

from the *Septuagint*, where it is used from Eden. By sin man lost the primeval Paradise: by the redemption of Christ the believer is restored to the favour and communion of God. And how natural that Christ, having finished the work of human redemption, should re-enter Paradise, taking with Him into its holy and blissful beauty the converted malefactor, as a trophy of His finished work. What better name for the Heaven which Christ has purchased for the believer than Paradise? If there is a second Adam, why should there not be a second Paradise?

In the Jewish conception the word was not only a name of the past, denoting some place of beauty and blessedness that lingered in memory as a lovely dream of the night, but it was a word of promise and hope for the future—the symbol of Heaven. Evidently Christ used the word according to the *Septuagint* and the current idea of the Jews, and when He promised to that poor, sinful, but penitent outcast, a place in Paradise, He meant not some dreamy place in *Hades*, but Heaven, and so understood, it opened above that dying sinner the gate of Heaven, and he went from that torturing cross to be with Jesus in Paradise. And this is the hope and the actual experience of every one “who dies in the Lord.” Let no Christian falter in the conflict when so near to final victory; let no one faint under the burdens and weariness of the way, for his redemption draweth nigh. “From henceforth,” not from the waking of the soul into consciousness after the sleep of centuries; not from the extinction of purgatorial fires—but from death. “Absent from the body; present with the Lord.” Let no child of God say, in tones of sadness, there is but a step between me and death; rather let him say, with exultation and hope, there is but a step between me and Paradise—