



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Is Atheism Dead? – Part 2

**Guest(s):** Eric Metaxas

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

**Roger Marsh:** Well, hello there. I'm Roger Marsh and you are listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Family Talk is dedicated to defending the institution of the family, fighting for the sanctity of human life, and promoting righteousness in the culture. Thank you so much for listening and for your prayers and support of this ministry. Now today on the program, we are bringing you the second half of a presentation from author, speaker, and conservative thinker Eric Metaxas. He'll be talking about his new book called *Is Atheism Dead*, which presents the overwhelming scientific evidence for a creator God. We have a lot to get to today, so without further ado here is Eric Metaxas on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

**Eric Metaxas:** So, I decided to write the book called *Is Atheism Dead*. But the reason that I was really compelled to write it was, as I said, it had to be the Holy Spirit because I wasn't planning to write this book. I guess it was the first week or two of COVID. I was on the couch having a three-day quiet time, and I thought of two people that I had met. Some of you may know them. There's a guy in Houston named James Tour. Does anybody know Dr. James Tour? He's a nano scientist, probably the top nano scientist on planet Earth, Jewish, believer in Jesus, freakishly brilliant. I met him through a friend in Houston and he starts talking to me about what he does.

Now when I say he's a nano scientist, I don't mean to freak you out, but in the lab, he builds molecules. Anybody ever build a molecule? Just in your garage when you're bored? Do you know how small molecules are and how hard it is to build a molecule? That's what he does. And he starts to tell me that for ... Some of you will remember this, and I know it's choppy, but in school you probably learned this. But in 1952, there was a famous experiment at the University of Chicago. This was probably on a lot of your high school tests. They discovered some scientists said, "You know what? We think the way life started on the earth four billion years ago, we all know single cells of life just appeared on earth and we want to know how that happened." So they ran some electricity through some solution, some prebiotic soup, okay? So some water, saline with, I

don't know, a little of this, a little of that, a few simple elements, nothing fancy, and they got a couple of amino acids out of it, okay?

Now that's not really a big deal, but they were blown away. As far as they were concerned, it was as if they had discovered life, right? So they announced to the world, "We've discovered life effectively or we're on the way." And the scientific community, which now has already bought into the paradigm that whatever's here got here without God jumps on that and says, "Okay, the famous Miller-Urey experiment 1952, published in '53, that was the beginning, and it's only a matter of time before we find out how the amino acids become proteins and how we get carbohydrates and then we get single cells. Sure." Well, Jim Tour, the genius nano scientist, says to me, "That was seven decades ago. We have not moved that ball forward one millimeter."

So how do you go from sloshing water, lightning creates amino acids maybe, and then all this other stuff just happens to happen, to happen, to create a cell that excretes and eats and has a membrane that keeps water out and lets things in when it wants to. And I mean, the more science learns about anything, but especially life, the more it just completely takes your breath away. God is so amazing that on one level, it is deeply frightening how amazing he is. But Jim Tour, he's funny, and he says to me, "Eric," he says, "They're fudging it, but they can't fool me, I know about this stuff." He says, "They're fudging it. They have no clue. They're clueless, clueless." He always says clueless twice just to make it clear. That people who are getting billions of dollars of science funding to figure this out for seven decades have been working on the problem.

And it's like discovering a bit of plastic and saying, "Any day now we're going to have a flat screen TV, just wait. Just, we're going to do it. We're going to do it." So I ask Jim, the super scientist genius, "Have you written a book about this?" "No." You have friends like that? They've got some amazing invention? "Have you ever written?" "No, I've just been busy gardening." I get angry, right? I'm like, "Jim, what is wrong with you? You need to put this in a book. This is insanely amazing information. This is a big deal. And you're qualified to write about it." He's like, "Well, I'm doing all this other stuff." So I thought, "Well, okay, I'm going to put it in my book, if I ever write a book about this stuff."

Well, I met a second guy, completely different. I was in Albuquerque speaking at Skip Heitzig's Church, same time, about four years ago. And he says, "You've got the day off before you preach tonight, would you like to meet Dr. Steven Collins? He's an archeologist. He discovered biblical Sodom." I said, "What?" Now, all these years I've been reading about biblical archeology and the same kind of fascination, it keeps proving the Bible, but nobody ever talks about it because we live in a world that has already decided God doesn't exist, the Bible's a bunch of folk tales. So all this information keeps coming out and it never really ... So when he says this to me naturally, I'm skeptical because a lot of Christians say a lot of stuff. You could be an enthusiastic Christian who overstates the case. Has anybody here ever done that?

Has anybody ever done that in a criminal way and gone to jail? Christians do this. We discovered Noah Ark and then you look into it and you're like, "Nah, I don't know." Well, I looked into it and think about what we're talking about. Abraham and Sodom, this is 1700 BC. This is the first couple of pages of the Bible. This is not Hezekiah territory. This is the beginning of the beginning of the beginning, 1700 BC. And this man using the Scripture, because he's an archeologist who believes the Scripture is the word of God, totally true, he says, "According to this, Sodom, if it's still discoverable would have to be in this area," and nobody's really there for many reasons I won't go into, but he knows that it would have to be there. So he finds a few, what they call tells, they're like a city on a city, on a city, on a city, on a city, over millennia.

And he finds one, he thinks it's probably it, so they excavate, I don't know, around 2005, six, something like that. They excavate down to the level of 1700 BC. Now he's a ceramic typologist, which means he can just look at something and tell you the date and he knows this stuff cold. They dig down a 1700 BC and they find a layer of ash, which is unlike anything anyone's ever seen. It couldn't be caused by an earthquake, couldn't be caused by a fire. I'm not going to go into the details here. It's in the book. So he pulls out a piece of pottery, which he instantly recognizes as from 1700 BC. Instantly he knows. He knows even what the part of the shoulder of a large pithoi jar, whatever. He knows, instantly of the era, whatever.

So, he finds it and I think he then turns it over and sees that it has a glassy green glaze on it. Well, now he's got a problem because he says the technology for glaze or glass was not invented until the eighth century AD, that's 24 centuries after. He's very confused. So he takes it to a lab among with other things in New Mexico and they tell him that the woman who takes it to look at it says, "Oh, a nice piece of trinitite." Now, when he found it in Jordan where he was digging and he looked at it and handed it up to a guy, that guy was also from New Mexico, and that guy said, "Oh, nice piece of trinitite." Or, "It looks like trinitite." When the atom bombs were being tested in the desert of New Mexico, Oppenheimer the physicist named it Trinity site for various reasons.

And the blast from the H bombs, or I guess it was A bombs at that point, created such heat that it melted the sand and the rock, and it created this green glassy stuff. So he hands it up to this guy who says, "Looks like Trinitite." I mean, a little bizarre that that guy had been there. He was old enough and whatever year it was that he remembered these tests and he recognizes what he's looking at. Well, they examine it and science tells us that the only way this piece of pottery could have what it has on it is that this is melted. And the temperature had to be 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit for probably 20 or 30 seconds.

So, there's no fire that can do that. I could go down the list, again, it's in the book. But the point is, the ash had distributed in it, it was about five feet in depth across this whole vast, huge city of that era, huge city. And all through it, they found little tiny bits of charred human bone, melted bits of brick, things that nobody had ever seen. And it was churned so much that they called it the

cuisine art effect. They said, "We've never seen a destruction matrix like this. This just was unheard of. What is this?" So all the scientists pour over this stuff and I mean, all kinds of scientists, and they say, "There's only one thing that could have caused everything that we see here. It's very simple. We call that a cosmic airburst event." What is that? That is when a meteor comes from far away, comes into our atmosphere at about 35,000 miles an hour and explodes from the heat, maybe five miles above the surface of the earth.

Now this happened, as I said in Tunguska, Siberia in 1908. So we can know what that does exactly. It creates winds of 700 miles an hour. The temperature of the initial explosion is something like 300,000 degrees Fahrenheit. I mean, the temperature of the sun is like 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit. So they know the only thing that could have caused what happened at this spot was a cosmic airburst event about the same size, 180 feet maybe in diameter, meteor comes down, explodes, vaporizes every human, vaporizes every building, including bricks, brick walls 12 feet deep, thick, just nothing. And the only thing that remains is just the huge, super gigantic rocks, which were below all this that were the foundations. So the more I learned about this, the more I realized this man discovered biblical Sodom.

So, if you're a skeptic, you don't believe the Bible is real, we haven't just discovered all kinds of stuff over the years, we've now discovered something from 1700 BC from the first couple of pages of the book. And even more amazing is that above the level of 1700 BC, for seven centuries they find absolutely nothing. For seven centuries no human beings settled on this spot because it was so obliterated and I would think haunted in the minds of people. Such an example of horror, unprecedented horror, that for seven centuries nobody settled there. And this was about the most premier piece of real estate in the area by far. I mean, there's reasons people lived there for millennia before this event. So when I hear all this, and then I talk to people and say, "Have you heard about this? Because I hadn't heard about this." Nobody had heard about it.

And so, between the James Tour story of how we now know that life could never just come into being randomly, as everyone is being taught in every school, certainly every public school for many decades. And we've just discovered this, I said, "I need to write a book because there's all this other information that I want to put in the book. But these two pieces are the most crazy and people need to know this." And I said, "The title of the book has to be *Is Atheism Dead?* Not, *Is God Dead?*" So, I want you to think about this, we have been taught our whole lives that science is at odds with faith and the more I looked into this, the more I thought God, in His sense of humor, because God has a sense of humor and a sense of timing, He waits until we are so sophisticated that we know that we don't need any God. And then using the very science, the sophisticated science that we now have that we didn't have 100 years ago or 50 years ago, He shows us what He has done through science.

So, science is leading us to God and I'll be blunt with you, the fine-tuned universe, which we won't go into anymore, but it gets so staggering that many atheists are completely freaked out by it because where do you go? Where do you wiggle when the information adds up and up and up and up and up and up and up? Well, I'll tell you where they go. They go to something called the multiverse theory. Have you heard that? There's zero evidence for it, zero evidence. But they said, "Well look, if this universe is perfect in every way, there's probably a zillion other universes and we just happen to be in the one that has Arizona and lots of great places and you can breathe and everything's cool." That's the most preposterous, unscientific theory imaginable, but they're so disturbed by it.

I mean, I think I mentioned Christopher Hitchens was the one who said, "That's the argument that all of my atheist colleagues can't handle. It points to God and we're not going to accept God, but this disturbs us." So, I said, "I have to put it in a book." So, I put these things in the book and the more that I put it in the book, the more I thought to myself of the Scripture, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of God will raise up a standard against him.

Now you understand a standard, I don't mean like a standard, like I have my standards. We mean a standard like a battle standard, a battle flag. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of God will raise up a standard against him so that in the midst of the smoke and we think we're losing and it's terrible, we see the flag that God has raised up. And we follow the flag, why? To fight. We're in a war and it's God's war and He chose us to be His obedient servants and soldiers in a war for goodness and truth. Amen.

And so, I simply can't tell you how astonished I was by the information. As I say, it's obviously in the book, but it becomes at some point ridiculous because you keep thinking, "Why don't other people know this? Why is this not reported on?" Now don't get me wrong, some of this is reported on in drips and drabs here and there, but it's so rare that even an intelligent evangelical probably hasn't heard of most of this stuff. One of the weirdest things that came up, the third part of the book, first part is science. Then I talk about biblical archeology, some hilarious stories in biblical archeology. I'm warning you, they're all true and the way God allows us to discover stuff sometimes is very funny.

But the third part of the book just deals with atheism. How is atheism held up? I mentioned earlier that the bleakness of atheism is usually alighted by modern atheists. When you think of people like Christopher Hitchens and Dawkins, they seem to be very flippant and very immature, frankly, about the whole subject. They will sneer and be very nasty in debates. They don't seem to be philosophically serious. When you look at the atheist of the mid 20th century, people like John-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, who the premier philosophers of the 20th century, they were deadly serious about atheism and they were not happy about it. And I find this interesting, the people who took it most seriously, and we're the most rigorous about thinking, what is this? We're not happy about it. Even Woody Allen, if you've ever heard him in interviews, when he

talks about there's no God and that means the universe is absurd. He's not cracking a joke. You can see that he's almost upset that the person asking him the question doesn't get how disturbing this is.

It's disturbing we're alone in a universe with no meaning. How do we live? That's the question if you understand what it means to live in a world without God. He gets that, Ingmar Bergman gets that, Dylan Thomas the poet claimed to be an atheist, but in his famous poem, most of you've heard, "Do not go gentle into that good night, but rage, rage against the dying of the light." His father is dying and even though he claims to be an atheist, he knows there is something worth raging against that death is not ... If we were nothing, dying is nothing, but he's telling his father rage, rage against the dying of the light. There's enough evidence to know that there's something, there has to be something, no matter what my brain tells me, I feel that there's more. So, Dylan Thomas is kind of tortured by this and Ingmar Bergman in his film, some of you've seen the film, "The Seventh Seal," he's looking for meaning.

And you have the knight played by Max von Sydow alone in a universe without God, but wanting to believe. People who wrestle with this honestly, there's something beautiful about it because they're being honest. But the new atheists who I really take to task at the end of the book were just tremendously flippant, intellectually dishonest, and ultimately, as far as I'm concerned, scandalous and offensive in the way that they just sold a lot of books, but were not serious about looking at this. But I mentioned Camus and Sartre, and I'll close with this. These are the two most famous atheist practically of the 20th century. They looked more deeply into the abyss of meaninglessness than anybody and they tried to come up with an ethical system in a world without God.

Now we know you can't do that, but they thought, "Well, God doesn't exist, so we're going to have to try." So they tried and effectively failed, but here's the punchline. Each of these two famous atheists who were not buddies, they died 20 years apart. Camus was killed in a car crash at age 47 around 1960. Sartre died in about 1980. He was about '80. Both of them, totally independently of each other came to believe in God. But what does that tell you? That the people who looked most deeply, and there's another one Anthony Flew, some of you do remember in 2006 or whatever, he wrote textbooks on atheism. He was the most famous atheistic philosopher. He came to believe in a creator God, not in Jesus. But the point is, these are the three people who looked the hardest into this creepy abyss of a world without meaning in God and all three of them came to the conclusion that God is real.

You know, there's some themes in the Scripture. It's just God's character. He always saves the best for last. I really believe that the darker things become the more the Lord pulls stuff out that you didn't know was there. When you start thinking the whole world's gone to hell and nobody believes in God, the Lord says, "Hang on a second. I'm going to show you a biblical sign I'm here. Look." And you go, "What? How can we discover this now?" I'm going to give you science that's going to let you see that life cannot emerge out of randomness.

I'm going to let you see these things to give you hope because when you're in the battle, the tougher the battle is, and we're in a tough battle now, the more you need hope. But when I say hope, sometimes I denigrate hope on purpose because I think Christians say like, "Well, I hope Jesus died for my sins."

"I hope this or I hope that." It's like folks, there's certain things that it's foolish to hope. You need to know. When Bonhoeffer went to the gallows, he didn't hope he was going to the presence of God. I'm telling you, he didn't hope. Because if you just hope that you're going to the presence of God, you never would've lived in a way that led you to those gallows. When you know whose you are and who died for you, when you know these things are true, they're not a truth, they're not nice ideas, they're true. We can't know everything, but the things that God allows us to know are enough for us to know that even if we lose the battle, even if we go to the gallows like Bonhoeffer, the Lord commands us to fight, to fight with joy. So when I hear Christians say like, "Oh, it's all going to hell and so I'm just going to go into the, to the shelter out back and eat my Slim Jim's and it's all going to ... It's all ending." That's the voice of the devil, folks.

The Lord wants us to fight to win. He doesn't want us to fight in the flesh. He wants us to fight on our knees and prayer, but He also wants us to fight by getting involved in school boards, getting involved politically, giving as much money as the government still allows you to have for God's purposes. Because if you don't all use all your bullets now, they may be confiscated five years from now. So I'm telling you whatever you have, I know some of you have money, some of you have talent, some of you have time, some of you have opportunities, some of you have networks, whatever the Lord has given you, use it all now while you have a voice, while you have freedom, use your voice and use your freedom. Use it now as though you won't have it tomorrow.

Give your money to God's purposes prayerfully now, as though you won't have it tomorrow. It'll be in the hands of people working against you. The Lord has called us to hope and sometimes He gives us things to say, "I'm raising up a standard in the midst of this for you." Follow the flag, fight, fight, fight. That's what He's called us to do. To do anything less is to be disobedient and to let the voice of the enemy direct us. That is always the temptation for the church. It's the temptation for every one of us, but the Lord reminds us now and again, "Don't do that. Don't do what the church did in Bonhoeffer's day. You've got that whole story. You can read that story. You can see what happened. I don't want that to happen to America. My hand is on this nation, but my church has to be my church, and my church has to fight. And I will bless you because the battle belongs to me." Amen. God bless you.

Roger Marsh:

And that was the conclusion of Eric Metaxas' presentation about his brand new book *Is Atheism Dead?* here on Family Talk. Eric's presentation was part of the recent JDFI event here in Colorado Springs. And we hope that you were encouraged by today's program and that it strengthened your faith. Now, if you missed the first part of Eric's presentation, or if you'd like to learn more about him or his book *Is Atheism Dead?* just visit [drjamesdobson.org/broadcast](http://drjamesdobson.org/broadcast). That's

[rrjamesdobson.org/broadcast](http://rrjamesdobson.org/broadcast). Well, thanks so much for listening to Family Talk today. We hope you'll join us again tomorrow, but for now, may God richly bless you and your family as you continue to grow in relationship with Him.

Announcer:

Has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.