



Rice Memorial MBC

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### **Gift of Languages**

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition  
or Roget's Thesaurus - **May 24, 2015**

## **Acts 2:1-7, 12, 1 Corinthians 14:13-19**

**Introduction:** We have here an account of the **descent** of the **Holy Ghost** upon the disciples of Christ. The Holy Ghost **came down** at the time of a solemn feast, because there was then a great concourse of people to Jerusalem from all parts of the country, and the proselytes from other countries, which would make it the more public, and the **fame** of it to be spread the sooner and further, which would contribute much to the propagating of the gospel into all nations. Thus now, as before at the Passover, the Jewish feasts served to toll the bell for gospel services and entertainments. (2.) This **feast of Pentecost** was kept in remembrance of the **giving** of the **law** upon mount Sinai, whence the incorporating of the Jewish church was to be dated, which Dr. Lightfoot reckons to be just one thousand four hundred and forty-seven **years** before this.  
*Source: The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible*

**Acts 2:1**, And when the day of **Pentecost** was fully come, they were **ALL** with **one accord** in one place. (Note: Pentecost began the previous evening at sunset.)

**NOTE:** And when the day of Pentecost. The word Pentecost is a Greek word, signifying the **fiftieth** part of a thing; or the fiftieth in order. Among the Jews it was applied to **one** of their **three great feasts** which began on the **fiftieth** day **after** the **Passover**. This feast was reckoned from the sixteenth day of the month ABIB, or April, or the second day of the Passover. The paschal lamb was slain on the fourteenth of the month **at even**, (Lev. 23:5); on the fifteenth of the month was a holy convocation--the proper beginning of the feast; on the sixteenth was the offering of the first-fruits of harvest, and from that day they were to reckon seven weeks, i.e., forty-nine days to the feast called the feast of Pentecost, so that it occurred fifty days after the first day of the feast of the Passover. This feast was also called the feast of weeks, from the circumstance that it followed a succession of weeks, Exodus 34:22; Numbers 28:26; Deuteronomy 16:10. It was also a harvest festival, and was accordingly called the feast of harvest. And it was for this reason that two loaves made of new meal were offered on this occasion as first-fruits, Leviticus 23:17,20 Num. 28:27-31.  
*(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)*

**Acts 2:2-3**, And **suddenly** there came a **SOUND** from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it (the sound) filled the house where they were **sitting**. And there **appeared** unto them **cloven tongues** like as of **fire**, and it sat upon each of them.

**Thought 1.** They all, about 120 people: Acts 1:15, **heard** the sound as of a rushing mighty wind. And they all (about 120) **SAW** the tongues as of fire. Both of these

occurrences are a manifestation of discerning of spirits: 1 Corinthians 12:10. It is one of which are commonly called the nine (9) gifts of the Spirit.

**1 Corinthians 12:7-8, 10**, But the **manifestation** of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit... ..to another **DISCERNING** of spirits...

**Discerning defined 1253, discerning** (to discern, discover [to reveal, to make known; bring to light, to see.])

**Thought 2.** When this supernatural manifestation of God is in operation, people can see, detect or sense whatever spirit our Father desires for them to be aware of in the spiritual realm. That's speaking of ALL spirits, even MAN, who is a spirit that lives in a physical body. The Holy Spirit will reveal the truth about the attitude, motives, or whatever about people. The things seen will show the spirit or spirits as they appear, or there will be a figure or symbol representing them.

And as you know, all of the different manifestations of the Spirit take place as our Father wills, for the good of his people. (1 Cor.12:11) He also controls how they manifest. The people being used do not control them.

**Acts 2:4**, And they were ALL **FILLED** with the Holy Ghost and ...

**Filled defined 4130, to influence** (a flowing forth of spiritual STRENGTH or ENERGY, active **POWER**).

**Thought 1.** It's not readily seen in this verse, but there are **two (2) experiences** with the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, for believers on Jesus Christ. The first experience is the Holy Ghost baptizes (WASHES) us from the filth of the old sin nature and places us into the body of Christ. We are now the children of God because we have received the Spirit of Christ: the Holy Spirit. And we are as saved and as clean as we're going to be in the nature of our spirits! (Acts 10:15)

In addition to this truth, it's the born again experience that gives us the ability to live right: overcoming the temptations of the world by FAITH in God's word as we learn. That's how Jesus did it before he was FILLED by the Spirit, and after.

**1 John 5:4**, For whatsoever is **BORN** of God overcometh the **world**: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (*not being filled*)

**Thought 2.** In Paul's life, we can see the TWO experiences with the Spirit. He was BORN of the Spirit on the Damascus road and FILLED by the Spirit 3 days later.

**1 John 5:1**, Whosoever **believeth** that Jesus is the Christ is **BORN** of God...

**Acts 9:3-6** ...as he **journeyed (WALK)**, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, **Lord (Sir)?** And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. ... And he trembling and astonished said, **Lord (Master)**, what wilt thou have me to do?

**Thought 3.** Saul has just believed on Jesus and therefore born again.

**Acts 9:6-9**, And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, **hearing a voice**, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him

by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was **three days** without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

**Acts 9:17**, And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, **Brother Saul**, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be **FILLED** with the Holy Ghost.

**Acts 8:5-6, 12**, Then **Philip** went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the **miracles** which he did. ...But when they **believed** Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized...

**Thought 4.** They were baptized in water because they believed on Jesus and were now BORN of the spirit and WASHED by the Spirit from sin.

**Acts 8:14-16**, And when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the **word** of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might **RECEIVE** the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was **fallen** (seize [stir about, do wonders]) upon **NONE** of them: only they were baptized in the **name** (**authority**) of the Lord Jesus.)

**Thought 5.** The Spirit had fallen upon NONE of them. No exceptions! In other words, they had only been baptized in water.

**Acts 8:17**, Then laid they their hands on them, and they **RECEIVED** the Holy Ghost.

**Receive/ Received 2983, be amazed** (astonished [daze, stagger]; confounded [to stupefy {STUN} with amazement] with wonder).

**Thought 6.** Sometimes because of reverence and FAITH, a person can be filled without having hands laid on them. It was this way in Acts 2:4, and also in Acts 10:44-46. The people were born again first, and a split second later were filled by the Spirit and spoke in tongues while Peter was still preaching! Another truth is once a person has been filled, it can be, and should be, an ongoing experience in their life. (See Eph. 5:18-19, Acts 4:31)

Next, the purpose for the second experience of being FILLED is to supply the person with Power, miracle working power from God by his Holy Spirit to be WITNESSES and do the WORKS of God like Jesus did after he was filled at about age thirty, Luke 3:22-23.

**Luke 4:17-19**, And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is **UPON** me, because **HE** hath **anointed** me to **preach** the gospel to the poor; he hath **SENT** me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to **SET** at **liberty**....

**Acts 1:8**, But ye shall receive **POWER** (**force, MIRACULOUS power, strength**), after that the Holy Ghost is come **UPON** you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem... in all Judaea... in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the **earth**.

**Acts 2:4-6** ...and began to **speak** with other **TONGUES**, as the Spirit gave them **utterance** (articulation)). And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, **devout** men, out of every nation

under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man **heard THEM speak** in his **OWN language**.

**Tongues defined 1100, glossa pronounced gloce-sah', a language (specially, one naturally unacquired).** (Which is to say this language is supernaturally acquired)

**Thought 1.** When they were filled by the Spirit, they began to speak with other tongues (languages), as the Spirit gave them utterance (articulation). What this means is when he filled them, THEY spoke whatever SOUNDS, SYLLABLES, or WORDS that were easiest to speak that was not their native language. Remember, this is a language that is not naturally acquired (as is a person's native tongue or a language learned by exercising the mind). For the occasions of his choosing, it's supernaturally acquired from God, and is one of the nine gifts.

Another important point is the Holy Ghost did not take them over and they just "Let him have his way." No, THEY did the speaking; he gave the articulation.

Another form of speaking in tongues is "PRAYING" in tongues. And though, it's "supernaturally acquired", WE control when we'll pray in this manner. But, like the "gift" of tongues, the Holy Spirit gives us the articulation. It's our language, called our "prayer language" in which we speak, and even SING to our Father, child to Father, spirit to Spirit, when we choose! (1 Cor. 14, Jude 1:20)

**1 Corinthians 14:2-4** ...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 (secret)**. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an **unknown tongue** **EDIFIETH** himself...

**Edifieth defined 3618, build up, edify** (to instruct and improve the mind in knowledge generally, and particularly in moral and religious knowledge, in FAITH and holiness).

**1 Corinthians 14:15**, What is it then? **I will** PRAY with the spirit, and **I will** PRAY with the understanding also:

**I will** SING with the **spirit**, and **I will** SING with the understanding also.

**Jude 1:20**, But ye, beloved, **BUILDING UP** yourselves on your most holy FAITH, **praying** in the Holy Ghost...

**Building up defined 2026, build** (to increase and strengthen; to settle, or establish, and preserve) **upon**.

**Thought 2.** Without the second experience, no one can sing, or speak in tongues of ANY KIND. Nor can they be used in the "gifts" of interpretation of tongues and miracles. Remember, Jesus' first miracle was turning water to wine, which occurred AFTER he was filled by the Holy Spirit for work.

**1 Corinthians 12:10**... to another divers (added by the translators) **kinds** (**diversity** [variety]) of **tongues**...

**1 Corinthians 13:1**, Though I speak with the **tongues** of MEN and of ANGELS, and have not **charity**, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

**Acts 2:7-13**, And they were all 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. 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.

**Thought 1.** Notice, they are speaking of God's WORKS in the language of the people gathered. They were NOT "PREACHING" to them in their language. The preaching would be done later by Peter in his naturally acquired language. But, this was a "sign" to arrest their attention so when the gospel was preached, they'd listen to it. And since they were **NOT** "preaching", this gift is not for preaching in other languages.

**1 Corinthians 14:10-12**, 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 (foreigner)**, and he that speaketh shall be a **barbarian (foreigner)** unto me. Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the **edifying** of the church.

**NOTE:** But whatever proper signification the words of any **language** may have in themselves, and to those who understand them, they are perfect **gibberish** to men of another language, who understand them not. In this case, speaker and hearers are **barbarians to each other**, they talk and hear only sounds without sense; for this is to be a barbarian. (Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible* [classic.studylight.org/com/mhc](http://classic.studylight.org/com/mhc))

**1 Corinthians 14:13**, Wherefore let him that **speaketh** in an unknown **tongue** **PRAY** that he may interpret.

**Thought 1.** When we remember that in the case of speaking TO God in tongues, we're speaking "mysteries (secrets)." So, it doesn't make sense to ask for interpretation that the church might know what was said, because it's a secret. It's not for them to know. So, we ask that we may "interpret" when something comes FROM God TO the PEOPLE, in tongues. Therefore, it needs to be interpreted in order to edify them. On the other hand, some Christians today believe tongues have "passed away." This is in large part to NOT understanding what Paul said in Chapter 13.

**1 Corinthians 13:8**, Charity never **faileth** (**become inefficient** [USELESS]); but whether there be prophecies, they shall **fail (become of no effect)**; whether there be TONGUES, they shall **CEASE**; whether there be knowledge, it shall **vanish away (to be entirely idle** [not turned to appropriate use].).

**Cease defined 3973**, "pause [temporary stop or REST, 1913 Webster's]".

**Thought 2.** As we see, what he said was "tongues" shall be put on pause in certain occasions. He even said that "knowledge" is idle, at times. But, no matter what the situation, "charity (LOVE) is never USELESS.

**1 Corinthians 14:14**, For if I **pray** in an unknown **tongue**, my **spirit** prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

**Thought 1.** This is where the ability to interpret is useful to the speaker, since there are times where God wants the secrets being spoken from OUR spirit, as we PRAY in the Holy Ghost, be revealed to US, to OUR understanding.

**1 Corinthians 14:15**, What is it then? **I will PRAY** with the **spirit**, and **I will pray** with the understanding also:

**I will SING** with the **SPIRIT**, and **I will SING** with the **understanding** ALSO.

**Thought 1.** Since praying “with the spirit” is to do so in “tongues”, then to SING in the spirit is to SING in “tongues.” And notice too, the way he made this statement. He was making clear that we have the ability to choose HOW we’re going to pray, and do so at OUR choosing.

**1 Corinthians 14:16-17**, Else when thou shalt **ble**ss with the **spirit**, how shall he that occupieth the room of the **unlearned** say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he **understandeth not** what thou sayest?

For thou verily givest thanks **WELL**, but the other is **not EDIFIED**.

**Thought 1.** Here Paul says it’s necessary to know WHEN to pray with the spirit, and when we need to pray with our understanding. It’s not wise to give thanks in tongues.

**1 Corinthians 14:18-19**, 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**.

**Thought 1.** First, the tongues in which Paul is speaking is not what he **LEARNED** as Hebrew and Greek. But, he’s talking about speaking as the Holy Ghost gives the utterance from his spirit. He then makes clear the fact the most important thing is to **FEED** God’s flock so they can **GROW** up and be equipped for the work of the ministry. (See **Ephesians 4:11**)

**1 Corinthians 14:20-22**, Brethren, be not children in **understanding**: howbeit in **malice** be ye children, but in understanding be **MEN (of full age)**. 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 or 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.

**NOTE:** **Wherefore tongues are for a sign** The miraculous gift of tongues was never designed for the benefit of those who have **already believed**, but for the instruction of **unbelievers**, that they might see from such a miracle that this is the *work of God*; and so embrace the Gospel.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

**1 Corinthians 14:23-25**, If therefore the **whole church** be come together into one place, and **ALL** speak with tongues, and there come in **THOSE** that are **unlearned**, or **unbelievers**, will they not say that ye are **mad**? But if **ALL prophesy**, and there come in **ONE** that believeth not, or **ONE** unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is **judged** of **all**: And thus are the **secrets** of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is **IN you** of a truth.

**NOTE:** **And thus are the secrets of his heart** As these, who were the *prophets* or *teachers*, had often the discernment of spirits, they were able in certain cases, and probably very frequently, to tell a man the **secrets** of his own heart (MIND); and, where this was not *directly* the case, God often led his ministers to speak those things that were **suitable** to the **case** before them, though they themselves had no particular design. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

**1 Corinthians 14:26**, How is it then, brethren? when ye **come together**, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let **ALL THINGS** be done unto **edifying**.