

Low In the Grave He Lay Worksheet  
© 2003 Beverly Schmitt, all rights reserved

*Verse 1*

Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior,  
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

*Refrain*

Up from the grave He arose,  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes,  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever, with His saints to reign.  
He arose! He arose!  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

*Verse 2*

Vainly they watch His bed, Jesus my Savior;  
Vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!

*Refrain*

*Verse 3*

Death cannot keep its Prey, Jesus my Savior;  
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!

*Refrain*

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

*Verse 1:* grave

*Refrain:* triumph, o'er, foes, Victor, domain, saints, reign, Hallelujah

*Verse 2:* Vainly

*Verse 3:* Prey

**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

**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:* Who is in the grave? What is He awaiting?

*Refrain:* Who arose? Why was/is this important? Did you notice the author's use of the term "o'er"? Why do you think the author opted to use this term? Explain and discuss: "He arose a Victor from the dark domain, And He lives forever, with His saints to reign." Why do you think some act as if they have been conquered verses knowing that victory has occurred? What does the term "Hallelujah" mean? Why do you think the author used this term?

*Verse 2:* What was vainly watched? What was vainly sealed?

*Verse 3:* What cannot keep its Prey? Explain and discuss: "He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!"

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.

What does the Bible have to say about joy? What does the Bible have to say about being cheerful? Give older and newer testament examples of those that experienced joy and were cheerful. Site historical examples of joy and cheerful individuals. Give current examples of joy and cheerfulness. How is joy related to being cheerful? What will you tell your grandchildren about being joyful and cheerful? How will you encourage your grandchildren in these character traits? Would you rather be around someone that has joy and is cheerful or around someone that chronically says "I can't" or complains, etc.?

What does the Bible say about complainers, murmurers and those that say "I can't"? What will you tell your grandchildren about being complainers, murmurers and those that say "I can't"? How will you encourage your grandchildren not to have these non-God honoring character traits?

Discuss this poem in relationship to alternative education (i.e., homeschooling and private schooling). Specifically, 2 Corinthians 10:5 ...

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ ... 2 Corinthians 10:5

## **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 Robert Lowry (1826-1899). He was born 12 March 1826 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and died 25 November 1899 in Plainfield, New Jersey. This Baptist minister wrote about 500 Christian tunes.

## **Geography**

Locate Pennsylvania and New Jersey a globe, map and atlas.

*Challenge* Locate Philadelphia (PA) and Plainfield (NJ) on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast the weather of Pennsylvania and/or New Jersey with your own for one week.  
Make an 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, Joshua and Caleb in the older testament, Alfred the Great, George Mason, Capt. John Smith, 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 *Low In the Grave He Lay*.

7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about Robert Lowry (1826-1899) and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.