

ON HIS BLINDNESS BY JOHN MILTON

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide,
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts: who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait."



John Milton (9 December 1608 – 8 November 1674) was an English poet, polemicist, man of letters, and a civil servant for the Commonwealth of England. He wrote at a time of religious flux and political upheaval.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the subject of the poem?
2. List and discuss two figures of speech found in the poem.
3. What does the poet mean by "...how my light is spent?"
4. What is Milton's problem he has to face?
5. Explain what solution he finds, when he sits patiently.
6. Why is patience written with a capital letter?
7. What type of poem can this be classified as?