

GROUP #3

TOPIC: The temptations of Christ.

Prof. Helgerson ended his last lecture with the question, why does Satan keep coming back? He wants to find out who this Son of God is, and tries to provoke him to do or say something definitive. But why does he keep trying? Why does Milton include all these temptations, if we all know that Jesus will "just say no" each time?

KEY PASSAGES:

- Belial's suggestion to tempt Jesus with women is met with scorn by Satan, who says "thou weigh'st / All others by thy self" and says that Belial thinks all will be tempted in this way because he is (II 172-95). This passage can serve as a model for understanding the temptations: perhaps they reveal more about the tempter than the tempted.

- Look at other temptations and see what they say about Satan.

- IV. 14-24

- How does Satan respond to Jesus' rebukes? III. 145-49

QUESTIONS:

The Son of God responds with negation to each of Satan's temptations, never asserting anything but always rejecting what Satan offers. What do the temptations reveal about Satan himself? How do these temptations work to strengthen the resolve of the Son of God?

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Suggestions on "team teaching": presenting your discussion to the class

- be clear about what issue you're discussing - first lay out the issues involved, explain what question you're getting at
- refer to textual evidence that encapsulates or illustrates the heart of the issue (i.e. read the passage involved)
- would this passage be a good "exam passage"?
 - show how the passage illustrates the points your group has made (i.e. close read the passage to point out what elements you would write on)
 - think about how the issue and the passage relate to the text as a whole