

新約聖書の「死後の世界」

～ ἄδης, ἄβυσσος, γέεννα, παράδεισος～

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ABSTRACT Akio ITO, “Afterlife in the New Testament: ἄβυσσος, ἄδης, γέεννα, παράδεισος”. This paper surveys four Greek words in the New Testament, ἄβυσσος, ἄδης, γέεννα, παράδεισος (“abyss,” “hades,” “gehenna,” “paradise”) which are used to designate places of the afterlife. It is usually understood that gehenna is the place of the eternal punishing fire, whereas hades is a place where the dead remain temporarily prior to the final judgment. However, this distinction is not as obvious as is usually understood. In some passages hades simply means death (e.g. Matthew 16:16; Revelation 1:18; 6:8). The abyss and paradise also refer to places for the dead. The abyss seems to designate the place where Jesus went after the crucifixion and spent the time prior to the resurrection (Romans 10:7 and 1Peter 3:19). In the well-known Lukan passage (23:43) Jesus promised to one of the crucified criminals that he would be with Jesus in the paradise on the same day. So where did Jesus go after his death on the cross, paradise or the abyss or . . . ? We must be careful lest we should understand these words within a preconceived framework of the afterlife. Since the final destination for a person will not change once he/she dies, it is questionable whether a temporary place for the dead must be assumed. The difficulty arises partly because the afterlife belongs to the eternity, while we live under the constraints of time and space. We can only think in terms of time and space. Thus it is advisable not to define the four words rigidly in detail.