



THE ETERNAL JOURNEY II:

The Garden of Eden

IN THE SUMMER OF 1994 a Kurdish shepherd was watching his flock on a hillside in southeastern Turkey. There was a solitary mulberry tree on the hill that the locals regarded as “sacred.” As the shepherd was following his flock, he noticed a large, oblong stone on the ground.

“The man looked left and right: there were similar stone rectangles, peeping from the sands. Calling his dog to heel, the shepherd resolved to inform someone of his finds when he got back to the village. Maybe the stones were important.

“They certainly were important . . . [H]e’d made the greatest archaeological discovery ever — a site that has revolutionized the way we look at human history, the origin of religion — and perhaps even the truth behind the Garden of Eden.”¹

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Gobekli Tepe

“Known as Gobekli Tepe (pronounced Guh-behk-lee Teh-peh), the site is vaguely reminiscent of Stonehenge, except that Gobekli Tepe was built much earlier and is made not from roughly hewn blocks but from cleanly carved limestone pillars splashed with base reliefs of animals — a cavalcade of gazelles, snakes, foxes, scorpions, and ferocious wild boars. The assemblage was built some 11,600 years ago, seven millennia before the Great Pyramid of Giza. It contains the oldest known temple.”²

Located at the headwaters of the Tigris (Hiddekel) and Euphrates Rivers, Gobekli Tepe stands alone. There is no evidence of human habitation nearby. Built nearly 10,000 years BCE, “it is so old that it predates settled human life. It is pre-pottery, pre-writing, pre-everything. Gobekli hails from a part of human history that is unimaginably distant, right back to our hunter-gatherer past.”³

Gobekli and Eden

This awesome temple could well signify the Garden of Eden and the acknowledgement of the gift of the “bicameral” (two-sided) mind to humanity.^{4,5} With this gift God used hallucinatory voices in the right side of the human brain to instruct humans on what to do. These instructions were

then transmitted to the left side of the brain to initiate responsive interaction.

This possessional⁶ blessing for/to/with mankind was regarded by human beings as the Edenic (“delight”) phase of their existence. In this context, Gobekli was not a symbol of human re-ligation (“religion”) to God but rather the metaphor for mankind’s sense of ligation (“ligion”) to God.

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Endnotes

1. Tom Knox, “Do these mysterious stones mark the site of the Garden of Eden?” at www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech//article-1157784/.
2. Charles C. Mann, “The Birth of Religion: The World’s First Temple,” *National Geographic* 219, no. 6 (June 2011): 34-59.
3. Knox, “mysterious stones.”
4. See “The Eternal Journey: Prologue,” *Outlook* (March/April 2012).
5. See Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1976, 1979), pp. 100-125.
6. See “The Divine Struggle for ‘I’ and ‘Thou’ IV: Possession,” *Outlook* (January 2010).