

He Did Not Die In Vain Worksheet  
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*Verse 1*

My blessed Lord was crucified,  
The day was dark, and grief was wide,  
For hope was crushed and all seemed vain,  
Until that Savior rose again.

*Refrain*

Ring out the blessed news again!  
Oh! bear aloft the strain;  
The mighty Lord is ris'n in power,  
He died, but not in vain!

*Verse 2*

He brings His great salvation nigh,  
And on His love bids us rely;  
He bought our peace through grief and pain;  
But oh! He did not die in vain!

*Refrain*

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

*Verse 1:* blessed, crucified, grief, vain

*Refrain:* aloft, strain, vain

*Verse 2:* salvation, nigh, bids

*Verse 3:* wondrous, reigns

**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:* the day was dar, grief was wide, hope was crushed

*Refrain:* Ring out the blessed news again!

*Verse 2:* salvation nigh

*Verse 3:* wondrous news of life and love!, path to glory

**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, perserverance, 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:*** Who was crucified? What was dark? What was wide? Did you notice the author accented the second “e” in “blessèd”? Why do you think the author chose to do that? What was crushed? Explain: “all seemed vain.” What happens in the last line that changes everything?

***Refrain:*** What is to be “rung” out? Did you notice the author’s use of the term “ris’n”? Why do you think the author opted to use that term? Why did the author say “He died, but not in vain!”

***Verse 2:*** What is brought near to us? Why would this be important? What are we to rely on? How was peace bought?

***Verse 3:*** What is the “wondrous news”? Who reigns? Explain: “He made the path to glory plain.”

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 three verses and the refrain.

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 Carrie Elizabeth Ellis Breck (1855-1934). She was born 22 January 1855 in Walden, Vermont, and died 27 March 1934, Portland, Oregon. Carrie was tone deaf yet she wrote over 2000 poems. This strong Christian woman was loyal to her husband and dearly loved her five daughters.

### **Geography**

Locate Vermont and Oregon on a globe, map and atlas.

*Challenge* Locate Walden (VT) and Portland (OR) on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast the weather of Vermont and/or Oregon with your own for one week.

Make a New England and/or American 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 four 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, Moses, soldiers past and present, Ruth, 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 *He Did Not Die in Vain*.

7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about Carrie Elizabeth Ellis Breck (1855-1934) and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.