

1 Corinthians 14 Tongues

REVIEW of ACTS 1-2

[Acts 1:12-14](#) Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet... 13 ... they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. (about 120 people)

[[**English Dictionary: TONGUE** 5. **A language**; the whole sum of words used by a particular nation.]]

Greek Dictionary G1100 γλῶσσα **glōssa**, *gloce-sah'*; of uncertain affinity; the tongue; **by implication, a language (specially, one naturally unacquired)**. **KJV Words:-- tongues, tongue**

These are **the words of Jesus, a prophecy**, just before He returned to Heaven in [Mark 16:15-19](#) => And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. 17 And these signs shall accompany **them that believe**: in my name shall they cast out demons; **they shall speak with new tongues[glōssa]**; 18 they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then **the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.**

[Acts 2:1-38](#) Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 Suddenly there came from the sky a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 **Tongues[glōssa]** like fire appeared and were distributed to them, and one sat on each of them. 4 They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other **languages[glōssa]**, as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak. ... 6 When this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because everyone heard them speaking in his own language. ... 8 How do we hear, everyone in our own native language? ... 11 Cretans and Arabians: we hear them speaking in our **languages[glōssa]** the mighty works of God!" ... 33 **[Jesus] Being therefore exalted by the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, which you now see and hear.** ... 38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and **be baptized**, every one of you, **in the name of Jesus Christ** for the forgiveness of sins, **and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

"**The gift of tongues was given to the disciples** on the day of Pentecost. But it was given them for use right then, so that those of all the different nationalities might hear the gospel in the language which they could understand. So it did not need any interpretation of tongues there." (W. W. Prescott, GCDB March 3, 1893, page 461.4)

MORE ABOUT TONGUES

[Acts 10:44-47](#) While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word. 45 They of the circumcision who believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because **the gift of the Holy Spirit was also poured out on the Gentiles.** 46 For **they heard them speaking in other languages[glōssa]** and magnifying God. Then **Peter** answered, 47 "Can any man forbid the water, that these who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we should not be baptized?" 48 He **commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ....**

[Acts 19:1](#) It happened that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper country, came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples. 2 He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They said to him, "No, we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 He said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Paul said, "John indeed baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the one who would come after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 When they heard this, **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** 6 When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and **they spoke with other languages[glōssa]** and prophesied.

Strong's Greek Dictionary G26: ἀγάπη **agápē**, ag-ah'-pay; from G25; **love, i.e. affection or benevolence**; specially (plural) a love-feast
KJV Translation(s):--(feast of) **charity**(-ably), dear, **love**.

[1 Corinthians 13:1-13](#) If I speak with **the languages[glōssa]** of men and of angels, but don't have **love[agápē]**, I have become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. ... 8 **love[agápē]** never fails. But

where there are prophecies, they will be done away with. Where there are various **languages**[glōssa], they will cease. Where there is knowledge, it will be done away with. ... 13 But now faith, hope, and **love**[agápē] remain — these three. The greatest of these is **love**[agápē].

Regarding the speaking "with the tongues of men and of angels": **Could it be that Acts 2 is an example speaking with the tongues of men and that 1 Corinthians 14 is an example of speaking with the tongues of angels?** I don't know... -Sid

1 CORINTHIANS 14, VERSE by VERSE

[1 Corinthians 14:1-40](#)

1. Follow after **love**[agápē], and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, but **especially that you may prophesy**.
 - Pursue agape love. Also, **Paul would rather that they prophesy, than speak in tongues**. Why? =>
2. For he who speaks in another **language**[glōssa] speaks not to men, but to God; for **no one understands**; but in the Spirit(**pneûma**) he speaks mysteries.
 - **In Acts 2, the tongues that were spoken were known languages** understood by men.
3. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort.
 - Maybe this is **why Paul preferred prophesy** over tongues(vs 1,5).
4. He who speaks in another **language**[glōssa] edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the assembly.
5. Now I desire to have you all speak with other **languages**[glōssa], but **rather that you would prophesy**. For **he is greater who prophesies** than he who speaks with other **languages**[glōssa], unless he interprets, that the assembly may be built up.
 - (NLT) **I wish you could all speak in tongues, but even more I wish you could all prophesy**. For prophecy is greater than speaking in tongues, unless someone interprets what you are saying so that the whole church will be strengthened.
 - **There is no edification for the church members, unless the tongues speaking is interpreted**.
 - [1 Corinthians 12:10](#) and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discerning of spirits; to another different kinds of **languages**[glōssa]; and to another the interpretation of **languages**[glōssa]. ... 28 God has set some in the assembly: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracle workers, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, and various kinds of **languages**[glōssa]. ... 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with various languages? Do all interpret? 31 But **earnestly desire the best gifts**. Moreover, I show a most excellent way to you.
 - Remember that **Acts 2 speaking in tongues, did not need "the interpretation of tongues", so this must be different in 1Cor14**.
6. But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking with other **languages**[glōssa], what would I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation, or of knowledge, or of prophesying, or of teaching?
 - **Paul didn't seem to have any reason to speak in tongues at Corinth**.
7. And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?
8. For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?
 - In other words, if a trumpet doesn't sound the call-to-battle tune, then why would you prepare for battle?
9. So also you, unless you uttered by the **tongue**[glōssa] words easy to understand, how would it be known what is spoken? For you would be speaking into the air.

- In other words, if you speak with an unknown language, how can it be understood and if not understood, what good is it?
10. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without meaning.
- "Languages are spoken with the intention of conveying some intelligible(understandable) idea to the hearers." (SDABC)
11. If then I don't know the meaning of the sound, I would be to him who speaks a foreigner, and he who speaks would be a foreigner to me.
- "foreigner" here denotes one who was not a Greek and didn't understand the Greek language.
12. So also you, since you are zealous for spiritual[**pneûma**] gifts, seek that you may **abound to the building up of the assembly.**
- The Greek word translated here as "spiritual *gifts*" is the same Greek word(**pneûma**) that is most-commonly translated "Spirit", as in Holy "Spirit". It is good to desire the gifts of the Spirit, but our motive should be to edify the church. This should be our goal of our desire for the gifts, rather than "to exalt self and satisfy personal ambition." (ibid)
13. Therefore let him who speaks in another **language[glōssa]** pray that he may interpret.
14. For if I pray in another **language[glōssa]**, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.
- "my spirit prayeth" => It is our mind(spirit) that gives us the words to be able to pray.
 - "unfruitful" => not helpful to those who know not the meaning of the words.
15. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.
- In other words, **if I pray or sing in a language that no one can understand, then I should also interpret so it can be edifying to those listening.** In the days we live in now, have you ever heard those who speak in tongues ever explain, in a known language, what they said in a unknown language?
16. Otherwise if you bless with the spirit, how will he who fills the place of the unlearned say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, seeing he doesn't know what you say?
17. For you most certainly give thanks well, but **the other person is not built up (edified).**
- "the other is not edified" if they have no understanding of what you said.
18. I thank my God, I speak with other **languages[glōssa]** more than you all.
1. Did Paul speak with the tongues of angels, as he mentioned in [1Cor 13:1](#) ? Maybe, but we know that he did speak in several **known** languages.
19. However in the assembly I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in another **language[glōssa]**.
20. Dear brothers, don't be childish in your understanding of these things. Be innocent as babies when it comes to evil, but be mature in understanding matters of this kind.
21. It is written in the Scriptures([Isa.28:11](#)): "I will speak to my own people through strange languages and through the lips of foreigners. But even then, they will not listen to me," says the Lord(Jehovah).
22. Therefore other **languages[glōssa]** are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to the unbelieving; but prophesying is for a sign, not to the unbelieving, but to those who believe.
23. Even so, if unbelievers or people who don't understand these things come into your church meeting and hear everyone speaking in an unknown language, they will think you are crazy.
24. But if all of you are prophesying, and unbelievers or people who don't understand these things come into your meeting, **they will be convicted of sin and judged by what you say.**
25. As they listen, their secret thoughts will be exposed, and they will fall to their knees and worship God, declaring, "God is truly here among you."

26. ¶ How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a another **language[glōssa]**, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.
27. If any man speaks in another **language[glōssa]**, let it be two, or at the most three, and in turn; and let one interpret.
28. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.
 - ... but not to the church...
29. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other(s) judge.
 - [1 Thessalonians 5:21](#) **Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**
 - [1 John 4:1](#) Beloved, **believe not every spirit[pneûma], but try the spirits[pneûma] whether they are of God:** because many false prophets are gone out into the world.
 - [Matthew 24:11](#) And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ... 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, **if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.**
30. But if a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first keep silent.
 - **Only one prophet should speak at once.** If God reveals something "to another", the first should stop.
31. For you all can prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be exhorted(comforted).
 - Or, "all may be exhorted."
32. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.
 - When inspired by the Holy Spirit, the prophets choose whether to speak or to be silent.
33. For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all the assemblies of the saints.
 - [1 Corinthians 14:40](#) **Let all things be done decently and in order.**
 - [Romans 15:33](#) Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.
34. let your wives keep silent in the assemblies, for it has not been permitted for them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as the law also says.
 - [1 Timothy 2:11](#) Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.
 - As you can see, Paul said this not only to the church at Corinth, but also to Timothy. Apparently, this was the custom of the early Christian churches. Should it apply to the churches today? I don't know -Sid
35. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.
 - Apparently, " both Greek and Jewish custom dictated that women should be kept in the background in public affairs. Violation of this custom would be looked upon as disgraceful and would bring reproach upon the church."(ibid). This custom is no longer practiced in most societies today. Whether this is of God, or not, I do not know. -Sid
36. What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?
 - The church at Corinth was one of the last that Paul founded. It appears that this church was doing things differently than most of the others. That would explain why Paul gave them such pointed instruction.
37. If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.
 - Here, Paul declares his instruction to Corinth to be from the Lord, Jesus Christ.

38. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

- "In effect, Paul is saying that if anyone should not recognize the fact that the apostle was inspired by God, and therefore did not receive his instructions as being God's commands, he does so at his peril." (ibid)

39. Therefore, brothers, desire earnestly to prophesy, and don't forbid speaking with other **languages[glōssa]**.

- Paul summarizes what he said throughout this discourse, starting in verse one. **Prophecy should be the priority, but speaking with tongues, according to the guidelines he gave, should be allowed**

40. Let all things be done decently and in order.

- When we gather to worship the Almighty Creator, Jehovah, and His "beloved", "only begotten Son", Jesus Christ, **reverence is essential**. This would include **no confusion, unnecessary noise, or disorder**.
- [Habakkuk 2:20](#) ... Jehovah is in his holy temple: **let all the earth keep silence before him**.
- **"The most profitable meetings for spiritual advancement are those which are characterized with solemnity and deep searching of heart;** each seeking to know himself, and earnestly, and in deep humility, seeking to learn of Christ." (1T 412.1)

SUMMARY BY SID

From my reading of the Bible and a Bible commentary, I would humbly submit my following opinions:

1. The speaking in tongues in Acts 2 and in 1 Cor. 14 are NOT the same, for the reasons stated above
2. Both are legitimate. For obvious reasons in Acts 2, it was edifying to the church. Paul, in 1 Cor. 14, says that this other type of speaking in tongues is edifying to the speaker. Paul also indicates that it is a good thing – vs. 4, 5, 18, 22, 26.
3. Paul warns against the abuse of the tongues of 1 Cor. 14. It is incomprehensible for me to see how Acts 2 tongues speaking could possibly be abused by humans, since humans have no control over such things.
4. Paul seems to indicate that there was no loss of self-control during 1Cor14 speaking in tongues. This is contrary to current popular belief.
5. Has Acts 2 tongues speaking been witnessed in modern times? Absolutely.
6. Has Acts 2 tongues speaking been counterfeited by satan? I doubt it, but I really don't know.
7. Has 1 Cor. 14 tongues speaking been witnessed in modern times? I don't know.
8. Has 1 Cor. 14 tongues speaking been counterfeited by satan? Absolutely.
9. Can we judge other people's experience and/or witness of tongues, as described in 1 Cor. 14?
 1. If we can see or are told of things that go against scripture, then we can be assured that it is either satan's counterfeit, or just someone faking it.
 2. If we have no Biblical evidence of anything wrong, then we are on dangerous ground if we claim that someone else's witness/experience with 1 Cor. 14 tongues speaking is NOT Biblical, or worse – satanic. A related factor is that "by their fruits ye shall know them". When we hear of Christian people, who are well-known for their good fruits, who also speak in the tongues of 1 Cor. 14, then I think we are amiss if we do not consider the possibility of this being Biblical tongues speaking.

This is my studied opinion. I realize that I could be mistaken. -Sid Nash 2011; updated 8/21/2021; updated 8/6/2022; updated 4/13/2024