

## Blake's 'The Divine Image' and 'The Human Abstract'

### A collapsed poem – The Divine Image

Printed below is a 'collapsed' version of the poem 'The Divine Image'. This means all the words in the poem have been sorted and arranged in alphabetical order.

1. What can you learn about the poem from looking at the words in this form? What predictions can you make?

&	delight	God	jew	of	the
a	distress	has	Love	or	thankfulness
a	distress	heart	Love	our	That
All	divine	heathen	Love	Peace	the
all	divine	his	love	Peace	the
and	dress	his	Love	Peace	the
And	dwell	human	Love	Peace	their
and	dwelling	human	Love	Peace	their
And	every	human	man	pity	Then
and	every	human	man	Pity	There
and	face	human	Mercy	Pity	these
And	father	human	Mercy	Pity	To
And	For	in	Mercy	Pity	to
And	For	in	Mercy	Pity	to
care	form	In	Mercy	pray	too
child	form	Is	Mercy	prays	turk
clime	form	Is	must	Prays	virtues
dear	God	is	of	Return	Where

2. Now read the poem as written by Blake. Talk about how it relates to your predictions.

### The Divine Image

To Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
All pray in their distress;  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
Is God, our father dear,  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
Is Man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity, a human face,  
And Love, the human form divine,  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man of every clime  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine:  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form  
In heathen, turk or jew.  
Where Mercy, Love & Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too.

**A collapsed poem – The Human Abstract**

3. Talk about the title ‘The Human Abstract’ and compare it with ‘The Divine Image’. What oppositions and points of contact can you identify?

4. Look at the collapsed poem. What do you notice? What differences can you see between it and ‘The Divine Image’?

5. Now read the poem and talk about it in relation your initial discussion of the collapsed version and by contrast with ‘The Divine Image’.

a	care	He	Mercy	Ruddy	the
all	Catterpillar	head	more	sea	their
all	could	his	more	search	Then
And	cruelty	his	mutual	selfish	Then
And	Deceit	his	Mystery	shade	There
And	did	his	Mystery	shade	thickest
And	dismal	holy	nature	sits	this
And	down	Human	nest	snare	thro’
and	earth	Humility	no	somebody	Till
And	eat	If	no	Soon	to
and	fear	If	not	Sought	to
And	fears	In	Of	spreads	Tree
and	Feed	in	of	spreads	Underneath
as	find	in	of	sweet	vain
as	Fly	increase	on	takes	was
baits	foot	it	one	tears	waters
be	fruit	its	over	the	we
be	Gods	its	peace	the	we
bears	ground	knots	Pity	the	were
Brain	grows	loves	Poor	the	with
brings	happy	made	Raven	the	with
But	has	make	root	The	with
				the	would

## The Human Abstract

Pity would be no more  
If we did not make somebody Poor;  
And Mercy no more could be  
If all were as happy as we;

And mutual fear brings peace,  
Till the selfish loves increase.  
Then Cruelty knits a snare  
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears  
And waters the ground with tears;  
Then Humility takes its root  
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade  
Of Mystery over his head,  
And the Catterpillar and Fly  
Feed on the Mystery;

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,  
Ruddy and sweet to eat,  
And the Raven his nest has made  
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea  
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree;  
But their search was all in vain:  
There grows one in the Human Brain.