**this day:** *before the close Of this natural  
day.* The attempt to join it with **I say  
unto thee** (*“I say unto thee this day”*),  
considering that it not only violates common sense, but destroys the force of our Lord’s promise, is surely something worse  
than silly; see below.

**shalt thou be with me** can bear no other meaning than  
the ordinary sense of the words, ‘I shall  
be in Paradise, and thou with Me.’

**in paradise**] On these words rests the  
whole explanation of the saying. *What  
is this* PARADISE? The *word* is used of  
the *garden of Eden* by the LXX, Gen.  
ii. 8, &c., and subsequently became, in the  
Jewish theology, the name for that part  
of Hadéa, the abode of the dead, where  
the souls of the righteous await the resurrection. It was also the name for a supernal or heavenly abode, see 2 Cor. xii. 4: Rev. ii. 7, which are the only other places in which it occurs in the New  
Testament. The *former of these* is, I  
believe, here primarily to be understood ;—  
but only as *introductory, and that immediately, to the latter.* By the death of Christ only was *Paradise* first, opened, in  
the *true sense of the word.* He Himself,  
when speaking of Lazarus (ch. xvi. 22),  
does not place him in Paradise, but in  
Abraham’s bosom—in that place which  
the Jews *called* Paradise, but by an anticipation which our Lord did not sanction. I believe the matter to have been thus.  
Our Lord spoke to the thief so as He  
knew the thief would understand Him ;  
but He spoke with a fuller and more  
blessed meaning than he could understand  
then. For *that day, on that very evening,*  
was ‘ Paradise’ truly ‘regained :’—opened  
by the death of Christ. We know (1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, where see note; iv. 6) that our Lord went down into the depths of death,  
—announced His triumph—(for His death  
was His triumph) to the imprisoned  
spirits,—and in that moment—for change  
of *state,* to the *disembodied,* is possibly all  
that *change of place* implies—they perhaps were in the Paradise of God,—in the blessed heavenly place, implied by the  
word, 2 Cor. xii. That this is not *fulness*  
of glory as yet, is evident ;—for the glorified *body* is not yet joined to their spirits,  
—they are not yet perfect (Heb. xi. 40) ;  
but it is a degree of bliss compared to  
which their former was but as imprisonment.

This work of the Lord I believe to have been accomplished *on the  
instant* *of His death,* and the penitent to  
**have** followed Him at *his death*—which  
took place some little time after—into the  
Paradise of God. That our Lord *returned*  
to take His glorified Body, was in accordance with His design, and He became thereby the *firstfruits of the holy dead,*who shall like Him put on the body of  
the resurrection, and be translated from  
disembodied and imperfect bliss in the  
Paradise of God, to the perfection of  
glorified humanity in His glory, and with  
Him, *not in Paradise,* but at *God’s right  
hand.*

**44—46.**] Our account is  
very short and epitomizing—containing,  
however, peculiar to itself, the *last  
of our Lord on the cross.* The impression conveyed by this account, if we had no other, would be that the veil **was** rent  
*before* the death of Jesus:—but the more  
detailed account of St. Matthew corrects  
this.

**45.**] The words **the sun was darkened** are probably added to give solemnity to the preceding, assigning its  
reason. It can hardly be, as Meyer, that  
the *earth* was darkened till the ninth  
hour, and *then* the *sun* became dark also.

**46.**] The use of **with a loud  
voice** shews that *this was the cry* to  
which St. Matthew and St. Mark allude.  
The words uttered are from the LXX,  
varying however from the common reading *“I will commend,”* and giving the  
verb in the *present,* which is also the rendering of the Hebrew.

These words have in them an important and deep meaning. They accompany that, which in our  
Lord’s case was strictly speaking the *act*  
of death. It was *His own act—not* ‘feeling the approach of death,’ as some, not apprehending the matter, have commented ;  
but a *determinate delivering up of His  
spirit to the Father.—“ He delivered up  
His spirit,”* John: see John x. 18—“ *no  
man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down  
of Myself.”* None of the Evangelists say  
*‘He died.’* although that expression is  
ever after used of His death stated as one  
great fact :—but it is, *“yielded up His  
spirit,”* Matthew ; *“breathed His last,”*