

**Sonnet 19**

**When I consider how my light is spent**

**by John Milton, 1663**

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  
Lodged 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.'