

# The Case for Tongues

*by*

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## Contents

Introduction	2
Nobody's Fools	3
Tongues	6
The New Covenant	9
The Evidence of Spirit Baptism	16
The Purpose of Tongues	23
Objections	30
Conclusion	35
References	36

*All Scriptures taken from the Hebraic-Roots  
Version unless otherwise indicated.*

## Introduction

In 2017, while queueing to get onto the Temple Mount, I started talking to a pastor from the Bible Belt. We chatted about prophecy and various other things, until we ended up debating *tongues*. I said, “*I speak in tongues*”, to which he replied with a chuckle, “*No one speaks in tongues these days*”. When I told him that my wife speaks in tongues too, he started laughing. I soon realised that it was pointless to argue any further, and at that point we had anyway reached the Dome of the Rock. His implication that I was lying was remarkable though.

On another occasion, while praying moderately in tongues at the Western Wall, I sensed a few bewildered looks on people’s faces. I was standing some two metres from the barrier, when a Jewish woman suddenly shouted at me, “*What is this? What are you doing? This is our place! Stop it!*”

Despite (or because of) the amount of literature on the subject, there appears to be a lot of ignorance regarding *tongues*. Though this ignorance may partially be deliberate and thus harder to remedy, I would like to contribute to the discussion.

It’s not only about ignorance or misinformation though. I have hardly come across a subject which causes so much controversy, bigotry, and rejection as *tongues*. What is the reason for this? In seeking to explain the animosity towards the Jewish state, Alan Dershowitz says in his impassioned book *The Case for Israel*:

*“It became clear to me that darker forces were at play.”*<sup>1</sup>

I cannot agree more with the above, and I believe the same holds true in regard to tongues. Tongues, as will be shown, are intrinsically connected with the New Covenant, with salvation and with the Israel of God,<sup>2</sup> namely, with the Jews and Gentiles who are born of God.

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<sup>1</sup> Alan Dershowitz, *The Case for Israel*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See Galatians 6:16. Considering that *theos*, *el*, or *elohim* can also refer to pagan deities, the article employs the nondescript title *God* outside of Scripture quotations.

## Nobody's Fools

There is an old gospel traditional which became a hit in the 1960's:

Give me oil in my lamp,  
Keep me burning,  
Give me oil in my lamp, I pray!  
Give me oil in my lamp,  
Keep me burning,  
Keep me burning  
Till the break of day.<sup>3</sup>

It is a very joyful song though the lyrics are based on a very sobering story – *The Parable of the Ten Virgins*:

*Again Yeshua<sup>4</sup> said to his disciples: The kingdom of heaven is like ten virgins who took their lamps and went forth to meet a bridegroom and a bride. Five of them were lazy fools and five of them were alert and wise. The five foolish brought their lamps, but they brought no oil with them. The wise brought oil in their vessels with their lamps. The bridegroom was late and, behold, all of them lingered and slept. It came to pass at midnight that, behold, a voice was heard: Behold, the bridegroom is coming; come to meet Him. Then all those virgins came and trimmed their lamps. The foolish virgins said to the wise: Give us some of your oil because our lamps have gone out. The wise answered saying: Go now to those who sell and buy for yourselves because there is not enough oil for us and you. We fear that it will be lacking for us. It came to pass when they went to buy, the bridegroom came; those who were ready went with him into the marriage ceremony and the gate was closed. Afterwards the foolish came and called at the gate saying the rest of the virgins, saying: Our lord, open for us. He answered them: Truly I say to you, I do not know you are.<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> *Oil in My Lamp*, Music & Lyrics by A. Sevison.

<sup>4</sup> *Yeshua* is the original form of Jesus of Nazareth's Hebrew name; it is a variant of *Yehoshua* which is formed from *Yehovah* and *yosbia* meaning 'Yehovah saves'. See Nehemia Gordon, *The Naming of Jesus in Hebrew Matthew*, Makor Hebrew Foundation, 2008, pp. 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 25:1-12, Shem Tov Version. See George Howard, *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, Mercer University Press, 1995, pp. 125-127.

At Yeshua's return there will be two groups of believers – those who are born of the Spirit and those who aren't, i.e. those who are born of the flesh. One will either belong to the wise virgins who have the oil of God's Spirit in their heart<sup>6</sup> or to the fools who haven't.<sup>7</sup>

The parable clearly shows that rebirth is imperative for salvation and thus answers a question which Job raised some 4,000 years ago:

***How can man be justified before El? Or how can he be clean who is born of a woman?***<sup>8</sup>

The answer is, “*He cannot, except he be born of God.*” Eternal life cannot spring forth from man's corrupt nature, it cannot spring forth from the *flesh*. That is why we are offered a second birth from incorruptible seed, i.e. from the Word of God.<sup>9</sup> Yeshua's victory provides for man's rebirth, however, many don't seem to appreciate the offer, not realising that it is the only way to escape eternal damnation:

***Truly, Truly I say to you, that if a man is not born of water and spirit, he is not able to enter the kingdom of Eloah. That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit.***<sup>10</sup>

Should these sober words which Yeshua spoke in God's name trouble anyone who negates hell? Probably not. And what about the politically incorrect who are aware of hell's reality and even address it? Is there anyone at all who dreads to spend

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<sup>6</sup> The infilling of the heart, i.e. of the human spirit denotes anointing. A follower of the Nazarene needs to be anointed just as Yeshua was anointed before He commenced His ministry, and as all the priests, prophets, and kings of old were anointed (Matthew 3:16; Luke 4:18; Hebrews 1:9; Revelation 1:6). The anointing enables the believer to do the works of Yeshua and to fully preach the Gospel by demonstrating God's power (John 14:12; Acts 8:5-7; Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:5). John, who probably wrote to the assemblies of Asia Minor, reminded the brethren that all of them had been anointed with the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:20).

<sup>7</sup> To interpret *lamp* as God's Word doesn't harmonize with ten individual lamps which belong to the virgins. Since when can the unchanging Word of God, ***the light which shineth in darkness***, be extinguished by the folly of men? *A vessel with a lamp* is clearly a reference to *a man with a spirit: The spirit of man is the lamp of Yehovah* (Proverbs 20:27). As oil is poured into a lamp, so Spirit is poured into a spirit. See Romans 5:5; 2 Corinthians 4:6-7; Ezekiel 36:27.

<sup>8</sup> Job 25:4 (cf. Job 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Isaiah 57:12; 64:6).

<sup>9</sup> See 1 Peter 1:23. Our rebirth, however, is just as little a license to continue breaking God's Torah, as is man's natural depravedness or his inability to justify himself. The word 'Torah' does not mean 'law' but 'instruction'. It is derived from the root ירה (yarah) which means 'to teach' or 'to instruct'; as an archery term it means 'to hit the mark'. חטא (chata), on the other hand, means 'to miss the mark' or 'to sin'.

<sup>10</sup> John 3:5-6, cf. v. 3: ***Truly, Truly I say to you, that if anyone is not born again he is not able to see the kingdom of Eloah.*** The Greek for 'again' <ἀνωθεν – anōthen> can also be translated as 'from above'. To enter the kingdom of God means to become a follower of Yeshua – it doesn't mean 'to go to heaven'. But unless one follows Yeshua, one won't 'go to heaven'.

eternity in a lake of fire? We either hear that everyone will be born again at the first resurrection (as per popular notion),<sup>11</sup> or that everyone is born again already, at least if we trust the statements of today's Christians<sup>12</sup> which range from: "I was born again when I accepted Christ" and "I was born again when I was baptized" to "I was born again the day my pastor told me I was" – thus, all appear to be on their way to heaven in which case I could end my defence of tongues right here.

Now, it is obvious that this state of affairs doesn't agree with Scripture. Inevitably there has to be a camp of people who are convinced that they have oil in their lamps, that they have received the Spirit,<sup>13</sup> and that they are saved. However, the sad truth is that they are not born again, that God's Spirit doesn't dwell in their hearts, and that they are not on their way into heavenly bliss – a truth which will only unfold when Yeshua returns.

Any hint to someone regarding their lack of oil, any innuendo that a person may actually not be Spirit-filled, or not be saved, is usually dismissed as *judgmental*, *presumptuous*, or even *unloving*. It seems there is hardly any area where different views can trigger such tension and animosity as in the question of salvation – and this leads us to our topic.

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<sup>11</sup> This wishful thinking is refuted by John 1:12-13, 1 Peter 1:23 and Galatians 4:29. No unregenerate person will be in the first resurrection.

<sup>12</sup> *Christian* is the anglicized version of the Greek word **Χριστιανός** (Christianos) meaning *anointed*. It was first used by Hellenists for the **משיחים** (Mashiachim) or *Messianics*, and eventually became a derogatory term (cf. Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). Though both words once meant the same, today *Messianic* carries the meaning of Torah observant, while *Christian* suggests non-Torah observant. Another term for a Torah adhering follower of Yeshua is **נצר** (Netzer) or *Nazarene*, see Acts 24:5.

<sup>13</sup> To *receive the Holy Spirit* and to be *born again* are synonymous terms as shown in Galatians 3:2; 4:29.

# Tongues

*Speaking in tongues* has always been a sensitive issue, even outside the context of salvation. The Internet abounds in articles which claim that today's *tongues* are basically a counterfeit or mere gibberish which has nothing to do with the miraculous gift of speaking in languages as recorded in Acts.<sup>14</sup>

The most offensive claim on the side of the tongues-speaker<sup>15</sup> is probably to assert, "*If you don't speak in tongues, you are not Spirit-filled*";<sup>16</sup> which is a simple proclamation one may accept or reject, but which doesn't slander or ridicule. The manifestation of God's Spirit in the form of tongues, however, is being constantly attacked, demonized, disparaged, or outrightly denied – predominantly by believers, rarely by atheists.<sup>17</sup>

May one ask at this point why only tongues are so vehemently opposed? Why not also *healing the sick* or *casting out demons*? Could it be because tongues have a much deeper significance which the adversary wants to obscure?

I have been speaking in tongues for 25 years (following repentance and water baptism), and can confirm that *tongues* are indeed languages, whether intelligible or not.<sup>18</sup> Acts 2:5-18 shows that some understood the dialects while others considered them babble – this has not changed today. At times I have witnessed brethren praying in tongues which sounded like French or Italian, though they had never learnt these languages. During collective prayer at international conventions, people

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<sup>14</sup> The *Toronto Blessing* is a good example of how an outpouring of the Holy Spirit is defamed. I don't agree with *dog barking* or uncontrolled *holy laughter* considering 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40. However, phenomena such as falling to the ground due to the Spirit's presence are in line with Scripture (cf. 1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14). Considering that one of the Spirit's emblems is *wine*, and that Scripture parallels ***drunk with wine*** to ***filled with the Spirit***, there also seems to be no reason for dragging a phrase like '*drunk in the Spirit*' mercilessly through the mud (cf. Isaiah 55:1; Mark 2:22; Ephesians 5:18).

<sup>15</sup> It is estimated that worldwide some 500 million people speak in tongues.

<sup>16</sup> There can be a delay between the infilling of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation; in that case a person is born again even though they don't manifest tongues yet.

<sup>17</sup> In Galatians 4:29 Paul compares the hostility of unregenerate Jews towards born again Nazarenes with Ishmael's enmity towards Isaac: ***He who was born of the flesh persecuted him who was born of the Spirit***. Isaac was 'born of the Spirit' through Abraham's faith in God's promise in the same way the Nazarenes were born of the Spirit through faith in God's promise. Ishmael, who mocked Isaac, was born through human effort, signifying the flesh of unbelief. Ishmael is the epitome of unregenerate man mocking the *Promise of the Father*, the *Promise of the Holy Spirit* and its manifestation of tongues.

<sup>18</sup> John L. Sherrill played recordings of some forty different tongues to a group of language experts (at a time when he had not received the Holy Spirit himself). Although the languages were unknown to the linguists "*they had frequently identified language patterns on the tapes. The 'shape' of real language, the variety of sound combinations, infrequency of repetition and so forth, is virtually impossible, so they said, to reproduce by deliberate effort... I had slipped onto the tapes two instances of pure made-up gibberish, one by our son, Scott, and one by Tib. They had tried to sound as much as possible like the tongues on the rest of the tape, but the linguists spotted the deception immediately. 'That's not language' one man said, 'That's just noise.'*" (John L. Sherrill, *They Speak With Other Tongues*, Chosen Books, 1964, p. 101).

sometimes hear their native tongue from someone who is praying in tongues. Below is one many documented accounts of the phenomenon of intelligible languages:

*Language: Hebrew | Place: Jerusalem, Israel | Date: March 1973*

*“While on a tour in Israel, Pyle determined to visit the Western Wall early one morning before breakfast. Hiring an Arab boy to guide him, and taking his tape recorder, he started out. He had forgotten it was Saturday and the Jewish Sabbath.*

*As the pastor and his guide approached the Damascus Gate, two men and a woman sitting there raised their hands in protest, denying them entrance. At this moment Pyle felt moved upon by the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other tongues. The three people changed their attitude immediately. With smiles they shook the minister’s hand and let him proceed unmolested. Had Pastor Pyle spoken in their language?*

*Coming to the esplanade before the Western Wall, the man and the boy started toward the shrine. But some Jews approached them and said in broken English, ‘No, this is Sabbath!’ Fortunately, the pastor had turned on his tape recorder to add this experience to the many hours he had already taped. So what followed was recorded.*

*Once again, moved by the Holy Spirit, Albert Pyle began speaking in other tongues. And again, the attitude of the people changed. They provided him with the little cap used by our Jewish friends when at prayer, and allowed him to proceed all the way to the Western Wall.*

*The tape recorder relates the conversation between the Missouri pastor and a friendly Jew near the Wall.*

*‘Did you understand what I was saying?’ Pyle asked.*

*‘Yes,’ the Jew replied, ‘it was a language.’*

*‘What was I saying’ the pastor continued.*

*‘You were praying to God,’ was the answer.*

*Since returning home, the author of this book has played the tape for Dr. Stanley M. Horton, professor at Central Bible College and the Assemblies of God Graduate School of Theology. Dr. Horton is a Hebrew scholar and has taught at the college for more than 25 years. Although he could not recognize all the words of Pastor Pyle’s utterance, he identified certain phrases as Hebrew words of praise.*

*The Jewish people have returned to Israel from nearly one hundred countries of the world, and many know several languages. There was something in that utterance that persuaded the Jews at the Western Wall to welcome Pastor Pyle as one of their own.”<sup>19</sup>*

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<sup>19</sup> Ralph Harris, *Spoken by the Spirit: Documented Accounts of ‘Other Tongues’ from Arabic to Zulu*, Gospel Publishing House, 1973, pp. 65-67.

The following is an account given by John L. Sherrill:

*“Out of his mouth came, and here are his words as I wrote them down that day:*

*‘... the most beautiful outpouring of vowels and consonants and also some strange, guttural syllables. I could not recognize any of it. It was as though I was listening to a foreign language, except that it was coming out of my own mouth.’*

*Amazed, curious, and a bit frightened, Bredesen ran down the mountain, still talking aloud in this tongue. He came to the edge of a small community. On the stoop of a cabin sat an old man. Bredesen continued to speak in the tongue which was coming so easily and naturally from his lips. The man answered, talking rapidly in a language which Bredesen didn’t know. When it became obvious that they were not communicating, the old man spoke in English.*

*‘How can you speak Polish but not understand it?’ the man asked.*

*‘I was speaking in Polish?’*

*The man laughed, thinking that Bredesen was joking.*

*‘Of course it was Polish,’ he said.*

*But Bredesen wasn’t joking. As far as he could recall he had never before heard the language.”<sup>20</sup>*

To claim that ‘speaking in tongues is not an option’ may not be the most popular statement, but it is nevertheless a true statement. We are not talking about *the gift of tongues* which is not compulsory to have, but we are talking about salvation and the evidence of spiritual birth.

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<sup>20</sup> *They Speak With Other Tongues*, p. 19.



## The New Covenant

To grasp the purpose of tongues and the role of our spirit, we need to realize that we have inherited death from Adam and have forfeited eternal life. The penalty for Adam's transgression was both physical and spiritual death. When he sinned, his spirit died, and we have inherited that dead spirit. No matter what we do, we possess an Adamic sinful nature – we are sinners.<sup>21</sup>

The entry into the New Covenant through spiritual rebirth is often equated with water baptism, a view which is sadly in error. Thus, it will be helpful to briefly contrast the main features and types of water and Spirit baptism, so we can understand their significance and relevance:

<b><i>Water Baptism</i></b> <i>(Yochanan's Baptism)</i>	<b><i>Spirit Baptism</i></b> <i>(Yeshua's Baptism)</i>	<b><i>Result</i></b>
<i>Destroying the temple</i>	<i>Raising up the temple</i>	<i>New temple</i>
<i>Destroying the earth by water</i>	<i>Restoring the earth by wind</i>	<i>New earth</i>
<i>Cleansing the earth with water</i>	<i>Cleansing the earth with fire</i>	<i>New earth</i>
<i>Removing the old nature</i>	<i>Imparting a new nature</i>	<i>New man</i>
<i>Smiting Jacob's flesh</i>	<i>Changing Jacob's name</i>	<i>New man</i>
<i>Circumcising the heart</i>	<i>Filling the heart</i>	<i>New heart</i>

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<sup>21</sup> See Romans 5:12; comparing Genesis 2:7 with Genesis 3:8 reveals that man had died spiritually.

<b><i>Water Baptism</i></b> <i>(Yochanan's Baptism)</i>	<b><i>Spirit Baptism</i></b> <i>(Yeshua's Baptism)</i>	<b><i>Result</i></b>
<i>Taking away the stony heart</i>	<i>Providing a fleshy heart</i>	<i>New heart</i>
<i>Cutting the foreskin of the heart</i>	<i>Setting the spirit over the soul</i>	<i>New heart</i>
<i>Immersing Israel in the sea</i>	<i>Immersing Israel in the cloud</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Swallowing Jonah</i>	<i>Releasing Jonah</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Physical death</i>	<i>Spiritual life</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Crucifixion</i>	<i>Resurrection</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Penalty</i>	<i>Reward</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Pouring out blood</i>	<i>Pouring out Spirit</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Smiting the Rock</i>	<i>Drinking from the Rock</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Slaying the lamb for the firstborn</i>	<i>Birthing the church of the firstborn</i>	<i>Salvation</i>
<i>Drenching the sacrifice with water</i>	<i>Consuming the sacrifice with fire</i>	<i>Victory</i>

<b><i>Water Baptism</i></b> <i>(Yochanan's Baptism)</i>	<b><i>Spirit Baptism</i></b> <i>(Yeshua's Baptism)</i>	<b><i>Result</i></b>
<i>Cleansing the temple</i>	<i>Filling the temple</i>	<i>Joy</i>
<i>Washing in His blood</i>	<i>Drinking His blood</i>	<i>Life</i>
<i>Mowing the grass</i>	<i>Watering the grass</i>	<i>Life</i>
<i>Killing the flesh</i>	<i>Reviving the spirit</i>	<i>Life</i>
<i>Renting the veil</i>	<i>Reconciling with God</i>	<i>Love</i>
<i>Removing the partition</i>	<i>Reconciling with man</i>	<i>Love</i>
<i>Trimming the lamp</i>	<i>Filling the lamp</i>	<i>Light</i>
<i>Cutting animals in pieces</i>	<i>Lamp passing between the pieces</i>	<i>Covenant</i>

Water baptism will not save. Noah would have died on his boat had God not dried the earth by wind, and Israel would have drowned in the sea had God not parted it by wind. Water baptism signifies the redemption and burial of the old man but this is only part of the rebirth.<sup>22</sup> Yeshua didn't say, "Unless you are born of water, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God." Man needs to be born of the Spirit.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Baptism is humbling because we recognize our own inability to save ourselves and identify with a scourged and crucified saviour instead. See Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:11-12; Titus 3:5; James 4:10.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. John 6:63; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Peter 3:18. An unregenerate person is separated from God, see Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:3.

Although the New Covenant was promised first and foremost to the Jews, its providential purpose was to save the Gentiles.<sup>24</sup> Spiritual circumcision and renewal<sup>25</sup> became the means of grafting Gentiles into the olive tree of Israel.<sup>26</sup> It became the means of bestowing Abraham's blessings upon them, *viz.* justification by faith and the inheritance of the *Promised Land*.<sup>27</sup> Once grafted into Israel, they would be subject to the law of Israel which had been codified at Mt. Sinai and written on stone tables.<sup>28</sup> The same law would now be written onto their hearts:<sup>29</sup>

***You are a letter of the Messiah that was served by us: written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the Living Eloah; not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of the heart of flesh.***<sup>30</sup>

The New Covenant creates a new man,<sup>31</sup> not a new law.<sup>32</sup> There is nothing wrong with God or His Word or His Law, but there is something wrong with man – he is fallen. The Torah has existed from the beginning, which is why the New Covenant not only concerns ethnic Israel but the whole of mankind. Gentiles are covenant breakers just as Jews and just as Adam, their common progenitor. The

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<sup>24</sup> "The fact that the Jews fulfilled prophecy in rejecting Christ is one reason why we receive Him." (H. Grattan Guinness, *Light For The Last Days: A Study In Chronological Prophecy*, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1917, p. 324).

<sup>25</sup> Circumcision and renewal is the sign of both the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant. Abraham ratified the covenant by circumcising himself and thus shedding some of his blood. God ratified the covenant by changing his name from **אברם** (Avram) to **אברהם** (Avraham); the Hebrew letter **ה** (Hey) signifies the Spirit of God indwelling the human heart.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Romans 4:1-17; 11:17-24; 1 Corinthians 7:18; Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:6. A Gentile who has been grafted into Israel through rebirth is an Israelite in God's eyes (cf. Romans 2:28-29). "Physical covenantal circumcision doesn't apply to the male Gentile believer because he is not of the racial Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who were given the sign of circumcision for their sons forever." (Avram Yehoshua, *Gentile Circumcision?*, The Seed of Abraham, 2017, p. 1, footnote 2). The Jew is still part of the covenants of circumcision that God made with Abraham and Moses. The Gentile believer was never part of those covenants. The Gentile comes into the New Covenant directly through faith in Messiah Yeshua, unlike the Jew who comes to his Messiah through the covenants of Abraham and Moses, which require physical covenantal circumcision for him when he is born and for his sons when they are born.

<sup>27</sup> See Genesis 15:6; Acts 13:39; Galatians 3:14. Abraham believed God and continued to do so even though sacrificing Isaac would have thwarted the promise – he believed in a resurrection, and God rewarded him. As *blessed* and *grafted* have the same Hebrew root **ברך**, Genesis 22:18 may also be rendered, ***Through thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be grafted in***, *viz.* through Yeshua the Gentiles will be grafted in. The Gentiles enter the Abrahamic Covenant via the New Covenant. For the meaning of *blessed* see Rashbam on Genesis 12:3.

<sup>28</sup> See Exodus 12:49; Leviticus 19:34; 24:22; Numbers 15:14-16.

<sup>29</sup> Man has always retained some inner knowledge of right and wrong, but those broad principles of the Torah are written on hearts of stone and therefore violated (see Romans 2:15). The stony tables have to become fleshy tables before the Torah can be reinscribed and kept.

<sup>30</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:3.

<sup>31</sup> Paul calls it a 'new creation', see 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15. Man needs to be born of God just as Yeshua was born of God on day one (see Genesis 1:2-3; Psalms 2:7; John 1:1-5; 8:12).

<sup>32</sup> Some commandments have been altered though such as the high priest being from the tribe of Judah now and not from Levi (see Avram Yehoshua, *Hebrews and the Change of the Law*, The Seed of Abraham, 2018, p. 27).

rebellion of the Israelites and the grafted-in Gentiles at Mt. Sinai clearly corresponds to Adam's rebellion in the Garden of Eden:

***But they, like Adam, have broken the covenant.***<sup>33</sup>

All are guilty and need redemption. But equally important, all are in need of a new heart<sup>34</sup> which causes them to keep the Torah – the New Covenant provides both:

***Behold, the days come, says Yehovah,<sup>35</sup> that I will cut a New Covenant <ברית חדשה – b'rit hadasha> with the House of Yisra'el, and with the House of Y'udah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; forasmuch as they broke My covenant,<sup>36</sup> although I was a husband over them, says Yehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Yisra'el after those days, says Yehovah, I will put My Torah in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it.***<sup>37</sup>

The Torah which was given at Mt. Sinai fifty days after Pesach (Passover) would be imparted by God's Spirit fifty days after Pesach – on Shavuot (Pentecost) in 28 CE as Daniel had prophesied.<sup>38</sup> Though the majority of the Jews had rejected the Messiah, a remnant of one hundred and twenty Israelites<sup>39</sup> entered the New Covenant<sup>40</sup> on that day followed by a few thousands of their countrymen.

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<sup>33</sup> Hosea 6:7, New Heart English Bible. Man broke the Edenic Covenant, which was stipulated in Genesis 1:26-30; 2:16-17.

<sup>34</sup> Entering the *b'rit hadasha* means receiving a *ruach hadasha*, *i.e.*, a new spirit/heart (cf. Ezekiel 36:26).

<sup>35</sup> God's proper name יהוה (Yehovah) appears 6,828 times in Scripture. Whenever the Tetragrammaton YHWH is used, I have substituted Yehovah for it.

<sup>36</sup> The death of 3,000 Israelites at Mt. Sinai showed the vileness of unregenerate man and the need for rebirth. This need was first met on Shavuot in 28 CE when 3,000 Israelites received the Torah into their hearts (see Exodus 32:28; Luke 24:49; Romans 8:4-7; Acts 2:41).

<sup>37</sup> Jeremiah 31:31-33, twice cited by Paul in Hebrews 8:8-10; 10:16.

<sup>38</sup> See *The Chronological Gospels*, p. 280. As per Daniel 9:24 seventy weeks were decreed on the Jews and Jerusalem to anoint the קדש קדשים (kodesh kodashim), *i.e.*, the sanctuary which usually housed the Ark of the Covenant. Yeshua's blood anointed the Ark which was hidden in a cave below the crucifixion site (see <http://www.arkdiscovery.com/aoc-1.htm>). The Spirit was put into sanctified hearts 70 weeks after Yeshua's baptism and parallels the anointing of the sanctuary (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:11, 19).

<sup>39</sup> The 'election of grace', see Romans 11:5, KJV. Acts 2:36 shows that a remnant of all the Twelve Tribes was present, which agrees with Exodus 12:47 according to which Pesach is to be kept by the whole assembly of Israel.

<sup>40</sup> After Yeshua had blessed the cup, he said, ***This is my blood of the New Covenant <ברית חדשה – b'rit hadasha> which will be poured out for many for the atonement of sins*** (Matthew 26:28, Shem Tov Version). See *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, p. 135. Yeshua ratified the New Covenant when He poured out His blood on our behalf (cf.

Through their trespass the Jews brought judgment upon themselves, but occasioned salvation for the Gentiles.<sup>41</sup> These were now grafted in like the mixed crowd which had left Egypt together with Israel. The Gentiles' salvation was meant to make Israel jealous and save her in return, however, this was soon thwarted by Rome's corrupting influence.<sup>42</sup> The Jewish nation as a whole will only embrace the New Covenant when the Messiah returns.<sup>43</sup>

***And there shall come a Redeemer to Zion, and to them that return from iniquity in Jacob, saith Yehovah. This is my Covenant with them, saith Yehovah: My Spirit that is in thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth.***<sup>44</sup>

In the final conflict God will pour out his indignation upon the Gentiles and His Spirit upon Israel:

***And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will destroy all the nations that come against Yerushalayim. And I will pour upon the House of David and upon the inhabitants of Yerushalayim the Spirit of grace and of supplication.***<sup>45</sup>

Israel and Judah, which were re-gathered to their homeland and re-established as one unified nation in 1948,<sup>46</sup> will be born again in that day. God will circumcise their hearts and fill them with His Spirit and with His Torah:

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Exodus 24:8), and His Father ratified the New Covenant when He poured out His Spirit – it was the New Covenant <ברית חדשה – *b'rit hadasha*> which Jeremiah had prophesied.

<sup>41</sup> See Romans 9:32; 11:11 (cf. Psalms 118:22; Isaiah 8:14-15; Matthew 21:42-43; 22:6-10; 27:25; Luke 17:25; Acts 13:46; 18:6).

<sup>42</sup> Western replacement theology has created a counterfeit of what the early Nazarenes taught and practiced. Rome's trinity, sun worship, lawlessness, and 1260 years of killing 'heretics' are mainly responsible for the Jews' rejection of Yeshua's Messiahship.

<sup>43</sup> The Jewish people will enter the New Covenant via the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant, *viz.* through their restoration and their regathering into the Promised Land. This will coincide with the close of the *Times of the Gentiles* (cf. Luke 21:24; Romans 11:25; Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 1:10).

<sup>44</sup> Isaiah 59:20-21, Douay-Rheims Bible.

<sup>45</sup> Zechariah 12:9-10 (cf. Ezekiel 39:29; Hebrews 10:29; Ephesians 6:18).

<sup>46</sup> Ezekiel 37:21-22. The Great Tribulation of Israel commenced in 68 CE and terminated in 1948 when the nation was reborn on Shavuot. It was the close of Israel's *Seven Times Punishment* which had begun 2,520 prophetic years earlier in 536 BCE after her 70-year captivity in Babylon had ended (cf. Leviticus 26:18; Deuteronomy 4:27, 30; Daniel 12:1, 7; Matthew 24:22; Luke 21:24). The Gentiles received the New Covenant after seventy *weeks* <שבועות – *shavuot*>, and so will the Jews in all likelihood, *i.e.*, in 2018/19 once seventy *Shavuot* have passed since Israel's rebirth (cf. *Light For The Last Days*, pp. 263-264).

*And I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness, and I will cleanse you from all your idols. And I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you: and I will cause you to walk in my commandments, and to keep my judgments, and do them.*<sup>47</sup>

The prophecies of Jeremiah and Joel, which were initially fulfilled on that historic Shavuot 2,000 years ago, will be fully exhausted when a final remnant of Jews and Gentiles is baptized in the Holy Spirit.<sup>48</sup>

Their unclean lips will be purified, and they will call upon Yehovah in a new tongue.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ezekiel 36:25-27, Douay-Rheims Bible (cf. Ezekiel 11:17-20).

<sup>48</sup> Jeremiah 31:31-34; Joel 2:28 *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh* (cf. Romans 9:27). The prophecies are twofold: a first moderate outpouring occurred on Shavuot (the early rain). It will be eclipsed by the latter rain, *viz.* by a second outpouring at Yeshua's return (see Job 29:23; Hosea 6:2-3; Joel 2:23; Zechariah 10:1; James 5:7).

<sup>49</sup> See Isaiah 6:1-7. To assert that the 'pure language' in Zephaniah 3:9 is Hebrew, doesn't seem to be tenable in light of the fact that the verse refers solely to Har Megiddo (Armageddon), whereas the revival of the *Holy Tongue* occurred in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Zephaniah 3:8-9, Zechariah 12:9-10 and Ezekiel 39 complement each other perfectly in their portrayals: the Gentiles' final destruction by fire, and Israel's final restoration through fire – the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of tongues.

## The Evidence of Spirit Baptism

Besides wine and oil, also fire, water, and wind symbolize the Spirit. Yochanan was the first to tell the crowds that Yeshua would immerse them with the *Fire of the Holy Spirit*:

***Behold I am only immersing you in water to repentance. And He that comes after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry, and He will immerse you with the fire of the Ruach HaKodesh [the Holy Spirit].***<sup>50</sup>

Then, before the crucifixion Yeshua told the crowds that those who believed would receive the *Water of the Holy Spirit*:

***Whoever believes in Me, as the Scriptures have said, rivers of water of Life will flow from his belly. And He spoke this about the Spirit, that those who believed in Him were about to receive.***<sup>51</sup>

After the crucifixion the first thing Yeshua said to the disciples after having shown them his nail prints was:

***Shalom to you, as my father has sent me, also I send you. And when he had said these things, he breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Ruach HaKodesh.***<sup>52</sup>

And before his ascension Yeshua told the disciples to stay in Jerusalem till they would receive the *Power of the Holy Spirit*, and that they would become witnesses and their words be confirmed with signs, one of them being tongues:<sup>53</sup>

***I will send to you the promise of my Father. But remain in the city Yerushalayim until you be closed with power from on high.***<sup>54</sup>

***He commanded them that they should not depart from Yerushalayim, but that they should wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard***

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<sup>50</sup> Matthew 3:11 (cf. Mark 1:7-8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26-33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 13:24-25).

<sup>51</sup> John 7:38-39 (cf. John 4:10, 13-14).

<sup>52</sup> John 20:21-22.

<sup>53</sup> See Mark 16:20 (cf. Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5).

<sup>54</sup> Luke 24:49 (cf. Romans 15:13; 2 Timothy 1:7).



*from me. For Yochanan immersed in water, but you will be immersed in Ruach HaKodesh after not many days. But when the Ruach HaKodesh comes upon you, you will receive power, and you will be witnesses for me.*<sup>55</sup>

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.*<sup>56</sup>

As it is clear from the context, the phrase “*he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*” cannot possibly refer to water baptism alone.<sup>57</sup> The implication is that *he that believes and is baptized in water and Spirit shall be saved*. Consequently, he that doesn’t believe and is therefore not baptized in water and Spirit *shall be damned*. Mark 16:16 is simply a second witness and comparable to John 3:5.<sup>58</sup>

*Unless a person is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*<sup>59</sup>

Ten days after Yeshua’s ascension came the day of Shavuot<sup>60</sup> and the disciples received the *Promise of the Father*. It was the fulfilment of John’s prophecy, of Jeremiah’s prophecy, and of Daniel’s prophecy, and the end of Yeshua’s ministry on earth. God’s Spirit, which had never entered a human heart since creation, filled the *House of Prayer* and subsequently the ones who had prayed:

*There was suddenly a sound from heaven like a powerful wind: and that entire house in which they were sitting was filled with it. And tongues that were divided, appeared to them like fire, and sat upon each one of them. And*

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<sup>55</sup> Acts 1:4-5, 8.

<sup>56</sup> Mark 16:16-17, KJV.

<sup>57</sup> See Acts 19:3-6. If that were the case, Paul could have left the disciples after he had baptized them in Yeshua’s name. But Paul ensured that they were also baptized in the Spirit (cf. Matthew 3:14; Acts 8:15-17).

<sup>58</sup> Another related verse is found in Matthew, though it stresses merely water baptism: ***Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*** (Matthew 28:19, KJV). That the disciples never obeyed this formula but only baptized in the name of Yeshua the Messiah (see Acts 2:38; 10:48; 19:5) is because it is spurious and was added by Rome to promote the trinity. Shem Tov’s Version of Matthew 28:19-20 resembles Mark 16:15: ***Go and teach them to carry out all the things which I have commanded you – forever***. See *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, p. 151. (cf. *The Chronological Gospels*, pp. 273-274).

<sup>59</sup> John 3:5, International Standard Version.

<sup>60</sup> On Shavuot the firstfruits of the wheat harvest were presented in the Temple (cf. Exodus 23:16; 34:22; Leviticus 23:17-20; Numbers 28:26; Deuteronomy 16:10, 16; 2 Chronicles 8:13). Yeshua had compared himself to a grain of wheat which has to die in order to bring forth fruit. He is the firstfruits which was put into human temples in form of the Spirit (see John 12:24; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Colossians 1:18). The ones born again were His firstfruits (see Hebrews 12:23; James 1:18; Revelation 14:4).

*all of them were filled with Ruach HaKodesh, and they began to speak in different tongues, like which the Spirit gave them to speak.* <sup>61</sup>

Firstly, we see the Holy Spirit manifesting Himself as *wind* or as the very breath of life which Adam received at creation. The wind filled the entire house,<sup>62</sup> just as the glory of God, once resting on Mt. Sinai, had filled the Temple.<sup>63</sup>

The second manifestation of the Spirit was *fire*. Fire transforms, purifies metal and sets dead wood ablaze. It's a familiar emblem of God's power, but its appearance on that day in Yerushalayim was absolutely unique: tongues of fire which were lighting for a short while on each of the one hundred twenty brethren. We remember Yeshua's anointing and the unique manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove which came down from heaven and lighted on Him.<sup>64</sup> The gentle dove, which embodies the feminine aspect of the divine nature, signified Yeshua's character and fate as a sin offering – He would be humble, harmless, and eventually sacrificed. Likewise, the powerful wind which filled the entire house followed by fiery tongues was simply an expression of what was to take place: human temples would be filled with the *Power of the Spirit* and subsequently manifest tongues.<sup>65</sup>

Let's reiterate: What happened after the Spirit had filled God's Temple? There were tongues. What then would we expect to happen once the Spirit had filled the disciples' temples? Tongues, – we would expect them to manifest tongues, to utter languages. Once they had vanished from above their heads, the tongues came out of their mouths because their hearts were filled with fire.

In other words, the initial evidence of Spirit infilling is *tongues* – anyone who is baptized with the fire of God will start to speak in tongues, just as the one hundred and twenty on that day.<sup>66</sup> As Yeshua had said:

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<sup>61</sup> Acts 2:2-4.

<sup>62</sup> The 'house' was the *House of Prayer*, viz. the Temple on Mt. Moriah (cf. Luke 19:46). See *The Chronological Gospels*, p. 280.

<sup>63</sup> See 1 Kings 8:10; 2 Chronicles 5:13.

<sup>64</sup> See Matthew 3:16; John 1:32; cf. Genesis 1:2-3. At His baptism Yeshua re-enacted day one when He was begotten of water and the Spirit, viz. God.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19.

<sup>66</sup> To assert that '*only 119 spoke in tongues because Peter excluded himself*' (cf. Acts 2:15), or '*only 108 spoke in tongues because the apostles stood aside and excluded themselves*' (v. 14), or '*only 70 spoke in tongues, namely the chosen disciples*', or '*only 50 spoke in tongues, those enabled by the Spirit*', or '*only 20 spoke in tongues as per listed language regions*', or '*only 12 spoke in tongues, namely the apostles*', or '*only 11 spoke in tongues, namely the apostles except Peter who excluded himself*', etc. – all such and similar claims only reveal the discomfort about the plain meaning of Acts 2:4, and thus the need to explain it away. The strained resolve to undermine the fact that all of the 120 spoke in tongues only proves that they did.

***The wind will blow where it wants, and you hear its sound, but you do not know from where it comes and to where it goes. Thus is every man who is born of the Spirit.***<sup>67</sup>

What has *sound* to do with someone who is born of God? Do we hear a reborn uttering some sound? One could certainly paraphrase the verse like this:

*The Spirit will control the language, and you hear its sound, but you do not know how it is generated and to whom it speaks. Thus is every man who is born of the Spirit.*<sup>68</sup>

Everyone could hear them glorifying God in tongues. Some of the Jews understood what was said because they heard their own dialect, while others thought it was gibber.<sup>69</sup>

As we will further see, being immersed in the Holy Spirit without some manifestation as quoted above doesn't agree with Scripture.<sup>70</sup> All the people to whom I have talked felt some hot or tingling sensation, like a current of power going through them. Some were actually 'slain by power', *viz.* they fell to the floor the moment they received – reminiscent of the priests who weren't able to stand in the Temple.<sup>71</sup> The outpouring of the Spirit in Yerushalayim is the plumb-line to which any subsequent bestowal should match up.<sup>72</sup> One hundred and twenty Nazarenes

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<sup>67</sup> John 3:8.

<sup>68</sup> Also James 3:4-5 connects *wind* with the *body* and the *tongue*.

<sup>69</sup> Many Jews had travelled to Yerushalayim in order to keep Pesach (cf. Deuteronomy 16:16). They had come from all the places they and their ancestors had been scattered to – Media, Babylonia, Persia, Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt, Rome, *etc.* – and they definitely constituted a remnant of the Twelve Tribes (cf. Exodus 12:6, 47; Matthew 10:6; 15:24; John 7:35; 11:52; Acts 26:6-7; 1 Peter 1:1; James 1:1).

<sup>70</sup> Lydia Prince describes her own experience as follows: "*Immediately the strange words that I had heard inside my chest began to flow out through my lips, and I realized that I myself was actually speaking them. It was hard to believe that it was my own voice I was listening to. What language was I speaking? I had a fair knowledge of both English and German – it was not either of those. How could I articulate so clearly words that I had never heard before? Yet there was a rhythmic beauty about them that sounded almost like poetry.*" (Lydia Prince, *Appointment in Jerusalem*, Kingsway Publications, 1975, p. 45).

<sup>71</sup> See 1 Kings 8:11; 2 Chronicles 5:14. This is admittedly subjective, but I may add that my personal experience was of a very gentle nature. There was nothing dramatic, just warmth and joy coming over me while I was starting to form syllables which I had never spoken before – only later I realized that it was a prayer language.

<sup>72</sup> Acts 2 sets forth the pattern of salvation, not how to get *the gift of tongues*. The disciples had never heard of the gift of tongues, let alone of the nine spiritual gifts which were addressed some twenty years later. How can one receive *gifts of the Spirit* without being zealous for them? And how can one be zealous for them if one has never heard about them in the first place? To claim that the disciples were in agreement to receive the gift of tongues – instead of *prophecy* as recommended by Paul, or instead of focussing on '*love*' altogether is simply ludicrous (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:1, 5, 39; 13:1). What a true baptism with Ruach HaKodesh and the reception of power entailed became clear the moment they received the Spirit, because all of them started to speak in languages which they had never learnt before – to the amazement of the people (see Acts 1:5, 8). Why were they not told off for operating 120 tongues simultaneously instead of 2-3, or for skipping the interpretations, or for edifying themselves instead of the assembly? Could it be because it wasn't *the gift of tongues* as defined in 1 Corinthians 14? After Peter had confirmed that Yeshua is indeed the

started to speak in tongues and were followed by another 3,000 on the very same day.<sup>73</sup>

There is no reason to doubt that all of the disciples manifested the same sign the moment they received God's Spirit. That the languages were not only audible but also visible, is confirmed a few verses later:

***And this is He who at the right hand of Eloah is exalted: and received from the Father the promise concerning the Ruach HaKodesh. And He has poured out this gift, which, behold, you see and hear.***<sup>74</sup>

After the first layer of Daniel's *Seventy Weeks* had ended in 34 CE,<sup>75</sup> the New Covenant was extended to non-Jews, *viz.* to the Samaritans. Simon the Magician *saw* when his own countrymen received the gift of the Holy Spirit:

***And when the emissaries who were in Yerushalayim heard that the people of the Samaritans had received the word of Eloah, they sent to them Shim'on Kefa and Yochanan. And they went down and prayed concerning them so that they might receive the Ruach HaKodesh. For it was not yet upon one [man] from them, for they were only immersed in the name of our Adon Yeshua. Then they placed a hand on them, and they received Ruach HaKodesh. And when Shim'on saw that by the placing of a hand of the emissaries the Ruach HaKodesh was given, he offered them money.***<sup>76</sup>

Even Simon, a sorcerer who had deceived the Samaritans for a long time through faking God's power, was quite impressed and wanted 'true power' for a

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Messiah, who was crucified, who had risen, who had caused prophecies to come true, and who had received the promise of the Holy Ghost, *i.e.*, the Spirit which had just been poured out (as all could **see and hear**), – after that address the people were **moved in their heart!** They were not only convinced of Yeshua's Messiahship but they were convicted of their sins and wanted to get saved! They wanted to see a part of Joel's promise which Peter had just cited, become reality in their lives. They wanted the same experience as they had just witnessed. They didn't mean, *'What shall we do to get the gift of tongues?'* – they meant, *'What shall we do to get saved?'* (cf. Acts 2:21, 37). Peter replied, **Repent and be immersed, every one of you, in the name of Yeshua HaMashiach for the remission of your sins, and you will receive the gift of Ruach HaKodesh** (Acts 2:38). *You will receive Ruach HaKodesh just like them, and you will speak in tongues just like them!* That is what Peter was saying. He presented the recipe for salvation which was adhered to by another 3,000 Jews on that day.

<sup>73</sup> To question whether the 3,000 spoke in tongues as well is like doubting whether they had repented, or whether they had been immersed in water, which is a fairly absurd thing to do.

<sup>74</sup> Acts 2:33.

<sup>75</sup> The first layer of the *Seventy Weeks* which were determined upon Jerusalem and the Jews commenced in 457 BCE, the year of Artaxerxes' decree, and terminated in 34 CE (see H. Grattan Guinness, *The Approaching End of The Age: Viewed In The Light Of History, Prophecy, And Science*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1882, p. 534).

<sup>76</sup> Acts 8:17-18.

change. How did he know that the Samaritans had received the Holy Spirit? The only explanation is that they must have spoken in tongues, and that is what Shimon had observed.<sup>77</sup> A similar situation occurred in Caesarea when Cornelius including family and friends were born again:

***And while Shim'on was speaking these words, the Ruach HaKodesh rested upon all who were hearing the word. And the circumcised brothers who had come with him, were amazed and astonished that the gift of the Ruach HaKodesh was also poured out upon the Goyim! For they heard them while speaking in different tongues and magnifying Eloah.***<sup>78</sup>

The believing Jews were amazed that also the Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit. How did they know? Because they heard them speaking in tongues. Simon Peter confirms that it was the same experience which the Jews had on Mt. Moriah, and alone the imperative *'behold'* in verse 47 shows that it was a visible manifestation.

A few days later, Peter relates the above event to the believing Jews in Yerushalayim who had received God's Spirit on Shavuot following the crucifixion. Once again speaking in tongues is linked to fire baptism:

***And when I began to speak there, the Ruach HaKodesh rested upon them like upon us from before. And I remembered the Word of our Adon who said, Yochanan immersed in water, but you will be immersed in [the fire of the] Ruach HaKodesh.***<sup>79</sup>

On his third missionary journey, Paul<sup>80</sup> meets twelve followers of Apollos in Ephesus. All of them had been baptized but they hadn't heard about the Spirit's outpouring and the phenomenon of tongues.<sup>81</sup> After Paul had strengthened their

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<sup>77</sup> It is clearly visible (and audible) when someone prays in tongues.

<sup>78</sup> Acts 10:44-46. Vv. 47-48 show that water baptism doesn't necessarily precede Spirit baptism, though it is usually the case.

<sup>79</sup> Acts 11:15-16 (cf. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26-33; Acts 1:5; 13:24-25).

<sup>80</sup> Although not explicitly mentioned, we may safely conclude that Paul began to speak in tongues when Ananias laid his hand on him. See Acts 9:17-18; 1 Corinthians 14:18; 2 Corinthians 3:14, 16-18.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Acts 18:24-26. Apollos had preached in the Ephesian synagogue but he knew only the baptism of Yochanan. Thus, Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos aside and taught him about the infilling of God's Spirit. In my former assembly everyone who wanted to get saved was shown from the Scriptures that they a) had to repent b) had to get baptized by full immersion, and c) had to receive the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2:38). We were explained that we would start speaking in tongues just like in Acts 2:4. Out of 600 people who followed the instructions, 600 received and started to speak in tongues (***as the Spirit gave them utterance***, Acts 2:4, KJV). The situation in Acts 19:1-7 seems to have been similar. People weren't aware that they could indeed receive the Holy Spirit, and that they would manifest tongues like all the others before them.

faith in Yeshua and in the promise of the Father, he baptized them again.<sup>82</sup> This is what followed:

***And Paul laid a hand upon them and the Ruach HaKodesh came upon them, and they spoke in different tongues and prophesied.***<sup>83</sup>

To summarize, in the *Acts of the Apostles* we find three witnesses which testify that anyone who was baptized in the Spirit began to speak in tongues, audibly and visibly. Many more people were added – all those whom God would call. And all of them were baptized by fire because the promise was, and still is, for all:

***For to you was the promise, and to your sons, and to all those who are far away, those whom Eloah will call.***<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Acts 19:4-5.

<sup>83</sup> Acts 19:6. Prophesying in a larger sense can also mean preaching or praising God under inspiration. The latter seems to be clearly the case here (cf. Acts 2:11; 10:46). The disciples hadn't received *the gift of prophecy* which they then operated 12 times simultaneously, instead of 2-3 times one after the other (1 Corinthians 14:29-31). As we have seen earlier, they hadn't received *the gift of tongues* either.

<sup>84</sup> Acts 2:38-39. Sometimes we only read that people were baptized, or that they turned to God. Again, there is no reason to assume that they weren't baptized in the Spirit, or that repentance or anything else was missing – they will have manifested the fire baptism by speaking in tongues just like anyone else. Scripture nowhere records that God's Spirit was poured out, and only a few or none of the recipients started to speak in tongues.

## The Purpose of Tongues

The manifestation of tongues which we have covered so far is a means to communicate with God – it is prayer. Although many of the Jews understood the languages in Acts 2, the words were not directed at them but at God. The disciples were magnifying the wondrous works of God but they were not addressing an audience or evangelizing:

***He who speaks in a tongue does not speak to sons of men but to Eloah.***<sup>85</sup>

It was definitely an attention-getting sign for the Jewish passers-by, but the real beneficiaries were the one hundred twenty disciples who were praising God. Speaking in new tongues is one of the signs which accompanies ‘those who believe’,<sup>86</sup> and therefore I will simply employ the term *sign of tongues* when referring to this prayer language.

Another manifestation of tongues which hasn’t been addressed yet is often translated as *kinds of tongues* in our English Bibles. This form of speaking in tongues conveys a message to the congregation. It is a manifestation of the Spirit which is bestowed for the benefit of the body of believers:

***To each one is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the profit of all.***<sup>87</sup>

The gift of tongues listed in 1 Corinthians 12 is sometimes referred to as the *ministry gift of tongues* because it ministers to others and is operated in a public assembly. We will take a closer look at the sign of tongues first because it is by far the more important one and the foundation for all the other gifts.

### *a) Basics of the sign of tongues*

In his letter to the Corinthians Paul exhorts the brethren to pray that they may receive the gift of interpretation, and he also tells them how to do this:

***Pray also in [your] understanding.***<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:2.

<sup>86</sup> See Mark 16:17.

<sup>87</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:7, New Heart English Bible.

<sup>88</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:15.

Paul tells them not to pray only in tongues when asking for this gift, but to also use their native language. Why does he do this?

***For if I were to pray [only] in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is without fruit.***<sup>89</sup>

In other words, when asking God for something, we should also use our natural tongue and not just the supernatural. How can we present a prayer request if we don't understand what we are praying for:

***For no man understands a thing that he speaks.***<sup>90</sup>

But more importantly, the reason given here sheds some light on what happens when we pray in tongues.

The human spirit<sup>91</sup> has a voice and can communicate as well. If I pray in tongues, the renewed spirit, the revived inner man prays, *i.e.*, my spirit prays. The understanding or intellect is *without fruit* because it is not involved in producing the language. The human mind isn't able to influence the prayer's content because God's language bypasses the mind.<sup>92</sup> That is why Paul told the brethren they should pray with the understanding also when praying for the gift of interpretation.

Every father will teach his new-born child how to communicate with him. At first the father will present simple words, then phrases, and eventually the child will speak his language. God does the same, only that He imparts His language within a few seconds into His new-born. Yeshua had promised His disciples not to leave them orphaned<sup>93</sup> but that they would be adopted. After they had become God's children through redemption they received the *spirit of adoption*.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:14.

<sup>90</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:2.

<sup>91</sup> The human spirit is also called ***the hidden man of the heart***, see 1 Peter 3:4, KJV.

<sup>92</sup> Someone who prays in tongues is fully aware of their surroundings. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania took brain images of five women while they spoke in tongues and found that their frontal lobes – the thinking, willful part of the brain through which people control what they do – were relatively quiet, as were the language centers. *“The regions involved in maintaining self-consciousness were active. The women were not in blind trances, and it was unclear which region was driving the behaviour.”* See <https://mobile.nytimes.com/2006/11/07/health/07brain.html>

<sup>93</sup> See John 14:18.

<sup>94</sup> Scripture says that unregenerate man is under the law of sin and death. He is alienated and hostile but God receives him again as His own child through redemption and reconciliation; cf. Romans 8:2, 7, 15-16; Galatians 4:1-5; Colossians 1:21.



***And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*** <sup>95</sup>

Paul knew how beneficial it was to spend prolonged times in prayer, and he tried to provoke the Corinthians to follow his example:

***I thank Eloah that I speak in tongues more than all of you.***<sup>96</sup>

Firstly, such a statement only makes sense if all the brethren are able to speak in tongues. Secondly, it shows that speaking in tongues means prayer in this context – Paul wasn't referring to the gift of tongues which needs interpreting, he was talking about prayer. He was basically saying:

*I thank God that I pray more with my spirit than anyone of you.*

Also in the following verse Paul uses the word 'speaks' but he actually means 'prays' – speaking to God is prayer:

***The person who speaks in another tongue is speaking to God; he speaks in the Spirit.***<sup>97</sup>

The reason we find both in the scriptures, to 'speak in the spirit' and to 'speak in the Spirit', is because the human spirit was merged with God's Spirit at rebirth.<sup>98</sup> God's Spirit and my spirit are interdependent in the operation of tongues. I cannot pray with my spirit without praying in the Spirit and vice versa. After having filled my renewed heart, the Spirit releases a language through my spirit and I start to speak in tongues. Thus, with regards to praying in tongues, the terms 'in the Spirit' and 'in/with the spirit' are interchangeable.

The above verses have shown that 1) every member in the Corinthian assembly prayed in tongues 2) that it is the human spirit – indwelled and enabled by God's Spirit – who does the praying, and 3) that 'praying in the Spirit' means 'praying in tongues'.

*b) Benefits of the sign of tongues*

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<sup>95</sup> Galatians 4:6.

<sup>96</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:18.

<sup>97</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:2, Christian Standard Bible (paraphrased).

<sup>98</sup> See John 14:20; 1 Corinthians 6:17; 2 Corinthians 3:17.

One purpose of praying in tongues is spiritual warfare. The brethren of the Ephesian assembly were admonished by Paul to join the fight in prayer:

***Put on all the armour of Eloah that you may be able to meet the evil one ... and with all prayers, and with all petitions, pray at all times in the Spirit.***<sup>99</sup>

Shall we assume that there were brethren who couldn't fully partake in the spiritual battle because they weren't able to pray in the Spirit? In Jude, a letter which doesn't address a particular congregation, but which was circulated to all Nazarene assemblies, we find that believers are admonished to build themselves up by praying in the Spirit:

***But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most set-apart faith, praying in the Ruach HaKodesh.***<sup>100</sup>

Again, why would Jude exhort the beloved to pray in the Spirit, if some of them weren't able to do so?<sup>101</sup> Paul confirms that prayer strengthens the inner man:

***He who speaks in a tongue edifies his nefesh [soul].***<sup>102</sup>

Isaiah, whom Paul quotes in his chapter on tongues, calls it the rest and the refreshing.<sup>103</sup> Yeshua Himself alludes to the Spirit when He promises the Samaritan woman water that would quench thirst unlike any other water and even become a well inside of her:

***If you knew the gift of Eloah, and who this is who said to you, Give me to drink, you would ask him and he would give you water of life. Every man who drinks from the water that I give him will not thirst forever; but the water that I give him will be in him a spring of water that will spring up unto eternal life.***<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ephesians 6:13, 18.

<sup>100</sup> Jude 1:20.

<sup>101</sup> Epistles such as Romans, Galatians, Philippians, etc., abound in references to the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Shall we suppose that none or only some of these references imply that there was a manifestation when people were born again?

<sup>102</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:4, cf. Ephesians 3:16.

<sup>103</sup> See Isaiah 28:12.

<sup>104</sup> John 4:10, 14.

The last thing Yeshua said to the Samaritan woman before revealing Himself to her, was this:

***The hour comes, and now is, when the true worshipper will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for indeed the Father seeks worshippers who are like these. Eloah is Spirit, and those who worship Him, ought to worship in Spirit and in truth.***<sup>105</sup>

We are to worship God by turning on this well, *viz.* by praying in the Spirit. The rivers of living water which flow from the belly, *i.e.*, from the heart, are nothing else but tongues.<sup>106</sup> I can confirm that it often sounds like water bubbling forth from a fountain when I pray in the Spirit. The inner man is being watered during prayer, the spirit drinks when a person worships God in the Spirit and in truth<sup>107</sup> – this is the refreshing which Isaiah foresaw.<sup>108</sup>

Furthermore, praying in tongues gives rest to our souls<sup>109</sup> because we don't need to think what to pray for or which words to use. The Holy Spirit gives the utterance and our minds are completely at rest. We don't know what God wants us to pray for anyway, but the Spirit does. When we pray in tongues, the Spirit gives the content and the language, and thus we always pray according to God's will:

***Thus also, the Spirit aids our infirmity, for we do not know what is right to pray for. But the Spirit prays on our behalf with groans that are not describable. And He who searches the hearts, knows what is the thinking of the Spirit that prays on behalf of the Set-Apart-Ones, according to the will of Eloah.***<sup>110</sup>

Apart from waging spiritual warfare and refreshing oneself, praying in tongues is a means to mortify the flesh, to reveal deep things, and above all to glorify God.

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<sup>105</sup> John 4:23-24. Cf. Philippians 3:2-3 which contrasts the proponents of Gentile circumcision with born again Nazarenes: ***Beware of dogs; beware of evildoers; beware of the cutting of flesh. For we are the circumcision who worship Eloah in the Spirit, and boast in Yeshua the Messiah, and are not confident in the flesh.***

<sup>106</sup> See John 7:37-39.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. John 14:17; 15:26; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 12:13.

<sup>108</sup> John 6:53 conveys the same idea of eternal life springing forth from inner spiritual life: ***And Yeshua said to them: Truly, Truly, I say to you: that unless you drink His blood, you do not have life in yourself*** (cf. 1 John 5:8). The verse reminds us of a thirsty land which drinks in the rain (cf. Isaiah 44:3; Hebrews 6:7), and it alludes in the first place to receiving Yeshua's Spirit as a condition for receiving eternal life.

<sup>109</sup> See Matthew 11:29, KJV.

<sup>110</sup> Romans 8:26-27. As we have seen 'the Spirit prays' and 'the spirit prays' are synonymous terms.

c) *Basics of the gift of tongues*

Spiritual gifts are given to the believer after rebirth – they cannot be bestowed on someone who is spiritually dead. The Corinthians were spiritually alive because they had been quickened by the Spirit and were baptized into one body by the Spirit.<sup>111</sup> All of them were born again, which is why all of them were able to pray in tongues as we have seen. Paul was writing to these very people when he listed the nine gifts of the Spirit:

***To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.***<sup>112</sup>

By operating the gift of ‘divers kinds of tongues’, commonly referred to as *the gift of tongues*, a message is delivered to the assembly. It is a message from God to man, not from man to God – it is not prayer. The one operating the gift will speak for a few seconds in a language which neither he understands nor the congregation. In order for the message to be beneficial it is then ‘translated’ by employing *the gift of interpretation*. The interpreter (who doesn’t understand the tongue either) opens his mouth and renders the message into the respective local language<sup>113</sup> – through the Spirit, not through the intellect.

It is not compulsory to operate the gift of tongues but if it is, then someone has to interpret (which can be the speaker himself).<sup>114</sup> Scripture permits only two to three tongues, which are to be given consecutively. Each tongue is followed by the interpretation before the next one is given:

***If a man should speak in a tongue, let two speak and at the most three. And let them speak one by one, and let that one interpret.***<sup>115</sup>

Operating the gift of tongues at a public gathering requires courage and faith. It is not about praying in the Spirit for a few seconds, it is about being a channel for a word from God to man, and not everyone has this gift.

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<sup>111</sup> See 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13; 1 Peter 3:18.

<sup>112</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.

<sup>113</sup> At international conventions the interpretations are often given in several languages and then translated.

<sup>114</sup> See 1 Corinthians 14:5, 13.

<sup>115</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:27.

d) *Benefits of the gift of tongues*

The main purpose of the spiritual gift of tongues is to edify the body of believers:

***I say therefore, my brothers, that whenever you are gathered, let the one among you who has a psalm speak: and whoever has a teaching, and whoever has a revelation, and whoever has a tongue, and whoever has an interpretation, let all of them be for edification.***<sup>116</sup>

Unless the gift is operated *in the flesh*,<sup>117</sup> it is God speaking to the assembly using human vessels. He may warn, rebuke, confirm, encourage, or give some other kind of direction.<sup>118</sup> The message will always address the entire body but it may sometimes relate to certain brethren only, in which case only some will *feel* addressed. Whether it is the ‘unknown’ language itself<sup>119</sup> or the import of the message, tongues can also serve as a sign for unbelievers.<sup>120</sup> Although the operated gift may directly address and convict an unbeliever, Scripture says that few will heed the call:

***In the Torah it is written: With a strange speech and with another tongue I will speak with this people; even so, they will not hear Me, says Yehovah. Therefore, tongues are placed for a sign: not to believers, but to those who do not believe.***<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:26. Cf. v. 12.

<sup>117</sup> When I tried to give my first interpretation, nothing came out of my mouth. I then started saying some spiritual things but after a few seconds I stopped (because it was *from the flesh*, i.e., from my own mind). We were only a small group and a brother encouraged me to go on. So I picked it up again, at first with a stammer. Suddenly words began to flow out of my mouth which I had not premeditated – the Spirit had taken over.

<sup>118</sup> Prophecies can have similar content but they are usually longer and more elaborate than interpretations; they don’t need to be ‘prophetic’ in the narrow sense of the word.

<sup>119</sup> At times an unbeliever understands the ‘unknown’ tongue: “A Jewish man was present in one of my services in Texas. He didn’t believe in Christ as the Messiah, nor did he believe in the New Testament. At the close of my sermon I spoke in tongues and then interpreted. The Jewish man came to me after the service and said, ‘Sir, you made a statement tonight in Aramaic that I never heard anyone make. In fact, no Jewish person would ever make such a statement. I wondered what you were going to do when you began to translate it.’ I said, ‘Well, how did I do?’ ‘Oh, you did splendidly.’ ‘Good. I didn’t know what I was saying.’” (Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Holy Spirit and His Gifts*, Faith Library Publications, 1991, p. 73).

<sup>120</sup> Seeing the Assyrian invaders and hearing their strange tongue was proof of Israel’s disobedience and unbelief. Moses’ warning, that God would bring a nation against them ***whose tongue [they] shall not understand*** had come true (see Deuteronomy 28:49). It was a sign and a call to repentance, but Israel didn’t take heed.

<sup>121</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:21-22.

## Objections

Amongst the more radical objections which are unsurprisingly only raised by ‘non-tongue-speakers’, we find claims such as ‘*tongues are faked*’, ‘*tongues have ceased*’, ‘*tongues are of the devil*’<sup>122</sup>, ‘*tongues are an offense to God*’, ‘*tongues are a mass psychosis*’, ‘*tongues are senseless babble*’, ‘*tongues are only for weirdos*’, ‘*tongues are only for a few chosen vessels*’, ‘*tongues are merely a means to cross the language barrier*’, ‘*tongues are only found in Acts because through them God showed the Jews and Gentiles that they were both accepted – today this isn’t necessary anymore*’, and last but not least the rather moderate and self-assuring claim, ‘*The Bible clearly shows that not everyone needs to speak in tongues!*’

The above views can be condensed into two main assertions, both of which are false as we will see:

- a) ‘*Today’s tongues have nothing to do with the biblical phenomenon of speaking in other languages.*’

The underlying logic here is that an unintelligible language can’t be from God, or that it is not a language since it is unintelligible. However, we ought to remind ourselves that tongues are primarily not a means to communicate with man but with God in the form of prayer:

***He who speaks in a tongue does not speak to sons of men but to Eloah: for no man understands a thing that he speaks; yet in the spirit he speaks a mystery.***<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> That a statement such as ‘*this gibber is not of God*’ comes close to blaspheming the Holy Spirit doesn’t seem to bother the critics, providing they realise the danger at all (cf. Mark 3:22-30). The worldly-wise and unregenerate will always ‘judge after the flesh’, *viz.* according to their carnal prejudices and without discerning the biased media coverage of the charismatic movement (such as some selective footage on the Internet showing hyper-excited people in bodily spasms). However, knowing what is at stake, the adversary has always made sure that fallen and lost mankind would spurn and condemn the sign of spiritual birth. The following passage is an excerpt from the Berliner Erklärung (‘Berlin Declaration’) made by the German Gemeinschaftsbewegung (‘Fellowship Movement’) on 15 September 1909: ‘*The so-called Pentecostal Movement has not come from above, but from below; a great number of manifestations are the same as in the Spiritist movement. In the Pentecostal Movement, there are demons at work, which, cunningly directed by Satan, confuse lie and truth, in order to deceive God’s children... Our conviction that this movement is from below, can neither be put in question by the personal faithfulness and devotion of individual leading brethren, nor by the healings, tongues, and prophecies.*’ (transl. from German – Christian Hugo Krust, *50 Jahre Deutsche Pfingstbewegung*, Missionsbuchhandlung und Verlag, 1958, p. 67).

<sup>123</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:2. ‘*It is among the traditions that when the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, he could communicate to God in a language that only he and God understood. This ability to speak in and understand the language of God only occurred when the high priest was in the Holy of Holies, and after he exited the sacred chamber, he was no longer able to speak that heavenly tongue.*’ (Perry Stone, *The Code of the Holy Spirit*, Charisma House, 2013, pp. 3-4).

The KJV reads ‘in an *unknown* tongue’ as the italicized word is not in the original. ‘No man understands a thing that he speaks’ means that the language is always unknown to the speaker but not necessarily to the hearer, and it is certainly never unknown to God. The one hundred twenty Israelites did not talk to the Jewish passers-by but were praising God and magnifying His wondrous works – just as the Gentiles did a few chapters later.<sup>124</sup> The probability of understanding the languages was obviously much higher in Acts 2 than in an average setting. Thousands upon thousands of Jews had come from every nation under heaven to attend the feast of Pesach in Yerushalayim. They had come from such remote areas as Babylonia, Media, Persia, Syria, Asia Minor, Europe, and Africa, and thus many understood the exotic sounding praises of the one hundred and twenty. The ones mocking them, saying they were drunk, are the ones of today who say it’s all gibberish. Today we have 6,500 languages.<sup>125</sup> If someone starts praising God in ‘Umbundu’ (one of the 2,000 African tongues), shall we claim they are drunk or cheating? The logic of ‘*I don’t understand it, therefore it’s not a language*’ is the height of arrogance and/or stupidity:

***There are many kinds of tongues in the world, and there is not one of them without meaning.***<sup>126</sup>

From calling the Spirit’s manifestation *babble* to negating it altogether is only a small step and both fall into the same category. The claim that the genuine sign of speaking in tongues has ceased to exist, rests on one fragment:

***Tongues shall cease.***<sup>127</sup>

The proponents of this view usually drop the rest of the verse:

***Charity [love] is never lost, but prophecies shall come to an end, tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall come to an end.***<sup>128</sup>

Because the Corinthians were vainglorious about their spiritual endowments, Paul emphasized that love would remain, but that the gifts of prophecy, tongues,

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<sup>124</sup> Acts 10:46.

<sup>125</sup> Considering that Paul heard unspeakable words in paradise and mentions ‘tongues of angels’, a number of unknown celestial languages can probably be added. See 1 Corinthians 13:1; 2 Corinthians 12:4.

<sup>126</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:10.

<sup>127</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:8, Jubilee Bible 2000.

<sup>128</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:8, Jubilee Bible 2000.

and knowledge would cease at one point. Has this occurred?<sup>129</sup> Have prophecy and knowledge ceased to exist? As always, the context provides the answer:

***For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see as through a mirror, in darkness, but then we shall see face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I also am known.***<sup>130</sup>

The argument ‘that which is perfect’ has already come since we have the Bible in its complete form (which is debatable), is refuted by the fact that our knowledge is still imperfect. In other words, ‘that which is in part’ such as prophecy, tongues, and knowledge hasn’t ceased yet. Virtually all Bible commentators equate ‘that which is perfect’ with the millennial reign of the Messiah when ‘the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yehovah, as the waters cover the sea.’<sup>131</sup> Until then we ought to grow in knowledge and delve into spiritual gifts:

***That in everything you may grow rich in him in every word and in all knowledge, according as the witness of the Messiah was established in you, so that you do not lack in any one of his gifts, but you are waiting for the appearance of our Adon Yeshua the Messiah.***<sup>132</sup>

b) *‘Speaking in tongues is a wonderful gift of God which all should desire, but it is not necessary for salvation.’*

The second broad view doesn’t slander or negate the Spirit’s manifestation of tongues in this age, however, it rejects tongues as a sign of rebirth. Since speaking in tongues is supposedly not for everyone, it cannot be linked to salvation. This fallacy can only be maintained by ignoring that there are two distinct manifestations of tongues. The advocates’ favourite phrase is Paul’s rhetorical question:

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<sup>129</sup> The Albigenses, the Anabaptists, the Quakers, the Huguenots, and the early Methodists – they all spoke in tongues. And though he turned into an Anti-Semite, we also read about Martin Luther that he was a “*prophet and evangelist, speaker in tongues and interpreter in one person, endowed with all the gifts of the Spirit.*” (transl. from German – Theodor Sauer, *Geschichte der Christlichen Kirche*, Rudolf Kunze’s Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1872, p. 406).

<sup>130</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:9-12, Jubilee Bible 2000.

<sup>131</sup> Isaiah 11:9.

<sup>132</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:7.



## ***Do all speak in tongues?***<sup>133</sup>

The answer is ‘No’, because the gift of tongues as listed in 1 Corinthians 12 is one of the spiritual gifts which the Spirit distributes to born again believers ‘as He wills’.<sup>134</sup> Its purpose, as we have seen, is to edify the body, not the individual who operates the gift – it is not a prayer language.

Prayer, *i.e.*, speaking in tongues to God, is not a gift of the Spirit in the sense of a spiritual endowment.<sup>135</sup> The ability to pray in tongues accompanies the rebirth whereas spiritual endowments or gifts are bestowed after rebirth.

It is entirely correct to say that not everyone has the gift of tongues, as it is entirely wrong to say that this gift was poured out on Shavuot 2,000 years ago. In Acts 2:4, 8:18, 10:46 and 19:6 no one received nor operated the gift of tongues.

Again, it is entirely correct to say that everyone who is born again speaks in tongues, as it is entirely wrong to say that this prayer language is listed in 1 Corinthians 12 as a spiritual gift. Why should the Corinthians earnestly desire a prayer language which they had all received at rebirth?<sup>136</sup>

That the gift of tongues is listed together with offices underlines its ministry function:

***For Eloah placed in his assembly, first emissaries; after them prophets; after them teachers; after them workers of power; after them gifts of healing and helpers and leaders and kinds of tongues. Are all emissaries? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all doers of power? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Or do all interpret?***<sup>137</sup>

Although the laity can also operate the vocal gifts of tongues, interpretation, and prophecy, we find these listed with offices because they minister to others. Operating the gift of tongues is not praying, nor worshipping, nor praising God as

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<sup>133</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:30.

<sup>134</sup> See 1 Corinthians 12:11. Cf. Romans 12:6-8.

<sup>135</sup> The Greek term which signifies a *spiritual gift* is *χάρισμα* – *khárisma* (Romans 1:11; 12:6; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 12:4, 9, 28, 30-31). Praying in tongues is neither *a gift* of the Holy Spirit nor *the gift* of the Holy Spirit, as the latter is the Holy Spirit Himself (cf. Acts 8:19-20; 11:16-17). The Greek term which signifies *the gift* of the Holy Spirit is *δώρεά* – *dōrea* (John 4:10; Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; Hebrews 6:4). *Dōrea* is never used to denote a *spiritual gift*, neither is *khárisma* ever used to signify *the gift* of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>136</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:1, 18. Similar with the *gift of faith* – though all who believe have faith, they don’t necessarily have the *gift of faith*, and though all who believe speak in tongues, they don’t necessarily have the *gift of tongues*.

<sup>137</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:28-30. Cf. Ephesians 4:8, 11-12. The term ‘diversities of tongues’ or ‘divers kinds of tongues’ not only shows that people receive different languages but also that the languages can change or multiply. To split up the gift of tongues into several categories is simply an attempt from the enemy to class the sign of rebirth as a *khárisma* and thus deny the need for it.

we see the ‘new-born babes’ in Acts do. People were not immediately set into offices or equipped with ministry gifts the moment they received the Holy Spirit – they were saved!

Below a final overview of the main differences between the gift of tongues and the sign of tongues:<sup>138</sup>

<i><b>Sign of Tongues</b></i>	<i><b>Gift of Tongues</b></i>
<i>Given at rebirth</i>	<i>Not given at rebirth</i>
<i>Used for prayer and worship</i>	<i>Not used for prayer and worship</i>
<i>Edifies self</i>	<i>Edifies others</i>
<i>Used in public gatherings and in private</i>	<i>Used in public gatherings only</i>
<i>Can be used as long and often as one wishes</i>	<i>Can be operated only two to three times</i>
<i>Doesn't need to be interpreted</i>	<i>Needs to be interpreted</i>

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<sup>138</sup> The phenomenon of speaking in another language which accompanies the initial infilling of Ruach HaKodesh in Acts 2:4; 10:46 and 19:6 is rendered לִשָּׁן בְּלִישָׁן (belishan lishan) in the Aramaic Peshitta. The expression literally means “in a tongue-language” and is nowhere employed in 1 Corinthians 12-14.

## Conclusion

I don't think anyone will deny the difference between the spiritual gift and the sign of the new birth. The book of Acts portrays the inauguration of the New Covenant while the epistle to the Corinthians regulates the use of gifts in an assembly.

However, despite the clear distinction, tongues will likely continue to be rejected. The foolish virgins will continue to carry empty vessels being confident that they will be received at the marriage feast.

The enmity of the flesh towards the Spirit is so strong, that an unregenerate person will rather justify themselves and explain away the obvious. Otherwise unbiased people with an immense reservoir of biblical knowledge, will not easily admit that they have been *'wrong for so long'*. Isaiah was prescient:

***God said to His own, This is the rest, and this is the refreshing, but they would not listen.***<sup>139</sup>

For those, however, who are humble enough to acknowledge that they could be lacking something and who come to God like little children, the promise is still there:

***If you, who are evil, know to give good gifts to your sons, how much more will your Father from heaven give RuachHaKodesh to those who ask Him?***<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Isaiah 28:12.

<sup>140</sup> Luke 11:13.

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