

THE NEED OF THE HOUR

A Supernatural Ministry—Many Miracles and Signs Being Performed and Yet the Gospel of the Kingdom Needs to be More Thoroughly Demonstrated.

As a rule religious propaganda has degenerated into a mere competition among the creeds—this system of belief striving for supremacy over that system of belief, each claiming to be better and more accurate than all the rest. This is too much even in the hands of so-called Christian countries, and all the more true, as the heathen see it, when denominations bring their systems of thought into competition with heathen philosophy and heathen religions. The battle is too much mental, too philosophical, not enough concrete and practical. It is not enough of the God that "answers by fire," as it were. Among the contest between Israel's God and that of Baal in the days of King Ahab was on the plane of mere intellectual teaching. Elijah was not his theories or doctrines that captured the island in a few months, but his supernatural ministry of healing alone.

Elijah tells the Romans that he will make manifest only of the things which God wrought through him for the obedience of the Gentiles. His word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost, Rom. 15:12, 13. Does not the Gospel need as much today to be demonstrated by power for the obedience of the present heathen Gentiles as it did for the obedience of the heathen then? The heathen today who never heard of Jesus or Jehovah know just as well about the truthfulness of the Bible and the truthfulness of the Gospel story as they did in Paul's day. No argument can be adduced for the need of miracles then that is not equally true today among the heathen who have neither Christ nor His Word. Paul said the Corinthians, "We show you our present work, not the entire work of God, but the window, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and power," 1 Cor. 2:14.

MODERN DEMONSTRATION OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

Certainly in the midst of every issue under the sun, of every old and new philosophy, of all the ancient and modern false religions that have ever infested the world, now making roads into even Christian lands especially in great cities—certainly under such circumstances should there be no lack of opportunity for the gospel to be demonstrated.

For example—
This is exactly what God has been doing during the past year, being raised, beyond all doubt, in three years, now record in those that are recorded in the Bible in two thousand years of miraculously casting of God with His ancient people. All intelligent people know that even in the days of Christ and the Apostles the raising of the dead was a very rare thing. Had God restored in all its fullness the power of the early Apostles, we could not expect, with the records of the New Testament as our guide, that the raising of the dead would be a very frequent occurrence. It is a matter of praise and glory, then, to the great name of our God that so many of such miracles in modern times have occurred both in America and in foreign lands—England, Germany, Africa, etc. Thousands of cases, during the same short period, of cancer, consumption, epilepsy, palsy, paralysis, asthma, rheumatism, from many diseases—even in cases of injury and a few of broken bones—are on record as being completely healed alone by the power of God in the name of Jesus.

One common miracle, which every child of God can experience for himself, is the miraculous baptism with the Holy Ghost, which results in the recipient's speaking in other tongues in a supernatural way as the Spirit of God gives utterance, just exactly as recorded in the miraculously of New Testament times. See Acts 2:1-11, 10-14, 19-21.

Perhaps two hundred thousand people in the past half a dozen years have individually tested in faith and received the promise of the Father (Luke 21:42) and this sign has followed. See Mark 16:17. This is not some theory, but a mere doctrine, not a mere philosophy to be held in the mind with the hope that it may prove true in eternity. It is something to be experienced, here and now, and by every honest child of God who will believe and obey the Lord. This is a part of the Gospel and this Gospel has been demonstrated by over a thousand preachers who are now preaching this gospel, and God, in a supernatural way, all around the world, casting it by signs and wonders from heaven. What passes but our dear to power, with wonderful living testimonies from all lands to the proof.

But, with all this, for which we praise God—there is, but generally that sweeping victory and miraculous healing that accompanied the ministry of Peter, where signs, exhibited outwards, who came was healed. See Acts 5:16. This is the ministry. Special gifts are given to us, but we are not to wait for these, but to use them.

The world is dying for the power and salvation from spiritual darkness, the power which we have, and the love which we have.

Paul was a great and deep teacher, but not even the church accepted him as the Apostle on account of this? In the great Council at Jerusalem it is said of the church that they believed unto Barnabas and Paul themselves.

power for themselves, can be filled with His unspeakable joy and glory. We want, and the world needs, a ministry that can demonstrate the Gospel by healing in Jesus' name, the sick who come in faith, by making the lame to walk, casting out devils and delivering those who are bound by Satan from the power of the Devil.

To get this we must not be just like seeking power, but we must be satisfied with the word, life and spirit of God. We must humble ourselves, meet His truth, be utterly changed in God and His will and believe Him and at once act on our faith.

N. N.

RUMORS OF WAR.

As we are preparing the manuscript for this week's paper, we are aware that the world is facing one of the greatest crisis in its history. As we have scanned the newspapers and read the glaring headlines which have converged to our consciousness the information that war is about to be declared which may plunge the whole of Europe into a deadly conflict, our hearts have been looking up with expectancy, for who knows but that it always will be when the conflict is merely in the mental realm between this theory and that, this system and that system. Our theory will visit this person and another theory that person. One will be Buddhist, and another Hindu in thought, and still another Moslem, and still another competing for that which reveals where the true God is and is not.

When Elijah set the east of God, and sent up the heavens from raining for three and one-half years, and Israel and all her few hundred prophets of Baal could not stop the drought, then King Ahab began to see for Elijah. God's prophet was in great danger, but the people were not fully frightened. The drought might be natural, and yet the direct result of the power

of Elijah's God. A. T. Lee, said,

"There will be sacrifices to the gods, and the one who answers by fire from heaven in a mighty, miraculous way, let him be the true God. The conflict is no longer in argument or theory. The God that can heal

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A CONTRAST IN VALUES

Paul's Rules of Order for the Proper Use of the Gifts of Prophecy and Speaking With Tongues—Analysis of 1 Corinthians, Chap. 14.

"Covet earnestly the best gifts." borian is removed, because the instrument or the voice is understood and profit thereby secured. vs. 11.

5. Prophecy, because understood, examines and convicts the unbeliever and secures an acknowledgment of God's presence. vs. 24-25.

6. Paul's argument in favor of prophecy. "Yet in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice" I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an (unknown) tongue" vs. 19.

But Note Carefully. This claim to superiority is based on the assumption that the tongues are **not interpreted**. When the interpretation is given, the disarray between tongues and prophecy is removed, for then tongues may be a revelation, a giving out of knowledge, a prophecy, or a setting forth of doctrine. The disabilities are all removed. Then

1. Tongues are for a sign to unbelievers. vs. 22.
2. The mystery is explained.
3. There is no occasion for the "barbarian" criticism.

4. The unbeliever is examined and convicted. He acknowledges the presence of God in the utterance and with the people.

5. Speaking with tongues combines praying in the spirit and with the understanding, also.

6. The unlearned—non-understanding—says "Amen" at the giving of thanks.

7. It is in fulfillment of prophecy. "With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto the people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 28:11.

Paul's entire argument for the superiority of prophecy over tongues is qualified by the phrase "**except he interpret**" vs. 5. Most people employ the argument without the qualifying phrase, consequently their conclusion is entirely unwarranted. Edification being the test, the test is now fully met.

The gift of tongues is not to be despised nor undervalued, for

1. It is a gift of God. Nothing that God bestows is of little value. Every gift is "good and perfect."

2. Paul rejoiced that he had the gift, "my God, speak with

tongues more abundantly" vs. 19. Thank—eucharistio; therefore Paul offered a sacrifice of praise to God for bestowing upon him the gift of tongues. This testimony does away with the objection that there is no record of Paul speaking in tongues at the time of his conversion. Unless his "baptism" immediately followed his conversion, he would not then speak in tongues. The baptism in the Spirit does not take place at the time of regeneration. His filling with the Holy Ghost occurred three days after his conversion when Ananias laid his hands upon Saul, and then without doubt, Saul spake with other tongues.

Paul had the gift. That is the important point here.

3. Paul earnestly desired that all might speak with tongues. vs. 5.

4. Speaking with tongues is not the least of the gifts, as is often claimed. Interpretation of tongues being dependent upon the other gifts for its existence must necessarily be inferior.

It is not the least of the gifts, but it is the first of the gifts, it is the first in God's order hence must be wisely ordered. It is the stepping-stone, however, to higher things. Faithfulness is rewarded by greater responsibility. The natural as well as the supernatural order is from the lower to the higher. Can we expect to attain the highest by refusing the lowest? We are to grow up into the best. "Precept upon precept; here a little and there a little." It was he who used his talents to advantage who was made ruler over many things.

5. We are under obligation to seek the gift. Not merely willing to accept, but to recognize the responsibility for seeking. "Covet earnestly the best gifts." Desire spiritual gifts. "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church."

6. We are not to forbid speaking with tongues. vs. 39.

C. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN PROPHECY AND SPEAKING WITH TONGUES.

Superiority is claimed for prophecy over speaking with tongues. "Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues." (The clause which follows "except he interpret" is invariably omitted from the arguments of opponents of the truth.) The test of superiority is the degree of edification derived. The claim is based on this test of edification. Cf. verses 3, 5, 12, 19, 24, 25.

The argument employs a two-fold analogy:

(a) It is a means of communication with God. vs. 2.

(b) It is not understood by man. vs. 2.

(c) It is a mystery. vs. 2.

(d) It edifies only the speaker. vs. 4.

(e) It is praying in the spirit. vs. 14.

(f) The unlearned (not understanding) is unable to say "Amen." vs. 16.

(g) The speaker and the hearer are thus to each other as barbarians. vs. 11.

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The argument employs a two-fold analogy:

1. Musical instruments. The profit arises from distinction of sounds. vs. 7, 8.

2. Many kinds of voices. None without significance. vs. 10.

3. Superiority is proven by the greater amount of profit derived.

4. The criticism of being a bar-

rier to the Word and Witness. Each member in his own position that each one may minister to the other, and the Spirit is He who worketh through all that it may be for the building up of all unto the fulness of the stature of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:14, 18, 25, 27. Eph. 1:22-23; 4:13-15-16; 23; Colossians 1:24.)

3. The Holy Spirit has come to possess this people for this very purpose, and He will lead them on in the pathway that leads to God. He came from God, and He leads back to God. For this purpose, Jesus went to the cross, not only to purchase redemption and the forgiveness of sins, but that He, by His Spirit, may indwell and lead everyone back to God. Oh, get down before Him, get down before Him, that ye may know what it is to receive Him who comes from God to lead you back to God. Oh, verily, God shall have a people that is conformed to His Son, for the Spirit has come for the purpose, to transform them into the same image as the Son of His Love.

4. The Holy Spirit speaketh expressly to the Church tonight. In this place God is speaking: Put off the works of darkness; be ye covered with the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.

And it shall come to pass that they which minister in righteousness and holiness must be clothed in the same mind as He, that the world may be gathered in, and the Lord be glorified with the people.

5. Speaking with tongues combines praying in the spirit and with the understanding, also.

6. The unlearned—non-understanding—says "Amen" at the giving of thanks.

7. It is in fulfillment of prophecy.

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Paul's entire argument for the superiority of prophecy over tongues is qualified by the phrase "**except he interpret**" vs. 5. Most people employ the argument without the qualifying phrase, consequently their conclusion is entirely unwarranted. Edification being the test, the test is now fully met.

II.—PAUL'S RULES FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF TONGUES.

If the value of speaking in tongues is estimated by the degree of edification, and that edification—at least for the Church—is dependent upon the interpretation, should one then pray for interpretation? The command is clear.

1. All who have the gift of tongues are to pray for interpretation. vs. 13.

2. Each person speaking with other tongues is to pray that he himself—not another—may have the power to interpret. Since the entire value of his message to the Church depends upon the interpretation of the message, and he is urged to seek to excel in edifying the Church, therefore he ought to be greatly concerned about interpretation.

3. If there is speaking in an unknown tongue during a meeting of the Assembly, only two or at the most three should speak, and they should do so one at a time and **someone** should interpret.

4. If no interpreter is present, there should be a reader or explanation in tongues. "Let him keep silence in the Church and let him speak to himself and to God. If the utterance is involuntary, we should then look to God to supply the need for interpretation through someone then present.

III.—PAUL'S RULES FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF PROPHETIC.

1. Let the prophets speak two or three. vs. 29.

2. Let the other judge. vs. 29. Others is plural—others, the rest. Judge, or discern (1 Cor. 12:10) as to whether the words spoken "really came forth from the Spirit, or were only the imagination of the speaker's heart."

3. If anything is revealed to someone else who is seated there, let the first be silent. vs. 30.

4. Everything is to be in order that all may learn, and all may be comforted. vs. 31.

5. The spirits of prophets yield submission to prophets, that is, are under their own control. vs. 32.

IV.—CONCLUSION.

1. Covet to prophesy.

2. Forbid not to speak with tongues.

3. Decency and order are to prevail in the assembly.

4. Speaking with tongues is not the least but it is the first of the gifts.

5. When speaking with tongues is accompanied by interpretation, the disarray in value between tongues and prophecy is removed, and

6. Speaking with tongues assumes a value at least equivalent to the value of prophecy.

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