

Chick,

I think most of your ‘problem’ comes from framing the Q in scientific terms. Though valuable, science is not the only path to knowing. Myth, poetic truth (think ‘Hound of Heaven’ or “God’s Grandeur”), and ‘experiential’ knowing (as when a woman gives birth, or a man survives a trauma). The Woman KNOWS what *birth* means; the man understands the meaning of *LIFE*. All these are ways of knowing truth. Some truths are best ‘known’ NOT by a scientific methodology.

Your ‘problem’ with Adam & Eve, is a manufactured problem. Compare it to the Pharisees questioning Jesus about who is the husband of the woman when they get to heaven? Jesus shows it is only a problem bc they want it to be one.
Ditto w Original Sin.

A&E, Noah and the dimensions of his ARK are NON-problems, if you realize that the first 11 Chapters of Genesis are Hebrew Mythology.

What is a myth then? Just made-up fantasy? NOOOoo!!!

A MYTH IS:

- 1 a **story**
- 2 told by **a people**
(not like modern “myths” which are works of an **individual** author)
- 3 involving **Gods, heroes** and demi-gods [DEMI is Greek = HEMI in Latin]
- 4 which explain a **TRUTH,**
about something which cannot be explained scientifically

[We use the word MYTH to mean false in everyday speech. This is important to understand this idea: that myths are about what is TRUE. E.g., No one knew about evolution or the Big Bang, so the Bible has to explain creation in terms people knew! No one knew about electrons so how do you explain “fire and light” in the sky with lightning? How do we explain why the new baby looks like Grandma? They didn’t have DNA!]

5 and reveal the **VALUES** of a culture. A culture tells a myth about IMPORTANT values: in this case (A&E) 1- ALL humans are equal and 2 – WE messed it up; OUR fault, not the Gods.

Two other important aspects of myth are:

6 MYTH is passed on through **ORAL TRADITION**. Oral Tradition is reliable. The OT can be believed. Kids will automatically assume it can’t be trusted. Yet they believe everything found on the NET!

7 Heroes must **SUFFER**. [Ergo, Movie stars, etc. are not myth ‘heroes.’]
Applying this to A&E and the Garden of Eden;
1 - It is a story, not a news reel, revealing how God deals with US humans.
2- The Truth is that ALL humans are the same humanity!
(ergo story all have same 2 parents!)
3 - Noah ‘explains’ the 3 ‘races’ from his 3 sons. But races are still =!

[Today's idea of Multi-sourced hominids is not a problem, since we can all mate and reproduce. Neanderthals, Cro-Magnon, and Denisovans mated too!]

Then Why aren't we living forever? Why DEATH?

Ah, yes: 8 The problem of DEATH

The Babylonians said: the Gods were worried that we humans would just get smarter and become = to the Gods. (note ancients knew that man was getting more civilized as they looked on older civilizations.) But the Babylonians said the REASON, was that the God's introduced death so we wouldn't have enough time to catch up to them!

The Bible's answer was WE messed it up. That is the truth. Back to free will.

Note NONE of this **be explained scientifically!** It can't be proven.

But the 'story' of A&E DOES explain it,

according to our values

which we get from the Jews in the Bible.

a 2nd note

I wrote this to my friend of 62+ years, Chick who is a scientist. PhD in Astronomy.

RE: ***Role of MYTH in pre-literary societies***

Myths are basically stories to transmit the beliefs of a CULTURE, not of an individual. They cannot be proven by science. Think, no DNA before 1954; no Big Bang and expanding universe, no Denisovans or Max Planck Institute on human diversity. No understanding of psychosis, so SS talks about "possession".

RIVERS are important in MYTH

People first lived along rivers; rivers flood; So Rivers produce both GOOD and FLOODS [bad]. WHICH river? Where? misses the point. So people use what they KNOW.

There is a wonderful book, The River Sutra by Gita Mehta.

<http://www.supersummary.com/a-river-sutra/summary/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_River_Sutra

The River reveals certain "Truths" which differ according to the viewpoints of the characters; but, in typical Hindu fashion, each connects with the TRUTH of the River, which is ETERNAL and ever CHANGING—and always the SAME! Always THERE!

It looks at the River as a MYTH from various characters' points of view.

I used it my my World Mythology class.

E.g., all humans can intermarry, so the "same"; enter story of A & E! Explains our human unity. But there are differences. They saw 3 races, ergo the 3 Sons of Noah. Explains our diversity.

The first 11 Chs of Genesis are the Hebrew Mythology.

Someone realized that Idols cannot be in charge of the world. But WHO? Enter Abraham.

We Jews alone have only 1 God, ergo our FATHER must have been the one who did it.

ABRA/father; --HIM plural ending = superlative too. So hi is: The Greatest Father. Or Father of the Many.

So It cannot be proven that there was ONE MAN who signed his checks " *Abraham*"; but someone had to start the ONE GOD idea.

2nd example: Abraham about to be sacrificing his son but substituting a ram instead.

Fact: The ancient Palestinians practiced human sacrifice. WE Jews DON'T, so we tell a story. The story says: IT is enough to substitute an animal. This story of Abe and Isaac shows it is OK.

Finally, Looking for the Noah's ARK,

What were the dimensions for sure?

Finding the location of EDEN, where is it?

locating exactly where Abraham was sacrificing Isaac.

ALL miss the point. Hope this clarifies.

I had mention to Chick that CS Lewis, who was atheist, became a Xtian from his nightly walks with Dawson, an Anglican, and Tolkien, who was a Catholic. Yes, that Tolkien! Lewis had said:

"When we returned from our walk that night, I had accepted the LITERAL and MYTHOLOGICAL truth of XT." Chick questioned what Lewis meant by that, so I replied:

When CS Lewis said: "the Literal" he meant that XT and his story (the gospels and epistles) tell about a REAL person. Someone who walked in REALITY—during the time of Pontius Pilate, who was also REAL. When he says "Mythological" truth, he means all that Xt meant to Symbolize or was a *TYPE* of:

The **Lamb** of the Exodus;

the RAM, substitute for **Isaac**,

the **Suffering Servant** of Isaiah,

the "**WORD**" of God. [Our "Word" reveals who you or I are;

so XT reveals the Father (and Spirit) as **LOVE**—which is the **ESSE**nce of God.]

And he is the **New Adam**, the NEWLY RE-created MAN. Archetype for US to follow.

From Genesis:

--God formed man ***out of the clay*** of the ground. This forming man from clay is a universal myth. First, People live by rivers. Kids made toy people out of the clay, dried them, and played with them. There was no Toy Store to buy dolls.

In Hebrew there is a play on words: ADAM = huMAN compared to ADAMA, which means *Dirt*. Think about it. When we die our flesh turns to dust. The play on words IN ENGLISH would be clear if we said: God made **MAN** from the **MUD**.

Our **BONES** which last is another mythical idea. **BONES** signify strength. Break a bone and we become a cripple. Our bones last long after the flesh has turned back into dirt!--AFTER the Breath of God, in us, has gone!

I was teaching World Mythology, going over an African Myth. The God was forming man but didn't bake them enough. = White people. Then he baked some a little longer. = producing Arabs. Finally God got it right! God produced **US**, the **Black Africans**, baked **perfectly**.

Sager Gosai, a Hindu student, blurted: Mr Weaver, my grandma tells the same story, but in her story the first batch was not dark enough; then the next batch was baked too much, and came out TOO DARK; finally they baked some just right— US in India.