

# three cheers for the sun

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**Moses** went for a walk one night when the moon took back the sky  
Hadn't intended to stay for long till he saw a tree on fire  
Not the usual phenomenon one tends to see these days  
It must have been the holy voice of god so Moses on his knees did pray

The words Moses heard he did not understand back down the mountain he ran  
And god called out to his mighty one 'don't forget ... three cheers for the sun'

**Descartes** well he disappeared one day in search of the final word  
Locked himself away from all that lay in the outer world  
His mind cut a swathe like a holy sword, a metaphysical jihad  
Stripped of all that his mind had known he heard the whisper of god

'Hey boy you've spilt the indivisible, just look at what you have done  
You've torn the heavens you've freed the mind but save ...  
three cheers for the sun'

**Thoreau** for a time lived on the edge of a pond in the middle of wintertime  
With frost on his breath he looked and saw a universe to explore  
With all the world to travel to and so much yet to find he said  
The greatest journey of them all the 'thousand regions of the mind'<sup>#</sup>

Like a lucent swan on the pond god reached to touch his hand  
'You behold all this but you need to learn to save ... three cheers for the sun'

**There** are monsters that roam the hills back there, creatures that eat the light  
And sycophants cling wildly to dreams of power and might  
So trust in what you think but test it all the time cause Moses never made Zion  
Descartes and Thoreau died long ago and now it's your turn in the sun

Commandments may come god only knows and philosophers will still be heard  
And in your love for life always keep your best ... three cheers for the sun

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<sup>#</sup>'Direct your eye right inward, and you'll find A thousand regions in your mind Yet undiscovered.  
Travel them', from Henry David Thoreau, Walden, 1960 (1854)

# three cheers for the sun: backstory

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I can't really say anything particularly profound about how this song came into being. It started with the line 'three cheers for the sun' and just sort of evolved from this core idea

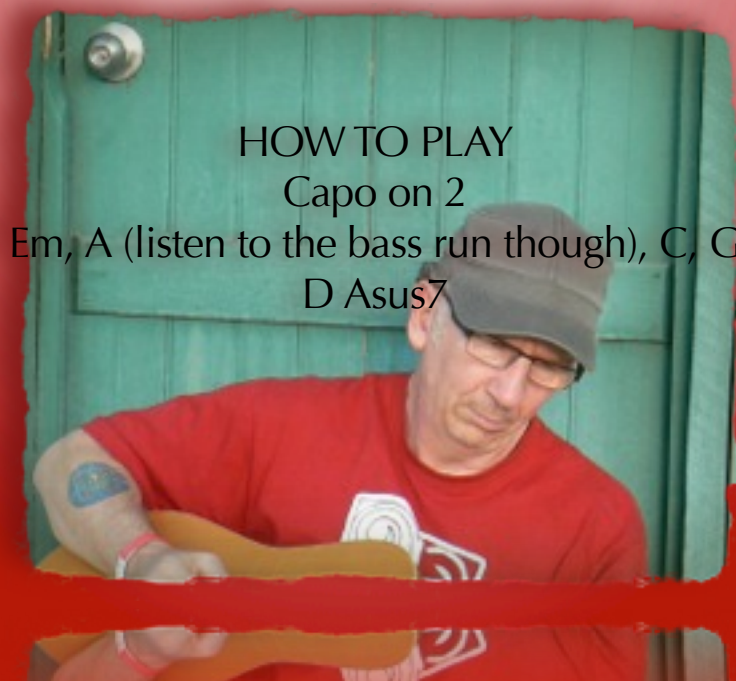
Three cheers is, of course, a vernacular we are all familiar with. Common place, and while it appears to be an exaltation, it can often be limp and perfunctory. We therefore have a choice over the manner we will offer our 'three cheers for the sun'

The sun is indifferent to our praise, but the way **we** act does matter, because it reflects a deeper cultural stance towards the way we live on our only home

We live off the sun's energy in the food we eat, the energy that drives our economies, the oceans and forests we enjoy. Yet, we squander limited resources and dangerously alter the atmosphere with excess carbon. We need to turn to the sun with much greater enthusiasm to power our cities, our economies, our homes, our transport. Solar energy, direct from the sun, or via the wind, waves, plants ... It's all there, and increasingly feasible and urgent

See <http://beyondzeroemissions.org/> for some robust scientific and economic work on non-carbon energy systems

Three cheers for the sun indeed! HIP, HIP and HOORAY!!



## HOW TO PLAY

Capo on 2

Em, A (listen to the bass run though), C, G

D Asus7

# three cheers for the sun: the three dudes

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**Moses, Descartes and Thoreau** just sort of came to mind as I wrote this, but since they are of some significance, here is my take on these three (all men it appears)

**Moses**, the biblical hero led his people out of captivity by the Egyptians, after god sent a bunch of plagues to convince them he was the true god. Then god gave Moses some commandments. Some are ok, but frankly, it is disappointing that this is the best god could come up with. He could have started with 'Thou shall wash your fucking hands' (a point made by the late Christopher Hitchens). This would have massively reduced the spread of disease and saved many women dying from infection after childbirth. Apparently god was content to let us suffer until Louis Pasteur figured out what was going on in the 19th century. Still, Moses deserves his place in literary history as a hero of sorts.

**Rene Descartes** was a 17th Century philosopher and maths geek. He kick-started modern philosophy and attempted to understand the world through the power of reason rather than the authority of religion. Descartes sought to free his mind from all but what reason demanded. Don't underestimate what this guy did; the world we now experience is built on a legacy of Descartes' insights. He freed the mind ... and from this science, modern medicine, law, all these things can be linked in some way to Descartes.

**Henry David Thoreau** wrote a book about his two years (1845-1847) spent in solitude on the edge of a small lake called Walden, in Concord, Massachusetts. He is considered an important influence in modern environmentalism, but is also known for his philosophy of simplicity. "*I do not see but a quiet mind may live as contentedly there (in the hut by the pond) ... as in a palace*". He stands as a challenge to the illusion that more material comfort will satisfy the soul. By all means let life be comfortable for all the earth's citizens, but let us dump the myth that we can be happy without nurturing our souls.

Oh, I use the word 'god' in a literary (not literal) sense, just in case you are getting confused or worried. This is the songwriter in me, not the philosopher... So there we are. Maybe we should also give a perfunctionary cheer each for those guys perhaps... hip, hip, and hooray!