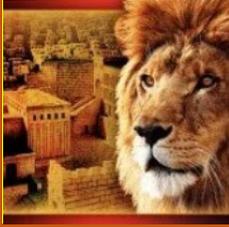


# Jews For Yeshua

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To the Torah & the Testimony  
If anyone does not speak according to these words  
It is because they have no light in them.  
Yesh'yahu (Isaiah) 8:20; Revelation 12:17; 14:12



## ON TONGUES AND SALVATION

In this chapter we are going to do a brief study on the question of tongues and salvation.

To begin our study, first let us define biblically what a tongue is, or more specifically, what an “unknown tongue” is.

By definition, a tongue is a language, and an “unknown tongue” is a foreign language; so that to speak in an “unknown tongue”, means literally, to speak a foreign language.

Is this definition supported by Scripture? Absolutely, in **Ma'aseh (Acts) 2:1-11** where the first occurrence of tongues is mentioned, it is written,

**2:1** Now when the day of Shavuot had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

**2:2** And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

**2:3** Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

**2:4** And they were all filled with the Ruach haKadosh (Holy Spirit) and began to speak in other languages as the Ruach (Spirit) gave them utterance.

**2:5** Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, from every nation under the sky.

**2:6** And when this sound occurred, the crowds came together, and were confused, because, everyone heard them speak in his own language.

**2:7** Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?”

**2:8** “How is it then that we hear each in our own dialect in which he was born?”

**2:9** “Parthians, and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

**2:10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jew and proselytes,

**2:11** Cretans and Arabs, we hear them speaking in our own languages the wonderful works of

יהוה.”

This passage states clearly that the “tongues” being spoken were indeed a foreign language of another people.

It is also clear that this occurrence and introduction of “tongues” was not a language “unknown” to man; but rather an ability to speak a “foreign” language previously unknown to the person speaking it, and supernaturally acquired by the speaker.

Is what is not clear is whether this was a continuing ability that they took home with them.

The concept of “tongues” is only mentioned a few times in the NT Scriptures, in **Ma’aseh (Acts) 2:1-13; Romans 12:6; Ivrim (Hebrews) 2:4 and in I Corinthians 12-14.**

The initial presentation of “tongues” in **Ma’aseh (Acts) 2** is positive in nature, presenting it as a notable sign given by Elohim (God) to man as a witness of Yeshua as the Messiah.

The verse in Romans, and verse in Ivrim (Hebrews) also present this gift in a favorable light.

However, the 3 chapters of **I Corinthians 12, 13, and 14** are specifically written to address the issue of tongues in their proper perspective, and stature, within the hierarchy of gifts with a distinct nuance of de-emphasis on them.

Beginning with **Romans 12:3-8** we see the first mention of gifts given by Elohim (God) to man. They are written as follows:

**12:3** For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as יהוה has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

**12:4** For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

**12:5** So we being many are one body in Messiah, and individually members of one another.

**12:6** Having then different gifts, let us use them in proportion to the favor that is given to us. If we have the gift of prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

**12:7** Or the gift of service, then let us use it to minister; and those with a gift of teaching, to teach.

**12:8** Those who can encourage and warn, let them exhort; and those with the gift of generosity, let them give freely. They who can lead, let them lead with diligence, and those who are gifted with mercy, let them do it with gladness.

In this first example of gifts we see no mention of tongues; but we do see a list of 7 gifts, all of which are encouraged for the purpose of edifying (of building up) the body of Messiah. They are as follows,

The gift,

- 1) Of Prophecy
- 2) Of Servitude
- 3) Of Encouragement
- 4) Of Exhortation (to warn, correct and call to repentance)

- 5) Of Generosity
- 6) Of Leadership
- 7) Of Mercy

Now continuing on in **I Corinthians 12:4-11 & 12:27-29** we are given two more lists of many more gifts. Many of these gifts listed in the two Corinthians passages overlap with the Romans list, and with each other. The Emissary Shaul (the Apostle Paul) likewise presents this as gifts given for the purpose of “building up/edifying” the body.

**I Corinthians 12:4-11** reads as follows:

**12:4** Now there are different types of gifts, but the same Ruach (Spirit).

**12:5** There are different types of ministries, but the same Master.

**12:6** And there are different types of activities, but it is the same Elohim (God) who works in all and through all.

**12:7** But the revealing of the Ruach (Spirit) is given to each one for the profit of all.

**12:8** For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Ruach (Spirit), and to another the word of knowledge through the same Ruach (Spirit),

**12:9** To another trust and belief by the same Ruach (Spirit), to another, gifts of healings by the same Ruach (Spirit).

**12:10** To another the working of Miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another different types of languages, and to another the ability to interpret different languages.

**12:11** But one and the same Ruach (Spirit) works all these things, distributing to each person individually according to the will of Elohim.

The gifts are summarized as follow:

The gift,

- 1) Of wisdom
- 2) Of knowledge
- 3) Of faith
- 4) Of healings
- 5) Of working of miracles
- 6) Of prophecy
- 7) Of the discernment of spirits
- 8) Of the speaking of languages
- 9) Of the interpretation of languages

And **I Corinthians 12:27-31** states:

**12:27** Now you are the body of Messiah, and members individually.

**12:28** And יהוה has appointed these in the assembly, first Emissaries (Apostles), second prophets, third teachers, after these miracles, then gifts of healings, helpers, administrators, and different types of languages.

**12:29** Are all Emissaries (Apostles)? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles?

**12:30** Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

**12:31** But earnestly desire the greater gifts, and yet I will show you a better way.

The gifts are summarized as follow:

The gift of,

- 1) An Emissary (an Apostle), [a type of lead overseer/teacher/regional manager]
- 2) Of a prophet (someone who exhorts and/or prophesies)
- 3) Of a teacher,
- 4) Of the ability to perform miracles,
- 5) Of healing,
- 6) Of serving others, (a type of generosity)
- 7) Of administrating,
- 8) Of speaking in a foreign language(s),
- 9) Of interpreting a foreign language(s).

A total of 25 listings are presented, however, because many of them overlap the total number of different gifts of the Ruach (Spirit) presented between these 3 passages is 18 as follows,

The gift,

- 1) Of prophesy (one type of role of prophet)
- 2) Of serving others
- 3) Of encouraging others
- 4) Of exhorting others
- 5) Of generosity
- 6) Of leadership
- 7) Of mercy
- 8) Of wisdom
- 9) Of knowledge
- 10) Of faith (the ability to trust and believe the word of Adonai)
- 11) Of healing
- 12) Of working miracles
- 13) Of discerning spirits
- 14) Of being an Emissary (an Apostle)
- 15) Of teaching
- 16) Of administration
- 17) To speak a foreign language through the Ruach haKadosh (Holy Spirit)
- 18) To interpret a foreign language

I doubt very much that these are the only gifts, for Joseph had the gift of dreams, and of dream interpretation. Others the gift of music like King David, the gift of artistic ability and craftsmanship like those assigned to design the artifacts of the Temple; **Shemot (Exodus) 31:1-6**, and the gift of humbleness like Moshe (Moses), etc...

Also, concerning **verses 12:28, 29** Shaul is clearly stating that not everyone has all the same gifts. That no one gift is unique to all believers.

This is not coincidence, as the Emissary Shaul (the Apostle Paul) in these Corinthians passages is specifically addressing the issue of the gift of speaking an "unknown tongue", and is specifying with

deliberate intent a de-emphasis of the gift of speaking a previously unknown and unlearned foreign language, presenting it as less effective and influential at building up the body than the others gifts.

In fact, Shaul compares the gift of foreign languages with the gift of prophecy to make his main points so that between these 3 passages, the gift of prophecy is listed first in one of them, second in another, and midway down in the third; while the gift of speaking a foreign language is not mentioned at all in one of them, and listed last in the remaining two.

On the same note, concerning the issue of whether the ability to speak a foreign language is necessary as evidence of the Ruach haKadosh (Holy Spirit) in one's life, then one would expect the Scriptures to state so plainly.

After all, the Ruach haKadosh (the Holy Spirit) is necessary to spiritual rebirth, and spiritual rebirth necessary to entering into eternal life; **Yehochanan (John) 3:3-7**. But despite this important point, no passage in Scripture designates any particular gift as being "evidence" of being "filled with the Spirit" or of being "born again".

Likewise, neither are there any passages in Scripture indicating that the gift of an "unknown tongue" is anything other than the ability to speak or interpret a foreign language not naturally acquired.

We hear often of the gift of the "tongues of angels" to be used as a prayer language. But Shaul (Paul) never says that he can speak with this type of a tongue, but only states that "if" he could, it would mean nothing without love.

This statement of Shaul (Paul) does not prove the existence of any such language, or that if there is such a language that is one of the gifts of the Ruach (Spirit) imparted to man. On the same note, the Scriptures provide no example of a "tongue of angels" demonstrated. All of the "Angels" in the Scriptures appear to speak plainly, the language of Hebrew.

Certainly, if this mysterious tongue of angels were a necessary sign for being born again, then not only would the Scriptures plainly say so, but one should be able to find any number of examples in the Scriptures demonstrating this "gift" in action. And clarify for us why only this gift qualifies as "absolute evidence" of being "born of the Ruach (Spirit)" but not any other gift.

Likewise, the introduction of a different expression of the gift, other than as was experienced in **Ma'aseh (Acts) 2**, would have raised many eyebrows and resulted in many discussions to determine if it was from Adonai or not.

With this, I believe that when you read through the Romans passage, and through **I Corinthians chapters 12, 13, and 14** with these things in mind, that you will gain a new understanding of what the gift of "tongues" is, and is not.

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