Week 4 Literary Reflections:
Progress on the Journey: Developing and Achieving Goals

In this segment we shall consider how setting achievable goals and measuring our progress toward them can help us on our academic journey and in our lives in general, as well. Our ultimate goal should be Heaven, and how we live, think, and interact with others is important as we make our way toward that lofty goal and lesser goals in life.

‘To Seem the Stranger Lies My Lot, My Life’

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89)

To seem the stranger lies my lot, my life
Among strangers. Father and mother dear,
Brothers and sisters are in Christ not near
And he my peace my parting, sword and strife.

England, whose honour O all my heart woos, wife
To my creating thought, would neither hear
Me, were I pleading, plead nor do I: I weary of idle a being but by where wars are rife.

I am in Ireland now; now I am at a third
Remove. Not but in all removes I can
Kind love both give and get. Only what word
Wisest my heart breeds dark heaven’s baffling ban
Bars or hell’s spell thwarts. This to hoard unheard,
Heard unheeded, leaves me a lonely began.
SONNET VII.
ON HIS BEING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF 23.

John Milton

HOW soon hath time, the subtle thief of youth,  
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year!  
My hasting days fly on with full career, 
But my late spring no bud or blossom sheweth. 
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth, 
That I to manhood am arrived so near,  
And inward ripeness doth much less appear  
That some more timely happy spirits indueth. 
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow, 
it shall be still in strictest measure even 
Toward which time leads me and the will of heaven. 
All is, if I have grace to use it so,  
As ever in my great taskmaster's eye.

Questions for Consideration:

1. Time is the most precious commodity we will ever have the privilege of possessing/dispensing/enjoying.

2. How do we use time not simply wisely, but also to find our way home, and to enjoy the adventure homewards while we do so.