

Tongues:

- I. The Greek word is GLOSSA(Singular), GLOSSAI(Plural).
 - a. It can mean one of three things:
 - i. The organ in our mouths that allows us to speak.
 - ii. The word for "language", English is our native tongue.
 - iii. The Biblical reference of speaking in tongues, in our Acts passage "everyone heard them in their own language(it's DIALEKTOS there). And The Holy Spirit gives several different locations with different languages.
 - b. Xenoglossy(sometimes Xenoglossia or xenolalia(Foreign speaking) is the term for someone who speaks(or reads or writes) in a known language that is completely unknown to them.
 - i. Xenos= "foreigner" and GLOSSA= "tongue" or "language"
- II. Where are tongues spoken of in Scripture?
 - a. Acts 2
 - b. Acts 8 – Some people think there is an indication when Philip was doing "signs" that maybe that included tongues, but it doesn't mention them specifically.
 - c. Acts 10 – Cornelius
 - d. Acts 19 – Paul at Ephesus.
 - e. I Cor. 12:10 (as one of the gifts of The Spirit):
 - i. "To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues." AV
 - f. I Cor. 12:28 & 30 and 13:1:
 - i. Vs. 28 "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."
 - ii. Vs. 30-13:1 "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. 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."
 - g. I Cor. 13:8 "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."
 - h. I Cor. 14 the whole chapter really.
- III. God's Word is COMPLETE:
 - a. Rev. 22:19 "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."
 - b. The word "written" is GRAPHO, that which is written down, that is, Genesis to Revelation.
 - c. This is often not included when considering tongues. I want to mention it as an important Doctrinal issue, especially in written or verbal comments about when someone speaking in tongues is discussed.
 - d. IF someone says their speaking in tongues is "The Holy Spirit" speaking through them AND ANYTHING they say is from The H.S. but it is different from the Scripture we have, they are saying God's Word is not complete. They have been told something "new" or "different".
 - e. While not tongues related, Joseph Smith said he was "given" by an angel a "new" revelation. What he is saying is God's Word is NOT complete, he has something more. That should key us right away what is being said or taught is wrong.

- f. We have an important teaching of that in our Acts 2 passage. In vs. 11 what everyone is hearing is "...the wonderful works of God".
- g. That is key. They are saying, preaching, speaking God's Wonderful Works, His Word. Theoretically if the tongue speaker is within the scope of what Scripture says, that would be words honoring God. What I am suggesting here is if that person, in any way, goes beyond that, they knowingly or unknowingly say they are giving us extrabiblical information, they have crossed a Doctrinal line to say God's Word in NOT complete, they have something more.
- h. I make this reference to the passage in Acts and I Corinthians, where we know it was H.S. driven. NOT in reference to any modern so-called speaking in tongues. In those passages, I believe, we are told they were gifts of God for the transitional time before God's Word was complete. That is why tongues passed away, because now we have everything God has to say to us in this life.
- i. I will just add a quick footnote here, I firmly believe as the end times draw closer, that satan will have his ministers "find" other books which they will claim should be added to the cannon. For instance, at the end of Colossians when it says "And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." I believe someday satan will produce an epistle to Laodicea and claim it is now part of the Biblical cannon, when it is not.

IV. PERSONAL OPINION – ALL tongue speaking was in known languages.

- a. This, of course, is an opinion not shared by Pentecostals. I think our passage in Acts 2 is very clear there what was spoken by the disciples was a language they didn't know – "other tongues". Which were then understood by believers from a very wide variety of geographical locations and languages. And we know what was being said "the wonderful works of God."
- b. The "mechanism" of how this was done is not given, because it was a miracle to substantiate these men, the Apostles (and maybe other disciples?) were speaking God's Word (it was The Spirit that gave them utterance 2:4). So that those who defend tongues in its current gibberish form, since they can't dispute all cases are known languages, dispute it by saying the words the speakers used were not a known language, it's just that the hearers heard it in different languages. In Acts 2:4 they began to "speak" it is LELEO, which can mean both "to speak" and "to give forth sound", so leaves the idea open to both. But I believe The H.S. is quite normally telling us they "spoke", they didn't utter gibberish. Obviously the Pentecostals take it to mean they made a "sound" which was "heavenly" rather than "earthly".
- c. When Peter explains to those who mock, this is fulfilled prophecy, the passage in Amos doesn't say "tongues" it says "prophecy" in both Acts 2:17 & 18. Remember the Greek word is PROPHETEUO. It is from PROPHEMI, PRO="forth" OR "fore" and PHEMI="to speak", so PROPHECY in Scriptures is BOTH Foretelling the future AND forth telling God's Word, i.e. preaching, teaching. An important Doctrinal understanding that the word PROPHECSY means BOTH things.
- d. II Tim. 3:16-17 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."
- e. John 16:13 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."
- f. We know The H.S. doesn't speak of anything but Christ, He doesn't refer to some statement of faith, or a magazine article or someone's commentary, He looks at Scripture, The Revelation of Jesus Christ – His Person and His Work. In THAT is ALL Truth, not partially truth or the beginning of Truth, but ALL of it.

- g. In II Peter 1:3 "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
 - h. Again He has given use ALL THINGS that pertain to Life and Godliness.
 - i. Mark 13:31 "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."
- V. Tongues shall cease...
- a. 1Co 13:8 "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."
 - b. In fact there are very few historical references in existence that mention people speaking in tongues after Scripture was completed(end of the 1st century).
 - c. There are accounts in the middle ages, but there aren't many, and those which exist are either accompanied by other "magical" events or are unclear as to exactly how the writer is using the word "tongues".
 - d. I don't want to deviate in to all kinds of non-Biblical references, so will just give Bernard of Clairvaux in the 12th century who said speaking in tongues was no longer present because God's complete word is what transforms lives.
 - e. When tongues pick up again is in the end times, when it is satan who uses them to gather a following, unfortunately appearing to capture believers to his "movement".
- VI. All Christians are "filled" with The Holy Spirit.
- a. At issue here is the unfortunate impression or outright teaching that those speaking in tongues are somehow more filled with The Spirit than other believers.
 - i. Or to rephrase it the other way around, if you don't speak in tongues then you are not "filled" or "controlled" by The Holy Spirit.
 - ii. In distinction with my belief that tongues were always and only known foreign languages, these people will say "Yes, that is a separate gift not everyone has(Xenoglossy) BUT every Christian can speak in "ecstatic utterances" i.e. a "heavenly language".
 - iii. We can see how far this "reasoning" can be pushed by the so called "Toronto experience" or the "Toronto blessing". People exhibited "holy laughter" where they couldn't stop laughing, others couldn't stop crying. Then there were those who made a variety of animal noises like lions roaring or other animals. Others would shake or jerk or writhe on the floor.
 - iv. We have already seen in Acts 2, The H.S. making it clear He is speaking of "all", vs. 2, "all" vs. 4, "every man" vs. 6 and "every man" vs. 8. The wording in the Greek in vs. 6 and 8 are "every single one".
 - b. In 2:4 we have seen the "filled" is an Aorist Passive Indicative. Aorist Indicative telling us this is a past FULLY COMPLETED action. The Passive telling us these people didn't participate in the action, the action was done to them. They could not ask for, pray for or excite their emotions to be filled with The Holy Spirit – It was HE who did this to them.
 - c. They did not speak something they drummed up in their own enthusiasm or "exalted" state, but The Holy Spirit gave them "declare", the Greek word meaning for "utterance".
 - d. Joh 16:13 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."
 - i. The H.S. does not "speak" of "Himself" HE speaks of The Lord Jesus Christ. There is no necessity to speak in tongues to speak of Jesus Christ, that's what God's Word does.
 - ii. I believe the "...things to come." Is not speaking of some far away prophecy, but is speaking to the fact the disciples in John, not yet the Church Age for it will not begin until Pentecost, will speak The New Testament. The Good News which does not yet exist will be what they will speak. Judaism didn't transform Rome, Christianity did.

- e. I Cor. 6:19 "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"
- f. John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."
 - i. The Lord is going to pray for the disciples and The Father will send another, ALLOS, one just like Christ, to abide in us forever "...into the age" as the Greek phrasing is translated "Eternity" or "forever" in our English translations.
 - ii. Note that "the world" CANNOT, OU DUNAMAI, has no power, no ability to receive. This is the strong negative in the Greek. The World has no ability, nothing in its power, to receive. It is The Father sending The Spirit on only God's Children. So there is no evangelistic or saving purpose in giving The Holy Spirit. He is given to us as the "earnest of OUR inheritance" as it says in Eph. 1:14.

VII. Speaking in an "unknown tongue":

- a. It is unfortunate this expression is still so widely used.
- b. In the AV, the King James, in I Cor. 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19 and 27 the phrase is repeated "unknown tongue".
- c. The word "unknown" is not there in the Greek. Of the translations I looked at, only the King James, Websters and Young's had the word included, and all of them italicized it to let us know the translator added it; none of the other translations had the word [ASV(American Standard Version), CJB(Complete Jewish Bible), DBY(Darby Bible), DRA(Douay-Rheims), NAS(New American Standard), NET(New English Translation), NIV(New International Version), NKJ(New King James), RSV (Revised Standard Version), TNT(Tyndale)].
- d. I don't know why, but I *think* the translators of the AV(the KJ) used it to emphasize to us that the one speaking is speaking in a tongue "*unknown*" to him. Not that some form of gibberish in what comes out of their mouths; but I don't know that.
- e. To build Doctrine on a word that is not there is patently wrong.

VIII. The Corinthian church was having tremendous fleshly difficulties:

- a. The H.S. writes to this fleshly church twice to give them instruction on how to conduct themselves and how The Lord's Church is to conduct itself.
- b. Many terrible things were going on in Corinth(whether at one church or churches, the Corinthian part of The True Church).
- c. The H.S. addresses chapters 12, 13 and 14 to ordering The Church and the gifts of The Spirit.

IX. Some thoughts on I Corinthians 14:

- a. Vs. 1-6:
 - i. **Vs. 1** – Suppose that "...ye may prophesy." Means to preach The Word, to teach The Word?
 - 1. Well, that's what I believe The H.S. is saying.
 - 2. The word used for prophesy is PROPHETEIA. It is from the root PROPHEMI which is derived from PRO= "Fore" but also means "Forth", and PHEMI = "to speak". So a prophet both Foretells the future AND forthtells God's Word.
 - 3. To quote from Vine's Expository Dictionary of the New Testament, PROPHETEIA "signifies the speaking forth of The Mind and Counsel of God."
 - 4. Vine goes on "Though much of the OT prophecy was purely predictive...prophecy is not necessarily, nor even primarily fore-telling. It is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means, it is forth-

telling The Will of God, whether in reference to the past, the present or the future.”

5. I would only suggest a change to what Dr. Vine notes as “forth-telling The Will of God” to forth-telling God’s Word(not just His Will).
 6. Vine continues - the purpose of the ministry is to edify, to comfort and to encourage believers. Its effect upon unbelievers is to show that the secrets of men’s hearts are known to God and His judgement of sin.
 7. With the completion of the NT, the prophet changed from foretelling of The Messiah’s coming, to primarily teaching the complete revelation contained in Scripture.
 8. I Cor. 13:8 “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”
 9. A thought. I suggest The reason The H.S. used the word “prophesy” rather than “teach” or “preach” is because at time I Corinthians was written down, the entire NT was not yet complete. John wrote down Revelation late in the 1st century. So the prophesying was still through men speaking God’s Word until all the NT was completed.
- ii. Then the repeated use of “prophesy” in Ch. 14 refers not to those foretelling the future, but it primarily speaks of edifying The Church – Teaching and Preaching God’s Word.
- iii. **Vs. 5 & 6** “I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?”
1. I believe The H.S. moves through Ch. 14 with the distinction of talking in another known language vs. teaching The Word.
 2. Reading vs. 5 & 6 then speaks to each of us that teaching function. Those in attendance couldn’t be “edified, exhorted or comforted” as vs. 3 says teaching does unless someone interprets what was said.
 3. Remember with the conquests of Alexander the Great, Greek became the “world” language. Even when the Romans took over, Greek was widely used in the Roman empire(especially the Eastern part). Latin then became another “world” language. In Israel, the Spiritual geographic focus, it was common to speak Hebrew, Greek and Latin(as well as Aramaic).
 4. Outside of Israel, as the Gospel spread to the Roman empire, Greek and Latin were very common languages. We will find in Acts that often Paul would go to a local synagogue which would speak Hebrew as well. A mixed congregation then might contain speakers with differing language skills. Add to that Corinth was a seaport town, so residents had a higher incidence of having different native tongues.
 5. As we know also, someone might ‘get by’ in English, but it would be very difficult for them to absorb Biblical terminology.
 6. I believe the text is a straight forward presentation that speaking in another language, let’s say Hebrew, to a group of Roman citizens in Corinth would be virtually impossible for them to comprehend. There would be no “profit” as vs. 6 says.
- iv. **Vs. 7-11:**

1. Here is a place where The H.S. presents “giving sound” and “distinction of sounds” that are often taught as “heavenly speaking” tongues. That is not a known language because The H.S. said “sounds”.
2. I don’t think that’s the purpose of the comment. I believe it is saying that spoken in a language not understood is confusing. The comparison to a trumpet that is “indistinct” not referring to sound vs. speech, but that it is important and those listening don’t know what to do.
3. Vs. 11 then important to advance this teaching using the word “barbarian”. It is a word taken from the SOUND the foreigner made. Those heathens that couldn’t be understood just sounded like “bar bar bar bar” and so earned the descriptive word “barbarian”.

v. **Vs. 12-17:**

1. Here I want to note in vs. 12 the important concept in Ch. 14 – The important thing to impart to us is edifying The Church.
2. This section begins and ends with EDIFICATION of the believer.
3. II Peter 1:20 “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.”
4. The “private” is not “personal”, but must include ALL Scripture. It is the process of “rightly dividing” God’s Word.
5. “Prophecy of Scripture” – now in our understanding this is the teaching and preaching of God’s Word.
6. Let me add in vs. 12 when The H.S. says being zealous of Spiritual gifts, the Greek just says “zealous of Spirits”. Because the context has been speaking of “gifts” that is added for clarification here. The modern Christian church exhibits a desire for “gifts” and then it defines what gifts are and which ones it wants. Love of the brethren, speaking in tongues, prophesying future events, etc. But The H.S. is very clear the heart’s desire should be to edify The Church. We can’t edify the believer EXCEPT in God’s Word. That is to be our primary desire. I suggest that is not very important to the Christian church today.

vi. **Vs. 18-22:**

1. Remember Paul’s place as a pharisee of the pharisees. If he were a member of the Sanhedrin(which seems likely) he was REQUIRED to thoroughly completely understand the language of anyone who was brought to court. The member of the Sanhedrin universally knew five languages at a minimum. We find him on his missionary journeys speaking directly to a variety of people in many different geographical places.
2. Recall that when Paul was shipwrecked on Melita, there were barbarians there which he could not understand. In Acts 14 when Paul and Barnabas went to Lystra, people speaking “the speech of the Lycaonia” it seems they couldn’t understand them. Paul, who said he spoke in tongues more than anyone couldn’t understand what was being said.
3. Paul could speak in many tongues. We know there is benefit to considering Scriptures in various languages. For years it has been taught that the unlearned, that is those who don’t know Greek or Hebrew or Latin and haven’t studied in some seminary, have no business teaching God’s Word. But that isn’t required. The H.S. is the teacher, it was a great blessing to mankind to have Scripture translated into English and many other languages.

4. Vs. 19 The H.S. has Paul say he would rather speak 5 words in understanding to teach others, then 10,000 words in a tongue. (Again, unknown is not there).
5. Vs. 22 – tongues are a sign to unbelievers, not for edifying believers. That's what we find in Acts 2. The JEWS, that require a sign, all heard in their own native language, even though they were in Jerusalem.

X. To build up the church:

- a. The section of I Corinthians between 12-14 that speaks of the gifts of The Spirit are to be used to edify the church, to build it up.
- b. Having church members openly living in known sin didn't edify and build up the church.
- c. Certainly speaking gibberish isn't edifying.
- d. 1 Cor. 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."
- e. Indeed we find in James 3:15-17 "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."
- f. That is the intent of "interpreting" – ensuring all understand what is being said or taught.
- g. In our Acts 2 passage in every single language it was heard ALL were speaking of "the wonderful works of God". I suggest those wonderful works are The Finished Work of The Lord Jesus Christ, God's Word.
- h. There have been several attempts to scientifically verify the "ecstatic utterances" or "Heavenly speech" were intelligible. I don't know of any that have found an instance of someone speaking a known language they did not learn, and others who were speakers of that language hearing it in their native tongue. Yet that is the example The H.S. has given us in Acts 2 with an impressive list of nations and languages present in Jerusalem.
- i. The argument always goes back to "heavenly speech" that isn't any "known" language, but comes from Heaven because The H.S. "gave them utterance". First, why is there NO examples like that given in Acts 2? NONE. Nobody today is speaking in a language unknown to them and it being heard by a person who is a native speaker of that language. In today's science that would mean there could have been as many tape recorders or digital recorders at Pentecost as anyone might want. They would all record known speech, they could all have witness testimony the speaker didn't (and still doesn't) know the language, that the hearers were native speakers, and still are verifiable native speakers. Why do we have none of that?
- j. Then how do we confirm the "interpreter" is correct or honest? Again more confusion enters than edification. We can, and should, compare what the interpreter says is The Truth of The Word. If it isn't – we can't believe anything that is said or interpreted. If it is, it has to give Honor and Glory to The Lord. The same tests apply as that of the false prophet in Deuteronomy. They were to be stoned if found to be false. Yet many a so called Christian church will not only put up with, but encourage others to speak gibberish.
- k. IF the gift of tongues is present, at MOST 2 or 3, no more. AND there MUST be an interpreter present. Until the person speaks, how would an interpreter know he was present as an interpreter if the speech is gibberish? The very command of having an interpreter present means to me someone wishes to speak in a known tongue, are any other French, German, Japanese speakers here who can interpret?
- l. I Cor. 12:13 "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of on Spirit". We ALL have His Spirit or we are none of his. (Rom. 8:9)