



Modern Pentecostalism

“GLOSSAIS”

KNOWN OR UNKNOWN TONGUES?

by

Elder Jacob O. Meyer

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In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, adherents of the charismatic movement held a convention attended by 17,000 people. “Pentecostalism” is a growing movement on the spectrum of religion and constantly appears in the forefront of the religious news. The charismatic movement also cuts horizontally across denominational lines which once stood so firmly established, and today it unites people holding to a broad spectrum of doctrinal beliefs.

Even Catholics are joining with members of many Protestant denominations to form what is known as the “neo-Pentecostal” movement, wherein each person remains a member of the church to which he or she belongs but seeks to evangelize his organization with the message of “speaking in tongues.” Some time ago, Pope Paul caused quite a bit of excitement when he blessed a gathering of Catholic Charismatics in St. Peter’s Square. Apparently the wave of Pentecostalism that sprang up at Notre Dame University had

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acquired the sanction of the top leadership of the Roman Catholic Church, to the dismay of some of the more conservative members of that sect.

Many questions enter the mind of the one who watches the trends developing where the charismatic movement is concerned. Possibly the primary question we might ask has already been expressed by the prophet Amos almost 3,000 years ago. **“Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?”** Amos 3:3. Since the neo-Pentecostal movement cuts across denominational lines and seeks to unite people who not only hold widely differing views on Bible doctrine, but often greatly conflicting beliefs, how is it possible for two individuals bearing contradictory beliefs to maintain that they both have received the same, identical Holy Spirit bap-

tism? Can the Holy Spirit be freely given to people who disbelieve basic sound doctrines taught by the Bible, even doctrines which are occasionally proven to be derived from paganism rather than the inspired Scriptures?

How about the use of the Sacred Name? Can someone receive the Holy Spirit of the true Mighty One and the Redeemer without calling on their revealed personal Names? How can people using the Sacred Name and, ostensibly believing in its authenticity, assemble with people opposed to the use of the Sacred Name, and all of them together receive the same manifestation of the Holy Spirit?

How can people claiming to keep the commandments declare that they are receiving the very SAME manifestation of the Holy Spirit as are people vehement in their opposition to the keeping of the commandments? Can those who are keeping the commandments feel comfortable in worship with those espousing a doctrine of saved by

grace alone without keeping any of the commandments? Why should it only be speaking in tongues that unites people otherwise espousing conflicting doctrines? The early apostles firmly believed in keeping the commandments of Yahweh as a prerequisite for receiving the Holy Spirit of Yahweh. **“And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, WHICH YAHWEH HAS GIVEN TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM.”** (Acts 5:32). The apostles faithfully taught the sound doctrine of the Old Testament, that sin is the transgression of the Law, 1 John 3:4 and Leviticus 4, etc.

The inspired Scriptures certainly do not contradict themselves. They were inspired by the Holy Spirit of Almighty Yahweh, given through the prophets He chose, and the message has been faithfully preserved for our benefit. **“For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: BUT MEN SPOKE FROM YAHWEH, BEING MOVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.”** (2 Peter 1:21). If there is any difference in doctrine among religious groups, it is NOT the fault of our Heavenly Father, but it is, without a doubt, an error of human understanding. The Holy Spirit is only given to those who OBEY Yahweh, which is a very plain, simple and easy-to-understand statement, Acts 5:32. Can those people who do not obey Yahweh and do not keep His commandments really be receiving a manifestation of the Holy Spirit of Yahweh? Yahweh is not the author of confusion, but of peace (Hebrew-*shalom*, and means to be whole or complete, 1 Corinthians 14:33).

The question of a charismatic manifestation in religious worship has claimed the attention of many people. The author of this article also came into contact with these teachings before beginning his personal journey from sin toward the Truth of the Bible. Although he has never been a part of the Pentecostal movement, he has sought to make a diligent research of its claims and

to do so with the utmost objectivity. (Such has been his motive in all of the doctrines which he teaches.) One must, by all means, approach the Bible with total honesty and forthrightness if he ever wishes to uncover the primitive scriptural Truth that has been hidden for so long under the cloak of traditional denominational suppression.

Without a doubt, the inspired Scriptures, as closely as we can return to them, must serve as our only guide to direct us into the narrow pathway to eternal life. Rather than falling into the rut of seeking Scriptures to support a pet idea, concept, or doctrine (proof texting), we must allow the Bible alone to establish any and all doctrines that we believe, clearly and forthrightly with plainspoken instructions.

While seeking to be objective in researching the subject of charismatic manifestations, we have not been hasty in drawing conclusions, neither have we embraced hostile feelings toward those individuals and groups who adhere to it. Nevertheless, when the truth clearly emerged after diligent research, we had to stand upon it unequivocally in determination to be in harmony with what the Bible teaches throughout its text.

This article is written with the intention of setting forth directly from the inspired Scriptures what we have found regarding the subject of Pentecostalism. We trust that all of our readers will give it prayerful consideration.

The Roots of the Charismatic Movement

When we use the term, “charismatic movement,” we mean that branch of nominal christianity that emphasizes so-called “speaking in tongues” (Greek-*glossalalia*). We find the word *charisma*, listed in the **Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible**, as #5486 in the Greek Lexicon. It is defined there as *a divine gratuity, i.e. de-*

liverance (from danger or passion); specifically a (spiritual) endowment, i.e. (subj.) religious qualification, or (obj.) miraculous faculty. It is derived from #5483—*charizomai*, which is defined, *to grant as a favor, i.e. gratuitously, in kindness, pardon or rescue.* The reason why the movement is called “charismatic” is from the definition “gift,” as related to the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12.

Most often those who are proponents of the Pentecostal spiritual experience will declare that they find their scriptural basis for speaking in tongues in Acts 2. The name is taken from the experience reportedly occurring on the day of Pentecost. The disciples were gathered together in a centrally located meeting place to observe the Feast of Pentecost (properly Shavuoth, the Feast of Weeks). This is one of Yahweh’s legislated annual feast days, commanded in Leviticus 23:15-21 and Numbers 28:26-31. The holy days also commemorate the occasion on which the Israelites received the Torah Law at Mount Sinai; therefore, the keeping of the commandments of Yahweh takes on special significance at Pentecost.

Here we find a remarkable conflict between Bible teaching and what is observed in christianity.

While the charismatics stress that the roots of their faith in the Apostolic Assembly trace directly from events occurring on that Acts chapter 2 Pentecost day, they rarely even keep the scripturally commanded observance in commemoration of the actual event.

The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) is one of Yahweh’s commanded holy days! Had the disciples not observed Yahweh’s holy days as listed in Leviticus 23 in obedience to the Word, they would not have been gathered together at the very moment when the Holy Spirit was poured out on these early believers in the Messiah. Had the Jews and proselytes not been obedient, they would not have been witnesses to

the momentous event that was to shake the known world of that era to its very foundations.

The disciples were obedient to Yahweh and, therefore, they received the blessing of Yahweh's Holy Spirit. ***“And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, which Yahweh has given to them that obey him.”*** (Acts 5:32).

As the disciples were gathered together in one accord (unity, and, especially, in sound doctrine) on that sanctified special day of worship, the Holy Spirit was poured out from heaven upon them. Here we already discover many reasons for questioning the form of spiritual manifestation that is presently in vogue among the Pentecostals. In order to receive the Holy Spirit of Yahweh, ONE MUST FIRST OF ALL BE IN HARMONY WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER AND HIS WORD. Then, the Heavenly Father will accept and bless those people who have desired to be known as His children by qualifying through obedience. They must thenceforth all unite in harmony, in one accord, in sound doctrine, just as was characterized by the first disciples who received the Holy Spirit.

Pentecostalism, Tool of Ecumenism

At this present time, the Pentecostal manifestation, in reality, serves as an ecumenical tool. Members of various religious denominations, each believing just a little differently on doctrine, are all purported to receive the same, identical manifestation. Such a belief is totally and completely contrary and at variance to what the Bible teaches. It is only those who are submissive and obedient to Almighty Yahweh and His Word who will receive the Holy Spirit. They must be in agreement to sound doctrine and cooperating in spreading the Word. Those who will receive the Holy Spirit are obeying the commandments of Yahweh. Those who are not obedi-

ent will NOT receive the genuine Holy Spirit.

When the disciples of Yahshua the Messiah gathered together to observe Yahweh's Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), there came a sound like a mighty rushing wind. It filled the house where they were sitting, while cloven tongues of fire came to rest on each one of them. This manifestation certainly is not happening today. We might point out that while those who involve themselves in the charismatic movement assert that they are seeking to restore the worship of the Apostolic era once again, all the signs described in Acts 2 are not in evidence. The appeal that the movement seems to project is that of a revitalized faith, a restoration of Apostolic worship with all its supernatural manifestations. But, there is no record that disciples spoke in tongues on a continuing basis after that one time. Notice the past tense of the statement in Acts 11:15. ***“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning.”***

Nevertheless, the Pentecostals continue to speak in tongues with a weekly or daily regularity, while none of them has been able to demonstrate that they ever had flames of fire resting on their heads. We might add that the sound of the rushing, mighty wind is also absent from today's meetings; however, they still claim to have received the very same manifestation as that described in Acts chapter 2.

While these supernatural phenomena were taking place, the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Here, indeed, was a miracle! These men began to make intelligible sounds and they were obviously speaking known languages. The word translated *tongues* in the Greek is *glossa*, #1100 in the **Strong's Greek Lexicon**. In the Greek, it means *the tongue [the organ producing speech], by implication a language, especially one not*

naturally acquired. For most of us, English is our natural language. We were reared with the English language as our language of communication. Some of us are bilingual (able to speak two languages) and some people are *polyglot* (proficient in many languages). Those additional languages would be known as *glossais*. The language which had not been acquired in the natural course of our lives, but learned later, could be called *glossais*. There is nothing mysterious or mystical about the Greek word *glossa*. The mystery was added by those who misunderstood the teaching of the sacred Scriptures on this subject. The TRUTH of the matter desperately needs to be restored and the quicker the better!

Roots Found in Acts 2

It was a miracle when these people mentioned in Acts 2 began to speak with a different language than the one they had acquired naturally. The miracle, its reason for occurring and what it was like, is clearly explained within this chapter.

Notice Acts 2:6. ***“And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them SPEAKING IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE.”*** So this statement clearly explains what has been set forth by Pentecostals as a mysterious event. As the disciples circulated through the assembled throng that had gathered to observe Yahweh's holy day, they were able to communicate freely with those of all ethnic backgrounds. Obviously, this manifestation would cause quite a commotion! Here were men who were not educated in various foreign languages, and yet they could speak fluently and communicate with those who spoke a number of foreign languages. The Holy Spirit had given the disciples a medium of communication that would be most effective in proclaiming the mes-

sage of the Messiah and the plan of salvation to a great many gathered people, in a short time.

This identical explanation is offered on three different instances in this chapter. Verse 6, as we have just seen, shows that they heard the disciples in their own (native) language. Now notice what they commented to each other (verses 7-8). ***“And they were all amazed and marveled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language [Greek—dialektos, language or dialect], in which we were born?”***

Once again, the obvious indication is that THE DISCIPLES WERE SPEAKING A GENUINE, KNOWN, INTELLIGIBLE LANGUAGE. There is nothing mysterious in the meaning of the Greek word *dialektos*, since it means a *language of a people or a nation*. In the **Strong’s Concordance** we find the word listed under #1258, and it is defined as a *discourse or dialect*. From this word is derived our English word “dialect.” We might also point out that the word is equivalent to and used in parallel with the Greek word *glossa*, so that there could be no misunderstanding of what is meant. Since the words are used on a parallel basis, it is obvious that the disciples were speaking in the various languages and dialects of the Israelites and proselytes (verse 22) who had assembled from the 16 nations listed in verses 7-11. There can be no other valid interpretation!

What was the purpose of this phenomenal experience? This second chapter of Acts was placed in the inspired Scriptures for a specific purpose. This chapter was included by the Holy Spirit to record the root origin of the Messianic Assemblies of Yahweh with accuracy. Since multitudes were gathered to observe the Feast of Weeks, an ideal occasion presented itself to contact thousands of people simultaneously with the message of salvation. How could a small group of Galilean

men who were uneducated in linguistic communications, men who had never studied advertising or had any knowledge of different languages, communicate to the assembled throngs the message given by Yahweh? Obviously, they could not accomplish the task without a mighty miracle. That miracle happened! They began to speak with the pilgrim worshipers in their own language or dialect. This in itself caused a great upsurge of excitement among the assembled multitude. Perhaps the most enlightening statement contained in the entire chapter is found at the end of verse 11. ***“... We hear them speaking IN OUR OWN LANGUAGES the mighty works of Elohim.”***

Here, then, is the answer to the incident that reputedly stands at the root of the entire modern charismatic movement! The disciples of the Messiah who experienced this manifestation were speaking in different languages, although they had not been educated in them or learned them naturally. The disciples chosen by Yahshua the Messiah were being used by the genuine Holy Spirit of Yahweh to communicate His Truth very quickly and efficiently to the vast multitude of worshipers who had gathered in Jerusalem at this commanded holy convocation.

What better way could there have been to take the message rapidly to the ends of the known world? Each one of those 3,000 people who were baptized could thereafter also carry the Messianic message to other people in his locality who spoke his own language. Consequently, it is easy to perceive that the manifestation of speaking in tongues (languages) was for the purpose of transmitting the message of Messiah rapidly to all nations so they also could share in the anticipation of the coming Kingdom of Yahweh. We must conclude that this miracle of communication in different languages to all people served the same purpose as the methods of media communication do in our time today.

One must ask himself at this point if any of the disciples experienced some kind of ecstatic, physical feeling, or sensation while he was speaking in these languages. People today describe many such sensations coursing through their bodies while they speak in tongues.

There is NO RECORD of any such physical gratification being experienced. The answer to this puzzle is (of course) that when the disciples spoke in those tongues, which were KNOWN INTELLIGIBLE LANGUAGES, the gift was not applied for their own personal physical (carnal) enjoyment, but it was intended to glorify Yahweh and Yahshua the Messiah and to build up the Assemblies of Yahweh.

The manifestation of the speaking in languages was NOT to prove to the Israelites that they had the Holy Spirit, but that they were merely instruments to accomplish this miracle, to serve as witnesses to communicate the wonderful works of Yahweh. Therefore, it was a manifestation that glorified Yahweh and brought honor to Him. Speaking in these languages in the Acts 2 Pentecost observance did not glorify men.

Nor was speaking in different tongues the mysterious contact with the spirit realm that is commonly projected by those engaged in the modern-day charismatic movement. It was a miracle from Yahweh, our Father in heaven, to give the ability of immediate mass communication to the Apostles. The purpose of the manifestation was purely and simply, communication. It was not physical self-gratification in any way.

What Did It Mean?

If you and I had been in attendance at that feast day observance 2,000 years ago, we undoubtedly would have asked the very same question as did the assembled multitude, ***“... What does it mean?”*** (Acts 2:12).

Others mocked and said, "...*They are filled with new wine.*" (Acts 2:13).

Was the behavior of the disciples such that the men acted inebriated? Interestingly, the word translated "new wine" in the Greek is *gleukos* (#1098 in the **Strong's Concordance Greek Lexicon**). It is specifically defined as "must or juice," corresponding to the Hebrew word *tirosh*. (Perhaps the jest was directed toward the assembly that used grape juice for the Passover symbol of blood.) It was indeed a mocking taunt that was leveled at the disciples—"you must be drunk on juice!" Evidently, as the disciples were speaking to some people they could not be understood by other people, and this was the reason for the jesting among some of those in the gathered throng who did not comprehend the significance of the miracle.

Tongues Are Languages

The crowd soon came to understand the meaning of the manifestation of the spiritual gift of languages, however. Cepha (Peter) stood up in the middle of the crowd and preached his powerful sermon that was used by the Holy Spirit to convict hearts and call 3,000 people into the Messianic Assembly. Peter showed that this manifestation was a fulfillment of prophecy, as he quoted from Joel 2:28-31. "***And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into blood, before the great and terrible day of Yahweh comes.***"

Notice that nothing can be found in this prophecy of Joel that speaks of UNINTELLIGIBLE, ECSTATIC UTTERANCES similar to what characterizes modern Pentecostalism. Israel's sons and daughters would prophesy, predicted the prophet Joel, and this prediction was supported by Cepha. The prophecy of Joel was being fulfilled before their very eyes.

The word *prophecy* means *inspired preaching*, as well as *to foretell events*. (See **Strong's Concordance Greek Lexicon** for #4395, #4396.) Is this not exactly what Peter (Cepha) was doing as he proclaimed the Truth of the Messiah? Were not the disciples proclaiming the wonderful works of Yahweh as they spoke directly to the assembled people in their own languages? We must answer in the affirmative to both these questions.

Let us notice that the revealed, personal Name of our Heavenly Father Yahweh enters significantly into the picture here. Acts 2:21 reads, "***And it shall be, that whoever shall call on the NAME OF YAHWEH SHALL BE SAVED.***" (*Yahshua* means *Yahweh is salvation*.) This is a direct quote from Joel 2:32. It is obvious that the Apostle Cepha (Peter) was indeed using the Sacred Name Yahweh and preaching it to the people, since Yahweh's Messiah bears the Name meaning Yahweh is salvation. Since it was the men teaching the Sacred Name who had the Holy Spirit of Yahweh, one is forced to wonder how those who do not use the Sacred Name could be receiving a true manifestation of the Holy Spirit since they do not use His correct Name, in addition to their rejection of His laws. (Have you read our free literature on the subject of the Sacred Name of our Father in heaven and His Son our Redeemer? If not, write immediately to: Assemblies of Yahweh, P. O. Box C, Bethel, Pennsylvania, 19507, and request such printed items as **What Is the Name of the Heav-**

only Father? and What Is the Messiah's Name?)

No Prior Stimulation Before Receiving the True Spirit

Let us again review verse 2 of this second chapter of Acts. "***And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.***"

The record given here does not indicate that any kind of artificial stimulation was necessary for the miracle of the Holy Spirit to be given. Today, charismatic proponents seem to require prior stimulation, such as lively music played repetitiously, which produces a seemingly *hypnotic effect*. The services of Pentecostals are replete with vain repetitions and emotionalism. The evidence in the inspired Scriptures nowhere gives this kind of picture of the setting wherein people spoke in tongues or received the Holy Spirit. In Acts chapter 2, THE DISCIPLES WERE SITTING QUIETLY IN A MEETING PLACE when the miracle suddenly occurred. There is NO MENTION of music being played, songs being sung, or any other kind of emotional activity at that momentous instant.

Furthermore, one needs to ask the question, "Must there be some type of emotional demonstration to prove that people have a sincere heart?" Obviously, the answer to this question is negative. One could use as a prime example to prove our answer, the contest between EliYah the prophet and the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings 18. It was the 850 pagan priests of Baal and the Asherah (Groves) that engaged in the emotional demonstration.

EliYah the prophet calmly prayed. Whose prayer was answered directly from the heavens? ELIYAH received an immediate answer to his thoughtful prayer, even though he had committed the seemingly sacrilegious act of mocking an opposing minister.

In this case, emotional demonstrations staged by the priests of Baal and the Groves never reached the ears of the Father in heaven because they called upon the Almighty by an erroneous, false, pagan name, and were obviously idol worshipers. Obviously, these pagan priests were not obedient to the Word of Yahweh and His commandments; therefore, He did not answer them.

Can we say that Yahweh has changed in the past three millennia? Certainly He has not changed, as Malachi 3:6 informs us; consequently, we must conclude that no emotional activity is necessary to contact Almighty Yahweh, our Heavenly Father.

This is not meant to be a rebuke to those who enjoy good music in worship. All True Worshipers are inspired and uplifted in spirit by some of the old favorite anthems, or by the sweet classical strains of a composition by Bach or Handel that is expertly performed in the Assembly. Without doubt, Almighty Yahweh made provision for the use of musical instruments in worship services when He inspired David to write Psalm 150.

Music was very much a part of the services in the Apostolic Assembly also, as it was in Temple worship. ***“Let the word of the Messiah dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, anthems and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to Yahweh.”*** (Colossians 3:16). The prophets of Yahweh sang songs, as recorded in the sacred Scriptures, for example Exodus 15:1. The Apostles also sang songs of praise (Acts 16:25). Yahshua the Messiah sang psalms with His disciples at the end of His Last Supper (Matthew 26:30). The members of the Assemblies of Yahweh today unite our voices in songs of praise to Yahweh, but we do so in an orderly manner as befits the Assembly whose Mighty One is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). We join our

voices in praise to the Most High in a respectful, orderly fashion, just as the multitude which assembles on the sea of glass will sing a song and harmonize their instruments before the throne of Yahweh. ***“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of Yahweh. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of Yahweh, and the song of the Lamb, saying,***

“Great and marvelous are your works, Oh Yahweh El Shaddai; righteous and true are your ways, you King of the ages. Who shall not fear, Oh Yahweh, and glorify your name? For you only are holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before you; for your righteous acts have been made manifest.” (Revelation 15:2-4).

How About 1 Corinthians 14?

Proponents of the charismatic movement will sometimes capitulate to and acknowledge the plain fact that Acts chapter 2 is indeed speaking about a known language rather than a nebulous, incomprehensible speaking in a mumble, which characterizes modern Pentecostalism. Nevertheless, for scriptural support they will retreat to 1 Corinthians 14, insisting that this passage of Scripture proves that their manifestation does not need to be a known language. Let us examine this chapter carefully to determine whether such an argument is valid.

Paul begins this chapter with a reference to the great love chapter (1 Corinthians 13) when he says, ***“Follow after love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but rather that you may prophesy,”*** verse 1. From 1 Corinthians 13, we have learned that the most desirable spiritual gift is charity (King

James Version terminology), defined as love (from the Greek word *agape*’ [Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible Greek Dictionary-#26], usually defined as *a spontaneous, outgoing affection for another person*). Strong’s renders the root (#25) as love (in a social or moral sense). Our primary goal should be to establish an atmosphere in the Assemblies of Yahweh fostering genuine love and affection for the other brethren and, indeed, for all humanity. In our services we should have mutual respect for the other people attending. We should wish to exhibit an atmosphere indicating that we are indeed a people governed and regulated by the orderliness of the Kingdom of the Heavens. This is the sign established by the Messiah to be the valid indication that the Assemblies of Yahweh are His earthly body of believers (John 13:34-35).

In the Assembly, peace will regulate the atmosphere of our gatherings, rather than bedlam. Even though some of our number may have come from a “Pentecostal” background, we all love our fellow believers so much that we wish them to enjoy an inspiring service rather than to be offended by perceived irresponsible actions. One would hardly allow his children to behave in an uncontrolled, disorderly manner in the home. Especially in the Assembly, therefore, while services are in progress, we should be respectful, since the Spirit of Yahweh the Most High is here. Notice Habakkuk 2:20. ***“But Yahweh is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.”***

Consequently, Yahweh’s ministers will not allow any commotion to disrupt the peaceful, worshipful atmosphere of Yahshua’s Assembly. We serve our Heavenly Father through love, and, therefore, we will naturally and sincerely love all the brethren. ***“By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Yahweh and do his commandments. For this is the***

love of Yahweh, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” (1 John 5:2-3).

Notice, also, how Paul instructs the young minister in 1 Timothy 5:17. **“Let the elders that RULE WELL be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching.”** It is essential, therefore, that out of love for each other, the members of Yahweh’s Assemblies will endeavor to conduct themselves as mature, responsible people who are dedicated representatives of the Most High. The Kingdom is destined to be established on this earth to create heavenly order from this modern Babylonish chaos. We are being educated so Yahshua can use us in that capacity. If we cannot rule over our own spirits, how can we assist Yahshua to rule in His Kingdom? Rule means regulation that leads to an orderly environment.

We are told by Paul to desire spiritual gifts, and the one that is to be most desired by all the members of the Assembly is prophecy. The word *spiritual gifts* in the Greek text is *pneumatika* (**Strong’s**, #4152), from the Greek word *pneuma* (#4151), meaning *spirit*. The meaning of the term in this context is that we should desire spiritual things, and the most desirable is to prophesy. The term *prophecy* means *to foretell events or to speak under Holy Spirit inspiration*.

Don’t true ministers declare that they are endowed with the Holy Spirit, or under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, every time they stand behind the pulpit? We have also known of various instances wherein dedicated members of the Assemblies of Yahweh spoke under Holy Spirit inspiration as they witnessed their Faith, although they never stood before an audience. This is the meaning of the word *prophecy* as Paul used it.

The adherents to the charismatic movement would have one believe that Paul declared that speaking in tongues is the most desirable

spiritual gift, but this is definitely not the case. ***Inspired speaking is to be desired.*** This is what happened in Acts chapter 2 as the disciples communicated their Faith to the assembled multitudes who had come from different nations who spoke various foreign languages. Do you see how this interpretation is consistent with the Word, how the message of the sacred Scriptures does not change?

Unknown Tongues?

A very serious mistake is made by people who hold that the **King James Version** of the Bible is the only inspired translation. When we read verse 2 of 1 Corinthians chapter 14, we should become alert to some obvious obscurities in the **King James Version** text. ***“For he that speaks in a language speaks not to men, but to Elohim; for no man understands; but in the spirit he speaks mysteries.”***

Let us examine this verse more closely. In your Bible do you regularly notice the italicized words? To add these italicized words means that these **italicized words** have **no equivalent** in the original texts and were only inserted by the translators because they believed this insertion would somehow clarify the thought in English.

However, the student should seek to return to the original texts to determine if those added words are indeed correct and necessary or if they were merely human opinions expressed by the translators. An excellent translation of the Greek text here is found in the **Benjamin Wilson** translation. ***“For he who is speaking in a FOREIGN LANGUAGE is not speaking to men, but to Yahweh; for no one listens; but, by the Spirit he is speaking mysterious things.”*** Do you see the difference between the **King James Version** and what is actually stated in the Greek text?

If someone in our assembly were to speak in a foreign language

(Greek—*glossa*, see previous definition), no one would listen because he would be speaking mysterious, incomprehensible things. The author has read a Psalm or some other passage of Scripture from the Hebrew text on occasion during the opening devotions in the Assembly. The congregation was asked to follow in their English Bibles for an immediate translation, but, from the often puzzled expressions on the people’s faces, it was obvious that the experiment was not a success. No one understood the author when he read Hebrew, or was able to follow along in the English text. If he had continued speaking (or reading) in this foreign language, the members of the Assembly would undoubtedly have soon lost interest and begun to shift about in their seats. Before too long, the worshipers would have demanded a restoration to the services of our common English tongue because no one would have received anything of value from attendance at the meetings!

Paul is describing exactly such a situation in this passage of Scripture. Paul indicates that the Assembly should desire to speak of the wonderful works of Yahweh in his own language under inspiration as the supreme spiritual gift, because when one speaks in a foreign language he cannot be understood.

Let us notice that no concept such as an “unknown tongue” emerges from the Greek text. The term *glossa* means simply *a foreign language* and not the unintelligible gibberish that characterizes the Charismatic Movement. The Greek word *akoua* appears here in verse 2, and is translated *hear* in 414 of the 420 instances it appears in the New Testament. From this word comes our English word *acoustics* which means *to hear* (listen). The term does not mean comprehension of what is said; consequently, the **King James Version** translation “understand” is a distortion of the meaning of the word. This is why we must be so careful in our Bible study

and seek the correct rendering of the translation most closely reproducing the sense of the original texts (as closely as we can return to them), to obtain the correct meaning.

By this time we have sufficient basic information to orient ourselves correctly as we study this significant chapter. Paul is obviously teaching the Corinthian Assembly a doctrine identical to the experience of Acts 2. We have already proven that the speaking in tongues means A KNOWN LANGUAGE. Consequently, if we are to remain within the narrow confines of what is taught in 1 Corinthians 14, we must accept the fact that Paul is also discussing a known language. Now the remainder of the chapter can be candidly and clearly understood, but we must not allow ourselves to become confused by popular, erroneous interpretations that have been attached to this passage. It is our intention to adhere strictly to the fundamental meaning of the text as we find it interpreted through accurate definitions of the words employed in the original texts (as closely as we can return to them).

The Importance of Prophesying

For the translation of this entire chapter, we shall continue quoting from the **Benjamin Wilson** translation. We hope you will also peruse the Assemblies of Yahweh publication, **The Sacred Scriptures, Bethel Edition**, for a comparison of the translation.

Verse 3, reads: ***“He who is prophesying, however, speaks to men for edification, and exhortation, and consolation.”*** This is the meaning that Paul attached to prophesying. This gift of the Spirit is communication in the common language of each person assembled in the congregation and it had a unifying purpose. It will bring much needed knowledge to the people of Yahweh. It will correct them, and it will bring them comfort as they face

the trials of walking in the Narrow Way. It will direct them into the Narrow Way that leads to salvation. Essentially, the most universally beneficial gift that the Spirit of Yahweh can bestow upon the Assembly of Messianic worshipers is to EDUCATE the members in the way of keeping Yahweh’s Covenant so they may all find salvation. It will assist the members to bear good fruit in their lives.

Notice also verse 4. ***“The speaker in a foreign language edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the congregation.”*** How perfectly lucid and crystal clear! If one were to speak in a foreign language he would edify himself before the crowd. The word *edify* means *to build up* (as an edifice, which is a large structure). Such a speaker would glorify his knowledge. The one who speaks under inspiration in the common language edifies (builds up) the Assembly by giving them knowledge.

Here we discover one of the most striking reasons why Paul insists on the supreme importance of prophesying. If one wishes to inflate his own ego he can occasionally confuse people by speaking in a foreign language. He can even counterfeit a manifestation that could masquerade as a language among those who are not linguists. (Some have done this.) The main purpose of our speaking in the Assembly should be to build up the congregation, not to harm it, to diminish it, or to tear it down.

Obviously, in this context we must subordinate self and glorify Yahweh. We must seek what is best for the group. The group must be able to obtain knowledge through being taught by the minister, and not merely to gaze at an emotional demonstration that does not convey Bible Truth to the observer.

The gift of language in Acts 2 obviously accomplished this objective, because the broad spectrum of people in attendance at that annual holy convocation learned about the doctrine of the Messiah and 3,000

of their number made their commitment in one day. The miracle accomplished a desirable purpose because it sowed the seed of Messianic worship among many ethnic peoples speaking different languages and dialects, all at the same time. The apostles spoke what was their native tongue, and the people heard the wonderful works of Yahweh in their native language. In the local Assembly, however, there is no need to show self importance by speaking in a foreign language, but our purpose of assembly should be to worship Yahweh and then to show love to our brethren, to build up the congregation, and to learn more of the Truth as Yahshua’s ministers speak.

The Element of Interpretation

Paul continues his discourse by introducing a new element into the subject of speaking in a foreign language. ***“I am willing, indeed for you all to speak in different languages, but rather that you should prophesy; for greater is he who prophesies than he who speaks in different languages; UNLESS INDEED, HE SHOULD INTERPRET SO THAT THE CONGREGATION MAY RECEIVE EDIFICATION.”***

Paul does not prohibit speaking in foreign languages when the congregation assembles, but he places a clear RESTRICTION on the practice. First of all, he places this gift in a subordinate position in the Assembly. Secondly, he insists on INTERPRETATION of what is spoken. There is nothing mysterious about what he outlines here. If someone writes a letter to the offices of the Assemblies of Yahweh in a foreign language, we must make a translation and interpret what is written so that we can communicate Yahweh’s Word of Life to that correspondent.

Similarly, Daniel the prophet gave an INTERPRETATION of what was written by the unattached

hand, in chapter 5 of his prophecy. Undoubtedly, those in attendance at that idolatrous feast could read the inscription but could not interpret it. Daniel, because of his position in the government and his righteous life, was blessed by our Heavenly Father and could correctly interpret what had been written. He explained that the empire of Babylon was very soon to end, that it would be conquered and thereafter ruled by the Medes and the Persians.

As Daniel did, the converted person can give the Assembly a genuine INTERPRETATION of a message in a foreign language rather than a cold, impersonal, mechanical TRANSLATION since he has the Holy Spirit of Yahweh to direct him. **The object of spoken language remains communication.** One uses language to communicate thoughts and ideas to another individual. If two people speak two completely different languages, there can be NO COMMUNICATION between them, NO mutual exchange of information, unless through a third party

Apparently, in the Corinthian Assembly some of the brethren were abusing a gift that had been given supernaturally to the Assembly. They were abusing this gift to the point that they were using it in an attempt to build themselves up in the eyes of the members of the congregation. Paul resisted such a mockery of Yahweh's Holy Spirit by demanding that all of the things spoken in a foreign language must be properly interpreted by someone so that the purpose for which the gift had been given would be beneficial to the entire Assembly. Then, the spirit of love would reign supreme throughout the Assembly.

Up to this point we have encountered nothing to indicate, even in the most remote way, that the "tongues" in 1 Corinthians 14 were anything other than an actual, known foreign language, regardless what may be claimed by those who adhere to modern-day Pentecostalism.

As we continue with verses 6 to 8, we shall find this doctrine to be maintained even more dogmatically by the Apostle Paul. ***"But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or [word] of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching? Even things without life, giving a voice, whether pipe or harp, if they give not a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet gives an uncertain voice, who shall prepare himself for war?"***

Tongues— Proven Intelligible Communication

Therefore, Paul is contending for intelligible communication in the Assembly! Each language spoken in the Assembly shall be one that will communicate a revelation, a word of knowledge, some inspired speaking, or necessary teaching. Paul once wrote—***"Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good,"*** 1 Thessalonians 5:22. Should we not also somehow prove the veracity of all things spoken in the Assembly?

Have you ever heard a band or orchestra tuning up? Each musician plays a different set of notes on his horn, or plays a scale or tune on his stringed instrument. What confusion of sound to hear a 100-piece orchestra tuning up their instruments! Who can say that such confused noise is inspiring? The tune-up of an orchestra could be compared to the assembling of people for a program wherein perhaps 500 to 1,000 people are all conversing on different subjects at the same time. Similarly, Pentecostal meetings frequently sound the same, I am told. Contrast the orchestra, heeding the directions of the director, all harmonizing to play a classical number created by one of the great composers, inspiring the listener.

One can hear the wind blowing, birds singing, a water brook rippling, leaves rustling as the music speaks to our hearts. Such is the voice of a musical instrument as its inventor meant it to function. Similarly, Yahweh, the Creator, intended the human voice to communicate intelligible information, knowledge, ideas, and instructions. He did not intend mature people to babble senselessly like little children. The human voice must convey intelligent messages and information to others.

Let us scrutinize also verse 9. ***"So even you by the tongue, if you do not give INTELLIGIBLE SPEECH, how shall it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking to the air."***

How perfectly clear! There can be no misunderstanding this clear instruction from Paul. He insists on INTELLIGIBLE speech in the Assembly! There cannot be an unintelligible form of speaking as the charismatic movement believes, or we will be speaking into the air! We must know for certain what is said either by use of our common language or through inspired interpretation and translation.

Now, if we are sincere, we must apply these plain instructions to ourselves. In the Assembly we must not allow unintelligible speaking or disorder, but in the Assemblies of Yahweh we must stand firmly on the concept that communication is the supreme purpose of our gathering together. We must unite our hearts and voices in pure worship to honor our Father in heaven and HIS Messiah. We must know what is being spoken, and those who are preaching must communicate knowledge by teaching. By utilizing only the predominant common tongue spoken among the members of the Assembly, we will all come into unity of doctrine, and the people of Yahweh will know how to prepare themselves to do battle throughout the week against the forces of evil, and against their weakness of the flesh.

Unless we practice this sensible approach to the Scriptures, the group will disintegrate into uncoordinated, unruly confusion. When Israel came out of Egypt they served as a model to guide the spiritual Assembly of the New Testament era, I Corinthians 10:11. They all spoke the same language and worshiped the same Mighty One. They did battle against the forces of the nations living astride their chosen route of travel toward the Holy Land

and Israel arrived in the Holy Land victorious. They were known as the Host of Yahweh, or the army of Yahweh (Numbers 2). They were an ordered host, not disorderly rabble (Exodus 13:18).

The Assemblies of Yahweh also are an orderly host, or army, and we do battle against the forces of evil. We seek to be a unified Assembly in all things. In this battle we encourage each other, and this can best be accomplished by accu-

rate communication. If a variety of intelligible languages are spoken in the Assembly, we must give an interpretation so that no confusion can develop. Let us be able to prove that all things spoken in the Assembly are intelligible and not merely something emotional. Let us not ASSUME that the mumbling of hysterical emotion is a language, unless it is conclusively proven to be so. Such proof has NOT yet been forthcoming. □