

Identity Wars Series

No. 5 – Abraham and Nimrod Contrasted

Our presentation today will be looking at the two kingdoms illustrated. Nimrod versus Abraham. Looking at how they illustrate the two kingdoms which I have been talking about both in this series and in the series last month. I really would encourage you to follow the sequence through, to come back this afternoon and to have a look at identity in the commandments, how vital the commandments are to our relationship with God. And then at 4:30 p.m., we'll be looking at doctrinal implications of the two kingdoms. That's where it really gets interesting, seeing how the principles we've been talking about, how they affect our understanding of the Bible and the teachings that we believe as Seventh Day Adventists. And then finally tonight, we will end with the Elijah Message in the context of the visible and the invisible. And we will talk in there about how our understanding of the Advent message affects the way we worship and our relationship with God. And I have some extended material there to see how long we can go and how long I can go, as to how much we can fit in in one day.

Also, I'd like to point out that the material that I'm sharing is an extension of the principles that I put together in a book that I've written which I put in audio format called "Identity Wars." We'll be making these available tonight. If you want to explore the subject further, I certainly will encourage you to do that. That you get hold of a copy of this audio series tonight.

All right. Let's just bow our heads once again and we'll begin.

Our Father in Heaven, we want to thank You that we can come into Your house, reminded of that beautiful music that heaven is not far away. And Lord, we pray that Your Spirit would speak to us, that You would instruct us and then teach us in the way that we should go. Open our hearts and minds to an understanding of the way You see things. And I pray that we'll be drawn closer to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Nimrod and Abraham. The two kingdoms illustrated. We just want to do a little bit of a recap on where we went last night. Last night was, in food terms, it was a bowl of muesli. It was fairly intense but there was plenty of things to consider and for those of you who weren't there, I can only feel sorry for you. But you can get the DVDs from Shane. He'll be making those available. All right.

And if we can turn in your bibles, we'll just pick it up there once again. Genesis 9. Looking at the impact of family on world affairs. How significant is one small family on the community, on the nation, on the world?

And we looked at how that one act by one individual, one unfortunate act, had repercussions for this whole world. Repercussions that you and I are suffering the consequences of. From one person and what they did. Notice in Genesis 9:20. It says, "And Noah began to be a farmer and he planted a vineyard. Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent." Again, I'm tempted to amplify and comment on that but I will refrain. I'll talk to Noah when I get to heaven. "And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away and they did not see their father's nakedness." And we said last night how that we see in Shem and Japheth a reverence manifested for their father that we do not see today in our culture. They went backwards. They didn't stand at the door of the tent, snicker and laugh, and say how silly it was that their father had put himself in this situation. They manifested their respect and their reverence for him that is significant, as opposed to their brother Ham where it says, verse 24, "So Noah awoke from his wine and he knew what his younger son had done to him." Many people do not understand what this passage is actually saying because it says, "Then he said, 'Cursed be Canaan (Canaan will be the son of Ham); a servant of servants he shall be (to

his brethren).'" And many people seem to think that possibly, that Noah was a little bit upset that his younger son had caught him naked in his tent and so he would retaliate and he would put a curse on him, would put a hex on him. Well, that was not what was going on at all.

If we look a little bit further into the text, it says, "So Noah awoke from his wine and he knew what his younger son had done to him." The Bible is discreetly trying to tell us that Ham was not a very nice individual. If you are asleep and someone walks into your tent, would you know that they had been there? If they just looked and walked out? You wouldn't know. But if you had been asleep and you awoke and you had been interfered with, would you know? Well, that's what has happened. Ham had interfered with his father. It's not a very nice thought. The Bible obviously tries to be discreet about it. But it was not a very nice thought. And we find in the Spirit of Prophecy, 'Patriarchs and Prophets' page 117 says, "The unnatural crime of Ham," ...that gives us another clue, doesn't it? The unnatural crime of Ham. I wouldn't have thought that accidentally bumping into someone in a tent was an unnatural crime. That would be an unfortunate circumstance. But this is an unnatural crime of Ham "declared that filial reverence" - filial from the word 'filios,' meaning, brotherly love, care, and loving concern between family members in this context - "had long before been cast from his soul, and it revealed the impiety and vileness of his character." And this is the point. "These evil characteristics were perpetuated in Canaan and his posterity, whose continued guilt called upon them the judgments of God."

One act by one individual reaped consequences for generations. Death, destruction, misery. By one act of selfishness and debauchery. And so we see, as we mentioned last night, that Ham not only was the father of Canaan, but he was the father of Cush, who was the father of Nimrod. And we read in Genesis 10, it says in verse 8, "Cush beget Nimrod. He began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before" or in this case, against "the Lord; therefore it is said, 'Like Nimrod the mighty hunter' against or 'before the Lord.' And don't miss this next point where it says, "And the beginning of his kingdom" The first time the word 'kingdom' appears in the Bible - "his kingdom was Babel." Babel means short for Babylon. The beginning of his kingdom was Babylon. Giving us the sense that he was a man who got to the point where he felt that he would be his own god. He would have his own kingdom, his own throne, and he would be worshipped. This is what Babylon signifies. Self-worship. Self-glorification. Living independently from God. Which of course is a grand delusion. The beginning of his kingdom. And we know, too, that because of what Ham had done, strange family relationships, dysfunctional family relationships, strange sexuality within those families, creates such a level of insecurity and worthlessness within the following generations that it causes men and women, and in this case, Nimrod, to rise up and desire so greatly to be accepted and to be wanted that he decided he would want to rule the whole earth.

This is what happens when we smash family relationships. We create individuals that are not safe in our communities. Individuals that want to rule. Individuals that want to control. Individuals that care nothing for families and relationships. But only to rule and to control. This is how Nimrod was created. And he is a lesson to us about how important our families are.

So we see, this was the curse we talked about. The curse of Canaan. And it says at the top, "Cursed be Canaan. He shall be a servant of servants to his brothers." (Genesis 9:25) This is a curse that is an extension of the principle of the curse that came upon Cain. We noticed, Cain violated a family relationship. He killed his brother. A curse was pronounced upon him. Ham violated a family relationship. A curse was pronounced upon him. When we violate family relationships, a curse will come. And it will have repercussions through the following generations.

This is so significant. And the question we raise is, "What are we doing as a church and as families to ensure that these curses do not occur within our families?" Our church here, our church throughout the world, depends upon the stability, the soundness of mind of the individuals within families. We'll look at a quote shortly on this where it amplifies this. But we see Nimrod. The mighty hunter. He had to be mighty because he had no values. So low was his understanding of the importance of family

values that Nimrod, seeing the power of his mother, decided that he would marry her. And so Nimrod's mother becomes his wife. That's a bit sick, isn't it? A bit strange. But these are the foundations of Babylon. Strange, twisted family relationships, deep-seated insecurity, worthlessness, a desire to control. As we have listed here. Hardened family relations. Insecurity and worthlessness. A confused identity. An individual that thinks there's nothing wrong with rising up and marrying his mother has serious psychological issues. And it's interesting that it's often people that are most psychotic are the ones that often end up ruling over other people. As we've seen in the cases of Idi Amin, Pol Pot, Hitler. These maniacs with a desire to rule and to control. They came from weird, strange, family relationships.

Rebelliousness, the desire to start one's own kingdom and of course controlling value by power and performance. What you achieve defines who you are. These are the elements that form the basis or the reason for why Nimrod created Babylon. And the question we have to ask ourselves, as I said last night, "Do we see these principles in our families?" Hardened family relationships. Insecurity. Worthlessness. Rebelliousness. Controlling. Value by power and performance. Do we see these things in our families? That is the question.

And the summary of what we looked at last night was broken family relationships can turn into despotic ruling nations. One act that you do within your family, could have repercussions for generations to come. Obviously, we live in a context where we know that Jesus is coming soon. But the fact remains that what we build here on earth will continue for us in heaven. The blessings we pour out now will continue for our posterity in heaven. But if we were to live say, a thousand years ago, do we give consideration to the fact that I wonder what will happen to my family name 500 years from now? Will it be a strong family? Will it form its own nation? Will it be might in the earth doing deeds for God, representing God, representing Jehovah and His kingdom? Or that go the way of other nations? Other family groups to become debauched and to become immoral, destroying and killing and murdering? And what am I doing to encourage the right direction?

We have such power in this area and we don't realize it. We think that what we do is so insignificant, that everything we do has such impact on everybody around us. The Bible says, "No man lives to himself. No man dies to himself." We all have impact upon one another. One family that decides not to raise their children appropriately may inadvertently raise a killer. The only problem is that one who raises a killer, another family must provide a victim to be killed. That's the sadness of the situation. One family raises a killer; another family raises a victim. We all affect one another. We all are interconnected in our relationships with each other.

Broken family relationships can turn into despotic ruling nations. And the reason I raise this point is to say the things that you do day by day in your home have dramatic consequences over the generations. And we ought to think seriously about that. We ought to spend more time thinking about, what does it mean to live in a family? How do I live? We need to get on our knees and say, "God, teach me what it means to be a husband or a wife or a mother or a father or a child. How should I live? How should I respond?"

We also look at the fact in Daniel 4:17 where it says, 'Worthlessness Rises.' We mentioned last night that when Adam and Eve embraced the fruit and ended the cycle of worthlessness, that God allowed this cycle of worthlessness, this constant cycle and pride and depression, to continue to manifest itself so that we would understand what it means when we continue to reject God's system, God's family order, God's way. And so we looked at the fact, as it says here in Daniel 4:17, where it talks about the tree that was cut down. Nebuchadnezzar representing the tree that was cut down. So "this matter" rather "is by decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will," and then it says, "and setteth up over it the basest of men."

And some versions say, "the lowest of men" or some even infer "the humblest of men." But that's not what it means.

God allows men of the most vile character to rule over the kingdoms of men so that you and I will understand why this system, this worldly system that we live in, cannot work. And that the only one that can rule is Jesus Christ. No one else can rule. And so God allows these individuals because as it says, "He sets over it the basest of men." In the context of 'God will send them a strong delusion,' He allows this to happen. And again, as I mentioned last night, which is more an illustration that we can relate to, many people feel that the organization they work for, they feel that the boss is a complete idiot. And that is in many cases because he is, because worthlessness rises. The desire for power, the desire to control, the desire to be better than everybody else forces that individual to the top of the chain. The only problem is, he doesn't have the emotional stability to deal with being in that position.

Worthlessness rises to the top. That's the way our system works. That's the way the system operates. And if a good man or a good woman is leading at the top of an organization, it is by the grace of God. He allows good people to be put in places, to check evil, to hold it back. And so that is why we see the basest of men - these basest of men are set up in these positions.

And let me tell you that Satan is intentional on preserving these individuals at the top. He binds them together in secret societies. He calls them to do vile things to one another so that they are completely worthless. And then he causes them to desire, to control, to become presidents of countries like the United States and other great leading powers. This is what happens. And that's why this world is in such a mess because of these situations.

It's a quote that I mentioned before and I want you to remember this quote. I want you, if you can, to pray and to think about this statement. It has profound ramifications. And I don't care where you're headed in your life, what aspirations you have, what goals you are seeking, remember this statement: "The heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation, is the household." (Adventist Home, page 15) Do you think that we have forgotten that as a society? I think we've forgotten this. "The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depends upon home influences." (Adventist Home, page 15)

And as I said last night, it is being shown within the Adventist Church that divorce rates and difficulty within Adventist homes does not differ from those in non-Adventist homes. Which brings me to one question, What difference does the Gospel have for us if there's no difference in the home life? What's it doing for us? Are we just playing games if there's no difference? Or is it simply that we do not really understand what the Gospel is saying to us? If we understand the Gospel, the changes will take place and the change will take place in the home. It's not simply a matter of coming to church and smiling sweetly and singing nice songs. It's a matter of in the home smiling sweetly when your partner or your children are giving you a hard time. That's where the test of true Christianity is. In the home life, where nobody can see you except those that you are close to.

Are you someone that is desired to be around by family members? Or are people eager to get out of your way and to stay away from you? That's the test of Christianity. The test of Christianity.

The success of the church, and I think we should be having more emphasis on strengthening families as a form of evangelism, to save our nation, because our nation in Australia is in big trouble on this issue. Our government supports and upholds systems that encourages families to break apart. And I know that there are cases where some family relationships become intolerable. And then there comes a time where there needs to be a separation. But in many cases, it's just too easy. It's just too easy and everything falls apart.

We finally looked at last night, I told you I get into long introductions, didn't I? We're still on the introduction. 'Elijah Message Reverses Ham's Curse.' "Noah said, cursed be Canaan. He shall be a

servant of servants to his brothers. (Genesis 9:25) That curse came about by separation of father and son. The love between father and son was broken in a terrible way. And then we see Elijah coming in the last days, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children." (Malachi 4:5-6) Reconnection. An undoing of what Ham and Noah experienced. Are reconnecting. Filial reverence is restored. Children having love and respect for their parents. And parents understanding the importance of their words and what they say to their children.

I have pondered many times the statement in the book, 'Child of Guidance' where it says, "Parents, you must not ...you must not..." and I'm doing it now! ..."raise your voice to your children." And I read that statement and I say, "Lord, how? How? How is that possible?" It says, "With God, all things are possible." Yes. But how? "You must not raise your voice to your children." That just tells me how far I am away from God's ideal for family relationships. If I feel the need to raise my voice and to get angry with my children, it shows me that I don't understand some things. Obviously, God sees that we can encourage and train and help our children to obey without raising our voice. And again I say, "Oh, Lord, how? How? How do we do this?" And it's something to pray about.

"He'll turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse." (Malachi 4:5-6)

The Elijah Message for those who understand history of the Adventist Church, the Elijah Message is at the very heart of what we preach as a people. And here we see it. The heart of the Elijah Message is a message of restored families. That to me is powerful. Restoring families. That's what Elijah is about. And I can't help but wonder, as I wondered with you last night, how that many of us in our church maybe 50 years ago, where ministers gave an example of what it means to be a Christian by spending hardly any time with his family and always out reaching and preaching out to other people and not spending time at home with the family.

What kind of message are we sending when we live like that? We can be preaching all about the commandments, all about the three angels, all about justification, all about righteousness, and yet the curse just continues to fall because we are not strengthening family relationships has Elijah has told us to do, to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers. And the curse has come because we see that family relationships with an Adventist life differs nothing from those in a non-Adventist context. In terms of knowledge, we have done great things in sharing the knowledge of the Bible with others. In terms of its practical application to family life, we have failed miserably as a church. And that's something that affects me deeply as one representing this church, as a minister of this church, that that is something that must change if we are to avoid this curse that continues to fall upon us, because I know for myself that my work gets harder and harder as a minister of the Gospel having to pick up the pieces of families that have been shredded and pulled apart because they don't understand these principles. It's not fun. It's heart-wrenching. It brings you to tears to have to do that.

Prevention is better than cure. Much better. And many of us have been shredded by these issues. But God is saying to us it's time to plan ahead. It's time to make a change in our families and to do the things that God has asked us to do. I was praying about this the other day and saying, "God, how do I do this? How do I reaffirm family values?" And the Lord said to me, "Well, you know what inspiration says. Family worship. Morning and evening." This is a critical part of strengthening family values. To spend time as a family, opening the Word of God and praying together. Not simply opening a book and reading from it in a monotone voice and having the kids sit there and be quiet. Oh, yes. Some of you know about that. "Let's read from 'Great Controversy.' And when I finish this paragraph, I want you to say, 'Amen.'" Yes. That's not what we're talking about. We're talking about bringing the Bible alive in a family context. And that takes effort, takes effort, it causes you to get on your knees and go before God and say, "God, teach me how to teach my children because I can't do it. It's something I have to do." You might think, "Oh, he's a minister. He knows how to do it." No. I have to go on my knees, "God, how

do I teach my children? How do I do this? I don't know how to do this. I'm good at talking to adults. I'm not good at talking to kids. Explaining these things to kids. You have to show me how to do it." And that's something I have to pray all the time. Making it real.

Family morning worship. It's not easy in our society, is it? Morning and evening worship. Well, we're getting the morning worship thing sort of happening, but the evening one, man, that's hard. God says, "You want to strengthen family values? This is where you start." Get on your knees. Pray. Ask God.

All right. Now we get into the sermon. It's twelve o'clock. I better go through this quickly. Keep going. To practice what I preach, I'm mindful of parents with small children. So I have to try and make it as quick as I can.

Now, we look at the comparison between Nimrod and Abraham. These two individuals represent the two systems that are on offer for you and I in the world today. And I'm building on the principles that we looked in our last month's presentation and last night. In Nimrod's system, we have a state-controlled system. Genesis 10:10. It talks about all the cities that Nimrod controlled. The more cities he controlled, the more power he felt, the stronger he was. And as he built the state system, and because he had state territorial borders, he needed armies. And because he needed armies, he needed to raise taxes. And because he needed taxes, he needed to build banks. All of these things were created by Nimrod. Banking. Taxation. Armies. State territorial system. Legislation based on a state territorial platform. And now we see the whole world is ruled by this system. All the world drank of the wine of Babylon and was made drunk. State territorial system. This is Nimrod's system. We live in this system. And we have to live in this system, but let us be aware of the implications of that system.

Secondly, Nimrod and his fellows were city builders and dwellers. (Genesis 11:4) They needed to build a city because it's much easier to control people when they live in cities. Does that make sense? You live in a city environment. If you're living in a rural environment or even if you are nomadic and you move around from place to place, how easy is it to control people like that? It's very hard. So you must build cities and you must drive people into the cities and you must supply all their water, their power, their communication. You provide everything for them, even their entertainment you provide for them. And then you control them. Nimrod was very smart. Satan taught him how to set up a system where you could blot God from your memory. And living in cities was very much a part of that program. City builders and dwellers. They said, Genesis 11:4: "Let us build a city and a tower."

Number Three. Identity Through Achievement. (Genesis 11:4) The reason they built a tower, as I said, "Let us make a," what does it say? "...a name for ourselves." Why do we need to make a name for ourselves? What if their hearts could speak, they would say, well, because their father Ham did what he did to his father and now "we are worthless individuals. We need to make a name for ourself." That's what their heart would be saying. "We feel worthless. We feel insecure. So let's build a tower. Let's make a name for ourselves so that we will be glorious and our name will live on forever." How many times do we hear about individuals saying, "I want to do something so that my name will be remembered." Well, my name is already written in the palms of Jesus Christ. I don't have to worry about that stuff. My name's already written in the best place possible.

Number Four. Reject the Ten Commandments. (Romans 1:29-32) Nimrod obviously rejected the Ten Commandments. And again I ask you to come back this afternoon as we dig into this issue of identity and the commandments. Nimrod was his own god. You can only do that by rejecting the commandments of God. He believed that life existed within himself apart from God. You can only believe that when you reject the Ten Commandments. And so this system is built on a rejection of the Ten Commandments. The carnal mind, is enmity against the law of God, not subject to the law of God. Neither they cannot be.

Number Five. Sun-(day) Worship. (cf 2 Kings 22:17, 23:5) When Nimrod died, Semiramis, his mother-wife, said that Nimrod had flown into the sun and now that the sun was actually Nimrod and

that they should bow and worship and he was the god that would protect them. And this of course was simply a way of individuals to worship themselves. Idolatry is simply a mechanism for human beings to worship themselves. If you study Greek philosophy and you look at the 12 gods and goddesses of the Greek culture, it is simply a deification of human personality and sinfulness. For instance, Dionysius, the god of sexuality and wine, it's just a glorification of human stupidity. And is it any wonder that the beast of Revelation 13 that rises up out of the water with seven heads and 10 horns is predominantly leopard? Self-glorification. That's what the system is all about. And sun worship is at the heart of this system.

Number Six. Immortality of the Soul. (Genesis 3:4; 1 Samuel 28:3,8) I have time to go into this. This is another whole subject. But in essence, if you believe that when you die you live on, you must therefore believe that you have some kind of power within yourself that not even God can destroy. It is a monstrous concept to believe that when we die, when all this is finished, that God will burn sinners in hell forever and ever. Why? Because He's not strong enough to kill them? Is that why? Because they have some kind of a life source within themselves that not even God can kill? Immortality of the soul is vital to Nimrod's kingdom. It is vital to Babylon. It is one of its central pillars because it subtly teaches us that you have life in yourself. Life in yourself. And that teaching is vital to a belief in righteousness by works and a whole lot of other things. I wish I could go into it but that teaching is vital. Why did I want to study that out? Because inspiration tells us that the immortality of the soul is one of the key doctrines of Babylon. Why? I wanted to know why. Study it out. Make the connection. Fit it together.

And Number Seven. The system of Nimrod, they worship material objects. Their relationships are based on the external. You enter into relationships with people not because you like them but because they can do things for you. You own more and more things because you know that the more things you own, the more people realize that you have power and the more that they will come under your influence. The worship of material objects. And it all goes back to Satan's little lie that says, "You shall not surely die but you shall be as gods knowing good and evil. If you eat from the fruit of the tree, you'll become like god." And that fruit was a material object. That tree was a material object. And so materialism becomes the heart of Nimrod's kingdom.

In contrast, we look at Abraham's kingdom. In Abraham's kingdom, we see that it is a family-controlled kingdom. The relationships within Abraham's government, because he had many people under him, many people with him. But those under him were directed by a family, a patriarchal, a filial reverence and love and respect. Isaac would do things for his father because he loved him, not because he'd be told, "If you don't do it, I'm going to cut your head off," as Nimrod did to those that worked under him. He did it because it was his father. As it was for Ishmael. Family-controlled.

Nomadic rural dwellers. Abraham believed that God owned the heavens and the earth. And obviously, at this particular time, he could live out his belief and move from place to place and know that the land was owned by God and he'd go from place to place. And this is a concept that we still see reflected in the aboriginal culture. The land belongs to everybody. It doesn't belong to individuals. You can't parcel off a piece of land saying, "That's mine." That's not God's way. Never intended to be God's way. Obviously, when Israel was set up, accommodation had to be made for God's people to have a space where they could practice this principle, where they could have a piece of land and you could sell it. You could do all this but after 50 years it would all come back to that family. You couldn't lose that piece of property. God had given it to you. Nomadic rural dwellers. A focus on rural living as opposed to city living. In a rural atmosphere, the more rural or the more country you go, the more independent you have to become. There's less services to provide for you. There are less things to help you. And you become more dependent on God. Hopefully. Or yourself. But you're not so dependent on other people. And this is a principle.

Number Three. Identity Through Parental Blessing. (Genesis 12:2) We see Isaac being blessed by his father. We see Jacob being blessed and Esau crying out, understanding this issue. He cried to his

father as a grown man. He cried like a little boy saying, "Father, father, is there not a blessing for me? Even for me?" A blessing for me. And Jacob blessing his sons, telling them what will happen, what will take place. This is the basis of God's kingdom. And I would say again, I can't reiterate this enough, to those who are fathers, if you are not blessing your children, if you're not bringing your children to yourself and placing your hands upon them and telling them that God loves them and that they are special and that they will do great things for God, you are not fulfilling your role as a father in God's kingdom. That is central to God's system.

Of course, observe the Ten Commandments. (Genesis 18:19; 26:5) The Ten Commandments clearly identify the roles of God and our roles. And it says in Genesis 26:5 that God knew that Abraham would observe His commandments. It also says God also chose Abraham because it said He knew that he would order his family correctly. That's why Abraham was chosen over everybody else. He knew that he would order his family correctly. He would reflect the order of heaven. That's why he was chosen.

Number Five. The Sabbath Memorial of the Creator. (Exodus 20:8-11) They worshiped on the Sabbath day to remember that God is the source of life. That's what the Sabbath is about. That God provides everything and we are totally dependent on Him. And we enter into a special relationship with Him on the Sabbath where we are reminded of this fact. Sabbath observance is critical to preserving a sense of God's kingdom. It has nothing to do with, "Well, I go to church on the Sabbath. Therefore I'm a good person." That's garbage. That's Nimrod's kingdom. You can go to church on the Sabbath. You can keep all the commandments and still be in Nimrod's kingdom because if you're doing it to show that you are a good person. No, we do it so that we remember, that everything comes from God. That's why we do it.

Number Six. Soul Sleep and Resurrection. (Hebrews 11:17-19) We know that Abraham believed this because when God asked him to slay his son, it says in Hebrews 11, that he believed that God will raise him from the dead. So he believed in soul sleep and resurrection. He believed that we are mortal. We have no life in ourselves. We're totally dependent on God. That's why it's so critical to believe in the state of the dead. The second re-issue is not to be deceived by evil spirits that may masquerade as human beings. That's the secondary issue. The primary issue is to believe that when we die, we're going to the dust and that we are no more, our spirit returns to heaven, is that life comes from God. That's the primary reason we believe in that teaching.

Number Seven. Worships the Invisible God. As it says in Hebrews 11:3, "We worship Him who is invisible." And because we worship an invisible God, the essence of our worship is a focus on the invisible. And we're going to talk about this tonight. I hope you come back. The focus of our worship is invisible. Not visible. The more jumping, the more beating of chest, the more spinning on your head, the more swinging from the chandeliers, and you've got chandeliers here, that's good. The more of that that you do, the more you show that you're really not entering into the God who is invisible. You're still stuck in the visible. And if you're stuck in the visible, you really haven't crossed into the relational, in the relationship with God. You're just having a good time. And that's not the way we worship God. Just having a good time. I want to have a good time but I want to have a good time in connection with God.

So there we see the two sides. The two sides between Nimrod's kingdom and Abraham's kingdom. Which kingdom do you want to live in? We are severely affected by Nimrod's kingdom. It's all around us. The whole world is drunk of this wine and is intoxicated. We're affected by it. But we have a choice. How are we going to live? And how do these principles that we believe as Seventh Day Adventists affect living in Abraham's kingdom? Don't you see the list of things that we believe? See it as a complete package. It affects our relationship with God.

All right. I just want to read these statements to you. Time is running out. I love the clock.

This is from 'Patriarchs and Prophets' page 118. "Here they decided" - this is talking about Nimrod. Let's get a bit of a background behind why they built this tower. "Here they decided to build a city, and in it a tower of such stupendous height as should render it the wonder of the world. These enterprises were designed to prevent the people from scattering abroad in colonies." There again, once the people spread abroad, they are a lot harder to control. Keep them together then we can control them. We can manipulate them. "God had directed men to disperse throughout the earth, to replenish and subdue it; but these Babel builders determined to keep their communities united in one body, and to found a monarchy that should eventually embrace the whole earth." Satan is determined to achieve this objective. And Revelation 13 tells us for a brief period of time, he will achieve his objective. All the world will wonder after the beast. That all-seeing eye will finally shit upon the pyramid and Satan has been wanting to bring together for a long time and there will be one system. And one small group of individuals would say, "No. We will not worship your god. We will not bow down to your idols. We'd rather die than serve your gods and follow your system because we know that to worship your god and follow your system is to destroy ourselves, to destroy our identity, to destroy our posterity in everything. And that is a price too high to pay." "Thus their city would become a metropolis of universal empire; it would command the admiration and homage of the world and render the founders illustrious." There is the key. Why did they build it? Because they needed the glory. As Satan said to Jesus in pitiful words, "All this I give you if you will but bow down and worship me." His insecurity could not be concealed. He needed Jesus, he willed Jesus to kneel before him just so he could feel valuable just once more, because he knows that he's worth nothing. "The magnificent tower, reaching to the heavens, was intended to stand as a monument of the power and wisdom of its builders, perpetuating their fame to the latest generations." And that tower of Babel is going to be completed. It is in process right now. By movements. By international bankers. By world leaders. They're going to finish this monument for their own glory and their own power, as it was in the time of Nimrod.

And another statement here. "The men of Babylon had determined to establish a government that should be independent of God." (Patriarchs and Prophets, page 123) That was their intention. And this is the system that it was built upon. This is the curse of Babylon, built on hardened family relations, insecurity and worthlessness, desire to start your own kingdom because of rebellion and a controlling spirit, where value is achieved by performance and power.

So what is the application for our time? Notice this. "There are tower builders in our time. Infidels construct their theories from the supposed deductions of sciences, and reject the revealed Word of God. They presume to pass sentences upon God's moral government; they despise His law and boast of the sufficiency of human reason. Then, 'because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.'" (Ecclesiastes 8:11)

We see that today. Why is evolution being pushed so hard? Why is higher criticism regarding the Word of God being pushed further and further? This is the tower-building of today. To lead men away from the Bible. To reject its family structure. To reject family relationships as the Bible dictates. And once that happens, and individuals are so insecure and worthless, then we can easily be controlled and pushed into that final world system that Satan's longing to bring about and will soon bring about.

So there is the comparison. There is the choice. Which system do you want to belong to? Nimrod or Abraham?

That is the thought that I want to leave with you at this point.

[End of Video - 50:18]