

NATURE & PURPOSE OF TONGUES

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF TONGUES?

It is Real Human Languages

Acts 2:1-13 — Jews

“began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (2:4)

“because everyone heard them speak in his own language” (2:6)

“Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?” (2:7)

“how is it that we hear, each in our own language” (2:8)

“we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God” (2:11)

Acts 10:44-48 — Gentiles

“they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God” (10:46)

“the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning” (11:15)

“God gave them the same gift as He gave us” (11:17)

Acts 19:1-7 — OT Believers

“when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them” (19:6)

“they spoke with tongues and prophesied” (19:6)

- Paul and Luke were companions. At the same time the Acts 19 event took place Paul wrote 1 Corinthians (55-56AD). Tongues in Acts and Corinthians are the same.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF TONGUES?

It is a Sign of Judgment

“²¹In the law it is written: “WITH MEN OF OTHER TONGUES AND OTHER LIPS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE; AND YET, FOR ALL THAT, THEY WILL NOT HEAR ME,” says the Lord.

²²Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.” (1Co.14:21-22)

- This is the only place in Scripture that tells us what the purpose of tongues are.
- Paul quotes Isaiah 28:11. and draws a conclusion from this quotation.

“For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people” (Is.28:11)

- God made it simple. He spoke to Judah in child-like language. Still they would not hear.
- Finally, Isaiah 28 says because you would not listen to My prophets when I spoke to you in your own language, I will speak to you in a language (Babylonian) in which you would not understand.
- Moses (Du.28), Jeremiah (Je.5:15), Isaiah (Is.28), and Jesus (Lk.19:41-44) warned them about judgment (70AD). This was fulfilled multiple times.

“⁴³...and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.” (Lk.19:43-44)

- Tongues are for a sign, not to believers, but to the unbelieving Jews of judgment that was to come upon them.

