

# INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

“For to one is give by the Spirit...the interpretation of tongues” (I Corinthians 12:10)

## What This Gift Is Not

1. It is not mental performance but a spiritual process.
2. It is not a deliberate analyzing of what someone hears, but rather a yielding to the Holy Spirit to allow Him to communicate as He desires.
3. It is not translation, but **Interpretation**. A translation is a rendering from one language to another in equivalent words or grammatical terms. An **Interpretation** is a declaration of the meaning, and may be very differently stated from the precise form of the original.

## What This Gift Is

1. “**Interpretation of tongues** is the supernatural showing forth by the Spirit of the meaning of an utterance in other tongues. This interpretation is not an operation of the mind of the interpreter but the mind of the Spirit” (Harold Horton, Pg. 147, The Gifts Of The Spirit)
  2. “This gift provides the ability to know directly and intuitively that which God is seeking to communicate through the gift of tongues. Both the sense and the import of one language is made intelligible in another.” (L. Thomas Holdcroft, Pg 165, The Holy Spirit).
  3. “The **Interpretation of tongues** is bringing the meaning of what has been said through the gift of tongues at a public meeting.” (Dennis Bennett, Pg. 90, The Holy Spirit And You)
  4. “This gift is an inspired explanation in commonly understood language of an inspired utterance in unknown tongues” (G. Raymond Carlson, Pg 106, Spiritual Dynamics)
- ◆ Here it is: This gift is simply an inspired explanation of the message in tongues in the known language of the congregation, to convey the essence or basic meaning of the utterance in tongues.

## The Nature Of This Gift

This gift does not operate unless the gift of tongues has been in operation. It's purpose is simply to render the gift of tongues intelligible to the hearers so that all may be edified. And never forget and ever remember: When it is in the Spirit, this gift will be edifying (not condemning). “When you come together...and have an interpretation, let all things **be done unto edifying**”. (I Corinthians 14:26)

When this gift is in operation, it will explain the utterance in tongues and apply its meaning to those who hear. It will not be derogatory or misleading, nor will it seek personal recognition or show respect of persons. The interpretation will have the same result as a prophetic utterance, that of: “**Edification, exhortation, or comfort**”. (I Corinthians 14:3-5)

## The Operation Of This Gift

Like all other spiritual gifts we have covered, this gift is totally supernatural and comes directly from the Holy Spirit. It is not dependent upon the natural language of the interpreter, (they need have no understanding whatsoever of the language spoken in tongues).

The interpretation following the gift of tongues does not come by close attention to the words of the one speaking in tongues, but by a close concentration in the spirit upon the Lord, who alone gives the interpretation. This inspired interpretation originates with the Holy Spirit and flows out through the personality and mind of the believer.

(over)

The gifts are perfect, while men are imperfect. And while the Holy spirit utilizes the vocabulary of the individual person, (a person who may have no formal training and speak without perfect grammar or eloquence) that does not make the operation of this gift any less supernatural.

Yes, God may entrust His gifts to sanctified farm hands and God fearing philosophers alike. The farm hand may deliver God's message with the blunt forthrightness of an Amos while the philosopher with the refinement of an Isaiah.

### **How Is It Revealed?**

The gift of interpretation may come directly into the person's mind (in toto) or they may receive just a few beginning words. As this person trusts the Lord and speaks, the rest of the message comes to them. "The Lord may choose to give the words by vision, by burden, or by suggestion". (Donald Gee, Pg. 66, Concerning Spiritual Gifts). While we walk by faith and not by feeling; the times when God has chosen to use me in this gift have almost always carried a specific burden or great feeling. The Holy Spirit actually imparts the burden of the Lord for His people.

### **What About The Length?**

Some have asked the question, "Why is it that someone speaks at length in tongues, and the interpreter will occasionally give only a short message?"

**Answer:** The interpretation is not a word for word translation, but an interpretation which is simply showing forth the meaning of what was said in tongues. And, it may not take as many words to declare what was said.

The opposite is true as well; someone may speak a short utterance in tongues and another will speak at length in interpretation. This is just as fine, as it may take longer to give the interpretation in order to show the meaning more clearly.

### **Final Tip**

(If you are open for God to use you, keep the following in mind:)

1. When a message in tongues is given in a public meeting, immediately concentrate in spirit upon the Lord.
2. Never interrupt the one speaking, but step out in faith when opportunity affords itself.
3. Be sure to speak loudly enough for all to hear, (otherwise not all will be edified).
4. Remember; you will know when God is prompting you to exercise this gift, you will sense the quickening or witness of the Holy Spirit within.

### **And Remember...**

... "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40)

... "Let all things be done unto edifying" (I Corinthians 14:26)

... "Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church" (I Corinthians 14:12)

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