

ENGL 220 Milton
Professor John Rogers

The End: Milton's *Samson Agonistes*

High noon in Milton's major poems:

PL: she plucked, she ate (9.781)

PR: he said and stood (4.561)

SA: he tugged, he shook (line 1650)

And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Le me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

--Judges 16:28-30.

Foreigners came much to see him, and much admired him, and offered to him great perferments to come over to them, and the only inducement of several foreigners that came over into England, was chiefly to see O. Protector, and Mr. J. Milton; and would see the house and chamber where he was born.

--Aubrey's "Life of Milton" (1681), p. 1023 of Hughes, ed. (original italics)

His harmonical and ingenious soul did lodge in a beautiful and well-proportioned body.

--Aubrey's "Life of Milton" (1681), p. 1022 of Hughes, ed.

He had this elegy in common with the patriarchs and kings of Israel, that he was gathered to his people; for he happened to be buried in Cripplegate, where about thirty years before he had by chance also interred his father.

--End of "An Anonymous Life of Milton" (1686), p. 1044 in Hughes, ed.

For earlier appearances of Samson, see *Areopagitica*, p. 745; *Reason of Church Government*, p. 688