

A comparison of creation myths from genesis and greece

[Literature](#), [Mythology](#)



The words myths and legends tend to be used interchangeably, but usually myths have a religious purpose whereas legends are the stories of heroes. Creation myths have commonalities, because they are all seeking to explain the same things.

It is part of human nature to wonder about the unknown and to seek answers. At the foundation of almost every culture is a story that explains how the earth, its creatures and its people came to be.

These myths may be dismissed by some modern thinkers, yet continue to have huge influence as a frame of reference. In the case of Judaism and Greek mythology both emerge from the Eastern Mediterranean region, so although there are lots of differences, these are people not so far removed from each other geographically and there would have been some trading links at least and so it is likely that each group would have had some knowledge of the stories of the other.

Myths are stories created by a group of people in order to explain some of the great questions in life such as 'Where did man come from and from where did he gain knowledge?' They originate in oral tradition as people discussed such matters and it would have been many generations before they were committed to script in some form.

This goes some way to explain why there may on occasions be slightly different versions extant, as in Genesis 1 and 2 where there are two versions of the creation. They are both included because at the time when the canon of Jewish scripture was finally fixed in the early years of the Christian era,

beginning in about 90 C. E.[1] both stories had been in circulation for so many years and both were felt to contain something of value.

Although myths may have internal chronology i. e. this happened first and then that, but there is no link with modern times.

The book of Genesis differs on this point from the general rule in that after the story of the firstfamily, Adam Eve and their sons, in Genesis 4 and 5 there is a list of the generations between Adam and Noah, considered by the Jews to be an historical figure and after the story of Noah, in chapter 9 there are further lists , partly to explain the origins of the various nations of the earth , and in part to provide a link to the story of Abram (later Abraham), considered to be the founder of the Jewish race.

So the stories in Genesis are more particular than the generalised creation myths of the Greeks, which do not mention the founding of the Greek race.

There is no such definitive collection of Greek myths, probably because the ancient Greek religion totally disappeared early in the first millennium C. E.

[1] What are the Deuterocanonical book s of the Bible? Available from [http://www. bluffton. edu/~bergerd/deutero. html](http://www.bluffton.edu/~bergerd/deutero.html) accessed 1st December 2008