

# The World Is Too Much With Us

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;—  
Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

## “The world is too much with us”

### Summary

This poem is one of the sonnets written by Wordsworth in the early 1800s. The speaker criticizes the modern age that nature is no longer interested by this age:

Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers

Little we see in Nature that is ours

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

There is no harmony between man and nature "even when the sea 'bares her bosom to the moon' and the winds howl, humanity is still out of tune, and looks on uncaringly at the spectacle of the storm."

The pagan images of Triton and Proteus reflects that the speaker wishes that he were a pagan:" Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn."

## **Theme**

Wordsworth shows that he sees "that human beings are too preoccupied with the material ("The world...getting and spending") and have lost touch with the spiritual and with nature". The speaker wishes that he were a pagan to feel the spiritual sense of nature "so he could still see ancient gods in the actions of nature and thereby gain spiritual solace."

In general, this sonnet "offers an angry summation of the familiar Wordsworthian theme of communion with nature, and states precisely how far the early nineteenth century was from living out the Wordsworthian ideal."

## **Form**

The poem is a Petrarchan sonnet which is formed of fourteen lines and its meter is iambic pentameter. The rhyme scheme of the poem is: ABBAABBA for the octave, and CDCDCD for the sestet.