

## *The Israel of God Bible Study Class*

2515 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street

Chicago, IL 60649

(773) 374-6413 or (800) 96-BIBLE

### **Tongues**

What advantage would one gain if a word is spoken and no one understood what was being said? The word spoken would not benefit anyone, correct? Some individuals in the church community believe unidentifiable speech is a sign from God, even saying that it is a requirement for salvation. Yet, I Corinthians the 14th chapter in the 33rd verse it states, "God is not the author of confusion." What is the opposite of confusion? Something that is clear or easy to understand. After reading through this study, one will see that there is no confusion in the Bible on the above topic. But, those that do not read the Bible and tell others that they must speak in an unknown tongue to receive salvation; they are in the state of confusion.

Let's begin this study in Acts the 2nd chapter, at the first verse and see if we can get a clear understanding of what happened on the day of Pentecost.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. (Acts 2: 1-2)

Here the apostles are observing the Day of Pentecost, and suddenly a rushing mighty wind came in to the house. So, what exactly is this rushing mighty wind? It has to be some type of note worthy information or it would not be in the verse. Let's see if we can find an example in the Word of God, of a "rushing mighty wind."

In the next set of scriptures David inquires of God, asking, should he go out to war against the Philistines? Take note of what takes place after the Lord informs David what he should do.

And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley. Therefore David inquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines. (1 Chronicles 14: 13-15)

Note what's being stated, "When thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle." In other words, when you hear a rushing mighty wind in the top of the mulberry trees go out against them. Let's take a look at another example before we find out who, or what this wind is. Take note!

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. (John 3: 8)

Jesus gives an excellent example as usual. Everyone that is born of the spirit is like the wind, we can hear the sound of the wind, but we cannot tell where it came from or where it's going. In

## *The Israel of God Bible Study Class*

2515 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street

Chicago, IL 60649

(773) 374-6413 or (800) 96-BIBLE

other words we cannot see the wind nor can we see a spirit, unless they want to be seen. But, Acts the second chapter tells us exactly where the rushing mighty wind came from and that was Heaven. So, we have just learned something, meaning a spirit is like the wind. Now, let's look at the third verse in Acts 2.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. (Acts 2:3)

So, once the wind came in, there appeared unto them cloven tongues of fire and it sat by each one of them. Cloven tongues like as of fire? What could that possibly be? Let's cut to the chase and find out exactly what this is. Take note.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: (Psalms 104: 1-4)

Remember, Jesus states in St. John the third chapter in the 8th verse, "The wind bloweth, thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh: so is every one that is born of the Spirit". In Acts chapter 2 in the 3rd verse it states, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire. The 104th Psalms states, "Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire". Therefore, the rushing mighty wind and the tongues of fire, were simply a large number of angels coming into the house. Now, let's return to the 2nd chapter of Acts and pick up where we left off.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2: 4)

They were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues. Here is the key, "the spirit gave them utterance". Remember the angels are the spirits that arrived in the house in the form of fiery tongues. So, it was the angels that gave them the act of speaking. Note this in the above verse, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Does this mean something entered their bodies? No! Here is an example of a spirit (or angel) giving an individual utterance.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4: 31)

Note what the verse states, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Once they were filled with the Holy Ghost, what did they do? They spake the word of God with boldness! Therefore in the case of Acts 2:4, the "Holy Ghost is the Word of God. Let's return to Acts chapter 2, pick up where we left off.

## *The Israel of God Bible Study Class*

2515 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street

Chicago, IL 60649

(773) 374-6413 or (800) 96-BIBLE

And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitudes came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. (Acts 2: 5-6)

Note what the verses states, "Every man heard them speak in his own language." Here is more note worthy information in the above verses. There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. In other words, there were "Jews" only in this assembly from every nation under heaven. Now, read the next two verses carefully and see the tongue or language that was spoken was understood perfectly.

And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? (Acts 2: 7-8)

How did every man hear them (Apostles/Galileans) speak in his own language (or tongue)? Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, and they spake the word of God with boldness. Therefore the angles were the interrupters for the whole assembly. That's why a cloven tongue sat by each one of them. So, Peter stood up as the spirit gave him utterance and quoted the Word of God to the Israelites that were present. Peter quoted the Prophet Joel, take note!

And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Acts 2: 12-21)

Let's see what Peter quoted.

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 shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of

## *The Israel of God Bible Study Class*

2515 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street

Chicago, IL 60649

(773) 374-6413 or (800) 96-BIBLE

smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call. (Joel 2: 28-32)

Peter quoted the Prophet Joel! If we were to read the remaining of this chapter we would see that Peter also quoted the Prophet David (Psalm 16:8-11) beginning at the 25th verse and ending at the 28th verses of Acts chapter 2. He did not speak an unidentifiable language; he uttered clear speech and every man understood what he said. So, let's recap what we have just learn.

In the 1st verse of Acts chapter 2 we see the Disciples observing the day of Pentecost. Notice they continued to keep the High Sabbaths after the death and the ascension of the Lord. If an individual call them self a follower of Christ one should also observe this day along with the other High and Holy Days. In the second verse we saw the angels come into the house. In the third verse the angles took the form of cloven tongues of fire, and sat by each one of them. In the fourth verse the angels gave them the word of God and they spoke it with boldness.

Now, that we see that the words spoken by the apostles was a language that was understood clearly, let's see what our beloved brother Paul have to say about this subject. We will begin in the 14th chapter of first Corinthians at the first verse. Pay close attention to the first verse!

Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Note what Paul says, "but rather that ye may prophesy." What did Peter do in Acts 2? He prophesied and gave those that were in the assembly edification! Let's continue.

For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. (1 Corinthians 14:2)

Note Paul states, "he that speak in an unknown tongue speak not to men but to God." What could Paul mean by this? Let's go to Genesis chapter eleven and find out.

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men build. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not

## *The Israel of God Bible Study Class*

2515 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street

Chicago, IL 60649

(773) 374-6413 or (800) 96-BIBLE

understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth. (Genesis 11:1-9)

Ahhhh, now we should understand what Paul meant when He stated, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, for no man understandeth him." Paul simply meant, "he that speaks in a language that is not known to the individual that is being spoken to, will not understand what's being said. We will see this more perfectly as we continue in the 14th chapter of first Corinthians. Let's take another look at the 1 Corinthians 14:2.

For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. (1 Corinthians 14:2)

Note what Paul states at the end of this verse, "howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." Remember, the subject is speaking to someone in a language that's not known to the individual that is listening. The word spirit in this verse is the key. Note Paul states that God understands what's being said because God changed their language (Gen 11:9). So, what does Paul mean by all this? Let's read further and see if we can figure this out.

But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. (1 Corinthians 14:3-4)

Paul states in verses two, "he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." In the two verses above we have a little more information. Paul states in the 4th verse, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself!" In other words, if an individual speaks in a foreign language (or tongue) to another individual, the person that is speaking imparts wisdom to him or herself, not the individual who is listening. Therefore the words uttered are a mystery (something not understood) to the person who is in an earshot. Let's continue in this chapter.

I would that ye all spake with tongues; but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? (1 Corinthians 14:5-6)

Note what Paul says, "I would that ye all spake with tongues; but, rather ye prophesied for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret". Thus if there is no interpreter, the language spoken will not profit the hearer. Remember, Paul is the Apostle to the Gentiles. So, being that Paul was a Hebrew Israelite and his native tongue (or

## *The Israel of God Bible Study Class*

2515 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street

Chicago, IL 60649

(773) 374-6413 or (800) 96-BIBLE

language) was Hebrew, he interpreted the word of God in the Corinthian's natural tongue. Thus he edified the church.

In the next few verses Paul gives examples of some things that gives clear and unmistakable illustrations, and if the warning is not understood its sound is good for nothing.

And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpets give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? (I Corinthians 14:7-8)

**PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE NEXT THREE VERSES!**

So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me. (I Corinthians 14:9-11)

That was extremely clear don't you think? Thus far we have seen that Paul reiterates that if a word is spoken in the church, all should understand what is being said. And if one speaks in a foreign language, have another to interpret or it will not profit the assembly. (For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. 1 Corinthians 14: 33) Let's take a look at one more set of verses. Pay close attention to what is being said.

In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.(1 Corinthians 14:21-22)

In conclusion, tongues are for a sign to them that believe not. For the Bible tells us that "an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" (Matthew 12:39), but prophesying is for believers of the Bible.

May the Lord add a blessing to the reading of His word, in Jesus' name A-men.