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The Shorter Poems and Samson Agonistes (Beeching's Milton)

John Milton · *Beeching's edition (PG #1745) · English original, ed. H. C. Beeching (Oxford), Project Gutenberg #1745*

This is the Month, and this the happy morn. So the Nativity ode begins, in this spelling. Later: When I consider how my light is spent. Then Samson: A little onward lend thy guiding hand to these dark steps. H. C. Beeching's Oxford text, PG #1745. The hosted file also contains Paradise Lost (already mapped) and Paradise Regained. This map treats the shorter poems and Samson Agonistes. Name the mix. For grades 11–12. Quote Milton, not only Beeching's preface. Keep this file's spelling (E're, Lodg'd, Heav'ns).

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read this file as Beeching's larger Milton volume, using the Nativity ode, the sonnet on his light, and Samson's first request for a guiding hand, while naming that Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained also stand in the same file?

"This is the Month, and this the happy morn Wherin"
On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

John Milton, in H. C. Beeching's Oxford text, Project Gutenberg #1745. The hosted file also contains Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained; Paradise Lost already has its own map. This map treats the shorter poems and Samson Agonistes. The Nativity ode begins: This is the Month, and this the happy morn. The sonnet: When I consider how my light is spent. Samson: A little onward lend thy guiding hand, to these dark steps, a little further on. For grades 11–12. Name the mix. Quote Milton, not only the preface. Keep this file's spelling.

KEY CHARACTERS

The singer of the Nativity ode
Who begins, This is the Month, and this the happy morn

The speaker of Sonnet XIX
Who considers how his light is spent

Samson
Who, at the opening of the dramatic poem, asks that a guiding hand be lent to these dark steps

HOW TO BEGIN THE SHORTER POEMS AND SAMSON

> *"This is the Month, and this the happy morn Wherin"*
> On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

> *"A little onward lend thy guiding hand To these"*
> Samson Agonistes

Grades 10–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

This Is the Month, and This the Happy Morn

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

This is the Month, and this the happy morn. The shorter poems can begin with a morning, and with a month, before later darkness is spoken.

- Keep "the Month" and "the happy morn," and this capitalization.
- 11–12.
- A nativity ode, not Paradise Lost.
- Quote this spelling.

> *"This is the Month, and this the happy morn Wherin"*
> On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

02

When I Consider How My Light Is Spent

SONNET XIX

When I consider how my light is spent. The sonnet begins as a considering, before patience speaks.

- Keep "how my light is spent." Stop before a broken line if needed.
- 11–12.
- A sonnet among shorter poems, not the epic.
- Keep this file's spelling (E're, Lodg'd).

> *"When I consider how my light is spent, E're half"*
> Sonnet XIX

03

Lend Thy Guiding Hand

SAMSON AGONISTES

A little onward lend thy guiding hand. Samson begins by asking for a hand, not by a spectacle of strength.

- Keep "a little onward" and "guiding hand."
- 11–12. Gravity.
- The dramatic poem, after the shorter poems.
- Quote Milton.

> *"A little onward lend thy guiding hand To these"*
> Samson Agonistes

04

To These Dark Steps

SAMSON AGONISTES

To these dark steps, a little further on. The same opening asks for a little further on, in the dark.

- Keep "dark steps" and "a little further on."
- 11–12. Gravity; no spectacle.
- Samson, not Paradise Lost.
- Quote this wording.

> *"To these dark steps, a little further on; For"*
> Samson Agonistes

05

Beeching's Volume, a Mix Honestly Named

THE EDITION

H. C. Beeching's Oxford text, Project Gutenberg #1745. The hosted file also contains Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained; Paradise Lost already has its own map. This map treats the shorter poems and Samson Agonistes. For grades 11–12. Name the mix. Quote Milton, not only Beeching's preface. Keep this file's spelling. One map cannot teach every shorter poem, or Samson entire.

- Name Beeching, PG #1745, and the mix.
- 11–12.
- Nativity, a sonnet on light, then Samson's hand.
- Quote this English.

> *"This is the Month, and this the happy morn Wherin"*
> On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

A happy morn, in a named month	A light, considered as spent	A guiding hand, asked for	Dark steps, a little further on	A mixed volume, honestly named

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 10–12

1. The Nativity ode begins: "This is the Month, and this the happy morn." Keep this file's spelling.
2. The hosted Beeching volume (PG #1745) also contains Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained; Paradise Lost already has its own map. This map treats the shorter poems and Samson Agonistes. Name the mix.
3. The sonnet begins: "When I consider how my light is spent." Samson begins: "A little onward lend thy guiding hand / To these dark steps, a little further on."
4. For grades 11–12. Quote Milton, not only Beeching's preface. Gravity in Samson; no spectacle. One map cannot teach every shorter poem, or Samson entire.

Quotations are verbatim from the English original, ed. H. C. Beeching (Oxford), Project Gutenberg #1745, Project Gutenberg #1745, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/milton-shorter-poems-and-samson-agonistes/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.