

DOCTRINE OF TONGUES

March 21, 1982

I. Definition and preliminary considerations.

- A. The gift of tongues constituted the Holy Spirit given ability to speak in a language one had **not** learned.
- B. That "tongues" involved **only** human languages can be ascertained by:
 1. The Greek words in their contexts (Act.2:4 speaks of "*other tongues*", ἑτέραις γλώσσαις, heterais glossais; vss.6,8 use the syn. διαλέκτος, dialektos; vs.11 again uses γλώσσα, glossa; 1Cor.14 uses glossa and φωνή, phone [2X], the latter being used in vss.10,11).
 2. The first instance of the exercise of the gift was clearly the exercise of foreign languages, read Act.2:1-11.
 3. The only chapter dealing with their proper use in the local church refers to human languages, 1Cor.14:10 "*There are undoubtedly a great many kinds (or families) of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning.*" Also note vss.11,19,21.
 4. The historical roots of the gift are tied to the Diaspora's adoption of gentile languages (see point II below).
- C. The gift of interpretation of tongues was designed to translate into the native speech what "tongues" had spoken, prayed or sung, 1Cor.14:15.
 1. It was the ability to translate a language one had not learned.
 2. Tongues was never to be exercised in its absence, 1Cor.14:59,13-19,27.
 3. At Pentecost, the gift of interpretation was not necessary.
 4. Tongues minus interpretation led to the conclusion that the Church was a body of madmen, 1Cor.14:23; cp. vs. 19.

II. The prophecy of tongues.

- A. Scripture: Isa.28:11,12; cp. 1Cor.14:21 "*In the Law it is written, 'By men of strange tongues (gentile languages and not therefore Hebrew or Aramaic) and by the lips of strangers (gentiles or Jews speaking gentile languages) I will speak (The Lord spoke to the Jews through gentile languages) to this people (Israel, and more specifically, Jews of the Diaspora) and even so, they will not listen to me', says the Lord.*" (The prophecy goes on to state that the Jews as a race and nation would reject the message and the sign.)
- B. The isagogics behind the prophecy and its fulfillment.
 1. In Isaiah's day (8th century BC) the Jews of the Northern Kingdom went into captivity (in 721BC the Assyrians exiled the 10 northern tribes).
 2. About a century and a half later, the Southern Kingdom went into captivity (in 586BC Judah went into Babylonian exile).
 3. Seventy years later (Jer.25) the Jews made a partial return from Babylon (516BC).
 4. In that short time, they switched from Hebrew (Biblical) to Aramaic, cf. Neh.9:18: vs.8 "*And they read from the book, from the Law of God, translating to give the sense so that they could understand the reading.*"
 5. Aramaic was the vernacular of the second commonwealth from 516BC to 70AD.
 6. Jesus and the disciples spoke Aramaic.
 7. But the Jews of the Diaspora knew neither Hebrew nor Aramaic, having adopted gentile tongues (languages).
- C. The era of the fulfillment of the prophecy.
 1. From the day of Pentecost (33AD) until the fall of Jerusalem (70AD).
 2. Jesus, who performed many miracles, never spoke in tongues, since He was sent to the Aramaic speaking nation and not the Diaspora (there was no practical need of it, Act.2:22).
 3. But His disciples did, since they ministered to the Diaspora.
 4. The first instance of speaking in tongues was on the day of Pentecost by Galilean Jews to

Diaspora Jews of Act.2:112.

5. The prophecy (Old Testament) was fulfilled in the Church Age by the Church for Israel's benefit.

III. Tongues was a sign to Israel.

- A. Of many signs heralding Messiah's First Advent, "tongues" was one, 1Cor.14:22 "*So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to unbelievers.*"
- B. Tongues was a sign that Messiah had come and that Israel was still under cursing and about to be set aside as God's chosen vessel, cf. Mt.21:18-22,33-46, esp. vs.43.
- C. Either the race could recover and all Jews be restored to the land or the Jews of the nation would join the Diaspora, cf. Lk.13:19.
- D. The prophecy anticipated the latter, cf. Mt.23:37-39.
- E. The fact the book of Acts records many Jews who accepted the sign (3,000 on Pentecost) in no way mitigates their national unbelief.
- F. Wherever there were Jews, the early disciples evangelized them in their native tongues.
- G. Conclusion: tongues are a sign (and still are, as recorded in Acts). Israel is no longer the vehicle of God's program.

IV. The prophecy of the cessation of the gift of tongues.

- A. Scripture: 1Cor.13:8-11.
- B. 1Cor.13:8 specifically says that tongues, along with other miraculous gifts, would cease, vs.8 "*if there are tongues, they will cease.*" Fut.pass.ind. παύω, pauo.
- C. The future tense is in connection with the coming of "*the perfect*" which is the completed New Testament (NT) canon (compare "*the perfect law*" which in context is "*the word*"; cp. Jam.1:22,23. Furthermore cp. 1Cor.13:12 and Jam.1:23 where "*mirror*" is used as a figure for the Word of God).
- D. "*The perfect*" does not refer to Christ's coming (either phase) since miraculous powers and signs will be associated with the prophets of the Tribulation and Millennium (example: the 2 witnesses; 144,000 Jewish evangelists. Prophecy will flourish in the Millennium, cf. Joel.2).
- E. Paul in 1Cor.13:8 says the gift of prophecy (a gift to edify the early Church, 1Cor.14:22) would be done away with at the completion of the canon.
- F. He employs in vs.11 a child-adult analogy to illustrate the cessation of certain gifts.
- G. The gifts peculiar to the apostolic era can be dubbed "infancy gifts."
- H. Tongues were a sign and an infancy gift.
 1. A sign to unbelieving Jews, 1Cor.14:21,22.
 2. It carried the Church in its infancy.
- I. Since tongues was a judicial sign to Israel, we date its cessation around 70AD with the final dispersion of the Jews.

V. Errors concerning the gift of tongues.

- A. Error concerning "tongues" usually begins with the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (see Doctrine of).
 1. Charismatics contend that "baptism in (with)" the Holy Spirit is different from "baptism by" the Holy Spirit, when in fact the original language in all Biblical references is the same (baptize "ἐν πνεύματι", en pneumati, Act.11:16); only the English translation differs.
 2. They (charismatics) must make this distinction so they can get around 1Cor.12:13a "*For by (ἐν, en) one Spirit we were ALL baptized into (εἰς, eis) one body.*"
 3. They recognize that the "baptism" of this verse is about salvation.
 4. They seek "a baptism" after the salvation adjustment to the justice of God (SAJG) connected with "speaking in tongues" (they confuse baptism, indwelling and filling).
 5. Indwelling is associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (BHS), 1Cor.12:13b.
 6. Only one Spirit baptism exists, Eph.4:46.
 7. In Acts, the BHS is connected with tongues in only four instances, Act.2,8,10-11,19.

8. In three of these four chapters, this "experience" occurred after conversion (Cornelius & Co. spoke in tongues at salvation, Act.10-11).
 9. The three exceptions to the rule (BHS occurs at the SAJG, 1Cor.12:13a) are explained as follows:
 - a. The 120 in Act.2 were already believers on Pentecost, so the BHS **had** to follow salvation.
 - b. The Samaritans of Act.8 were saved under the evangelist Philip but later received the HS under Peter and John for apostolic witness to the fact Samaritans were on an equal footing with Christian Jews in Jerusalem.
 - c. John the Baptist's disciples in the Diaspora received the Holy Spirit long after their salvation to prove to them the validity of the new age, Act.19.
 10. Speaking in tongues and prophesying was the overt attestation that each category were admitted to Christ (example: gentiles in Act.10,11).
 11. Those who were saved (cir. 3,000 souls) on Pentecost received the HS at conversion, Act.2:38.
 12. Conclusion: there are not two baptisms of the HS (the second being the so-called "second blessing"), only one (Eph.4:46) and it occurs at salvation, the three exceptions notwithstanding.
- B. The next error is tied to the first, which is that tongues is an initial evidence (mark, sign) for those who have experienced the fullness of the HS (i.e. who is and who is not spiritual).
1. They teach that the Holy Spirit intended "tongues" for all believers as a sign of the Holy Spirit's "baptism." (The NT with Personal Commentary by Oral Roberts, pp. 691, 745, 751-755.)
 2. They go on to distinguish **tongues as a sign** and **tongues as a gift** (Article 7, "Statement of Faith", cf. the Assemblies of God).
 3. This is pure invention and subterfuge to deny passages which explicitly **deny** tongues are a gift for all, 1Cor.12:29,30.
 4. Furthermore, tongues did not mark spirituality or maturity as seen in the Corinthians who were labeled "carnal" and "babies", 1Cor.3:13, and yet who exercised tongues, 1Cor.12:14.
 5. In fact, the Corinthians abused the gift of interpretation in the presence of the gift of tongues, 1Cor.14:13,19,20,23.
 6. Charismatics are guilty of making one gift a sign of spirituality which depreciates the other gifts (the Corinthians were guilty of overrating and distorting tongues into a system of spirituality), 1Cor.14:15.
 7. The modern "tongues" movement (a 20th century or last days phenomenon) encourages the sins of pride and envy, neglecting the diversity and balance in the Holy Spirit's distribution of spiritual gifts, 1Cor.12:4-11; 14-31; Rom.12:48.
 8. Conclusion: no particular gift (including "tongues") can be possessed by all Christians. No particular gift is "universal". Therefore, "tongues" (or any other "gift") cannot be the sign of the universal ministries of the Holy Spirit (baptism, indwelling or filling). Finally, the Corinthians (who possessed all the gifts including "tongues", 1Cor.1:47) were without "love" in the exercise of their gifts, 1Cor.13:1. The infallible signs of spirituality are the fruits of the Spirit, Gal.5:22-24.
- C. The error that speaking in tongues was an "ecstatic, non-human, heavenly" language (Pentecostals do not totally agree on this. Some claim it is ecstatic and non-human; others claim it is all three).
1. In the first recorded instance, Jews from various nations heard the 120 Galileans "speak in tongues", Act.2:9-11.
 2. In the NT, glossa (tongues) uniformly signified languages used by inhabitants of the world (the principle Biblical lexicons list "ecstatic utterances" upon a presupposition about

tongues in 1Cor. The major non-biblical Greek lexicons do not consider "ecstatics" a valid definition).

3. In 1Cor.14:10 "*kinds of tongues in the world*" is a plural implying many human languages (rather than a heavenly language).
4. Tongues could only serve as a "sign" if they were provable languages. Otherwise, being unproven as a genuine miracle, they could be written off as mere human gibberish, 1Cor.14:22.
5. Paul used the gift more than all the Corinthians (but not in the church). He did it (consistent with 1Cor.14:20-22) among dispersed Jews (its intended purpose) where he did not know the languages (his custom was to go to Jews first).
6. 1Cor.13:1 ("*tongues of men and angels*") is used as a support text. This merely referred to the possibility of exercising "tongues" to the Nth degree without love (FHS), that is, all languages ever spoken by men and angels (not heavenly dialects). Grammatically "tongues" is used just ONCE with "man" and "angels" meaning ONE CLASS (not dividing into human ecstatic). In Biblical times men and angels conversed in known languages.
7. In the King James Version "unknown" is italicized; it is inserted as an interpretative device.
8. In 1Cor.14:2 "*a tongue*" which "*does not speak to men, but to God*", which "*no man understands*", pertained not to the nature of the tongue but its use in the church without interpretation, cp. vs.911.
9. In 1Cor.14:4 the phrase "*a tongue edified himself*" does not mean tongues were an "ecstatic" language for private use in self-edification. These are negative comments to the effect that un-interpreted tongues edify only the possessor as every gift edifies its possessor when exercised.
10. Praising God from the spirit is done at church, not at home, 1Cor.14:28.
11. Conclusion: "ecstatic, heavenly languages" is another invention to hide the fact that these people cannot speak known foreign languages.

D. The error of failing to recognize what the Bible declares about the purpose of "tongues", 1Cor.14:20-25.

1. "Tongues" were a sign to the nation Israel that they were to be dispersed.
2. They were a sign to unbelievers, but not to believers, vs.22.
3. Once Israel ceased as a nation (70AD), the sign gift ceased.
4. Never is "tongues" a sign to a believer that he/she is "spiritual" (an invention of men).

E. The error that "tongues" were available to every Christian and a highly sought after, highly desirable gift.

1. Concerning "tongues" as **the sign of** the Holy Spirit baptism, indwelling or filling, see subpoints A and B above.
2. That all Christians can have the same gift, see Doctrine of Spiritual Gifts. Imagine the bizarre pathological specter of STA (sinful trend of Adam) and human viewpoint motivated Christians designing Christ's body (a tongue, an eye, genital, etc.), cp. 1Cor.12:17,19.
3. It is unscriptural to seek gifts generally (already bestowed), or a gift in particular ("tongues"), since the HS sovereignly bestows gifts at salvation.
4. Paul taught that tongues were LESS DESIRABLE and that a Spirit filled, mature believer would place prophecy above it, 1Cor.14:5,39.
5. "Tongues" had limited edification value (none to the local church apart from interpretation) while "prophecy" held all honors when it came to the edification of the body of Christ, 1Cor.14:16,12,26.
6. Paul limited the number who could speak in "tongues" to two or three and never in the

absence of an interpreter, 1Cor.14:27,28.

7. No such restrictions were imposed on "prophecy", 1Cor.14:29-31.

8. So if one particular gift was desirable it was "prophecy", NOT "tongues", 1Cor.12:31a; 14:1.

9. Verses misunderstood include 1Cor.14:1,5. The command is a desire to see all diverse gifts function normally in the local church rather than going after a gift. Paul wished all could have "tongues" (though they cannot), but more that all could prophesy (also impossible).

F. Finally, there is the error that "tongues" is a valid gift today (see point IV).

1. There are some teachers (example: Hal Lindsey) who believe the HS still bestows "tongues" on some believers (not all).

2. A correct interpretation of 1Cor.13:8-11 and 14:21 refutes this.

3. You either retain all the temporary gifts (all 10 of them) or none.

4. The fifth cycle of Divine discipline (Lev.26) to Israel and the completed canon rendered these gifts obsolete, 1Cor.13:8-11; cp. Jn.14:25,26; 16:12,13.

<u>PENTECOST</u>	<u>Fall of Israel in 70AD</u>	<u>Canon Complete, 97AD</u>
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Prophecy		ended
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Knowledge		ended
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Tongues	ended	
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VI. What is the explanation for present day "speaking in tongues"?

A. The charismatic movement is a 20th century phenomenon, which crossed all denominational borders. (They claim this is a latter-day phenomenon in fulfillment of Joel.2:28,29. This passage [in context] is a prophecy of the Second Advent of the HS and resultant Millennial prophecy.

Actually, they are fulfilling latter day prophecies like 2Tim.3:17; 4:14.)

1. The tongues explosion is traced to a female, Agnes Osman, a student at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas, who claimed to have spoken in tongues and received the BHS (January 1, 1901).

2. Its adherents include Protestants and Catholics.

3. Rejecting the Doctrine of the Importance of Doctrine, its adherents claim to desire a fuller or deeper life and are seeking this "experience" of the HS.

B. "Tongues" are non-language sounds produced most of the time by mere human emotional, psychological processes.

1. If they were genuine modern languages, it would be obvious by merely exercising them. However, no person who claims the gift today is able to freely demonstrate a foreign language.

2. Some who "speak in tongues" at glossolalia meetings are self-confessed unbelievers (Seattle Times 12372; Eternity July 1963; C. Stacy Woods, His Magazine, April 1970; the confessions of MARJOE in Life, Oct. 1972; Church of God Bishop Homer Thompson who claimed to be "king of this world"; one of the leaders who appeared at Yale and Princeton prior to the outbreak of "tongues" there: Eternity, July 1963; and Christianity Today, 8273).

C. Common methods for "getting tongues" include: placing hands upon the head, shoulders, throat; instructions to keep your mind "open", let your mind go "blank", let your tongue "fall loose", say certain syllables or "thank you Jesus" over and over, faster and faster, until your tongue trips (SeattleTimes, 12361).

D. A testimony of "the tongues" experience: Presbyterian minister Paul Morris; a tingling "warmth" over the body (Eternity, July 1963).

E. Common circumstances of "tongues": many who have received "tongues" were going through severe loneliness, unhappiness, discord; others are high keyed mystics and visionaries more impressed by feelings and miraculous escapes than by academic self-discipline, walking by faith

and spiritual growth.

F. The doubts of many: *"At the close of that meeting I went forward with others seeking the baptism of the HS. Praise God! I received the desire of my heart ... and with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Immediately Satan moved in on me! I began to think that because I so deeply desired the baptism, the speaking in tongues was just a psychological result and did not come from the Spirit at all. I have since learned that this is a common experience with those who have just received the baptism"* (p. 10 VOICE Magazine, January 1972).

G. Demon influence is at work in all so-called "tongues" experiences, cp. 1Tim.4:1,2 *"doctrines of demons"* (or evil) by those who will *"fall away from the faith."*

1. Believers are to separate from believers who are in tongues or who place feelings, emotions and experiences above the Word of God, Rom.16:17,18.
2. If you have a good friend, etc. who is a charismatic, you are to separate.
3. Such persons are deceived, fleshly, with a form of godliness, whose consciences are "seared", claiming visions, revelations, and experiences they have never had, Rom.16:17,18; 1Tim.4:1,2; Col.2:18.
4. All such believers (however sincere) are functioning under evil.

H. What about believers who practice tongues in private (who avoid many of the errors of mainline charismatics, are not constantly proselytizing or divisive, or claiming "tongues" for all believers or as a mark of spirituality)?

1. These believers, though not as obnoxious, are nevertheless not of sound doctrine.
2. Their leaven (evil) is still leaven, Gal.5:9 *"A little leaven leavens the whole loaf."*
3. If you allow for "private tongues speaking", you have to allow for public tongues speaking and the exercise of all the temporary gifts, cp. 1Cor.14:39b.
4. Again, do not build your doctrine on the testimonies of "sincere" personable believers, but on the Word of God, 1Cor.14:37,38.

VII. The Bible recognizes a type of "speaking in tongues" that involves demon possession, Isa.8:19.

A. In vs.18, Isaiah gives true signs, in vs.19, false signs.

1. The true signs included the virgin birth sign and the leaves of the fig tree sign.
2. The false signs included the advice of the ministerial council to go to demon possessed individuals.

B. These individuals are listed as:

1. Mediums (Heb., אֹבְדִים, obh): witches who were involved in the occult. They practice necromancy, etc. The witch of Endor was an "obh".
2. Wizards (Heb., יִדְּעֹנִי, jidoni, masc.plur.n.): a wizard or soothsayer, derived from the root "to know".
3. The first refers to females, the second to males, involved in the occult (the two terms often appear together), Lev.19:31; 20:6; 23:24; 2Chr.33:6; Isa.8:19; 19:3.

C. The sounds they made were a demonic ventriloquism "who chirp" (Heb. צִפִּץ, tsaph) the sound of an angry bird whose nest has been threatened, Isa.14:10. It is a high falsetto sound, and growl (Heb. הִגָּה, haghah) of a low guttural sound.

1. These sounds come from the possessed in their seances.
2. They seek to rouse the dead.

D. The demon acts through the medium as a ventriloquist, mimicking the dead person from another part of the room.

E. Demon possession takes different forms including speaking in a normal, abnormal or even a different language (controls the vocal cords).

F. This activity is referred to in:

1. Mk.5 (2,000 demons in one man with a leader acting as a ventriloquist or engosthromuthos in the Greek).

2. Rev.16:13,14 of demons speaking through world leaders in the Tribulation (frog or "political" demons).

3. Tongues will be a part of the deceiving signs of the Tribulation, 2Thess.2:711.

G. Modern day illustrations involving unbelievers.

1. Helene Smith in Switzerland who spoke in a very ancient dialect of India (some thought it was tongues. Tongues, R. B. Thieme, Jr., pg. 30).

2. Cults and non-Christian religions practice tongues; Mormons; the ancient oracle of Delphi not far from Corinth, cf. 1Cor.12:2; several far eastern religions; Eternity, July 1963).

VIII. Additional problems associated with glossofalia.

A. Divisive and schismatic (they must push tongues to be consistent with their grid that this is "spirituality". "There is something about the baptism in the Holy Spirit that makes you deeply concerned to help someone else receive it" Testimonial, p. 11 Full Gospel BusinessMen's Fellowship International VOICE Magazine, January 1972. Their strategy is infiltration without basic Christian honesty and ethics).

B. They promote a female clergy (long before ERA. It is of extreme interest to note that Paul condemns the practice of female preachers in the chapter dealing with tongues abuse at Corinth, cf. 1Cor.14:34,35; cp.vs.37,38 and 1Tim.2:11,12).

C. They advocate and prophesy a dangerous ecumenism (they distort Jn.17:21 and Eph.4:3, and they say the tongues phenomenon is a latter day sign and fulfillment of Joel.2 and that speaking in tongues among fundamentalists, Protestants, Catholics, theological liberals, etc. is proof. Remember Isa.8:20).

IX. Summary.

A. Tongues were bona fide human languages.

B. Tongues were a sign to Israel of the fifth cycle to the second commonwealth.

C. Tongues ceased with the administration of the fifth cycle in 70AD.

D. Tongues as advocated in these last days necessitated three inventions by its devotees: a second baptism, a second sign (to believers that they are spiritual) and a second "language" (a non-human unverifiable ecstatic heavenly speech).

E. Tongues people are involved in evil regardless of where they are on the spectrum (respectable or wild-eyed, frothing, "holy rollers").

F. We are to totally separate from tongues as a movement and those who practice it.

X. Final exhortation: If people do not speak according to sound doctrine regardless of their testimonies or piety, do not listen to them, Rom.16:17,18; 1Cor.14:37,38; 1Tim.6:3; 2Tim.1:13; 4:3,4; Ti.1:9; 2:1; Act.17:11; 20:2830; 1Jn.4:1.