

Lesson 1

Introduction to Greek and Roman Myths

Q: How are myths different from Bible stories?



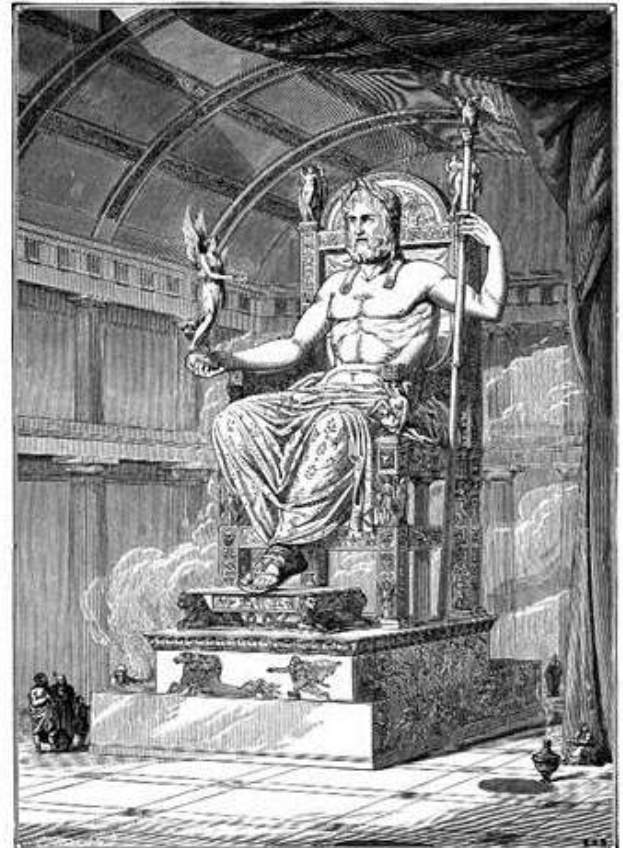
What is a myth?

Greek = μυθος / ΜΥΘΟΣ mythos:
story

Greek = μυθοι / ΜΥΘΟΙ mythoi:
stories

Myths are . . .

made-up stories about gods (= nature)



Ancient Greeks and Romans told myths to . . .

explain events & customs (WHY?)

teach morals (HOW ACT?)

entertain (WHEE!)

Today we still know about these myths because they were eventually written down by playwrights and poets. But for centuries the myths were simply oral tales, passed by word of mouth from storyteller to listener.







Why do you think different versions of the same myth often existed?

Different people changed parts based on their preferences.

People sometimes forgot things & changed details.

People changed parts due to different audiences.

2.

Gods and Goddesses

polytheism : belief in *many* gods and goddesses

monotheism : belief in *one* God (god)

The ancient Greeks and Romans believed that the gods and goddesses

looked and acted like mortals (humans) ,

even though the gods and goddesses were immortal (not able to die) .



3.

Why would people make up myths about gods and goddesses?

Romans 1:21-25

Sinful people want to worship "something other than the Lord"

²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised.

4.

How are the stories of the Bible different?

2 Peter 1:16

Its writers didn't make up stories. (Real events!)

2 Peter 1:21 &

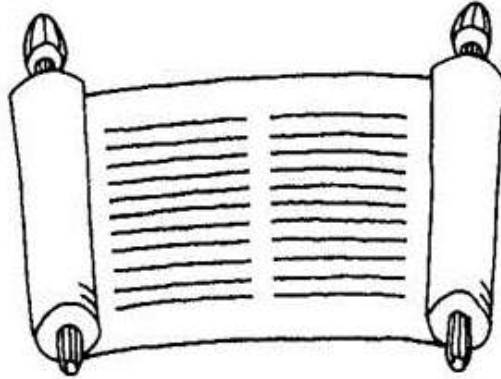
2 Timothy 3:15-16

Its writers were guided by the real God.

¹⁶ We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. . . .

²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁵ . . . from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed . . .



What I've learned: The Bible has true (real), unchanging stories given by the true (real) God. Ancient myths were changing stories made up by sinful people.