

~PARADISE (1050)

[Hebrew, *par'des*´, Greek, *pa-ra'dei-sos*, Persian, *pairidaeza*]

· The Paradise That Jesus Promised To The Evildoer

· A Spiritual Paradise

· Eating In The Paradise Of God

- A beautiful park, or a parklike garden. The Greek word *pa-ra'dei-sos* occurs three times in the Christian Greek Scriptures.
- And he said to him; Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in **Paradise**. (Luke 23:43)
- That he was caught away into **paradise** and heard unutterable words which it is not lawful for a man to speak. (2 Corinthians 12:4)
- Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations; To him that conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the **paradise** of God. (Revelation 2:7)
- Greek writers as far back as Xenophon, circa 431-352 B.C.E, used the word *pairidaeza*, and Pollux attributed it to Persian sources. [Cyropaedia, I, iii, 14] [Anabasis, I, ii, 7] [Onomasticon, IX]
- Some lexicographers would derive the Hebrew word *par'des*´, meaning, basically, a park from the same source. But since Solomon, of the 11th Century B.C.E, used *par'des*´ in his writings, whereas existing Persian writings go back only to about the Sixth Century B.C.E, such derivation of the Hebrew term is only conjectural.
- I made gardens and **parks** for myself, and I planted in them fruit trees of all sorts. (Ecclesiastes 2:5)
- Your skin is a **paradise** of pomegranates, with the choicest fruits, henna plants along with spikenard plants. (Song of Solomon 4:13)
- The remaining use of *par'des*´ is at;
- Also a letter to Asaph the keeper of the park that belongs to the king, that he may give me trees to build with timber the gates of the Castle that belongs to the house, and for the wall of the city

and for the house into which I am to enter. So the king gave them to me, according to the good hand of my God upon me. (Nehemiah 2:8)

- Where reference is made to a royal wooded park of Persian King Artaxerxes Longimanus, in the Fifth Century B.C.E.

See Also PARK

- The three terms, Hebrew *par'des*, Persian *pairidaeza*, and Greek *pa'ra dei'sos*, however, all convey the basic idea of a beautiful park or parklike garden. The first such park was that made by man's Creator, Jehovah God, in Eden.
- Further, Yehowah God planted a garden in Eden, toward the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. (Genesis 2:8)
- Thus Yehowah God made to grow out of the ground every tree desirable to ones sight and good for food and also the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and bad. (Genesis 2:9)
- And Yehowah God proceeded to take the man and settle him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to take care of it. (Genesis 2:15)
- It is called a *gan*, or garden, in Hebrew, but was obviously parklike in size and nature. The Greek Septuagint appropriately uses the term *pa'ra dei'sos* with reference to that garden.

**See Also EDEN 1,
See Also GARDEN (Garden of Eden)**

- Because of sin, Adam lost his right to live in that paradise and his opportunity to gain the right to everlasting life, which right was represented in the fruit of a divinely designated tree in the center of the garden. The garden of Eden may have been enclosed in some way, since it was necessary to place angelic guards only at the east side thereof to prevent human entrance.
- And Yehowah God went on to say; Here the man has become like one of us in knowing good and bad, and now in order, that he may not put his hand out and actually take fruit also from the tree of life and eat and live to time indefinite. (Genesis 3:22)

- With that Yehowah God put him out of the **garden** of Eden to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken. (**Genesis 3:23**)
- And so he drove the man out and posted at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubs and the flaming blade of a sword that was turning itself continually to guard the way to the tree of life. (**Genesis 3:24**)

• The Paradise That Jesus Promised To The Evildoer

- Luke's account shows that an evildoer, being executed alongside Jesus Christ, spoke words in Jesus defense and requested that Jesus remember him when he got into his kingdom. Jesus reply was:
 - But one of the hung evildoers began to say abusively to him; You are the Christ, are you not? Save yourself and us. (**Luke 23:39**)
 - In reply the other rebuked him and said; Do you not fear God at all, now that you are in the same judgment? (**Luke 23:40**)
 - And we, indeed, justly so, for we are receiving in full what we deserve for things we did, but this man did nothing out of the way. (**Luke 23:41**)
 - And he went on to say; Jesus, remember me when you get into your kingdom. (**Luke 23:42**)
 - And he said to him; Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise. (**Luke 23:43**)
- The punctuation shown in the rendering of these words must, of course, depend on the translators understanding of the sense of Jesus words, since no punctuation was used in the original Greek text. Punctuation in the modern style did not become common until about the **Ninth Century C.E.**
- Whereas many translations place a comma before the word **today** and thereby give the impression that the evildoer entered Paradise that same day, there is nothing in the rest of the Scriptures to support this. Jesus himself was dead and in the tomb **until the third day** and was then resurrected as the firstfruits of the resurrection.

- God raised this One up on the third day and granted him to become manifest. (**Acts of Apostles 10:40**)
- However, now Christ has been raised up from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep in death. (**1 Corinthians 15:20**)
- And he is the head of the body, the congregation. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that he might become the one who is first in all things. (**Colossians 1:18**)
- He ascended to heaven 40 days later.
- Jesus said to her; Stop clinging to me. For I have not yet ascended to the Father. But be on your way to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father and to my God and your God. (**John 20:17**)
- The first account, O Theophilus, I composed about all the things Jesus started both to do and to teach. (**Acts of Apostles 1:1**)
- Until the day that he was taken up, after he had given commandment through Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he chose. (**Acts of Apostles 1:2**)
- To these also by many positive proofs he showed himself alive after he had suffered, being seen by them throughout forty days and telling the things about the kingdom of God. (**Acts of Apostles 1:3**)
- And after he had said these things, while they were looking on, he was lifted up and a cloud caught him up from their vision. (**Acts of Apostles 1:9**)
- The evidence is, therefore, that Jesus use of the word today was not to give the time of the evildoers being in **Paradise** but, rather, to call attention to the time in which the promise was being made and during which the evildoer had shown a measure of faith in Jesus.
- It was a day when Jesus had been rejected and condemned by the highest-ranking religious leaders of his own people and was thereafter sentenced to die by Roman authority. He had become an object of scorn and ridicule. So the wrongdoer alongside him had shown a notable quality and commendable heart attitude in not going

along with the crowd but, rather, speaking out in Jesus behalf and expressing belief in his coming Kingship.

- Recognizing that the emphasis is correctly placed on the time of the promises being made rather than on the time of its fulfillment, other translations, such as those in English by **Rotherham and Lamsa**, those in German by **Reinhardt and W. Michaelis**, as well as the **Curetonian Syriac** of the **Fifth Century C.E.**, rendered the text in a form similar to the reading of the **New World Translation**, quoted herein.

- As to the identification of the **Paradise** of which Jesus spoke, it is clearly not synonymous with the heavenly Kingdom of Christ. Earlier that day entry into that heavenly Kingdom had been held out as a prospect for Jesus faithful disciples but on the basis of their having stuck with him in his trials, something the evildoer had never done, his dying on a stake alongside Jesus being purely for his own criminal acts.

- However, you are the ones that have stuck with me in my trials. (**Luke 22:28**)

- And I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom. (**Luke 22:29**)

- That you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. (**Luke 22:30**)

- In reply the other rebuked him and said; Do you not fear God at all, now that you are in the same judgment? (**Luke 23:40**)

- And we, indeed, justly so, for we are receiving in full what we deserve for things we did, but this man did nothing out of the way. (**Luke 23:41**)

- The evildoer obviously had not been **born again**, of water and spirit, which Jesus showed was a prerequisite to entry into the Kingdom of the heavens.

- Nor would it ever be possible for him to become such, for the first ones were born again at Pentecost fifty days after he died. Once he was resurrected in the general resurrection of all mankind this select group of Christians would be closed.

- In answer Jesus said to him; Most truly I say to you, unless anyone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (**John**

3:3)

- **Nicodemus said to him; How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter into the womb of his mother a second time and be born, can he? (John 3:4)**
- **Jesus answered; Most truly I say to you, Unless anyone is born from water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)**
- **What has been born from the flesh is flesh, and what has been born from the spirit is spirit. (John 3:6)**
- **Nor was the evildoer one of the conquerors that the glorified Christ Jesus stated would be with him on his heavenly throne and that have a share in the first resurrection.**
- **I am coming quickly. Keep on holding fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. (Revelation 3:11)**
- **The one that conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will by no means go out from it anymore, and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which descends out of heaven from my God, and that new name of mine. (Revelation 3:12)**
- **To the one that conquers I will grant to sit down with me on my throne, even as I conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. (Revelation 3:21)**
- **And I heard a loud voice in heaven say; Now have come to pass the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been hurled down, who accuses them day and night before our God! (Revelation 12:10)**
- **And they conquered him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their witnessing, and they did not love their souls even in the face of death. (Revelation 12:11)**
- **And I saw, and, look! The Lamb standing upon the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. (Revelation 14:1)**

- **And I heard a sound out of heaven as the sound of many waters and as the sound of loud thunder, and the sound that I heard was as of singers who accompany themselves on the harp playing on their harps. (Revelation 14:2)**
- **And they are singing as if a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders, and no one was able to master that song but the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been bought from the earth. (Revelation 14:3)**
- **These are the ones that did not defile themselves with women, in fact, they are virgins. These are the ones that keep following the Lamb no matter where he goes. These were bought from among mankind as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. (Revelation 14:4)**
- **And I saw thrones, and there were those who sat down on them, and power of judging was given them. Yes, I saw the souls of those executed with the ax for the witness they bore to Jesus and for speaking about God, and those who had worshiped neither the wild beast nor its image and who had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand. And they came to life and ruled as kings with the Christ for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4)**
- **The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. (Revelation 20:5)**
- **Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection, over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years. (Revelation 20:6)**
- **Some reference works present the view that Jesus was referring to a paradise location in Hades or Sheol, supposedly a compartment or division thereof for those approved by God. The claim is made that the Jewish rabbis of that time taught the existence of such a paradise for those who had died and were awaiting a resurrection.**
- **Regarding the teachings of the rabbis, *Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible* states: *The Rabbinical theology as it has come down to us exhibits an extraordinary medley of ideas on these questions, and in the case of***

many of them it is difficult to determine the dates to which they should be assigned.

- Taking the literature as it is, it might appear that Paradise was regarded by some as on earth itself, by others as forming part of Sheol, by others still as neither on earth nor under earth, but in heaven. But there is some doubt as respects, at least, part of this.

- These various conceptions are found indeed in later Judaism. They appear most precisely and most in detail in the mediaeval Cabbalistic Judaism. But it is uncertain how far back these things can be carried.

- The older Jewish theology at least seems to give little or no place to the idea of an intermediate Paradise. It speaks of a *Gehinnom* for the wicked, and a *Gan, Eden*, or garden of Eden, for the just. It is questionable whether it goes beyond these conceptions and affirms a Paradise in Sheol. [1905, Vol. III, pp. 669, 670]

- Even if they did teach such a thing, it would be most unreasonable to believe that Jesus would propagate such a concept, in view of his condemnation of the non-Biblical religious traditions of the Jewish religious leaders.

- In reply he said to them; Why is it you also overstep the commandment of God because of your tradition? (**Matthew 15:3**)

- For example, God said; Honor your father and your mother, and, Let him that reviles father or mother end up in death. (**Matthew 15:4**)

- But you say; Whoever says to his father or mother; Whatever I have by which you might get benefit from me is a gift dedicated to God. (**Matthew 15:5**)

- He must not honor his father at all. And so you have made the word of God invalid because of your tradition. (**Matthew 15:6**)

- You hypocrites, Isaiah aptly prophesied about you, when he said; (**Matthew 15:7**)

- This people honors me with their lips, yet their heart is far removed from me. (**Matthew 15:8**)

- It is in vain that they keep worshiping me, because they teach commands of men as doctrines. ([Matthew 15:9](#))
- Likely the paradise truly familiar to the Jewish malefactor to whom Jesus spoke was the earthly Paradise described in the first book of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Paradise of Eden. That being so, Jesus promise would reasonably point to a restoration of such earthly paradisaic condition. His promise to the wrongdoer would therefore give assured hope of a resurrection of such an unrighteous one to an opportunity to life in that restored Paradise.
- And I have hope toward God, which hope these men themselves also entertain, that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous. ([Acts of Apostles 24:15](#))
- And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. But another scroll was opened, it is the scroll of life. And the dead were judged out of those things written in the scrolls according to their deeds. ([Revelation 20:12](#))
- And the sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades gave up those dead in them, and they were judged individually according to their deeds. ([Revelation 20:13](#))
- And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea is no more. ([Revelation 21:1](#))
- I saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ([Revelation 21:2](#))
- With that I heard a loud voice from the throne say; Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. ([Revelation 21:3](#))
- And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away. ([Revelation 21:4](#))
- And the One seated on the throne said; Look! I am making all things new. Also, he says; Write, because these words are

faithful and true. ([Revelation 21:5](#))

- Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth. ([Matthew 6:10](#))

· A Spiritual Paradise

- Throughout many of the prophetic books of the Bible, divine promises are found regarding the restoration of Israel from the lands of its exile to its desolated homeland. God would cause that abandoned land to be tilled and sown, to produce richly, and to abound with humankind and animalkind, the cities would be rebuilt and inhabited, and people would say,
- Therefore prophesy concerning the soil of Israel, and you must say to the mountains and to the hills, to the streambeds and to the valleys; This is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; Look! I myself in my zeal and in my rage must speak, for the reason that humiliation by nations is what you have borne. ([Ezekiel 36:6](#))
- Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; I myself have raised my hand in an oath that the nations that you have round about, they themselves will bear their own humiliation. ([Ezekiel 36:7](#))
- And you yourselves, O mountains of Israel, will give forth your very own boughs and bear your own fruitage for my people Israel, for they have drawn near to the point of coming in. ([Ezekiel 36:8](#))
- For here I am in favor of you, and I shall certainly turn toward you, and you will actually be cultivated and sown with seed. ([Ezekiel 36:9](#))
- And I will multiply upon you humankind, the whole house of Israel, all of it, and the cities must become inhabited, and the devastated places themselves will be rebuilt. ([Ezekiel 36:10](#))
- Yes, I will multiply upon you humankind and animalkind, and they will certainly multiply and become fruitful, and I shall actually cause you to be inhabited as in your former condition and I will do more good than in your initial state, and you will have to know that I am Yehowah. ([Ezekiel 36:11](#))

- **And I will save you from all your impurities and call to the grain and make it abound, and I shall put upon you no famine. (Ezekiel 36:29)**
- **And I shall certainly make the fruitage of the tree abound, and the produce of the field, in order, that you may no more receive among the nations the reproach of famine. (Ezekiel 36:30)**
- **This is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; In the day of my cleansing you from all your errors I will also cause the cities to be inhabited, and the devastated places must be rebuilt. (Ezekiel 36:33)**
- **And the desolated land itself will be cultivated, whereas it had become a desolate waste before the eyes of every passerby. (Ezekiel 36:34)**
- **And people will certainly say; That land yonder which was laid desolate has become like the **garden** of Eden, and the cities that were a waste and that were laid desolate and that were torn down are fortified, they have become inhabited. (Ezekiel 36:35)**
- **For Yehowah will certainly comfort Zion. He will for certain comfort all her devastated places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert plain like the garden of Yehowah. Exultation and rejoicing themselves will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. (Isaiah 51:3)**
- **Hear the word of Yehowah, O you nations, and tell it among the islands far away, and say; The One scattering Israel will himself collect him together, and he will certainly keep him as a shepherd does his drove. (Jeremiah 31:10)**
- **For Yehowah will actually redeem Jacob and reclaim him out of the hand of the one stronger than he is. (Jeremiah 31:11)**
- **And they will certainly come and cry out joyfully on the height of Zion and become radiant over the goodness of Yehowah, over the grain and over the new wine and over the oil and over the young ones of the flock and the cattle. And their soul will simply become like a well-watered garden, and no more will they languish again. (Jeremiah 31:12)**

- **And I will conclude with them a covenant of peace, and I shall certainly cause the injurious wild beast to cease out of the land, and they will actually dwell in the wilderness in security and sleep in the forests. (Ezekiel 34:25)**
- **And I will make them and the surroundings of my hill a blessing, and I will cause the pouring rain to descend in its time. Pouring rains of blessing there will prove to be. (Ezekiel 34:26)**
- **And the tree of the field must give its fruitage, and the land itself will give its yield, and they will actually prove to be on their soil in security. And they will have to know that I am Yehowah when I break the bars of their yoke and I have delivered them out of the hand of those who had been using them as slaves. (Ezekiel 34:27)**
- **However, these prophecies also show that paradise conditions related to the people themselves, who, by faithfulness to God, could now sprout and flourish as trees of righteousness, enjoying beautiful spiritual prosperity like a well-watered garden, showered by bounteous blessings from God because of having his favor.**
- **And Yehowah will be bound to lead you constantly and to satisfy your soul even in a scorched land, and he will invigorate your very bones, and you must become like a well-watered garden, and like the source of water, the waters of which do not lie. (Isaiah 58:11)**
- **To assign to those mourning over Zion, to give them a headdress instead of ashes, the oil of exultation instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of the downhearted spirit, and they must be called big trees of righteousness, the planting of Yehowah, for him to be beautified. (Isaiah 61:3)**
- **For as the earth itself brings forth its sprout, and as the garden itself makes the things that are sown in it sprout, in like manner the Sovereign Lord Yehowah will cause the sprouting of righteousness and of praise in front of all the nations. (Isaiah 61:11)**
- **And they will certainly come and cry out joyfully on the height of Zion and become radiant over the goodness of Yehowah, over the grain and over the new wine and over the oil and over the young ones of the flock and the cattle. And their soul will simply**

become like a well-watered garden, and no more will they languish again. (**Jeremiah 31:12**)

- And I will exult over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land in trueness with all my heart and with all my soul. (**Jeremiah 32:41**)
- And he will certainly become like a tree planted by streams of water, that gives its own fruit in its season and the foliage of which does not wither, and everything he does will succeed. (**Psalms 1:3**)
- Let the mountains carry peace to the people, also the hills, through righteousness. (**Psalms 72:3**)
- He will descend like the rain upon the mown grass, like copious showers that wet the earth. (**Psalms 72:6**)
- In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more. (**Psalms 72:7**)
- And he will have subjects from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. (**Psalms 72:8**)
- There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth, on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow. His fruit will be as in Lebanon, and those who are from the city will blossom like the vegetation of the earth. (**Psalms 72:16**)
- As for loving-kindness and trueness, they have met each other, righteousness and peace, they have kissed each other. (**Psalms 85:10**)
- Trueness itself will sprout out of the very earth, and righteousness itself will look down from the very heavens. (**Psalms 85:11**)
- Also, Yehowah, for his part, will give what is good, and our own land will give its yield. (**Psalms 85:12**)
- Before him righteousness itself will walk, and it will make a way by his steppings. (**Psalms 85:13**)
- For I shall pour out water upon the thirsty one, and trickling

- streams upon the dry place. I shall pour out my spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your descendants. ([Isaiah 44:3](#))
- And they will certainly spring up as among the green grass, like poplars by the water ditches. ([Isaiah 44:4](#))
 - The people of Israel had been God's vineyard, his planting, but their badness and apostasy from true worship had caused a figurative withering away of their spiritual field, even before the literal desolation of their land took place.
 - You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of your inheritance; An established place that you have made ready for you to inhabit, O Yehowah, a sanctuary, O Yehowah, that your hands have established. ([Exodus 15:17](#))
 - Let me sing, please, to my beloved one a song of my loved one concerning his vineyard. There was a vineyard that my beloved one came to have on a fruitful hillside. ([Isaiah 5:1](#))
 - And he proceeded to dig it up and to rid it of stones and to plant it with a choice red vine, and to build a tower in the middle of it. And there was also a winepress that he hewed out in it. And he kept hoping for it to produce grapes, but it gradually produced wild grapes. ([Isaiah 5:2](#))
 - And now, O you inhabitants of Jerusalem and you men of Judah, please judge between me and my vineyard. ([Isaiah 5:3](#))
 - What is there yet to do for my vineyard that I have not already done in it? Why is it that I hoped for it to produce grapes, but it gradually produced wild grapes? ([Isaiah 5:4](#))
 - And now, please, may I make known to you men what I am doing to my vineyard. There will be a removing of its hedge, and it must be destined for burning down. There must be a breaking down of its stone wall, and it must be destined for a place of trampling. ([Isaiah 5:5](#))
 - And I shall set it as a thing destroyed. It will not be pruned, nor will it be hoed. And it must come up with the thornbush and weeds, and upon the clouds I shall lay a command to keep from precipitating any rain upon it. ([Isaiah 5:6](#))

- For the vineyard of Yehowah of armies is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the plantation of which he was fond. And he kept hoping for judgment, but, look! The breaking of Law, for righteousness, but, look! An outcry. (**Isaiah 5:7**)
- Woe to the ones joining house to house, and those who annex field to field until there is no more room and you men have been made to dwell all by yourselves in the midst of the land! (**Isaiah 5:8**)
- And as for me, I had planted you as a choice red vine, all of it a true seed. So how have you been changed toward me into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine? (**Jeremiah 2:21**)
- This undoubtedly provides the key for understanding Paul's description of the vision, evidently had by him, since it forms part of his defense of his own apostleship referred to at;
- I have to boast. It is not beneficial, but I shall pass on to supernatural visions and revelations of the Lord. (**2 Corinthians 12:1**)
- I know a man in union with Christ who, fourteen years ago, whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows, was caught away as such to the third heaven. (**2 Corinthians 12:2**)
- Yes, I know such a man, whether in the body or apart from the body, I do not know, God knows. (**2 Corinthians 12:3**)
- That he was caught away into **paradise** and heard unutterable words which it is not lawful for a man to speak. (**2 Corinthians 12:4**)
- Over such a man I will boast, but I will not boast over myself, except as respects my weaknesses. (**2 Corinthians 12:5**)
- For if I ever do want to boast, I shall not be unreasonable, for I shall say the truth. But I abstain, in order, that no one should put to my credit more than what he sees I am or he hears from me. (**2 Corinthians 12:6**)
- Just because of the excess of the revelations. Therefore, that I might not feel overly exalted, there was given me a thorn in the

flesh, an angel of Satan, to keep slapping me, that I might not be overly exalted. ([2 Corinthians 12:7](#))

- Caught away to **the third heaven**, the vision viewer entered **paradise** and heard unutterable words. That this **paradise** envisioned could refer to a spiritual state among God's people, as in the case of fleshly Israel, can be seen from the fact that the Christian congregation was also God's field under cultivation, his spiritual vineyard, rooted in Christ Jesus and bearing fruit to God's praise.

See Also HEAVEN (Third Heaven)

- For we are God's fellow workers. You people are God's field under cultivation, God's building. ([1 Corinthians 3:9](#))
- I am the true vine, and my Father is the cultivator. ([John 15:1](#))
- Every branch in me not bearing fruit he takes away, and every one bearing fruit he cleans, that it may bear more fruit. ([John 15:2](#))
- You are already clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ([John 15:3](#))
- Remain in union with me, and I in union with you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remains in the vine, in the same way neither can you, unless you remain in union with me. ([John 15:4](#))
- I am the vine, you are the branches. He that remains in union with me, and I in union with him, this one bears much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing at all. ([John 15:5](#))
- If anyone does not remain in union with me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up, and men gather those branches up and pitch them into the fire and they are burned. ([John 15:6](#))
- If you remain in union with me and my sayings remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will take place for you. ([John 15:7](#))
- My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples. ([John 15:8](#))
- As such it had replaced the nation of Israel in God's favor.

- Hear another illustration; There was a man, a householder, who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and erected a tower, and let it out to cultivators, and traveled abroad. ([Matthew 21:33](#))
- When the season of the fruits came around, he dispatched his slaves to the cultivators to get his fruits. ([Matthew 21:34](#))
- However, the cultivators took his slaves, and one they beat up, another they killed, another they stoned. ([Matthew 21:35](#))
- Again he dispatched other slaves, more than the first, but they did the same to these. ([Matthew 21:36](#))
- Lastly he dispatched his son to them, saying; They will respect my son. ([Matthew 21:37](#))
- On seeing the son the cultivators said among themselves, this is the heir. Come, let us kill him and get his inheritance! ([Matthew 21:38](#))
- So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. ([Matthew 21:39](#))
- Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those cultivators? ([Matthew 21:40](#))
- They said to him; Because they are evil, he will bring an evil destruction upon them and will let out the vineyard to other cultivators, who will render him the fruits when they become due. ([Matthew 21:41](#))
- Jesus said to them; Did you never read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected is the one that has become the chief cornerstone. From Yehowah this has come to be, and it is marvelous in our eyes? ([Matthew 21:42](#))
- This is why I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits. ([Matthew 21:43](#))
- Paul's vision, nevertheless, must logically have applied to some future time, so as to constitute a revelation.

- I have to boast. It is not beneficial, but I shall pass on to supernatural visions and revelations of the Lord. ([2 Corinthians 12:1](#))
- An apostasy was due to set in among the Christian congregation and was already working in Paul's day, it would result in a condition like that of a field oversown with weeds.
- Another illustration he set before them, saying; The kingdom of the heavens has become like a man that sowed fine seed in his field. ([Matthew 13:24](#))
- While men were sleeping, his enemy came and oversowed weeds in among the wheat, and left. ([Matthew 13:25](#))
- When the blade sprouted and produced fruit, then the weeds appeared also. ([Matthew 13:26](#))
- So the slaves of the householder came up and said to him; Master, did you not sow fine seed in your field? How, then, does it come to have weeds? ([Matthew 13:27](#))
- He said to them, An enemy, a man, did this. They said to him, Do you want us, then, to go out and collect them? ([Matthew 13:28](#))
- He said; No, that by no chance, while collecting the weeds, you uproot the wheat with them. ([Matthew 13:29](#))
- Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the harvest season I will tell the reapers, First collect the weeds and bind them in bundles to burn them up, then go to gathering the wheat into my storehouse. ([Matthew 13:30](#))
- Then after dismissing the crowds he went into the house. And his disciples came to him and said; Explain to us the illustration of the weeds in the field. ([Matthew 13:36](#))
- In response he said; The sower of the fine seed is the Son of man. ([Matthew 13:37](#))
- The field is the world, as for the fine seed, these are the sons of the kingdom, but the weeds are the sons of the wicked one. ([Matthew 13:38](#))

- And the enemy that sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels. (**Matthew 13:39**)
- Therefore, just as the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be in the conclusion of the system of things. (**Matthew 13:40**)
- The Son of man will send forth his angels, and they will collect out from his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and persons who are doing lawlessness. (**Matthew 13:41**)
- And they will pitch them into the fiery furnace. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be. (**Matthew 13:42**)
- At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let him that has ears listen. (**Matthew 13:43**)
- I know that after my going away oppressive wolves will enter in among you and will not treat the flock with tenderness. (**Acts of Apostles 20:29**)
- Let no one seduce you in any manner, because it will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness gets revealed, the son of destruction. (**2 Thessalonians 2:3**)
- True, the mystery of this lawlessness is already at work, but only till he who is right now acting as a restraint gets to be out of the way. (**2 Thessalonians 2:7**)
- For example, the ground that drinks in the rain which often comes upon it, and that then brings forth vegetation suitable to those for whom it is also cultivated, receives in return a blessing from God. (**Hebrews 6:7**)
- But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is rejected and is near to being cursed, and it ends up with being burned. (**Hebrews 6:8**)
- So, Paul's paradise vision would not reasonably apply while such was the case but would evidently relate to the time of **the harvest season** when the genuine Christians would be gathered by the angelic

reapers and would enjoy rich blessings and spiritual prosperity from God.

- It is evident, however, that the restoration prophecies recorded by the Hebrew prophets include elements that will also find a physical fulfillment in the restored earthly **Paradise**. There are features, for example, in;
 - The wilderness and the waterless region will exult, and the desert plain will be joyful and blossom as the saffron. (**Isaiah 35:1**)
 - Without fail it will blossom, and it will really be joyful with joyousness and with glad crying out. The glory of Lebanon itself must be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and of Sharon. There will be those who will see the glory of Yehowah, the splendor of our God. (**Isaiah 35:2**)
 - Strengthen the weak hands, you people, and make the knees that are wobbling firm. (**Isaiah 35:3**)
 - Say to those who are anxious at heart; Be strong. Do not be afraid. Look! your own God will come with vengeance itself, God even with a repayment. He himself will come and save you people. (**Isaiah 35:4**)
 - At that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. (**Isaiah 35:5**)
 - At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness. For in the wilderness waters will have burst out, and torrents in the desert plain. (**Isaiah 35:6**)
 - And the heat-parched ground will have become as a reedy pool, and the thirsty ground as springs of water. In the abiding place of jackals, a resting-place for them, there will be green grass with reeds and papyrus plants. (**Isaiah 35:7**)
- Such as the healing of the blind and the lame, that did not have a literal fulfillment following the restoration from ancient Babylon, nor are they fulfilled in such a manner in the Christian spiritual **paradise**. It would be inconsistent for God to inspire such prophecies as those of.

- And the wolf will actually reside for a while with the male lamb, and with the kid the leopard itself will lie down, and the calf and the maned young lion and the well-fed animal all together, and a mere little boy will be leader over them. ([Isaiah 11:6](#))
- And the cow and the bear themselves will feed, together their young ones will lie down. And even the lion will eat straw just like the bull. ([Isaiah 11:7](#))
- And the sucking child will certainly play upon the hole of the cobra, and upon the light aperture of a poisonous snake will a weaned child actually put his own hand. ([Isaiah 11:8](#))
- They will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain, because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Yehowah as the waters are covering the very sea. ([Isaiah 11:9](#))
- And I will conclude with them a covenant of peace, and I shall certainly cause the injurious wild beast to cease out of the land, and they will actually dwell in the wilderness in security and sleep in the forests. ([Ezekiel 34:25](#))
- And for them I shall certainly conclude a covenant in that day in connection with the wild beast of the field and with the flying creature of the heavens and the creeping thing of the ground, and the bow and the sword and war I shall break out of the land, and I will make them lie down in security. ([Hosea 2:18](#))
- With the intention that they have only a figurative or spiritual meaning, without having a literal fulfillment of these things in the physical experiences of God's servants.

•• Eating In The Paradise Of God

- Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations; To him that conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. ([Revelation 2:7](#))
- Mentions a tree of life in the **paradise** of God and that eating from it would be the privilege of the one that conquers. Since other promises given in this section of Revelation to such conquering ones clearly relate to their gaining a heavenly inheritance.

- And to him that conquers and observes my deeds down to the end I will give authority over the nations. ([Revelation 2:26](#))
- And he shall shepherd the people with an iron rod so that they will be broken to pieces like clay vessels, the same as I have received from my Father. ([Revelation 2:27](#))
- And I will give him the morning star. ([Revelation 2:28](#))
- The one that conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will by no means go out from it anymore, and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which descends out of heaven from my God, and that new name of mine. ([Revelation 3:12](#))
- To the one that conquers I will grant to sit down with me on my throne, even as I conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. ([Revelation 3:21](#))
- It seems evident that the **paradise** of God in this case is a heavenly one. The word **tree** here translates the [Greek](#) word *xy 'lon*, which literally means, **wood**, and could therefore refer to an orchard of trees. In the earthly Paradise of Eden, eating of the tree of life would have meant living forever for man.
- And Yehowah God went on to say; Here the man has become like one of us in knowing good and bad, and now in order, that he may not put his hand out and actually take fruit also from the tree of life and eat and live to time indefinite. ([Genesis 3:22](#))
- With that Yehowah God put him out of the garden of Eden to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken. ([Genesis 3:23](#))
- And so he drove the man out and posted at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubs and the flaming blade of a sword that was turning itself continually to guard the way to the tree of life. ([Genesis 3:24](#))
- Even the fruit of the other trees of the garden would have been life sustaining for man as long as he continued obedient. So, the partaking of the tree, or trees of life in the **paradise** of God evidently relates to the divine provision for sustained life granted the Christian conquerors, other texts showing that they receive the prize of

immortality and incorruptibility along with their heavenly Head and Lord, Christ Jesus.

- **However, this I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit God's kingdom, neither does corruption inherit incorruption. (1 Corinthians 15:50)**
- **Look! I tell you a sacred secret. We shall not all fall asleep in death, but we shall all be changed. (1 Corinthians 15:51)**
- **In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, during the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised up incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (1 Corinthians 15:52)**
- **For this which is corruptible must put on incorruption, and this which is mortal must put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:53)**
- **But when this which is corruptible puts on incorruption and this which is mortal puts on immortality, then the saying will take place that is written; Death is swallowed up forever. (1 Corinthians 15:54)**
- **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for according to his great mercy he gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)**
- **To an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance. It is reserved in the heavens for you. (1 Peter 1:4)**