

APPENDIX 3. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S GIFTS FOR CONQUERING CANAAN.

INTRODUCTION. It is a sad fact that movements and denominations which have been bulwarks for the Gospel have often become bulwarks against the Spirit of God and His gifts. It is tragedy to see churches, that are praying for revival, and claim to be founded on the New Testament, so resolutely opposed to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that they forbid the miraculous things that happened in the New Testament from taking place in their churches. They fulfil the words of Jesus in Luke.11v52., "Woe to you, lawyers (experts in the Mosaic Law)! For you have taken away the key to knowledge; you did not go in yourselves, and you hindered and prevented those who were entering." AMP. The traditions of men have replaced, and made void, the Word of God in our day, just as surely as they did in our Lord's time. Mk.7v9-13. Col.2v8. 1Pet.1v18. Religious leaders still oppose the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit just as they did in our Lord's ministry.

Those who insist that God has withdrawn spiritual gifts, must, if they are to be consistent, insist that God has removed them all. However, it is a fact that Christians who say that spiritual gifts have been withdrawn, do in fact often pray for God to manifest His gifts. They pray for people to be physically healed; this is a gift of healing. They pray for illumination upon a problem, or guidance from God; these are in the province of words of wisdom and knowledge. They pray for preachers to be anointed by God, and for people to be blessed, and for Satan's hold upon people to be broken; all these are in the sphere of operation of the gift of faith. They pray for a miraculous supply of material needs; this is the province of workings of miracles. They pray for a revelation of God to the soul; this is a discerning of spirits. They pray for the Holy Spirit to inspire them in worship and prayer; this is the function of the gift of tongues and prophetic prayer. Christians who say that spiritual gifts have been withdrawn, do in fact often pray that God will manifest His spiritual gifts. The rejection of spiritual gifts, is really a rejection of God's influence in His Church. God has given these gifts, let us accept them, and not charge God with folly, or frustrate His loving purposes through His gifts. "The powers of the age to come," are still available today, for God has promised to confirm His truth by signs, wonders and miracles until the great and notable day of our Lord's second coming. Acts.2v17-21,38,39. Heb.6v5. 13v8.

a. The Holy Spirit was the source of our Lord's powerful, tender, and caring ministry.

Matthew states that our Lord fulfilled the prophecy concerning the Messiah found in Is.42v1-4., His ministry had the phenomenal mixture of total guileless love, irresistible power and infinite patience, which was manifested in an unassuming and unobtrusive loving ministry that restored broken lives. We read in Mt.12v18-21. "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgement to the Gentiles. v19. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. v20. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgement unto victory. v21. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

The fullness of the power, concern, and love of the Holy Spirit were perfectly manifested in the public ministry of Jesus. Jesus quoted from Is.61v1,2. and Is.58v6., when He preached in the Synagogue at Nazareth; we read in Luke.4v16-21. "So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. v17. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: v18. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; v19. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." v20. Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. v21. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (NKJ)

Both John Baptist and Jesus prophetically proclaimed that the ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus brought in the new age of the Holy Spirit's ministry. Mt.3v11,12. Mk.1v8. Lk.3v16,17. Jn.1v32,33. The Holy Spirit was the gift to the Church of both the Father and the ascended Christ. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came to perform the new ministries connected with the new age of grace. Jews and Gentiles were admitted to this new experience of the Spirit of God. Acts.10. , even the despised racially mongrel Samaritans were granted the gift of the Holy Spirit, and became members of the body of Christ. Acts.8. Every believer is given the privilege of being sealed, permanently indwelt, and continuously filled with the Holy Spirit. This heritage has been purchased with the precious blood of Christ.

b. The Holy Spirit is the agent of the regeneration and the rebirth of our spirits.

The Spirit of God strove with fallen mankind, and He still convicts people of sin, righteousness and judgement to come. Gen.6v3. John.16v7-11. The word for "convict," in Jn.16v8, is "elengxei," the future active of "elegcho", confuting and convicting by proof, it describes enlightenment and conquest of the mind by truth, and a moral process. This word has already been used in Jn.3v29. and 8v46.. The Holy Spirit makes His appeal on the grounds of truth. The Holy Spirit brings us to the new birth, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" Jn.3v6. Our spirits which were dead through our sin, were quickened by the Holy Spirit. Eph.2v1-3. Titus.3v3-5. James.1v13,14. Nicodemus and Jesus. John.3v3-7. Paul said that it is the Holy Spirit who enables us to confess that Jesus is Lord, and gives us the inner witness to our salvation. 1Cor.12v3. Paul states in Rom.8v16,17., "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, v17 and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him,

that we may also be glorified together. NKJV.

God promises in Ezek.36v25-27., that He would put a new heart in His people at the setting up of the kingdom, we read, "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes;" In Hebrews.8v10-13., we read that the covenant promised in Jer.31v31-34., is promised to the Church in this age. Paul tells us in 2Cor.3v8-18., that we are now in the age of "the ministration of the Spirit." We are indeed very privileged. Now that we are regenerated children of God the Holy Spirit comes to manifest Himself in our lives and churches.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES GIVE US PRACTICAL AID IN OUR DAILY LIVING.

a. In our home and work relationships and the practical problems of life.

In our home and garage business we had many instances of this. **Jesus has been here, and done this, He was in charge of the family business, when Joseph died..**

In Col.3v17., Paul directs, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, constantly giving thanks through Him to God the Father." We live most of our lives outside of our church fellowships, in work and home situations; this is why Paul, lays such a strong emphasis on doing everything in the name of Jesus. Paul makes it clear that true spirituality is manifested in "agape" love between the family members, and the exclusion of bitter recriminations. Children are to obey their parents, and fathers are not to expect too much from their children, or dishearten them by being severe in their discipline, but rather work by encouragement.

In Col.3v23-25., Paul's instruction to slaves, applies to us all, "Whatever may be your task, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, and not for men, v24. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. v25. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and that without partiality. In Col.4v1., Paul's warns the Christian masters of slaves, that the Lord watches our work practices, this also applies to those in management positions today, "Masters, on your part be rendering to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven."

b. The Holy Spirit comes to give us joy and liberty in our daily lives., and all the other fruit of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has come to impart His fruit of character into our daily living, He comes to replace the soul-destroying lusts, conflicts and enmities that are the result of walking in the flesh, with the fruit and harvest that grows in us as we yield to His presence and guidance, they are, "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control." Gal.5v19-22. The Holy Spirit is the source of our liberty and joy, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2Cor.3v17. And as we continue to "behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord," we are, "transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2Cor.3v18.

c. The Holy Spirit comes to give us His continuous presence and benediction to our lives.

In 2Cor.13v14., Paul blesses the Corinthians with the grace, love, and communion of the Godhead in a Trinitarian benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." The Holy Spirit comes to cause us to abound in hope with power, In Rom.15v13., Paul blesses the Romans, " "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the means by which we walk and live in God, and the pledge or guarantee by which we are sealed for the day of salvation. Rom.8v1-16. 2Cor.1v21,22. The Holy Spirit also comes to reveal to us the deep things of God, and the mystery (hidden glories and secrets) about Christ Jesus. 1Cor.1v10-12. Eph.3v3-5.

The Holy Spirit is the source of inward purity in our daily living. David felt an intense sense of guilt and sin, so he prayed for forgiveness and pleaded, "Take not thy holy Spirit from me," he knew the Holy Spirit gave him the chance of transformation, renewal and walking with God. He is called "good," Neh.9v20. Ps.143v10. Isa.63v10. He is "holy," Is.6v3. "And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" NKJV The Hebrew states it more emphatically, "the fullness of this whole earth is His glory." Ps.24v1. 72v19.

God gives us the Holy Spirit, so that even rebels can come under His transforming influence, and by being empowered, can be influenced and changed. Ps.68v18. with Eph.4v7,8. The Holy Spirit makes the ugly and nasty, beautiful. He recreates our personalities, and imparts His character to us, the fruit of the Spirit.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SOURCE OF EFFECTIVE MINISTRY.

a. The Holy Spirit is the revealer of the Father and Jesus. John.14v26.15v26.16v13,14. Eph.1v12-18. 3v14-21. The Holy Spirit brings the deepest experiences of the Father and Jesus, this is the only real foundation for successful ministry.

b The Holy Spirit is the overseer of the ministry gifts. 1Cor.12v28. Rom.12. Eph.4v8-11.

c. The Holy Spirit brings unity to the body of Christ, and is the source of body ministry. Eph.4v

d. The Holy Spirit is the Source of transforming and satisfying worship. 2Cor.3v18. Eph.5v18-20.Col.3v16.

We read in Eph.5v18-20., that when we are filled with the Spirit we will have remarkable and inspired times of worship.

e. The Holy Spirit is the Source of power in prayer and intercession. Rom.8v26.

f. The Holy Spirit is the Source of successful evangelism.

Preaching with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.

We read in 1Pet.1v12., "To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things which angels desire to look into." The Holy Spirit gives His supernatural abilities to us in His gifts.

We read in Rom.15v18-21., that Paul compelled the Gentiles to believe through mighty signs, wonders and miracles.

The guidance of the Holy Spirit in Acts.

The Holy Spirit guides Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, and then "catches away" Philip. Acts.8v29,39. He guides Peter at Joppa through a vision to go to the Gentile soldier Cornelius at Caesarea. Acts.10v1-48. 11v12. The Spirit commands the church at Antioch to separate Saul and Barnabus for the work to which they had been previously called to by God. Acts.13v1-4. He confirms the wisdom of the Church in dealing with the problem of Gentile Christians to the Law. Acts.15v28. He forbids the apostle to go to Bithynia and Mysia. Acts.16v6,7. By the Spirit Agabus warns Paul of the consequences of disobeying the Holy Spirit's instruction not to go to Jerusalem. Acts.21v4,10,11. It was the Holy Spirit who gave the elders of Ephesus their position as pastors and overseers in the Church. Acts.20v28-32.

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

INTRODUCTION.

It fills us with joy to hear that tens of thousands of God's children from all denominations are receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and are manifesting God's spiritual gifts exactly as the disciples did in the New Testament. God is pouring out His Spirit upon all mankind, just as He promised to do before the great, glorious, awesome and notable day of our Lord's second coming. Joel.2v11,28-32. Acts.2v16-21. The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to prepare for the great day of His coming; for they play a major part in the comfort and edification in love of the Church, as well as being the Divine means of confirming the truth of the Gospel, and were the cutting edge of New Testament evangelism. 1Cor.14v1-5,39,40. Rom.15v18-21. Heb.2v4. Christian leaders, who teach that God has withdrawn His spiritual gifts, and oppose and forbid them in their churches, are doing incalculable harm to their flocks. They are denying Christians the essential spiritual equipment, not only for spiritual growth and witness, but also for survival in the traumatic and evil events that precede our Lord's return. Jesus pronounced a stern "woe" upon teachers who take away "the key of knowledge," and hinder people from going through the gateway of an experience of God and His gifts. Luke.11v52. Severe judgement follows this grave sin. James.3v1.

It is an undeniable fact of Scripture, that the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the operation of His spiritual gifts was the norm for Christians in the early Church. Those who resist this New Testament pattern, resist God. See Acts.7v51-53. Those who stubbornly rebel against the gifts of the Holy Spirit, should remember that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry." 1Sam.15v23. These modern critics would have been very unhappy, and quite out of place, in the early Church.

In spite of the massive Scriptural evidence for the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit, there is a very determined opposition to them in some Christian circles. Indeed, some view Christians who manifest the Holy Spirit's gifts in the same light as the heretical cults and other false religions, and look upon them with suspicion and hostility, and even denounce them as "not of God." However, this charge will not bear examination, for true Pentecostal Christians emphasise every doctrine the Scriptures hold as "fundamental" and "precious." We believe in the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures, and their teaching on the virgin birth, true deity, compassionate humanity, sinless life, atoning death, victorious resurrection, high priestly ministry, and glorious return and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. True Pentecostals also practice godly caring love, consecrated sacrificial living, and diligent service for God.

The critics, who say that the gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased with the apostles, are being wilfully blind to the clear facts of Scripture and Church History. To justify their unbelief in the possibility of a present day experience of the baptism and gifts of the Spirit, some "Christian" writers have written material that is quite unworthy of true Christian scholarship and love, and have compiled records of the failures of Pentecostal Christians in order to justify their unbelieving position. Exposition that depends for its justification on character assassination is manifestly, "Not of God," and will result in severe condemnation on judgement day.

James.3v1. 1Cor.3v10-14. In 1Cor.13v5., Paul condemns this carping criticism, and loveless documenting of people's sins, he writes "love does not compile records of evil, ("logizomai," to take an inventory)." Christians who are filled with God's love do not compile a catalogue of people's sins, to censure fallen Christians. True "agape" love "suffers long and is kind," and tries in a spirit of meekness, to help, heal, and restore fallen Christians; not seek out, gloat over, and magnify their sins and failures. "Love bears all things," ("panta stegei"), it protects and covers; and exercises all faith ("panta pisteuei"), and all hope ("panta elpizei") for their spiritual recovery. When all efforts fail, "love endures all things" ("panta hupomenei"). This is the triumph of God's forgiving love towards us. Writers who descend to gutter press standards of journalism, with the excuse that they are exposing false prophets, set the standards for their own judgement. Mt.7v1,2., "Do not judge lest you be judged. v2. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you." James.2v13. "For judgement is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgement." Mt.5v7. 6v15. 18v28-35.

What Christian group has no spiritual failures? Even the apostolic band could be looked upon as "not of God" by this carping and loveless method of examination. Christ was betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter and forsaken by all, and the Bible tells us of many good men who have failed God. Some of the Christians at Corinth were Pentecostal failures; but though their lives were deplorable, Paul recognises them as God's children, and their spiritual gifts as genuine. 1Cor.1v2,7. 3v1-3. Are we to ignore the great grace and mercy of God to His dear children? Are we to judge the faithful by the failures of the faithless? What kind of justice is that? I do not judge the anti-Pentecostal Christians by their spiritual wrecks. Indeed, the Bible tells me to sorrow over the fall of a brother and commands me to try to help and restore him. Gal.6v1. Mt.5v44-48. Let the tree be judged by its good fruit, not by the fruit that has gone bad. Jesus warns us of the serious consequences of this kind of carping criticism. Mt.5v19,22,44-48. 7v1-5. Is not resistance to the Holy Spirit's gifts, a beam in the eye? Resisting the Spirit is a sin of religious leaders, the ordinary people heard Jesus gladly. Mk.12v37. Acts.2v41. 7v51-53.

Critics who say that the Holy Spirit's gifts are, "Of the Devil," have gone far beyond the sin of carping criticism. Jesus warns that it is the worst kind of blasphemy to ascribe the works of God to Satan. Mk.3v22-30. Lk.19v41-44. Acts.7v51-53. We, like Jesus, ask, "Can Satan be divided against himself? Can a person who is born of the Holy Spirit, and washed in the precious blood of Christ, be possessed by Satan?" We emphatically answer, "**Never! Never!**" Jesus promised that his was impossible. Lk.11v9-13. 1Jn.5v18. An apostate Christian, who treads under foot our Lord Jesus, and counts the blood of the covenant whereby he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and insults the Holy Spirit, may become demon possessed, but not the Christian who loves and follows their Lord. Jn.10v25-30. Heb.10v26-31.

True Pentecostal Christians do not over-emphasise the gift of tongues and spiritual gifts, we just give them the place that God's Word tells us to. It is the critics, who say, and quite wrongly, that this is our only theme, we give the Lord Jesus pre-eminence in all things. Col.1v18. It is the attacks of the critics that drive us to defend the truths that are so precious to us. I pray that these studies will be a blessing to all those who read them, and that through them many Christians will come to experience their heritage, the power and love of the Holy Spirit operating through His spiritual gifts.

THE NINE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. 1Cor.12v7-10.

In considering these "Nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit," 1Cor.12v7-10., we in no way forget or neglect the vital "Nine Fruit of the Holy Spirit." Gal.5v22-24. We recognise the correct place given to both fruit and gifts in the Scripture. Love, and the other fruit of the Spirit, have need of God's power to fulfil His beautiful desires; and we need the fruit of the Spirit to correctly use His gifts. The Holy Spirit comes to give us both fruits and gifts, they are both part of His full ministry to us and through us, and each perfectly complements the other. The life and ministry of Jesus show the perfect manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Those who love the Lord Jesus and desire to follow Him, will desire both the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Jn.10v27. Jesus is the Head of the Church, and we should accept the spiritual gifts that He gives to His Church. The nine spiritual gifts are the combined and co-ordinated abilities and acts of God the Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in the Church. Their manifestations can be divided up in the following three ways.

THE THREE MAIN DIVISIONS OF THE NINE SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

A. The Gifts of Revelation and Information. Manifesting God's omniscience.

The Trinity give us their guidance, wisdom and knowledge through the gifts of revelation.

1. The gift of a word of wisdom. 2. The gift of a word of knowledge. 3. The gift of discernings of spirits.

B. The Gifts of Action and Power. Manifesting God's omnipotence.

The Trinity give us power to work miracles through the power gifts.

4. The gift of faith. 5. The gift of workings of miracles. 6. The gift of gifts of healings.

C. The Gifts of Inspiration and Encouragement. Manifesting God's omnipresent love.

The Trinity encourage us through devotional gifts that inspire, edify and comfort.

7. The gift of prophecy. 8. The gift of various kinds of tongues. 9. The gift of interpretation of tongues.

The apostle Paul divides the manifestations of the Holy Spirit into nine separate divisions, nine gifts that can operate quite separately from each other. These nine gifts are really the various aspects of the love, power, wisdom and knowledge of God imparted to us by the Holy Spirit, as we need them. They are the interventions of God in our lives and ministries. Sometimes we may need only one gift, but at other times we may need several gifts to meet our needs, and we can receive them in one outpouring of the love and power, and wisdom and knowledge of God. e.g. Acts.9v10-19. 12v5-11. The gifts of the Holy Spirit reveal the great and loving heart of God to the Church and the world, and manifest and bring the beauty, love and healing power of God's kingdom to those in need. Lk.10v9. Jn.14v12. Acts.10v8.

Paul states in 1Cor.12v4-31., that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are intended to operate in the Church through its leading ministries and various members; as the various parts of the human body operate together in perfect co-operation and co-ordination. When Christians work together in love, and the Holy Spirit's gifts operate in perfect co-operation and co-ordination through the various ministries and members of the body of Christ, as they did in the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem; then God can perform all the beautiful and wonderful things that He desires to do; and His kingdom will be greatly extended.

A. THE GIFTS OF REVELATION AND INFORMATION.

1. THE GIFT OF A WORD OF WISDOM. "Logos sophias."

Some have tried to give a human explanation of a word of wisdom. However, a word of wisdom is not natural wisdom sanctified to the service of God; or the ability to rightly interpret or preach the Scriptures. Nor is it a good administrative ability, or the ability to guide and counsel people wisely with mature Christian guidance. Usually the guidance for everyday affairs needs common sense and Christian wisdom. Ps.32v8-10. However, if we need a word of God's wisdom, He can break into our lives and routines, as He has done so often with His children in the past, and give His divine direction and guidance. A word of wisdom is a fragment of God's divine wisdom imparted to us; it is a supernatural revelation given by the Holy Spirit of the mind, will, plans and purposes of God, for the following purposes.

1. To reveal the eternal purposes, sovereign counsels, and oracles of God.

Through this gift God has revealed vital spiritual truths and general commands and principles for holy living, as well as His eternal purposes and sovereign counsels. This divine truth has been received as "the oracles of God," and as "God-breathed, Holy Scripture," and Jesus said that they could not be broken. Jn.10v35. Acts.7v38. Rom.3v2. Heb.5v12. 2Tim.3v14-17.

Some of God's secret purposes, or "mysteries," as they are called, have been kept hidden from the foundation of the world, but now God's wonderful "plan of the ages," has been revealed to His children. Eph.1v21. 2v7. 3v10,11. Mt.13v11,17-35. Lk.10v21-24. Rom.16v25,26. Col.1v26. 1Cor.15v51-53. Though the revelation of new truth ceased after the start of this age, God can still reveal His plans and purposes for individuals, communities, churches and nations, through the word of wisdom.

2. To warn and direct God's people in difficult and disastrous times.

In time of divine judgement, as in, Noah and flood. Gen.6v18-22. Abraham and Sodom. Gen.18v17-33. 19v12,13. Israel's captivity. 2Chron.36v15-21. Ezek.9v1-11. Is.10v5-27.

In natural catastrophe or national disaster. Pharaoh's dreams. Gen.41v1-44. The great woman of Shunem was preserved in famine. 2King.4v8-17. 8v1-8. Agabus warns of famine. Acts.11v27-30. Paul warns of a great storm. Acts.27v9-25,30-34,44.

3. To give divine direction and deliverance in time of persecution and danger.

David was protected from Saul. 1Sam.25v5,6. The three kings fighting Moab. 2Kings3v4-27. The wise men, Joseph, Mary were warned of Herod's intentions. Mt.2v12,13,19,20. Our Lord Jesus delayed His visit to Jerusalem to escape arrest. John.7v1-10,44-53. Paul was warned to flee from Jerusalem. Acts.22v17-21. Jeremiah's guidance from God was rejected; the result was death for all. Jer.42 and 43.

4. To give divine defence in trial or persecution for Christ's sake.

In persecution, we must not premeditate, but trust God to give His divine wisdom. Lk.12v11,12. and 21v12-15. Sometimes God will inspire us to answer with Scripture truth, as our Lord Jesus did in Mt.22v23-33,41-46.; and Stephen did in Acts.6v10. and 7v1-60.; and Paul did in Acts.24v24-27... See Col.4v6. 1Pet.3v13-18. God may inspire us to give our testimony, just as Paul did in Acts.22v1-24. and 26v1-32., or inspire us to take advantage of a division among our persecutors. Acts.23v6-10. Christ said we must not rely on clever answers, but rather on divine illumination, as He did when His foes asked Him the source of His authority in Mt.21v23-27., and when they tried to trap Him over the lawfulness of offering tribute to Caesar in Mt.22v15-22... The divine wisdom and authority imparted to Peter and John gave them a boldness and assurance that amazed the Sanhedrin, they could only threaten them, they could not answer them. Acts.4v8-22. 5v17-42. The writer has had the experience of saying things that were not in his mind and outside of his knowledge. This divine defence gives us a tremendous assurance in facing the unknown future; we know that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. God can deliver us, but if He does not, He is still with us, and if our foes kill us, they only send us home to heaven, to our Father, and our Saviour. In Phil.1v21-24., Paul states that death for a

Christian is gain, and that life with Jesus in heaven is far, far, far better than life here.

5. To give divine direction in the work of God.

It can reveal and confirm a call from God to work for Him. Moses. Ex.3v1-13. Gideon. Judges.7v1-11. Isaiah. Is.6v8. Jeremiah. Jer.1v1-9. Paul. Acts.9v10-17. 13v1,2. It can reveal God's strategic plans. Elijah. 1Kings.17v1. 18v46. Joshua. Jos.5v13 to 6v5. Philip. Acts.8v26-29. Peter. Acts.10v1-48. Paul. Acts.13v2. 16v6-10. 3,000 missionaries. Acts.2v5,41. Acts.4v4. Christ's ministry was directed by revelation. Jn.5v19,20. It can reveal God-appointed leaders. Saul. 1Sam.9v16. David. 1Sam.16v6-13. The apostles. Lk.6v12-19. Paul. Acts.9v15,16. It can reveal or confirm the solution to Church problems, Acts.15v13-29.; and show the necessity of divine judgement on sin in the Church, or the correction of wrong attitudes so that God's work can prosper. Acts.5v1-11. 10v9-48. Rev.1 and 2. It can reveal blessings to come. Abraham. Gen.12v1-7. 17v1-8. Jacob. Gen.25v23. 28v15. Acts.2v16-21. with Joel.2v28-32. It can comfort and reassure troubled saints. Ex.33v12-17. Josh.1v1-9. Jer.1v4-10. Acts.23v11. 27v22-24. Rev.1v9-18. And give directions to meet our material needs. God loves to guide us in home, work and business life. 1Kings.17v2-16. 2Kings.4v1-7. Lk.5v1-11. Mt.17v24-27.

SOME STRONG WORDS OF WARNING, AND SPECIAL POINTS TO WATCH.

1. Directive revelations should be carefully examined, and often rejected.

Paul says we must test all prophecies in the fire, and reject the false. 1Thes.5v20,21. Don't accept revelations that claim to add to New Testament truth; we already have the foundation of Christian doctrine for this age. Eph.2v20. 3v5. Rev.22v19. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15.

a. Do not let others direct you by supposed prophetic revelation.

This warning is absolutely necessary; for arrogant and pretentious false prophets, have given false revelations that have harmed, and even ruined, the lives of many people, and directed them out of God's will. It is true that Old Testament prophets enquired of God for people, and directed them; however, under the New Covenant this aspect of prophetic ministry has changed, we can all be personally led by the Holy Spirit, and are personally responsible to seek guidance for ourselves. We read in Rom.8v14., that New Testament Sons of God are personally led by the Spirit of God; and Heb.8v8-13.; states that under the New Covenant, "they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest." See Heb.10v19-22.

b. God-given guidance through others will confirm, not direct.

We should **NEVER** submit to guidance from others about which God has not already given us definite and well-confirmed guidance personally. Jn.14v16-26. 16v7-15. 21v20-22. Heb.4v12-16. Beware of strong personalities who would interpret revelation in the light of their opinion, and counsel you into their decisions. A word of wisdom can show us personally how to serve God, but this gift is not given to us to direct another person's walk with God, as Peter found out, when Christ corrected him for trying to get guidance for John. Jn.21v20-22. Confirmation of guidance can occur through others; in Acts.13v2. a word of wisdom confirmed what God had already told Paul and Barnabus, they received specific guidance direct from God, and others confirmed it in a general way. Take time to consider prophecies, and **NEVER** make instant decisions on them. Put them in the fire and thoroughly test them; note well 1Thes.5v20,21., where the verb "dokimazo," means, "to approve after testing," and can be used of testing metals in the fire. In the Septuagint of Prov.27v21., "dokimion," is used to speak of a crucible or furnace for smelting; and in 1Pet.1v7. of a process similar to that of metal refining, which produces in our characters something more precious than precious metals. True prophecies will stand a fiery test.

c. Warnings in emergencies through well-proven ministries should be heeded.

God can use trustworthy prophets, like Agabus, or spiritual Christians, like those at Tyre, to give warnings of danger by words of wisdom. Acts.20v22,23. 21v4,10-14. God gave Paul the same warnings through many Christians, in locations separated by hundreds of miles, so there was no possibility of contact or collusion between them. Through these Christians God gave Paul repeated strong warnings not to go to Jerusalem, which unfortunately he ignored; and so his ministry was permanently hindered, and the Church was badly damaged by the Judaizers as a result. The prophet Agabus warned of a famine in Acts.11v27-30.; this occurred about A.D. 44 to 48, during which many people died of starvation in Judea; the church had about three years warning of the famine and prepared accordingly.

2. Do not expect even genuine words of wisdom to always happen immediately.

a. Don't forget the time factor in prediction.

Remember the experience of the prophets in 1Pet.1v10-12... You may think a prediction or promise from God may happen quickly, when it may take years to come to pass, and be fulfilled, and this can be a great trial to our faith. Satan tries to take advantage of the delay between a revelation and its fulfilment; He even cast doubt on our Lord's future ministry, and taunted Him to prove His ministry by doing the miraculous. Lk.4v1-13. N.B. v3,9,10. Eph.6v10-20. Heb.6v12. 10v32-39. Even great prophets have been tried by delays in the understanding and fulfilment of prophecies that they have given. Ps.105.v17-19. Dan.7v15,16,28.

8v15,16,26,27.

b. Do not let circumstances overwhelm you, hold fast in faith.

Sometimes there are great discrepancies between circumstances as they appear and God's word of wisdom; hold on in faith. Lk.4v1-13. Eph.6v10-20. Heb.6v12. 10v32-39. Remember how the Word of the Lord tried Joseph's faith in God, and love for God, until His promises to Joseph came to pass over 20 years later. Ps.105v17-22. N.B. v19.

c. Don't try to force prophecies to come to pass, wait for God to fulfil His Word.

Don't try to bring a word of wisdom to pass unless God tells you to do so; wait until God fulfils His promises and purposes. Ps.37v7-9,34. 40v1-4. 42v1-11. 62v1-8.

3. Do not forget that God's purposes can be altered by repentance or rebellion.

A prophecy of judgement may not come to pass because people repent and put things right with God or man, or both. Jonah.3v9,10. Likewise a person may not die who God has said will die, like Hezekiah; because of a new consecration and prevailing prayer by themselves, or others. Is.38v1-22. Promised blessing may be withheld by God because of sin and sloth; and repentance and a new consecration can change circumstances, or stop God's judgement. Ps.95v8-11. Numb.14v35,35. Ezek.18v20-32. 2Cor.6v16 to 7v1.

4. Do not forget that abiding in Christ is the key to obtaining prophetic revelation.

Abiding in Jesus is the key to a profitable manifestation of the revelation and predictive prophetic gifts of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes to reveal things to come, He comes to glorify Jesus. Jn.16v12-14. God never intended us to divorce the manifestation of spiritual gifts from abiding in Christ, obeying God's Word, and prayerful communion with God, and this applies particularly to the word of wisdom. We have to walk close with God to have His important ways, will, and purposes revealed to you before they happen. Jn.15v1-17. N.B. v7,12,17. Acts.4v33. "God made His ways known unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." Ps.103v7.

2. THE GIFT OF A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE. "Logos gnoseos."

A word of knowledge is totally miraculous. It is a small part of God's awesome omniscience. It is not any kind of natural ability or knowledge, or even a good knowledge of the Scriptures. It is a fact that is supernaturally given by God, of which the recipient has no previous knowledge, or it will confirm as a fact something that we have been told, felt, or feared, as when David asked God if the men of Keilah would deliver him up to Saul, God told David that they would. 1Sam.23v1-12. This gift covers all areas of knowledge except that covered by the word of wisdom and discerning of spirits. It can tell us of events and things in the past, present and future.

A word of knowledge can warn of dangers ahead. 2Kings.6v8-12. Mt.2v12,13. Acts.21v10-12. Failure to heed these warnings brings great trouble and defeat. Mt.16v21-24. 17v22,23. 20v17-19. with 26v55,56. Mk.16v9-14. Jn.13v36-38. 18v25-27. Lk.22v31-34,54-62. Jn.21v18,19. with 1Pet.1v13,14. and Acts.12v5-7,13-17. 2Kings.4v27. God can hide future trials from us if He thinks it best.

This gift can reveal a person's character and thoughts and intentions towards us when necessary, and warn us of deceitful people. 1Sam.16v6,7. 1Kings.14v5,6. Jn.6v70,71. Lk.7v36-40. 14v1-6. 5v22. It can expose the sinners heart and bring them to repentance, 2Sam.12v1-9. Jn.4v16-19,29. 1Cor.14v24,25., or show the reason for divine judgement. 2Kings.5v20-27. Josh.7v1-26. N.B. v5,13,25. Acts.5v1-11. Rev.3v20-23. 1Chron.18v1-34. This gift can also reveal beautiful and trustworthy persons, Jn.1v37,40-42,46-51. Lk.6v12-16. Acts.9v17-25.; or seeking, or wounded hearts, and so meet their needs. Acts.9v10-19. 10v1-48. Jn.4v16-19,29. Is.61v1-3. Lk.4v18,19.

Words of knowledge can greatly encourage people and stimulate faith and action. 1Kings.19v14-18. Mt.28v6. Acts.18v6-11. 1Kings.13v2. 2Kings.21v25. Is.45v1-4. Jn.1v48,49. Many Christians have had prayer burdens laid on their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and have later found that those who they were praying for were in great need. Words of knowledge can reveal many different kinds of needs for prayer. Col.2v5. Mk.14v27-31,37,38,50. Rev.2 and 3., and how material needs in God's work and our daily lives can be met. Mk.14v12-16. 11v1-7. with Zech.9v9. Mt.17v24,25. 1Sam.10v1-8. 30v1-8,18,19. In the Scriptures words of knowledge were often manifested in conjunction with words of wisdom and the discerning of spirits. Words of knowledge were an important part of the armoury of prophets, and confirmed their message, and they still have an important place as a sign and wonder. Dan.2v21-26. Jn.4v28-42.

3. THE GIFT OF DISCERNINGS OF SPIRITS. "Diakriseis pneumaton."

This is the seventh in the list in 1Cor.12v8-10... It is not a critical spirit, Mt.7v1.; or Christian discernment. Mt.7v5-23. 10v16. 1Thes.5v21. 1Jn.2v26,27.. It is certainly not evil occult manifestations as in Spiritualism, witchcraft, black magic, etc.; which the Bible condemns. Lev.19v31. 20v6. 2Kings.21v2,6. Exod.22v18. with 1Sam.28v6,7. and 1Chron.10v13,14. Is.8v19,20. 19v3. 47v13. Mal.3v5. Acts.13v1-11. 16v16-18. 19v19. 1Cor.10v20,21. Gal.5v19-21. 1Jn.4v1-5. Rev.21v8. 22v15.

The gift of discernings of spirits does not take the place of Scriptural tests of character and inspiration; Christians are to test people by the fruit of their lives, their love for people and God, their doctrine, particularly

about Christ, and by their love of prayer and God's Word. Mt.7v15-23. 1Cor.12v3. Is.8v19,20. 1Jn.4v1-5. Jn.13v34,35. Ps.24v6. 1v1-6. Lk.24v53.

The gift of discernings of spirits is the supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to temporarily see into the spirit world. It can reveal a fragment, or a wide range of activity in the spirit world, either in the past, present, or future; it reveals the activities of either good or evil spirits. It is a plural gift, "diakriseis," "discernings." The gift of discerning of spirits can safeguard the spiritual life of a Christian or a church, for it can reveal Satan's attacks upon Christians and churches, by oppression, infiltration, seduction, and persecution, and so protect them from evil. Acts8v9-23. 5v3,4. 1Cor.1v10-17. 3v1-7. 2Cor.11v3,4,13-15. Eph.6v11. 1Tim.4v1-7. 2Pet.2v1-4. Jn.8v44. with Mk.3v22-30. 2Cor.10v4,5. Sometimes we need to know the spirit moving a person before we can know their lives or doctrine, and sometimes false prophets are so crafty that they hide their true doctrine and character under a sheep's clothing; through this gift the Holy Spirit can protect us from them. Acts.13v6-12. 16v16-18. This gift can reveal angelic ministries and the workings of the Holy Spirit, and this can save us from resisting the Holy Spirit, or from failing to discern a genuine move of the Holy Spirit.

SOME WORDS OF WARNING.

N.B. 1. Don't ascribe all sickness to the Devil.

This gift can reveal if demon power is causing sickness; the Bible tells us that some sickness is caused by demons. Mt.4v23,24. 8v28-34. 9v32-34. 12v22-24. 15v21-28. 17v14-21. with Mk.9v23. However, most sickness should not be attributed to Satan, for the Scriptures clearly distinguish between sickness and lunacy due to natural causes, from sickness and lunacy due to demon possession. Mt.4v23,24. 17v15-18. Godly people, like Job, have sometimes suffered sickness as a result of Satan's power, but this cannot happen without the permission of God. Job.1v9-11. 2v1-10.

N.B. 2. Concentrate on God, not on demons.

Whatever you do, don't suffer from "demonitis." That is, don't be always talking about demons, or go looking for demons, or blame everything on demons. Be positive, and concentrate your minds and talk on our lovely Father and Saviour. Heb.3v1.4v14-16. 12v1-3. Also remember that it is quite wicked to pretend that you have this gift, and to go around pretending to cast demons from every body, including good Christians. To hurt people by saying that they have a demon in them, when it is not true, is very wrong, and those who do this kind of thing will very definitely have to answer to God. The New Testament emphasis is upon good angels and God, not evil spirits, we should follow the New Testament example and emphasise the Lord not demons.

N.B. 3. Christ promised that Christians cannot be demon possessed.

Those who teach that Christians can be possessed by demons, do not realise that they are denying and attacking Christ's atonement, and the cleansing and protecting presence of the Holy Spirit. Titus.3v5. Jn.14v16. 1Jn.4v4. Christians cannot get a serpent, scorpion, or stone, because we are continuously guarded by God. Lk.11v9-13. Job.1v10. 1Pet.1v3-5. Demons cannot possess or grasp a child of God, we trample on them. 1Jn.5v18. Lk.10v17-20. The blood of Jesus gives us victory, and has translated us out of Satan's power and kingdom, into God's kingdom. Col.1v12-14. 1Pet.1v18,19. 2v9. Rev.12v11.

Christians may fail God because of temptation by Satan, but this is quite different from being demon possessed. Mt.16v13-27. 26v69-75. It is the apostate Christian, who has thrown all faith in Christ away, that gets possessed; however, apostasy must never be confused with even severe backsliding. Mt.12v22-32,43-45. Mk.3v22-30. Christ came to deliver mankind from Satan's power and malice, and came to destroy his evil works. Acts.10v38. Jn.8v36. 1Jn.3v8. Lk.4v17-21. 13v10-17. Heb.13v8.

The discernings of spirits can be the most powerful way that God can speak to man to bring about their conversion; Paul was converted by a vision of Christ, this accomplished what even miracles could not do. Acts.10v1-8. compare Rev.19v11-21. This gift can also be the ultimate in encouragement to the Christian, visions of angels, Christ, and the Father, give the ultimate in encouragement and the most transforming spiritual experience. This kind of revelation of God is indispensable for those with a difficult task to do for God; indeed, it was the revelation of God that enabled great men of God fulfil their tasks. Exod.3v1-6. 24v9-18. 2Kings.6v17. Is.6v1-13. Ezek.1v1-28. Lk.1v10-38. 2Pet.1v16-21. Rev.1v20. etc. Paul had many wonderful "heavenly visions," of our Lord and angels; and these gave him the inner strength to perform his missions. Acts.9v3-6. 18v9-11. 22v17-21. 2Cor.12v1-4. Acts.27v23-25. Our dear Lord Jesus experienced a most wonderful revelation of the Father on the "Holy Mount" of transfiguration; this was necessary to give him the spiritual strength to face the events connected with his suffering and death at Jerusalem. Lk.9v28-36. 22v23-26. Jn.3v13. Heb.2v9. The discerning of spirits can vary a great deal in its scope, from a simple and brief revelation of a demon, to the ultimate beatific vision of God.

B. THE THREE GIFTS OF POWER.

4. THE GIFT OF FAITH. "Pistis."

The gift of faith is not saving faith, the fruit of faith, or even a prayer of faith; however, these are the necessary basis of a gift of faith. The gift of faith is an act of divine power. It is a supernatural confidence and

power imparted by God to meet a specific need through an act of His power. It is the operation of God's power in the spiritual realm, and acts upon angels and men. It is an out-shining of God's faith and power. It is certainly not a mere ritual, or pretence, it is the greatest of the power gifts.

The gift of faith can give divine protection in danger and persecution. Exod.3v10. 7v10. 14v19,20. Judges.15v9-20. 16v20. Dan.6v16-23. 3v17,18,25. Lk.4v29,30. Jn.7v44-46. 8v59. 10v39. Acts.5v17-26. 12v1-11. 27v18-44. It can give divine strength, comfort and peace in persecution and great need. Heb.11v35-39. Acts7v54-60. 6v15. Lk.9v27-36. 22v42-44. It can bestow spiritual blessings; and even mould and protect people's lives in the future. Gen.27v27-41. Heb.11v20. Gen.48v8-28. Heb.11v21. Mk.10v13-16. It can impart spiritual power and authority. Numb.11v24-29. 27v18-23. Deut.34v9. Exod.18v25. 2Kings.2v9-14. Mt.10v1-8. Lk.10v1-24. Acts.13v1-4. It can impart the baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit, Acts.8v14-19. 9v17. 19v1-6.; and revival outpourings, Acts.2v1-4. 4v23-31. 10v44-48... It can remove hurts, wounds and scars inside people, and change their personality for good. 1Sam.10v6,11. 16v12,13. Lk.4v18. 2Cor.10v1-5.

N.B. It is difficult to put the casting out of demons under any other gift than the gift of faith; it is true that Mk.9v38,39., tells us that the casting out of a demon is "an act of power," however, every power gift is "an act of power," it is the sphere of operation which decides which power gift is in operation. The operation of spiritual power in the unseen spiritual world is certainly best described by the gift of faith, for it is a realm where we need faith to see and operate. We can certainly say that we have to live close to God to deal with evil spirits, as the apostles found out. Lk.9v1,2,37-42. with Mk.9v14-29. Acts.19v11-17,

God has judged people through the gift of faith, even during the New Covenant of grace. Acts.5v1-11. 12v1-5,21-24. 13v6-12. 1Cor.5v1-5. 1Tim.1v20. However, this was rare because Jesus came to save and bless, not to judge or condemn. Ex.9v8-12. 11v1-12v36. 2Kings.1v8-16. 5v25-27. Judgement is a "strange act" to a God of love. Is.28v21. Mt.5v44. Rom.12v14. 1Cor.4v12. 14v16. 2Cor.2v1-8. However, this age will close with a mighty manifestation of the gift of faith in judgement. Rev.11v5,6. Compare. Numb.23v23.

Some think that Elijah being fed by the ravens was a gift of faith, I feel that it was a working of miracles; I feel that miracles of provision such as Ps.78v24-25. Lk.8v1-3. and 1Kings.19v4-8., come within the scope of the gift of faith. However, it is foolish to be dogmatic over this, as the gifts do fringe upon each other in certain areas, and make definition difficult. The important thing is to enjoy our heavenly Father's miracles of provision, and His other good gifts; correct definition is of secondary importance, however, a correct definition is of real value when it acts as a key to the experience and regulation of the gifts.

5. THE GIFT OF WORKINGS OF MIRACLES. "Energemata dunameon."

In 1Cor.12v2. the ministry of workings of miracles comes fourth in the list and before gifts of healings; one needs greater authority from God to manifest this gift, than a ministry of healing. God may give a person the authority to manifest one gift, but not the authority to manifest another gift.

The working of miracles must not be confused with the other power gifts. A gift of healing is a miracle of healing; an act of *dunamis*, but it is not a working of miracles. All physical healing comes within the scope of the gifts of healings, even creative instantaneous miracles of healing. The gift of faith gives authority in the spiritual realm, where only faith can see; it gives authority over men and angels. The working of miracles gives authority and power over material things and nature, it effects man's environment. The gifts of healings give authority in the physical realm, over infirmity, disease and sickness.

"Workings of powers or miracles," or "activities that call forth miracles," "*energemata dunameon*," could well describe all the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, they are all the result of the operation of God's power, however, the Scriptures show us that workings of miracles acts on man's material environment.

A Definition of The Workings of Miracles.

The working of miracles is an operation of divine power that changes natural law and material things, and produces seen miraculous effects in man's material environment. The workings of miracles can interrupt, suspend, or control the laws of nature; it is the operation of the power of God upon material things, vegetation, and the rest of the living world apart from man.

The workings of miracles can be a mighty sign that displays the almighty power and majesty of God. Ex.6v6,7. 8v15. 9v16. 15v11-16. Deut.4v34. 5v115. Josh.2v9-11. 5v1. It has been used to confirm the message of God's prophets. 1Kings.13v1-10. 1Sam.12v16-25. 1Kings.18v36-39.

It has also been used to confirm God's word and call to a person. Judg.6v1-40. 7v9-14. 2Kings.20v1-11. Ex.7v10. with Numb.17v8. 2Kings.2v13-15. Lk.5v1-11. 1v20-23,63,64. 2v10-12,34. This gift can establish faith in people and powerfully confirm the Gospel message. Jn.2v1-11,23. 6v1-14,26,27. Mt.15v32-39. Mk.14v22-36. 16v15-18. Jn.5v19,20,36,44.

It has often provided food and other material needs for the children of God, when no human or natural resources were available. Ex.5v35. 16v13. 17v1-7. Num.11v31. 2Kings.2v19-22. 4v1-7,38,44. 6v1-7. 2v13-15. Mk.6v32-44,48. 8v1-9. Lk.5v1-11. Jn.21v3-11. Mt.17v24-27. It can deliver from danger. Exod.14v16-21.

15v23-25. Lk.8v22-25. Mt.14v24-33. 6v18-21. Acts.16v25-34.

This gift has sometimes been used in divine judgement. Ex.8v1 to 10v29. Numb.16v19-35. Josh.10v6-14. 1Kings.17v1. 18v1,42-46. James.5v14-20. Mk.1v12-14,20-24. The emphasis during this age of grace is upon God's love and mercy, and not judgement; however, at the end of this age the two witnesses of Rev.11v1-8. N.B. v5,6., and doubtless other Christians, will have authority and power given to them to bring judgement upon their evil foes through this gift.

God's power gifts gave Israel victory in war. The operation of the power gifts through Moses was greater than the military might of either Israel, or their enemies. Ex.17v11-13. Josh.6v20. The power gifts of Elijah and Elisha made them into "the horses and chariots of Israel," that is, the protective spiritual and military might of Israel, and their loss was deeply felt. 2Kings.2v12. 2Kings.13v14. Samuel's power gifts frightened the Philistines more than Saul's picked army. 1Sam.7v4-14. with 13v1-23. Men of God have always been able to defeat seemingly "invincible foes" through God's power gifts. Gen.14v1-17. Judges.7v16-25. 15v7-20. 1Sam.14v1-14. 17v11-58. 2Chron.14v9-13. 15v6. 17v3. 20v1-25.

When the apostles were delivered from prison by angelic ministry, we could say that there were three gifts of revelation and two gifts of power in operation, it was really one display of God's power and ability. Acts.5v16-24. 12v1-17. The resurrection of the dead also calls for the operation of what we would call several power gifts, in one burst of the power of God. 2Kings.13v20,21. 4v32-37. Lk.7v11. 8v41.

Is supernatural transport a working of miracles or a gift of faith? Is the faith active or passive? 1Kings.18v11,12. 2Kings.2v16-18. Ezek.3v12-15. 8v3. Acts.8v39,40. Jn.6v20,21. Rev.12v14. Was the harmless snake poison a working of miracles, or a gift of healing? Acts.16v1-6. Mk.16v18. Was Samson killing the lion, a working of miracles or a gift of faith, or both? Judges.14v5,6. Possession of this gift is more important than definition, particularly in these dark last days. Let us earnestly desire these precious power gifts of God.

6. THE GIFT OF GIFTS OF HEALINGS. "Charismata iamaton."

Gifts of healings should not be confused with medical care; however, Christians should be the last to disparage the work of doctors and nurses, who are dedicated to the relief of suffering. There is a very definite place for natural healing, indeed, God gave the Israelites sound medical advice on rest, food, hygiene, quarantine and sanitation, etc., which has been recognised by modern medicine. Divine healing must also not be confused with "healing" by Spiritualism, Christian Science, and other occult means, which are forbidden by God, those who go to them for healing are in very real spiritual danger. Lev.19v31. 20v6. Deut.18v8-20. Is.8v19,20.

WHY HEALING FROM GOD MAY NOT OCCUR, OR BE DELAYED.

a. Because of unbelieving, "not for today" preaching. 1Jn.5v14,15. James.3v1.

b. Because of the lack of faith and power in the person praying for the sick. Mk.9v14-29.

c. Because a sick person is not prepared to get right with God, or seek God for healing. Ex.23v25. Mk.2v1-12. Jn.5v1-9,14,44. 12v42,43. Ps.15v1-5. 24v3-6. 34v12-22. 66v18. Prov.28v13. Exod.15v26. Rom.8v11. Mt.11v20-24. There is divine sickness as well as divine healing. 1Cor.11v28-32. Ps.73 all. 119v67,71-75. True faith and repentance will always be rewarded. Heb.11v6.

d. Because gifts of healings do not enable us to avoid the consequences of intemperate living. Adequate food, rest and sleep are essential to good health. Ps.103.v3,5. 127v2. 107v17-21. 1Cor.6v20. Eph.5v29. Phil.2v25-30. Col.2v27.

e. Because of a wrong attitude to the person who is praying for the sick, either in the form of criticism, or in the form of idolatry. Mk.6v1-6. Is.43v8. Acts.3v12,13. 1Cor.1v26-31. with Jer.9v23,24.

f. Because God may desire to try to improve a Christian's character. Job.2v4-10. God tries and disciplines those who do well, as well as those who do badly. Heb.12v4-12. Prov.3v11, 12.

g. Because of the shocking state of some of the churches. In many churches the Christians are at sixes and sevens and have a bitter spirit toward each other, or they are prayerless, too spiritually lazy, and too worldly to defeat Satan, and sin in the camp often makes victory impossible. Josh.7v1-26. 8v1. 1Cor.3v1-3. Mk.11v22-26. Mt.18v15-35. Jn.13v34,35. 15v12-14. Elders often merely go through undemanding formal prayer, instead of praying through for the sick until a positive answer comes from God. We have to follow Elijah's example of persistent prevailing prayer to get results in divine healing. James.5v13-18. 1Kings.18v43.

h. Because a person's allotted span of life is reached; there is a time for even mighty men of God to die. Ps.90v10,12. 2Kings.13v14,20,21. Is.57v1,2. 1Kings.14v11-13. Deut.34v7. Josh.14v7-15. Phil.3v20,21. 1v20-24.

i. Because God knows that medical help, aided by the natural healing process He has put in the body, or a simple natural remedy, will produce healing. Prov.17v22. Ezek.47v12. 1Tim.5v23.

THE VARIOUS WAYS WE CAN RECEIVE HEALING FROM GOD.

Through personal prayer. Is.38v1-22. Jn.14v11-15. 15v4-14. Through church elders praying a prayer of faith for the sick. James.5v13-16. Through any believer who is full of faith and power. Mk.16v18. Acts.9v17,18. Through the apostolic, prophetic, and evangelistic ministries of the Church. 1Cor.12v28. 2Cor.12v12. Rom.15v18-20. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9.

A gift of healing can be ministered by the laying on of hands, Mk.6v5,6.; by a touch, Mt.8v13-17. 9v24,25,29,30.; by a word of commanding faith, Mt.8v8. Acts.3v6.; by Christians praying, even a great distance away, Mt.8v5-13. Jn.4v46-54.; by a "prayer cloth", prayed over and sent to the one who is sick, Acts.19v11,12. Mt.14v35,36. 2Kings.13v20.; by an act of obedient faith at Christ's direction, Mk.7v32-37. Lk.17v12-19. Jn.9v1-15. Numb.21v5-9. Each gift of healing is a separate gift, that is, if we pray for ten people and all of them are healed, ten gifts of healings have been ministered.

THE SCRIPTURAL ADVICE FOR THOSE SEEKING HEALING FROM GOD.

a. Ask Christians to pray for you, whose faith and ministry of healing are a proven success and not a proven failure. James.5v13-18. etc.

b. Repent of all known sin and come in sincere repentance to Christ; accept Christ as your Saviour, if you do not know Him as Saviour. Mk.1v15. Acts.3v19. Jn.6v37. Mk.2v5,9,10. 1Jn.3v21-24. 1Cor.11v27-32. Bitterness and enmity against others will hinder healing, so get right with God and man, and come in full assurance of faith for healing of soul and body. Mt.5v22-24. 6v12-15. 18v35. Mk.11v22-26. Lk.7v1-17. Rom.8v32. 1Pet.2v24.

c. Be absolutely positive in your faith in Christ and the Father. Heb.11v5,6. Mk.5v25-34. 6v56. Praise and thank God for His promise to heal you. Don't come to God with doubting hope, come to Him with positive faith in His goodness, and covenants and promises; let your confession of faith be as positive as the Word of God. Mk.9v22,23. 11v20-24. Jn.20v27-29. Rom.4v20. 2Cor.1v19,20.

d. Expect an instant miracle of healing. Mk.1v31,41. 2v12. 5v29,42. 7v35. 10v32. Acts.3v7. 9v32. However, do not limit healing to an instant miracle. Continue to trust Christ for healing, even when healing is not immediate, for sometimes healing is delayed or gradual. Job.42v10. Mk.8v22-26. Lk.17v12-19. Jn.4v52. 9v1-15. Jesus said that real faith never goes unrewarded, so imitate the persistent faith of the men and women who obtained the promises of God in the Scriptures. 2Kings.4v18-37. Mt.5v25-34. 2v1-12. Lk.18v35-43.

Realise that God is trying to make a change in you as well as in your body. There is no record in the Bible of God refusing healing to those who seek it, except for the reasons we have previously detailed under the heading why healings can be delayed; remember a delay in healing does not mean denial.

C. THE THREE GIFTS OF INSPIRATION AND COMFORT.

7. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY. "Propheteia."

The gift of prophecy is sixth in the list in Cor.12v8-10., it is the gift that Paul tells us to desire most in public gatherings, because prophecy can greatly edify, encourage and comfort fellow believers. 1Cor.14v1-3. The simple gift of prophecy must not be confused with predictive prophecy. All Christians may prophesy but not all Christians manifest the gifts of revelation. The simple gift of prophecy edifies, exhorts and comforts; whereas, the gifts of revelation, direct, predict and reveal.

Nor should the simple gift of prophecy be confused with the office of a prophet, all Christians may prophesy, 1Cor.14v5,24,31., but not all Christians hold a prophetic office and ministry, which is second only to apostolic ministry. 1Cor.12v28. Eph.4v11. The person with the simple gift of prophecy may sometimes manifest gifts of revelation, but that does not give them a prophetic office. The prophetic office is proved by the continual manifestation of the gifts of revelation and power on a high level of authority. Compare the prophetic ministry of Agabus with the prophetic gift of Philip's four daughters. Acts.21v9,10. Prophets can vary a great deal in their authority. Numb.12v6-15.

ALL KINDS OF PROPHECY MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM PREACHING AND TEACHING.

The Old Testament distinguishes a preacher, "qoheleth," Eccles.1v1,2,12. 7v27. 12v8,9,10., from a prophet, a "nabi," or seer, a "roeh," or "chozeh." Gen.20v7. Ezra.5v1. Ex.15v20. 2Sam.24v11. 30v10. Ezek.13v9,16. Amos.7v12. The New Testament clearly distinguishes a prophet from a teacher. In the Authorised Version the Greek word "propheteuo," "to prophesy," is never translated as "preach:" nor is "propheteia," that is, "prophecy," ever translated as "preaching;" and "prophetes," "prophet," is never translated as "preacher." The Greek words for preaching are never used in the Authorised Version to speak of a person prophesying. Both prophet and preacher proclaim; the prophet from the impulse and sudden inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the preacher from the operation of the mind upon known truth.

ALL KINDS OF PROPHECY MUST BE PROPERLY REGULATED.

a. We must not surrender our right to judge prophetic utterances. 1Thes.5v19-21. 1Cor.14v29-33.

Important prophetic truth is always confirmed out of the mouths of two or three reliable witnesses. Deut.19v15. 2Cor.13v1. 1Cor.14v29.

b. We must not accept direction by prophecy, or direct others by prophecy.

God may speak through others to confirm guidance that He has already given, or He may use others to warn us in emergency or danger, just as Agabus and the Christians at Tyre warned Paul not to set foot in Jerusalem. Acts.20v20-23. 21v3,4,10,11. However, prophecies, which tell us what to do, should be regarded with caution and carefully examined, for in the New Testament, personal direction, usually comes direct to the sons of God from their Father. Rom.8v14. Heb.8v10,11.

c. We must not give prophecy precedence over Scripture.

The foundation of our faith is the Scripture. Eph.2v20. 3v5. No one can receive truth that will add to or supersede the New Testament revelation. Rev.22v18,19. Prophecies have to be checked by the Scriptures. 1Jn.4v1-5. We must not give a place to spiritual revelation that can only be given to the Scriptures. A correct balance between God's Word, sanctification, sanctified common sense, and spiritual gifts will preserve us from many heartbreaks and dangers. 1Pet.1v23,35.

d. We must not lose our self-control, propriety, or divine order. 1Cor.14v32,33,40.

The spirit of a Christian prophet is under their control, and is in marked contrast to the deranged and frenzied ravings of the prophets of Baal and other Heathen prophets. 1Kings.18v25-40. James.3v13-18. A prophet should not monopolise prophetic manifestations, see 1Cor.14v30., where Paul directs, "let the first hold his peace." We should also only have as many prophecies as we can judge, weigh, assimilate and remember. 1Cor.14v29,31. All may sometimes prophesy in small meetings, but definitely not in large ones.

When Paul said in 1Cor.14v24,31., that all the believers could prophesy, he was thinking of a comparatively small house meeting, and also of a much longer meeting than a short one-hour service. 1Cor.16v19. Col.4v15. Acts.2v2,46. 20v6v12. In a short meeting given to preaching or Bible study, ONE prophecy may be as much as we can thoroughly examine and remember, in a night of prayer we can profitably have many more. We can't restrict all services to three prophecies regardless of their type and length; nor can the number of prophecies depend on how many artificial breaks we make in a service, or day of fellowship. Paul's divinely inspired counsel is by far the best, we should have only as many prophecies as we can judge, weigh, discuss, and profitably assimilate. The maximum for consideration at any one time being three prophecies. 1Cor.14v29. The prophesying of Numb.11v24-29. 1Sam.10v10-13. 19v18-24. and Kings.2v3,5., seems to be the exception rather than the rule, for this mass prophesying seems more for personal edification than for public edification. It is not the Christian norm, but it may occur on rare and special outpourings of the Spirit.

e. We must not despise genuine prophesying. 1Thes.5v19,20.

Paul reminded Timothy of the importance of the prophecies that had been given for his personal comfort and edification. 1Tim.4v14,15. 2Tim.1v6-8. Heb.12v25. The idea that no real notice should be taken of prophetic utterances is quite perilous, and can have the most serious and tragic consequences, as the history of Israel and the seven churches in the book of Revelation clearly demonstrate. 2Chron.36v15-21. Rev.2 and 3. Alas, trembling at the written Word or prophetic word of God is comparatively rare. Is.66v2-5. Ps.2v11. Ezra.9v4. 10v3. Phil.2v12.

f. We must be careful not to misinterpret prophecy.

The apostle John had to correct the false interpretation of Christ's words in Jn.21,22,23. If there is any doubt over the interpretation of prophecies or revelations, it is best to be silent and let the Holy Spirit and time reveal their true import. Let us not jump to hasty conclusions. Prophecies may foretell something that is years ahead, and we should not insist on giving them a present application, they may need new circumstances to come to pass and the passage of time to reveal what they mean.

Even great Old Testament prophets were puzzled by their own prophecies, until God told them that they were for the distant future and not for themselves. 1Pet.1v10-12. 2Pet.1v20,21. Some prophecies are only understood by the person they are for, God veils their meaning from everybody else, He is discreet, wise, and loving; a perfect gentleman, who respects a person's desire for privacy, and so He will meet needs by general and ambiguous prophecy, rather than by specific detailed prophecy, to save people embarrassment. Let us not trespass or pry where God says, "Private, Keep Out."

THE IMPORTANCE AND USE OF PROPHECY.

1. Through Prophecy God edifies, exhorts and comforts His Church. 1Cor.14v3.

In 1Cor.14v3., "edification;" is "oikodome," which means to build up; "exhortation," is "parakleesis;" that is, a calling to one's side, a calling near, an invitation; "comfort," is "paramuthia," to speak near or close to anyone,

with soothing and consoling words. This comforting love from our heavenly Father builds up faith, character, love and knowledge; it is full of strengthening comfort, gentleness, inviting mercy and grace. The Holy Spirit comes to speak very kindly to the people of God, to soothe and pacify, by speaking words of gracious persuasion, tender incentive, gentle love, and cheering and healing comfort.

Prophecy from our gracious Lord is not critical or harsh, Christ desires to encourage us, not to discourage us; there may be rebuke sometimes, as in Rev.3v16,17.; but Christ is merciful, loving and kind with His own, even in His disciplines; He even told the Laodiceans of His great love for them. Christ's strengthening comfort corrects as well as consoles, but His gentle humility and tenderness, and inviting mercy and grace are always apparent. Mt.11v28-30. Heb.12v5. The Holy Spirit comes to our side, to help us, not condemn us, we should rejoice in His strengthening comfort and gentleness. 1Cor.14v31. 1Tim.1v18.

2. Prophecy can be a channel of the gifts of revelation.

Prophecy is spoken of as "a light in a dark place;" it can prepare us for great blessing or great trouble. 1Pet.1v19. It can also be of great value in winning the lost, when it brings people face to face with God as the secrets of their hearts are revealed. The Lord Jesus used this gift with a word of knowledge in it, in a powerful evangelistic appeal to the woman at the well. Jn.4v15-42. 1v47-51. Paul advocates its use in evangelism in the Corinthian church. 1Cor.14v24,25.

3. Prophecy can be of great value in prayer, praise, worship and song.

The psalms of David abound with prophetic prayer and praise. In 1Cor.14v15. Eph.5v19. and Col.3v16., Paul is obviously thinking of prophetic songs, as well as ordinary songs and hymns. Note the outstanding prophetic prayer and praise of Hannah, Elizabeth, Mary and Zechariah. 1Sam.2v1-10. Lk.1v39-80. Prophecy is indeed a wonderful gift; it is no wonder that Paul has to use the word "zeloute", to describe how intensely we should desire this lovely gift of God. 1Cor.14v39. In the history of God's people, prophecy has made all the difference between victory and defeat, time and time again.

8. THE GIFT OF TONGUES. "Glossais."

This is spoken of in the New Testament as "new tongues," "other tongues," "divers kinds of tongues," and even as "the tongue of men and angels." Mk.16v17. Acts.2v4. 1Cor.12v10,28. 13v1.

The gift of tongues is certainly not gibberish, or unmeaning ecstatic utterance.

There is no Scriptural, etymological, or exegetical reason for supposing that speaking with tongues is an ecstatic language, or utterance without meaning. The articulate, meaningful, and understandable genuine languages of Acts.2v4., are no different than the tongues of Acts.10v6. 19v6. 1Cor.12v10,28. 13v1,8. 14v2,5,6m13,18,22,23,26,27,39. They are "the like gift," Acts.11v17.; the only difference is, that in Acts.2v4., some of the hearers happened to understand them. On the day of Pentecost the two Greek words that are used to describe "tongues" both indicate a genuine language; "glossai," i.e. "tongues," Acts.2v4,11. and "dialektos," the language or dialect of a district or country." Acts.2v6,8. Those who understood the languages were "beside themselves," "amazed" and "ecstatic," according to the writer of Acts, for the word "existemi" is used to describe their reactions in Acts.2v7,12. (10v45) (For "ekstasis," see Acts.3v10. 10v10. 11v5. 22v17. Mk.5v42. 16v8. Lk.5v26.) The reason for this amazement, was that they heard Galileans, speaking fluently and powerfully of God's wonderful works, in their own local dialects, as only a native could, and they knew that this was, naturally speaking, quite impossible.

It was only the ignorant critics, who did not know or understand the languages, who said that speaking in tongues was drunken gibberish; those who did know the languages, said that they were perfect and inspiring languages and were converted as a result. The Christians who speak in tongues, experience transports of joy and praise, which to the unbelieving outsider may look like "drunken gibberish." However, Paul tells us, it is not nonsense, but the intelligent speaking of God's divine "musteria," that is, His glorious works, secrets, and purposes, being magnified in genuine articulate language. Acts.14v2.

Those who compare the gift of tongues with the incoherent, unmeaning, broken ramblings of some wild, false religions, and censure and malign God's gift of tongues, should remember there is no more serious sin than ascribing the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. The gift of tongues is an edifying gift, 1Cor.4v4., and is so divinely inspired that in Acts.2v4. the Greek word, "apophtheggasthai," (pronounced "apophthengesthai") is used to convey the fluency and forcefulness of the "utterance" of tongues under the Holy Spirit's influence; it is not used in the Septuagint of ordinary conversation, it is used for prophetic discourse. This word well conveys the impression of earnest, exalted, weighty, solemn, passionate utterance and divinely inspired discourse. Desire this beautiful gift of tongues, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 1Cor.14v1,39.

2. Paul recommended and made extensive use of the gift of tongues. 1Cor. 14v18.

The apostle Paul certainly did not despise or belittle the gift of tongues, he condemned the selfish and noisy user of the gift of tongues. In 1Cor.13., Paul does not say that the gifts are "nothing" without love, for they are given by the God of love, and are wonderful, it is the loveless possessor that is "nothing." Indeed, the gift of tongues is a companion of love, not an opponent of love; it is given for the express purpose of producing love

and faith in us. 1Cor.14v2,4. This is why Paul used it more diligently than the Corinthians, who mistakenly used this gift, which is given primarily for private prayer, in a noisy, selfish and prolonged manner in their Christian gatherings.

Paul told the Corinthians that "in the Church" five words of prophecy are better for building up the listening Christians than 10,000 words in a tongue. Paul used the gift of tongues diligently in private prayer, and quietly "to himself and God" in public praise and prayer. Paul tells us from his own experience that the gift of tongues will build love, faith and spiritual strength in the possessor of the gift, when it is used diligently and devotionally. 1Cor.14v2,4,15-18. Why do some Christians belittle or despise the gift of tongues? Some are genuinely ignorant of the great blessing that this gift can bring. Some have a fear of the supernatural and cannot trust God to give them "good gifts" and preserve them from evil. Lk.11v13. Mt.7v7-11. Heb.3 and 4. Others love the praise of men more than the praise of God, and count the cost of losing anti-Pentecostal friends and so they reject God's lovely gift of tongues. Jn.12v12,43. 5v44. Some Christians, sad to say, have been put off by noisy, Corinthian-type Pentecostals. We should, however, judge the value of this gift from the Scriptures, and from the experience of Paul, the other apostles, and mature Christians, not from the experience of Corinthian type Christian babes.

3. We must not confuse devotional tongues with tongues given for a ministry to others.

It is a fact of experience that only a small percentage of Christians who speak in devotional tongues, speak out in a tongue that is interpreted in the church. It is this ministry that Paul is speaking about in 1Cor.12v30., when he asks, "Do all speak with tongues?" There are Christians who have been given outstanding ministries of speaking with tongues; their utterances are of such great beauty and carry such a divine benediction, that one feels that they are upon holy ground, even before there is an interpretation. In 1Cor.12v27-31. Paul is speaking of ministries that God has set in the Church, to build up the Church, Christians with a God-given gift for public ministry, and the ministry of interpretation of tongues is amongst them. Paul's desire, "I would that ye ALL spake with tongues," was an experimental fact amongst the Christians in the upper room, and among the believers in the house of Cornelius, and the disciples at Ephesus, for they ALL spoke with tongues. However, the majority of these tongues were for prayer and praise and not for interpretation. Acts.2v4. 10v44-48. 19v6. 1Cor.14v5,30. This ministry of tongues for interpretation demands a deep prayer life to be effective, uplifting and powerful.

4. The gift of tongues was not given for preaching the Gospel.

Though God intends the gift of tongues to be predominantly a devotional aid to the prayer life, speaking with tongues is a mighty sign to people when they understand the language. God does not intend the gift of tongues to replace the preaching of the Gospel, He uses it as a sign to gain the attention of the people and prepare them for the preaching of the Gospel, as on the day of Pentecost, when the tongues prepared people for the preaching of Peter. The colloquial Greek "koine" was understood throughout most of the Roman Empire, and was the common language of the nations around the Mediterranean, and so the gift of tongues was not needed to preach the Gospel to people in their own language. Many modern instances of Christians speaking in known languages have been recorded by reliable witnesses, the theme of the languages have been the same as in Acts.2v11., "the wonderful works of God."

5. The limitations placed upon the use of the gift of tongues.

The aim in church fellowships should be public and not personal edification; therefore, we should curtail noisy or excessive speaking in tongues and seek God for a prophecy. 1Cor.14v5,18,19. Though the whole church may on occasions burst out in praise and worship and sing and speak in tongues; in a church meeting, speaking with tongues should generally be quietly spoken between ourselves and God. 1Cor.14v28. Paul instructs us that when the unconverted or unlearned in spiritual gifts come into a Pentecostal meeting, the Pentecostal believers must act wisely and restrain themselves from any loud and concerted outbursts in tongues; otherwise the visitors will say that everybody is mad. Paul informs us in 1Cor.14v23-25., that prophecy is far the best gift to manifest under such circumstances. Paul desired the Corinthians to have a correct and sensible balance and to seek after gifts with a greater public ministry in their church meetings.

Though Paul said that we must not forbid speaking in tongues, he also said that tongues that are for interpretation should be limited to three utterances. If there is no interpreter in the church, there must be no public utterances; the person must speak quietly to themselves and to God. 1Cor.14v27,28,39. It also seems from 1Cor.14v26., "everyone hath a tongue," that one person should give only one tongue, as in v29, Paul suggests that each prophet should only give one prophecy, so that the ministry of the gifts can be shared around. Further prophetic input can come in the process of judging and considering other people's prophecies. We should share the ministry of spiritual gifts. A selfish person loves to dominate and monopolise Christian meetings, love delights to share and give place to others.

THE VALUE AND USE OF THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

a. It is a divine aid to the prayer-life of the Christian.

By the simple act of speaking with tongues we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to pray and worship on the very highest level. Speaking with tongues enables us to have direct and close communion with God; it brings into play the highest faculty of the Christian, the born again spirit that God has given to each redeemed child of

God. This is truly acceptable worship and prayer in spirit and truth. Jn.4v23,24. Rom.8v26,27. 1Cor.14v14-16. Acts.10v46. Mt.22v35-40. The gift of tongues enables us to exalt, worship and praise God, in a way that we cannot without it. The Holy Spirit Himself gives us the vocabulary and blessing to fully express the needs, feelings and desires of the soul and spirit; He frees us from the limits of human speech and knowledge, and enables us to pray and worship on the very highest level.

Paul states in 1Cor.14v15., that the balanced prayer life consists of prayer and singing in tongues, as well as prayer and singing in one's own language. The gift of tongues enables the Christian to pray on a new level, for it is God praying through us to perform things "infinitely beyond all our highest prayers, hopes, thoughts and dreams." Eph.3v18-20. Rom.8v26,27.

b. It is a divine aid to transform the character and personality.

Paul said that this gift is given to produce and build faith and love in the soul, to "edify," bless and transform the personality, character and life of the believer. 1Cor.14v4,18. It has the same edifying effect in the life of the believer as prophecy has in the church. It can relax and refresh the tired body as well as the soul. Is.28v11,12. with 1Cor.14v21. Rom.8v11.

c. It is a divine aid to deepen our ministries and spiritual effectiveness.

Those who diligently use the gift of tongues in the secret place can testify that it brings them very close to Jesus and our heavenly Father, and in deepening our love for them, brings a greater appreciation of spiritual things and a greater spiritual effectiveness. Loving Jesus and abiding in Him, is the only true source of a genuine fruitfulness, Jn.15v4-17.; the gift of tongues is given as a divine aid to abiding in Christ, and is of great value. Prayer and praise in tongues edifies the spirit and gives a spiritual insight into the Scriptures, which is often not found in the best commentaries. Indeed, it is only the tongue-speaking "charismata" manifesting Christian, who can really understand much of the experience of the early Church. Prayer and praise in tongues builds up the spiritual life of the Christian to the place where they are able to manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's ministrations through this gift in the secret place will result in a blessing upon our public ministry and greatly increase our effectiveness for God. Mt.5v6. with 1Cor.14v2,4,18. and 2Cor.12v12.

Speaking in tongues is certainly not "infant prattling," it can deepen the effectiveness of even a mature Christian's ministry. Paul could hardly be called "an infant prattler;" in 1Cor.14v18., he had been a remarkable Christian for over 20 years. Through this precious gift, the Holy Spirit deepens our ministries, makes the soul strong, and attacks the hosts of evil spirits that dominate this present evil world.

d. It is a divine means of edifying the church when it is interpreted.

A powerful, love-laden tongue can greatly bless the church even before it is interpreted, and if the interpretation carries the same benediction, it can bring a veritable shower of blessing, in the form of comfort, solace, instruction, and edifying truth. 1Cor.14v5,27,28.

e. It is a divine sign to people when the language is understood.

When understood, the gift of tongues can convict and convert the sinner, and be a great encouragement to the believer. 1Cor.14v22. Acts.2v4-12. Mk.16v17-20. Though this is not the normal use of the gift, for the gift of tongues is predominantly devotional, it can produce remarkable results when God manifests this gift as a sign as He did on the day of Pentecost, when 3,000 people became Christians. Acts2v41. Many modern cases of this gift as a sign have occurred.

f. It is the divinely chosen evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

At the outpourings of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Acts.2v4. 10v45,46. and 19v6.; when Christians received the baptism in the Spirit, they all received the same initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit, they all spoke with tongues. The Holy Spirit did not give different spiritual gifts as the evidence of the baptism; He gave the gift of tongues to all. With the exception of the outpouring at Ephesus, we do not read of any other manifestations of the gifts, and they prophesied as well as spoke with tongues. Nor is the fruit of the Spirit the initial evidence of the baptism of the Spirit; the fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, faith, etc.; are very important, but they take time to grow; so the Holy Spirit gave the prayer-gift of tongues. If the fruit of the Spirit was made the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit, no one would be sure that they had received it, it would have resulted in endless argument, unhealthy introspection, and complete uncertainty; God made the easily discernible gift of tongues the evidence of the baptism in the Spirit.

HERE I WANT TO GIVE A VERY NECESSARY WARNING.

Remember, that though the gift of tongues is a wonderful and lovely gift from God; when you are seeking the baptism in the Spirit, you are seeking an encounter with Jesus, not just seeking tongues. The gift of tongues is the outflow of an encounter with the baptising Lord; it is the effect of the baptism in the Spirit, not the cause. In the New Testament the supernatural filling of the Holy Spirit, preceded the supernatural speaking with tongues. Acts.2v4. We should not try to get Christians to speak with tongues at any cost, so that they can be told, "You have received your baptism." Our whole emphasis should be on an encounter with Christ. The

baptism in the Spirit does not come through physical or soulish techniques; it comes through living union with Christ. If there is an absence of soul-searching, consecration, thirsting after God, and soul-communion with Christ; Christians may well have an experience of the baptism in the Spirit, which does not reach or satisfy the deep yearnings of the inner depths of the soul, even though they may have spoken with tongues. This will give added power to Satan's inevitable faith-destroying attack on their experience. Mt.4v1-12. We should not be satisfied until Christians have received a deep, rich and satisfying baptism in the Spirit, which brings an overwhelming experience of the nearness and preciousness of our dear Lord Jesus and our heavenly Father.

The tongue, and the speech centres that dominate the brain, are the most rebellious and uncontrollable parts of the human body and personality, James.3v2-12., when a Christian speak in tongues, it is a sure proof that the whole personality has been immersed in the Holy Spirit. Acts.2v4. Since Spirit-filled Christians manifest spiritual gifts and face spiritual foes, they need to be able to spiritually edify themselves; this is the prime purpose of the gift of tongues. Let us recognise the value and importance of what God has given. How dare Christians criticise God's gifts, question and deride His wisdom, and refuse to obey His command to earnestly seek spiritual gifts as well as to pursue love? 1Cor.14v1. The gift of tongues is one of God's gifts, let us realise its great value and seek to use it as He intended.

9. THE INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES. "Hermeneia glosson."

This gift is the supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to interpret an utterance with tongues. 1Cor.12v10. 14v5,13,27,28. It has its place among the ministries of the Church, and fulfils a similar function to the simple gift of prophecy. 1Cor.12v28. 14v5. The interpretation of tongues can take the form of a prayer for heavenly help, a prayer of dedication, a statement of faith and assurance, an expression of praise and worship, a sacred song or hymn, as well as words of edification, exhortation and tender comfort. Interpreted tongue may be addressed to God, like the devotional tongues of 1Cor.14v2., however, like prophecy, it can also be addressed to man. 1Cor.14v3. Sometimes the "interpretation" can be the answer to the prayer, praise, and statement of faith, etc., that has been spoken out in tongues, and on these occasions it would perhaps be more accurate to call it a prophecy than an interpretation. However, we do not have to be too technical in our definitions; it is a powerful manifestation of the gifts that is of first importance.

The Greek word translated as "interpret" in 1Cor.12v30. 14v5,23,27., is "diermeneuo," which gives a much wider meaning than "translate;" it is used to speak of Christ explaining and fully expounding the Old Testament Scriptures in Lk.24v27. and Acts.9v36.. The Holy Spirit, can then, gives great variety in the manifestation of an interpretation; the interpretation may come in the form of a prophetic type utterance, or as a description of a pictorial vision, or as a conversational description of the facts the Holy Spirit has revealed, and sometimes as a heavy burden upon the heart and spirit. It can be received before, during, or after the utterance in tongues. A genuine interpretation of tongues is recognisable by the heavenly unction which rests both upon the interpreter and the listeners, any interpretation that lacks this anointing, lacks God's authority. 2Pet.1v21. This ministry should be shared, it is very wrong for one person to monopolise this ministry, this kind of selfish determination leads to false interpretation. The interpretation may be longer or shorter than the tongue due to the Holy Spirit's vocabulary, because the interpretation has an additional prophecy, or because of a partial interpretation. Sometimes through ignorance, wrong teaching, or a wilful determination to give an interpretation, which one does not possess, a false interpretation can be given. Spiritual Christians can easily discern extempore preaching paraded as interpretation of tongues, from true interpretation of tongues; true interpretation carries the power and blessing of God and greatly edifies the local church.

SOME SEARCHING QUESTIONS.

Are we satisfied with purely human ability and guidance in our services? Who controls and directs our services, God or ourselves? Is the Holy Spirit forced to be almost an idle bystander in our churches, through our determination to keep to our programmes? Is Christ's ministry being carried on in our churches by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the full manifestation of all His gifts? Are we obeying the Word of God through Paul, and earnestly desiring our heavenly Father's gracious and lovely spiritual gifts? Failure to obey this command leaves the body of Christ spiritually leprous and paralysed, emaciated and powerless. Enter into the full inheritance that has been purchased for you with the precious blood of Christ, for your spiritual profit. 1Cor.12v7. 1Pet.1v18,19.

THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

The Holy Spirit desires the baptism in the Spirit to be the gateway to the regular manifestation of His gifts; He desires to make us the channels of Christ's life, love, knowledge and power. Even our Lord Jesus, who was "full of grace and truth", did no public signs or miracles until He was empowered by the Holy Spirit at Jordan. Jn.1v14. 2v11. 3v34,35. 5v19,20. Lk.3v21,22. 4v1,14-23. How can we succeed and fulfil the Father's perfect will and meet the needs of fallen and suffering mankind, if we lack the spiritual equipment that the Father deemed essential for the success of the ministry of Jesus and the early Church?

Some believe that we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit at conversion; however, this can be shown to be incorrect by many passages of Scripture. The apostles were converted before Pentecost; their names, like those of the seventy, were, "written in heaven," Lk.10v20.; they were "clean," Jn.15v2,3.; they were not of the world and belonged to God, Jn.17v6,9-16,23.; they had received Christ and were believers in Him, and so they

were born-again children of God, and Christ owned them as His friends and brethren. Jn.1v12. 3v1-21. 15v15. 17v8. Mt.12v48-50. At Pentecost these born-again believers received the baptism in the Spirit that had been promised them. The Samaritans accepted Philip's sign-attested ministry and many became joyful baptised believers in Jesus; it was many days later, when Peter and John came to Samaria to lay hands on these born-again, water baptised converts, that they received the baptism in the Spirit. Acts.8v5-19. The Samaritans were full of faith and joy, but they were not baptised in the Spirit until Peter and John prayed for them.

Paul became a Christian when he met the Lord Jesus on the Damascus road, he owned Christ as Lord, and he said, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" Ananias was able to call him "Brother Saul," and was sent that Paul might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit; this was three days after Paul's conversion and new birth in Christ. Acts.9v6,9,17. The baptism in the Spirit of the disciples at Ephesus, also occurred some time after the conversion and their baptism in water, when the apostle Paul laid hands on them, a point that Paul reminds the Ephesians of in Eph.1v13., "after that ye had believed (again the aorist participle, "pisteusantes," as in Acts.19v2.) ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the house of Cornelius demonstrates the fact that Christians can receive the baptism in the Spirit a few seconds or minutes after believing in Christ as Saviour, and without having previously been baptised in water, and without having the ministry of laying on of hands. Acts.10v34-48.

God desires to give the baptism in the Holy Spirit to all believers. Acts.2v39. Lk.11v13. So:

1. Don't be anxious, trust God's Word to you, and rest in His great love for you. Heb.11v6. Jn.16v12-15,26,27.

2. Determine to obey God and walk humbly before Him. Acts.5v32. Mt.5v3. Micah.6v8.

3. Combine prayer with a joyful praising heart and praising lips. Mt.5v12. Lk.11v9-13. 24v52,53. Jn.7v35. Phil.3v1. 4v4. Heb.13v15. Ps.95v1-7. Ps.107v8,21. 118v24. Deut.30v9.

Praise God with instruments. Gen.4v21. Job.21v12. 30v31. (N.B. The Organ)

Ps.150v1-6. 1. Praise the LORD! Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in His mighty firmament!

2. Praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness!

3. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the lute and harp!

4. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!

5. Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with clashing cymbals!

6. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! (NKJ)

Ps.149v1-9.

1. Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD **a new song**, and His praise in the assembly of saints.

2. Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3. Let them **praise His name with the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.**

4. . or the LORD takes pleasure in His people; he will beautify the humble with salvation.

5. Let the saints be joyful in glory; **let them sing aloud on their beds.**

6. **Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand.**

7. To execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples;

8. To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9. To execute on them the written judgment-- this honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD! (NKJ)

4. Seek God with other earnest loving Christians, and place yourself under mature spiritual oversight. Acts.1v14. Eph.4v7-16. 1Cor.12v28. Heb.10v24,25.

5. Seek above all things a revelation of Jesus and the Father to your soul. John.15v9. 17v3,23. Eph.1v15-23. 3v14-21. Phil.3v8-15.

Don't be content with men's minimum, earnestly seek God's maximum.

God's spiritual gifts reveal the awesome majesty and justice of God, as well as His wonderful character and His amazing love, grace and mercy.

THE GREEK WORDS GOD USES TO DESCRIBE HIS GIFTS.

1. Spirituals. "Pneumatikon."

In the Authorised Version of 1Cor.12v1. and 14v1. "pneumatikon" is translated as "spiritual gifts." In 1Cor.12v1. Paul informs us that Christians should not be ignorant about spiritual gifts; and in 1Cor.14v1., he tells us to eagerly seek spiritual gifts as well as pursue after love. Paul makes it quite clear that a spiritual person will seek and manifest spiritual gifts for their own and the Church's benefit. 1Cor.12v7. In Rom.1v11., Paul states his desire to visit Rome so that he could impart some spiritual gift to them, this was something which he could not do by teaching in an epistle; here "spiritual gift," is a translation of "pneumatikos" and

"charisma," and so means "spiritual grace-gift." Spiritual gifts are part of our spiritual blessings in Christ. 1Cor.12v7. 14v37. Eph.1v3. Spiritual gifts help to build up the Church into a spiritual house, and help us to offer spiritual sacrifices, and sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God. 1Pet.2v5. Eph.5v19. Col.3v16. They are indispensable for serving God. Spiritual Christians will recognise the correct place given to both the fruit and gifts of the Spirit in the Scriptures. 1Cor.2v13,15. 14v1. Gal.5v22. The Law of God is spiritual; and love is the fulfilling of the Law, and obeying the moral Law is a vital part of being spiritual. Rom.7v14. 8v1-4. 13v10. Paul writes in Rom.8v7., "The mind dominated by the sinful nature is hostile to God;" and he warns us that some Christians allow themselves to be dominated by the evil carnal nature, and are "sarkikos," instead of being spiritual, "pneumatikos." 1Cor.3v1. Stephen makes it clear that a worldly and carnal person, who resists and opposes the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit, cannot be called spiritual. Acts.7v51-53. Paul tells us that we have "to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" to successfully fight the spiritual power and wickedness of evil principalities and powers; **"the power of His might," is the realm of God's spiritual gifts.** Eph.6v10-22. N.B. v10-12.

2. Grace gifts. "Charismata." Spiritual gifts have an important place with God's other "charismata.

The other "charismata" mentioned in the New Testament are, God's gracious eternal purposes and callings, Rom.11v29.; God's gift of salvation and eternal life, Rom.5v15,16. and 6v23.; and the various kinds of ministries and spiritual gifts that God gives to His Church. Rom.12v6. Paul states that self-control can sometimes be a grace gift of God, as well as a fruit of the Spirit. 1Cor.7v7. Gal.5v22,23. Paul uses "charismata" to definitely speak of spiritual gifts in Rom.12v6. 1Cor.1v7. 12v4,9,28,30,31., and Rom.1v11., where both "charisma" and "pneumatikos" occur together, and possibly in 1Tim.4v14. and 2Tim.1v6. where some ministry gift or spiritual gift was imparted to Timothy by the prayers of godly and spiritual Christian leaders. The link between prayer and the "charismata" is also seen in 2Cor.1v10,11., where we read of Paul's deliverance from death by a divine grace gift ("charisma") in answer to the prayers of Christians. Spiritual gifts make us the stewards and channels of God's grace to a needy Church and world. 1Pet.4v10. They were the reason why the early Church served God so effectively; boldness in preaching came as a result of God's mighty workings and miracles. Acts.4v30,31.

3. Distributions.

a. "Merismos." In the Authorised Version "merismois" is translated as "gifts" in Heb.2v4., it speaks of "a sharing out, a dividing, a distribution." In the New Testament "merismos" only occurs in Heb.2v4. and 4v12., where we read of the ability of the Word of God to divide and discern our innermost thoughts, motives and intents, and to divide between soul and spirit; a text which proves there is a difference between soul and spirit. See 1Thes.5v23. We need both the Word of God and the searching and purifying presence of the Holy Spirit, which is manifested through the distribution of His gifts. The early Church needed these mighty gifts of God, and in these even more godless and wicked days we need them even more than ever. 1Tim.4v1-3. 2Tim.3v1-9,13.

b. "Diaireseis." In 1Cor.12v4-7., Paul states, "Now there are different distributions and varieties of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit. v5. And there are different distributions and varieties of ministries, but the same Lord. v6. And there are different distributions and varieties of operations and activities, but it is the same God who energises and inspires them all in all. v7. But to each one there is constantly being given the clearly seen operations of the Spirit for the profit of all." All three, "different distributions and varieties," are the noun "diaireseis," from "dia," "apart," and "haireo," "to take;" which is akin to the verb "diaireo," "to take apart," "to divide into parts, to distribute."

In 1Cor.12v11., Paul writes, "All these gifts are inspired and energised by the one and same Holy Spirit, who distributes to each person individually and separately as He wills." "Distributes," is "dairoun," the present active of "diaireo," which shows the active and continual distribution and dividing of His spiritual gifts among the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. "As He wills," is "kathos bouletai;" "bouletai," the present indicative middle of "boulomai," "to will, to determine;" the present tense again shows the repeated and continual action of the Holy Spirit's giving. The Holy Spirit comes to bind the body of Christ together in love by the distribution of His gifts, so that each member feels the need of each other's gifts and ministries. 1Cor.12v11-27. There should be no competition over spiritual gifts, or monopolisation by one person of the manifestation of the gifts. Paul instructs us to recognise the divine source of each others gifts; and informs us that our diverse spiritual gifts are intended to complement each other, and bring dependence on each other, not division.

4. Ministrations. "Diakonion." 1Cor.12v5.

The noun "diakonion," has the general meaning of service. It is used to describe Paul's apostolic office and other ministries of the Church. Acts.6v4. 12v25. 20v24. 21v19. Rom.11v15. 12v7. 4v1. 5v18. 6v3. Eph.4v12. Col.4v17. 1Tim.1v12. 2Tim.4v5,11. In Rom.16v15., it is used of the household of Stephanas addicting themselves to the service of the saints. It is also used for aid to the poor. Acts.6v1. 11v29. 1Cor.16v15. 2Cor.8v4. 9v1. In Lk.10v40., both the noun "diakonion," "serving," and the verb "diakoneo," "to serve," are used of Martha's practical care for Jesus and His apostles. Martha was distracted and cumbered by much serving in her loving desire to give Jesus and His apostles a good meal to build up their strength; she complains to Jesus that Mary had forsaken her ("kateleipen," the imperfect of "kataleipo," "to leave, to forsake"). Jesus tells Martha that Mary had chosen the best part in listening to Him and that it was not going to

be taken away from her. However, the use of "diakonia" here, shows Martha's lovely spirit of service, and the beautiful ministrations that can occur when loving hearts are aided by the Holy Spirit to minister the wondrous grace and love flowing from the great heart of God.

5. Manifestation. "Phanerosis."

"Phanerosis," is derived from "phaneroo," "to make manifest," it only occurs in 1Cor.12v7. and 2Cor.4v2.; and means, "a manifestation, a making known, a shining forth." Paul states that Christians should manifest the love and power of the invisible God by spiritual gifts as well as manifest the truth by diligent preaching, witnessing, and holy living. 1Cor.12v7. 2Cor.4v1-7. Jesus has come to manifest Himself in His Church through His spiritual gifts; He has not come to be an idle bystander, while we manifest our limited human abilities. It is sad that Christians can be as stubborn and rebellious as the children of Israel, and resist the loving will and manifestations of God.

6. Demonstrations. "Apodixis." 1Cor.2v4.

"Apodixis" only occurs in 1Cor.2v4. in the New Testament, and speaks of a manifestation, demonstration and proof. At Athens Paul tried to meet the people of Athens on their own ground and convert them by an intellectual appeal; he learned the valuable lesson that the best Christian oratory is limited in its success without the divine confirmation of the truth by miracles. So when Paul came from Athens to Corinth he knew that the gross evil of Corinth demanded more than human oratory and non-miraculous evangelical preaching and reasoning, so he determined to preach Christ and Him crucified, and relied on God to confirm the truth of the Gospel by a powerful demonstration of the miraculous. Paul compelled the Gentiles to believe in Christ and obey the Gospel through mighty signs, wonders and miracles. Acts.17v15 to 19v12. 1Cor.2v2-4. Rom.15v18-20. Jesus and Paul needed the full equipment and demonstrations of the Holy Spirit, and so do we.

7. Operations. "Energematon."

The singular "energema," speaks of, "that which is wrought through energy, the effect produced, operation;" from "energeo," "to work in, to be active, to perform, to energise and operate." "Energematon" occurs in 1Cor.12v6., where it speaks of the varieties of operation of ALL the gifts. In 1Cor.12v10. "energemata" is used with "dunameon" to speak of ONE of the power gifts, "workings of miracles;" these "operations of miracles, or acts of power," are used to speak of the operations of God's power on nature and man's environment. The gift of workings of miracles has a powerful and lasting effect on people and nations, this is clearly seen by the effect of the plagues on Egypt, and the opening of the Red Sea. Josh.2v9-11. Is.26v9. Many generations later ungodly nations were still trembling at the memory of these mighty miracles. 1Sam.4v6-8. Our Lord's nature miracles had a profound effect on those who saw them. Mk.4v35-41. Jn.6v14. We need to experience all the operations of the Spirit's workings. Christians can, and should, be energised by God and manifest His spiritual gifts.

8. Works. "Erga."

"Erga" is used in the New Testament to speak of the deeds of men, both good and evil; but it is also used, particularly by Christ in John's Gospel, to speak of the miraculous works of God. Jn.3v19-21. 4v34. 5v20,36. 6v28,29. 9v3,4. 10v25,32,33,37,38. 14v10-12. 15v24. 17v4. Acts.13v41. 1Cor.3v13-15. Rev.2v2. 20v10. etc.. God's normal works are mighty miracles, we should not limit the mighty workings of God by our small expectations and abilities; this was the sin of Israel, and it is often the sin of the Church. Ps.78v41. Eph.3v19-21.

9. "The works of power of the age to come." "Dunameis te mellontos aionos." Heb.6v5.

Paul tells us that spiritual gifts are a partial manifestation of the powers of the coming age. In 1Cor.13v8-13., Paul is certainly not saying that spiritual gifts would cease with the ministries of the apostles, or with the completion of the Scripture canon; for Paul tells us, in this very same Scripture, that spiritual gifts will continue until that which is perfect is come, that is, when King Jesus returns and the God of love sets up His kingdom on earth. To say, as some do, that, "that which is perfect" is the canon of Scripture, does violence to the context, which speaks of a future full and perfect knowledge, "epignosomai," the future middle indicative of "epiginosko;" we can only experience this "full knowledge" when we die and go to heaven, or at the "perfect day" when God's kingdom comes to earth at Christ's second coming. Prov.4v18. In "A Bible Commentary For Today," edited by Howley, Bruce and Ellison, Paul Marsh states that "when the perfect comes" in 1Cor.13v10., anticipates the Parousia, the culmination of this age, and a "face to face" intimacy with the Lord as yet unknown. He states that there is no support for the biblical use of "perfect," or any of its cognate forms, that "perfect" refers to the completion of the Scripture canon. Marsh says this interpretation only exists because people feel a need to explain the absence of certain "charismata" from their churches.

Paul states that spiritual gifts only cease in the sense that the partial use of "the powers of the age to come," will continue until they are exchanged for the full, complete and perfect use of those powers in God's kingdom. The occasional manifestations of the power gifts will be replaced by the permanent, continual and complete manifestations of those powers. The permanent possession of power to do every kind of miracle will be a fact. The supernatural transport of Elijah and Philip is a rare and exceptional thing in the Scriptures, but it is the everyday norm in the kingdom of God. 1Kings.18v12. 2Kings.2v11. Acts.8v39,40. The partial words of wisdom and knowledge, and discerning of spirits, will be replaced by the continual and perfect revelation of the wisdom

and knowledge that comes from face to face fellowship with God. The ability to know and worship in all the tongues of angels and men will supersede the ability to speak in and interpret unknown tongues. The partial revelations of a prophetic gift and ministry will disappear in the fullness and perfect revelation of face to face communion with God. Paul said that even his 23 years of mature Christian experience and knowledge was as babyhood compared with the experience and knowledge of the kingdom of God, when our present hazy image of God will be replaced by the glorious experience of a face to face vision of God. 1Cor.13v10-12. Ellicott confirms this interpretation, he writes on 1Cor.13v10., "This verse shows by the emphatic 'then,' that the time when the gifts shall cease is the end of this dispensation. The imperfect shall not cease until the perfect is brought in."

Those who insist that God has withdrawn spiritual gifts, must, if they are to be consistent, insist that God has removed them all. If the sceptics believe that spiritual gifts are not for today, then they should not pray for divine healing, for this is a gift of healing. They should not pray for illumination upon a problem, or guidance from God, for this is a word of wisdom, or a word of knowledge. They should not pray for preachers to receive the Holy Spirit's anointing, or for Satan's hold upon people to be broken, or for people to be blessed, for all these are in the sphere of operation of the gift of faith. They should not pray for a miraculous supply of material needs, for this is the province of workings of miracles; they should not pray for a revelation of God to the soul, for this is a discerning of spirits. They should not pray for God to inspire them in prayer, for this is the function of the gift of tongues and prophetic prayer. It is a fact, that Christians who say that spiritual gifts have been withdrawn, often pray for the manifestation of God's spiritual gifts. Those who reject spiritual gifts, would in reality totally remove God's influence from His Church. Let us accept the wisdom of God in giving His gifts, and not charge Him with folly, or frustrate His loving purposes through His gifts. "The powers of the age to come," are still available today, for God has promised to confirm His truth by signs and wonders until the great and notable day of our Lord's second coming. Acts.2v17-21,38,39. Heb13v8.

10. Signs. "Semeia." NT:4592

In the New Testament "semeion" speaks of a sign, mark, token, wonder and miracle. Spiritual gifts are a sign from God and a signpost to God. God desires to answer Satan's lying signs and wonders, and to show the world that He is the living God. 2Thes.2v9. Mt.24v24. 2Tim.3v8. Rev.16v13,14. etc.. In Mt.12v38-45., the Lord Jesus was not condemning miraculous signs through spiritual gifts, for He had given multiplied thousands of them; He was condemning the people who had such evil hearts of unbelief that they would not believe that He was the Christ, or even a prophet from God, after seeing a multitude of signs, wonders and miracles through His ministry. Christ's enemies refused to accept His signs, and had the affrontery to demand their personal proof and sign from God after seeing untold numbers of signs, wonders and miracles through the manifestation of mercy gifts of healing, and other gifts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus refused to grant the personal signs of His enemies, but He asked the people to accept the miracles and healings that He did as a proof of the Divine source of His ministry and authority, and He promised them more signs to help them believe. Jn.5v20,35-37. 10v37.38. Mt.11v20-30.

Signs, wonders, and miracles are a vital part of the armoury of the Church of Christ. Mk.16v17,20. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9. Acts.5v12-16. 8v5-8. Rom.15v18-21. 1Cor.2v4,5. 14v25. 2Cor.12v12. The early Church did not depend upon oratory, but upon the truth confirmed by the signs and wonders of God. Lk.9v1,2. 10v1-9. Mk.16v17,20. Acts.4v16. 5v12. 6v8. 8v5-8. 2Cor.12v12. Rom.15v18-21. 1Cor.14v25. Miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were certainly not just confined to apostles, or only transmitted by apostles; Christ made them available to every member of His Church as they had need of them. Paul told the Christians of each Church to covet earnestly the gifts of the Holy Spirit, for ordinary Christians needed these gifts as well as apostles. 1Cor.1v7. 12v31. 14v1,5,18,39.

The command to desire spiritual gifts is as binding as Paul's command to follow after love. 1Cor.14v1. 1Cor.2v4,5. This is why Paul told each local Church to covet earnestly the gifts of the Holy Spirit, local Churches needed these gifts as well as apostles. 1Cor.12v31. 14v1,5,18,39. Miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were certainly not just confined to apostles, or only transmitted by apostles; Jesus gives them to every member of His Church as we have need of them. Acts.8v5-8. 6v8. 9v10-18. 10v1-7. 1Cor.1v7. 12v7. Spiritual gifts and their accompanying signs and wonders are promised to the Church until God's kingdom comes upon earth at Christ's second coming. Acts.2v17-21,38,39. Jn.14v12-14. Rev.11v1-15.

The confirmation of the Gospel by mighty signs and wonders is a mighty appeal to the unconverted person, and Jesus said that unbelief and hatred of the God and truth in such circumstances can be a final act of spiritual suicide. Jn.15v21-25. The final defence of the sceptic who is confronted by an undeniable sign from God, is to say that it is a display of Satan's power. When Jesus confronted the sceptics with signs that could only come from God, they said that they were a manifestation of the power of Satan; Jesus said this response meant they were in danger of committing the eternal and unforgiveable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Mt.12v22-32. Mk.3v20-35.

11. Miracles. "Dunameis."

"Dunamis" speaks of ability, power, strength, an act of supernatural power, it is used of works of a supernatural character and origin, which could not occur, or be produced by natural laws or natural agents. In

the A.V. it is translated as "power" seventy seven times; "mighty work" eleven times; "miracle" eight times; "strength" seven times; "might" four times; "virtue" three times; "mighty deed" once; "ability" once; "wonderful works," once; etc.. Every gift of the Holy Spirit is miraculous,

12. Wonders. "Teras."

"Teras," occurs 16 times in the New Testament, and is always associated with either "signs," "seemia;" or "miracles," "dunameis." It is used to speak of God's wonders twelve times, Acts.2v19,22,43. 4v30. 5v12. 6v8. 7v36. 14v3. 15v12. Rom.15v19. 2Cor.12v12. Heb.2v4.; of Satan's lying wonders three times, Mt.24v24. Mk.13v22. 2The.2v9., and on another occasion, in John.4v48., Christ states that signs and wonders establish faith in otherwise faithless people. See John.5v19,20. Satan is doing many "lying wonders" through false cults, the Church has the complete answer to these "lying wonders," if it will seek and manifest God's spiritual gifts. Indeed, Satan and the powers of darkness fear the Holy Spirit's gifts, and try to stop Christians from seeking them; or try to make Christians fanatical and proud when they manifest them, even as Satan tried with the Lord Jesus. Mt.4v1-11. It is vitally important to realise that Jesus has guaranteed that as God's children, we cannot receive anything evil when we are worshipping God, or seeking God, for His gracious gifts. Mt.7v7-11. Lk.11v9-13. 1Jn.5v18. God has not left the field of the miraculous to Satan, we can still have the gracious gifts of Divine illumination and guidance, and Divine inspiration and power. God still does wonders, He is not "The Great I Was," He is "The Great I Am," The Great Yahweh, who changes not; He still manifests wonders, marvels, portents, and prodigies through His spiritual gifts.

13. Wonderful things."

"**Thaumasios.**" In Mt.21v15. the neuter plural of the adjective "thaumasios," "wonderful," is used as a noun, to speak of the "wonders, or wonderful things," that our Lord did in healing the blind and lame in the Temple, which really incensed ("aganakteo," "to much displease," see Mt.20v24. 26v8. Mk.10v14,41. 14v4. Lk.13v14.) the chief priests and scribes.

"**Thaumazo.**" a verb meaning, "to wonder at, to marvel;" it occurs 46 times in the New Testament, and shows well the astonishment caused by our Lord's life and ministry. People marvelled at Christ's birth and childhood. Lk.2v18,33. The apostles marvelled at the stilling of the storm in Mt.8v27. and Lk.8v25.. The apostles marvelled when Jesus walked on the water, Mark writes, in Mk.6v51,52., "they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure and MARVELLED, for they did not consider the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was in a settled state of hardness." "Thaumazo" is used to express the astonishment of the apostles when the fig tree withered. Mt.21v20. "Thaumazo" describes the astonishment of the multitudes at our Lord's miracles. Mt.9v8,33. 15v31. Lk.9v43. 11v14. Jn.5v20. 7v21.; and the effect of the miracles of the early Church, Acts.2v7. 3v12. 4v13.. It is used to describe how the people at Nazareth marvelled, even in their unbelief, at our Lord's gracious and beautiful words in the synagogue, Lk.4v22.; and how our Lord marvelled at the unbelief at Nazareth, Mk.6v6.; and marvelled at the faith of the Centurion in Mt.8v10. and Lk.7v9.. It is used to express the astonishment of Christ's critics at His gracious words and wisdom. Mk.12v17. Lk.4v22. 20v26. Jn.7v15.

THE STRIKING REACTION OF PEOPLE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MIRACLES.

Many remarkable Greek words are used to describe and express the awe, wonder, amazement, astonishment and fear, that people felt when they saw and reacted to the workings of God the Holy Spirit.

"**Thambeo.**" Is a verb meaning, "to stupefy with surprise, to astound, to amaze, to astonish," it only occurs in Mk.1v27. 10v24,32. and Acts.9v6., being translated either as "amazed, or astonished" in the Authorised Version. The noun "thambos," means "amazed, astonished, dumbfounded," it is probably derived from a root meaning, "to render immovable, to dumbfound," and is associated with terror as well as astonishment and amazement; it only occurs in Lk.4v36. 5v9. and Acts.3v10..

"**Ekthambeo.**" Is an intensified verb form of "thambeo," meaning "to be greatly amazed, to be greatly frightened," it only occurs four times in the New Testament, all in Mark's Gospel, Mk.9v15. 14v33., and 16v5,6.. In Mk.9v15., we read that people were "greatly amazed and fearful" when they saw Jesus after His transfiguration, it is obvious that they saw the residual glory and majesty of the transfiguration still upon Him after He came down the mountain and met the people, it reminds us of the experience of Moses. 2Cor.3v7-18. Another deeply moving Scripture which uses "ekthambeo" is Mk.14v33., which tells us that Jesus began to be "sore amazed" and deeply troubled and depressed at the extreme conflict and pressure that came upon Him in the garden of Gethsemane; it gives the impression that the pressure was even worse than He expected. In Mk.16v5,6. we see the women who went to the tomb being amazed and frightened at the vision of the angel at the tomb, the angel tells them not to be frightened, but to realise that Jesus is risen from the dead.

"**Existemi.**" This verb "existemi," means literally, "to stand out from, to be beside oneself," and so "to be amazed." It occurs 17 times in the New Testament. It occurs once in Matthew's Gospel, in Mt.12v23., in the imperfect tense "existanto," all the multitude were beside themselves with amazement and excitement at the deliverance of a demon possessed person. It occurs four times in Mark's Gospel; at the healing of the palsied man, Mk.2v12.; it is used in the aorist tense, "exeste," by Christ's family to say He was insane, in Mk.3v21.,

See Acts.26v24. and 2Cor.5v13. It is used with "ekstasis" in the raising of Jairus's daughter from the dead in Mk.4v52.. It is used in the imperfect tense in Mk.6v51., with "ekthaumazo," when the apostles "were exceedingly beyond measure in themselves were amazed" ("existanto"), and marvelled, ("ethaumazon"), when our Lord walked on the water. "Existemi" is used three times in Luke's Gospel. In Lk.2v47., it is used to show the reaction of people to Christ's understanding and answers in the temple at twelve years of age. In Lk.8v56. it reveals the reaction of Jairus and his wife when Jesus raised their daughter from the dead. In Lk.24v22. it reveals the unreasoning astonishment and unbelief of the apostles to the women's testimony that they had seen the risen Christ.

"Existemi" occurs seven times in Acts. In Acts.2v7,12. of the amazement over the gift of tongues. In Acts.8v9. of the astonishment (translated "bewitched" in the A.V.) of the people at the evil miracles of Simon the sorcerer; and in Acts.8v13. of Simon's astonishment at the great miracles that God did through Philip. In Acts.9v21. it is used of the astonishment caused by the testimony of the newly converted Paul on those who heard him. In Acts.10v45. the Christian Jews, bound by their Jewish traditions, were besides themselves with astonishment, that Gentiles had been given the Holy Spirit. In Acts.12v16., it is used of the loud exclamations of amazement and joy of the people praying for Peter's deliverance, when Peter came to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, after his deliverance by the angel. Acts.12v12. Paul uses "existemi" once in 2Cor.5v13.; where he says if he was beside himself it was for God; he certainly did many things that the world and some Christians thought was quite mad, just as Christ's family thought that He was mad. Mk.3v21.

"Ekstasis." The noun "ekstasis," is related to the verb "existemi," it means literally, "a standing out," it is derived from "ek," "out of," and "stasis," "a standing." It occurs 7 times in the New Testament. It is used in Acts.10v10. 11v5. and 22v17., when Peter and Paul became unconscious to everything else except the vision they saw. "Ekstasis" is used with "existemi" in Mk.5v42., when Jesus raised Jairus's daughter from the dead, and all were "astonished with great astonishment," and the parents were "besides themselves with great ecstasy." Lk.8v56. In Mk.16v8., when the angel told the women of the resurrection of Jesus, the women fled from the tomb "trembling and astonished," "ekstasis;" Matthew reads, "with fear and great joy." Mt.28v8. People were filled with wonder and ecstasy when the man born crippled was healed at the beautiful gate. Acts.3v10. In Lk.5v26., "amazement took hold on all," "lambano," "to take hold of," is used with "ekstasis," to describe people being gripped by amazement, at the healing of the paralytic, and by fear, "phobos," when the widow of Nain's son was raised from the dead. Lk.7v16..

"Eklepso." This verb is derived from the intensive, "ek," "out of," and "plesso," "to strike," and so means to be exceedingly struck in mind, and astonished. It occurs 13 times in the New Testament. It occurs 4 times in Matthew's Gospel. In Mt.7v28., the multitudes "were struck out of themselves;" the imperfect tense shows the continual buzz of astonished conversation at the authoritative teaching of Jesus. In Mt.13v54. His townspeople at Nazareth were likewise astonished at our Lord's teaching, wisdom and works of power; however, they were offended in Him, and refused to believe in Him; the imperfect passive shows the continual rejection of Christ. In Mt.19v25., the imperfect tense is used to show the disciples continuing mood of total astonishment when our Lord said that it is difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. In Mt.22v33. the perfect passive shows the settled state of amazement of the crowds at our Lord's teaching, they were amazed, besides themselves, and overwhelmed by it. "Eklepso" occurs five times in Mark's Gospel; Mk.1v22. 6v2. 7v37. 10v26. 11v18.; three times in Luke's Gospel; 2v48. 4v32. 9v43.; and once in Acts; Acts.13v12., the temporary blinding of Elymas the sorcerer" by Paul, astounded the proconsul Sergius Paulus, and caused him to become a believer in the Lord.

"Phobos." A noun which originally had the meaning of flight through being frightened, then it came to mean the fear, dread and terror that caused that flight. It is used of the fear that came on people when they saw the divine miraculous. Mt.14v26. 28v4,8. Mk.4v41. Lk.1v12,65. 2v9. 5v26. 7v16. 8v37. 21v26. Acts.2v43. 5v5,11. Rev.11v11. "Phobos" is also used many times of the reverential fear of God, Acts.9v31. 19v17-20. Rom.3v18. 2Cor.5v11. 7v1,11,15. Eph.5v21. 6v5. Phil.2v12. 1Pet.1v17. 3v15. 1Jn.4v18.; and fear of death and eternal judgement, Rom.8v15. Jude.v23.; and the proper respect and fear of authorities and superiors in Rom.13v3,7. and 1Pet.2v18. In Acts.19v13-17. even a demon caused people to fear, and Christ to be magnified.

"Phobeomai." A verb akin to "phobos," which in earlier Greek meant, "to put to flight;" in the New Testament it is always used with the meaning, "to be afraid, to fear, to show reverential fear. In the Authorised Version it is translated, "fear," 63 times; "be afraid," 25 times; "be afraid of," 4 times; and "reverence," once. It is used of the fear of the disciples when our Lord stilled the storm, Mk.4v41. When the demoniac of Gadara was healed, all who saw him were afraid. Mk.5v15. Jesus told Jairus to believe and not be afraid. Mk.6v36. The apostles were sore afraid in the mount of transfiguration, Mt.17v6,7.; The visitation of angels and our Lord, brought fear. Lk.1v13,30,50. 2v9,10. Rev.1v17.

When Jesus went up to Jerusalem just before His sufferings and death, the disciples were amazed ("ethambounto," the imperfect of "thambeo"), and afraid ("ephobounto," the imperfect of "phobeomai"), at the grimly determined way our Lord walked before them, and His whole grave and serious deportment. Mk.10v32. He steadfastly set His face like a flint to go to Jerusalem. Lk.9v51. Is.50v7.

"Phoberos." An adjective meaning "fearful," it is used in the active sense in the New Testament, that is, in the sense of causing fear, and so means, fearful, terrifying, or terrible. It only occurs in the New Testament in Heb.12v21., and 10v27,31.. "Phoberos" is translated as "terrible," in the Authorised Version of Heb.12v21., "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceeding fear and tremble with terror."

"Ekphobos." An adjective, from the intensive "ek," "out of," and "phobos," "frightened." It only occurs in Heb.12v21. and Mk.9v6.. In Heb.12v21., Moses said, "I am exceeding fearful," even Moses was frightened and shaken by the manifestations of God's power and glory at Mount Sinai. Here, "ekphobos," "I exceeding fear," is used with "entromos," to tremble and quake with fear.

In Mk.9v6., it is revealed that the disciples were "sore afraid" at the revelation of the glory of God manifested at Mount Hermon, during the transfiguration of Jesus and the visit of Moses and Elijah. The verb "ekphobeo," only occurs in 2Cor.10v9., where Paul writes, "as if I would terrify you by letters."

"Entromos." An adjective meaning "trembling with fear," from the intensive "en," "in," and "tremo," "to tremble, to quake." It only occurs in Acts.7v32. 16v29. and Heb.12v21.. It is used in Acts.7v32., of Moses trembling with fear at the burning bush, and in Heb.12v21., of Moses trembling with fear at the manifestations of God's glory at Sinai. In Acts.16v29., the jailor trembled in fear at the heavenly earthquake that shook the prison.

We are told in Heb.12v28., to serve God with reverence, "aidous" and godly fear, "eulabeias:" and we are told in Heb.5v7. that our Lord's strong crying and tears were heard in Gethsemane because of His godly fear, "eulabeia," which speaks of a careful and watchful reverence in every circumstance of life.

"Emphobos." An adjective which literally means, "in fear," from "en," in, and "phobos," fear; and means afraid, terrified and affrighted. It only occurs in Lk.24v5,37. Acts.10v4. 22v9. 24v25. and Rev.11v13..

"Perieko." "To encompass, enclose, contain." In Lk.5v9. we read that astonishment encompassed and seized, "perieko," Peter and his companions at the catch of fish.

The strength and repetition of these words of awe, amazement, astonishment, wonder and fear, convey in the most striking manner the remarkable effect of the gifts of the Holy Spirit on those who beheld His miracles. People were compelled to listen and take heed to the Gospel by the "wonderful things" that God was doing; the same response occurs today where these gifts are manifested in power. The inhabitants of the world learn righteousness when God's power and judgements are manifested in the earth. Is.26v8,9. Rom.15v18-21. Divine miracles that arrested, gripped, and even frightened and terrified people, were the cutting edge of both Old Testament and New Testament evangelism. They revealed the awesome majesty and justice of God, as well as His amazing grace and mercy.

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