

# Unbelievable

## Episode 7: Unbelie-Babel!

**The Bible -  
Amazing chronicle of history?  
Or a collection of unbelievable comic book stories?  
People have diverse opinions...**

They said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

- Genesis 11:3-4 (NASB)

A human unity without the vision of God's will is likely to be ordered in oppressive conformity. And it will finally be "in vain".

- Walter Brueggemann

The purpose of this passage, therefore, is not primarily the explanation of the origin of diverse languages, but the condemnation and defeat of the imperial arrogance and universal domination represented by the symbol of Babylon.

- Jose Miguez-Bonino

People's dreams and aspirations have always been embodied in cities, buildings and especially towers. This is true of the tower of Babel as it is of the cathedral at Chartres, The Eiffel Tower, the pyramids at Giza, the Toronto CN Tower or the World Trade Centre in New York City.

- Brian Walsh, (1995)

Why is it that empires always like building towers?

- N. T. Wright

The people want to become a self-sufficient elite who are free from any need to answer to others. They want to make a name so that they can say to their challengers, "Who are you?" A great reputation is a self-defense mechanism comparable socially and spiritually to what the tower itself would have been militarily.

- W. Sibley Towner

This text suggests a different kind of unity sought by fearful humanity organized against the purposes of God. This unity attempts to establish a cultural, human oneness without reference to the threats, promises, or mandates of God. This is a self-made unity in which humanity has a "fortress mentality".

- Walter Brueggemann

Those in the universities and professions of our world who desire to be loyal Christians need to think afresh through the issues of what allegiance to Jesus means in practice. It is not enough to say one's prayers in private, maintain high personal morality and then go to work to rebuild the tower of Babel."

- N.T. Wright

The lesson of Babel and the direction of the Bible story should be clear: True human security lies in doing the will of God, in seeking the good of all the peoples, in establishing justice and making peace.

- W. Sibley Towner

But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.

- Genesis 11:5-8 (NIV)

**Do you find the stories in the Bible...**

**UNBELIEVABLE?**