible.html>

Discuss this poem in light of ...

Matthew 22:37 " ... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Luke 10:27 "... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind."

Deuteronomy 6:5 "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."

Mark 12:30 "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength ..."

### **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 London 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 this poem could illustrate (e.g., family members, Oliver Cromwell, Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, Moses, 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 *Alas ! Did My Saviour Bleed?*

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.