

THE GIFT OF INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES -

A SIGN GIFT

TEXT: I COR. 12:10; 14:27,28

EXPLANATION

I. WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN THIS GIFT

- A. The gift of interpretation of tongues was the God-given ability to translate a foreign language by someone who did not know that language.

- B. Notice what was interpreted was a known language and the purpose of this gift was to give understanding to others who did not know the language which was being spoken (I Cor. 14:23-25).

EXERCISE

II. HOW THIS GIFT WAS EXERCISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. This gift was exercised along with the gift of tongues-speaking. It was used to give a translation to others of what was being spoken in another language (I Cor. 14:8,9).

- B. The apostle Paul laid down the rules on how the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues were to be exercised in the churches. One was to speak and another interpret. If no interpreter was present then those with the gift of tongues were to be silent (I Cor. 14:27,28).

- C. Notice the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues became a problem in the carnal Corinthian church. The devil

used those with these gifts to develop spiritual pride which caused divisions and confusion. It must be seen that the Corinthian believers were in spiritual error in the manner in which they were exercising these gifts (I Cor. 14:1,21).

EXTENT

III. HOW THIS GIFT OPERATES AND APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALS IN OUR DAY

- A. The gift of interpretation of tongues does not extend to our day. If it did missionaries with this gift could understand languages in other lands without linguistical training.

- B. It must be seen that those who engage in the practices of tongues-speaking and interpretation in our day do so in Scriptural error. This being the case, participants are being used of the devil either directly through demonic influence or a state of psychological frenzy which is also evidenced in non-christian religions.

ERROR

IV. HOW THIS GIFT CAN BE MISAPPLIED AND MISUSED

- A. Some supposedly exercise this gift in worship services in response to those who speak in tongues. But such interpretation is highly subjective and differs greatly from anyone who interprets a known language.

- B. Manytimes in charismatic churches individuals will be involved in tongues-speaking with no interpreters and little or no order. The Biblical mandate for tongues-speaking and interpretation called for order and no more than three were to speak in a service and these were to do it "by course" or taking turns. If no interpreter was present then no tongues were to be spoken (I Cor. 14:26-28).

- C. In charismatic churches women are heavily involved in tongues-speaking and interpretation. In the New Testament church when the gift of tongues-speaking was exercised women were forbidden to take part in it (I Cor. 14:34,35).
- D. Those who practice tongues-speaking and interpretation in our day refer to it as "the language" of heaven." Notice two things in this regard: First of all the Bible sets forth the need for clarity and simplicity in spiritual things because of the consequences of misunderstanding (Isa. 28:10; I Cor. 2:1; II Cor. 3:12; 11:3). Secondly the Bible states that Satan is the author of confusion and deceit (Mt. 13:24-30; I Cor. 14:33; James 3:15,16).
- E. From the foregoing study it should be clear to anyone with spiritual discernment that the present-day tongues movement is not of God because of its divisive and destructive nature.