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**“Cotton Mather’s Diary” Rhetorical Analysis**

* Mather blames the Devil for controlling him. He says, “I am a man greatly assaulted by Satan”(311) and “I am left unto great vexations from Satan”(310). Mather uses Satan as an excuse for his actions and thoughts rather than owning up to his behavior.
  + Mather is worried about God disowning him as a minister because of what the Devil has done to him: “I am a man rejected and abhored of God [...] the Lord will make no more use of me to glorify Him” (310).
* Mather goes on to dramatize his obedience to god: “Though I have kept one fast in my study this week already, yet I must this day keep another” (311). He does this to assure himself he is a good man that is not being taken over by Satan.
* He repeatedly calls himself a “miserable man” (311, 312) and states, once again, his obedience to God: “Lord Jesus Christ and my serviceableness to His precious interests; which I had a thousand times rather die than damnify” (312). Mather does this to show to himself and others that he is a man of Christ no matter what, even if he does dramatize his speech.
* Mather then, at the end of his diary entry, finds a “lovely person” also known as Elizabeth Hubbard, and describes her as, “[to her] heaven has directed me [...] with pure, chaste, noble strokes, and the smiles of God upon it” (314). Mather then describes his hapiness with God and is “amaze[ed]” (314) by it. The last sentence, “keeping me from a fast this week, as I might else have done” (314) shows Mather’s contentedness and evenness going on in his life. He blames it on the weather being too hot, but it is probable that it is also because of this lovely person. In the past entries of this article, Mather’s persistence to outwardly remain a man of God was firm; no weather would stop this man from expressing his devotion to his Lord. However, in the last sentence of his entry, Mather blames his choice to not fast on the weather, suggesting that his mind has been taken over by this lovely person and his life no longer includes the young gentlewoman.