

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:16,312

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:16,312 --> 00:00:20,839

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations, but not necessarily

3

00:00:20,839 --> 00:00:27,929

the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

4

00:00:27,929 --> 00:00:35,781

The Bible says mankind's first home was a garden paradise called Eden.

5

00:00:35,781 --> 00:00:38,545

God created Adam and Eve to tend the garden.

6

00:00:38,545 --> 00:00:44,874

He warned them never to eat from the tree of knowledge.

7

00:00:44,874 --> 00:00:49,441

One day a serpent hissed a jealous message to Eve.

8

00:00:49,441 --> 00:01:08,429

If you eat the forbidden fruit, you will become as wise as your Creator.

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00:01:08,429 --> 00:01:29,180

The first woman and man succumbed to temptation.

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00:01:29,180 --> 00:01:33,146

God feared his creations would next eat from the tree of life.

11

00:01:33,146 --> 00:01:39,716

He cast Adam and Eve from the garden and gave mankind a legacy of earthly toil.

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00:01:39,716 --> 00:01:52,415

There is another legacy, a longing to rediscover the place where it all began.

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00:01:52,415 --> 00:01:56,341

The dawn of civilization is thought to have occurred in that part of the world we now

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00:01:56,341 --> 00:01:58,624

call the Middle East.

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00:01:58,624 --> 00:02:03,031

The great pyramids of Egypt have endured nearly 5,000 years.

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00:02:03,031 --> 00:02:10,842

In the epic journey of mankind, however, they are relatively recent milestones.

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00:02:10,842 --> 00:02:16,090

The builders of the pyramids grappled with the same question that puzzles modern men.

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00:02:16,090 --> 00:02:18,694

Where did it all begin?

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00:02:18,694 --> 00:02:25,063

One answer lies in the Judeo-Christian tradition of an earthly paradise that existed somewhere

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00:02:25,063 --> 00:02:26,746

in the Middle East.

21

00:02:27,106 --> 00:02:31,032

Biblical scholars have devoted lifetimes to interpreting the section of Genesis which

22

00:02:31,032 --> 00:02:33,276

describes the location of Eden.

23

00:02:33,276 --> 00:02:38,684

A passage in the Old Testament states that Eden was watered by a stream which rose out

24

00:02:38,684 --> 00:02:46,415

of the garden and branched out into four rivers, the Tigris, Euphrates, Peshon and Gion.

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00:02:46,415 --> 00:02:51,943

The Tigris and Euphrates are familiar enough, but what are the Peshon and Gion?

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00:02:51,943 --> 00:02:54,467

Where are they in the modern world?

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00:02:55,469 --> 00:03:01,598

The great river of Egypt is the Nile, thought by some to be the Gehon of Genesis.

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00:03:01,598 --> 00:03:06,485

There would be no city of Cairo without the Nile, only desert.

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00:03:06,485 --> 00:03:10,491

To the ancients, the river was a god.

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00:03:10,491 --> 00:03:15,498

All their great monuments and temples were built near its banks.

31

00:03:24,512 --> 00:03:38,533

The obelisk at Karnac took nearly a decade to quarry, transport and erect.

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00:03:38,533 --> 00:03:42,539

The holiest of monuments here was not stone, however.

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00:03:42,539 --> 00:03:47,546

It was the sacred pool, symbol of life in the desert.

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00:03:47,546 --> 00:03:51,552

Water is a recurrent theme in all accounts of mankind's beginnings.

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00:03:51,552 --> 00:03:58,562

If we assume that the Nile is the western boundary of the search for Eden, it is to the rising sun

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00:03:58,562 --> 00:04:02,568

that we must look for clues to the location of the fourth river.

37

00:04:06,574 --> 00:04:12,583

The east of Karnac is the Red Sea, separating Africa from the Arabia and Peninsula.

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00:04:12,583 --> 00:04:19,594

Fraders and tankers have recently inundated these waters, but the coast of Arabia is no stranger to commerce.

39

00:04:20,595 --> 00:04:26,604

Jidda is the major seaport, bustling with the enormous wealth Arab oil has brought.

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00:04:26,604 --> 00:04:34,616

Modern office buildings are rising from the arid soil, rapidly crowding out the ramshackle structures of an earlier, quieter time.

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00:04:34,616 --> 00:04:41,626

Jidda is the Arabic word for grandmother, and although the city is the gateway to the holiest shrines of Islam,

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00:04:41,626 --> 00:04:45,632

it has great significance to Christians and Jews as well.

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00:04:46,634 --> 00:04:54,646

A rubble-strewn plot of ground is all that remains of a great Christian shrine destroyed by Muslim zealots in 1928.

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00:04:54,646 --> 00:05:00,655

The shrine marked the legendary tomb of Eve, grandmother of humanity.

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00:05:02,658 --> 00:05:06,664

The burden of their fall from grace weighed heavily on Adam and Eve.

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00:05:06,664 --> 00:05:10,670

Tradition has it they separated when they were cast out from Eden.

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00:05:10,670 --> 00:05:14,676

Eve made her way across the desert to the place that is her namesake.

48

00:05:14,676 --> 00:05:17,680

Jidda. There she died.

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00:05:20,684 --> 00:05:25,692

Of all the modern Arab states, Arabia clings most tenaciously to its past.

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00:05:25,692 --> 00:05:32,702

It is the land of Mohammed, and long before him, the great Jewish king Solomon, mind gold here.

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00:05:32,702 --> 00:05:37,710

Legends are not easily dismissed in a place with such a rich history.

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00:05:38,711 --> 00:05:41,716

Arabia is a land of seeming contradictions.

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00:05:41,716 --> 00:05:46,723

gasoline is virtually free, but water is sold for 25 cents a glass.

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00:05:46,723 --> 00:05:50,729

Part of the price perhaps for Eve's temptation.

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00:05:53,734 --> 00:05:57,740

And it taught the toil was the legacy of Adam and Eve's fall.

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00:05:59,743 --> 00:06:05,751

The same tradition which says Eve wandered in the desert says Adam struggled in the Judean wilderness.

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00:06:07,754 --> 00:06:13,763

In Judea, nomads still tend their flocks in the hills above the Dead Sea.

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00:06:16,768 --> 00:06:22,777

Beyond the wilderness is Jerusalem, where the old ways are honored as they are in Jidda.

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00:06:27,784 --> 00:06:32,792

Highest Jews chant prayers at a wall built 2,000 years ago by Herod.

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00:06:33,793 --> 00:06:40,804

Near this sacred and ancient place, Adam is said to have emerged from the wilderness.

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00:06:40,804 --> 00:06:48,815

A beautiful mosque stands above Herod's wall. It is among the most sacred shrines of the Muslim faith.

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00:06:50,818 --> 00:06:55,826

The delicate Arabic script inlaid in tile is from the Quran.

63

00:06:56,827 --> 00:07:04,839

It tells of Mohammed's struggle to return mankind to the purity Eden represents to all faiths.

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00:07:04,839 --> 00:07:11,850

The great dome of the mosque falls an ancient place with immense religious significance.

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00:07:11,850 --> 00:07:17,859

On an ancient rock, Abraham is said to have offered to sacrifice his son.

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00:07:17,859 --> 00:07:22,866

Mohammed is believed to have stepped from the rock into heaven.

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00:07:22,866 --> 00:07:28,875

It is also the place one tradition says where Adam returned to die.

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00:07:28,875 --> 00:07:34,884

The persistent question remains, where is the fourth river mentioned in Genesis?

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00:07:38,890 --> 00:07:42,896

The traditional resting places of Adam and Eve are east of the Nile,

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00:07:42,896 --> 00:07:47,903

east of Jidda and Jerusalem, of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

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00:07:47,903 --> 00:07:54,914

In the second millennium before Christ, that part of the world watered by the two rivers was ruled by the Assyrians.

72

00:07:54,914 --> 00:08:01,924

They were searching for paradise too and may have found it in the great gulf with the Tigris and Euphrates empty.

73

00:08:05,930 --> 00:08:08,935

I am Asher Bonifall, king of the Assyrians.

74

00:08:08,935 --> 00:08:11,939

My legions are the most powerful on earth.

75

00:08:11,939 --> 00:08:16,947

From Mesopotamia, we strike west into Egypt and south into the Gulf of Arabi.

76

00:08:16,947 --> 00:08:22,955

There is great wealth in the Gulf, wealth to feed my armies, but there is more.

77

00:08:22,955 --> 00:08:25,960

Stories of a place called Dilman.

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00:08:25,960 --> 00:08:33,972

It is said that no one dies there and the natives pluck pearls from the ocean like dates from the palm.

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00:08:33,972 --> 00:08:37,978

If there is such a place, it shall be mine.

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00:08:38,979 --> 00:08:43,987

Into the Gulf, Asher Bonifall sent advance elements of his army.

81

00:08:43,987 --> 00:08:46,991

The scouts returned with incredible reports.

82

00:08:49,996 --> 00:08:53,000

It seemed there was a land called Dilman.

83

00:08:53,000 --> 00:08:58,008

The inhabitants did pluck pearls from the ocean like dates from a palm.

84

00:09:02,014 --> 00:09:05,018

Flowers bloomed, sending the air with their perfume.

85

00:09:05,018 --> 00:09:08,022

The date palms were heavy with fruit.

86

00:09:08,022 --> 00:09:12,028

Asher Bonifall's men had never seen such abundance.

87

00:09:12,028 --> 00:09:16,034

Everywhere there was greenery, lush and inviting.

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00:09:18,037 --> 00:09:22,043

On a Dilman seal, a tree flanked by two mysterious figures.

89

00:09:22,043 --> 00:09:30,055

The record of Asher Bonifall's expedition gives us one of the earliest indications that Adam and Eve's garden might have existed.

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00:09:30,055 --> 00:09:33,060

Might still exist.

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00:09:34,061 --> 00:09:40,070

Thus, the key to finding Eden and the fourth river of Genesis may lie in finding Dilman.

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00:09:40,070 --> 00:09:43,075

Somewhere in the Persian Gulf.

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00:09:49,084 --> 00:09:53,089

To understand the Middle East, one must study the sea.

94

00:09:57,095 --> 00:10:03,104

Long before the ancient Phoenicians were probing the Mediterranean from their harbors in modern day Lebanon,

95

00:10:03,104 --> 00:10:08,112

a great ocean gulf separating Arabia from Persia was already alive with commerce.

96

00:10:11,116 --> 00:10:16,124

The same tools and techniques that built ancient sailing ships are still in use today.

97

00:10:19,128 --> 00:10:23,134

Nautical craftsmanship has been handed down through a hundred generations.

98

00:10:23,134 --> 00:10:30,145

With little more than a saw and their memories, these men build the sturdy boats that sail the Gulf.

99

00:10:34,151 --> 00:10:38,156

From Arabia in the west come ships laden with date wine and spun cotton.

100

00:10:38,156 --> 00:10:44,165

From Persian cities in the east, the ships return with exotic vegetables and spices from India.

101

00:10:49,173 --> 00:10:56,183

Many nations have claimed the Gulf as their own. One place has seen them all come and move on.

102

00:10:57,185 --> 00:11:01,191

Bukrain is a small island off the east coast of Arabia.

103

00:11:01,191 --> 00:11:07,200

Its people have enjoyed an influence far beyond their numbers or the size of their homeland.

104

00:11:11,206 --> 00:11:16,213

Through Bukrain's seaport at Manama City flows the wealth of the Gulf.

105

00:11:20,219 --> 00:11:25,226

The islands have been independent only since 1971.

106

00:11:27,229 --> 00:11:35,241

Before that, Bukrain was a British protectorate. Before that, it was Persian. Before that, Portuguese.

107

00:11:38,246 --> 00:11:43,253

Many nations have ruled Bukrain, but she has always retained an exotic individuality.

108

00:11:46,258 --> 00:11:50,264

Perhaps nowhere else in the Arab world is there a stronger work ethic.

109

00:11:56,273 --> 00:12:00,279

The day begins early. By noon, it is too hot to work.

110

00:12:17,304 --> 00:12:19,307

Breakfast may be fresh Arab bread.

111

00:12:20,308 --> 00:12:26,317

A bitter green coffee is ritually shared by merchants preparing for the day.

112

00:12:29,322 --> 00:12:33,328

By 5 a.m., the vegetable market is ready for business.

113

00:12:33,328 --> 00:12:40,338

Eat Vendor is a specialist selling melon from Egypt, citrus from Lebanon, or lush homegrown produce.

114

00:12:40,338 --> 00:12:44,344

The merchants squat in the dust, ready to bargain.

115

00:12:45,346 --> 00:12:48,350

It has been this way for thousands of years.

116

00:12:50,353 --> 00:12:55,360

Bukrain has a resiliency that allows old and new to exist in harmony.

117

00:12:55,360 --> 00:12:59,366

A modern refinery turns Saudi Arabian oil into gasoline.

118

00:12:59,366 --> 00:13:02,371

The Bukranis have little oil themselves.

119

00:13:02,371 --> 00:13:06,377

They do have the ability to exploit a good thing when they see it.

120

00:13:07,378 --> 00:13:13,387

By being invaluable to bigger, more powerful neighbors, Bukrain assures its unique place.

121

00:13:14,389 --> 00:13:15,390

In the world.

122

00:13:20,398 --> 00:13:27,408

The pulse of the gulf may well be the rush of oil through pipelines, but oil plays no part in genesis.

123

00:13:30,413 --> 00:13:34,419

Water is the fluid of Eden, nectar of the desert.

124

00:13:35,420 --> 00:13:41,429

To keep decorative trees alive under Bukrain's brutal sun, they must be watered daily.

125

00:13:41,429 --> 00:13:44,433

Water is Bukrain's secret.

126

00:13:49,441 --> 00:13:56,451

The potter's kiln is built into a huge rock mound that may tell much about Bukrain's special relationship with water.

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00:13:56,451 --> 00:13:59,456

There are dozens of the large mounds on the island.

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00:14:00,457 --> 00:14:05,465

Archaeologist P. B. Cornwall was the first to recognize their significance.

129

00:14:05,465 --> 00:14:10,472

In 1940, he dug into one of the mounds and discovered that it was a tomb.

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00:14:10,472 --> 00:14:12,475

Probably a royal tomb.

131

00:14:12,475 --> 00:14:15,480

And probably older than the Great Pyramid at Giza.

132

00:14:15,480 --> 00:14:20,487

5,000 years older than the modern graveyard at its base.

133

00:14:23,492 --> 00:14:28,499

There are perhaps 50,000 people who have been buried in the tomb.

134

00:14:29,500 --> 00:14:32,505

There are several smaller mounds on the island.

135

00:14:32,505 --> 00:14:35,509

Most of them long since looted.

136

00:14:41,518 --> 00:14:45,524

They tell us that the ancient population of Bukrain was large and affluent.

137

00:14:45,524 --> 00:14:50,532

Rich enough to accord death, a status surpassed only by the pharaohs of Egypt.

138

00:14:50,532 --> 00:14:56,541

And they place this lost civilization in the same millennium as the Assyrian domination of the north.

139

00:14:56,541 --> 00:15:05,554

When King Ashurbanapal sent his men to find Dilmun, they returned with reports of a civilization that defied death.

140

00:15:05,554 --> 00:15:10,561

Near Anoasis is the ghost of a much later military expedition.

141

00:15:10,561 --> 00:15:18,573

In the 16th century, the Portuguese invaded Bukrain and built a fort to protect their trade route to the far east.

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00:15:18,573 --> 00:15:30,591

Without realizing it, the invaders were building on the ruins of a civilization that had dominated the same trade routes long before their Portuguese ancestors had ever put to sea.

143

00:15:33,596 --> 00:15:39,605

The first major excavation of the site was begun in 1953 by Professor Jeffrey Bibby.

144

00:15:39,605 --> 00:15:44,612

It revealed a sophisticated dwelling, complete with what appears to be an altar.

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00:15:45,614 --> 00:15:53,626

More intriguing was the discovery of a limestone basin, which probably held fresh water.

146

00:15:53,626 --> 00:16:03,640

The reservoir fed into a wall channel built 20 feet below the surface of the ground, clearly an

advanced irrigation system.

147

00:16:04,642 --> 00:16:13,655

The underground water supply could be tapped from well-liked chimneys constructed along the course of the channel.

148

00:16:17,661 --> 00:16:24,672

Bibby thought they probably served the additional function of allowing silt deposits to be removed from the waterway.

149

00:16:25,673 --> 00:16:33,685

Dozens of the stone chimneys appear in the desert at intervals of about 100 yards.

150

00:16:33,685 --> 00:16:40,696

Fresh water remains abundant elsewhere on the island, welling up from the ground to fill natural rock basins.

151

00:16:40,696 --> 00:16:44,701

Bukrain is surrounded by the salt waters of the Gulf.

152

00:16:44,701 --> 00:16:51,712

The sea is absorbed into the limestone bedrock of the island and percolates upward in a natural stream.

153

00:16:51,712 --> 00:16:58,722

The result is the most wonderful of all things in the desert, a miracle, an oasis.

154

00:17:01,727 --> 00:17:07,736

If we are to believe Genesis, then Adam and Eve must have crawled in just such a place.

155

00:17:22,758 --> 00:17:28,767

Perhaps we have found the fourth river which the Bible says takes us to Eden.

156

00:17:28,767 --> 00:17:33,774

It may very well be the great river flowing beneath Bukrain.

157

00:17:37,780 --> 00:17:41,786

Where there is water in Bukrain, the desert explodes with life and color.

158

00:17:41,786 --> 00:17:45,792

If we take Genesis as a mixture of revelation and allegory,

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00:17:45,792 --> 00:17:50,800

then it is likely the author had a real place in mind when he described Eden.

160

00:17:53,804 --> 00:17:59,813

He might have been familiar with the Sumerian legend of the semi-divine king named Gilgamesh.

161

00:18:00,815 --> 00:18:05,822

In search of immortality, Gilgamesh travels to the land of Dilmourne.

162

00:18:07,825 --> 00:18:11,831

There, Gilgamesh learns that he must pursue the flower of immortality,

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00:18:11,831 --> 00:18:14,835

which is found at the bottom of the sea.

164

00:18:14,835 --> 00:18:18,841

By eating the flower, Gilgamesh will become immortal.

165

00:18:19,843 --> 00:18:22,847

The story doesn't end halfway.

166

00:18:26,853 --> 00:18:30,859

A serpent appears, steals the flower and eats it.

167

00:18:30,859 --> 00:18:35,867

A man's old adversary once again robs him of everlasting life.

168

00:18:35,867 --> 00:18:40,874

The biblical similarities are obvious. There is more, however.

169

00:18:41,876 --> 00:18:48,886

The flower of immortality at the bottom of the sea could be a figure of speech for the pearls Bukrain is famous for.

170

00:18:52,892 --> 00:18:56,898

The ancient inhabitants of Bukrain had a peculiar custom.

171

00:18:56,898 --> 00:18:59,902

In their burial mounds, they placed a basket.

172

00:18:59,902 --> 00:19:03,908

Inside the basket, they placed a basket of flowers.

173

00:19:03,908 --> 00:19:08,916

Inside the basket, they placed a snake and a symbolic pearl.

174

00:19:10,919 --> 00:19:15,926

On Bukrain, as in Genesis, the garden gives way to desert.

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00:19:15,926 --> 00:19:22,937

Few creatures willingly leave the oasis to take their chances in the wilderness just beyond the last blade of grass.

176

00:19:23,938 --> 00:19:29,947

Adam and Eve had a choice. They chose knowledge instead of life and were cast out.

177

00:19:30,949 --> 00:19:35,956

Magkind's prospects seemed bleak, as bleak as the interior of Bukhrain.

178

00:19:36,958 --> 00:19:41,965

If there is a single lesson to be learned from the great faiths, however, perhaps it is hope.

179

00:19:42,967 --> 00:19:45,971

The tree of life may not be lost forever.

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00:19:46,972 --> 00:19:53,983

In one last astonishing parallel to the biblical Eden, we find a great tree growing in the Bukhrain waste.

181

00:19:53,983 --> 00:19:56,987

It seems to thrive where nothing else can.

182

00:19:56,987 --> 00:20:01,995

In shade, beckons across the sun-hade and desert floor.

183

00:20:09,005 --> 00:20:17,017

Few of the people who live on this island have ever heard of the Garden of Eden, yet they call this the tree of life.

184

00:20:18,019 --> 00:20:25,029

If we never again achieve the Garden, it will certainly not be because we lost our way in our dreams.

185

00:20:28,034 --> 00:20:39,050

There is intense curiosity among a handful of scholars and scientists who know that the real story of Bukhrain hasn't been told.

186

00:20:40,051 --> 00:20:47,062

Money for archaeological work is always scarce, and what there is of it is more likely to be spent on glamour digs in Egypt.

187

00:20:48,063 --> 00:20:56,075

Those who work here do so out of deep commitment. Piecing together a lost civilization is not as easy as piecing together a pot.

188

00:20:57,077 --> 00:21:04,087

Time may be running out. Saudi Arabia plans to build a causeway from the mainland to Bukhrae.

189

00:21:04,087 --> 00:21:08,093

It will cut through thousands of Dilm-1 burial mounds.

190

00:21:10,096 --> 00:21:15,104

It would be tragic to lose the Garden of Eden a second time.

191

00:21:16,105 --> 00:21:28,123

Coming up next, a hijacker wires herself with dynamite and demands the release of her lover from prison on FBI, The Untold Stories.

192

00:21:29,124 --> 00:21:36,135

Then on History's Crimes and Trials, the story of one of the most brazen heists of modern time, the U.S. Brinks Robbery.

193

00:21:36,135 --> 00:21:45,148

And tomorrow night on Danger Central, electrical line workers go on high-voltage suicide missions at 10, here on the History Channel.