**Do You Have the Gift?**

these are my notes of a teaching by Darryl Mefford

Mark 16:15-20 KJV  And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.  (16)  He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.  (17)  And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; (18)  They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.  (19)  So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.  (20)  And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

The eleven were not told to go and preach the message of the cross, that was revealed to the Apostle Paul. The gospel which they were to preach was the gospel of the kingdom and the central message of that gospel was that it was at hand. They were told to preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sin, that is not what we are to preach today. Signs were to follow them that believe. Speaking in tongues was one of the signs.

**Purpose of Tongues and Signs**

John 4:48 KJV Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

The purpose for signs and wonders was to cause someone to believe. This means that signs were not for believers but to convince unbelievers to believe.

Acts 2:22 KJV Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

Who were the signs to? Where are these unbelievers that God is trying to convince to believe?

1 Corinthians 1:22 KJV  For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

Jews require a sign: signs are always given to the nation of Israel.

1 Corinthians 14:21 KJV  In the law it is written, With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

God is going to speak a message to “a people”. Who are these people that God will give a message of tongues to? Paul is quoting Isaiah 28:11-12.

Isaiah 28:11-12 KJV  For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.  (12)  To whom he said, This *is* the rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and this *is*the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

Who is God speaking to? In the context of Isaiah 28:11-12, He is talking to Israel. In verse 1 it says “the drunkards of Ephraim” (Israel); these were those who were to rule the people in Jerusalem (verse 14). The context of Isaiah 28 says that this people lives in a certain place on the planet: they are in Jerusalem. It is a message to Israel.

Isaiah 28:9-11 KJV  Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts.  (10)  For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and*there a little:  (11)  For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

Psalms 74 is more proof that signs belong to the nation of Israel.

Psalms 74:9 KJV  We see not our signs: *there is* no more any prophet: neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

*“We see not our signs”* in the context the “we” is Israel.

Who do signs in the Bible belong to? Verse by verse, they belong to Israel. The purpose of speaking in tongues and signs in general are so God can communicate a message to the unbelieving nation of Israel and through that communication of that message the unbelieving nation will be brought to a place of believing, to a place of repentance.

**Program of Signs and Tongues**

We need to understand God’s purpose for Israel and how salvation of Gentile nations is to take place.If not, you’ll never understand the Great Commission or what is happening in the dispensation of grace.

Isaiah 59 tells of the second coming of Jesus Christ, the time when the New Covenant will be established.

Isaiah 59:20-21 KJV  And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.  (21)  As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

The conversion of the nation of Israel will happen at the second coming.

Isaiah 60:1 KJV  Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

Israel will arise and shine when the light of the Lord Jesus Christ comes. When God’s glory is risen on Israel the result will be the rest of the nations will be in darkness.

Isaiah 60:2-3 KJV  For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.  (3)  And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

The Gentile nations will then come to Israel’s brightness. Israel will shine like a lamp that burns. The Gentiles will get saved through the nation of Israel.

The middle wall of partition will be back up and the Gentile nations will be on the wrong side, cut off from God, no contact with God, but can be saved by coming to God through Israel. This will be the blessing and cursing of Abraham.

Isaiah 61:6 KJV  But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

Israel is to be a nation of kings and priests to the rest of the nations (Exodus 19). Israel is to be the channel and the means by which Gentiles can be saved.

Zechariah 8:23 KJV  Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days *it shall come to pass*, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard *that* God *is* with you.

The Gentile nations will say, “We have heard that God is with you [the Jew]. Zechariah 8:23 tells of Gentile salvation that happens when that Gentile takes hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew. This is not so today.

Ephesians 2:11-12 KJV  Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;  (12)  That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Ephesians 2:11-12 describes Gentiles in time past: the Jew had God and Christ. In time past there was no Gentile salvation apart from Israel.

How will Israel fulfill the passage in Zechariah 8:23? By the gift of tongues.

Matthew 15:24 KJV  But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Matthew 1:21 KJV  And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

John 1:11 KJV He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

John 4:22 KJV Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

In Acts the earthly ministry of Christ has happened but he has not yet been received.

The apostles needed to start in Jerusalem first before they could go out into all the world. If the world, as prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, is going to be saved because God is with the Jew, then this unrepentant nation, who has rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and caused Him to be crucified, has to be first brought to the feet of the Messiah for repentance. This is why Luke’s account tells them to start at  Jerusalem: “Go out and preach but start at Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:47)

They were not told to start in Jerusalem because it is their hometown, but because that is what is written in the Old Testament. One cannot understand the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Great Commission if you don’t understand what is written in the Old Testament.

The reason they are to start in Jerusalem is because that is the city of the Great King, that is the city Isaiah 62 says that the salvation and righteousness will be the light that will shine. Jerusalem is the city that will rise and shine; it is the city that the nations are going to come to. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes, the Gentiles will hear the word of the Lord coming from Jerusalem and Israel will arise and shine.

Before these men are ever going to be ready to go out and teach the other nations they need to be first brought to the feet of their Messiah: all according to the Old Testament.

In early Acts, Peter preached to the nation of Israel.

Acts 2:5 KJV And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

Before they go out to the nations they need to preach to the nation of Israel: they had a restricted ministry. In Jesus’ earthly ministry He told them not to go to the Gentiles or to Samaria (Matt 10).

Acts 2:6 KJV Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

Because of the Babylonian captivity the Jews were scattered among the nations and spoke the languages of the other nations.

The gift of tongues, first and foremost, was to allow this little believing Flock that had been gathered together under the ministry of John the Baptist first and then the Lord Jesus Christ and then the 12 apostles. The Little Flock  gathered together for the purpose of going out and preaching gospel of the kingdom to the nation of Israel who was still at this time in unbelief so they could be brought to a place of believing Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

The gift of tongues, first and foremost, was given to the believing remnant so they can go out and preach to the unbelieving nation of Israel and bring them to the feet of the Messiah and be able to communicate unto them the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of the circumcision. Eventually, when Israel is saved and ready to be priests, then they will be ready for the Gentiles among the nations to take hold of their skirt and the means by which they will do that is by speaking in tongues.

Did the men go out and were they able to be fulfill their commission? No. So, the majority of the Body of Christ today labors under the idea that we are fulfilling Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and Acts 1. But we are not to do so and those men did not fulfill that commission; they went and preached in the early chapters of Acts to Israel.

Acts 2:22 KJV Ye men of Israel,…

Acts 3:12 KJV And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, …

Acts 5:35 KJV And said unto them, Ye men of Israel,…

All through the first seven chapters of Acts there is a legitimate offer made to the nation of Israel of the resurrected Jesus Christ as their Messiah and the majority rejects Him; they do not receive Him. Now, what that is the fall of the nation of Israel. The fall of the nation of Israel is a prophesied event. It is prophesied that when Jesus Christ comes, he will be rejected. And the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the direct reason why the tribulation period would come. But, did the tribulation come? Has it come yet? No, it was prophesied they would reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, what God did in the book of Acts is stop the prophetic program and God brought in the salvation of the Apostle Paul, an unprophesied dispensation of the grace of God. Paul teaches us that through the fall of Israel salvation has gone out to the Gentiles and that was *not* prophesied.

The fall of Israel was a prophesied event, but what would happen as a result of that fall would be the tribulation. However, what Paul teaches in Romans 11 is the result of the fall of Israel was not the tribulation but rather salvation being sent out to the Gentiles apart from Israel.

Romans 11:11 KJV  I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather*through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

When Paul was saved in Acts 9, the dispensation of the grace of God was brought in. The dispensation of grace did not start with the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, not at Calvary, not at Pentecost. It did not start until the salvation of Paul in Acts 9.

How do we know this? Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 1:15-16 that he was the first in something and others will come after him and be like him.

1 Timothy 1:15-16 KJV  This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (16)  Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

What Paul was the first in was that he was the first member of the Body of Christ. The other people who are saved after Paul, who come in the line of Paul’s pattern, are members of the Body of Christ. When Paul got saved, God started the body, an unprophesied group of people never before hinted at, talked about, or foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament. Those prophets never saw anything of the dispensation of grace in which God would break down the middle wall of partition which divided the Jew and Gentile. Through the merits of Jesus Christ at Calvary, God would send out a message to the Jew and Gentile on the same level and the same basis that all those who would believe that message would be reconciled unto God and put in one body by the cross: that was never foreseen by the Old Testament scripture, it was a mystery.

God stopped the prophetic program; it did not advance. We know this because Israel is not saved today; she is fallen and blinded. We do not have to go and get a hold of skirt of a Jew in order to get saved. We got saved apart from any Jew, apart from the nation of Israel. We did not get saved because Israel arose and was shining. We did not come through the brightness of Israel’s rising: we come to the Lord Jesus Christ through the fall of the nation of Israel, this is the means salvation came to us Gentiles.

That Great Commission is not being fulfilled today, it will wait until the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the kingdom reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. Today, we are working under the commission  of the Lord Jesus Christ which is as an ambassador of Jesus Christ, who sits today in heaven as a king in exile, offering the world peace and reconciliation through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary anticipating the fact that God’s wrath is going to come but God has delayed it while He has given His enemies an opportunity to get saved by His grace and become a part of this new man, this new purpose.

Now, the Body of Christ is not a plan B. It is something God thought about before the world began. It is something God has predestined that He was going to do when He brought it in. It is an eternal purpose that God is fulfilling today. God is going out and visiting the Gentiles (Acts 15).

When you visit someone you know you are not at home. What God is doing among the Gentiles today is just visiting; His home is back there with Israel.

God is visiting the Gentiles in the dispensation of the grace of God: none (Jew or Gentile)is any better than the other, one in no different from the other. They are all in unbelief; they are all sinners.

While God is visiting out there among the Gentiles, He sends out a message of reconciliation and saves those who will believe on Him and makes them part of His body. One day, when the dispensation of grace ends by the rapture of the Body of Christ then the prophetic program will continue on, that is when the Great Commission will be fulfilled, in the kingdom reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**If what I said is true, then why did the Gentiles saved during the time of Acts receive the gift of tongues?**

It was already answered: Tongues are for a sign. Who are they a sign to? They are a sign to unbelieving Israel.

Those signs, gifts of speaking in tongues, were a sign to unbelieving Israel. In the book of Acts, when those Gentiles get saved and God begins to give them the gift of speaking in tongues, it is still a sign to the unbelieving nation of Israel.

Romans 11:13-14 KJV  For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:  (14)  If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them.

The purpose of the sign of speaking in tongues being given to the Gentiles in the book of Acts, was still a sign to unbelieving Israel. The purpose of tongues was because God was speaking a message to Israel; that is the means by which God was speaking a message to them.

What the signs among the Gentiles believers in the book of Acts spoke to Israel is an extension of the message of the change of the program of God. When Israel sees her signs out there among the Gentile nations, it is a sign that the program has changed and they are no longer the issue in God’s plan and purpose. It signified that God had introduced a new purpose that is apart from Israel. It is a sign that God had departed from them and had gone out to visit the Gentiles. As one followed the signs, one followed the change in the program of God.

The Apostle Paul lays out three chapters in 1 Corinthians about the gifts and speaking in tongues, chapters 12,13 and 14.

1 Corinthians 14:21-22 KJV  (21)  In the law it is written, With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.  (22)  Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

The purpose of speaking in tongues among the Gentiles is still the same: a sign to unbelieving Israel. God is sending a message to the nation of Israel through the Gentiles having that gift and the message is: “I am judging you and going out to visit among the Gentiles.”

In the book of Acts, Paul pronounces three times judgment against the nation of Israel: Acts 13, 18, 28. Once that Acts period and testimony of the signs in which that message is clear: going, going, gone!

Acts 13:46 KJV  Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Acts 18:5-6 KJV  And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* Christ.  (6)  And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

Acts 28:25-28 KJV  And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, (26)Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:  (27)  For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their*eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.  (28)  Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it.

God is not dealing with Israel today as a nation.

Psalms 74:9 KJV  We see not our signs: *there is* no more any prophet: neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

What that verse tells us is this:

1. Signs belong to Israel.
2. There have been periods of time in Israel’s history when God withdrew the signs.

There have been period of time when God did not give Israel the signs, there was no prophecy, no knowledge. In times of judgment on the nation of Israel God would withdraw the signs, there wouldn’t be prophecy nor any knowledge.

This is exactly what the dispensation of the grace of God is: it is a signless age, God is not giving signs today because it is a time when God’s judgment has fallen on Israel as a nation. And they, as a fallen nation and blinded and set aside, God is not giving them signs, prophecy or knowledge.

Just like in Israel’s past when there have been times when God withdrew the signs as judgment, the dispensation of grace is a time when Israel has fallen and they are not an issue and God is not giving them signs, prophecy or knowledge. It is gone! Just as it happened before. The dispensation of the grace of God is one of those times when God has withdrawn the signs.

Paul plainly teaches us the purpose of tongues, how the sign program is to work and operate. He tells us why it was among the Gentiles and Israel’s program of the Old Testament could not and did not move forward.

1 Corinthians 13:8 KJV  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.

Paul tells us that there are three things that will pass away, that they will not be a permanent part of the dispensation of the grace of God:

1. prophecies
2. tongues
3. knowledge

Psalms 74:9 KJV  We see not our signs: *there is* no more any prophet: neither *is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

Tongues will cease and tongues are one of Israel’s signs. The Psalmist said, “We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet.” Paul says prophecy will cease to be given as a gift.

There is none that know how long, we don’t know how long God is going to close those things up because it has to do with the program and how it relates to the nation of Israel, how they will go out and be priests and ministers of the Lord to the nations. But because of their unbelief they failed. When they failed, God brought in the eternal purpose of the dispensation of grace.

So, there is no reason, no purpose today for the gift of tongues. God has withdrawn the gift of tongues and those other sign gifts. God withdrew them and they are gone.

1 Corinthians 13:9-10 KJV  (9)  For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.  (10)  But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

That which is perfect is come: some say that this is the 2nd coming but that idea is not supported by the context. The word “perfect” means to be matured, grownup, complete. If something is in part it is not complete.

So, we know the word “perfect” in context means to be complete but it also means to be mature.

1 Corinthians 13:11 KJV  When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

The context teaches us what the word “perfect” means. It does not mean perfect in the sense of sinless but it means complete, mature, grownup.

Some will then ask, “Do you think you will be grown up before the Lord Jesus Christ comes?” Well, Paul tells us to be grown up before the Lord Jesus Christ comes. Paul tells us we can be grown up right now because God has completed the revelation. What Paul is talking about in the passage is God completed the revelation of the mystery. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 12:1 that he received that revelation of the mystery in visions and revelations ; he did not get it all at once. It was given to him in a series of revelations and visions of the Lord over a period of time. He received the message that we have in our Bible: Romans – Philemon.

When Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, he said we know in part and prophecy in part but we are waiting for that day when in our knowledge we will be mature, grown up when this thing is complete: when Paul’s visions and revelations, prophecies and knowledge are complete all will be complete. When that happens God will withdraw the tongues, prophecy and knowledge. When it is complete then we can grow up, quit being a little kid and be an adult.

To show “perfect” is not the 2nd coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, look at verse 13. Paul says that some things will cease when the perfect comes and if the perfect is the 2nd coming, then verse 13 would mean faith, hope and love would continue on after Christ came.

1 Corinthians 13:13 KJV  And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

Now, is faith going to continue when the Lord Jesus Christ comes? No.
Is hope going to continue when the Lord Jesus Christ comes? No.
Is love going to continue when the Lord Jesus Christ comes? Well, yes.

Faith and hope will end in sight when we see Him. Paul contrasts between verse 8 some things that will cease when the perfect comes in opposition to verse 13 to some things when Paul wrote the passage about some things that are abiding and will continue even after the perfect thing has come.

So, if you teach “perfect” is the 2nd coming then you would be saying faith, hope and charity will continue even after He comes. However, Paul wrote to us that if we see something, then what do we have hope for (Romans 8:24). To say “perfect” is the 2nd coming won’t work in context.

**Perfect Thing**

Colossians 1:25 KJV  Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

God has fulfilled His word. The word “fulfilled” means to complete. God has completed His word through Paul.

The prophets of the Old Testament laid out what they saw since the world began. They spoke what they were given and it had to do with Israel and the earth and the things related. God then began to form a new group of people called the Body of Christ and God began to give the revelation of the mystery to the Apostle Paul.

The message to us today was given to the Apostle Paul and that is part of the word of God that needed to be finished. When it is finished it is here: that which is perfect is come!

In 1 Corinthians 13 Paul is talking about knowledge being complete.  What would complete knowledge? The revelation of the mystery and Paul said it was given to him to fulfill (complete) the word of God. When Paul put his pen down, when he finished writing those books Romans – Philemon, the word of God was complete and God withdrew the signs and today they are gone.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 KJV  All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:  (17)  That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

“*Is given*”, not is in the process of being given. The completed word of God is profitable. There is a purpose for the word of God is that the man of God may be perfect, that is mature, grownup, complete. We do not have to wait for the Lord Jesus Christ to come again. When Paul put his pen down, knowledge was complete, prophecy was complete, and the revelation was complete. Now, we can put away childish thing and grow up in Him in all things, into the head which is Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4). We don’t have to wait for Him to come; we can do it right now.

With the completed word of God, the Body of Christ comes to a place of perfection (maturity). That is why the gift of speaking in tongues and all those other gifts are gone. God is not giving them in this present dispensation of grace.

**Four Rules For Speaking in Tongues**

1 Corinthians 12 informs the Corinthians of the gifts. 1 Corinthians 13 says they will pass away. 1 Corinthians 14 lays out the rules for how to use the gifts until they cease. The Corinthians were misusing them.

1 Corinthians 14:27-28 KJV  (27)  If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; 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.

1 Corinthians 14:34 KJV  Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

If God were involved in the speaking in tongues movement then these rules will be followed:

1. No more than 3 that would speak in a meeting.
2. Need to wait one’s turn to speak, and that by course
3. Let one interpret, if there is no interpreter present then one is not to speak in tongues. This means one has to know in advance if an interpreter is present
4. Only men are to speak in tongues in the church. (If any man speak…)

It is clear that these rules are not being followed today. This makes it clear that God is not involved in the speaking in tongues movement today.