

About Us  
Events  
Newsletters  
Give

**SUBSCRIBE**

---

**POETRY FOUNDATION**

POEMS  
POETS  
PROSE  
COLLECTIONS  
LISTEN  
LEARN  
VISIT

## The Worship of Nature

BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

The harp at Nature's advent strung  
Has never ceased to play;  
The song the stars of morning sung  
Has never died away.

And prayer is made, and praise is given,  
By all things near and far;  
The ocean looketh up to heaven,  
And mirrors every star.

Its waves are kneeling on the strand,  
As kneels the human knee,  
Their white locks bowing to the sand,  
The priesthood of the sea!

They pour their glittering treasures forth,  
Their gifts of pearl they bring,  
And all the listening hills of earth  
Take up the song they sing.

The green earth sends its incense up  
From many a mountain shrine;

*POETRY MAGAZINE*

## The Worship of Nature

BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

---

### ABOUT THIS POET

---

In the 30-year struggle to abolish slavery, John Greenleaf Whittier played an important role as a poet, as a politician, and as a moral force. Although he was among the most ardent of the antebellum reformers, he was saved from the besetting sin of that...

[Read Full Biography](#)

From folded leaf and dewy cup  
She pours her sacred wine.

The mists above the morning rills  
Rise white as wings of prayer;  
The altar-curtains of the hills  
Are sunset's purple air.

The winds with hymns of praise are loud,  
Or low with sobs of pain,—  
The thunder-organ of the cloud,  
The dropping tears of rain.

With drooping head and branches crossed  
The twilight forest grieves,  
Or speaks with tongues of Pentecost  
From all its sunlit leaves.

The blue sky is the temple's arch,  
Its transept earth and air,  
The music of its starry march  
The chorus of a prayer.

So Nature keeps the reverent frame  
With which her years began,  
And all her signs and voices shame  
The prayerless heart of man.

## MORE ABOUT THIS POET

---

Region:

U.S., NEW ENGLAND

School/Period:

VICTORIAN

Quick Tags

---

NATURE

LANDSCAPES & PASTORALS

RELIGION

OTHER RELIGIONS

THE SPIRITUAL

[Share on Twitter](#)

[Share on Facebook](#)

[Print this page](#)

[Email this page](#)

**MORE POEMS BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER**

---

**An Autograph**

BY JOHN  
GREENLEAF  
WHITTIER

**Barbara**

**Frietchie**

BY JOHN  
GREENLEAF  
WHITTIER

**The Barefoot**

**Boy**

BY JOHN  
GREENLEAF  
WHITTIER

**Burning Drift-  
Wood**

BY JOHN  
GREENLEAF  
WHITTIER

**Ichabod**

BY JOHN  
GREENLEAF  
WHITTIER

[See All Poems by this Author](#)

---

POEMS

Poems for Children

Poems for Teens

Poem Guides

Audio Poems

POETS

PROSE

Harriet Blog

COLLECTIONS

LISTEN

LEARN

Children

Teens

Adults

Educators

Glossary of Poetic  
Terms

VISIT

Events

Exhibitions

Library

*POETRY*

MAGAZINE

Current Issue

*Poetry* Magazine  
Archive

Subscriptions

About the Magazine

How to Submit

Advertise with Us

ABOUT US

Give

Foundation Awards

Media Partnerships

Poetry Out Loud

People

Jobs

`.st0{fill:none;stroke:#ED1C24;stroke-width:3.64;stroke-miterlimit:10;} .st1{fill:#ED1C24;} .st2{fill:#FFFFFF;}`

Twitter Find us on Twitter

Facebook Find us on Facebook

Instagram Find us on Instagram

Facebook Find us on Facebook

Poetry Foundation Children

Twitter Find us on Twitter

Poetry Magazine

CONTACT US

NEWSLETTERS

PRESS

PRIVACY POLICY

POLICIES

TERMS OF USE

POETRY MOBILE APP

61 West Superior Street, Chicago, IL 60654

Hours: Monday-Friday 11am - 4pm

© 2020 Poetry Foundation

[See a problem on this page?](#)