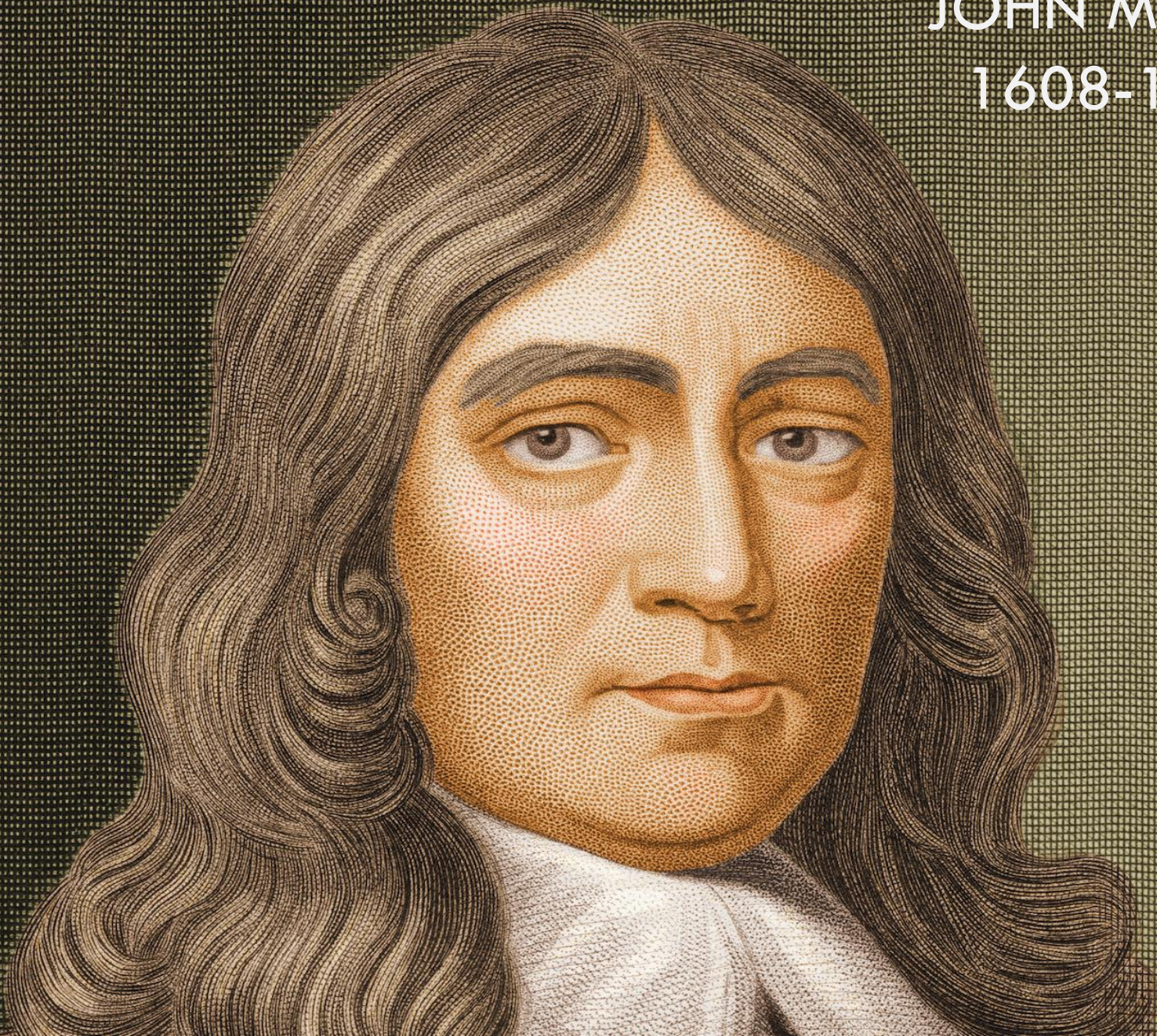


ON HIS HAVING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY- THREE

-JOHN MILTON

JOHN MILTON
1608-1674



How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth
Stoln on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits indu'th.

Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure ev'n
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n;

All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great task Master's eye.

A short explanation of "On His Having Arrived at the Age of Twenty-Three" by John Milton is that the English poet is looking on his young life so far and assessing himself. He understands that time is passing quickly - that before you know it the years stack up and we must determine what our accomplishments are and whether we are using time wisely. Milton states that he has lived, "But my late spring no bud or blossow shew'th." In other words, have I contributed to society properly? If I have, does it show? He is not sure if he is mature yet, or maturing at the right pace, although his heart is in the right place. The poet knows that Time will march on, God will perform his will in the Universe, and that the young man of twenty-three will, either slowly or quickly, become a productive and proper individual as intended by his Creator, if he uses what God has given him in pursuing his dreams.