

## APPENDIX 1: SHEOL/HADES DURING THE OLD TESTAMENT PERIOD

For a number of years the view has been widely disseminated that during the Old Testament period SHEOL/HADES was comprised of two compartments: one a Paradise of bliss and the other a Hell of misery; and that SHEOL/HADES was a rather dark and dismal place in the depths of the earth in which disembodied spirits were imprisoned.

Since this view conflicts with what has been represented as the scriptural conception of ᾗδης, we must ask how such a view of ᾗδης arose. Let us note two representative authorities on the question.

In the article on HADES in McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature* the following statement appears:

The Greeks, however, in process of time abandoned this use of Hades (as the personal designation of Pluto, the invisible-making deity), and when the Greek Scriptures were written the word was scarcely ever applied except to the place of the departed. In the classical writers, therefore, it is used to denote Orcus, of the Infernal regions. . . .

Two or three points stand out prominently in the views entertained by the ancients respecting Hades: first, that it was the common receptacle of departed spirits, of good as well as bad; second, that it was divided into two compartments, the one containing an Elysium of bliss for the good, the other a Tartarus of sorrow and punishment for the wicked; and thirdly, that in respect to its locality, it lay under ground, in the mid-regions of the earth.

This statement gives the meaning of ᾗδης as it was employed by classical Greek writers. As such, it reflects their pagan religious beliefs as well as their speculative thought concerning death.

In the entry under ᾗδης in Grimm's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, translated, revised, and enlarged by Joseph Henry Thayer (a widely used lexicon of New Testament Greek), the following appears:

1. a proper name, Hades, Pluto, the god of the lower regions; so in Homer always. 2. an appellative, Orcus, the nether world, the realm of the dead. In the Septuagint the Hebrew SHEOL is almost always rendered by this word (once by THANATOS, II Samuel 22:6); it denotes, therefore, in biblical Greek Orcus, the infernal regions, a dark. . . and dismal place . . . in the very depths of the earth . . . the common receptacle of disembodied spirits . . . Metaphorically, . . . to go or be thrust down into the depth of misery and disgrace.

The reasoning this lexicon employs in the phrase "it denotes, therefore, in biblical Greek . . ." is astounding! Think of the logic: Because HADES meant such and such a thing in the classical pagan Greek writers, and because HADES is used by the New Testament writers, therefore HADES has the same meaning in the New Testament as it had in pagan Greek mythology! If such an assertion were not in print, it would be incredible!!

It is admittedly disconcerting for a person who has been brought up to accept uncritically a particular view as scriptural truth, only to discover later that that view is nothing less than a wholesale acceptance of pagan Greek mythology and an imposition of that mythology upon the teaching of Scripture. However, once that person discovers that such is indeed the case,