

ABSTRACT

EVAN MOORE. *With Open Arms and Eyes to the Ground: The Hospitality of Milton's Adam in Paradise Lost*. (Under the direction of Professor John N. Wall.)

In the following essay, I find that Milton's hospitality is one of unconditional acceptance. By looking at the hospitable acts of Adam toward Raphael, Eve, God, and Michael, I find that perfect, Edenic hospitality is based in accepting, revering, feeding, inviting, and conversing with any guest. Milton's prelapsarian Adam follows this code perfectly—along with Eve—when Raphael visits in Book V. While Milton uses classical and biblical examples of greatness in hospitality to help form Adam's, the hospitality in Eden cannot be great; it must be perfect. So Milton revises the hospitable acts of Abraham (*Genesis*) and Alcinous (*The Odyssey*), showing that even those great hosts are not as perfect as Adam once was. However, Milton uses the breaking of this code in order to show the fall's occurrence and implications. The fall itself comes through Eve's mishandling of hospitality, both as guest and host, and through Adam's decision to be hospitable toward Eve instead of toward God and His law. Milton's postlapsarian Adam, then, commits sins against hospitality and Eden's welcoming. He hides from God in Book X, instead of receiving Him openly, and his relationship with Eve becomes consumed by argument and misunderstanding. Adam is no longer inherently, perfectly hospitable, and he must make attempts toward that perfect code again. He shows this intent and will when Michael comes to Eden in Books XI and XII. As before, Adam shows reverence, though there is no food, and the conversation is less welcoming; it is more like a lecture than a discussion. Milton, therefore, uses hospitality to show how humans have lost the ways of Eden, his golden age, and must now make intended attempts to recall such good actions.