

was the domestication of animals. The wild dog was the first animal domesticated, although we are not certain where this occurred. Sheep are thought to have been domesticated about 9,000 B.C. in what is now northern Iraq (ancient Mesopotamia). Man was still nomadic, however, as he had to constantly move his sheep and cattle to fresh pasture. Civilization depends on a settled community and had to await cultivated agriculture.

The Jordan Valley in Palestine is unique in the history of man, for it is here, in the ancient oasis of Jericho and similar sites in Israel and Jordan, that settlements began to take a permanent shape and that cultivated agriculture is first known to have developed, in the burst of vegetation that followed the close of the Ice Ages, wild wheat appeared in the Middle East. The ancient people of Jericho and similar villages harvested this wild wheat with sickles made of flint pieces embedded in horn or bone.

Two unique developments (J. Bronowski calls them "genetic accidents") are then thought to have happened. The first "gift of nature" was the cross between wild wheat and native goat grass to produce a hybrid wheat called *emmer*. Emmer produced a much plumper head of grain for the harvest. Although probably cultivated, its seeds scattered in the wind the way other wild grasses do today.

The second "genetic accident" was truly a marvel. Emmer crossed with another type of wild goat grass and produced a still larger hybrid: bread wheat. The seeds of bread wheat do not scatter in the wind. They must be removed from the stalk by man and planted to spread and propagate. Man and wheat came together in Jericho to found the world's first and oldest known city. A settled way of life had become possible. Civilization could begin.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Current records indicate that civilization began along the Tigris-Euphrates river complex and in the oasis of Jericho in the Jordan Valley. It was there that man and water and bread wheat came together to begin the agricultural revolution. With the scientific record placing the beginning of human civilization in the same place as the biblical record places it, the question of the reality of the Garden of Eden instantly confronts even the secular scholar. Science and Scripture have met again, this time at the origin of man himself.

The search for the Garden of Eden starts with its geographical