The Marriage of Peleus & Thetis
[Groton & May, Chapter 18]

Peleus
was a mortal man, the son of Endeis and Aeacus, king of Aegina. As a young man, Peleus and his brother, Telemon were involved in the murder of their half-brother, Phocus. In exile, he married Antigone, then accidentally killed her father, Eurytion. After Antigone killed herself, Peleus again went into exile where he met his next wife.

Thetis
was a sea nymph, one of the fifty daughters of Nereus, termed Nereids, described by Homer as, “silver-footed.”

m.
Achilles

The Nuptials

The wedding was planned by Zeus (Jupiter) himself and took place on Mt. Pelion. Mortals and immortals alike were invited and all were required to bring gifts. Poseidon (Neptune) gave Peleus a pair of immortal horses, named Balius & Xanthus. The wedding is described by the Greek playwright, Euripides, in “Iphigenia at Aulis” and by the Latin poet, Catullus in poem 64.

Discordia [Greek, Ερισ]

The goddess of discord and the personification of strife, Discord was the only immortal not invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. Angered, she threw out a golden apple inscribed with the words, “For the Fairest.” Three goddesses, Hera (Juno), Aphrodite (Venus), and Athena (Minerva), immediately begin to quarrel over the apple. Jupiter handed the decision over to the Trojan, Paris, who awards the apple to Aphrodite. Venus in turn offers him Helen, wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta.

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Ancient Thought on Life, Death & the Soul

Contemplation of the soul began with the Greek philosophers, specifically Plato and Aristotle. The Greeks used the word, ψυχή, similar to the English word, psyche, to represent the soul. Plato believed that the soul was a mark of all living things responsible for thought and sensory perception. The soul was where virtues such as courage and justice resided and was what separated the living from the dead. In death, Plato believed that the soul departed from the body and traveled to the Underworld where it existed as a shade or ghost. He purported that the soul was immortal and therefore could never be destroyed. He reasoned that only things made of visible parts could be dissolved and since the soul cannot be seen, it cannot be dissolved, even in death. In contrast, Aristotle and many later Hellenistic thinkers believed that Plato was wrong and that the soul was corporeal and thus was lost at death.