

The God of Peace: A Marriage of Faith & Works

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.” (Heb. 13:20-21)

The above text will be our focus for this study; which we will open up more fully from the Scripture.

God is called the **“God of peace”**, and how He makes peace is of interest towards all of us is worthy of continual study, because not all are at peace with Him. Worthy because the man who has sinned is separated from His Spirit of peace; this causes a disconnect between God and man, “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” (Rom. 8:6)

Before man sinned, and after he is redeemed from sin, the life and peace of God through the Spirit of God is to be in us. It is further stated in the Scripture of the God of peace how that peace is brought about. It is **“through the blood of the everlasting covenant”** that this peace is established. That peace that is brought to us is to bring a definite work into the soul:

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself... And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”

(Col 1:20-21)

By that very blood, now you are reconciled to God, but before having this peace, you were counted as an enemy of God “by

wicked works”, “because the carnal mind is enmity [hatred, hostility] against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Rom. 8:7) Yet that same blood of Christ (who is our peace [Eph. 2:14] with God, and called the Prince of peace [Isaiah 9:6]) so fully brings us back into the presence of the God of peace, so that we might be called truly “peacemakers” (Matt. 5:9), the children of peace, having peace with God, and in Christ, peace with all those who partake of His Spirit. Moreover, that “everlasting covenant”, the blood of which brings this peace, is called “the covenant of peace” between God & Christ (Zechariah 6:13). God says of “the Jerusalem above” (Gal. 4:26), His beloved nation that He is married to: “For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.” (Isa 54:10)

The God of peace is truly merciful; seeking to reconcile all to Himself. There are many today who are professing to be children of peace, and part of the covenant of peace, and say they are citizens of that beloved heavenly nation that is at peace with God, but why are there so few that truly have any real peace at all?

The answer can be found in what happens when the God of peace brings us to covenant relationship with Him. It states that He will **“perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ...”**; this work that is worked in us by God, through Christ. What is “every good work” that He works in us? It is nothing less than His commandments. We are told that “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10) The good works that we walk in, to reveal that we have peace with Him are the works which were “before ordained that we should walk in them.” Only a few verses before, it contrasts the saved experience of walking in good works, with

the condition of before our salvation appeared: "Wherein in time past **ye walked according to the course of this world**, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of **disobedience**:...But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" (Eph. 2:2,4-6)

Instead of walking in good works, we had walked in disobedience to God's law, being "dead in sins" (which is the transgression of God's law 1 John 3:4). But "**the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus**" has "quickened us together with Christ,...and has raised us up..." that we might now walk in good works, as the Spirit that raised up Christ Jesus dwells in our hearts working in us.

To all who believe in Christ as a personal Savior, and walk in His commandments, He gives us the assurance:

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)

Peace can never be afforded from the world that doesn't know God or keep His commandments, but only to those who truly love God and truly walk in His commandments. The peace that the world offers is temporary, superficial, and outward; it seldom is true peace that reaches from our heart to the heart of God, and to one another. Thus He promises a true and abiding peace; heaven's peace is that which He works in us, and is called "the work of righteousness":

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." (Isaiah 32:17)

What a beautiful promise! The work of righteousness produces

the peace of God! Now, the only righteousness that can be worked is that which divine power in Christ, through His blood, can work, and apart from that there is no righteousness at all which a man can have. We need a divine peace, which comes from a divine righteousness; this is wholly a gift of God's grace, and not our own works, but receiving His works to be worked out in us. Man's standard of righteousness is to try and work to create peace with God, and with each other by their own strength independent of God; this is a very common for men to do this; to believe "I'm a good person", but blind to the obligations of God's law, and what it means to have His righteousness. Anything less than His righteousness is worldly; Christ declared the same: "Do not think that I've come to destroy the law...I've come not to destroy but to fulfill...Verily I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no manner enter into the kingdom of God." (Matthew 5:19-21) Only through blood of Christ which cleanses us from all unrighteousness can this be made a reality in our lives. And His righteousness, which works peace can only be manifested in us by obedience to His commandments. "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law..." (Isaiah 51:7)

Here is the secret to real peace. It is knowing the law's searching even the thoughts and intents of the heart, and being cleansed deeply; thus producing a depth of peace that few have realized in their walk with Christ. It is only when realizing the magnitude of the holiness of God's law to reveal His own righteousness, that Christ may work in us to truly establish peace in the soul. Such a peace is found in the holiness of the law engraved on the tables of the heart that keeps God's commandments. It is God's righteousness in His law, and the blood of Christ which binds our hearts to peace in that law that finds the words fulfilled in our lives: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Psalm 85:10)

It is evident by these passages of Scripture that if such a peace is in the heart, it is because the law is in the heart. Without the law in the heart, how can the soul be risen above stormy tempest, to heaven's atmosphere above the clouds, with the holiness of the Prince of peace? To such as who disregard His law as the basis of His righteousness, He says:

"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:...There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked."
(Isa 48:18,22)

Yet, of the redeemed children of that beloved nation of the covenant of peace, something far different is said:

"All your children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of you children." (Isaiah 54:13)

"Great peace have they which love Your law: and nothing shall offend them." (Psalm 119:165)

There is good reason why many do not have such peace today, they think that Christ came to take away the law instead of taking away our sins (the transgression of that law), rather than coming to fulfill the law in us. Like a shallow reading of the law and not seeing the deep holiness of God within it's precepts, there are many who are not discerning Christ's works of coming to fulfill the law, or the righteousness of God. The Scripture tells us that "what the law could not do, because it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh...that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us...who walk after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:3-4) Christ fulfills the law in us, He destroys our sins against that law, condemning them by His Spirit in our flesh; He restores order to the soul; He builds us anew.

It is not enough to have the law without Christ's blood (works). Nor is it enough to have Christ's blood without the

law (dead, empty faith). Both can never produce peace. These are the two chief reasons that so few actually have peace today; they do not see Christ as inseparably connected to His law; they do not walk as Christ walked, though they claim to be in covenant relationship with Him. Both extremes the apostles frequently opposed and taught against, teaching the truth to be a narrow road between the two ditches.

FAITH APART FROM OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” (1Jn 2:4-6)

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (James 2:17)

Faith was alone, and James used starting words to declare the connection between faith and works. “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” (v. 26) Many are simply a body without the Spirit; if Adam’s body had been formed, but he received no breath of life, he could not walk, and live, and communicate. His soul was dead (non-existent) when he had an absence of life. The living soul of true Christianity is understanding the beautiful inseparable marriage between both the law and faith. It is true understanding when we realize that Christ did not die to divorce Himself, (or us) from the law, but to divorce man from sin, and it’s condemnation which brings death.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:...Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” (Rom. 5:1)

THE LAW APART FROM CHRIST

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” (Gal. 5:4)

Man is justified by faith, and that of faith by Christ's blood. It will forever change how we relate to the law; but does not justify walking in disobedience like we did before we knew Christ. “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” (Rom. 3:20) The law reveals sin. To try and keep it after you have broken it already, is sin; it is like Adam and Eve once they sinned and their nakedness appeared. They were guilty, but tried to clothe themselves to hide their guilt; but only Christ could clothe them by His sacrifice; God could accept nothing less. “For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” (Gal. 2:18) Therefore, the law can only produce condemnation and never salvation, but true salvation in Christ, which is by grace through faith, can produce the good works required by the law which we had sinned against.

Moreover, that the children of God's covenant of peace are through-and-through commandment-keepers cannot be denied:

“And the dragon (Satan, the old serpent that deceived Eve into sin) was wroth with the woman (the beloved nation- the heavenly Jerusalem), and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (the Spirit of God- Rev. 19:10).” (Rev 12:17)

And even though all the wicked, all the devils of hell and their agents shall come against us, yet the peace of God that is manifested to us will overcome and triumph over all of our enemies; the devil was cast out of heaven, and though we live on this earth and are not shielded from the tempter, we may be united with the power of heaven in Christ, being risen above the storm in the Spirit that dwells in our hearts, as we walk in obedience to His Word. This peace in God will unite us to a

divine source of power, which is well able to rise above the most terrible of persecutions.

IN THE BEGINNING: The Counsel of Peace

In the beginning of the Bible, our minds are taken back to the creation of God.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”
(Genesis 1:1)



“In
the beginning God...”

Yet God was not alone in His work of creation. He had a Helper at His side. Of this, the Scripture tells us:

“The LORD **possessed me in the beginning** of his way, before his works of old. I was **set up from everlasting**, from **the beginning**, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, **I was brought forth**; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was **I brought forth**: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.”

(Proverbs 8:22-26)

The Word of God tells us that Jehovah brought forth, and possessed One in the beginning of His way. Alluding to exactly who this was who was with God before the creation of the world is further alluded to in the same book of Proverbs:

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?”

(Proverbs 30:4)

The Bible says that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, so therefore it is He that “hath established all the ends of the earth.” Then it presents another question, “what is His Son’s name, if thou canst tell?” Therefore, the one who was brought forth, who was “set up from everlasting, from the beginning” was the Son of God. He declares it was “before His works of old”, His creation, that Jehovah had set Him up. Speaking further of this close Companion of Jehovah, from the beginning of the creation of God, the Word declares:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” (John 1:1-4)

It says that the Son of God that was brought forth was the Word of God, God made “all things...by Him”. So it was the Word of God, Jesus, His only-begotten Son who was at His side, making all things in the beginning with Him.

“God... Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;” (Hebrews 1:1-2)

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in

heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:" (Col. 1:15-16)

The Bible abundantly testifies that in the beginning, God, the Father, had worked through His Son in the creation of all things. Therefore confirming that He was not alone in His work.

God shares His throne with His Son, "who He hath appointed heir of all things," including His throne.

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, **Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:** They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." (Hebrews 1:8-12)

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5)

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24)

So we see that the Scripture declares that there were **two** in the beginning of God's creation:

1) God the Father

2) Jesus Christ, the only-begotten (brought forth) Son of the Father



The Rainbow Covenant: On The Throne Is Seated The Father & The Son

Thus concluding that God was by no means alone in the creation. The creation of the whole kingdom of heaven, and the throne over it, was given Him, inasmuch as He partook in the creation of it by the Father.

The Bible gives us this glimpse of the Throne of God, showing the Son as seated down at the right hand of the Father:

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Hebrews 8:1)

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrew 12:2)

“A Psalm of David. JEHOVAH said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool...” (Psalm 110:1)

Of that Throne which the Father shares with His Son, the Psalmist continues in verse 4,

“JEHOVAH hath sworn, and will not repent, **Thou art a priest for ever** after the order of Melchizedek.” (Psalm 110:4)

Thus we see that the Son of God, who shared in the creative work of God, and His throne, is also a Priest, as well as a King (the Order of Melchizedek) by divine institution of the heavenly Father. Thus the heavenly throne, is also a priestly throne. A priestly throne however, requires a Sanctuary. The prophet beheld in vision, a throne "from the beginning" that was exactly this:

"A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." Jeremiah 17:12

So the glorious high throne from the beginning, before JEHOVAH's "works of old", the Son of God was established as a Priest & King. And why a Priest? He was the Priest of the Sanctuary. And why a Sanctuary? That is the most vital part of understanding these points, because without the other points to bring us to this place, there would be no gospel. Yet there is the gospel. In holy vision, Zechariah saw the glory of the Son of God:

"Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between **them both."** (Zechariah 6:13)

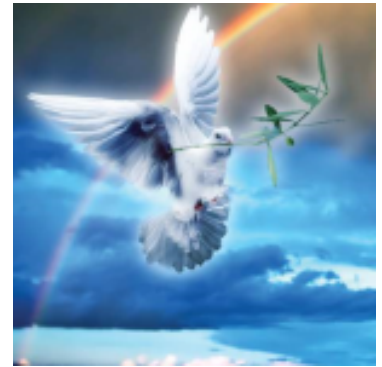
We are told that "the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Not merely affirming two, but it says the counsel of peace is between them. The Hebrew word for "shall be" is especially interesting, of the tense it is in. This means "I AM", or "to exist", "be/was/is". It is the Hebrew word "HawYah", from which comes the name JEHOVAH, and means "eternal". It is the same words that our God employed when speaking to Moses:

"And God said unto Moses, I AM [HawYah] THAT I AM [HawYah]: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM [HawYah] hath sent me unto you." (Exodus 3:14)

Therefore, an accurate rendering of Zechariah 6:13 may also read: "Even He builds the temple of the LORD; and bears the glory, and sits and rules upon His throne; and He is a priest

upon His throne, and the counsel of peace IS between them both.”

What is this counsel of peace between our Heavenly Father and our Great High Priest? It is that which was from the beginning, and what the throne was established upon. It is the most sacred of counsels, because in it, was established both the Son, the Sanctuary, and the Throne over all creation. What is that eternal counsel which was from the beginning between them both? It was the formulation of the plan of the gospel. The Word of God declares:



The Counsel of Peace Was Between Them Both

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not **redeemed** with corruptible things...But **with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily **was foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you,” (1 Peter 1:18-20)

Of this counsel of peace that existed between the Father and the Son, it is called “the hidden wisdom”:

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even **the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world** unto our glory:” (1 Corinthians 2:7)

“Even the mystery which **hath been hid from ages and from generations**, but now is **made manifest** (revealed) unto his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the

glory of this mystery... which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:" (Colossians 1:26-27)

Therefore, we see that this was hidden since creation. The plan of redemption was formed between God and His Son beforehand, in the event that man would choose to ruin himself by disobeying the command of His Creator, and eat the fruit of sin. Yet, at the fall, the counsel of peace, the everlasting covenant, at the very first sin went into effect. The Voice of God visited them at their fall, and promised that He would crush the dominion of the serpent, Satan. That promise was sufficient to break his dominion in their hearts if they would believe the counsel of peace. There, He covered their nakedness with a slain lamb, and declared to them: "...the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, **neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed**, saith the LORD that **hath mercy on thee.**" (Isaiah 54:10)



God Didn't Desire
Sin's Entrance, But A
Plan Was Made
Beforehand...

So what is the counsel of peace? It is "the covenant of My

peace” says the Word of JEHOVAH. It declares that the way of His mercy has already been established from the beginning, before His “works of old”, having **“foreordained” His Son to be the Lamb of sacrifice, “before the foundation of the world”**. Hallelujah! That peace of this counsel is none other than peace foremost with God through His Son:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” (Romans 5:1-2)

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;” (Ephesians 2:13-14)

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” (Colossians 1:18-20)

The plan established in the heart of God and His Son before the creation of the world was to, in the event of sin, “reconcile all things” to God through the One that God made all things through! And not only so, but in the heart of God therefore, when this plan was formed, it declares something of the greatest importance. This counsel was fixed in place before the creation was entered into by God and His Christ, but it was not for Themselves that they formed this plan. The Scriptures declare that it was for us, declaring that He has even “chosen us...before the foundation of the world”:

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:” (Ephesians 1:4)

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling... according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,” (2 Timothy 1:9)

God has saved us from the beginning if we will choose to rest in His love. He has saved us, and called us, and chosen us, and even given us grace BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN; before we were born, He saw the mercy, and grace and glory He would crown us with in His love. He sees the covenant of peace, and He declares, “I have saved you, return unto Me.” Salvation has already been in place, so none need be lost. He who upholds the worlds fixed something in place even greater than the world, and He saw us in that very thing.

This is “the love of the truth” that we should purify our souls in obeying. It declares heaven is our home. It declares that our abiding place is in the Lamb of God before the foundation of the world. That He established His Sanctuary and Priesthood for our sakes, in the love wherewith He has loved us.

Why then should any be lost? Because they “obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes. 1:8). The very same gospel which was ordained to their glory, they have refused. And why have they refused? Because of Satan.



The god of this world has blinded the minds of many from the glorious revelation of the love of the gospel

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them....” (2 Corinthians 3:3-4)

Declaring that he works “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” (2Th 2:10)

Therefore, we read:

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Revelation 13:8)

Jesus is called the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the world, another reference to the counsel of peace that existed. He was slain from the foundation of the world, being that Lamb that was a ready sacrifice “foreordained” for fallen man, to be the Lamb promising mercy and life. Here is the promise God gave:

“In hope of **eternal life**, which God, that cannot lie, **promised before the world began;**” (Titus 1:2)

“**That which was from the beginning**, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, **of the Word of life;** (For the life was **manifested**, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew

unto you **that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;**). That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1 John 1:1-3)

In the above passage, John calls Jesus “the Word of life”, “which was from the beginning”, and “was manifested”, even calling Him “that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested”; in the same letter, declaring this eternal life which was with the Father, he says: “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and **this life is in his Son.**”

Therefore, if the life was manifested to John, and that eternal life is in the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, being the Lamb bringing mercy to Adam, and all who sinned before He was manifested, then He is also the Life from the foundation of the world, giving eternal life to all who believe from the foundation of the world. Even before His Resurrection, Christ said:

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:” (John 11:25)

Therefore, Christ is the Resurrection from the foundation of the world, and He is our Life. This is the peace, this is the life, this is the hope that you have been given in the gospel, declaring the love God has had toward you. Therefore, the question that remains, that Jesus asks of you, is this:

“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John 11:26)

The Gift of Tongues

Christ gave a commission to His appointed apostles to bring the light of the gospel committed to the Hebrews to the rest of the world in the darkness of error.

“And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 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...”

(Mark 16:15-17)



The commission for the men of Galilee was of a worldwide scale, and only divine enabling could fulfill them to accomplish that mission. For this cause, those reconciled to God were given authority over devils to

cast them out through the power of the gospel. They were also given the promise of being equipped to “speak with new tongues” as their mission demanded. However, there has been some confusion as to what this gift was exactly, and even more obscured is the purpose. The largest and fastest growing religious movement to originate in the United States” is the Pentecostal movement. The movement emphasizes the gifts of the Spirit, and in specific, holds to a doctrine that demands all believers speak in a manner of tongue that departs from the plain understanding of the Bible gift. The Scripture admonishes us, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” (1John 4:1) Seeing that the movement has risen in numbers like wildfire, it demands that there is the clearest account of what the gift of tongues

is from the Scriptures. While, this article does not intend to dwell at great length on a false gift of another spirit, we must be able to “test” these spiritual gifts by the Bible, and to do this, we must understand the true gift of tongues. As we examine Scripture, it will shed a clear light on the subject to clear up misunderstandings that may exist regarding the matter.

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

We are told of the designations in the body of Christ, with the various gifts in addition to those.

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.”
(1 Cor. 12:28-31)

There are several points that need to be realized regarding the body of Christ. All those functions are in the body of Christ of which Christ is the head. Notice that the gifts of the



Many parts; one body; one Spirit: the Spirit of

Christ.

Spirit are not all the same, but it is the same Spirit operating throughout the body. The apostle said to the same church that "the Lord is that Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:17), and Christ is called the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, hence it is said of Him "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." (1 Cor. 12:4-5) Christ administers the Spirit, by which the members of the body have their appointed administration, and all the various gifts, "but the same Spirit" accomplishes the same glorious purpose of furthering the gospel in the world.

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"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." (1 Cor. 12:11-12)

Now, if Christ is working through His people to "walk even as He walked" (1 John 2:6), we must say that it is Him that speaks through the body of His people. In Christ is all the gifts, as it is written: "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (Eph. 4:8) Thus the gift of tongues is also found in Christ to give unto men.

John beheld the risen Christ, a glorious high priest and the life of the body of His people, maintaining the oil in the lampstands of the church; supplying them sufficient oil to be a light for their mission. Thus John described Christ as having "the voice of many waters" (Rev. 1:15), and was further told that the waters "are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. 17:5) Thus in Christ's voice, we find the voice of the Spirit which is imparted to His believing church; this is the voice of many waters, or "tongues", which He "gave...unto men" to communicate with men

the gospel.

Before we enter into a more full understanding of that gift however, we should understand the purpose of the body of Christ.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BODY

We are told the purpose of the body is to edify each other member, to present each member perfect in the Son of God.

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-13)

The gifts are to bless and uplift each other in love to bring the restoration of the image of God in man. Yet it is also for the purpose of proclaiming the gospel to the whole unbelieving world. “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” (Matt. 24:14)

The body of Christ therefore has a twofold purpose on this earth:

- 1) Accountability to love and nurture those within the church with the Word of God.
- 2) Accountability to speak the truth in love to those without the church with the Word of God.

Thus the believing become stronger in the truth of Christ. And the unbelieving are brought to belief of the truth of Christ.

THE GIFT OF TONGUES

It is evident that not all have the gift of tongues, but that the gift of tongues is a sign that follows the Christian

believers for the sake of proclaiming it to others around the world who speak in different languages. We are going to examine closely the outpouring of the Spirit, when Christ promised the signs for proclaiming the gospel:

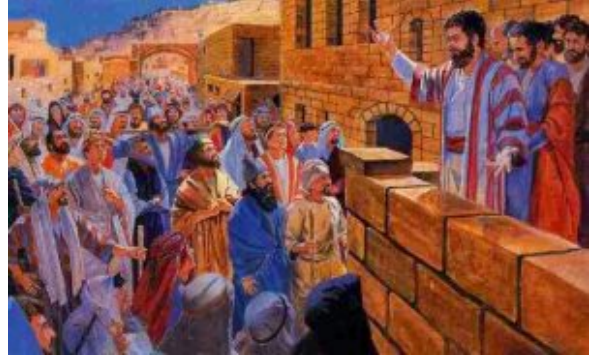


“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.” (Acts

2:4-5)

In Jerusalem, at the time of the three annual feasts, there gathered men from all over the world. This was especially true in this case. Men of Israel had relocated to other lands after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, and as such, learned the native tongues of the people wherever they resided. Thus, during Pentecost, there were dwelling at Jerusalem men “out of every nation under heaven.” These devout men knew nothing of the Messiah and the work He had fulfilled, and spoke other tongues. For this purpose, the outpouring of the Holy Ghost caused the believers in Christ “to speak with other tongues”, and connects this sign with the men of other nations. And more than just connecting the gift of tongues with men of other nations, the inspired record goes further than this.

“Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all



For bringing the gospel to the world..

amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.” (Acts 2:6-11)

There can be no mistake in the matter of what the gift of tongues was: it was other languages. The languages of many “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.”

THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH

The Greeks prided themselves on knowledge, and this was especially the case with Corinthian church. In the beginning of his address to the Corinthians, he said “the Greeks seek after wisdom”, then says “knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.” (1 Cor. 8:1) He speaks regarding the gifts to them that there is no purpose for the Greeks to speak in another tongue to fellow Greeks, and for this cause he says: “Follow after love, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that you may prophesy, because he that speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands him; but in the spirit he speaks mysteries.” (1 Cor. 14:1-2) The man who speaks to other men of his own language in another

language doesn't speak to men because "no man understands him", so he can only speak to God, even if he speaks, as the apostles did, of "the wonderful works of God"- He may "speak mysteries", but it isn't profitable for anyone.

Why would anyone in the Corinthian church speak such things? The Greeks who prized wisdom, knowledge, and were competitive, was not unlikely to show that he may speak in many more tongues than his brother in a typical Greek fashion. Typical of the Greek mindset, they were strongly desiring spiritual gifts, and revealing this in tongue speaking to no profit: "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." (1 Cor. 14:12) However, Paul admonished them to "covet earnestly the best gifts".

The apostle was careful to compare the reality of the gifts, to show "the best gifts" which would serve to edify the church, saying to "desire spiritual gifts but rather that you may prophesy." Seeing as the multitude of unknown tongues was not edifying for the churches, although it was not a gift contrary to the Spirit. "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." (1 Cor. 14:5)

When the Corinthian believers spoke these manifold languages in the congregation, being "zealous for spiritual gifts", Paul said it would not profit the unlearned "except he interpret" the language so the church could understand and receive the mysteries of the revelation spoken by the Spirit of God. He further remarked of his labors to many different lands, saying "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." (1 Cor. 14:18-19)

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY OF TONGUES

Christ foretold the gift of tongues, but he foretold a reality that was not a new one, but an old truth written from the prophets in the Old Testament:

“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.” (1 Cor. 14:21)

The verse Paul refers to, referencing the gift of tongues is the one in Isaiah: “For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.” (Isaiah 28:11-12) “Another tongue” will he speak to the people, giving a proclamation to the weary that they may find rest for their souls. Such is the purpose of the gift of tongues: it is to proclaim the gospel truth spoken of by Christ, inviting all: “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” (Matt. 11:28-29) For this purpose, the gift of tongues was given. “Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serves not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.” (1 Cor. 14:22)

Thus we are given the instruction of the purpose of tongues: it is for the unbeliever, that he may understand the gospel. Yet the purpose of prophecy was to edify the church. Paul then makes the conclusion, “Let all be done for edifying.”

However, there is one more notable thing that should be considered about the gift of tongues in the Old Testament reference. The word in the Hebrew for “tongue” is “lašhoñ” (לשון). If there was any doubt that this gift of tongues was that of a known language amongst men, we needn't go far to

see how this word for tongue is used in the Hebrew in the Old Testament. The same word is used in Genesis 10:5 to speak of the languages which came as a result of the scattering from the Tower of Babel, when God and Christ decreed that the builder's speech should be confounded, thus bringing an eventual division in communication. "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations." (Gen. 10:5)

However, where the curse of rebellion brought division, strife, and confusion of tongues as at Babel, the gospel's gift of tongues is a promise that the gospel will at last, in Christ, unite those who were once divided. "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and tongues, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:14)

THE TONGUES OF ANGELS

Some, in sincere misguiding, believe they speak in "the tongues of angels"; a language which cannot be comprehended at all. Yet the result is little different from the Corinthians speaking unknown languages to their fellow Greeks which they zealously boasted themselves in. It is not a language that can be comprehended which could not edify the church. "Though I speak with the tongues of men, even of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing." (1 Cor. 13:1-2)

There! It is proof that men can speak in an angelic language! Yet wait. The apostle is not saying this, because it is clear that the rest of his testimony was regarding the spiritual gifts which the Corinthians were priding themselves on; but rebuked them saying that "knowledge puffs up, but love

edifies.” The word for “EVEN of angels” is the word in Greek meaning accumulative force. It is meant to embellish the point the apostle was seeking to make to advance the idea that NO LANGUAGE, NO KNOWLEDGE, NO PROPHECY IS ANY GOOD AT ALL WITHOUT LOVE. Love is the thing which edifies the church, and makes noble use of any language we could speak. It is love which moves the angels of heaven to work for our salvation. It is the angels without love that would make the idea of speaking a mystery language to no understanding which cannot edify, hence why Paul said he would rather speak five words someone can understand, than ten thousand words that are not able to be comprehended.

TONGUES IN PAGANISM



The apostles did not speak in angelic tongues, but tongues that could edify unbelievers with the gospel message. However, there were those who spoke in unknown tongues. In ancient pagan temple worship, it was common in the worship practices of the congregation to speak in languages that were thought to be the languages of the gods. Ancient history records it abundantly as occurring amongst non-Israelite, non-Bible believing heathen religions as far back as 1100BC. It was not uncommon for these heathen worshippers, especially their prophets, to speak in unearthly languages, go into trances, have fervent or animalistic behaviors.

The earliest reference may be found in the “Report of Wenamon”, where it speaks of a young Amen worshiper whose possession became something of a sensational matter and attracted historical notoriety. When he became possessed by “a god”, it is said that he began to emit sounds in a strange ecstatic “tongue.”:

“Now, when he sacrificed to his gods, the gods seized one of his noble youths, making him frenzied, so that he said, ‘Bring the god hither!

Bring the messenger of Amen who hath him. Send him and let him go.'"

George A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible*, page 353

Plato, in his account of the dialogue between Socrates and Phaedrus speaks of a madness that is a gift from the heathen gods. "but in reality the greatest of blessings come to us through madness, when it is sent as a gift of the gods. Io in Prometheus Bound states: Oh! Oh! Alas! Once again convulsive pain and frenzy, striking my brain, inflame me. I am stung by the gadfly's barb, unforged by fire. My heart knocks at my ribs in terror; my eyeballs roll wildly round and round. I am carried out of my course by a fierce blast of madness; I've lost all mastery over my tongue, and a stream of turbid words beats recklessly against the billows of dark destruction."

He also spoke about miraculous healing that would take place when the possession took over the worshippers:

"Moreover, when diseases and the greatest troubles have been visited upon certain families through some ancient guilt, madness has entered in and by oracular power has found a way of release for those in need, taking refuge in prayers and the service of the gods, and so, by purifications and sacred rites, he who has this madness is made safe for the present and the after time, and for him who is rightly possessed of madness a release from present ills is found."

"And a third kind of possession and madness comes from the Muses...All these noble results of inspired madness I can mention, and many more. Therefore let us not be afraid on that point, and let no one disturb and frighten us...We, on our part, must prove that such madness is given by the gods for our greatest happiness."

Virgil (70-19BC) in the "Aeneid" speaks of this tongue speaking. He references a Sibylline priestess, when in prayer on the Isle of Delos, telling of her speaking in an frenzied and strange tongue after being united with the god Apollo.

Speaking of the Greek god Apollo, the oracle of Delphi was well known over all of Grecia since 400BC. Speaking of the Oracle of Delphi, Chrysostom made the observation: "This same pythoress is said, being a female, to sit at times upon the tripod of Apollo astride, and thus the evil spirit ascending from beneath and entering the lower part of her body fills the woman with madness. And she with dishevelled hair begins to foam at the mouth, and thus being in a frenzy, to utter the words of her madness."

"Oracles of the great 'lord' at the Shrine of Delphi, as Heraclitus put it, were revelations of the god's will through ecstasy, not through sensible words. So were the Sybil's unintelligible cries. A priest or priestess, seized by sudden trances of the spirit, uttered mystic sayings, which were held to be all the more divine as they were least rational or articulate. Philo in Alexandria had taken over the Greek notion, arguing that such ecstasy, when the mind or unconscious reason was superseded, was the highest reach of the human soul in its quest for God." Moffatt's New Testament Commentary, p. 214



One modern day observation was written of an Eskimo ritual to contact the spirit world. The testimony says: "Suddenly one of the men, Krisuk, went out of his head. Unable to contain himself to the regular rhythm of the service he leapt to his feet crying like a raven and howling like a wolf. In ecstasy he and the girl, Ivaloo, began to yell in a tongue I could not understand... Certainly it was not the usual Eskimo language... and if there is such a thing as speaking in tongues I heard it then."

Yet this is only one of many modern examples. Others may be found amongst Hinduists, Animists, and Islamic Sufists to name a few.

What is this spirit that is speaking through them? We are told in the Scripture that unclean spirits, the spirits of devils, can speak through human vessels:

“And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.” (Luke 4:33-34)

The demonic influence manifested itself in these heathen religions which were “without God” and “having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them.” (Eph. 4:18) Even so, in the last days, we are told of this very experience happening with supernatural manifestations throughout the entire earth:

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” (Revelation 16:13-14)

Notice that the unclean spirits come from the mouth of these three spiritualistic powers; one being called “the false prophet”; which means another spirit takes possession of this prophetic ministry that is of a worldwide scale, and it works miracles to deceive mankind. In the prophecy, we are told that it is out of the mouth, where the tongue resides, there comes an unclean spirit as frogs. And frogs always catch their prey with their tongues. It is further spoken of in Revelation 13, as a lamblike beast that deceives the world because of its miracle-working power, and that it speaks “like a dragon”. The dragon, is identified in Revelation 12 as the Satan and his fallen angels, which are devils and are called that old “serpent”. Thus, the voice of the serpent or dragon is that

same angel which used the serpent's subtlety to deceive Eve, causing her to disobey God and fail the test of faith. That voice is the same who will work in these last days through the lamb-like false prophet to deceive many. Thus it is indeed the tongues of angels speaking through the false prophet system, but it is not the angels of God; but the devil and his angels taking possession of souls.

The counterfeit gift of tongues, which speaks in a language not familiar to man, which is prevalent in Pentecostalism today is not a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit; but rather a new manifestation of the devil's spirit from ancient paganism.

In Conclusion:

- 1) The Gift of tongues is intelligent language
- 2) It was prophesied in the Old Testament
- 3) There was a manifestation of a strange tongue from the heathen before Acts 2.
- 4) The last movements of prophecy declare a false spirit and a false prophet that manifests the counterfeit gift of tongues.
- 5) We are left to conclude that the fastest growing movement in the world, the Pentecostal movement, that holds tongue speaking does not hold its origin in apostolic godliness, but rather from Babylonian confusion and Greek mysticism.
- 6) The movement is nothing less than the spirit of false prophet of Revelation: introducing a counterfeit spirit to the true God.