Tower of Babel

Conflict: a "competitive or opposing action of incompatibles: antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons)."[i]

The Conflict and subsequent Resolution of this segment involves a body of people that sprang from the seed of Noah, i.e., Shem, Ham, and Japheth: "the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and of these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood" [ii] (Genesis 10:32).

Thus, it is written, "And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" [iii] (Genesis 11:1-4).

The actions of the people created a "competitive or opposing action of incompatibles: antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons)," in as much as their actions were not according to the ideas and interests of Jehovah.

The Conflict: "And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And Jehovah said, Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is what they begin to do: and now nothing will be withholden from them, which they purpose to do" (Genesis 11:5-6). Had

they been instructed by the sons of God not to build such a tower? We will leave that to your individual attention. Nevertheless, Jehovah did not look favorably upon the venture.

Concerning the genealogy of Ham the scriptures identify that the first born of Ham was Cush. Unto Cush was born Nimrod: "he was a mighty hunter before Jehovah…and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel" [iv] (Genesis 10:10).

The scriptures identify the thinking of the people, saying, "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth," they had determined to build "a city, and a tower whose top may reach the heaven." There have been numerous suppositions as to the greater purpose of the construction, but we will leave it as stated, i.e., "let us make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth."

Thus, they "said one to another, Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar," and so they began to build.

The Resolution: "Come, let us (Jehovah) go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So Jehovah scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off building the city. Therefore was the name of it called Babel; because Jehovah did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did Jehovah scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." (Genesis 11:7–11).

All the conflicts we have heretofore considered had devastating resolutions upon those who rebelled against the commandments of Jehovah. This resolution appears to not have had such. The people had become strong and confident in their numbers and abilities, and apparently took comfort therein. But it was not according to the plans of Jehovah for the creation for men so to do. Therefore, Jehovah provided a resolution that would accomplish the desired end, i.e., "let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

Speech barriers are difficult to cross. Languages simply affect the way individuals think and communicate and when there is not a common language among people not only are the words unintelligible, but so also are the thoughts behind those words. Words have been described as vehicles upon which thoughts travel. Within our reading Jehovah resolved the conflict by confounding the speech. The end result, "Jehovah scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off building the city" [v] (Genesis 11:8), and so, mankind has been confounded in language ever since.

One evident principle of conflict is that regardless of the resolution, there are lasting consequences. The immediate conflict can be resolved, but the initial seed of the conflict can, and usually does, produce generational fruit.

And now, you know how the nations of the world came from three men, and why they have a variety of languages.

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[i] Webster's
[ii] Genesis 10:32
[iii] Genesis 11:1-4
[iv] Genesis 10:10
[v] Genesis 11:8