

Holy Thursday (Songs of Experience) key Facts

Writer: William Blake | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Title: Holy Thursday

Poet: William Blake (1757-1827)

Tone: Critical, Bitter, accusatory, sorrowful, angry.

Genre: Poetry (Lyric)

Publication: "Holy Thursday" was published in Blake's collection *Songs of Experience* in 1794.

Form: The poem has four short quatrains (four-line stanzas)

Rhyme Scheme: The rhyme scheme of this poem varies. In the first stanza, the lines follow the ABAB pattern. It becomes ABCB in the second stanza.

Structure and Form:

- 4 quatrains (four-line stanzas).
- Simple language but heavy irony and rhetorical questioning.

Important Note:

In this poem, Blake criticizes society for neglecting the children. The poem asks: why so many children suffer from poverty in a rich and fruitful country like England? Why are so many children orphaned and dependent on charity? The speaker of "Holy Thursday" from

Songs of Innocence (1789)

takes an innocent look at poverty and charity. He is happy for the beautiful children who are attending the church service on Holy Thursday. However, the speaker of the

Songs of Experience (1794)

knows full well that society is to blame for the misery of the children. The rich, who are feeding the children, are selfish. They care more about looking good than truly helping. This speaker's view is "experience".