

Athena and Eve

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Ancient Greek religion, what we call mythology, tells the same story as the Book of Genesis, except that the serpent is the enlightener of mankind rather than our deceiver. Athena represents Eve—the reborn serpent’s Eve in the new Greek age. She and the Parthenon and the entire ancient Greek religious system celebrate the rejuvenation and re-establishment of the way of Kain (Cain) after the Flood. Though on one hand Greek idolatry violates the teaching of the Word of God, on the other, if properly understood, it reinforces the truth of the Scriptures.

Athena’s magnificent temple, the Parthenon, is the national monument of Greece (Figure 1). From 447 to 432 BC, during the Classical Age, the ancient Athenians built for Athena one of the most superb architectural works of antiquity. Featuring more sculpture than any other Greek temple, the Parthenon dominated their Akropolis—the high place of the city. Inside stood her forty-foot-tall gold and ivory idol-image. Later in this article, we are going to take a close look at Athena’s famous Parthenon statue as it has been reconstructed in the Parthenon in Nashville, Tennessee, from ancient replicas and descriptions of it. We are not going to be able to understand very much about Athena’s idol-image, however, unless we see where she fits into the history of humanity as the Greeks saw it. We need some background. Fortunately, the Greeks provided it in their myths and art.

The first couple

There is no Creator-God in the Greek religious system. The ancient Greek religious system is about getting away from the God of Genesis, and exalting man as the measure



Figure 1. The Parthenon as it appears today atop the Akropolis of Athens, from the north-west.



Figure 2. Hans Holbeins' Adam and Eve.

of all things. You may think to yourself that the Greeks are exalting gods, not man; but haven't you ever wondered why the Greek gods looked exactly like humans? The answer is the obvious one: for the most part, the gods represented the Greeks' (and our) human ancestors. Greek religion was thus a sophisticated form of ancestor worship. You have no doubt heard of the supposedly great philosopher, Sokrates. In Plato's *Euthydemus*, he referred to Zeus, Athena, and Apollo as his 'gods' and his 'lords and ancestors'.¹

Greek stories about their origins are varied and sometimes contradictory until their poets and artists settle upon Zeus and Hera as the couple from whom the other Olympian gods and mortal men are descended. This brother/sister and husband/wife pair, the king and queen of the gods, are a match for the Adam and Eve of Genesis.

Figure 2 is Hans Holbein's *Adam and Eve*. This couple is the beginning of the family of man, and the origin of the family of the Greek gods, Zeus and Hera. Figure 3 shows us Zeus and his wife Hera, sculpted on the east frieze of the Parthenon, c. 438 BC. With no Creator-God in the Greek religious system, the first couple advances to the forefront.

Hera, the queen of the gods, is the primal Eve

According to the Book of Genesis, Eve is the mother of all living humans, and the wife of Adam. Since God is the Father of both Adam and Eve, some consider them to be brother and sister as well. After they had both eaten the fruit, Adam named his wife Eve (*Chue* in Hebrew which means 'Living') and Genesis 3:20 explains why: '... for she becomes mother of all the living'.[†] In a hymn of invocation, the 6th-century BC lyric poet, Alcaeus, refers to Hera as *panton genethla*, or 'mother of all'.² As the first mother, the Greeks worshipped Hera as goddess of childbirth; as the first wife, the Greeks worshipped her as the goddess of marriage.

[†] Bible quotations taken from the Concordant Literal Translation.

We are told in Chapter 2 of Genesis that Eve was created full-grown out of Adam. Before she was known as Hera, the wife of Zeus had the name *Dione*. The name relates to the creation of Eve out of Adam, for Dione is the feminine form of *Dios* or Zeus. This suggests that the two were once, like Adam and Eve, a single entity.

The attribute most often associated with Hera in ancient art was the sceptre. She is often depicted as enthroned and holding it in her right hand. She is, and always will be, the queen of Olympus. As the sister/wife of Zeus, Hera is a deification of Eve, the motherless mother of all humanity. She holds the sceptre of rule by birth.

Zeus, the king of the gods, is Adam

From the Judeo-Christian standpoint, the taking of the fruit by Eve and Adam at the serpent's behest was shameful, a transgression of Yahweh's commandment. From the Greek standpoint, however, the taking of the fruit was a triumphant and liberating act which brought to mankind the serpent's enlightenment. To the Greeks, the serpent freed mankind from bondage to an oppressive God, and was therefore a saviour and illuminator of our race. The Greeks worshipped Zeus as both saviour and illuminator; they called him Zeus *Phanaios* which means one who appears as light and brings light. The light that he brought to the ancient Greeks was the serpent's light that he received when he ate the fruit from the serpent's tree.

In his *Zeus and Hera*, mythologist Carl Kerényi suggests that the name Zeus or Dios, at its deepest level, means 'the actual decisive, dynamic moment of becoming light'.³ Thus, the very meaning of the names of the first couple, Dios and Dione, points to that time when they ate the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and first embraced the enlightenment of the serpent. The natural force, lightning, depicts who Zeus is and what he brings to mankind perfectly. It should not surprise us, then, that the attribute most closely associated with Zeus in ancient art was the lightning bolt. On most of the vases on which he is depicted, Zeus holds the lightning bolt in his right hand. From the Greek viewpoint, there is no more 'actual decisive, dynamic moment of becoming light' in human history than the time Adam and Eve received the serpent's enlightenment, and no more appropriate symbol for it than the lightning bolt of Zeus.

On a Greek vase from c. 410 BC, a naked Zeus holds the sceptre of rule in his left hand and the lightning bolt in his right.⁴ He is the naked and unashamed king of Olympus. The fruit of the tree—the serpent's enlightenment—has been passed to him. It is the true source of his power.



Figure 3. *Hera and Zeus*

Zeus and Hera are the first couple described in Genesis

In his *Works and Days*, the poet Hesiod wrote of 'how the gods and mortal men sprang from one source'.⁵ The first couple, Zeus and Hera, were that source. Hera is the single mother of all humanity, and Zeus is, according to Hesiod, 'the father of men and gods'.⁶ The term 'father Zeus' is a description of the king of the gods which appears over one hundred times in the ancient writings of Homer.⁷ As the source of their history, Zeus and Hera became the gods of their history.

According to Genesis, Adam lived 930 years. The length of Eve's life is not mentioned but there is no reason to think that it wasn't about as long as Adam's. That by itself would confer a godlike status on them.

And who came before them? No-one. It is only natural that the Greeks worshipped Adam and Eve as Zeus and Hera. Those without a belief in the Creator have only nature, themselves, and their progenitors to exalt.

The Greek tradition insists that Zeus and Hera were the first couple; the Judeo-Christian tradition insists Adam and Eve were the first couple. Two opposite spiritual standpoints share the same factual basis.

If the above is true, then the Greeks ought to have directly connected Zeus and Hera to a paradise, a serpent, and a fruit tree. They did, indeed, make such a direct connection.

The Garden of the Hesperides— Eden's Greek counterpart

The Greeks remembered the original paradise. They called it the Garden of the Hesperides, and they associated



Figure 4. *The Garden of the Hesperides*

Zeus and Hera with its enticing ease, and with a serpent-entwined apple tree.

The Hesperides, the spirit-beings associated with this tree, its apples, and its serpent, get their name from *Hesperere* in Greek which means evening, and that signifies the west where the sun sets. This matches the Genesis account which describes civilization developing to the east of Eden. A return to Eden would mean travelling west. The Greeks put the Garden of the Hesperides, with its serpent-entwined apple tree, in the far west.

Some mythologists have mistaken the Hesperides for guardians of the tree, but they certainly are not. Their body language, their easy actions and their very names serve the purpose of establishing what kind of a garden this is: a wonderful, carefree place.

In Figure 4, we see the Garden of the Hesperides depicted on a water pot from c. 410 BC. The serpent entwines the apple tree with its golden fruit. The names of the figures are written on the vase. Two of the Hesperides, Chrysothemis (Golden Order) and Asterope (Star Face) stand to the immediate left of the tree. Chrysothemis moves toward the tree to pluck an apple. Asterope leans pleasantly against her with both arms. To the left of them, Hygeia (Health) sits on a hillock and holds a long sceptre, a symbol of rule, as she looks back towards the tree. To the right of the apple tree, Lipara (Shining Skin) holds apples in the fold of her garment, and raises her veil off her shoulder.

The names of the Hesperides describe what the garden is like. It's a land of soft starlight, gold for the taking, perfect health, and wondrous beauty. Apollodorus gives four different names for the Hesperides: Aegle (Dazzling Light), Erythia (Red Land), Hesperia (Evening Star) and Arethusa (Water Fountain).⁸ The sound of a water fountain is one of the most peaceful sounds. What an enchanting and delightful place! The Hebrew word for Eden means 'to be soft or pleasant', figuratively 'to delight oneself'. The Garden of the Hesperides is, with little doubt, the Garden of Genesis.

If Adam and Eve, in the Greek religious system, have become Zeus and Hera, there should be literary evidence for their presence in this garden, and there is. Apollodorus

wrote that the apples of the Hesperides 'were presented by Gaia [Earth] to Zeus after his marriage with Hera'. This matches the Genesis account: Eve became Adam's wife right after she was taken out of Adam (Genesis 2:21–25), and the next recorded event is the taking of the fruit by the first couple. Connecting Zeus and Hera with the Hesperides automatically connects them with the serpent and the fruit tree with which they are always represented.

The chorus in Euripides' play *Hippolytus* speaks of 'the apple-bearing shore of the Hesperides' where immortal fountains flow 'by the place where Zeus lay, and holy Earth with her gifts of blessedness makes the gods' prosperity wax great'.⁹ Thus Euripides put Zeus in the garden, and his language affirms that this is where Zeus came from.

You have probably heard one time or another about Eve eating the apple. The Hebrew word for fruit in Chapter 3 of Genesis is a general term. The idea that Adam and Eve took a bite of an apple comes to us as part of the Greek tradition.

Atlas pushes away the heavens and with them, the God of the heavens

The Greek poets placed a figure named Atlas in the ancient Garden of the Hesperides. Hesiod wrote in his *Theogony*:

'And Atlas through hard constraint upholds the wide heaven with unwearying head and arms, standing at the borders of the earth before the clear-voiced Hesperides; for this lot wise Zeus assigned him.'¹⁰



Figure 5. *Atlas pushes away the heavens.*

His presence there clarified the Greeks' religious viewpoint, for it was his job to put the authority of heaven at a distance from them.

In Figure 5, we see part of a plate scene depicting Atlas pushing away the heavens. We can see where the artist has drawn stars. As Atlas pushes away the heavens, he also pushes away the God of the heavens—the very object of his efforts. Victory for the Greek system means that the Creator is kept at bay, pushed out of the picture, and His influence nullified, so that men become free to believe and do what they will. The way of Greek religion, which is nothing less than the way of Kain (Cain) referred to in the Scriptures, is a life lived without God's interference with mankind's desires. The Creator must be pushed away and ignored if Zeus-religion is to succeed.

Yahweh cursed and condemned the serpent in Genesis 3:14: 'On your torso shall you go, and soil shall you eat all the days of your lives'. As God is pushed out of humanity's realm, the curse on the serpent becomes void. He rises up, as on the plate depiction, to take his place as the illuminator and enlightener of the race.

The two antagonistic sons of the first family

Now if Zeus and Hera are pictures of Adam and Eve, we would expect them to have two antagonistic male children just as the first man and woman did. Zeus and Hera had two male children: Hephaistos, the elder, and Ares; and they were as averse to each other as Kain and Seth.

Adam and Eve had three sons: Kain, Abel and Seth. But Kain killed Abel, evidently before the latter had offspring. Since Seth replaced Abel, we look at Adam and Eve as having two sons, each of whom, in turn, had offspring. In the Scriptures, the line of Seth is the line of Christ. The book of Matthew traces the lineage of Christ through David to Abraham; and the Book of Luke further traces the lineage of Abraham to Adam through his son Seth. This is often referred to as the line of belief in the Creator-God or the line of faith. On the other hand, the Scriptures define the line of Kain as one of unbelief in the Creator-God. According to I John 3:12, 'Kain was of the wicked one', a straightforward reference to 'the ancient serpent called Adversary and Satan, who is deceiving the whole inhabited earth' (Revelation 12:9).

The Greeks deified Kain as Hephaistos, god of the forge. They deified his younger brother, Seth, as Ares, the troublesome god of conflict and war. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, Kain is the evil one whose way is to be shunned. In the Greek religious system, Ares, the Seth of Genesis, is the traitor and the one who causes ruin and woe.

Hephaistos/Kain

By his Roman name, Vulcan, we associate Hephaistos, the deified Kain, immediately with the forge and the foundry. According to Genesis 4:22, the members of Kain's family

were the first to become forgers 'of every tool of copper and iron'. These surely included the hammer, the axe and the tongs—the tools most often associated with Hephaistos in Greek art.

Hephaistos' banishment from, and return to, Olympus (a place where the Creator is excluded from the pantheon) is a 'myth' which constituted an essential element of Greek religion; it appeared painted, sculpted and bronzed throughout the Archaic and Classical periods. In the Greek religious system, the banishment of Hephaistos corresponds, in Genesis, to Kain's being commanded to wander the earth by Yahweh: 'A rover and a wanderer shall you become in the earth' (Genesis 4:12). According to Greek sources, it was Hera or Zeus, or both, who banished their eldest son. Since the Greeks rejected the Creator-God, it makes sense that they would attribute the banishment of Hephaistos to his parents instead.

Kain wandered for a time but then defied Yahweh again and ceased his wandering:

'And knowing is Kain his wife and she is pregnant and bearing Enoch. And coming is it that he is building a city, and calling is he the name of the city as the name of his son, Enoch' (Genesis 4:17).

The return of Hephaistos to Olympus in Greek religion corresponds to Kain's ignoring Yahweh's command to wander, and his building a city instead. Out of that city, the defiant line of Kain prospered as he and his offspring embraced the wisdom of the serpent.

As a reward for his return, Hephaistos received the beautiful and sensuous Aphrodite as his wife. Just as Kain's wife was most likely his sister, so Aphrodite was the sister of Hephaistos. Zeus is the father of both Aphrodite and Hephaistos, and Aphrodite's mother, Dione, is the same woman/goddess as Hera, but from a different and more ancient oral tradition.

In Plato's dialogue, *Cratylus*, Sokrates describes Hephaistos as 'the princely lord of light'.¹¹ According to Robert Graves, his name is a contraction of *hemeraphaestos*, which means 'he who shines by day'.¹² On a vase scene from the Archaic period, the young Hephaistos stands on his father's lap in the presence of his mother, Hera. He holds two torches and is hailed as 'light of Zeus'.¹³ Hephaistos shines because he is Eve's eldest son, Kain, who rejects the Creator and embraces the serpent's enlightenment, the very basis of Zeus-religion.

Ares/Seth

Zeus was fond of his son Hephaistos, who performed an indispensable and appreciated function as armorer of the gods. On the other hand, Zeus considered his youngest son, Ares, to be worthless, calling him 'hateful' and 'pestilent' and a 'renegade'.¹⁴ The ancient poet, Homer, referred to Ares as 'the bane of mortals'.¹⁵ The only reason Ares has a place in the Greek pantheon is that he is the son of Zeus;

that is, he is one of the two actual sons of the first couple, Adam and Eve, of whom Zeus and Hera are deifications. Zeus hates Ares, but accepts responsibility for siring him: ‘for thou art mine offspring, and it was to me that thy mother bare thee’, and then rails at this son of his, telling him that if he were born of any other god, he would have been ‘lower than the sons of heaven’ long ago.¹⁶

Some scholars say Greek religion is anthropomorphic; that is, gods take human form. That’s not quite right. What happens is that real human ancestors retain their original identities and take on godlike qualities. Ares, as a deification of Seth, is trapped, in a sense, by the historical framework. His father, Zeus, had to hate him, and Greek heroes were expected to kill his children.

While the scriptural viewpoint defines Seth/Ares as the Yahweh-believing, or spiritual son, Greek religion defines him as hated by, and antagonistic to, the ruling gods who are part of the serpent’s system. Likewise, while Zeus-religion looks on Hephaistos/Kain as the true and devoted son, the scriptural viewpoint defines him as part of the wicked one’s system.

Jews and Christians dislike and shun the line of Kain, but they can’t get rid of him or his line without altering their spiritual standpoint and history itself. Kain is part of the Scriptures, and he is there to stay. Zeus-religion has the same kind of situation. It hates the line of Ares, but it cannot eliminate the line from its history, for, as we shall see, the basic achievement of Zeus-religion, its grand celebration even, is the triumph of the way of Kain over the way of Seth. Ares is part of Greek sacred literature and art, and he is there to stay.

The Flood wipes out the-way-of-Kain

According to Genesis, the Flood temporarily wiped out the way of Kain. Noah, in the line of Seth, ‘a just man’ (Genesis 6:9), survived with his wife, three sons, and their wives in the Ark. All but these eight people disappeared into the earth. The Greeks pictured this cataclysmic event as half-men/half-horses known as Kentaurs (Centaur) pounding a man named Kaineus into the ground with a rock (Figure 6). Kaineus means ‘pertaining to Kain’, or more directly, ‘the line of Kain’.

Who were the Kentaurs? The original Greek word for Kentauros, *Kentauros*, means hundred (where we get century and cent) and most likely relates to the fact that Noah, the chief of the line of Seth, warned of the Flood for one hundred years.¹⁷ In most vase paintings of them, the Kentaurs carried symmetrical branches, a sign that they belonged to a certain branch of humanity. The Greeks, who embraced

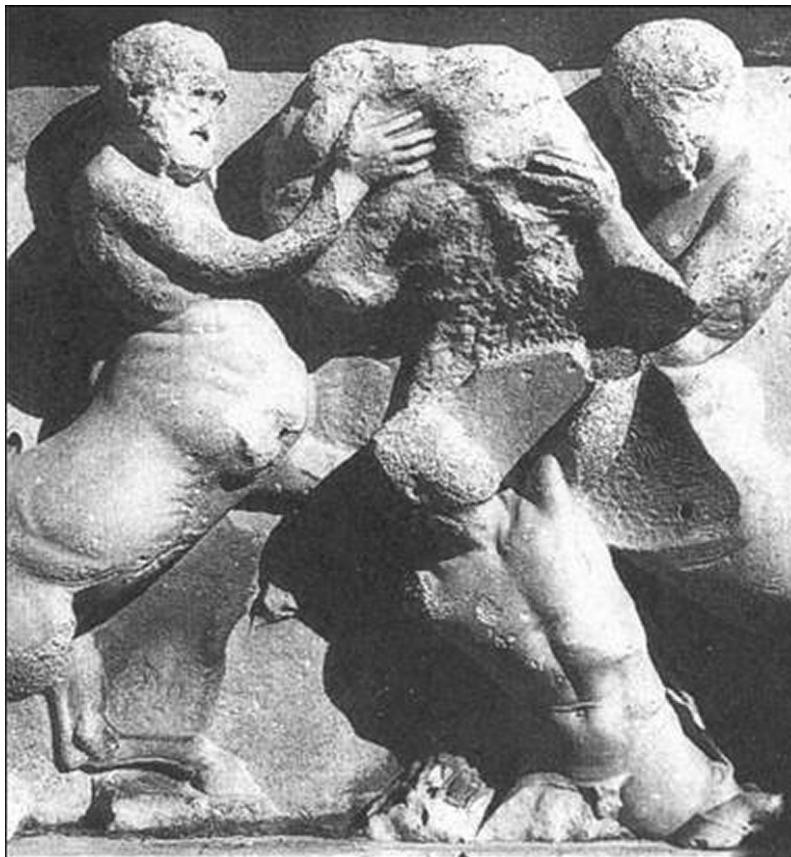


Figure 6. Kentaurs pound Kaineus into the ground with a boulder. West Frieze of the Temple of Hephaistos, Athens, c. 440 BC.

the way of Kain, did not acknowledge the Creator-God, and so they couldn’t blame Him for the Flood. They blamed the survivors of it, that strange branch of humanity they didn’t really understand—the line of Seth.

The resurgence of the way of Kain after the Flood

For a number of years after the Flood, God’s awesome and decisive intervention in human affairs remained fresh in the minds of Noah’s descendants, and the way of Kain remained dormant. Then, gradually, a yearning for the serpent’s wisdom began to take hold. On a shield band panel from about 550 BC, a Greek artist depicted this all-too-human desire perfectly (Figure 7).

The characters are the great hero, Herakles (Hercules), the Nimrod of Genesis transported to Greek soil, and Nereus, the Greek Noah. Nereus means the ‘Wet One’. His bottom half is a fish, signifying that he came through the Flood. The inscription on this panel refers to him as Halios Geron—‘The Salt Sea Old Man’.¹⁸ Herakles demands to know something that only the Salt Sea Old Man can tell him. A flame and a serpent come out of Nereus’ head. Herakles wants to know where to find the enlightenment of the serpent. According to Apollodorus:

‘Herakles seized [Nereus] while he slept, and



Figure 7. Herakles and Nereus, the 'Salt Sea Old Man'.

though the god turned himself into all kinds of shapes, the hero bound him and did not release him till he had learned from him where were the apples of the Hesperides.¹⁸

Life in service to the God of Noah seemed boring. Humanity wanted another big bite of the apple from the serpent's tree in the Garden of the Hesperides.

Ancient Greek religion commemorates the return and triumph of the way of Kain after the Flood, and it is celebrated in many interrelated ways in myth and art:

- Hermes, the Cush of Babylon, embraces the serpent's system and becomes deified as the chief prophet of Zeus-religion.¹⁹
- Poseidon, a 'brother' of Zeus marries a daughter of Noah/Nereus and replaces him as god of the sea.²⁰
- The gods inspire Greek heroes to wound Ares/Seth and kill his offspring.²¹
- A special child, the seed of Hephaistos/Kain, is reborn from the earth in Athens.²²
- In one of his famous twelve labours, Herakles, the Nimrod of Genesis, kills the three-bodied Geryon who represents the spiritual authority of the three sons of Noah.²³
- As his final labour, Herakles returns to the serpent's tree in the Garden of the Hesperides and obtains the sacred apples for Athena.²⁴
- In the great culminating and decisive battle, the gods in concert (as a religious system) overwhelm and defeat the Giants who represent the Yahweh-believing sons of Noah.²⁵

Athena—the serpent's Eve reborn after the Flood

In one way or another, Athena is involved with all of these events. She is the ultimate symbol of the great vic-

tory of Zeus-religion. She is the serpent's Eve, reborn and exalted after the Flood. According to the Greek myth, she was born full-grown out of Zeus, an unmistakable picture of Eve being born full-grown out of Adam.²⁶ And she was born in the presence of Hera, the primal Eve, meaning that she (Athena) is the new representation of Eve in the Greek age. As a sign of this change, Herakles presented the golden apples from the serpent's tree, which once belonged to Hera, to his patron goddess, Athena.

Now that we understand what Greek religion was about, we are in a position to understand the religious statement the Athenians made to their world and to posterity when they erected Athena's ivory and gold-plated idol-image in the Parthenon (Figure 8).

The Judeo-Christian tradition traces the current state of humanity back to a woman, a serpent and a tree. Athena's idol-image shows us the woman and the serpent, but where is the tree? The very core of the statue is wood—a tree. In both the Greek and Judeo-Christian traditions, a tree is at the core of what happened between a woman and a serpent in paradise.

Note that the serpent rises up next to Athena as a friend. In Genesis, Yahweh had condemned the serpent to crawl on its belly as a deceiver of humanity, yet all who entered



Figure 8. Athena Parthenos, full-size reproduction in the Nashville Parthenon by Alan LeQuire <www.Parthenon.org>.

the Parthenon to worship or admire the great statue were forced to look up to both Athena and the serpent. That is because the Greek religious system, the very opposite of the Judeo-Christian, was based on the notion that the serpent had enlightened humanity in paradise.

Athena holds Nike in her right hand, the hand of power. Nike symbolizes victory—Eve’s ‘victory’ for humanity when she ate the fruit offered by the serpent. Athena is the only goddess in Greek art who is ever pictured holding Nike.

Athena’s very name speaks of Eve. In Genesis 3:4, the serpent promised Eve that when she ate the fruit of the tree she would not die. In the most ancient Greek writing (Linear B), the name of the goddess first appears as *Athana*. The word *thanatos* in ancient Greek means death. *A-thanatos* signifies deathlessness. A-thana is the shortened form of A-thanatos meaning the deathless one, or more specifically, the embodiment of the serpent’s promise to Eve that she would never die, but would be as the gods, knowing good and evil. Through Athana(tos), later called Athena, the serpent has made good his promise to Eve.

On the front of her *aegis*, or goatskin, which covered the top of her chest, Athena wore the head of the Gorgon Medusa—the head of serpents. The aegis is a symbol of authority. The symbolism is straightforward: the source of Athena’s authority is the head of serpents.

Atop Athena’s helmet, between winged griffins, crouched an inscrutable sphinx. As we know from the story of Oedipus, Hera originally controlled this riddle-uttering winged monster with the head of a woman and the body of a lion. But it is now after the Flood. Athena’s possession of the sphinx shows that her authority supersedes that of Hera in the new Greek Age. The wings of the sphinx symbolize power in the heavens; the body of the lion, power on Earth; and the woman’s head represents the mysterious Eve, mother of all living. As we have seen, Hera, the primal Eve, carried the sceptre of rule by birth. Athena, the new Eve of the Greek Age, carries a deadly spear, a sign that she led the great spiritual battle to defeat the Yahweh-believing sons of Noah and re-establish the way of Cain after the Flood.

There is even a more obvious demonstration of Athena’s identity as the reborn serpent’s Eve. Meeting the ancient Greeks at eye level as they entered the Parthenon was the statue base of the great idol-image of Athena. In the centre of it, surrounded by the gods giving her gifts, stood a sculpted Pandora—the woman who, according to Greek myth, was responsible for letting evil out into the world. Could not a schoolchild grasp that Athena’s gold and ivory grandeur above Pandora was literally *based* on this obvious picture of Eve?

The curse of the Gorgon Medusa

Athena’s true identity is so self-evident that she may as well have worn a sign around her neck saying, ‘Hello, I’m the serpent-worshipping Eve of Genesis.’ Why haven’t the great scholars of Greek myth been able to see something



Figure 9. Athena depicted on an Attic red-figure vase from c. 525 BC. Her aegis is positioned over her right shoulder so that the face of the Gorgon head—the head of serpents—can be seen.

so simple? I attribute their abysmal ignorance to the curse of the Gorgon Medusa on Athena’s aegis (Figure 9), the focal point of her idol-image. If you remember the myth, the look of the Gorgon Medusa had the power to turn men to stone. The hero, Perseus, who cut off the Gorgon’s head and presented it to Athena, used his polished shield as a mirror to view her indirectly, negating the power of her gaze. Most of the revered teachers of mythology and anthropology (J.J. Bachofen, Jane Ellen Harrison, Robert Graves, Joseph Campbell *et al.*)²⁷ were at worst atheists, and at best contemptuous of the Book of Genesis. As they looked to Athena herself for their understanding, the stare of the Gorgon on her aegis turned their minds figuratively to stone—a kind of mental paralysis set in. In this intellectual stupor, they were unable to recognize Athena as the serpent’s Eve. As unbelievers, they would never have considered looking away from Athena and toward Genesis in order to understand the identity of the goddess.

We believe God and so the curse of the Gorgon has no power with us. We instinctively look away from the Gorgon and toward the Scriptures for our understanding. When we view Athena’s image indirectly, as it is clearly and simply reflected in the Book of Genesis, we get a true picture of her identity, and understand her role in Greek religion as a depiction of Eve—the serpent’s Eve.

Conclusion

Modern scholarship has yet to learn the simple lesson that, without reference to the early events described in the Book of Genesis, it is not possible to make any real sense of Greek mythology. In fact, the entire formidable religious framework of ancient Greek society means virtually nothing without reference to those events. The next time you're in a bookstore or a library, go to the mythology section. Look at all the books on the subject and ponder all the fruitless theorizing and all the wasted paper that have resulted from writers leaving the Creator of Heaven and Earth out of what they imagine is their deep and reasonable thinking.

The 2004 Olympics in Athens as a spiritual opportunity

While the Chad Ape-man and other hoaxes of evolutionary 'science' have made it to the front pages of America's newspapers, my books, *Athena and Eden* and *Athena and Kain*, have been ignored by the mainstream. And this, despite the books' systematic presentation of abundant evidence that the events of Eden were part of the Greeks' collective cultural memory, and that their interpretation of those events made up the very *raison d'être* of their religious system.

The first part of my prayer for the near future is that both books will develop a Christian underground following; and that, during next year's Olympics in Athens, thousands of us will be able to explain to our doubting friends, in convincing detail, who Athena is and why the Greeks elevated her to a position of such undisputed supremacy. The second part of my prayer is that the True and Supreme Spirit of Light and Love will use these occasions so that our friends, in the words of the Apostle Paul, 'also may be happening upon the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.'²⁸

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15. Homer, Ref. 7, 846.
16. Homer, Ref. 7, 895.
17. See 2 Peter 2:5; Genesis 5:32 and 7:6.
18. Carpenter, T.H., *Art and Myth in Ancient Greece*, Thames and Hudson, Illus. 87, London, 1991. Carpenter says 'Old man of the sea', but 'Salt Sea Old Man' is closer to the original Greek.
19. Johnson, R.B. Jr, *Athena and Eden: The Hidden Meaning of the Parthenon's East Façade*, Solving Light Books, Annapolis, pp. 99–104, 143; 2002; and Johnson, Ref. 4, pp. 121–131.
20. Johnson, Ref. 4, pp. 86–91.
21. Johnson, Ref. 4, pp. 152–155.
22. Johnson, Ref. 4, pp. 183–191.
23. Johnson, Ref. 19, pp. 116–118; and Johnson, Ref. 4, pp. 156–157.
24. Johnson, Ref. 19, pp. 66, 89–91; and Johnson, Ref. 4, pp. 161–164.
25. Johnson, Ref. 19, pp. 120–123; and Johnson, Ref. 4, pp. 167–181.
26. Johnson, Ref. 19, pp. 21–28.
27. See Johnson, R.B., Jr, The serpent worshippers, *TJ* 17(3):66–69, 2003.
28. 2 Timothy 2:10.

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