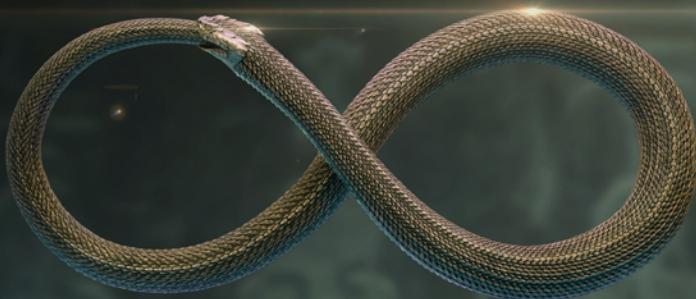




THE SERPENTINE PROPHECY



THE STORY YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO HEAR

STUDY GUIDE

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THE SERPENTINE PROPHECY

1

Sometimes, the findings of archaeologists reveal that our ancient ancestors weren't as primitive as we supposed. Why do you think many people automatically assume that we are more advanced than our ancestors simply because they lived in a previous era? Can you think of ways in which, perhaps, our ancestors were more correct than we are today?

2

Egypt was a highly advanced civilization, and in some ways it became a cradle for the Israelite nation. (Slavery in Egypt was at least a formative influence on the mindset of the Israelites.) What does Hebrews 11:24-29 reveal about the nature of this ancient empire as compared to the worldview of the children of Israel?

3

The writings of Hermes Trismegistus and other ancient pagan luminaries insist that God's thoughts permeated the universe—as a kind of mist—before anything material was created. In *some* regards, there is *some* slight agreement with the perspective of the Bible regarding God's place in the universe. What do the following texts reveal about the nature of God and creation?

a. Psalm 90:2

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b. Proverbs 8:22-30

c. Colossians 1:15, 16; Micah 5:2

4

The ancient Egyptians and Greeks came to the conclusion that because God's thoughts are pure and the physical world is imperfect, then the physical world must be a mistake—a downgrade from what should have been a purely spiritual existence. How does Genesis 1:26-31 differ with that conclusion?

5

Philosophers like Plato could point to the suffering and imperfections of our current world as proof that physical existence was not desirable. If God insists that His creation was good, and it was the work of Christ Himself (see John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15, 16; Hebrews 1:1, 2), how do we account for the hardship associated with living on this planet? (Genesis 3:17-19)

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6

In spite of the hardship we brought on ourselves, God holds out a promise to the human race. What hope do we have to look forward to? (Revelation 21:1-5)

7

Quite opposite to the ancient pagans, many of today's secular thinkers insist that we have a *purely* material existence—without a spiritual component—and that the phenomenon of human existence emerged by chance through the dance of colliding atoms over billions of years. This perspective fails, however, to account for the emergence of *consciousness*—the self-awareness that allows human beings to contemplate their own existence . . . and to wonder about the *meaning* of life. With Ecclesiastes 3:11 in mind, what kinds of things do people contemplate that seem to indicate that we are not likely here by accident? In what ways do you think we have “eternity in our hearts”?

