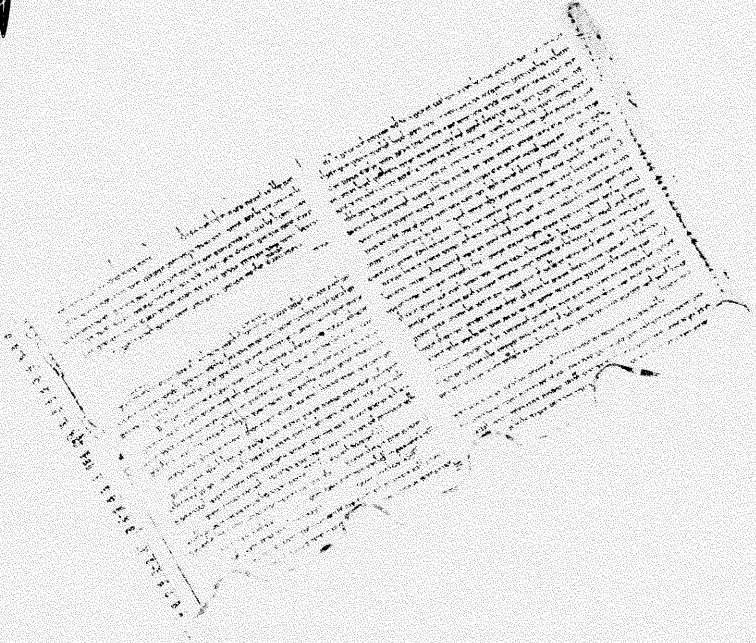




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## F O R E W O R D

This issue of the Quarterly begins with a sermon by the Rev. Robert McMiller, pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Okauchee, Wisconsin, which was delivered to the seminary graduation class of 1984. Bethany Lutheran Seminary graduated six students on Synod Sunday afternoon, June 17. Pastor McMiller's son was one of the graduates.

We also include an exegetical paper on Isaiah 11:6-9 by Rev. Gaylin Schmeling, pastor of the Cottonwood-Tracy parish. He shows that the true peace of which the prophet speaks is that spiritual peace won for us by Christ, not an external peace in this world as the millennialists contend. A symbolical interpretation of this section does violence to the text. We are also grateful to Pastor Schmeling for his translation of a sermon from German into English by Dr. George Stockhardt. This sermon is found in Stockhardt's Adventspreigten.

Another instructive essay in this issue is Glossalalia in the New Testament and The Modern Charismatic Movement by Rev. T. Michael Elliott, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Camarillo, California. He shows that the tongues spoken of in Acts and I Corinthians were foreign languages, not ecstatic utterances nor heavenly languages unknown to human beings, as the modern charismatics contend. Both of the above-mentioned papers were delivered to the General Pastoral Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod held last October.

The annual Reformation Lectures, sponsored jointly by Bethany College and Bethany Seminary will be held October 25-26, 1984 in Mankato. The lecturer will be Prof. Armin Schuetze, president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin. His topic is: Luther on Law and Gospel with Special Reference to the Third Use of the Law.

-- WWP





TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Seminary Graduation Sermon . . . -- Rev. Robert J. McMiller	1
An Exegetical Study of Isaiah 11:6-9 . . . . . -- Rev. Gaylin Schmeling	9
A Translation of a Sermon on Isaiah 11:1-10 . . . . . -- Rev. Gaylin Schmeling	32
Glossolalia in The New Testament and The Modern Charismatic Movement . . . . . -- Rev. T. Michael Elliott	43



## SEMINARY GRADUATION SERMON

by

Rev. Robert J. McMiller

Acts 20:28

"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

Dear friends in Christ, and especially you dear brethren, who today are marking a memorable day in your lives as you graduate from our Evangelical Lutheran Synod's Seminary and prepare to respond to the calls which have been extended to you. I am sure this day also brings a special joy to you parents. Indeed, I would like to share with you parents some words of Martin Luther which seem so appropriate on this occasion: "You should be heartily glad and joyful to rear by means of your goods and labor a son who becomes a pious, Christian preacher...! By so doing you have reared a special servant for God, nay..an angel of God, a true bishop for God, a king and prince in the kingdom of Christ, and a teacher and a light of the world among the people of God. Who will or can tell all the honor and value a true, faithful pastor has before God?" (Keeping Children in School, 1530; SL 10, 427 ff)

Who can tell the value of a true, faithful pastor before God? Indeed, dear brethren, it is our fervent prayer that these words are indicative of the faithful ministry which, by God's

grace, you shall render to the Chief Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ, and to His precious flock. This was also the prayer and admonition which the apostle Paul expressed to the pastors of the church in Ephesus when he met with them briefly at Miletus, as he hurried back to Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey. Paul had labored long in Ephesus, boldly and joyfully preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8), and now at his departure the church had called these men to be their pastors. Paul already knew that he was facing imprisonment and might never return to Ephesus, therefore he solemnly charges these men with the RESPONSIBILITIES AND JOYS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

I would employ these same words of St. Paul as the solemn charge of the church to each of you today as you prepare to begin your ministry: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood."

God has now called you six men to serve as pastors of His precious flock, for in every true call, ordination and installation we see the work of the Holy Spirit. This should be a very comforting truth to each of you, that that part of Christ's flock which you will be serving has been entrusted to you by the Lord Himself. He has chosen you to be His watchman at that particular spot on Zion's wall where He has called you. I pray you will remember this truth throughout your ministry, wherever you may serve in the years to come. I assure you, it will be a special source of comfort and strength to you when those moments come when you are tempted to be discouraged, or feel that the particular problems or challenges of your ministry are beyond your strength and

ability. It is a great source of peace to be able to say, "Lord it is You, and not I, who has called me to lead and feed Your precious flock in this place, therefore I boldly ask Your blessing and strength for the ministry You have placed before me."

There is, of course, but one place where this strength and consolation and blessing of Christ is found, and that is in His Word. Thus, as the apostle urged the pastors of Ephesus, so he also urges you who now look forward to the beginning of your pastoral ministry, "Take heed to yourselves!" No pastor can be a true "Seel-sorger," or "keeper of souls," unless his own soul is daily nourished and strengthened by the Word of God. Therefore, the first and greatest responsibility of any pastor is to continually search and study the Scriptures for his own spiritual strength and edification. We too have our personal battles to fight with our sinful flesh; we too face the temptations of the world, and our arch enemy, Satan, and it is only the Word of God which can impart to us the faith, the strength and the courage we need for our own life in Christ. Indeed, how can we lead the flock of Christ into those green pastures of His Word if we ourselves are not familiar with those valleys and meadows and quiet streams of His living Word? We also need to daily walk at the side of the Chief Shepherd of the flock so that He might further instruct and guide us in our holy calling.

Thus a pastor needs to discipline himself so that he spends many quiet hours alone with his Lord in the Word, not only for sermon and Bible study preparation, but simply to let our Lord speak to us about our own sins and our need for repentance, and to let Him apply the healing balm of His grace to our souls. And a goodly

portion of those important hours must also be spent in earnest conversation with our Lord. Luther once remarked that the more responsibilities he faced and the more work he had to do, the more time he spent in prayer. This is a lesson which I confess I had to learn in my ministry, but I happily acknowledge that I have found Luther's counsel to be true. Indeed, I would say it is presumptuous for us to even undertake our study of the Scriptures without offering the prayer of the Psalmist: Lord, "open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." (119:18 KJ). Daily fervent prayer should be made, of course, not only for your own ministry, but also for that precious flock which Christ has entrusted to your care.

Note how Paul reminds us that the flock which has been entrusted to us is not ours, but it belongs to Christ, the Chief Shepherd, who has redeemed it with His precious blood: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." With these words Paul also reminds you of the second great responsibility that will be yours as an undershepherd of Christ, and that is, to faithfully feed the flock with the pure and unadulterated Word of God. Not to share your own speculations or opinions, nor to worry about the opinions of others, but to proclaim the Law to awaken those who are asleep in their self-righteous pride, and to comfort with the Gospel of Christ those, who in sincere repentance realize they have nothing to offer a holy and righteous God - except the righteousness of Christ. Comfort them with that Gospel which declares: we are "justified freely by (God's) grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:24) Hold before all those who long for God's forgive-

ness and grace the tender invitation of our Savior, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!" (Mt. 11:28) As Paul counseled his young co-worker, Timothy, "Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season!" (2 Tim. 4:2) Preach this Word faithfully and clearly! In his treatise, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," Luther expresses a truth which every pastor should have hanging in that study where he prepares his sermons: "I shall give the truth as I have received it, freely and without malice... I shall go on working faithfully, so that before the judgment seat of Christ no one may cast on me the blame for his lack of faith and knowledge of the truth." (SL 19, 30f)

Then also, my dear brethren, let the joy you have experienced in your own heart and soul through God's grace in Christ permeate your preaching. Let your preaching of the Law demonstrate to others the sorrow you have experienced in your own heart over your own sins. And let your preaching of the Gospel express the boundless peace and strength and joy God's grace in Christ has brought into your own heart. Good preaching must, first of all, be grounded in the Word of God, but good preaching must also come from a heart which overflows with joyful amazement at God's grace for a sinner like me! I recall reading many years ago some words which a sailor spoke to a preacher who had asked this man what he considered to be good preaching. His reply was, "When a man takes something warm out of his heart and shoves it into mine, I call that good preaching." (Secret of Beautiful Living, p. 35) St. Paul was such a preacher! His heart and his preaching overflowed with the love of Christ. Paul never forgot what Christ had done for him, and Paul never ceased to be amazed that his Lord had chosen him to share the truth of the Gospel



with others. Paul saw his ministry as the highest honor his Lord could bestow upon him, as he reminds us in that beautiful letter which he sent to these same Christians of Ephesus: "To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." (Eph. 3:8)

And so we see how our Lord has wonderfully blended the joys of the ministry with its responsibilities. There truly is no greater joy than to see the fruits of the Gospel in the lives of those to whom you minister; to witness the faith, the peace, and the strength it imparts to their hearts. This is part of that joy of being an "undershepherd" of Christ, which Paul refers to when he writes: "The Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God." I love Luther's exposition of this word "overseer" in his commentary on I Peter, where he writes: "It is derived from the little word EPISKOPOS, which in German is EYN FORSEHER or WECHTER, a man who watches or guards and looks round about him to see what everyone needs.... If someone is weak, he must help and comfort. If someone falls, he must buoy him up, etc., in order that that Christian may be adequately provided for in body and soul." (American Edition, Vol. 30, p. 135) Indeed, this is why our Lord, in His wisdom and compassion, has instituted the office of the ministry, so that there might be faithful undershepherds to comfort, strengthen, cheer and guide His precious flock on earth.

This is also why a pastor's ministry cannot be limited to laboring faithfully in his study, but he must also visit the homes of his members and share their burdens and joys. The Chief

Shepherd knows all of His sheep by name, and so those of us who are His undershepherds should also strive to personally know those whom Christ has entrusted to our care and ministry. It is through such personal pastoring that we are able to clearly see the needs of our flock - the grieving widow who has recently lost her husband, the lonely child, who finds himself fatherless or motherless; those young Christian men and women who are struggling daily with the temptations of this humanistic and hedonistic society in which we live. They are all looking for the guidance and strength to honor and serve Christ with their lives, but they need a pastor to take them by the hand and lead them into that Word where such power and strength are found. I assure you, some of the greatest joys of your ministry will be experienced in those gentle smiles of gratitude and in those warm handclasps you receive on a Sunday morning from those members of your flock whom you have counseled and comforted with the Word during the previous week.

To be sure, the ministry also has its burdens, for as St. Paul repeatedly reminds us (I Cor. 1; Phil. 1), as members of the Body of Christ we must share the sufferings of our Lord, and the shepherd of the flock is often the target of some of Satan's most painful attacks. Yet, the joy of knowing we are able to serve our Lord and Redeemer; that we are able to share His grace with others through His holy Word, far outweighs any burdens of this office to which you have been called.

My dear brethren, as our Lord now entrusts to your care a portion of that precious flock which He has purchased with His own blood, it is my prayer, the prayer of all who have taught you

at this seminary, and the prayer of all in Zion, that you will be faithful undershepherds, guarding the flock and guiding it into the saving truth of the Gospel! The Lord richly bless your ministries, and may you serve Him with the joy of knowing that "when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away." (I Peter, 5:4) Amen.

(All Scripture quotations are from the NKJ, unless otherwise indicated)

The Secret of Beautiful Living, Rev. Oswald Riess - CPH, 1953.

-- Rev. McMiller is pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Okauchee, Wisconsin

## An Exegetical Study of Isaiah 11: 6-9

In order to understand this section of Scripture, we need to take a look at the general context of Isaiah 11. Isaiah writes, "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse and a branch from His roots will bear fruit." (Isaiah 11:1 NASB) Isaiah sees the house of David in very humble circumstances. The famous family of Jesse, which in David's and Solomon's time was like a mighty cedar tree overshadowing the nations, is here seen as only a stump. All its green foliage and life are gone. Nevertheless, out of this stump comes forth a fresh green Branch. A weather-beaten tree without life or power produces a vital living Shoot. This is not a natural happening. This is a miracle of God. So it was at the time of Augustus' decree. The house of David was nothing but a stump. Yet the virgin conceived and bore a Son calling His name Immanuel. The Branch indeed was growing.

On Jesus Christ, who is this Branch, the Holy Spirit was poured out in all His fullness pictured here as the sevenfold Spirit. This outpouring refers to His human nature, for as God He always possesses these attributes. We are reminded that the whole fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus in bodily form. (Isaiah 11:2)

Having completed His work of redemption and having elevated to the position of power at the right hand, Jesus does not decide by what He sees or hears, but with righteousness He judges the poor. He is controlling all things in the universe for the good of His Holy Church, the poor in heart. He is holding His little flock gathered from the

four winds in His loving arms. The person, however, who rejects Jesus will be slain by the Word of His mouth. (Isaiah 11:3-5)

Now in this context, the Prophet continues:

Verse 6a וְגַרְ וְאֵב עִם-כָּבֵשׁ וְנָמַר עִם-יָדַי יִרְבֵּץ

And the wolf will dwell with the lamb and the leopard will lie down with the kid.

VOCABLE NOTES

וְגַרְ

ו correlative with Qal Perfect 3 M S of גָּרַר "to sojourn, to dwell for a time": LXX συμβοσκηθήσεται Future Passive Ind. 3 S.

וְאֵב

M S noun "wolf" (the root אָבַד "to drive away and despise"): LXX ὁ λύκος.

וְכָבֵשׁ

M S noun "lamb": LXX ὁ ἀρνῆν.

וְנָמַר

M S noun "leopard" (the root נָמַר "to shine, to glean, glossy coat of the leopard"): LXX ὁ πάρδαλις.

וְיָדַי

M S noun "kid" (this word is most likely from a root meaning to cut or shear"): LXX ὁ ἐρίφος.

וְיִרְבֵּץ

Qal Perfect 3 M S of רָבַץ "to stretch oneself out, to lie down": LXX συναναπαύσεται Future Middle Ind. 3 S "to rest, to find rest."

Notice that this verse begins with the waw correlative and the perfect verb form. The waw links this verb to the verb forms in the previous verses in a correlative relationship. The verb forms are co-existent and related logically by inherent and permanent coordination. (J. W. Watts, A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament, p. 54.)

Because of this there is no reason to assume the peace spoken of in Isaiah 11:6-9 is successive in time to the foregoing verses. This peace occurs in Christ's New Testament kingdom, His Church. In fact verses 1-10 of chapter 11 all begin with waw correlative and do not necessarily show any time sequence. The peace of these verses is coexistent with the birth of the Branch at Bethlehem Ephrathah. The Church is not waiting for this peace in the far future but it has it right now. Isaiah 11:1-5 portrays Messiah, the King of Peace, and Isaiah 11:6-9 portrays His kingdom of peace.

Throughout this section the names of the animals are given without the definite article and yet they are translated as though the definite article is present. This is the generic use of the noun. The Prophet isn't speaking of a wolf and a lamb but about the whole class of these animals.

In verse 6a there is an interesting chiasmus. Literally it reads, "and will dwell the wolf with the lamb and the leopard with the kid will lie down." The verb is first in the beginning phrase while last in the second phrase. This introverted word order is one of the characteristics of Hebrew poetry.

The picture here is peace in nature. Are there any greater mortal enemies than the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid? These predatory animals are the age-old adversaries of the domestic animals. Here, however, the old hostility is removed. The lamb, who lives in fear of the wolf, now entertains the wolf in his dwelling. The leopard, which is equally as ferocious as the wolf, lies down with the kid, the animal it normally would have devoured. The old enmity is gone.

What a wonderful picture of the peace in Messiah's kingdom.

Verse 6b : וְעַל וּבְפִי יוֹמְרֵי אֶיִחֲוִי וְנָעַר קָטָן נֹהֵג בָּהֶם :

"And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and the young child is leading them."

VOCABLE NOTES

עָרַף with M S noun "calf" (the root עָרַף "to roll"): LXX τὸ βοσκόριον.

פִּי לֵוִי M S noun "young lion": LXX ὁ λέων.

סָרַח M S noun "fatling" (the root סָרַח "to be fat, to be well fed"): LXX ὁ ταῦρος "bull, ox."

יָחַד Adverb "together": LXX ἄμα.

צָהַל Qal Active Participle of צָהַל "to drive, to conduct, to keep to the road, to lead." In Hebrew the participle shows continuous action: LXX ἄξει Future Active Ind. 3 S "to drive, to lead."

The Septuagint has a few variant readings in this verse. Rahlfs' Edition of the Septuagint reads, "and the calf and the ox and the lion will feed together" (βοσκηθήσονται Future Passive Ind. 3 Pl. "to feed together"). The verb "to feed" seems to be added here to make the phrase parallel with the first phrase of the verse which in the Septuagint reads, "and the wolf will feed together with the lamb, etc." In the critical commentary of The Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, Jesaja there is another Septuagint variant. In this reading אֵיִתְּנֵם "and the fatling" is taken as אֵיִתְּנֵם? "they will feed." This is the origin of the NIV



note "the calf and the lion will feed." Still another variant in this critical commentary is a reading which takes  $\text{לֶבֶן לִיֹּן וְעֵזִים}$  as  $\text{לֶבֶן לִיֹּן וְעֵזִים}$  Qal Imperfect 3 M Pl. of  $\text{לָבַן}$  "to be together." This is what Beck seems to be following when he translates, "a calf, a young lion, and a fattened animal will be together." These variants are a misreading of the Hebrew text or show a lack of understanding of the Hebrew text. Therefore the Masoretic text is preferred.

Here there are interesting comparisons. A young strong lion is in the middle. Notice the text uses the word  $\text{לִיֹּן}$  "young lion" not some toothless old flea-bag. On either side of him are wonderful things to eat. What would meet his fancy more than tender veal and  $\text{עֵזִים}$  "a fattening ox" fed to perfection. The lion should be licking his chops and planning the dinner menu. Does he seize them? No, they walk together as friends. Even more amazing, a young child leads them. Anyone who has any contact with dairy farms knows that the farmer is always concerned that his little ones are not trampled in the stockyard and these are tame animals. Yet the little one in this verse leads not only the domestic but also the wild animals. He leads without fear in perfect safety.

There is parallelism here with the conditions in the creation before the fall. In the world, undisturbed by sin, there was peace and harmony. According to Genesis 1:26 man was to rule over the creation and here even a small child leads the animals. In Genesis 2:19-20 the animals recognize Adam as their lord and peacefully gather around him receiving their names, so here the beasts gather around the child and follow his lead. In Genesis 1:30 only vegetation was assigned to the animals for their food. Likewise in this verse the animals do not devour each other, and in verse 7

we are told that the lion will eat straw as the ox. This parallelism indicates that the peace between God and man, lost in the fall, will be restored in the Stem of Jesse's rule of peace. The first Adam lost this wonderful peace through sin but the Second Adam, Jesus Christ, restored it by His death and resurrection. These verses using poetic language are saying the very same thing the angels said that first Holy Night, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men. (Luke 2:14 KJV)

Verse 7 וּפְתָהּ וְלֵב תִּרְעֶנָּה יַחְדָּו יִרְבְּצוּ יְלְדֵיהֶן וְאַרְיֵה כִבְקָר יֹאכַל-תֶּבֶן:

"Also the cow and the bear will graze, together their young will lie down and the lion will eat straw as the ox.

#### VOCABLE NOTES

פָּרָה F S noun "heifer, cow." The word is used in Pharoah's dream Genesis 41:2: LXX ó ἡ βοῦς.

דָּב M S noun "bear" (Possibly the root is דָּוַב "to move gently, to glide, to move slowly," the bear has a gliding motion or movement): LXX ó ἡ ἄρκτος.

רָעָה Qal Imperfect 3 F Pl of רָעָה "to graze, to tend, to pasture." This verb is feminine plural although one of the subjects is masculine. In Hebrew animals which are strong and courageous are usually regarded as masculine whereas those that are weaker are considered feminine. Here the word bear may have a feminine force. (Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, Vol. I, p. 389): LXX βοσκηθήσονται.

וְיָרְדוּ יַחְדָּם  
 Qal Imperfect 3 M Pl of רָבַע "to lie down": LXX ἕσονται Future Mid. Ind. 3 Pl. Here the LXX reads "their young will be together" rather than "lie down together."

וְיָרְדוּ יַחְדָּם  
 M Pl noun of יָרַד "boy, young one" with F Pl Suffix.

אֲרִי הַיָּבֵשׁ  
 M S noun "lion." This word and אֲרִי are the most common words for adult lions.

וְיָרְדוּ יַחְדָּם  
 M noun "cattle, ox, herd": LXX ὁ ἡ βοῦς.

וְיָרְדוּ יַחְדָּם  
 M S noun "straw": LXX τὸ ἄχυρον.

In verse 6 the first verb is perfect and then in the second phrase the imperfect is used which continues through verse 7. The main difference between the two tenses in Hebrew is that the perfect describes completed action while the imperfect describes incompleted action. The imperfects here are frequentative imperfects showing repetitive or continuous action. None of the English translations of these verses made any distinction between the tenses because this would lead to a very cumbersome translation. However, literally verses 6 and 7 read thus, "and the wolf will dwell with the lamb and the leopard will be accustomed to lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and the young child leads them. Also the cow and the bear will continually graze, together their young will be accustomed to lie down and the lion will always eat straw as the ox."

The ferocious bear grazes in green pastures with the cow. Their young rest together. Even the lion eats vegetable matter as before the fall. Isaiah sees that Messiah's Advent will cause this



י נ ד נ

Qal Passive Participle "weaned one" from י נ ד נ "deal fully, to wean, to ripen." "When the verb י נ ד נ is used with a feminine subject or in the passive in speaking of the relationship between 'mother and child,' it means to wean the child from its mother's milk (Isaiah 28:9), which was done at the end of a nursing period of about three years." (G. J. Botterweck, and Helmer Ringgren, Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, Vol. III, p. 26.): The LXX seems to take י נ ד נ and י נ י נ י נ י נ י נ together and reads ἐκθόνων ἀσπίδων.

ה ה ה

Qal Perfect 3 M S of ה ה ה "to stretch out the hand." (This is a Hapax legomenon.): LXX ἐπιβαλεῖ Future Active Ind. 3 S.

Delitzsch in his commentary translates the second phrase "and the weaned child stretcheth his hand toward the pupil of the basilisk." ה ה ה נ ד נ is understood as the light of the eye, the eyeball. "The glance of serpents, and in particular of basilisks, was regarded as paralysing and fascinating - this terrific hurtfulness of serpents has now ceased, the basilisk has become so gentle that it lets children touch its sparkling eyes as though they were precious stones." (Franz Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on The Prophecies of Isaiah, Vol. 1, p. 250.) This view is rejected by most translators because it disagrees with the Ancient Versions which read "bed or den of the snake." Also Delitzsch's view destroys the parallelism with the first phrase, which speaks of playing on the hole of the cobra.

Isaiah's description of peace here reaches its climax. The child, still nursing, plays with

delight on the hole of the cobra. The mood of the verb form **לַעֲשׂוֹת** "to play" is Pilpel a variation of the Piel showing this is intensive action. The child really enjoys playing there. The weaned child, one barely three years old, sticks his hand in the viper's den wanting to play. These children do not cause their mothers heart failure. No, the mothers calmly allow them to continue this harmless play.

Verse 9 **לֹא יִהְיוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתוּ בְּכָל־תֵּר קְדָשִׁי**  
**כִּי־מִלְאָה הָאָרֶץ דַּעַת אֶת־יְהוָה בְּמַיִם לַיָּם מְכַסִּים:**

They will neither hurt nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of Yahweh as the waters are covering the sea.

VOCABLE NOTES

**לַעֲשׂוֹת** Hiphil Imperfect 3 M Pl of **עָשָׂה**  
 "to do evil": LXX μακοποιήσωσιν  
 Future Active Ind. 3 Pl.

**לְהָרִיב** Hiphil Imperfect 3 M Pl of **רָבַח**  
 "to go to ruin": LXX δύνωνται  
 ἀπολέσαι.

**מִלְאָה** Qal Perfect 3 F S of **מָלָא** "to be full": LXX ἐνεπλήσθη Aorist Passive Ind. 3 S.

**דַּעַת** F S noun "knowledge" (the root is **יָדַע** "to know," it is formed from the infinitive construct of this verb.)

**מְכַסִּים** Piel Participle M Pl of **כָּסַף** "to cover": LXX κατακαλύψαι Aorist Active Infinitive.

This verse begins with the strongest Hebrew negative **לֹא** which is like the Greek οὐ . Here

the Septuagint uses the double negative οὐ μή. Never will they hurt nor destroy on the Lord's mountain.

The second half of the verse literally reads, "for the earth will be full of knowing the Lord as the waters are covering the sea."  $\text{הַיְדֹת}$  "knowledge is a noun which is the direct object of  $\text{הָאֵלֹהִים}$  "to be full" and at the same time it has a verbal force so that it can take an object  $\text{הַיְדֹת}$  "Yahweh." The noun  $\text{הַיְדֹת}$  functions here almost like the infinitive construct of the verb  $\text{יָדַע}$ . Therefore the term "the knowledge of God" found in most translations does not refer to God's knowing or God's knowledge but to man's knowing about God. It is an objective genitive rather than a subjective genitive. Also this is not a knowledge of God which leads to dread and fear so that one must cry, "Woe is me I am ruined." Rather this is a knowing the Yahweh God, the God of our salvation. When men come to know the salvation of God; how He sacrificed Himself for sin, then there will be peace. This knowledge alone can bring peace to the human heart.

The expression "My Holy Mountain" in Isaiah usually refers to Mount Zion or Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:2, 56:7, 57:13, 65:25) "It is questionable whether expressions such as 'Holy Mountain' and 'God's Mountain' are used in the Old Testament for any mountains other than Sinai, Zion, and Jerusalem." (Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, Vol. 1, p. 392.) Now realizing that My Holy Mountain refers to Mt. Zion it seems best to understand the subject of this verse as men and not the animals of verse 6-8, for wild animals never dwelt on Zion in historical times. Also the reason there will be no harming or destroying is that the earth will be full of the knowledge of Yahweh which can only change the heart of men not beasts. "Those



on earth who know the Lord can not be the animals, but only men. And those who know the Lord prove this their knowledge in that they cause no evil or harm." (G. Stöckhardt, Commentar Über den Propheten Jesaia, p. 154.) The peace of Messiah's kingdom described with poetic terms in verses 6-8 is here expressed plainly. That peace centers in the knowledge of Yahweh which is the Gospel of Salvation. That Gospel will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; there will indeed be peace.

The Lord's Mountain, Mount Zion, was the symbol of God's presence in the Old Testament. Here stood the temple of Jerusalem. Here Israel gathered to worship the living God. However, when Messiah's perfect sacrifice was complete that first Good Friday, the purpose of Mount Zion and the temple came to an end. In Messiah's kingdom, Zion is not the broken down temple mound in Jerusalem, but it is that of which Paul says, "We are the temple of the living God; just as God said 'I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'" (II Corinthians 6:16 NASB) Mount Zion is where the means of grace are found, the Church. "In Zion, in the Church of God, there will then be no more sin; for the earth is then full of the knowledge of the Lord, by which the sins are done away with." (E.W. Hengstenberg, Christology of the Old Testament, p. 475.) The writer to the Hebrews says, "But you (New Testament believers) have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and the church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven." (Hebrews 12:22-23a NASB)

Thus far we have viewed Isaiah's description of the Branch of Jesse's kingdom of peace with its grass-eating lions and friendly cobras. Now how is this prophecy to be understood? The ancient

Church Fathers, Luther, and Calvin took all these pictures from the animal world symbolically. Their interpretation almost becomes allegorical. Concerning verse 6, Luther writes: "He (the Prophet) tells of the fruit of the Word. But these are pictures with which he shows that the tyrants, the self-righteous, and the powerful ones in the world will be converted and received into the Church. But who works this great wonder? Who works this wonderful change? It is the Word, indeed the spoken word, which goes out of the mouth of a sinful man." (M. Luther, Luther's Sämmtliche Schriften, St. Louis Edition, Vol. VI, p. 237.)

Again Luther says, "The wolf will associate with the lamb. Not the lamb with the wolf. The tyrant will become a martyr and the wolf a teacher. The wolves are false teachers according to Matthew 7:15. Paul was a wolf before his conversion. The lambs are the Christians. With the latter the former will be wise in spirit. The young goats are, of course, those that were a clean offering in the law, not those of whom Matthew 25:52 f. speaks. These are martyrs. Leopards are persecuting tyrants. This is what the Word of God does; it casts down the proud and lifts up the lowly. The calves are the faithful. The lions are the rich. Lion cubs are said to act more fiercely than the adults. That is, those who formerly yielded to no one now obey the Gospel preached to them by the least of the brethren, and they gladly hear the Word." Martin Luther, Luther's Works, American Edition, Vol. XVI, p. 122.)

Calvin writes, "Though Isaiah says that the wild and the tame beasts will live in harmony, that the blessings of God may be clearly and fully manifested, yet he chiefly means what I have said, that the people of Christ will have no disposition to do injury, no fierceness or cruelty. They

were formerly like lions or leopards, but will now be like sheep or lambs; for they will have laid aside every cruel and brutish disposition. (John Calvin, Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah, Vol. 1, p. 384.)

Kretzman says, "All the members of Messiah's kingdom whose former state was characterized by the comparison with the various animals named above, would lose and lay aside their hostile habits toward one another." (P. E. Kretzmann, Popular Commentary of Bible Old Testament, Vol. II, p. 308.)

While interpretations such as Luther's and Calvin's were common and are still held by some today, there are certain arguments against such a view. First, it is impossible to carry such a symbolic interpretation through in detail and so this section is distinguished from other passages, where tendencies of men are presented under the forms of animals. "Interpretation already goes too far when it professes to see in the lion a picture of evil men, and in the lamb a picture of good men. Following that line of thought, is the ox then to symbolize men of strong character, and the serpent men of subtle minds?" (August Pieper, Isaiah II, p. 679.) Pieper, here commenting on Isaiah 65: 24-25 a parallel passage to Isaiah II:6-9, shows the problems of such an interpretation. If the animals here are picturing different human personalities effected by the Gospel, then there should be no lambs present for everyone is a wolf by nature born in sin. Besides there is a human child in the scene. If the animals are different types of people, the child does not fit the context. The second argument against this view is that there is nothing in the text itself which gives the exegete the right to assume the animals are picturing different human personalities. Thirdly, there is a parallelism with the condition of the creation

before the fall. The point of this section is the peace between God and man, which was enjoyed in Eden not which animal symbolizes which type of person. A symbolical interpretation simply does violence to the text.

Another view of this text fast gaining favor is to refer Isaiah 11:6-9 to the Millennium. Millennialism has been commonly taught among the Reformed and even by Lutherans like Bengel and Reu. While there are many variations of millennialism floating around, among Evangelicals premillennialism is most common. Premillennial eschatology proceeds thus: 1. The Rapture, 2. The Seven Year Tribulation, 3. The Thousand Year Reign, 4. The loosing of Satan, 5. The Final Judgment.

In the near future all the true believers are to be raptured, meaning they will be taken bodily into heaven leaving only the unbelievers on earth. Most believe this will happen right before the Tribulation although some think it will occur midway through the Tribulation. The Seven Year Tribulation will be a very terrible time when much destruction will befall the world. At its beginning the ten European States will make the Antichrist their head and Israel will be converted. Then Antichrist will make war on Israel ending in the battle of Armageddon in which Christ Himself fights for His own. This battle ends the Tribulation and ushers in the Millennium. During these thousand years Satan is bound and Jesus rules the world from Jerusalem. It is to be a time of world peace where Isaiah's description of the peace in nature is taken literally. Carnivorous animals will not eat meat during the Millennium. After the Millennium Satan will be loose for a short time and then the Final Judgment.

Is Isaiah 11:6-9 teaching the Millennium as is spoken of above? This is the contention of

many today. Yet the context of these verses will not lend itself to such an interpretation. If Isaiah 11:6-9 refers to the Millennium there is a large gap in time between it and verses 1-5 which refer to the sprouting of Jesse's Branch and His Messianic work. The King of Peace comes bringing peace in verses 1-5, but His kingdom of peace in verses 6-8 does not occur until many years later. In fact, we are then still awaiting it. Such an interpretation is arbitrary.

The Hebrew text throughout Isaiah 11-12 uses the waw correlative with the perfect form of the verb which shows coexistent action with the previous correlative perfect. "These same correlative perfects may be the author's means of presenting an extensive prophecy as to Isaiah 11:1-12:6 as a unit." (J. W. Watts, A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament, p. 69.) Then on the basis of the grammar when the Branch of Jesse came forth, one would expect that the peace of Isaiah 11:6-9 would have also occurred. The text presents both happenings as coexistent. The grammar gives us no reason to assume a long-time gap between the coming of the Messiah and His kingdom of peace. This is reading something into the text that is not there.

Pieper writes, "The state of peace described in Isaiah 11:6-9, "'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,' etc. is immediately preceeded by its causa efficiens: 'And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.'" (Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, Vol. III, p. 552.) The Old Testament text itself connects the peace predicted with the coming of Christ. If the cause of this peace is the birth of the Savior, then this peace had its beginning with the coming of Christ and not far in the future.

The second argument against a millennial interpretation is found in Isaiah 11:10, "Then it will come about in that day that the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the people; and His resting place will be glorious." (NASB) This verse in its Septuagint variation is quoted as fulfilled by St. Paul in Romans 15:12 through the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles. (G. Stöckhardt, Römerbrief, p. 622.) If this passage which speaking of the Gentiles coming to Messiah's peace is quoted as being fulfilled by St. Paul, obviously then the peace or the rest to which the nations are coming must already be here. Isaiah 11:6-9 is occurring right now in the New Testament Era.

The third argument against this view is found in the description of the Millennium itself. Isaiah 11:6-9 taken literally pictures the world without sin as it was before the fall. This harmony in nature can only exist where there is no sin. Therefore, it can not refer to the Millennium because advocates of a millennial theory maintain that even during the Millennium there is sin, for after Satan is loosed the nations will again gather for battle.

Also, there is an amazing inconsistency in certain millennialists. They pride themselves in their literal interpretation of the text but one individual writes, "In Isaiah 11, the state of universal peace is symbolized by wild beasts and children playing together absolutely unafraid. All evil will be restrained; none will live in fear or danger. All wild, beastly natures will either be voluntarily controlled or forcefully silenced." (Millennium Superworld, p. 72.) Here after they have invented the Millennium to interpret Biblical poetry literally, they opt for a symbolic understanding. What a fanciful result.

Millennialists refuse to recognize that Inspired Scripture is also a literary document which employs figures of speech, poetic language, and symbolism.

Finally a millennial interpretation of these verses must be rejected because it is not consistent with the Lord's clear description of the end times in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. The Lord Jesus shows that things will continue on with sin and violence ever increasing until suddenly He appears in the clouds to judge the living and the dead. In this sinful downhill progression of history there is no room for a thousand years of universal peace. The Lord is to come as a thief in the night for judgment. (I Thessalonians 5:2) The judgment is to be as unexpected as the flood in the days of Noah. (Matthew 24:37) How is this possible if the Millennium has come first? Also Jesus said, "Do not think I come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword." (Matthew 10:34 NASB) and "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36 NASB) A millennial view perverts the Scriptural teaching of Christian hope. Millennialists look forward to the earthly pleasures of ruling over the unbelieving in the Millennium rather than to the glory of heaven. Jesus will not have an earthly kingdom of peace. Rightly our confessions declare, "Our Churches condemn also others who are now spreading certain Jewish opinions, that before the resurrection of the dead the godly shall take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly everywhere suppressed." (A. C. Article XVII)

If then the symbolic interpretation of Luther, Calvin, and the ancient Fathers, and the extreme literalism of millennialists are to be rejected what does Isaiah 11:6-9 mean when the Prophet



speaks of the wolf living with the lamb, the calf and the lion and fatling together, and the little child leading them? This is poetic language to describe the peace before the time of the fall into sin when there was harmony in nature, harmony between man and nature, and most important harmony and a proper relationship between God and man. This peace is pictured with scenes from God's perfect creation. The animals do not devour; even the carnivorous eat vegetation. The animals peacefully gather before a little child as they did before Adam to be named. The child leads the beasts showing man's original dominion over nature.

In the fall this peace was lost. Sin tainted every aspect of the creation. Yet Jesus was sent into this world to restore that peace between God and man as the angels said to the shepherds. Jesus, the second Adam, came to restore all the first Adam lost in the fall and even more the glories of heaven. One of Walther's Christmas sermons had this theme, "Dasz wir in Bethlehem mehr wieder finden, als wir einst im Paradiese verloren haben." (That we again find more in Bethlehem, than we once lost in Paradise.) Another of his sermons has this theme, "Die Geburt des Kindes zu Bethlehem - die Wiederaufschliessung des Paradieses für alle Menschen. (The Birth of the Child at Bethlehem - the Reopening of Paradise for all Men.) Isaiah 11:6-9 is simply telling us that the peace before the fall, the peace of Eden, is restored in the coming of the Stem of Jesse. It is not telling us that the animals will all become tame but that the source of all enmity in the creation will be blotted out by Messiah's holy life and sacrificial death.

In Isaiah 11:9 it states in simple terms what Isaiah 11:6-8 says poetically. On God's holy mountain, the Church, they will not hurt any more;

In other words, there will be peace because the knowledge of the Lord, which is the Gospel, will cover the earth. Isaiah points us not to an earthly material peace but to peace which comes from the knowledge of the Lord. As members of His Church, His kingdom, we have peace with God and we stand justified before Him in faith. Through Word and Sacraments, He incorporates us into His kingdom and sustains us in His kingdom making us His new creation. This peace of God through Word and Sacraments is indeed paradise regained right now.

In a number of places in the Old Testament, the Messianic Age is portrayed as a time of peace in nature as was found in the creation before the fall, when the animals were at peace with each other and there was peace between man and beast. Compare Isaiah 9:1-7, Isaiah 35:9, Isaiah 65:25, Hosea 2:18, Ezekiel 34:23 ff., Job 5:23. The Old Testament writers tend to be very corporal and concrete. However, the New Testament writers do not look for the fulfillment of these prophecies in some future age but in the death and resurrection of Christ. He removes the curse of sin thus bringing a new creation. He is the second Adam who restores all the first Adam lost. St. Paul writes, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." (I Corinthians 5:17 NIV) and again "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation." (Galatians 6:15 NIV) Through the Gospel of Christ we are indeed a new creation and have the wonderful peace described in Isaiah 11. By using this new creation terminology, the New Testament shows that the Old Testament allusions to a time of peace as before the fall are fulfilled in Christ.

The Old Testament writers do not divide the coming Messianic kingdom into two kingdoms, the

one temporal and imperfect and the other eternal and perfect. Everything written pertains to the one kingdom. Pieper says concerning Isaiah 66:25, "The prophet does not always make a distinction between the kingdom of God in the New Testament and the eternal kingdom of glory." (August Pieper, Isaiah II, p. 679) Then the wonderful renewal of Eden's peace, paradise regained, which we now have in part yet tainted by sin, will be ours in all its fullness on the last day. Concerning the wonders of that time Isaiah's vision only begins to scratch the surface. For it the whole creation waits in eager expectation. St. John used poetic language similar to Isaiah to picture the eternal, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had passed away and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband." (Revelation 21:1-2 NIV) Our bodies will return from the dust glorified and so we will ever be with the Lord both body and soul where all sorrow, pain, and tears will be wiped away, and there will be joy beyond compare. This is Jerusalem, the golden, with milk and honey blessed, paradise regained.

The preceding Exegetical Study and the sermon translation which follows was presented by Rev. Gaylin Schmeling, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Tracy, Minnesota and English Lutheran Church, Cottonwood, Minnesota, at the General Pastoral Conference October 25-26, 1983 Mankato, Minnesota

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A Translation of a Sermon on Isaiah 11:1-10

by George Stöckhardt

Found in the Book Adventspredigten

The Prophet Isaiah is the greatest among the Old Testament prophets who have left us their writings. His prophecy is rightly called the apex of the second part of the Old Testament canon, the prophetic books. Isaiah is properly called the evangelist among the prophets. Of course, he also announced the Law. Especially at the time of the godless King Ahaz, he chastised unfaithful Judah - Jerusalem on account of its sins. His prophecy begins with the complaint which he raises against his people, "Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; for the Lord speaks. 'Sons I have reared and brought up, but they have revolted against Me. An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.' Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from Him." (Isaiah 1:2-4 NASB) Again he says, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it. Only bruises, welts, and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil." (Isaiah 1:5-6 NASB) Yes, those from Judah blasphemed the Holy One in Israel. Also they dealt treacherously with their brothers. "How the faithful city has become a harlot, she who was full of justice! Righteousness once lodged in her, but now murderers. Your silver has become dross, your drink diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels, and companions

of thieves; every one loves a bribe, and chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, nor does the widow's plea come before them." (Isaiah 1:21-23 NASB) The Prophet laments in deep sorrow over the vineyard which God planted and for which God did everything possible, but still it brought forth wild grapes instead of the choice good grapes. (Isaiah 5) He threatens the unrepentant people of God with punishment and vengeance. Already at his call he received the charge from the Lord to harden the disobedient people and to preach judgment to them. Thus he describes in detail the great, glorious, and fearful Day of the Lord. (Isaiah 2)

With the preaching of the Law, however, Isaiah wants only to prepare the way for the Gospel. He is the evangelist among the prophets. His prophecy is Gospel first and foremost. To the faithful in Israel who gathered to hear his preaching and to the repentant sinners who with King Hezekiah humbly mourned the iniquities of the people, he announced the salvation of God. He prophesies concerning the Redeemer who would come out of Zion, the Virgin's Son Immanuel, the Son of David and the Son of God, the Child who is born to us and the Son who is given to us, on whose shoulders would be the rule. He prophesies concerning the Comforter and Savior of sinners who is sent to preach to the poor, binding up the broken hearted, announcing release to the prisoners, and an opening for those bound. He foretells the coming of the Servant of the Lord, whose cry one does not hear in the streets, and who does not break the bruised reed and extinguish the faintly burning wick. He sees the suffering and death of the Servant of God who was wounded on account of our transgressions and on account of our sin He was beaten. This Humiliated One he sees exalted whose life span no mouth can fully explain. (This sentence is an

allusion to Isaiah 53:8 where Luther's Bible translates **יָרֵךְ** as "Lebens Länge, Life's length or span.")

All the chief articles of our most holy faith are found in this Old Testament Gospel. Isaiah speaks of justification by faith. "Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool." (Isaiah 1:18 NASB) He shows the justified the way of God, the way of love and mercy, "Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked, to cover him; and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?" (Isaiah 58:7 NASB) He describes the glory of Christ's Church gathered from all nations; he sees the sons and daughters of Zion coming from afar. (Isaiah 60) He speaks of the power of God's Word through which the Church is maintained and which shall not return empty. (Isaiah 55:10-11) He comforts the little, troubled Flock, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you." (Isaiah 43:1-2 NASB) The Prophet Isaiah prophesies concerning the coming glory of God's people and concerning the comfort of eternity with which the Lord consoles His own as one whom his mother comforts. (Isaiah 65-66) He prophesies the resurrection from the dead. "But your dead will live; their bodies will rise." (Isaiah 26:19 NIV) He prophesies about the magnificence and splendour of the new city Jerusalem. He concludes his prophecy with a reference to the new heaven and new earth.

The prophecy above (Isaiah 11:1-10), which we want to consider, concerns the main theme of all prophecy, Christ and His kingdom. It treats of



## THE SON OF DAVID'S RULE OF PEACE

- It shows:
1. The King of Peace
  2. The Anointed One's Kingdom of Peace

I. First we see the King of Peace. The Prophet presents to us Messiah, the King. He describes His humble origin and birth. He begins, "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit." (Isaiah 11:1 NASB) Isaiah sees the House of David in its humiliation and contempt. The famous family of Jesse, which in the time of David's and Solomon's rule was like a mighty tree overshadowing the land of Israel and under whose shadow the Gentiles sought protection, will in the future be like a barren fruitless tree stump. The trunk with its branches and leaves is cut off, withered, and rotted. Only a rootstock remains. All hope, which Israel had set upon the house of David, appears dead and lost. Yet, behold, out of this rootstalk sprouts forth a little Twig, a delicate humble Twig, which few notice or consider.

We know this prophecy is fulfilled. The house and family of Jesse, that famous house of David which decayed, in the course of time lost all glory and honor. At God's appointed time, the descendants of great King David were poor humble people, Joseph a carpenter, who lived in Nazareth, and his betrothed Mary the humble maid of the Lord. They belonged to the poorest class. When Mary went to the temple for her purification, she could only present the offering of the poor. They were insignificant, despised people. When at the command of Caesar Augustus they went to be taxed in Bethlehem, David's City, they had to take shelter in a stable. But, behold, even at this hour the delicate, holy Twig spoken of by Isaiah was taking His place in the light. This glorious hour we still praise

today after nineteen hundred years and will in all eternity bless it. We sing:

Behold a Branch is growing Of loveliest  
form and grace,  
As prophets sung, foreknowing; It springs  
from Jesse's race  
And bears one little Flower In midst of  
coldest winter,  
At deepest midnight hour.

Isaiah hath foretold It In words of promise  
sure, And Mary's arms enfold It, A virgin  
meek and pure  
Though God's eternal will This Child to her  
is given at midnight calm and still.

This little Child born of Mary, David's daughter,  
this sweet Child, gave peace to the world, which  
is the joy and delight of the children of men.  
For Him our heart beats in eager expectation.

This Twig, this little Branch, of which Isaiah speaks, grows up and bears fruit. The Prophet describes the growing power, effect, and work of the Son of David. He says, "The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him--the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and power, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord--and he will delight in the fear of the Lord." (Isaiah 11:2-3a NIV) The progress of history conformed to the prophecy. Jesus, the Son of David, was anointed with the Holy Ghost without measure, appeared in the power of the Lord, and was manifested before all Israel. The Spirit of wisdom and understanding was resting on Him. In Him was hidden all the treasure of wisdom. He gave evidence of a wisdom which was hidden from the beginning of the world. He spoke of and proved heavenly things, which He had heard and seen by His Father above. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the

Father, He announced it to us. He witnessed concerning Himself, and concerning the mystery of His person. In this holy body, which came from the Virgin Mary, was dwelling indeed the fullness of the Godhead. Here God and humanity were united in one.

The Spirit of counsel and strength was resting on Him. The Son of David devised a plan for His people, who lay in the bonds of death, and for the world dead in sin, which was past help and lost. Man's situation was utterly desperate. They had sinned unto death and there was no Savior. But He knew what to do. Into a world lost in sin, the Christ was born. The delicate Child from David's stem, God's only Child, brought help for the lost world. Through Him there is help for us. In the power of God and His Spirit He accomplished the work of deliverance, the redemption to victory. Through His suffering, death, and blood, through His great and wonderful endurance, Christ, David's Son, the King of Israel, burst open the bonds in which His people lay and overcame sin, death, and the Devil, the enemies of men. Then He arose in power and through His mighty and glorious resurrection showed Himself as the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

On Him was resting the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. The Father knows the Son and the Son knows the Father. The Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father. Christ was obedient to His Father even unto death, death on the cross. Thus He reconciled sinners; He led the lost children back to God. Now there is peace on earth, peace between God and men. The Lord then through His Spirit has implanted in the hearts of men the knowledge of God which is fear and love. His (Messiah's) delight is in the fear of the Lord. (The German has "smell" in place of "delight," meaning a delightful or pleasing fragrance.

See Stöckhardt Commentar über den Propheten Jesaia, p. 150) He is pleased with the offerings of men. Again there is peace on earth, good will toward men.

After He completed His work on earth, the Son of David sat down on the seat of His Father David, the throne of God, and holds the scepter of peace. The Prophet speaks further of the Anointed's rule of peace: "And He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: ... And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." (Isaiah 11:3b KJV) Not with respect to persons will he judge or punish, that means, His decisions are right. Furthermore, righteousness and judgment, that is justice, fairness, and good faith will be the belt around His loins and waist. He will administer justice and righteousness in His kingdom. He will keep His word and confirm His promises. This has happened. Christ rules, practices righteousness, and keeps His Word to them who believe His Word. He judges, He justifies the poor, the distressed on earth. He sees to it that the poor and the distressed, who are the troubled sinners, have justice. He justifies the poor sinners who seek help from Him. He justifies them before God. The poor, who have God as their own, He justifies procuring justice for them before their enemies and opponents. Thus all feuding is ended.

Certainly the godless have no peace. They strive against the scepter of this King. They refuse His peace and His grace. Through these He is glorified in punishment, judgment, and righteousness. "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." (Isaiah 11:4 KJV)

With the rod of His mouth and with the breath of His lips, that is, with His Word He strikes, judges, and condemns the earth, the world of the godless, who are His enemies, and especially the godless one who raises himself against Him, the Antichrist who is that man of sin. Thus the Prophet follows the course of David's Son from His humble birth to the throne of honor. That is Christ, the King, whom we worship and serve and in whom we believe.

II. In the second half of His prophecy the Prophet outlines a picture of the Anointed One's kingdom of peace. That is the kingdom in which we now live and have our citizenship. That king from David's family, who brought the world peace and who now rules in righteousness, has established a kingdom on earth which is a kingdom of peace. From all nations and languages this nation is gathered. The Prophet prophesies and says, "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." (Isaiah 11:10 KJV) A time will come when that little Twig, which sprouted out of the stem of Jesse, that delicate Root of Jesse who is David's Son, will stand as a standard for which the Gentiles ask and around which they gather.

This blessed time has come. Jesus from Nazareth, Mary's Son, David's Sprout, this King of the Jews, raised His name and His cross as a standard on the earth. That standard is every where visible. The Gospel of Christ, the Son of David and Son of God, the Crucified and the Arisen, is gone out into all lands. Far and near salvation and peace is announced. The Gentiles, the sinners on earth, know that there is no other salvation for there is no other name given to men whereby they should be saved. They come and bow their knees before

this delicate Twig, the little Child in Mary's bosom, the crucified Christ. Certainly this Christ is set as a sign which will be spoken against from all sides. He is set for the downfall of many. However, from all sides out of all nations and lands, an ever new multitude comes and sets its course for that standard which stands on the mountains. Going toward Bethlehem and Gathatha, they seek and find rest and peace for their souls. They recognize the Lord, who redeemed them, their Lord, King, and Savior. "For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9b NASB) They know the Lord and serve Him in holiness and righteousness which is pleasing to Him. "They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain." (Isaiah 11:9a NASB) In the kingdom of Christ there is no wickedness. Those, who know the Lord, cease all unrighteousness. If we still sin, we have in this kingdom a free fountain for all sin. From day to day we receive grace, peace, and righteousness, power, and strength for all good from Christ, our Lord and King.

With lovely colors and images, the Prophet describes the Anointed One's kingdom of peace. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den." (Isaiah 11:6-8 KJV) It is a beautiful picture of peace, a true paradise situation which the Prophet here paints before our eyes. What the Prophet says is that wolves, lions, and bears live and lie down beside lambs, goats, and calves. These wild animals

will no longer attack and kill. They will no more feed on the flesh and blood of other animals. They go to pasture and eat straw as the oxen. They have laid aside their unruly manner and became tame. Quiet and secure the suckling child sits on the hole of the viper. He sticks his hand toward the smooth, shiny cockatrice. He plays with the colorful snakes and enjoys it. The vipers and cockatrice strike and hurt no more. They have lost their poison. That is the picture which is here set before our eyes.

Now what is the meaning of the prophecy? What does the Holy Ghost want to say through the Prophet? Are we presented a picture from eternal life, the life of glorification, a scene from the new heaven and earth which God will create? In that world will lions, wolves, and bears really graze with lambs, goats, and oxen, and young children play with snakes? So some have thought. God's promise of eternal life, however, nowhere speaks of wolves, lions, lambs, and oxen. We Christians await and hope for no Turkish heaven which is filled with material attractions and earthly glory. In that world it will all be completely different from here below; it is a new heaven and earth.

On the other hand, on this earth perhaps at the end of time, will such a situation occur as is here described? Will there be a universal world peace where also the wild beasts forget preying and fighting and live in peace with the animals of the field and the children of men? The most famous Scripture researchers of our day have put this new wisdom on the market. They dream of an earthly, worldly kingdom of Messiah, a thousand year kingdom which will end this present time. Here the sins and evil of men and also of the animals will no longer have free course. A Christian child who has only a little spiritual understanding has to

laugh over this childish idea of the greatly learned, who in their wisdom have become fools. No, in the entire prophecy the Prophet speaks concerning the kingdom of grace in which we now live, which is the Church of Christ gathered from all the nations of the Gentiles. What he says about the animals is picture language and imagery. With beautiful pictures from the world of nature, the Prophet symbolizes and illustrates the peace which fills the Church. In the world there is restlessness, strife, and war. Here everyone thinks evil toward his neighbor. The children of men are in a hurry to shed blood. Viper's poison is under their lips.

In the Church of Christ, our kingdom, it is otherwise. Here there is peace. Certainly the Church, the bride of Christ still has her spots and wrinkles. But she washes herself daily in the blood of the Lamb and is sanctified and cleaned through the Spirit of Jesus. In the kingdom of Christ lives the converted sinner. The Gospel of Christ changes sinners and makes a new creation. The men who are won through the Gospel, that is, those who believe in Christ and serve Him, deny their crude lusts, put away their violent nature, and avoid as much as is in them, anger, bitterness, and enmity. They are diligent to hold the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Through the bond of love they united with one another. They do each other no harm, only good. They are a holy race and brotherhood. Here there is no more Jew or Greek, master and slave, man and woman; but they are all one in Christ. Certainly only in that world to come will this peace be perfect. "His rest shall be glorious." (Isaiah 11:10 KJV) There Christ's kingdom and rule will be nothing but glory and splendour. To that end help us God in grace.

Amen



GLOSSOLALIA IN THE NEW TESTAMENT  
AND THE MODERN CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

by

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1. During the last two decades, we witnessed a renewed interest and involvement in the "supernatural." While many in the secular world were occupied with astrology and other forms of the occult, many in the Christian world were being influenced by the "charismatic movement." However, since the mid-1970's, this movement's influence in churches and denominations seems to have waned. Certainly the charismatics' claims and goals were eclipsed by the doctrinal controversies of that period, epitomized by the "battle for the Bible" in the Luthern Church-Missouri Synod.

2. But--just as it would be a mistake to assume that Missouri's problems finally have been resolved in favor of scriptural and confessional orthodoxy--it would be a mistake to conclude that the charismatic movement's decreased visibility means a decreasing activity and influence in many congregations. An article in the April 2, 1983 issue of the Los Angeles Times said that a

turning point in the Pentecostal saga may be at hand, some church observers feel, as evangelical Protestants not only find it easier to live with their Pentecostal/charismatic brethren but also are adapting some of the practices and spiritual perspectives associated with them . . . .

considering the discomfort which most evangelicals felt with Pentecostalists/charismatics in the 1960's, barriers are now breaking down and lines are being blurred rather swiftly (Dart, I-A, p. 1).

3. Lutheran Perspective reported on an interview with the Rev. Larry Christenson (director of International Lutheran Renewal Center in St. Paul, Minnesota):

Christenson said he doesn't believe the charismatic movement has peaked, but the Lutheran part of it has changed its focus . . . . there is a greater emphasis on localizing the movement. Many fears about the movement, which were due to "sheer lack of information," have been allayed . . . charismatic renewal has a legitimate place within Lutheran theology and tradition, and Lutheran churches are not realizing the fullness of faith without it (Thorkelson, 14 Feb. 1983, p. 3).

4. An article appearing in the Christian News said:

While the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has taken an official stand against the modern charismatic movement and formerly removed charismatic clergymen from its clergy roster, charismatics, who worship with liberal Roman Catholics and Protestants, not in fellowship with the LCMS, are being allowed to remain within the LCMS. . . . Rev. Don Matzat, an LCMS clergyman . . . wrote . . . "For all practical purposes, the liberal-conservative controversy which held the attention of the church for the past decade is all but over . . . . On the horizon looms a controversy

which, according to one seminary professor, is of greater magnitude than the difficulty through which the church has just passed. It is the charismatic controversy . . . . clearly one of doctrine involving many sections of the Word of God which speak of the work of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit" (Otten, 6 June 1983, p. 8).

5. Taking their name from the New Testament term  $\chi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$  (Romans 12:6, I Corinthians 12:9--the word  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$  means "grace") usually translated "spiritual gifts," charismatics claim that their movement is Christian, scriptural, and Spirit-inspired. Among the various "charismata" that proponents say the Holy Spirit gives them, "glossolalia," known as "speaking in tongues," is emphasized. But is the Holy Spirit the source of today's speaking in tongues? Is this contemporary phenomenon an authentic sign of spiritual renewal?
6. Clearly in the 1980's, as in every age, Christians are to "test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). (Scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.) And this is one of the reasons why God has given us His objective, inspired Word--the sufficient and final standard by which Christians can claim the gift of "spiritual discernment"--by which we are to judge whether or not something is the Holy Spirit's work or gift. Therefore, on the basis of the Scriptures, we will consider the following questions: What were the (1) nature and (2) purpose of glossolalia in the New Testament, according to Acts and I Corinthians; (3) Does today's "speaking in tongues" by charismatics fit the New Testament model?

## I. The Nature of Glossolalia in the New Testament

7. The term "glossolalia" is derived from the Koine' γλωσσα λαλεῖν which means "to speak in a tongue." Before His ascension, Christ said, "These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16:17-18). Jesus' promise that His apostles would γλωσσαῖς λαλήσουσιν καιναῖς -- "speak in new (unknown, strange) tongues"--- was fulfilled by the Holy Spirit's power on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).

8. St. Paul tells us that members of the Corinthian congregation also spoke in tongues (and valued this gift very highly). When the glossolalia of I Corinthians and the glossolalia of Acts are compared, one of three conclusions is possible: first, that both the Pentecost and the Corinthian tongues were earthly languages; second, that St. Luke wrote about earthly languages but St. Paul wrote about "unearthly" ecstatic languages or utterances--two distinct phenomena; third, that both the Pentecost and Corinthian glossolalia were heavenly ecstatic utterances. Most charismatics hold either the second or third viewpoint. Can we determine which position is correct, on the basis of an exegesis of pertinent texts from both Acts and I Corinthians?

### The Nature of Glossolalia in Acts

#### Ecstatic Utterances?

9. Those who believe that the tongues in Acts were ecstatic utterances (which required interpretation for hearers to understand what was said) argue that the Holy Spirit translated the apostles' utterances into known languages in the hearer's hearing

(rather than in the speaker's speaking). Those who favor this interpretation claim that the fact that the apostles were accused of being drunk (Acts 2:13) is evidence that they were speaking heavenly languages unknown by men.

10. However, that some thought the apostles were drunk can be explained by the fact that the apostles may have begun speaking in other tongues simultaneously. Certainly--especially if heard from a distance--various languages spoken at the same time could easily be perceived as unintelligible babbling. Luke also tells us that these men made this charge in derision, or mockery, of the apostles.

#### Intelligible Languages

11. Luke clearly states, "They began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (2:4); and "each one heard them speaking in his own language" (2:6). Nowhere does Luke say that they simply heard in their own languages; nor does he say anything about the Holy Spirit acting upon the hearers in any way.

12. Rather, on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit gave the apostles the ability to speak in intelligible languages known by the diaspora Jews gathered in Jerusalem from many lands, though unknown and foreign to--and unlearned by--the speakers. So they asked, "How is it that we heard, each of us in his own native language?" (2:8). Here (and in verse 6), Luke uses the term  $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\omicron\varsigma$  as an alternative to  $\gamma\lambda\omega\sigma\sigma\alpha$ ;  $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\omicron\varsigma$  always means "language of a nation or region" or a "dialect."

13. Thus, what happened on Pentecost set the pattern for all subsequent tongues-speaking mentioned in Acts (at Caesarea, chapter 10; and at

Ephesus, chapter 19). That Luke meant tongues were intelligible languages spoken by the speakers is further verified by the following verses:

"... we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God" (2:11); "They spoke with tongues and prophesied" (19:6). In other words, the tongues that were spoken had cognitive content that was communicated, i.e. "the mighty works of God" and prophecy. When they spoke in tongues they were speaking God's Word.

#### The Nature of Glossolalia in I Corinthians

14. However, most charismatics (and many noncharismatics)--though they concede that the tongues of Acts were intelligible, earthly languages--insist that the tongues of I Corinthians were unknown, heavenly, ecstatic languages or utterances. Does I Corinthians itself justify or allow such an interpretation, or does a careful exegesis of the text of St. Paul's letter lead us to a different conclusion?

#### Kinds of Tongues

15. When Paul lists "varieties of gifts" from the Holy Spirit, he includes ἐτέρω γένη γλωσσῶν, that is "various kinds of tongues" (I Corinthians 12:10). Would Paul have written about "various kinds of tongues" if he meant "ecstatic utterances"? Can you make distinctions among different kinds of "ecstatic" speech? Again, Paul refers to "speakers in various kinds of tongues"-- γένη γλωσσῶν (12:28); γένος means "class," "kind," "sort," "family," or "nation." Thus, the implication is this: there are many kinds of languages, but they are all languages.

16. Furthermore, St. Paul--missionary and world traveler--wrote, "I speak in tongues more than you all" (14:18). Did Paul mean that he could

speak more, or more different kinds of, ecstatic speech than the Corinthian tongues-speakers could? Either Paul meant he spoke a greater number of different languages or that he spoke unlearned languages more often than did the Corinthian members.

17. Paul himself equates tongues with different kinds of earthly language: "If I come to you speaking in tongues (γλώσσας), how shall I benefit you unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? . . . There are doubtless many different languages (γένη φωνῶν) in the world, and none is without meaning; but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me" (14:6-11).

18. Charismatics claim that Paul was drawing an analogy between tongues and earthly languages, distinguishing the two by using φωνή in verses 10 and 11 instead of γλώσσα (verse 6). But Paul might have used two different terms to distinguish between languages learned in the usual manner and those same languages spoken by the Holy Spirit's power, not to say that there was a difference in the nature of these languages. Of course, there is nothing in the text to tell us why Paul chose to use two different words. Yet Luke also used two different terms to refer to the same phenomenon from two different perspectives (God's and man's) in Acts 2: γλώσσα in verse 4, and δυάλεκτος in verses 6 and 8.

#### Tongues of Angels?

19. Charismatics argue that when St. Paul says "If I speak in the tongues of men and angels. . ." (13:1), he differentiates between earthly languages ("of men") and tongues as heavenly ecstatic utterances ("of angels"). However, Paul used the conjunction εἰάν ("if") with the subjunctive mood of the

verb, λαλῶ ("I speak"), which usually expresses future conditions in Greek. Therefore, if Paul means, "If I should speak in the tongues of men and angels . . .," isn't he speaking hypothetically? St. Paul continues, "And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (13:2). Are we to conclude that Paul is saying he actually understood "all mysteries" and all knowledge," and that he had "all faith" by which he literally had removed mountains?

20. Similarly, there is nothing in this text (nor in any other text in Scripture) that indicates St. Paul actually spoke in "angelic languages," or that any human being ever has or ever will. Even if Paul had contemplated all the possibilities of communicating that might exist in God's universe, he gives no clues to what the nature of "angelic languages" might be. And whenever the Scriptures recount conversations between angels and human beings, they never indicate that angels spoke in ecstatic utterances instead of known human languages; people apparently understood God's messengers without translations or interpretations.

#### Unknown Tongues

21. Much has been made of the King James translators' use of the phrase "unknown tongues" throughout chapter 14 (verses 2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27) of I Corinthians. The word "unknown" is not found in the original text but was an interpolation (as is AAT's "strange") by the translators, reflecting their interpretation and (well-meaning but misguided) attempt to clarify the meaning of the text. Nowhere does Paul say "unknown tongues."

22. Yet there is a sense in which tongues were unknown, since St. Paul says, "One who speaks



in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit" (14:2). But the charismatics interpret "no one understands them" to be an absolute statement: that is, if a speaker of every earthly language had been present at worship services in Corinth, not one of them would have understood the tongues spoken without interpretation. Rather, Paul was only saying that no one normally present at public worship in Corinth understood those who spoke in tongues (without a translation into the Koine--the common tongue).

23. Likewise, when St. Paul says "He utters mysteries in the Spirit," he doesn't mean "mystery" in the sense of something absolutely incomprehensible to men. Paul regularly used the word  $\mu\sigma\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\rho\iota\omicron\nu$  to speak of God's revelation to man in Christ (cf. Romans 11:25; I Corinthians 4:1, 13:2, 15:51; Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 2:2; I Timothy 3:9). And Paul further explains, "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. . . . He who prophesies is greater than he who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets so that the church may be edified" (14:4-5). These "mysteries" uttered in tongues could be understood by everyone if someone translated the unknown language into the common language:

whoever speaks in a foreign tongue which others do not understand is not edifying the church. His is at most a conversation between himself and God, completely mysterious, unintelligible to others who do not know the language. . . . The fact that the individual edifies himself indicates that he understands what he himself is saying. . . . Edification, according to Scripture, comes through the Word spoken to our intellect. But the fact remains

that he can't communicate it to others in a tongue they understand, and that keeps the foreign tongue as such from edifying others . . . which is therefore out of place in the public assembly (Harley, 12 June 1978, p. 9)

24. But doesn't Paul's statement, "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful" (14:14), prove that the tongues-speaker himself didn't understand what he was praying? We must remember that Paul was still speaking about the use of tongues in the public assembly: when the individual's "spirit" spoke (prayed) in unlearned languages, that individual understood but his mind was "unfruitful"; that is, his understanding did not produce the "fruit" of understanding among the others present. So Paul said, "He who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret" (14:13). Otherwise, "how can anyone in the position of an outsider say the 'Amen' to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying?" (14:16) (The word ἀμήν indicates agreement with the content of what is said.)

25. Therefore, St. Paul established the ἐρμηνεῖα γλωσσῶν (12:10)--the "interpretation of tongues"--principle. Since the word ἐρμηνεῖα means "interpretation" in the sense of "translation" (cf. Hebrews 7:2), Paul's instruction was this: if members of the Corinthian congregation spoke at all in foreign languages during worship, there must be a translation into the common language (Koine) so that all present would understand (be edified by) the message that was spoken (14:26-28). The fact that St. Paul insisted on translation means that translation was possible, indeed was to be the norm. Thus, Paul's "no one understands" (14:2) can not be inclusive; if the Corinthian tongues had been "unknown" absolutely, translation or interpretation of

them would not have been possible.

26. Therefore, a careful study of I Corinthians reveals nothing which would lead us to conclude that the Corinthian tongues were heavenly languages or ecstatic utterances. Indeed, there are many indications in St. Paul's letter which lead us to conclude that the tongues of Corinth were earthly, intelligible (though unlearned) languages.

### Conclusion

27. Luke, an associate and companion of St. Paul, probably wrote Acts (ca. 62 A.D.) after Paul had written his first letter to the Corinthians (ca. 55 A.D.). Luke was familiar with the Corinthian congregation and might have known about Paul's letters to this congregation (cf. Acts 18: 1-11). It is probable, then, that Luke was familiar with Paul's teaching concerning the abuse of the gift of tongues. Therefore, it is significant that--after the fact of the Corinthian controversy-- Luke chose to use the same terminology (γλῶσσα λαλεῖν) used by St. Paul to identify the gift of languages.

28. Of course, St. Paul had no need to describe the nature of glossolalia in his letter, because the Corinthians knew what tongues were. But Luke (in keeping with the reasons he gives for writing both Acts and his Gospel, Luke 1:1-4) needed to describe the nature of glossolalia to Theophilus (to whom he addressed his account, Acts 1:1). Since the Scriptures describe no other type of glossolalia, St. Luke's description in Acts is also definitive for glossolalia in I Corinthians. This conclusion is consistent with the analogy (rule) of faith: "Scriptura ex Scriptura explicanda est"--that is, "Scripture must explain itself."

As the Apology of the Augsburg Confession says, "Examples ought to be interpreted according to the rule, that is, according to sure and clear passages of Scripture, not against the rule of passages" (Tappert, 1959, p. 279).

29. Therefore, the New Testament always uses the term  $\gamma\lambda\omega\sigma\sigma\alpha$  to mean either (1) the physical tongue (organ or source of speech, Mark 7:33, Philippians 2:11; figuratively, Acts 2:1), or (2) a language or languages (as you or I might say, "English is my mother tongue"). In both Acts and I Corinthians, tongues were foreign languages, though unlearned by their speakers and miraculously produced by the Holy Spirit. Thus the New Testament never uses  $\gamma\lambda\omega\sigma\sigma\alpha$  to mean either (1) languages (heavenly or otherwise) unknown to human beings in an absolute sense, or (2) ecstatic utterances or gibberish. Such interpretations--though common and nothing new--are "a priori" assumptions that have been imposed on the pertinent pericopes. So the Rev. Philip Gehlhar, a Lutheran pastor and charismatic apologist, said (in a paper I heard him present at a Missouri Synod, Southern California District, pastoral conference):

The word "tongues" means languages. It does not mean ecstatic utterances, although some translate it that way. . . . Glossai is used 52 times in the New Testament, primarily for the human organ of speech or human language. Outside of I Corinthians 12 and 14 it could never mean ecstatic utterances. That Paul also means real languages with meaning in I Corinthians is evident also from I Corinthians 13:1 and 14:10 (15 October 1975, p. 12).

## II. The Purpose of Glossolalia in the New Testament

30. God does not give gifts to His church without a purpose; it follows then that if that purpose no longer exists, God is no longer giving the gift. For example, God is no longer giving the gift of prophetic inspiration to men because His completed Word now satisfies His intentions (contrary to what many cults claim; cf. I Corinthians 12, Revelation 22:18-19): "God our Savior . . . desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:3-4), and what He had revealed in the Scriptures is sufficient to accomplish that purpose. Therefore, any further direct revelation to men would be either contradictory or superfluous to God's purposes (cf. I Corinthians 14:33, II Timothy 3:14-17).

### General Purpose of Signs

31. According to the Scriptures, what was the purpose of the charismata, including the gift of languages, which the risen Christ promised would accompany the apostles' proclamation of the gospel (Mark 16:15-18)? We are told that "they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it" (Mark 16:20). These special gifts were not ends in themselves; they were signs meant to verify and point to the apostolic message:

The general purpose of distributing prophetic gifts in the apostolic church was the same as that of the other signs and wonders done by the apostles, the authentication of their foundational office in the church. That is, these charisms were given to prove the authority of the apostles as the infallible teachers whose oral and written instruction was to serve,

together with that of the prophets whom they confirmed, as the foundation of the New Testament church (Eph. 2:19-20) (Judisch, 1978, p. 35).

32. What was the subject of the oral and written apostolic message that the Holy Spirit confirmed with these signs? Again, before His ascension the risen Savior promised: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses beginning in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit gave charismata not as a witness to Himself but to point to the person and work of Jesus Christ as the subject of the apostolic proclamation (cf. John 16:12-15). But, in addition to this general purpose, what was the specific purpose of glossolalia according to both Acts and II Corinthians?

#### The Purpose of Glossolalia in Acts

##### A Sign to Israel

33. Luke informs us that Jews were present on the three occasions recorded in Acts when the gift of languages was given (at Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Ephesus). This gift was not God's way of facilitating the proclamation of the gospel throughout the Roman world (since Koine was a universal language throughout the empire); rather, the gift of tongues was a sign meant for a specific nation, the Jewish nation. So Luke tells us that, when their attention had been captured by Galileans speaking an amazing variety of languages, the diaspora Jews (gathered in Jerusalem on Pentecost) responded with the appropriate question (since a sign pointed to something beyond itself), "What does this mean?" (Acts 2:12).

## A Sign of God's Blessing

34. Answering in the common language (Koiné), the Apostle Peter told them what the sign of tongues meant according to the Scriptures:

This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh . . . . And I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below . . . before the day of the Lord comes . . . that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." . . . This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses . . . . and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear . . . . Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified (2:16-36).

The gift of languages was a sign to Israel of God's blessing in Christ, His confirmation of the apostolic message that Jesus, crucified and risen, was indeed Israel's promised Messiah.

35. Responding to this good news, the diaspora Jews in Jerusalem asked

Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him" (2:37-39).

First, then, as a sign of blessing, tongues pointed

to Christ as the way that individual Jews might be blessed: by repenting, being baptized, and believing in Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

36. But Luke also tells us that (on the second occasion he recounts, at Caesarea) believing Jews

who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (10:45-48).

The gift of languages was also a sign to Israel of God's blessing in Christ for all people, His confirmation of the apostolic message that Jesus was the world's promised Savior as well as Israel's Messiah (the blessing promised in Genesis 12:1-3). Second, then, as a sign of blessing, tongues indicated that the gospel of salvation through faith in Christ was to be proclaimed not only "to you and to your children" but "to all that are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him" (2:39) --for example, as far away from Palestine as Ephesus (19:1-10)--not only to the Jews but to all nations.

### The Purpose of Glossolalia in I Corinthians

#### A Sign of God's Judgment

37. However, St. Paul, paraphrasing Deuteronomy 28:49 and Isaiah 28:11-12, tells us: "In the law it is written, 'By men of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me,





different foreign languages simultaneously, and publicly, was chaotic and confusing to outsiders (14:26-33). An unbeliever could be exposed to Christ's grace only if he heard God's Word proclaimed in the common language (as God's Word was proclaimed by Peter in the common language on Pentecost). Therefore, "If all prophesy," rather than speak in foreign languages, "and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convinced . . . called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so . . . he will worship God and declare that God is really among you" (14:24-25).

40. But, in the second place, it is important that we remember that there were two types of unbelievers during the apostolic era: unbelievers (Jewish) who were familiar with the Scriptures and unbelievers (gentile) who were not familiar with the Scriptures. Thus, gentile unbelievers were ignorant of the significance of tongues according to God's Word; they therefore said that tongues-speakers were "mad." Therefore, Paul meant Jewish unbelievers when he said that "tongues are a sign . . . for unbelievers": they knew Deuteronomy (28) and Isaiah (28) and, therefore, should have known the significance of the gift of languages.

#### A Temporary Sign

41. As a sign to Israel, Paul indicates that the purpose of tongues was temporary: "as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away" (13:8). We should note that Paul used two different verbs in this verse, one verb with both "prophecies" and "knowledge": προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται . . . γνώσις, καταργηθήσεται. Therefore, prophecies and knowledge "shall be abolished (pass away)": in both cases, Paul used the future passive indicative of the verb καταργέω.

42. But when Paul wrote "tongues shall cease," he used another verb with "tongues": γλῶσσαι, παύσσονται. παύσσονται is the future middle indicative (third person plural) of the verb παύω. I emphasize the fact that this verb is in the middle voice--a voice which we not only do not have in our language but which is difficult to translate into English. However, in Greek the middle voice of the verb represents the subject as acting upon itself in some way; that is, the subject is both the agent and the object of the verb (the action). Therefore, it is possible to translate γλῶσσαι, παύσσονται in the following manner: "tongues, they shall cease in and of themselves."

43. But did Paul actually say when tongues would cease? He certainly gives a clue in the next verses: "Our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away" (13:9-10); a more accurate translation would be, "but when the whole (complete, mature) comes, the partial (incomplete) will pass away." So the New Testament church's infancy; therefore, their purpose would cease to exist when the maturity and wholeness of full knowledge came: "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood" (13:11-12).

44. Many interpreters understand "the whole" (especially when translated "the perfect"), "face to face," and "understand fully" to be references to the believer's translation into eternal bliss at death or the resurrection to eternal life at the parousia. However, it can be argued that St. Paul was referring to the end of direct revelation through prophetic gifts when God's "whole"

revelation became available to the church. When the need for direct revelation no longer existed, prophetic gifts (languages as well as prophecy and knowledge) no longer would be necessary; they therefore would be limited to the New Testament church's infancy:

The "complete thing," seen in this context, represents the composite of all the individual pieces of prophecy, discourse in unlearned tongues, and prophetic knowledge . . . . The prophetic gifts, then, must cease when God's revelation is complete . . . . the apostolic revelation did of course reach completion by the end of the first century . . . . The Christian with piecemeal (albeit infallible) oral apostolic proclamation as his only supplement to the Old Testament is likened to the apostle looking at himself in a dim mirror and so knowing himself only in part. The Christian with the complete apostolic revelation (and its essence reduced to writing) is likened to the apostle seeing himself in a clear mirror ("face to face") and so perceiving himself as he is perceived by others (Judisch, 1978, pp. 48-50).

If this exegesis is correct, then the gift of languages would have ceased to exist by the time (if not before) the New Testament Scriptures had been completed.

#### A Sign of Spiritual Immaturity

45. As St. Paul said that tongues were a sign for the church's infancy, he also said that the Corinthians' misuse of this gift was a sign of spiritual immaturity. They sought and coveted the attractive "showy" spiritual gifts; indeed, they had all these charismata in their midst.

Yet their congregation was indifferent to the truth and divided by factionalism (cf. I Corinthians 1-3). So Paul said, "You are coveting (desiring) the best (most desirable, most showy) gifts. But I will show you a more excellent way" (12:31, my translation)--that is, the way to spiritual maturity. (Charismatics prefer the translation, "But earnestly desire the higher gifts," which makes Paul's words an exhortation to seek charismata. However, the verb he uses, *ζηλοῦτε*, has the identical form in both the imperative and indicative moods of the second person plural. Translated as a statement of fact, Paul's words make better sense in view of his promise to show the Corinthians "a more excellent way.")

46. Therefore, St. Paul told the Corinthians (because they were abusing the gift of languages): "Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; be babes in evil, but in thinking be mature" (14:20). What happened when God's Word was proclaimed in the common language?: "Everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort" (14:3, NIV). But what happened when they spoke in tongues during the public assembly?: "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself" (14:4). Many were using this gift for childish "ego"-building--to "show off"--instead of according to the gift's purpose as a sign to Israel.

#### When Did Tongues Cease?

47. St. Paul himself spoke in tongues (14:18), but he also preached first in the synagogues, wherever he went on his missionary journeys. (He also confessed, "I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek," Romans 1:16.) So we are told that "he left Athens and went to Corinth. . . Paul was occupied

with preaching, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. And when they opposed and reviled him, he . . . said to them, '. . .From now on I will go to the Gentiles'" (Acts 18:1-6; cf. Acts 17).

48. Since glossolalia was a sign of judgment on unbelieving Israel, a sign for the New Testament church's infancy, and a sign to the Jewish nation that God's legitimate spiritual Israel (the church) would include anyone (regardless of national heritage) who received Christ's gospel, when then did glossolalia's purpose cease to exist? When Israel as a nation ceased to exist; when God's final sign of judgment on unbelieving Israel, predicted by Christ Himself (Matthew 21:33-43, Luke 21:20-24), was accomplished: when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and razed the temple in 70 A.D.:

when the time came for God's final rejection of Israel as a nation--due to her rejection of His last word in the person of His own Son--we should be very surprised if Israel had not been forced to listen to God addressing her in alien tongues once again. The speaking in unlearned tongues during the apostolic age was, then, a signal of God's alienation from the Jewish nation and its replacement by the Gentiles. Indeed this is exactly the point Paul made in I Corinthians 14:21-22 . . . . This God-inspired utterance in Gentile tongues was a signal of the end of the special relationship between God and Israel; in the new era men of all peoples were to stand on an equal footing with God (Acts 2:17). . . . Thus. . . we should rightly expect these tongues to pass away quietly with the smoke that arose from the temple afire (Judisch, 1978, pp. 41-43).

## Conclusion

49. It is interesting to note that St. Paul doesn't include the gift of languages when he lists the qualifications for "bishops" and "deacons" (I Timothy 3, Titus 1). Indeed it may be significant that the gift of languages is mentioned in no epistle (including Revelation) in the New Testament canon except I Corinthians. Since I Corinthians may have been the earliest New Testament epistle (ca. 55 A.D.), might not the silence of the others reflect the fact that the phenomenon of glossolalia did cease by 70 A.D.?
50. Whatever weight we give to such considerations, we nevertheless should conclude, on the basis of God's Word, that neither the general purpose (a sign confirming the apostolic proclamation) nor the specific purpose (a sign of judgment to Israel) for the gift of languages still exists. Therefore, tongues have ceased because (1) the purpose of prophetic gifts was limited to the apostolic era, (2) God's revelation in His Word, the means of grace, is complete (that is, sufficient for His purposes and for our needs until the end of time), and (3) the new Israel consists of all who believe in Christ through the means of grace.

### III. The Glossolalia of the Modern Charismatic Movement

51. It is not God's will, according to I Corinthians, that the unity and witness of a church (1:10-15, 14:23-25) and the personal faith of its members (13:1-3) be vitiated by self-centeredness, competitiveness, and doctrinal indifference. Therefore when the activities of charismatics in a congregation result in this, Christians correctly conclude that this isn't the work of the Holy Spirit.

52. Unfortunately, many noncharismatics also accept the assumption of charismatics that the Corinthian glossolalia was different in nature and purpose from the glossolalia of Acts. To concede that the Corinthians spoke heavenly ecstatic utterances--which is what modern charismatics claim to be doing--is to preclude what (I believe) the Scriptures teach concerning glossolalia. For example, the otherwise excellent report of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations, The Charismatic Movement and Lutheran Theology, seems to accept the charismatics' definition of glossolalia (1972, p. 20). The report would have been more thorough and valuable if it had dealt with the crux of the issue--the fact that today's so-called glossolalia doesn't fit the New Testament model in nature or purpose.

#### The Nature and Purpose of Modern Glossolalia

53. One authority on the charismatic movement says:

The conclusions of the linguists indicate that modern glossolalia is composed of unknown sounds with no distinguishing vocabulary and grammatical features, simulated foreign features, and the total absence of language characteristics. The essential character of this new movement is therefore at variance with the Biblical phenomenon of speaking in known languages (Gromacki, 1967, p. 67).

The burden of proof rests upon the charismatics to show either (1) that scriptural tongues included the utterance of gibberish or (2) that the tongues they speak today are known languages. Of course they can do neither.



54. And what purpose is served by uttering gibberish? A charismatic Lutheran pastor says: "One speaks in tongues, for the most part, in his private devotions. This is by far its most important use and value. It offers the believer a new dimension in prayer. Although one does not know what he is saying as he speaks in tongues, he does have a clear sense that he is praying to God" (Christenson, 1975, p. 79). Although I Corinthians (14:1-25) indicates that personal edification was the only benefit possible when the gift of tongues was misused, the Scriptures never say that a purpose for glossolalia was either private devotions and prayer or communication with God beyond the restrictions of human semantics, thought, and comprehension.

#### Teaching and Practicing Tongues?

55. Also in conflict with the New Testament model is the practice of instructing others how to receive the gift of tongues. An article entitled "Purposes of Pentecost" says:

Some believers imagine that the Holy Spirit will move them so forcefully that they will be literally compelled to speak with other tongues without any act of their own will. However, this will never happen. In Acts, chapter 2, verse 4 . . . the disciples first began to speak themselves and then the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. . . . In this matter of speaking with other tongues, there must be co-operation on the part of the believer with the Holy Spirit (Prince, 1972, p. 3).

Not only does this interpretation reflect an unscriptural synergism--it also reveals the unscriptural hermeneutics often used by the sects and by many who call themselves "fundamentalists."

Acts 2:4 tells us that the disciples began to speak with other languages only because the Holy Spirit "gave them utterance."

56. The Rev. Larry Christenson is quoted as instructing would-be tongue-speakers:

In order to speak in tongues, you have to quit praying in English. You simply lapse into silence and resolve to speak not a syllable of any language you have ever learned . . . . you take no thought of what you are saying: as far as you are concerned, it is just a series of sounds. The first sounds will sound strange and unnatural to your ear, and they may be halting and inarticulate (have you ever heard a baby learning to talk?) (Miles, February 1965, pp. 5-6).

Of course, Pastor Christenson's implication that learning and practicing tongues is similar to learning and practicing "baby talk" contradicts St. Paul's admonition to give up "baby ways" (I Corinthians 13:11) and to "grow up" spiritually (14:20). More importantly, the Scriptures tell no one to practice (or pray for) tongues. (Christ commanded the apostles to "wait for the promise of the Father," (Acts 1:4.) The ability to speak in other languages came to the apostles without any effort on their part: "The Spirit gave them utterance," not "tongues-teachers."

### The Source of Modern Glossolalia

#### The Holy Spirit?

57. Charismatics claim that the Holy Spirit is the source of their ecstatic utterances because the practice results in (or accompanies) changed lives. (They may quote Jesus' words, "You will know them by their fruits," to show that

the "good Christian life" they now live proves their claim. But, in Matthew 7:15-20, Christ explains that these fruits of the prophets are not their deeds--how they live--but their doctrine--what they teach.) However, not only does the end not justify the means, the end does not necessarily reveal the means. Even commendable "results" don't prove the correctness of someone's interpretation of the cause or meaning of an experience. God's objective Word, not our subjective feelings, is always the test in spiritual matters.

### The Devil?

58. Egyptian magicians duplicated the divine miracles performed by Moses (Exodus 7:10-12). St. Paul warned that anti-Christ would attempt to duplicate Christ's signs (II Thessalonians 2:9). Jesus Himself warned that miracles and prophesying would be done in His name without His sanction and power (Matthew 7:21-23). Thus one observer believes that the source of behavior in both tongue-speakers and spiritualist mediums is the same; he claims that both share the same physical manifestations (heavy breathing, shaking) and descriptions of what it feels like to be "under the influence" (Stegal, n.d., pp. 48-49).

59. No one today becomes involved in ecstatic experiences and utterances (which have been found in a variety of cultures and religions) unless he has been exposed to them and has dropped his inhibitions (often under peer pressure). Drop certain inhibitions and, at worst, you may subject yourself to forces God never intended. St. Paul says that "even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness" (II Corinthians 11:14-15). This

is not to say that charismatics are false Christians or "agents of the devil."

60. However, being a Christian doesn't mean immunity to unhealthy or evil influences (cf. I Timothy 4:1). Certainly a believer can be deceived in an area of life or doctrine and not be lost. All of us depend on Christ's Word and forgiving grace in all areas of life and teaching. We should therefore humbly remember our Savior's warning, "False Christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, the elect" (Mark 13:22).

#### The Human Mind?

61. At best, modern tongues-speaking may be a type of behavior described by Dr. William Glasser; these are behaviors which originate in the human mind and which can become addicting because they satisfy a need:

In Positive Addiction I describe how during each of the wide variety of activities that could be addicting, the person experienced a position addiction or meditative state of mind. . . . Meditations range from weak to strong. Among the weakest is the simple act of regularly taking a vitamin pill, a small, regularly scheduled beneficial act. The strongest are positive addictions such as running ten miles a day . . . . What is important about any meditation behavior . . . is that (1) you believe in the process, (2) you can do it easily, and (3) it is need fulfilling in some way. . . . When we find a way, like running, that works for us, even though this takes some time and effort, the feeling is so powerful or pleasant that we can become positively

addicted to the activity. This occurs because . . . a natural, addicting pleasure chemical like enkephalin or endorphin may be produced in our brain (1981, pp. 248-253).

62. Why does an infant find satisfaction in "cooing" and "gurgling" to himself? Such "baby talk" has no cognitive content; it's only nonsense sounds, gibberish. Yet this behavior (discovered by the baby) is pleasurable and satisfying--need fulfilling for the baby in some way. Similarly, perhaps the tongues-speaker reverts to an infantile behavior that is very satisfying to him. And perhaps this "baby talk," like a drug, then becomes addicting (even releasing a pleasure chemical produced in the brain.) If this is the case, who would object if the behavior were recognized for what it is? The objection is to the claim that the phenomenon is the glossolalia of the New Testament and the work of the Holy Spirit.

#### The Testimony of History

63. Charismatics protest that those who deny the Holy Spirit is the source are trying to restrict God. The issue, though, isn't whether God can give special gifts today; certainly He still has the power. The issue is whether charismatic practices fit the scriptural criteria. The issue is whether, according to the New Testament, it is still God's will that He give the gift of tongues to the church. Again, Paul said that tongues would be temporary (I Corinthians 13:8). Yet charismatics protest that human beings have no right to say when tongues should cease. Well, when did tongues cease? Historically, tongues ceased when they ceased, which was no later than the end of the apostolic era (ca. 100 A.D.).

64. From the second century A.D. until the twentieth century, occurrences of so-called

tongues-speaking originated with false teachers and were sporadic. Eusebius said that the heretic Montanus (126-180 A.D.) called himself the Holy Spirit's mouthpiece and "became beside himself . . . and began to babble and utter strange things, prophesying in a manner contrary to the constant custom of the Church" (1961, p. 231). Augustine (354-430 A.D.) told the heretics of his day that glossolalia was a "betokening of the Holy Spirit in all tongues to shew that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues over the earth. . . . done as a betokening, . . . it passed away" (1956, p. 497).

## Reasons for the Modern Charismatic Movement

### Existentialism

65. What is the charismatic movement's appeal?

Certainly an environment conducive to the movement's growth. The secular revolution expressed itself in politics, sexual mores, and drugs--often tearing down authority and traditions without replacing them. Psychologists told the "me generation" to "let it all hang out." This revolution's religious expression led to the popularity of eastern philosophies. And existentialism's influence in the Christian churches was expressed in the belief that what we know is not as important as what we feel.

### Indifference to the Sound Doctrine of God's Word

66. Therefore "spiritual experiences" were emphasized at the expense of sound doctrine. The Scriptures teach that an experience must conform to God's Word if it is from the Holy Spirit (I John 4:1-6; cf. John 8:32). But, instead of proceeding from the Bible to an experience, charismatics proceed from experience to the Bible: they find something that looks like their experience in the

Scriptures and then say, "Therefore, my experience must be scriptural!"

67. Why have many (who think they are "super-spiritual") adopted such a low view of Word and Sacrament, the means of grace? Why are they (though they say they are close to God) so indifferent to sound doctrine and to a systematic, objective study of Scriptures? Because the promises of the charismatic movement appeal to natural man's desire to walk by sight (and by feelings) rather than by faith (and by reliance on God's Word). Many are looking for easy answers--a spiritual experience that will solve their problems (or, at least, reduce the feelings of pain and frustration that their problems bring them). Not really trusting God and His revelation, many still seek signs.

68. Christ said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign" (Matthew 12:39; cf. John 20:24-25). And St. Paul wrote to the spiritually immature Corinthians (who valued the least of gifts, tongues, more highly than any other): "Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power of God and the wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:22-24). God's Word says that seeking signs (to supplement faith) shows a lack of faith and is a sign of spiritual immaturity. Yet charismatics continue to ignore the Scriptures on this matter, insisting that to desire gifts (such as tongues) is a sign of spiritual maturity and of faith's abundance.

69. For example, one Lutheran charismatic newsletter used a portion of Hebrews 6:1--"Let us go unto maturity . . ."--as a slogan. By ignoring the verse's context, the newsletter implies that

"going on to maturity" means seeking charismatic gifts ("Charisciples," 1972, 4, 12). However, Hebrews 5:11-6:2 clearly says that immature believers shouldn't be content with just the "ABC's" (fundamental teachings) of the Christian faith but should grow in doctrinal understanding and maturity through God's Word (as Paul taught the Corinthians).

## Results of the Modern Charismatic Movement

### More Indifference to the Sound Doctrine of God's Word

70. If a reason for the charismatic movement's growth is indifference to the means of grace, a result of the charismatic movement is more of the same. Indifference to God's Word causes indifference to God's Word; spiritual immaturity breeds spiritual immaturity; doctrinal confusion and ignorance perpetuate doctrinal confusion and ignorance. So, concerning the doctrine of baptism, a charismatic Lutheran pastor writes:

Where questions about baptism have come up in the charismatic movement, it has been due not to charismatic experience, as such, but to the ecumenical nature of the movement. . . . Lutherans . . . confided to me that they had been rebaptized by immersion. After they had experienced the baptism with the Holy Spirit, they had come to question their baptism as infants. . . . Was this God's way of speaking to me . . . to call into question a long-standing practice of the church? . . . The answer did not come to me all at once. It unfolded slowly. . . . a quiet conviction quickened within me that He would show me what He had decided (Christenson, 1976, pp. 54-56).



71. Why didn't Pastor Christenson know the answer on the basis of God's Word? According to the Scriptures, is baptism just "a long-standing practice of the church" or a means of grace instituted by Christ for all human beings? Does the Holy Spirit lead believers to question doctrinal truths clearly taught in God's Word? Does God cause us to doubt a sacrament by which we can renew daily (as Luther taught) the assurances of God's gracious love for us in Christ?

72. The charismatic movement has become a new ecumenicism that promotes all sorts of false doctrine, including Romanism's confusion of works and faith, justification and sanctification, and sanctification and perfectionism. The words of another Lutheran charismatic exemplify that confusion:

Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." A holy person is a person whose heart is constantly being cleansed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The blood of Jesus gives us a clean heart, but a pure heart is one in which all the obstacles which might hinder us from seeing God are removed. . . . Holiness is the perfection of a relationship and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to keep us in unbroken fellowship with . . . Jesus so that we can live in a perfect relationship with Him at all times (Voeks, April 1979, p. 4).

73. Though St. Paul and Luther both warned that the Christian faith is lost if its central doctrine--justification by grace through faith alone--is compromised (cf. Galatians 5:4), charismatics don't seem to be concerned as long as a

person has had the correct "spiritual experience." Charismatics have made their experiences (e.g. "speaking in tongues") the basis for Christian unity in place of a confessional unity based on God's Word. It is as if they have transformed the old cliché, "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you're sincere" into, "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you've had a spiritual experience." Francis Schaeffer observes:

the old Pentecostals taught a great deal of basic Christian doctrinal content . . . the new Pentecostals put their emphasis on the external signs themselves instead of content . . . make these external signs the test of fellowship . . . One can also see a parallel between the new Pentecostals and the liberals. The liberal theologians don't believe in content or religious truth. . . they can enter into fellowship with any other experience-oriented group using religious language . . . in the new Pentecostalism . . . . Questions which have been considered important enough to cause crucial differences, all the way back to the Reformation . . . are swept under the rug. . . . content doesn't matter as long as there are external signs and religious emotion (1972, pp. 15-16).

#### The Holy Spirit Separated from God's Word

74. Charismatics believe that they are restoring the Holy Spirit to a negligent church's teaching and living. Yet this belief reflects a false dichotomy and the movement's own unscriptural emphasis. The work of the Holy Spirit is not to testify to Himself but to Jesus Christ through the means of God's objective Word (John 16:13-14). Our faith is Christocentric because the Scriptures are Christocentric.

75. Because they emphasize spiritual experiences, charismatics tend to separate the Holy Spirit from the means through which He works, God's Word. An example of this is the following statement: "Martin Luther . . . defied the heads of both church and state on the basis of his experience of God. . . . Luther was a great one for growing. I suppose he learned it both from Scripture and from the Holy Spirit" (Hillmer, July 1977, pp. 1-2). Luther defied church and state on the basis of God's Word, not on the basis of "his experience of God." Luther grew in faith by the Holy Spirit working through Scripture, not through the Holy Spirit and/or the Scripture independent of each other. Indeed Luther warned (concerning the charismatics of his day) in the Smalcald Articles:

God gives no one his Spirit except through the external Word. Thus we shall be protected from the enthusiasts--that is, from the spiritualists who boast that they possess the Spirit without or before the Word and who therefore judge, interpret, and twist the Scriptures or spoken Word according to their pleasure. . . . enthusiasm is the source, strength, and power of all heresy. . . . Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through his eternal Word and sacrament (Tappert 1959, pp. 312-313).

#### Conclusion

76. As Luther pointed to the objective Word instead of to his experiences, as the Holy Spirit testifies to our Savior instead of to Himself, so the believer will be moved by the Spirit to witness to Christ--not to keep harping,

"I'm a Spirit-filled believer!" Can you imagine the Apostle Peter proclaiming on Pentecost, "Men of Judea, I have just received the fullness of the Spirit and the gift of tongues; I want to share with you how wonderful it is and what it feels like"? Peter proclaimed the objective message of Christ crucified and risen according to God's promises (Acts 2). None of the apostles pointed to their own feelings but "With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 4:33). It was the proclamation of Christ's gospel--not exciting experiences or the telling of them--that turned the world upside down.

77. And it is this objective gospel--not ecstatic speech or our own undependable feelings--that will strengthen faith and assure of us salvation and God's grace in Christ:

The charismatic movement encourages Christians to look for comfort not to the cross of Christ, not to the washing of baptism, not to the body and blood of our Lord in the Sacrament, not to the Word of absolution, but to themselves, their own prayers, their own struggles, their own experience. Result? Mr. Smith begins to doubt the love of Jesus because his prayers for a special experience seem to go unanswered. Mrs. Jones questions God's forgiveness because she still sins after her "Baptism in the Spirit." Pious Christian people begin to question the grace of God and their faith in Christ simply because they still yell at their children, they still dishonor their parents, they still feel the pressing load of sin. All these

feelings of guilt are caused by the false doctrine that the "Baptism in the Spirit will solve spiritual problems. The Lutheran Church on the other hand, has always taught in accord with the Bible that only the Word of forgiveness can remove the guilt which otherwise would lead to despair (Preus, September-October 1980, p. 3).

78. In spite of the Holy Spirit's testimony in the Scriptures, charismatics insist that their "tongues-speaking" is a sign that the church is being stirred by fires of revivalism. "Fire" is a favorite symbol of the charismatic movement. And perhaps Revelation's "fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of men" (13:13) is an appropriate picture of the false revivalism and ecumenicism that have been pursued by neo-pentecostals. The Scriptures also use "fire" as a symbol of counterfeit signs which mark religious and spiritual deceptions. Many think it to be almost blasphemy to speak against the tongues movement. But, on the basis of God's Word, we can do no less today when the great issues of the Reformation are again being debated. We are to judge the fruits (that is, the teachings) of the charismatic movement to the Scriptures. For Christians today don't need new revelations or experiences; they need to understand what God has already revealed in His Word.

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