

Speaking in Tongues Defined

1. **Definition:** Speaking in tongues is the supernatural gift of speaking in another language without having learned it.
2. **Greek Term:** The Greek word for tongues is "glossa," meaning either the physical organ or a language.
3. **Theological Term:** Modern theological term for speaking in tongues is "glossolalia."
4. **Modern Translations:**
 - Moffat: "speak in foreign tongues"
 - Goodspeed: "speak in foreign languages"
 - Phillips: "speak in different languages"

New Testament References

1. **Acts 2:** Day of Pentecost where the disciples spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4).
2. **Acts 10:44-47:** Cornelius and his household spoke in tongues upon receiving the Holy Spirit.
3. **Acts 19:6:** Disciples in Ephesus spoke in tongues when Paul laid hands on them.
4. **1 Corinthians 12-14:** Detailed discussion on the spiritual gifts, including tongues.

Characteristics of Speaking in Tongues

1. **Divine Empowerment:** Speaking in tongues happens by the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).
2. **Genuine Languages:** The languages spoken are genuine, although the speakers do not understand them (Acts 2).
3. **Types of Languages:** The languages can be either human or angelic (1 Corinthians 13:1).

4. (1Co 13:1) Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
5. **Recognition by Others:** Often, observers can recognize the languages being spoken (Acts 2).

The Significance of Speaking in Tongues

1. **Not Gibberish:** Tongues are not nonsensical babble or ecstatic utterances without meaning.
2. **Gift from God:** Speaking in tongues is a significant gift from God for the New Testament church.
3. **Part of God's Plan:** It plays an important role in God's plan for the church.

Isaiah's Prophecy (Isaiah 28:11-12)

1. **Prophetic Role:** Isaiah foretold that stammering lips and another tongue would be a sign (Isaiah 28:11-12).
2. (Isa 28:9) Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts.
3. (Isa 28:10) For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:
4. (Isa 28:11) For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.
5. (Isa 28:12) To whom he said, This *is* the rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear.
6. **Rest and Refreshing:** The prophecy links tongues with spiritual rest and refreshing, identified with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19).
7. (Act 3:19) Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

New Testament Applications

1. **Peter's Confirmation:** Peter links Isaiah's prophecy with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
2. **Paul's Application:** Paul cites Isaiah's prophecy to explain the role of tongues as a sign (1 Corinthians 14:21-22).
3. (1Co 14:21) In the law it is written, With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.
4. (1Co 14:22) Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.
- 5.
6. **Sign for Unbelievers:** Tongues serve as a sign to encourage unbelievers to believe in God's Word.

Speaking in Tongues as a Sign (Mark 16:17)

1. **Promise of Tongues:** Jesus promised that speaking in tongues would be a sign for believers: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17).
2. **Translations:**
 - "New tongues" is rendered as "new languages" (TAB) or "foreign tongues" (Goodspeed).

Objections to Mark 16:17-18 and Rebuttals

1. **Opponents' Criticism:** Critics challenge Mark 16:17 by associating it with Mark 16:18, which mentions handling serpents and drinking poison.
2. (Mar 16:17) And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

3. (Mar 16:18) They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.
4. **Misinterpretation of Verse 18:** Some small sects believe Christians should prove their faith by handling poisonous snakes, which critics use to discredit speaking in tongues.

Proper Understanding of Mark 16:18

1. **Protection in Accidents:** Verse 18 promises protection in accidental situations, such as snake bites or poisoning, not deliberate tests of faith.
 - Example: Paul was bitten by a viper but remained unharmed (Acts 28:1-6).
2. **Spiritual Application:** The verse also promises power over demonic forces.
 - Jesus' promise: "Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19).
3. **Temptation of Christ:** Jesus refused to test God by jumping off the temple, emphasizing, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matthew 4:7).
4. **Conclusion:** We should not dismiss verse 18 to ignore verse 17 but seek to understand and apply both.

Initial Fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost

1. **Occasion:** The Day of Pentecost marks the initial fulfillment of the prophecies concerning tongues.

2. **Participants:** 120 Jewish disciples of Christ, including the apostles, Jesus' brothers, Mary the mother of Jesus, and several women, were baptized with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues.

- Reference: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1).

Supernatural Manifestations

1. **Sound from Heaven:** A sound from heaven like a rushing mighty wind filled the house.

- Reference: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2).

2. **Tongues of Fire:** Cloven tongues like fire appeared and sat upon each person.

- Reference: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:3).
- NIV: "They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them" (Acts 2:3, NIV).

Filled with the Holy Ghost

1. **Speaking in Tongues:** They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

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

Significance of Speaking in Tongues

1. **Sign of Spirit Baptism:** Speaking in tongues was the unique sign that each person had been baptized or filled with the Holy Spirit.

- The miracle occurred as the Spirit moved on the speakers, not on the hearers.

- Reference: "They began to speak in tongues only after the Spirit had entered" (Acts 2:4).

Unique Occurrences and Lasting Importance

1. **Unique Occurrences:** The sound of wind and the tongues like fire did not reappear in Scripture, paralleling the phenomena at the giving of the Law (Exodus 19:16-19).
2. (Exo 19:16) And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled.
3. (Exo 19:17) And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.
4. (Exo 19:18) And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.
5. (Exo 19:19) And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.
- 6.
7. **Lasting Importance:** Speaking in tongues reoccurs in the Bible and is the only sign particularly associated with individual Spirit baptism.
 - Unlike the sound and fire, speaking in tongues has lasting importance and function.

Witness to Foreign Jews

1. **Diverse Audience:** Jews from many nations were in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, representing fourteen foreign lands (Acts 2:5-11).
2. **Marvel of Languages:** These visitors were astonished to hear their native languages spoken by uneducated Galileans.
 - Reference: "And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?" (Acts 2:7).

Purpose of Tongues

1. **Sign of the Holy Spirit:** The miracle of tongues was a sign that God had bestowed His Spirit, not necessarily to preach the gospel to the foreigners.
 - Peter delivered his sermon in one language, likely Aramaic or Greek.
 - Reference: "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words" (Acts 2:14).
2. **Fulfillment of Prophecy:** Peter used the phenomenon of tongues to explain the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy concerning the outpouring of the Spirit.
 - Reference: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16).
3. (Joe 2:28) And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:
4. (Joe 2:29) And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.
5. (Joe 2:30) And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.
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6. **Evidence of the Holy Ghost:** Peter emphasized that the speaking in tongues was evidence of the promised Holy Spirit.
 - Reference: "Exalted to the right hand of God, he [Jesus] has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33, NIV).

Cornelius and His Household Receive the Holy Ghost

1. **Event Description:** The first Gentiles to receive the Holy Ghost spoke in tongues while Peter was speaking.

- Reference: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:44-46).

Jewish Christians' Reaction

1. **Astonishment:** The Jewish Christians with Peter were astonished because they did not expect Gentiles to receive the Holy Ghost immediately.

- Reference: "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter" (Acts 10:45).

2. **Traditional Belief:** Jews traditionally believed that one had to convert to Judaism first in order to be saved (Acts 15:1).

3. (Act 15:1) And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

Evidence of Receiving the Holy Ghost

1. **Speaking in Tongues as Evidence:** The Jews with Peter recognized that Cornelius and his household had received the Holy Ghost because they heard them speak with tongues.

- Reference: "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).

2. **Incontrovertible Evidence:** Speaking in tongues was the undeniable evidence of their reception of the Holy Ghost.

- Commentary: The Pulpit Commentary states, “This was the incontrovertible evidence of their reception of the Holy Ghost.”

3. **Absence of Other Signs:** There was no mention of a sound like wind or tongues like fire; speaking in tongues alone was the conclusive evidence.

Magnifying God

1. **Praising God:** The Spirit-filled Gentiles also magnified God, either in tongues or their own language.

- Reference: "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).

2. **Non-miraculous Praise:** If they praised in their own language, it was a result of receiving the Spirit but not the miraculous sign that convinced the skeptical Jews.

Peter's Report to the Jerusalem Church

1. **Comparison to Pentecost:** Peter reported the events to the church in Jerusalem, stating that the Holy Ghost fell on the Gentiles as it did on the Jewish believers at the beginning.

- Reference: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15).

2. **Common Sign:** Speaking in tongues is the only sign that both Acts 2 and Acts 10 have in common.

- Conclusion: Speaking in tongues alone was enough to convince Peter that the Gentiles had received the Pentecostal experience.

Key Points on the Disciples of John the Baptist at Ephesus Speaking in Tongues

Event Description

1. **Reception of the Spirit:** The disciples of John the Baptist at Ephesus spoke in tongues when they received the Holy Spirit.
 - Reference: "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6).

Significance of the Event

1. **Inclusivity of Spirit Baptism:** This account demonstrates that the baptism of the Spirit with tongues is for all believers.
2. **Establishment of a Norm:** While the tongues in Acts 2 and 10 could be viewed as unique signs for Jews and Gentiles, Acts 19 establishes speaking in tongues as the norm for the New Testament church.
 - Purpose: The tongues served as a sign to these individual believers that they had received the same experience given to others.

Modern Relevance

1. **Continued Validity:** The reasons God had for giving the Ephesians the sign of tongues still exist today, making this use of tongues just as valid and needed in the present day.

Additional Manifestation: Prophecy

1. **Prophecy Defined:** Prophecy is the speaking forth of the mind and counsel of God or the forth telling of the will of God.
 - Strong's Exhaustive Concordance: To prophesy means to "speak under inspiration," which can include the gift of prophecy or any anointed preaching, praising, and testifying (1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 11:4-5; Revelation 19:10).

2. **Ephesians' Prophecy:** After receiving the Spirit, the Ephesians prophesied, potentially speaking words in their own language after speaking in tongues.

- Reference: "They spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6).
- Example: On Pentecost, the 120 spoke of the wonderful works of God as they spoke in tongues (Acts 2:11).

Distinction Between Tongues and Prophecy

1. **Initial Sign:** Tongues preceded prophecy, making it the initial sign of Spirit baptism.
 - Tongues occurred first, serving as the initial evidence of receiving the Spirit.
2. **Lack of Uniformity:** No other account of Spirit baptism mentions prophecy, indicating it is not a uniform sign like tongues.
3. **Supernatural Nature:** Tongues are readily identifiable as a supernatural, miraculous sign, especially to nonbelievers, while prophecy may not be as easily recognized.

Conclusion

1. **Importance of Tongues:** Speaking in tongues remains a significant sign of receiving the Holy Spirit, with a lasting importance for all believers, demonstrating the ongoing work of the Spirit in the church.

Samaritans Receiving the Holy Ghost

Event Description

1. **Lack of Explicit Mention:** The account in Acts 8 of the Samaritans receiving the Holy Ghost does not explicitly mention speaking in tongues or provide a description of the signs of their Spirit baptism.
 - Reference: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:17).

Evidence of a Tangible Sign

1. **Observable Phenomenon:** Despite the lack of detailed description, there was a tangible, observable sign indicating Spirit baptism that both believers and nonbelievers recognized as supernatural.

Logical Assumptions for the Sign

1. **Absence of the Spirit Prior:** Despite miracles, joy, belief, and water baptism, it was known that the Samaritans had not yet received the Spirit. Philip, Peter, and John expected a specific sign, and its absence indicated the Samaritans had not received the Spirit.
 - Reference: "For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16).
2. **Definite Sign upon Reception:** Everyone recognized the moment the Samaritans received the Spirit when Peter and John laid hands on them. This recognition required a definite, observable sign beyond emotional feelings, confession of faith, or water baptism, which had already occurred.
3. **Impression on Simon the Magician:** Simon the Magician was so impressed by the sign that he desired the power to lay hands on people to manifest this sign, indicating it was a remarkable supernatural occurrence.

- Reference: "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money" (Acts 8:18).

The Nature of the Sign

1. **Supernatural Sign:** The sign was more than expressions of joy, confessions of faith, or praise to God, which could be easily counterfeited. It impressed Simon in a way other miracles had not.
 - The Pulpit Commentary: Acknowledges the existence of a sign associated with the impartation of the Spirit by the apostles that was observable and supernatural.
2. **Comparison to Pentecost:** When comparing the Samaritans' experience with other accounts, the sign is inferred to be speaking in tongues, similar to the Day of Pentecost.
 - Reference: The Pulpit Commentary suggests that the signs at Pentecost, such as speaking in tongues, preaching, or praying, were realized outwardly.
 - Acts 2:4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Supporting Opinions

1. **Hoekema's Conclusion:** Even critics like Hoekema, who do not believe speaking in tongues is available today, acknowledge that the Samaritans probably spoke in tongues based on the need for public evidence of receiving the Spirit.
 - Quote: "Though we are not told in so many words that the Samaritans spoke with tongues...there must have been some public evidence of their having received the Spirit. We may therefore agree with our Pentecostal friends at that point that the Samaritans probably did speak with tongues."

Acts 9 indicates that Paul received the Spirit but it

gives no description of this event. As a result, the passage does not mention speaking in tongues. Paul, however, spoke in tongues frequently, for he later said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (I Corinthians 14:18).

Summary of Cases

1. Pentecost (Acts 2)

- Recipients: 120 Jewish disciples, including apostles, Jesus' brothers, and women.
- Sign: Speaking in tongues immediately.
- Reference: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

2. Cornelius (Acts 10)

- Recipients: Cornelius and his household.
- Sign: Speaking in tongues immediately.
- Reference: "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).

3. Ephesus (Acts 19)

- Recipients: Disciples of John the Baptist.
- Sign: Speaking in tongues immediately.

- Reference: "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6).

4. Samaria (Acts 8)

- Recipients: Samaritans.
- Sign: Not explicitly described, but a miraculous, immediately identifiable outward sign was present, most likely speaking in tongues.
- Reference: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:17).
- Commentary: The Pulpit Commentary and other commentators agree it was likely speaking in tongues.

5. Paul (Acts 9)

- Recipients: Paul (Saul of Tarsus).
- Sign: The Bible does not describe his Spirit baptism but later reveals he spoke in tongues throughout his life.
- Reference: "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Corinthians 14:18).

Examination of Possible Signs

1. Wind and Fire (Acts 2)

- Unique Elements: Sound like wind and tongues like fire preceded the first outpouring of the Spirit.
- Frequency: Not mentioned in any other account.
- Reference: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind... And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire" (Acts 2:2-3).

2. Spiritual Gifts and Miracles (Acts 8)

- Not All Considered Signs: Spiritual gifts and miracles were not universally seen as signs of Spirit baptism.
- Reference: Acts 8 demonstrates the need for a specific sign beyond general miracles and gifts.

3. **Prophecy (Acts 19)**

- Timing: Mentioned after speaking in tongues.
- Reference: "They spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6).

4. **Magnifying (Praising) God (Acts 10)**

- Nature: Not considered a miraculous sign.
- Importance: Speaking in tongues is identified as the sufficient sign of receiving the Spirit.
- Reference: "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).

Conclusion

1. **Primary Sign:** Speaking in tongues is consistently presented as the primary, unmistakable sign of receiving the Holy Ghost.
2. **Additional Signs:** Other signs, such as prophecy or magnifying God, may accompany Spirit baptism but are secondary to the primary sign of speaking in tongues.
3. **Validation Across Cases:** The consistency of speaking in tongues across different cases highlights its importance as a sign of Spirit baptism in the New Testament church.

Speaking in Tongues as the Initial Sign

1. **Consistent Manifestation:** Speaking in tongues is the only outward manifestation that appears in more than one account in the Book of Acts and occurs at the actual moment of Spirit baptism.

- **Pentecost (Acts 2):** "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).
 - **Cornelius (Acts 10):** "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46).
 - **Ephesus (Acts 19):** "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6).
2. **Teaching of Acts:** The Book of Acts teaches that a person will speak in tongues when they receive the Holy Ghost, making it the initial evidence of Spirit baptism.

Possible References by Jesus and Paul

1. **Jesus' Reference:** Jesus may have alluded to speaking in tongues when He said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth [pleases], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).
2. **Paul's Writings:** Speaking in tongues fulfills Romans 8:16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."
 - **Confessing Jesus as Lord:** Paul's teaching on confessing Jesus as Lord could also include speaking in tongues, as "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 12:3).

Necessity of Tongues

1. **Salvation:** Tongues do not save; salvation is by faith. However, just as works accompany genuine faith, tongues accompany the baptism of the Spirit.
 - **Faith and Works:** "We are saved by faith, not works, yet works always accompany genuine faith" (James 2:17).
2. **Spirit Baptism and Tongues:** The baptism of the Spirit produces tongues as the initial sign.

- **Initial Sign:** "The Book of Acts indicates this to be so; it describes tongues and nothing else as the initial sign associated with the individual filling."

Expectation of Tongues with Spirit Baptism

1. **Biblical Consistency:** A Spirit baptism without tongues is a nonbiblical concept; the Bible does not discuss this possibility.
2. **Expectation:** We should always expect speaking in tongues when someone receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost.
 - **Consistent Evidence:** The Book of Acts consistently presents tongues as the evidence of Spirit baptism.

Conclusion

1. **Significance of Tongues:** Speaking in tongues is the initial sign that one has received the gift (baptism) of the Holy Spirit.
2. **Doctrine and Practice:** The expectation of tongues accompanying Spirit baptism is firmly rooted in biblical teaching and should be anticipated in the experience of believers.