

1. The Tower of Babel

Terrie Lambert, 28.10.2022

Youtube Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWvW0yYSS00>

[00:00:05.390] - Terrie

Our loving God in heaven. We thank you for bringing us safely through another week. And as we count down to the Sabbath hours, we count our blessings, your goodness and longsuffering towards us. Our needs are met, and yet I know that there are people that are struggling and are in difficulty. And yet Lord, we we know that Your providential hand is overall. We ask that you would be with us tonight as we come to study together to enter into the Sabbath hours with Your presence and with Your spirit. Please guide and direct this discussion, open our minds to the things that are relevant for us today. And I just pray for all present and all joining and all our members around the world, especially those in the islands that have already opened the Sabbath. May you be with them. And we ask in Jesus name, Amen.

[00:01:07.050] - Terrie

Our study is going to be on Atheism. During the Vespers program for the first half of the year, atheism was a topic and we looked at New Atheism and particularly the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. There was Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett and Sam Harris.

[00:01:39.990] - Terrie

And New Atheism was a very aggressive form of Atheism that developed out of 9/11, 2001. The attack of radical Islam on the Twin Towers. And so even though these men directed their animosity towards all religions, really they were particularly pointed with Islam and Allah. That is one form of Atheism that was looked at earlier in the year. But we want to have a look at Atheism in a more broader understanding and other manifestations of Atheism that can also impact us. We went to an Ellen White quote. Because what we want to understand is: Is Atheism a religion? And we went to Great Controversy, chapter 38. And after Ellen White quotes Revelation 18:1-2,4 she makes the following statement. Rachel, are you able to read that passage?

[00:03:20.000] - Rachel

Hi Terry, I just sat down. Yes, let me have a quick look. The Scripture points forward to a time when announcement of the fall of Babylon as made by the second angel of Revelation 14:8 is to be repeated with additional mention of corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon. Since that message was first given in the summer of 1844, a terrible condition of the religious world is here described.

[00:03:54.880] - Terrie

Thank you, Rachel. In describing Babylon, she quotes Revelation 18 and is explaining that it is a repetition of Revelation 14 with additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon. Babylon is constituted of various organizations and then she also uses the term 'religious world'. Babylon is comprised of various organizations, but they are religious. Where does Atheism fit into that? We understand that Babylon is that great city. That great city is divided into three the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The beast being Catholicism, false prophet being apostate Protestantism. And the dragon, we understand, is spiritualism. Within the framework of spiritualism, you will find atheism it comes under the category of spiritualism. And what we want to show is that it is a religion. It can be seen as a religion. And so it fits into that paragraph that Ellen White was saying there in Great Controversy. It's part of the dragon. If you've got your Bibles, go to Ezekiel, chapter 29. Ezekiel 29. Katherine, are you able to read Ezekiel 29, verses two and three?

[00:07:05.030] - Terrie

Katherine, are you with us? Have you got audio problems?

[00:07:15.310] - Terrie

I think we've lost Katherine.

[00:07:18.270] - Rachel

What was the verses Terry?

[00:07:21.410] - Terrie

Ezekiel, chapter 29, verses two and three?

[00:07:26.050] - Rachel

I can read it for you.

[00:07:28.340] - Terrie

Thanks, Rachel.

[00:07:30.390] - Rachel

Son of men, set thy face against Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt. Speak and say thou, sayeth the Lord God. Behold, I am against the Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon that lies in the midst of this river, which has said, my river is my own, and I have made it for myself.

[00:07:55.390] - Terrie

Thank you, Rachel. I hope you're back with this, Katherine. Oh, I don't see her. I hope she's sorts out her Internet. This is a prophecy against Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And what do we call the king of Egypt? He's got another title. Anybody?

[00:08:25.220] - Marilyn

King of the south.

[00:08:28.260] - Terrie

Thank you, Marilyn. King of the south. And we know we can align Egypt with France, who's the king of the south, with the USSR, which is the king of the south. And here in this passage, the king of the south is referred to as the great dragon. He lies in the midst of his rivers, and what does he say? My river is my own. I own this. I have made it for myself. If you remember to what we have been discussing the last few weeks, when we look at Daniel, chapter 8, you can recognize that self exaltation that Pharaoh has, and yet he's referred to as a great red dragon. Sorry, not a great red dragon. A great dragon. He's not the red one. And contextually, you could argue that he's a crocodile, because the dragon just means a water monster, and there are water monsters in the Nile.

[00:09:26.430] - Terrie

If we were to look at that contextually, that's who he's being symbolized as. But we can't look past the fact that he's referred to as a dragon, and a dragon is a part of Babylon. We can see his mindset here, can't we? We can see how Pharaoh thinks, and it's not dissimilar to how the king of the north thinks. If we compared Pharaoh with Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar says, look at this great city that I have built by the might of my power and for the glory of my honor. And here Pharaoh says, look at this great river that I made all by myself. They have that same spirit, this dragon spirit, which is spiritualism, which is self worship. Even though this is the king of the south, we know that the king of the south and the king of the north are polar opposites, which means they have similarities. And this is one of their striking similarities, is the way that they perceive themselves. Here's Pharaoh, and we know Pharaoh and Egypt were idol worshipers. We usually align Atheism with Egypt, but in reality they were just that meant that they were hostile to the true god.

[00:11:03.240] - Terrie

They had their gods. We know they had Apis Bull and they had lots of other gods, frogs and whatever. But they were hostile to the true god. And that is also a mark of Atheism related to that. You don't necessarily have to not believe in any gods. Those gods that they did have represented self worship. Self worship and hostility to the true god. We can keep that in mind. Here we see spiritualism and connected to a dragon. And we know. Pagan Rome. When we went through the the prophetic lines of Daniel. Pagan Rome version one. The masculine little horn of Daniel 8, the beast of Daniel 7. And in Revelation twelve, it is the great red dragon. And Ellen White says that in a primary sense that represents Satan, but in a secondary sense it's Pagan Rome. So pagan Rome and Egypt are both dragon powers, but in a primary sense they represent Satan because the mindset of Satan was transferred down into those kingdoms. The point being here is that the king of the south and the king of the north have similar belief systems.

[00:12:42.120] - Terrie

Stop me at any time if you need to ask a question or make a comment. We compared Daniel 2, Daniel 7, Daniel 8. Daniel 11. We went over that history and last week I rubbed out the wrong side of the board, unfortunately. We'll keep Daniel 8 up. When we went into Daniel 8, and we went slowly and thoroughly through Daniel 8, we then stopped and made note of the counterfeit versus the true. We know when we look at Daniel 8, it's the story of counterfeit religions because it's sanctuary terminology and their counterfeit sacrifices, animal sacrifices, because they're not right. They've got blemishes. The Ram had one horn higher than the other and it gets broken. The hegoat had the big horn and the broken horns. We see that they represent counterfeit religions. What we did was we compared these kingdoms, which we called Satan's kingdoms, with God's kingdom. And we looked for the similarities that were counterfeited, if that's the right way of saying it. We looked at aspects of the kingdom. Because we understand that Satan was a created being. He can't create himself.

[00:14:44.760] - Terrie

All he can do is copy and he corrupts what he copies. He takes what is of God and he mimics it, but it's a corrupted copy. When we looked at these we looked at these kingdoms, how they represented in Daniel 8, we noticed what they all had in common. And what they had in common were horns. And when we went to Psalm 75, we saw that there are such a thing as righteous horns and wicked horns. The horns in Satan's kingdom are wicked. The horns in God's kingdom are righteous. And would somebody like to explain to us the difference between a righteous horn and a wicked horn?

[00:15:58.940] - Marie

I'm volunteering.

[00:16:01.260] - Terrie

Can you hear me? Yes.

[00:16:04.400] - Marie

A wicked horn is self exalting.

[00:16:12.160] - Terrie

Okay. Yes. You're not wrong, but you're using the wrong word.

[00:16:20.100] - Marie

Okay. Gadal is it?

[00:16:23.700] - Terrie

Gadal is the self exaltation. The horn is.

[00:16:35.440] - Marie

I'm sorry, I've forgotten.

[00:16:38.100] - Terrie

It's on the board. I can't read that. It's blurry. Oh, I'm sorry. Not better. A little bit.

[00:16:51.160] - Marie

What does it say? Self proclaim.

[00:16:54.020] - Terrie

Is it?

[00:16:54.890] - Marie

I still can't read it very well.

[00:16:57.660] - Terrie

Is everybody having trouble with the board?

[00:17:02.060] - Katherine

Yeah, it's blurry.

[00:17:04.380] - Terrie

Yes, it's very blurry. Blurry. Does that help?

[00:17:26.800] - Katherine

It's better.

[00:17:30.400] - Terrie

It's better.

[00:17:33.600] - Greg

It's self promotion.

[00:17:35.420] - Terrie

It's better.

[00:17:39.300] - Greg

It gets worse when you move it backwards.

[00:17:50.100] - Terrie

Okay. Self promotion. Marie, what was the righteous horn?

[00:18:03.380] - Marie

I probably jumped in too soon. I'm very sorry. I can't think what that would be.

[00:18:12.400] - Terrie

If this is self promotion, who promotes you in the God's Kingdom? Promotion comes from God. Promotion comes from the north. This is where God lifts you up. We went to Philippians, chapter two. We talked about Christ, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal. But he made himself of no reputation, so he emptied himself and then God highly exalted him. It's God that promotes. And then now we can go and look at the Gadal, which is what did they all have in common? They were all great. They've all got horns and they're all increasing in greatness. We'll put great here, which is the Gadal or Hubris, if you're a Greek. And that is self exaltation, as you said, Marie. We know that there has to be a true. Does anybody remember the first passage we went to to determine that that is actually what God does is he makes great? Ray.

[00:19:48.460] - Ray

Was it Genesis 12?

[00:19:51.040] - Terrie

Genesis 12. What happened in Genesis? What was the promise in Genesis 12? Ray.

[00:19:56.800] - Ray

He's talking to Abraham and he tells him that he will make him a great nation.

[00:20:07.840] - Terrie

Yes. On the condition that he gets out of Babylon and he leaves his family and he leaves his culture, and then God exalts. There's nothing evil about Gadal. It's about who does it, who exalts. Do you exalt yourself or does God exalt? Thank you, Ray. We also saw there were two hosts. One was the armies of Rome, and the other host was God's church. And what else? Sanctuaries. We had a sanctuary in Daniel 8, which was Quodesh only ever God's temple. And we have a sanctuary, Miqdes, which could be anything very generic. And one of the last ones, I think, was Prince, which was Christ. And over here, Prince, which was who? Graeme?

[00:22:02.600] - Graeme

Titus.

[00:22:04.620] - Terrie

Titus. What did Titus do in chapter 9? Chapter 9:26 put a stake in the ground. That was Cestius. What did Titus just do? Verse 26? Anybody? Ray?

[00:22:48.480] - Ray

Did he destroy the temple?

[00:22:51.620] - Terrie

He destroys the city and the temple. The city and the sanctuary. Titus destroys the city and the sanctuary. What does Christ do?

[00:23:07.840] - Ray

He restores the sanctuary.

[00:23:11.200] - Terrie

He destroyed the city and the sanctuary. And after three days, he rose it up again. You want to blame somebody for the destruction of the temple. Once he fulfilled the type. When type met antitype, then the message was to go out to all the world. So very much a counterfeit. Same, but different. Any thoughts on that? Destroy the city and the sanctuary. That's what got Christ in trouble, because he said not one stone to be turned left on one. He was prophesying of that, but he and he was talking of his body, because spiritually, his body was the temple. Anyway, you can see that analogy there. We called this culture wars. That there is a philosophy ideology of Satan's that has counterfeited and corrupted the philosophy and ideology of God's kingdom. Then we went to the 2520, and because in Daniel, chapter 8, we saw what the the daily was. The daily was the continual. I turned the board too early. What's continual? It's this philosophy of self exaltation and selfpromotion. It was in Babylon, it was in Medo Persia, it was in Greece, it was in Rome.

[00:25:18.600] - Terrie

It continues through its perpetual. The daily, the continual, is not only Gadal, but it's also represented in these horns, this self worship, self promotion, self exaltation. That's the daily. When we went to the 2520, we saw that what we've traditionally done with that is when we note that Babylon took away or Syria took away the northern kingdom. That the northern kingdom was trodden down for 2520 years. That we divide that up into two 1260s. So 1260 years god's people were trodden down by paganism, or what was commonly called the daily. And then 1260 years of Papalism. But when we understand the daily, it's just more than paganism. It doesn't stop in 538. It's not what is taken away. That taken away means what? Who'd like to explain the taken away. Greg.

[00:26:45.060] - Greg

Taken away means basically, it was transformed from one thing to another.

[00:26:52.900] - Terrie

Yes. The language of the Hebrew is it's lifted up and exalted. It's actually lifted up and paganism was exalted into Papalism. It was clothed in holy garments. So taken away. Do you remember the word, Greg?

[00:27:21.730] - Greg

Sorry, not off the top of my head. I'd have to read it.

[00:27:25.010] - Terrie

That's okay. It's 'Rum'. It wasn't 'Sur'. It wasn't removed. It changed, it morphed into something more palatable for that era. We look back and think, oh, it's the Dark Ages, it's so medieval. But this was actually seen at the time as a real step forward. Humanity was improving. They didn't see it as any they saw it as civilization becoming more cultured. They saw it as a definite improvement for society, for the world. The daily continues and then when we look at the Southern Kingdom and we do that, we see that we have to divide it even further. We see 1214 years of paganism, 1260 of Papalism, and then what is the continual over here? It's Protestantism. Which means we've got the dragon and the beast and the false prophet. Point being that the daily just never goes away. The daily is going to continue through the end. But here we see with the deadly wound. Took me a minute to work out what that meant, but the deadly wound here. But now we're going to see the daily change again and become even more deceptive, because it will be an acceptable change.

[00:29:29.510] - Terrie

So, any questions on the daily? We're all good on the daily.

[00:29:47.820] - Katherine

I don't know. I'll ask you a question, or comment. For that time, like acceptable for paganism at that time, and then when it morphs again, it's acceptable for Papalism at the time by the people, by the world, or is that what you're saying? And so now it's acceptable to the people in our time. In Protestantism.

[00:30:20.100] - Terrie

Yeah, it just seems like a logical evolution, an improvement. But it's the same essence, it's the same philosophy. It's being fought against. I mean, that's the purpose of Adventists here, is they were meant to stand up against the errors that were staying with Protestantism. Same as what's happening during the 1260 years. You always had Gods people that recognize that something is amiss here, but the majority just don't see it that way. They just see it as something that is improving on the past. And we know that it can't be an improvement. How do we know it can't be improvement? What's Daniel 2 teach.

[00:31:32.780] - Katherine

Deterioration.

[00:31:34.100] - Terrie

Deterioration. We see deterioration in Daniel 2, Daniel 7. And what Daniel 8 is adding to that equation is that what's getting worse is how they have taken on these pagan concepts, but dressed it up in acceptable cultured, language, rational language, but it is a deterioration. Just because technology has improved doesn't mean that, yeah, people's worldview improved. Then we went back and saw that even though we mark the daily or paganism as treading down God's people, starting to tread down God's people in 723 BC, that we can trace that right back to Heaven. This is an ideology that began in the mind of Satan. And we looked at two passages, Ezekiel 28, Isaiah 14, that spoke of the Prince of Tyre and of Lucifer and how this was the mind of Lucifer in heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will be like the most high. It was self exaltation, self promotion that he had in Heaven. The daily we can trace right back, it's continued from Lucifer's fall. He brought it down to earth and transferred it to Adam and Eve when he said, ye shall be as gods.

[00:33:48.790] - Terrie

It was self promotion, self exaltation, and they bought into it. And that's how sin entered the world. We see a new religion has developed here on the earth. Then they got problems that need to be solved. And it's in the solving of these problems that we see a deterioration of affairs between people on the earth. With Eden, what's the problem? The problem is Eve. Wandering Eves. What are you going to do to solve the problem of wandering Eves? Patriarchy. A wandering Eve caused all this in the first place. We have patriarchy, it's going to solve that problem. Then we have the problem of religious intolerance. How do we solve that problem? The problem of Cain with more intolerance, really? This is where you can trace church state relationships right back to Cain. Then you have the problem with Ham, and that's going to be solved by racism, by seeing different family lines being controlled. I don't want to go into that too much. But all I'm saying is that there are problems that have arisen since sin and people are going to attempt to solve those problems, but they're not doing it God's way.

[00:35:42.510] - Terrie

When patriarchy is introduced here, that's not how God would have solved the problem. It was the result of their sin. And same with false worship, same with racism, nationalism, it's the result. But those problems could have been solved another way. They've been solved through self exaltation, self promotion. How are we going to solve the Eve problem? Man exalts himself over woman. One nation will exalt themselves over another nation and bring them into captivity, into servitude, slavery. Any questions so far? Any thoughts? What we want to look at now is we want to go and relook at Genesis, chapter 11. I just rub that out. And I'm going to put the Tower of Babel here, Genesis 11. And I'm going to bring up three paragraphs from the Spirit of Prophecy, and let's remind ourselves of this history. Before we do that, if somebody's got their Bible, would they like to open up to Genesis 11 and perhaps read the first three verses?

[00:37:36.350] - Graeme

I can read that.

[00:37:38.350] - Terrie

Thank you, Graeme.

[00:37:40.670] - Graeme

The whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar. And they dwelt there. And they said to one another, go to, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

[00:38:02.970] - Terrie

And verse four.

[00:38:05.530] - Graeme

And they said, Go, let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach under heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

[00:38:18.830] - Terrie

Thank you, Graeme. Okay, let's revisit this in the spirit of prophecy. That's not the one. And I keep pulling up the same one. Let's just delete that one. That'll make it easier. This is chapter 10, Patriarchs and Prophets, the Tower of Babel. And Ellen White explains how God preserved the family of Noah and they were to repopulate the earth. She'll go into the problem with Ham. The sin of Ham. But we want to drop down to paragraph 4, page 118, paragraph 4. Can I have a volunteer to read that paragraph?

[00:39:31.780] - Marie

Yeah, I'm happy to read it for you.

[00:39:35.220] - Terrie

Thank you.

[00:39:38.100] - Marie

For a time, the descendants of Noah continued to dwell among the mountains where the ark had rested. As their numbers increased, apostasy soon led to division. Those who desired to forget their Creator and to cast off the restraint of his law felt a constant annoyance from the teaching and example of their Godfearing associates. And after a time, they decided to separate from the worshipers of God. Accordingly, they journeyed to the Plain of Shinar on the banks of the River Euphrates. They were attracted to the beauty of the situation, and the fertility of the soil. And upon this plain they were determined to make their home.

[00:40:33.560] - Terrie

Thank you, Marie. Okay, so what can we note here? How many groups of people do we have, Marie?

[00:40:49.090] - Marie

Two.

[00:40:51.090] - Terrie

Two. Who are the first group?

[00:40:57.890] - Marie

The first group is the godfearing group. And the second group is the ones that have separated and gone down onto the Plain of Shinar.

[00:41:13.370] - Terrie

Yes. And so the first group stay where.

[00:41:25.690] - Marie

They dwell among the mountains, where the Ark rested.

[00:41:31.070] - Terrie

Yes. You've got two groups. One is going to stay in the mountains where the Ark is. The other group are going to go down to the plain. The group that goes down to the plain they've desired, they've made a decision, it's a rational decision, you might call it, to forget their Creator. They don't want to keep his law, and they don't want to be annoyed by pious people. They're annoyed by the teaching and example, or we would say faith and practice, of those that remain up on the mountain, the God fearing associates. There's a separation. Two groups of people. Let's go to our next one. And who have we got that can read? Rachel, are you able to read again?

[00:42:37.350] - Rachel

Yeah, sure.

[00:42:39.110] - Terrie

Sorry, I can't see everybody's name when I'm sharing my screen.

[00:42:44.570] - Rachel

They decided to build a city and in a tower of such stupendous height as should render it The Wonder of the World. These enterprise was designed to prevent the people from scattering abroad in colonies. God had directed men to disperse throughout the earth, to replenish and subdue it. But these Babel builders

determined to keep their community united in one body and to find a monarchy that should eventually embrace the whole earth. Thus, their city would become their metropolis of the universal empire. Its glory would command the admiration and homage of the world and render the founders illustrious. The magnificent tower reached into the heavens was intended to stand as a monument of the power and the wisdom of its builders, perpetuating their fame to the latest generation.

[00:43:47.310] - Terrie

Thank you, Rachel. Let's dot down some points here about this second group of people that have moved to the plain. You've got people on a mountain and people on a plain. The people on the plain. Let's write this up here. I'll just keep the share screen up so that you can read it and then I'll close. They're going to build a city and a tower. And why are they going to build that? According to this paragraph? Just according to this paragraph, why are they building it?

[00:44:42.280] - Rachel

To stay united as one body.

[00:44:46.220] - Terrie

Yes. We'll put that up. They want to stay united. What had God wanted them to do? He wanted them to scatter. And they said, no, we're not scattering, we're going to stay united. No scattering. And yet what is their final aim, though? They're building a city and a tower, but eventually what do they want to do?

[00:45:31.740] - Marie

They want to found a monarchy.

[00:45:39.530] - Terrie

Yes. Okay, we'll put that up here. What's a monarchy?

[00:45:47.770] - Marie

A king

[00:45:51.150] - Terrie

Who's there king?

[00:45:58.750] - Marie

Who's their king?

[00:46:00.510] - Terrie

Who's their king? Not mentioned in the passage.

[00:46:08.290] - Marie

I guess it's Satan.

[00:46:10.770] - Terrie

No, not Satan. Anybody else? Who's the king. It's not mentioned in this passage. We got a chat. Hang on. Brodie.

[00:46:29.370] - Brodie

Nimrod.

[00:46:31.210] - Terrie

Nimrod. They plan to have an absolute monarchy or an absolute power, a supreme authority. And then with this city and their tower and their king, what do they eventually want to do? Ray, you put your hand up. Are you able to answer this question? What's their aim?

[00:47:01.170] - Ray

Was it world dominion? An Empire?

[00:47:05.970] - Terrie

Yes, empire. What's the words that are used? Universal empire. And for what purpose? For what purpose? Just in this paragraph here. What's the purpose? We've got a chat. Rachel?

[00:47:52.950] - Rachel

A monument.

[00:47:55.510] - Terrie

A monument. Why do you build monuments?

[00:48:03.140] - Rachel

To Remember.

[00:48:06.410] - Terrie

Yes, to remember what's the words here that mean remember? In that last sentence. You're right. What's the language that's used in the passage?

[00:48:26.270] - Moli

Perpetuating to fame.

[00:48:29.570] - Terrie

Perpetuating fame. Nobody's going to forget our celebrity. They want their fame to be perpetuated. You're not going to forget us. This is a monument. You'll always remember how good we are. Perpetuating their fame to the latest generations. Their name is going to live on. That's what they want. Any thoughts or questions on that paragraph? Rachel?

[00:49:14.890] - Rachel

I was thinking another counterfeit. When you compare, contrast a monument. The Sabbath is supposed to be a monument for us to remember for generations. And here we've got the counterfeit building monument. It's interesting.

[00:49:33.230] - Terrie

What did you say was the monument? I missed your word.

[00:49:38.430] - Rachel

The monument for the Sabbath.

[00:49:46.130] - Terrie

If we put the mountain people over here, we can do compare and contrast and we'll say, yes, the monument they're building was the Sabbath, which is part of the law. And it's the law that these plain people want to forget. I think I missed you, Josephine. Good point, Rachel.

[00:50:08.810] - Katherine

No, I'm all right, go on.

[00:50:15.900] - Terrie

Okay. Thank you. Graeme?

[00:50:20.990] - Graeme

I was just going to point out something similar to what Rachel said. It seems to be what we're looking at previously, that self exaltation. They've come down off of a mountain to a lower point and they've felt the need to build upwards to lift themselves up. That's self exaltation. It looks a lot like the imagery of Daniel 2.

[00:50:43.190] - Terrie

Yes. Even when you think of Daniel three, what was Nebuchadnezzar doing with the image of Daniel 2? He wanted to perpetuate his name, didn't he? He's going to make this monument. Nobody's going to forget who I am because it'll be out there on the plain of Jura forever. Everybody will know Nebuchadnezzar. This way everybody will know these people that's out on the plain of Shinar. The word Tower, actually, its root word, is Gadal. And I don't know if that has any great symbolic value, because of course it is. Because it's to lift yourself up, and a tower is to lift yourself up. It would stand to reason that it would be the root word of tower. So, yes. Perpetuating fame. Anybody else likes to add to that paragraph?

[00:51:41.590] - Moli

It's the same with that commandment where they were told not to create any image.

[00:51:52.460] - Terrie

So an images can look like different things, can't they? That's a really good point. Nebuchadnezzar. It was an obvious big idol, wasn't it? Was like an idol on steroids. But this city and Tower is an idol as well. They're building an idol, something that's going to be worshiped, something that's going to make sure that their notoriety, their fame, their wisdom, their glory is never going to be forgotten. Ray?.

[00:52:26.490] - Ray

I was thinking, as Graeme was speaking when he mentioned the statue in Daniel too, how the more time progresses, the lower it gets. You moving, literally in the symbol down the body. Getting lower and lower. You start out really high and you get lower. The more you try to lift yourself up, the lower you end up getting.

[00:52:53.850] - Terrie

Thank you. Josephine?

[00:53:01.400] - Josephine

Without lifting yourself up, you got to be lifting yourself up against something. If you're lifting yourself up against God, then you're lifting yourself to be as gods. Just a thought.

[00:53:19.520] - Terrie

Good thought, because what do we got back here? What's the original thought? You shall be as gods. And I'm sure we're all familiar enough with Nimrod to know that that's in here. But remember that they've decided that there is no God. So we see atheism here. And yet it is a religion. They are worshiping their own wisdom, their own glory, their own ingenuity, their own abilities. It really starts to institutionalize what a false worship would look like that's built on self. Thank you, Josephine. Moli?

[00:54:10.560] - Moli

Yeah, I'm just thinking where it originated, how they determined not to be scattered, like what was demanded of them, but to stay together and build themselves up. Like how it comes from Lucifer, when he's been demoted and he determined that he will rise above the stars and sit on the throne of God in the north. And we can see it's the same characters that these people inherited.

[00:54:43.470] - Terrie

In order to lift yourself up to self promote, to self exalt, you've actually got a tread on somebody else.

[00:54:49.420] - Moli

Yes.

[00:54:50.140] - Terrie

And what they're doing here in building the city and tower, the city is actually controlling the people. Their idea eventually is to be universal and to control everyone. But let's start off by just let's bring everybody in for a start. Let's get our city and tower. But then they want to go big. It's like go big or go home. They're going to go big. But first there's this control. So, yes, in order to self exalt, you have to tread on somebody else to do that. Josephine?

[00:55:32.970] - Josephine

I was just thinking on this mountain / plain dwelling. This is after the flood. It's because of sin that came about, the evil, the wickedness of the people. The idea is they were in, Cain was living in the city and God is wanting them to go away from being city dwellers and to be on the mountains, but they're going back again to dwelling in cities and exhausting themselves or lifting themselves up. The idea of the tower is connected to worship and doesn't necessarily have to be worshipping the God of Heaven, just doing that one thing, as she said. And reaching up to heaven. The idea is to build it, to reach up to heaven, probably to protect themselves from the flood.

[00:56:43.410] - Terrie

Again. We'll get to that point that's the next paragraph.

[00:56:51.970] - Josephine

Okay.

[00:56:52.630] - Terrie

Sorry. No, that's okay. We just wanted to pull out this paragraph here, but you did say something. What did you say at the beginning? Oh, yes. So generally, Adventists use these passage to show the evil of cities. And I want to stay away from that. God wanted them to move out, to spread across the whole earth. And then once the earth is populated, it's like when God said, go forth and multiply. That applied for a particular dispensation. It doesn't apply to us today. There's enough going forth and multiplication, there's enough children in the world, there's enough people, there's enough population. That directive by

God back in Genesis doesn't apply to us today. When God is saying, scatter, go out, spread across the world, that doesn't apply to us today either. This isn't a lesson or the morality or immorality of cities, because we can see here it's going to start with a city, but then they do want to scatter, they do want to spread out, but first you got to get control of what you got, and then you can go big. It's not necessarily the city here is walled in, and we can also bring in our understanding of Nimrod here and protection from wild animals, et cetera.

[00:58:39.810] - Terrie

But it's about controlling a population. You can control a population today. You don't need a city to do that. There are other ways. Once upon a time there were walls. Today there are barriers as well. But it's not city barriers. What time is it? I'd like us to read this last passage and then we'll pause on this point and come back to it. Greg, would you like to read this paragraph?

[00:59:23.780] - Greg

The dwellers of the Plain of Shinar disbelieve God's covenant that he would not again bring a flood upon the earth. Many of them denied the existence of God and attributed the flood to the operation of natural causes. Others believed in a supreme being and that it was he who had destroyed the anti deluvian world. And their heart, like that of Cain, rose up in rebellion against Him. One object before them in the erection of the tower was to secure their own safety in case of another deluge. By carrying the structure to a much greater height than was reached by the waters of the flood, they thought to place themselves beyond all possibility of danger. And as they would be able to ascend to the region of the clouds, they hoped to ascertain the cause of the flood. The whole undertaking was designed to exalt still further the pride of its projectors and turn the minds of future generations away from God and lead them into idolatry.

[01:00:39.820] - Terrie

Thank you, Greg. We're told that these people, the plain people, they don't believe God. God had said he'd made a covenant with the rainbow as a symbol that he would not again bring a flood upon the Earth. But what's their problem? They actually deny that God exists. They said what has happened here is the result of natural causes. We've got two groups of people here. We've got those that say God doesn't exist. Others believe in a supreme Being, but they just don't like Him. They don't like that God because that God caused a flood. And why would a God do such horrible things? He either doesn't exist or he's not very nice. But what's their problem?

[01:02:05.110] - Moli

Disbelieve.

[01:02:07.850] - Terrie

If you disbelieve God, because God says it's not going to be a flood, then what's your other option? Josephine?

[01:02:27.710] - Josephine

I'm not sure how to verbalize it. You're going to go your own way. You don't believe God, you're going to set up something of your own monument? I don't know. Maybe my thoughts are not together on that point.

[01:02:49.610] - Terrie

That's okay.

[01:02:52.390] - Josephine

Ideology. You're going to make an idol or build something, some kind of monument. That you can see. But it's not by faith. Believing God, It's got to be by faith, by what he says. But you need something tangible, perhaps.

[01:03:13.150] - Terrie

What do they know? What do they know? They don't believe in God or they don't like Him. But what do they know has happened?

[01:03:23.250] - Josephine

The flood.

[01:03:25.330] - Terrie

That there's been a flood. There's been a flood, there's evidence. They're not stupid people. There's been a flood. Now what's the problem? Because God said there won't be another one, but we don't like Him or we don't believe in Him. What's their problem? Ray?

[01:03:50.710] - Ray

They believe in themselves more than they believe in God.

[01:03:57.630] - Terrie

Well, yeah, you got to believe in something. They believe in themselves. Yes.

[01:04:06.930] - Ray

They're going to take their own actions to fix the problem.

[01:04:13.810] - Terrie

What's the problem they got to fix? Greg?

[01:04:26.390] - Greg

I'd like to point to the second last sentence of that paragraph. It says, they hope to ascertain the cause of the flood. So by going up beyond the clouds, they hope to ascertain. They hope to use their human reasoning and so called science.

[01:04:45.690] - Terrie

Yes. That's a positive about building the tower. They're going to be able to use that technology to work out how things happen. That's not necessarily a bad thing.

[01:05:05.490] - Greg

No, but they tried to explain things away in their own mindset with their disbelief of a creator.

[01:05:14.550] - Terrie

Okay, so they don't believe in God, but they know there's been a flood. Brodie?

[01:05:27.620] - Brodie

Their problem is that there could be another one, so they better do something about it.

[01:05:33.220] - Terrie

Yes. Their problem is fear. What happens if there's another flood? We know there's been one. If it's natural causes, what's stopping it happening again? What are we going to do about it? The problem is there's been a flood. Might not believe in God, but the evidence is of the flood you can't argue against. It says here one object before them in the erection of the tower was to secure their own safety in case of another deluge. They've got to build this thing high, because what don't they want to happen? They don't want to die, they don't want to be swept away like those others in the flood. You've got a monument that will perpetuate their glory, their fame, but you've also got the practicalities that we're building a tower to save ourselves. And if we can build it high enough and we can work out how this happens, then we can save others, because not everybody can live up the tower.

[01:07:05.330] - Terrie

And we do want to be a universal empire, and we got to have something to sell to the people. Let's work out how this happens, see if we can't stop it happening. At the same time, it makes us look good, but we also need to secure our safety. There's a word for this. Josephine?

[01:07:39.690] - Josephine

Are they doing, like, a precautionary measure, taking precautionary measure to make sure that they're safe the next time?

[01:07:49.290] - Terrie

I would say it's bigger than a precaution. Save the world, save us. It is a precaution, you're right. But it is a life saving measure.

[01:08:19.670] - Katherine

Like safeguard their perpetuation or perpetuality.

[01:08:30.890] - Terrie

Yes. They don't want to be wiped out. What happened the last time? Everybody got wiped out except for a handful of people. You've got to make sure you're among that handful of people that can ride out the natural disaster. On the mountain, we got the ark up here. They're not about to build another ark. They're doing it a different way. They're going to build a tower. Moli.

[01:09:14.670] - Moli

I was thinking that they know they had the problem with the flood because of their rebellion. And now they reach to a point where they don't trust God anymore. They know a lot of them were wiped away and died. Now by building this monument, they show they don't need God anymore to solve their problems. Like they don't want him to get involved in the activities. They wanted to do it themselves. They wanted to exalt themselves to a point where they are trusted.

[01:09:59.450] - Terrie

There is no God, there just isn't one. And the one that exists, he doesn't care. We don't like him. Even if you did believe there was. What do you do when you really don't believe there's a God? And you think that these natural causes have catastrophic implications for you and for everyone?

[01:10:37.690] - Marie

I was going to say they create their own salvation.

[01:10:46.210] - Terrie

Yep. And that seems reasonable, doesn't it? You've got to do something. You've got to do the engineering, the idea about the tower and being able to raise yourself up above the flood, that's not an evil thing to do. The science behind it is not evil. Wanting to work out how things happened, there's nothing essentially wrong about that. But it's this combination of the self exaltation, the self promotion, the control of people, and the fear that it could all just go tomorrow with a catastrophic event. What they're afraid of is a global catastrophe. Now, global catastrophes can go a number of different ways because we could say that we had a pandemic and that was a global catastrophe. Did it put mankind at risk of extinction?

[01:12:28.930] - Marie

No.

[01:12:31.170] - Terrie

No. Could it have? Could something like that happen in the future? We have global catastrophes. But there are different types of global catastrophes. Something that would come under that umbrella is called an existential risk. Existential risks, as the name suggests. What are you afraid of? What were the people on the plain of Shinar afraid of? Not existing. There's a risk of not existing. Yes. There's global catastrophes that can do a lot of damage and that can destroy man's propensity, can set us back. They may even set mankind back where it would never recover. I shouldn't say mankind, but people. But there are global catastrophes that could result in people never coming back to what we've got today, but still existing. And then there are existential risks that could result in extinction. You've got these people on the plain and they're worried about a global catastrophe, so what are they going to do? And what is tied up in what they're doing in order to save themselves?

[01:14:45.590] - Terrie

We could ask the question, you're an atheist. You do not believe in God. It's 2022. What are you afraid of? What would you be worried about today in 2022? You've got those four horsemen of the apocalypse. If you were to read their writings, because Christopher Hitchens died and he wrote a book on mortality just before he died. He's not that afraid of death. I think he was a bit but anyway, they say there's no atheists in foxholes. But there's atheists that are quite happy to just go into the abyss. There's nothing beyond the grave. But there are other atheists that are concerned about the future. I've missed some hands, James.

[01:16:05.870] - James

I don't know if you're referring to natural disasters, but I was tinkering about the women's rights and their uprising and that sort of thing.

[01:16:24.180] - Terrie

Okay. I don't think women's uprising has the risk of wiping us all out. Tiny? Global warming.

[01:16:50.610] - Greg

Sorry, I didn't think of that.

[01:16:55.540] - Terrie

I think atheists are more afraid of global warming. They don't like women, a lot of them. But you now know what track I'm on, James! Josephine?

[01:17:17.930] - Josephine

I think I'm off track now. I was thinking of something totally different. I thought they were afraid of the big government, but you were asking about afraid of what could wipe them out.

[01:17:32.130] - Terrie

Okay, so some of them are afraid of big government. They are afraid of totalitarian regimes that could take over the whole world. That could become a global catastrophe. That is actually a catastrophic risk. It's late, we might stop it there. But over the next week, have us think. Maybe that's the wrong thing to ask. I wanted to ask you to think like an atheist. But when you're looking at the news, when you're looking at the events that are happening around the world, have a think about what an atheist would be concerned about today. Are they concerned about floods? Not the type of floods that are going to wipe us all out. We have floods, but they're not global catastrophes. They're not existential risks.

[01:18:40.550] - Josephine

Nuclear, nuclear war.

[01:18:43.900] - Terrie

Okay, nuclear war.

[01:18:46.630] - Moli

Global warming.

[01:18:51.110] - Terrie

We've got global warming. I'm going to give you two groups. There are two types of risks. Oh, I did that wrong, sorry. Two types of risks. I'll write non anthropogenic and anthropogenic. What would I mean by that? Anthro = men. Genic = burst. There are catastrophes that can be caused by humans and catastrophes that are natural. We're going to have two lists, one that is natural and one that is man made. And I would suggest global warming could come under both. Let's leave it there. We'll leave it there. Let's have a think over the next week and come back and get our atheist minds together and see what would be worrying non religious people today. Okay? Let's close in prayer. Josephine, would you like to close in prayer for us tonight?

[01:20:37.650] - Josephine

I would be happy to Elder Terry. Thank you, dear Lord for your word. Thank you for the wisdom that you've given Elder Terry tonight to guide and direct us and open our minds further. To enlighten us. We pray, Lord, for one another that we may uphold one another and study your word. That we may be more prepared and have a better understanding of the world, the society in which we live in. Bless each and every one tonight and give us a good rest. And raise us up again in the morning, that we may serve you again. Thank you Lord for the members of the movement all over the world. Bless them likewise and the leaders too. This is our prayer. In Jesus name. Amen.