

Mia Lawrence
TR 11-12:15, 4-5:15

Questions from Journals: Books 1 and 2 of
Paradise Regained

Yes, we can't resist comparing this work with Paradise Lost:

Narratively speaking, it's shorter, concentrating on the central episode of Christ's temptation (versus multiple episodes of PL--creation, Satan's fall, man's fall). The language of the narrative seems simpler and easier to read, events of the poem don't diverge as extensively from the Bible---why these changes and how are they connected to the subject matter of the poem? Why the absence of the lofty language?

Another temptation scene is at the center of this work, but what's the difference between Jesus' temptation and Adam and Eve's?

Satan and Christ, comparatively: what's the difference between the Satan of Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained--he's lost his "spark," seems more weary, less haughty? How does Jesus compare with the Son of PL? Does he seem more likeable (more human), gentler--or fairly harsh in dealing with Satan?

Depiction of Mary: what is her role in this narrative, and how does it compare to Eve's in Paradise Lost? Mary tells her son that he's divine before the signs at his baptism confirm this--is it important that she tells Jesus of his divine parentage? How does Milton depict Mary, what kind of a character is she? How does this fit in with the discussion of womankind in the first two books--that Jesus won't succumb to the temptation of women, that beauty is a lure for weak minds?

Narrative concerns--why the repeated telling of Christ's baptism, and what's the effect of having different characters tell it? What's important about who tells what--Satan tells of Jesus' birth, Jesus relates what Mary has said etc. Why does Milton include the thoughts and doubts of the disciples and Mary as they wait for Jesus to return?

Milton paints a Jesus who doesn't have complete access to his Father's wishes and goals in this work---what is "human" about this Jesus, and what is divine? What is "evil" about Satan's temptations, and why does Milton depict them the way he does (Satan appears in city clothes with a feast)?