



The Creation Story of Kitche Manitou (The Great Spirit) of the Ojibwe

Out of nothing he made rock, water, fire, and wind. Into each he breathed the breath of life. On each he bestowed with his breath a different essence and nature. Each substance had its own power which became its soul-spirit.

From these four substances Kitche Manitou created the physical world of sun, stars, moon and earth.

Then Kitche Manitou made the plant beings. These were four kinds: flowers, grasses, trees and vegetables. To each he gave a spirit of life, growth, healing and beauty. Each he placed where it would be most beneficial, and lend to earth the greatest beauty and harmony and order.

After plants, Kitche Manitou created animal beings conferring on each special powers and natures. There were two-leggeds, four-leggeds, wingeds and swimmers.

Last of all he made man. Though last in order of creation, least in the order of dependence, and weakest in bodily powers, man had the greatest gift — the power to dream.

Kitche Manitou then made The Great Laws of Nature for the well being and harmony of all things and all creatures. The Great Laws governed the place and movement of sun, moon, earth and stars; governed the powers of wind, water, fire and rock; governed the rhythm and continuity of life, birth, growth and decay. All things lived and worked by these laws.

Adapted from Basil Johnston: *Ojibway Heritage: The ceremonies, rituals, songs, dances, prayers and legends of the Ojibway*. McClelland and Stewart 1976, reprinted 1998; Toronto.