

"TODAY YOU SHALL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE":
AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF LUKE 23:43

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Abstraks

Kalimat “hari ini kamu akan bersamaku di surga” (Gr. *Ἀμήν σοι λέγω, σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ*) dalam Lukas 23:43 telah menjadi perdebatan sejak awal kekristenan. Subjek perdebatannya adalah apakah penjahat yang disalib bersama Yesus itu langsung masuk surga pada hari itu juga atau hanya merupakan sebuah janji Yesus bahwa pada dia akan masuk surga di masa yang akan datang. Perdebatan ini muncul oleh karena manuskrip Perjanjian Baru dalam bahasa Yunani kuno tidak memiliki tanda-tanda baca sehingga secara tata bahasa dan sintaks memberikan beberapa alternatif penerjemahan dan penafsiran. Dalam studi ini diberikan suatu solusi dengan melihat pemakaian kata keterangan *sēmeron* dengan kata penghubung *hoti* sehubungan dengan tata bahasa dan sintaks oleh Lukas yang menunjukkan kecenderungan tertentu. Selain itu, secara kontekstual menunjukkan bahwa penjahat tidak pergi ke surga pada hari penyaliban Yesus. Demikian juga studi intertekstualitas dari kata *paradeiso* menunjukkan bahwa surga adalah tempat tinggal Allah. Firdaus ini mengacu pada tempat tinggal masa depan umat Tuhan. Ini adalah gambaran tentang tempat yang ideal dalam kondisi terbaiknya dan realitas spiritual yang terbaik yaitu suatu taman kebahagiaan moral dan spiritual bagi umat Tuhan yang telah ditebus.

INTRODUCTION

The expression of “today you shall be with me in paradise” (Gr. *Ἀμήν σοι λέγω, σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ*) in Luke 23:43 had been a dispute since early Christian era. The expression which is one of the seven sayings Jesus’ utterances on the

cross¹ has been interpreted diversely by scholars. Modern biblical scholars have wrestled and debated on the phrase and have no consensus.

Most of modern biblical scholars interpret the phrase to support the views of immediate entry into paradise after death and of the immortality of the soul. Scholars such as Marshal,² Plummer,³ Darrel Bock,⁴ are among of those who favor such kind of interpretation. Matthew Henry states that Christ lets all penitent believers know that when they die they shall go to be with Jesus to paradise.⁵ In addition McGee states, “Our Lord made the remarkable statement that this thief would be in paradise with Him that very day.”⁶ Furthermore, Robertson asserts, “He promises him immediate and conscious fellowship after death with Christ in Paradise which is a Persian word and is used here not

¹There are seven Frédéric Louis Godet, Edward William Shalders and M. D. Cusin, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (New York: I. K. Funk & co., 1881), 2:332.

²I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke : A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Includes Indexes., The New international Greek testament commentary (Exeter [Eng.: Paternoster Press, 1978), 872.

³Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke* (London: T&T Clark International, 1896), 535.

⁴Darrell L. Bock, *Luke Volume 2: 9:51-24:53*, Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1996), 1857.

⁵Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible : Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991), Lk 23:32.

⁶J. Vernon McGee, vol. 37, *Thru the Bible Commentary: The Gospels (Luke)*, Based on the Thru the Bible Radio Program., electronic ed., Thru the Bible commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 287.

for any supposed intermediate state; but the very bliss of heaven itself.”¹ Darrel Bock suggests that Jesus does not speak of the unspecified future, but of the immediate present.² Thus, the view of immediate entry into paradise after death is major nowadays.

However a number of scholars refute such interpretation. They assert that the expression does not mean an idea of immediate entry into paradise after death. Some scholars such Leland Ryken³ and James Robert⁴ and Nichol⁵ argue the expression does not mean as an idea of immediate entry into paradise after death but as an assurance of salvation which Christ promised to the robber’s penitent.

The basic reasons why there are different interpretations on the passage because of the different approaches of understanding the modifying adverb *sēmeron*, “today,” which stands between two clauses. Putting comma punctuation before or after the word *sēmeron*, “today,” would give different understandings or interpretations and would give

¹A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol.V c1932, Vol.VI c1933 by Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997), Lk 23:43.

²Darrell L. Bock, *Luke Volume 2: 9:51-24:53*, Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1996), 1857.

³Leland Ryken, Jim Wilhoit, Tremper Longman et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000, c1998), 317.

⁴Robert James Dr. Utley, vol. Volume 3A, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2004), Lk 23:42.

⁵Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 5* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978; 2002), 878.

a great consequence to the meaning of the text. In addition the meaning of *paradeisos* “paradise” has been interpreted diversely. What is the meaning of the expression “today you shall be with me in paradise” in Luke 23:43? To what phrase the adverb σήμερον modifies? Does it modify the first phrase, Ἀμήν σοι λέγω (Amen I tell you) or the second phrase μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ (you will be with me)? What does the meaning of ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ (in paradise) in this verse? The answer of these questions is significance to have the clearer meaning of the expression “today you shall be with me in paradise.”

HISTORICAL SETTING

The setting of the expression refers to Jesus’ crucifixion in the first century, on 14 Nisan in 34 AD. This crucifixion was preceded by the judgment by the Sanhedrin. The Jewish high priests and elders of the Sanhedrin accused Jesus of Blasphemy and put death sentence on him. However, they could not do it by themselves because they were under Roman law. They ask the Governor of Syria, Pontius Pilate to the Roman Governor.

Jesus was crucified alongside two other men, both of whom were criminals, perhaps they were friends of Barabbas.¹ They are hung to the left and right of Jesus. The one thief imitated the mockery of the religious leaders and asked Jesus to rescue him from the

¹Andrew Knowles, *The Bible Guide*, Includes Index., 1st Augsburg books ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2001), 500.

cross.¹ He expressed a total sarcasm, using the bitter form mockery, “Are you not (οὐχί, *ouchi*) the Christ? Then save yourself and us!” On that cross Jesus had become an object of scorn and ridicule of the religious leaders, soldiers and the criminals as Barton states:

“The crowd that had gathered along with the Jewish leaders and the soldiers made fun of Jesus. They mocked his ability to save others when he could not even save himself. Three titles are used with derision: Christ of God, the Chosen One (see 9:35), and king of the Jews. Even the title on the cross written by Pilate is meant to poke fun: “This is the king of the Jews.”²

Petition of the Criminal

Only Luke tells this story of the criminals who hung beside Jesus.³ Both of thieves at first insulted Jesus; however, one of them repented and turned to Jesus for help.⁴ Regarding the changes attitude of the one of the criminal McGee states:

“During the six hours that they were on the cross, especially the last three hours, one thief saw that something unusual was taking place. He recognized that this One dying on the cross was not dying for Himself but for another. Although he knew Barabbas should be on that cross.... He was dying for *him*. He recognized

¹Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, "An Exposition of the New Testament Comprising the Entire 'BE' Series"--Jkt. (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996, c1989), Lk 23:32.

²Victor H. Prange, *Luke*, The People's Bible (Milwaukee, Wis.: Northwestern Pub. House, 1988), 250.

³Mark C. Black, *Luke*, College Press NIV commentary (Joplin, Mo.: College Press Pub., 1996), Lk 23:39.

⁴Robert James Dr. Utley, vol. Volume 3A, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2004), Lk 23:40.

that this was a transaction between God and the Man on the cross, and the Man on the cross was *God*. Then he turned to Him in faith.”¹

Understanding that he was crucified and his life only a few hours more, the criminal prays for his future when Jesus enters His Kingdom by asking a petition, “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” This petition expresses the hope that he will attain to life at the *parousia*.² His words do imply, however, a clear belief in the resurrection of the just (see Acts 24:15). Perhaps his idea of the resurrection was not so different from that of Martha (see on John 11:24).³ This prayer implies a belief in a future state in which Jesus is to receive him in His Kingdom.⁴ He means the definitive messianic kingdom that Jews expected at the end of the age.⁵

In codex Bezae the expression is more specific, ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς ἐλεύσεώς σου (“in the day of your [second] coming”). It reflects a developed interest in the eschatologi-

¹J. Vernon McGee, vol. 37, *Thru the Bible Commentary: The Gospels (Luke)*, Based on the Thru the Bible Radio Program., electronic ed., Thru the Bible commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 287.

²I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke : A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Includes Indexes., The New international Greek testament commentary (Exeter [Eng.: Paternoster Press, 1978), 870.

³Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 5* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978; 2002), 877.

⁴Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke* (London: T&T Clark International, 1896), 535.

⁵Dianne Bergant and Robert J. Karris, *The Collegeville Bible Commentary : Based on the New American Bible With Revised New Testament*, Previously Published in 36 Separate Booklets. (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1989), 977.

cal kingdom.¹ The phrase, *coming in His kingdom*, denotes His Messianic return with divine splendour and royal majesty some time after His death. He does not think of the possibility of the *body* of Jesus being raised.²

SYNTACTICAL ANALYSIS

One of the important exegetical processes is the semantic analysis and study of or use in the text in question. This is the purpose of this section. It concentrates on the usage words Ἀμήν “Amen,” σήμερον “today, λέγω “I say,” ἔσθι “you will be” and παραδεισο “paradise” in the last section.

Ἀμήν “Amen”

The word *amēn* is used six times in the book of Luke. The introductory *amēn*-formula is a substitute for the Old Testament prophetic “Thus says the Lord” without the name of God. It introduces something of special importance, or beyond expectation.³

¹Bruce Manning Metzger and United Bible Societies, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition a Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (4th Rev. Ed.)* (London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 154.

²Frédéric Louis Godet, Edward William Shalders and M. D. Cusin, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (New York: I. K. Funk & co., 1881), 2:335.

³ Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke* (London: T&T Clark International, 1896), 535.

λέγω “I say”

λέγω is a verb indicative present active 1st person singular from λέγω. The Indicative Mood is used to express information about everyday situations¹ or *presentation of certainty*.² Using this indicative verb indicates that Jesus wants to present of certainty of his utterance to the criminal. They are translated into English as either a simple or progressive present.³ Thus, the translation of λέγω is “I am saying or I say”

ἔσῃ “you will be”

ἔσῃ is a verb indicative future middle deponent 2nd person singular from εἰμί. The future tense indicate that something will take place. The portrayal is external, summarizing the action: “it will happen.” The predictive future is far and away the most common use of this tense.⁴

Syntactical Analysis of Σήμερον

Luke 23:43 has two phrases. The first is Ἀμήν σοι λέγω (Amen I tell you) or the second phrase μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ (you will be with me) with adverb *semeron* between them.

¹Fredrick J. Long, *Kairos: A Beginning Greek Grammar* (Mishawaka, IN.: Fredrick J. Long, 2005), 26.

²Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software, 1999; 2002), 448.

³Fredrick J. Long, *Kairos: A Beginning Greek Grammar* (Mishawaka, IN.: Fredrick J. Long, 2005), 27.

⁴Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software, 1999; 2002), 568.

Syntactically, the adverb *semeron* is possible to modify the first or the second phrase. Thus it is possible to translate the passage for some different translations.

Syntactically, there are three possibilities of functions of the adverb *semeron*. First, it modifies the phrase Ἀμήν σοι λέγω (Amen I tell you); second modifies the second phrase μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ (you will be with me); and third modifying both of them. The consequence of modifying the phrase could be seen the punctuation of the passage.

The possibilities of punctuation the passage are as follows: First, put a comma before the word σήμερον "today," 2) putting comma after σήμερον and 3) putting comma both before and after σήμερον. Thus the alternative of the translations of καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Ἀμήν σοι λέγω, σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ are as follows:

1. And he said to him: "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."
2. And he said to him: "Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise."
3. And he said to him: "Truly I tell you, today, you will be with me in Paradise."

According to Bullinger, in his book *A Critical lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, when an adverb *today* comes after a verb, it belongs to that verb, unless it is separated from it and thrown into the next clause by presence of *hoti*.¹

¹E.W. Bullinger, *A Critical lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 810-811.

If the formula of Bullinger is applied into Luke 23:43 (the adverb *today* comes after a verb, it belongs to that verb, unless it is separated by conjunction *hoti*), thus the the adverb “today” would modify the first phrase “I am saying to you” and putting punctuation of comma should be after the adverb “today.”

The translation of Luke 23:43 should be: “And he said to him: ‘Truly I am telling to you today, you will be with me in Paradise.’” Furthermore, Nichol states that the position of adverb *semeron* immediately following the verb *leg*, “I say,” may imply a closer grammatical relationship to it than to the verb *es*, “you will be.”¹

However because of the grammar of Greek have a very flexible word order and the earliest Greek manuscripts were uncial and therefore did not have the punctuation marks. F. Blass states that in Greek there is no specific rule concerning the position of an adverb whether before or after verb and the word order is freer by far than modern languages.² Thus, from the grammatical standpoint, it is impossible to determine exactly whether *sēmeron* in modifies the preceding phrase or the following one.

¹Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 5* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978; 2002), 878.

² F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other early Christian Literature*, trans. and ed. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 472

The Usages of *sēmeron* With *Hoti* in Luke

Further research in a broader context is needed to analyze the use of adverb *semeron*. The next section of the study will discuss the usage of adverb *semeron* in its intertextuality. The uses of the adverb “today” in Luke, other books in NT as well as book in OT will be discussed. First in this section the study presents the uses of *semeron* in Luke.

The adverb *sēmeron* occurs in the book of Luke 11 times; they are in Luke 4:21; 19:5, 9, 13:32, 33; 22:34, 61. Of the 11 times *sēmeron* occurrences, four of them appear with the conjunction *hoti* (Luke 2:11; 4:21; 19:5, 9). All of those four *sēmeron* modifies the following verb and is preceded by a conjunction *hoti*. Of the eleven occurrences of *sēmeron* in Luke four of them are used without conjunction *hoti*. All of the *sēmeron* usages in those four verses show that it modifies the following verb. It means that there is intentional use of Luke in using conjunction *hoti* to show which verb is modified by adverb *sēmeron*.

The use of *sēmeron* without *hoti* in Luke

Of the 11 times of *sēmeron* occurrences in book of Luke, seven of them appear without conjunction *hoti*, and of the seven uses of *sēmeron* without conjunction *hoti*, six of them show that it modifies the preceding verb (12:28; 13:32, 33; 22:34; 22:61 and 23:43) and only once (v. 19:5) modifies the following verb. This contrary is because of the present of conjunction *gar* “for, because” instead of *hoti*.

		And He said, "I say to you, Peter, the cock will not crow today until you have denied
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		three times that you know Me."
		And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before a cock crows today, you will deny Me three times."
		And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

The Use of *sēmeron* without *hoti* in NT

The adverb occurs 40 times in the whole NT. It has been shown that 11 of them appear in the book of Luke. It appears 8 times in Matthew, once in mark, 9 times in Acts, once time in Roman, twice in Corinthian, 7 times in Hebrew and once in James. Of the 29 uses of *sēmeron* in the whole NT.

The Meaning of *Paradeios*

In order to have a clear understanding of Luke 23:43, it is necessarily to explore its contextual background. Peter Cotterell states that the meaning of an utterance must be determined in the light of the text, the cotext, and the context. That is to say, the meaning

of an utterance cannot be determined merely by reference to the dictionary, the lexicon, the thesaurus and the grammar."¹

The term *paradise* (Gr. παράδεισος) derives from the Persian word ²and first used by the historian Xenophon³ to designate a “garden” or “park.”⁴ It is a transliteration of the Persian *pairidaēza*, meaning an “enclosure,” “park,” or “preserve” containing trees, in which animals were often kept for the hunt. The term of *paradise* introduced into Greek by Xenophon to indicate the game parks and pleasure gardens of Persian kings and nobles.⁵

¹ Peter Cotterell, “Semantic, Interpretation, and theology,” *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis (NIDOTTE)*, ed. William A. VanGere-men (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 1:136.

²Leland Ryken, Jim Wilhoit, Tremper Longman et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000, c1998), 315.

³W.E. Vine and F.F. Bruce, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan NJ: Revell, 1981; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996), 2:158.

⁴ Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, Translation of: *Exegetisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament*. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990-c1993), 3:17-18.

⁵Allen C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, Rev., Augm. Translation of: *Bijbelse Encyclopedie*. Rev. Ed. 1975. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 794.

Paradise in Old Testament

The Hebrew word for paradise is פֶּרְדֵּי, (*pardes*) and come into Hebrew as well as into Greek from the Zend Avestan.¹ It is never in the Hebrew OT applied to the Garden of Eden and appears only with profane meaning.² This secular meaning continues in Mishnaic Hebrew and in Jewish Aramaic.³ In addition there is nowhere in the OT is the word *pardēs* used in an eschatological sense.⁴

The Hebrew word *pardes* occurs three times in Hebrew OT. First in Nehemiah 2:8; second in Song of Solomon 4:13; and the third in Eccl 2:5. In the book of Nehemiah, the word *pardes* is translated by most English Bible “a forest”⁵ and used to describe a

¹R. Laird Harris, Robert Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999, c1980), 733.

²Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Map on Lining Papers. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1614.

³David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996, c1992), 5:154.

⁴Charles F. Pfeiffer, Howard Frederic Vos and John Rea, *The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia* (Moody Press, 1975; 2005).

⁵English bible versions such as; KJV, ASV, NAV, NASB, NLT translates the *pardes* “a forest,” meanwhile NIV translates “a royal park.”

royal woodland or a park with fruit.¹ The context clearly indicates that it here refers to the royal domain or estates.²

In Song of Songs 4:13, paradise is portrayed as a garden of love where the sensory pleasures of the place mirror the pleasure the couple finds in their mutual love.³ Jamieson states that this is an expression a pleasure-ground and orchard not only flowers, but fruit trees⁴ and Nichol asserts that it is a symbolic expression of an enclosed garden King Solomon proposes marriage.⁵

In Eccl 2:5, the word *pardes* is used to signifies a place *full of delights*. How well Solomon was qualified to form *gardens, orchards, vineyards, conservatories*, etc.⁶ King

¹John Barton and John Muddiman, *Oxford Bible Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), Ne 2:1.

²H. G. M. Willamson, vol. 16, *Word Biblical Commentary : Ezra-Nehemiah*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 181.

³Leland Ryken, Jim Wilhoit, Tremper Longman et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000, c1998), 317.

⁴Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset et al., *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*, On Spine: Critical and Explanatory Commentary. (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), So 4:13.

⁵Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible With Exegetical and Expository Comment.*, Commentary Reference Series (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978), So 4:12.

⁶Adam Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary: Ecclesiastes*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Clarke's Commentaries (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999), Ec 2:5.

Solomon built for himself luxurious houses, planted vineyards¹ and were added by garden and park.²

Paradise in the Septuagint

In the LXX παράδεισος occurs 42 times in six forms.³ The LXX used *parádeisos* seven times (3 in Isaiah; 4 in Ezekiel) to refer to a garden of God.⁴ The Garden of Eden became “the paradise of pleasure or luxury” (Genesis 2:15; 3:23; Joel 2:3).

When the Old Testament was translated into Greek, the garden of Genesis 2 became *paradeisos*.⁵ In addition, they also translates four Hebrew words (*pard s, gan,*

¹William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Ec 2:4.

²George A. Barton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ecclesiastes*. (New York: Scribner, 1908), 80.

³David Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers and Astrid B. Beck, *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1008. "This outstanding source is the place to find definitions, personal names and their derivation, places, and concepts from the Bible. Six hundred leading scholars from a wide spectrum of theological perspectives have come together to provide almost 5,000 articles that reflect current biblical scholarship, archaeological discoveries, trends, and issues. A must for every library."--"Outstanding Reference Sources," *American Libraries*, May 2002.

⁴Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988; 2002), 3:660-661.

⁵Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Map on Lining Papers. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1614.

ganā, pēn) into *parádeisos*¹. Thus, the garden of Eden became increasingly identified in the Jewish mind with *parádeisos* and the valley of the Jordan became 'the paradise of God' (Genesis 13:10).²

There is a shifting meaning of paradise from secular to religious meaning in this era. This religious meaning comes Jewish thought and vocabulary after the Babylonian Exile.³ This development was aided by the image of a special garden, Eden, free of any trouble or inconvenience, in which the human and divine were close and collegial, in which every tree was "pleasant to the sight and good for food" (Gen 2:8), and from which flowed four rivers (Gen 2:10–14).⁴

Paradise in the Apocrypha

In the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature the word is extensively used in a spiritual and symbolic sense, signaling the place of happiness to be inherited by the righteous.⁵ In this literature, Elwell confirms that the Jews came to believe that paradise

¹Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988; 2002), 3:660-661.

²James Orr, M.A., D.D., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia : 1915 Edition*, ed. James Orr (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999).

³David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996, c1992), 5:154.

⁴Ibid.

⁵James Orr, M.A., D.D., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia : 1915 Edition*, ed. James Orr (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1999).

existed in some undiscoverable place and it was inhabited by the deserving dead.¹ Salmond states that the apocryphal books associate paradise with *Gehenna* closely.²

Paradise in Intertestament

The intertestamental literature completes the transition of the word to a religious term. Human history will culminate in a divine paradise.³ By the third century B.C., it came to mean any park or garden.⁴ In writings of the intertestamental period, paradise is a future lush garden of Eden (2 Enoch 8).⁵ Greek historians such as Xenophon and Diodorus mention local parks under the care of officials of the Persian government.⁶

¹ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Map on Lining Papers. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1615.

² G.R. Lewis, *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), 598.

³ Walter A. Elwell and Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, electronic ed., Baker reference library; Logos Library System (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997, c1996).

⁴ Allen C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, Rev., Augm. Translation of: *Bijbelse Encyclopedie*. Rev. Ed. 1975. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 794.

⁵ Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988; 2002), 3:661.

⁶ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary : Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Ne 2:8.

By the 2nd century B.C.E. resurrection became a hope for certain Jewish groups, longing for a future home free from earthly troubles, and belief in a paradise which would become their abode — whether temporary or permanent — gained popularity.

Bromiley affirms that *Parádeisos* developed into a specific eschatological concept in the Jewish intertestamental writings, especially in the apocalyptic literature. The starting point for all Jewish thinking about paradise, under the influence of the LXX, was the garden of Eden.¹

By the end of the 1st century C.E. the term is used for both the garden of Eden of Genesis and the final dwelling place of the righteous dead (2 Esdras).² Moreover Stein states that in the intertestamental literature the expression of paradise is used more and more to describe the final abode of the righteous.³

Paradise in New Testament

In New Testament παράδεισος occurs 3 times. The first in Luke 23:43; the second in 2 Cor 12:4; and the third Rev 2:7. In Luke 23:43, Jesus promises to the penitent thief that he would be in paradise.

¹Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988; 2002), 3:661.

²David Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers and Astrid B. Beck, *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1008.

³Robert H. Stein, vol. 24, *Luke*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001, c1992), 593.

In 2 Cor 12:4, Paul describes that he was “caught up” to paradise “the third heaven” but he does not know whether in or out of the body. The place as an actual but otherworldly reality was once mysteriously during his lifetime.¹ He probably speaks “paradise” is obviously synonymous with “heaven.” The fact that Paul refers to no earthly “paradise” is doubly clear from the fact he equates being “caught up” to “heaven” with being “caught up” to paradise.² According to Nichol the third heaven is the abode of God and heavenly beings.³

The third and last of the New Testament reference of paradise appears in the promise to the church of Ephesus (Rev 2:7). This verse tells God’s promises to the victors that He would give the tree of life. The tree of life itself grows by the river, the encircle wall and the presence of the King.⁴ Elwell states that the overcoming church will eat from the tree of life in the eschatological garden.⁵ In addition Nichol states the original *para-*

¹Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Map on Lining Papers. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1615.

²Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 5* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978; 2002), 877.

³Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible With Exegetical and Expository Comment.*, Commentary Reference Series (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978), 2 Co 12:3.

⁴Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Map on Lining Papers. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1615.

⁵Walter A. Elwell and Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, electronic ed., Baker reference library; Logos Library System (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997, c1996).

dise with the tree of life (Gen 2:9; 3:3) will return in the eschaton. Regarding the paradise in Revelation, Pfeiffer describes as follows:

A new paradise for the redeemed sinner appears in the last book of the Bible (Rev 2:7; *cf.* 22:2). In his final vision of the future eternal state John saw “a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Rev 22:1–2).¹

Robert H. Stein states that in the in the NT (2 Cor 12:4; Rev 2:7) the expression of paradise is used more and more to describe the final abode of the righteous. The criminal would experience salvation. He would not “today” experience the resurrection, for the resurrection of the dead will only occur at the *parousia*.²

From those three New Testament passages above, all of them are associated with heavenly experience as John MacArthur affirms that all 3 NT uses paradise speaks of heaven.³ Furthermore Nichol asserts, “There can be no doubt whatever that NT usage of *paradeisos* consistently makes it synonymous with “heaven.”⁴ Moreover Charles Hodge

¹Charles F. Pfeiffer, Howard Frederic Vos and John Rea, *The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia* (Moody Press, 1975; 2005).

²Robert H. Stein, vol. 24, *Luke*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001, c1992), 593.

³John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997), Lk 23:43.

⁴Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 5* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978; 2002), 877.

concludes, “There can, therefore, be no doubt that paradise is heaven”¹ and the heaven or the presence of God with the tree of life links the NT “paradise” with the OT Garden of Eden.²

MSS B AND SOME EARLY TRANSLATION

Manuscript Vaticanus

Robertson states that some of the oldest N. T. MSS, shows these marks to some extent. B has the higher point as a period, the lower point for a shorter pause.³ This is the case, where in Vaticanus Manuscript has a lower point after *semeron* in Luke 23:43.⁴

Curatonian Syriac

In the Curetonian Syriac, one of the earliest NT translations, employs the adverb “today” as modifier of the preceding verb. Many scholars believe the text itself to be as

¹ C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, III (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library), 727

² Siegfried H. Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary*, Revised edition., Commentary Reference Series (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1979).

³ A.T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Logos, 1919; 2006), 242.

⁴ This lower point could be seen in Vaticanus manuscript in Bible work 9 program.

old as the 2nd century.¹ This manuscript translates Luke 23:43 by joining σήμερον, not with μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσθι, but with Ἀμὴν σοι λέγω (“Truly I say to you today that with me you will be ...”).²

Hymn of Ephraem the Syrian

The translation which put comma is found also in works of Ephraem the Syrian, a Christian writer of the fourth century. In book Hymn on paradise, he quotes Luke 23:43, “I say to you today that with me you will be in paradise.”³ Here St. Ephrem refers to the thief’s story by saying that his soul could not enter Paradise without the body because the righteous cannot, in fact, enter Paradise until the final resurrection. He is quite clear in his mind that soul cannot enter paradise without body and so the righteous the righteous cannot in fact enter paradise until final resurrection.⁴

¹ Burkitt, F. C., *The Curetonian Syriac Gospels*, Vol. I, (Cambridge, UK: University Press, 1904).

² Bruce Manning Metzger and United Bible Societies, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition a Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (4th Rev. Ed.)* (London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 155.

³ St Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymn on Paradise*, Hymn VIII. 11. trans. Sebastian Brook (Cresswood, NY: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 1990), 131.

⁴ Ibid.

Theophylact of Ohrid

Putting comma punctuation after *sēmeron* in the work of Theophylact of Ohrid (ca. 1050/60-ca. 1108) was one of the most famous Byzantine biblical scholars and exegete. He put punctuation mark after “today.”¹

Novum Testamentum Graece

It is found also in the work of Tischendorf who put the comma after *semeron*. Thus the translation : “I tell you today, that I should have you in Paradise with me.”²

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study shows that since early Greek manuscripts had no punctuation, merely from the Greek grammatical and syntactical construction of the sentence, it is impossible

¹ The text is found in could be found in *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 123.
<http://books.google.com.ph/books?id=7L4UAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

² Text found in *Novum Testamentum Graece*, editio octava critica maior, by C. Tischendorf, Vol. I, Leipzig, 1869.
<http://www.archive.org/stream/novumtestamentu01greggoog#page/n598/mode/2up>.

to determine whether the adverb σήμερον “today” modifies Ἀμήν σοι λέγω “Verily, I am saying to you” or μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ “you will be with me.”

However, contextually shows that reading the adverb in Luke 23:43 in connection to the preceding verb, is not only fully acceptable in terms of grammar but is also in complete agreement with Luke’s literary style because of tendency of using adverb *sēmeron* with the preceding verb in Luke. The book of Luke shows this tendency by using or not using the conjunction *hoti*. In addition, intertextuality study of adverb *sēmeron* shows that most.

Furthermore, the meaning of *paradise* in Luke 23:43 shows that it is a heavenly place where God abode. This paradise refers to the future dwelling place of God’s people. It is an image of the ideal place at its best and spiritual reality at its best. It is a garden of bliss is a moral and spiritual for the redeemed people of God. Jesus Christ gave answer to the penitent of the criminal as he was asking Jesus to remember him in His future kingdom.

Since paradise refers to heavenly place where God abode as the study shows, and Jesus’ does not ascent to heaven few days after His resurrection, as He says to Mary: “Be not touching Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father” (Joh 20:17). Contextually shows that the criminal does not go to paradise on the day of Jesus’ crucifixion, but rather a promise of assurance that in the future, in Jesus second coming, the criminal will be with Jesus together with all redeemed people of God. This description agrees with the commentary of Bullinger:

“The words *today* being made solemn and emphatic. Thus instead of a *remembrance*, when he shall come in His kingdom, He promises a presence then in association (meta) with himself. And this promise He makes on that very day when He was dying.”¹

The narrative of the criminal’s penitent and the answer of Jesus Christ on the cross shows a most important event in human history, it opens to all mankind the prospect of gaining everlasting life in Paradise. The answer of Jesus shows the greatness love of God that whoever can be saved by faith. God gives unlimited mercy to all those who regret their sinful life and it is never too late to turn to Christ.

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¹ E.W. Bullinger, *A Critical lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 811.

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