

Romanticism

Literature



Teacher Does Wordsworth's encounter with nature in "Tintern Abbey" seem to be a religious experience? If so, how? William Wordsworth's encounter with nature in "Tintern Abbey" can be considered as a "religious experience".

When we mention "religious experience", it does not pertain to a sect or a denominational ritual practice but rather the spiritual experience which is a universal feeling to all mankind when we are in awe of the creation of our Maker. It can be the universe or nature or anything that touches our soul.

In the case of William Wordsworth, it was his fascination with Tintern Abbey during his visits (he visited twice) whereby he was moved to write being a poet. As described in his poem, Tintern Abbey was indeed a sight to behold with its banks of river and panoramic light reminding Wordsworth of vagrant dwellers and hermit's cave due to its solitary serenity.

This serenity, or bliss elevated Wordsworth to experience a spiritual experience that moved him to write the poem. He was also moved to ponder about life and passage of time evident in the passage of the first section of the poem (there are five sections), which in itself is a religious experience. It read;

FIVE years have past; five summers, with the length

Of five long winters! and again I hear

These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs

With a soft inland murmur

Religious experience does not only mean praying or going to church, synagogue or mosque but is also a state when we are moved to commune with God because his creation has touched us which in the case of William Wordsworth is "Tintern Abbey".