



Volume LIV No. 1 MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY—MARCH, 1971 Does Speaking in Tongues Promote Understanding of the Bible?

(This Article Published by Request)

THIS subject has been prompted largely by the ' prominence given to speaking in tongues not only in our own land, but by reports of this fast growing practice in many countries. Recently, a broadcast was given entitled "Catholic Pentecostalism" with information about a movement within this church in the Sydney area. During this broadcast reference was made to the fact that during the last three years in particular what has been called a revival in Pentecostalism has been penetrating the Roman Catholic Church in America, and is now active in a particular branch of the Catholic Church in Sydney. We have no doubt this movement is operating in many other centres in Australia and throughout the world.

One thing of vital importance is that during the broadcast describing the Catholic Pentecostal Movement in Sydney, no claim was made that the speaking in tongues promoted an understanding of God's Word. Strange as it may seem, in dozens of broadcasts where speaking in tongues is the main subject of discussion, no claim has been made that speaking in tongues has meant increased understanding of the Word of God. This being the case, sincere and intelligent people who are attracted by the claim that speaking in tongues is from the Lord should surely enquire why no enlightenment from the Bible results from speaking in tongues today. Surely the Lord desires to teach His people from His Word, so if speaking in tongues is from the Lord, why is no understanding of the Bible gained by those who preach little else than speaking in tongues in these days? We hope to find an answer from the Scriptures.

In Acts 2 we have the record given of the Day of Pentecost, which followed our Lord's resurrection and ascension to heaven. On the fiftieth day from our Lord's resurrection God acknowledged Christ's sacrifice by the gift of His spirit from on high, just as Jesus predicted to His disciples in John 16: 5-7. Our Lord speaking, says—"And now I go my way to him that sent me. . . . It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter (holy spirit) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send it unto you." "It is expedient"—absolutely essential, that the Lord die as the sacrifice for sins, be raised from the dead, ascend to heaven to the Father, that the Father may witness Christ's faithfulness unto death by the outpouring of the holy spirit. It was essential if there was to be a Church, a called-out people to be with Christ, that all this take place. So the power of God came upon the waiting disciples on the Day of Pentecost, as we read in Acts 2. The opening verses of this chapter tell about the descent of the holy spirit. From verse 4 we read—"And they were all filled with the holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." The following verses describe what happened, and give a list of "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven"—about ten or twelve nationalities are mentioned—who heard "the wonderful works of God" in their own languages.

In verse 4 the meaning of the Greek word translated "tongues" is—"the tongue; by implication a language (specially one naturally not acquired)." The same Greek word is found in verse 11—"We do hear them speak in our own tongues (languages) the wonderful works of God." In verse 8, "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?", we have another Greek word from which the word "tongue" is translated, and it means "a (mode of) discourse, that is, dialect." This same Greek word is found in verse 6, translated by our English word "language"—"every man heard them speak in his own language." Each of these nationalities heard the Apostles speak in their own language, so they could understand the messages given out on that wonderful Day of Pentecost. That was an amazing experience for those ten or a dozen nationalities listed in those verses—"and are not all these men Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue (dialect), wherein we were born?" God was interpreting the message respecting the risen Christ through the Apostles in those "tongues" to those

particular nationalities.

A most important part of this record is the fact that all those people of so many nations heard in their own languages the **wonderful works of God**. That was the message that God was giving them by the descent of His holy spirit when Christ had ascended to the Father's right hand. What is meant by the wonderful works of God they heard in their own languages, or dialects? We have a sample of what it means from Peter's sermon on this same day, when he spoke to Israel in verses 22-24 of this same chapter. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know ... ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." It was not possible Christ should have been holden in death. He was raised the third day, and remained to associate with His disciples for 40 days, and then ascended to heaven.

The Apostle Peter continued in verses 30-33, speaking of David—"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God . . . would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Then verse 36—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." What a wonderful message was delivered to Israel! This is the message, the wonderful works of God, given to all those nationalities by the various languages given on that Day of Pentecost. Was not that a gracious arrangement that God provided? When those devout Jews "out of every nation under heaven" returned to their own countries, they could expound to their fellow countrymen the wonderful message of the risen Christ. They had heard it by the tongues of those Galileans. "We are all amazed", they said, "at these wonderful works of God."

Also at this same time were fulfilled the words of Acts 2: 18—"And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit; and they shall prophesy." God manifested forth His spirit upon His servants and handmaidens by the preaching in tongues to those present, at that early period of the Gospel Age. Verse 17 of this same chapter—"Saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh"—is falsely claimed as being fulfilled now in our day, but not so. Verses are not always in consecutive order for fulfilment in the Bible. How strange it would be for God to pour out His spirit upon all flesh while this present evil world is with us! But with Satan bound in the next age, and the resurrection of mankind under way upon the earth, then will be the time when God will pour out His spirit upon "all flesh."

Obviously, all flesh today is not receiving God's spirit. "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people"; "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." God's spirit is poured out now in this Gospel Age only upon God's servants and handmaidens, beginning with the Day of Pentecost, and only for a limited time were the gifts of the spirit given to the early Church for a special purpose when the Church was in its infancy.

It may be asked, Why did God arrange the preaching of the glad news of Christ's resurrection and salvation through Him by the speaking in tongues in the languages of many different Jews—"devout men, out of every nation under heaven"—as quoted in Acts 2:5? The answer would be God desired them to take the message of salvation through the risen Christ to their own countrymen, when there was no New Testament available. There was no Bible then, apart from the Old Testament Scriptures, and few people could read anyway. God gave the devout Jews from various nationalities the message to thrill their hearts. When they returned home, they could speak of nothing else than the wonderful works of God, that Christ had paid the penalty for all mankind, He is now at the Father's right hand and there is salvation for those who come, gladly accepting Him as their Saviour and devoting their lives to His service. But when the New Testament became available, and especially in these last days of the Gospel Age, when we have God's Word so easily procurable, we find Paul's words to Timothy, in 2 Tim. 3: 14-17, of special interest, and a guide as to what we should adhere to in seeking to know God's will in the understanding of His truth.

It is a great help to grasp the meaning of the Apostle's words in these verses in 2 Tim. 3 by examining verse 17 in some detail. Introducing it from verse 16, we read—"All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable . . . that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." We find the meaning of "perfect" in the Greek to be "complete"—"that the man of God may be **complete**." And "thoroughly furnished" in the Greek means—"to finish out (time); figuratively to equip fully (a teacher)." This same Greek word is translated "accomplished" in Acts 21: 5—"When we had accomplished (finished out, fulfilled) those days." The Apostle Paul is saying that the holy scriptures, inspired of God, are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruc-

tion in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped unto all good works. That being so, why would God add to His Word in any way with extra help, when the Apostle says God's Word is sufficient to complete, or fully equip His people. It is a great deception of the Adversary to try and convince mankind that they need additions to God's Word to enlighten them correctly.

We have seen why God used the "tongues" or "languages" of the various nationalities to convey the truths of His Word at Pentecost, when no Bible was available to give the clear message of salvation through Christ's sacrifice, but how different is the position today. God's Word is procurable in almost any language at such small cost, and as all God's truth is contained in His Word the supposed gifts of the spirit today are spurious, deceptions of the Adversary to flatter and puff up the minds of people to imagine they are heaven's favorites. There can be no doubt that the Adversary has a particular kind of deception to suit every kind of mind in the human family. For instance, for the spiritualist there is the claim that he can communicate with his departed friends, when the Scriptures clearly declare "the dead know not anything." For the Christian Scientist he is exhorted to believe there is no real sickness, and is encouraged to lie to himself. For the average church-going person there is the claim that death is not real—that a person is immortal and really never dies—when the Bible clearly states—"As in Adam all die." For those who crave outward show, "a fair show in the flesh", there is the claim that it is necessary to speak in tongues to receive God's blessing. Such people think it is wonderful if they can create some gibberish, but no one understands what they are saying, and even if this were possible no additional enlightenment is thrown on the Word of God. They think they are getting an outpouring of the spirit, when all the time it is a counterfeit of Pentecost. In a recent broadcast a speaker, who rarely speaks of anything else than speaking in tongues, said there were over 30 million adherents to this practice of speaking in tongues, which is really an indication of this great deception throughout the world, rather than proving otherwise. Our Lord stated that there would be deceptive "signs and wonders" in the end of this age that "if it were possible, shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24: 24).

One thing is very noticeable in the Apostle Paul's epistles, and that is that only to the Corinthian church did he mention the gifts of the spirit. If speaking in other tongues would be a mark of development for the Christian, it is very strange that Paul did not exhort all the other churches to participate in this practice. But he did not. There is no reference to speaking in tongues in his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus or Hebrews. The Apostle commended many in these churches for their spirituality, but the Corinthians as a church were not spiritually minded. Why did Paul mention the speaking in tongues and other gifts of the spirit to the Corinthians only? For the apparent reason they were clinging to the assistance given through the "gifts of the spirit" to the early church far too long, and prided themselves in the outward show of these gifts instead of cultivating the inward fruits of the spirit. This is clearly shown in 1 Cor. 3: 1—"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." From chapter 4: 7 in this epistle the Apostle also shows that members in this church were grasping honor and power, cultivating pride in their religion. Speaking ironically in verse 10 he declared—"We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong." Paul is really ridiculing this church for priding itself in the outward gifts of the spirit. That the Corinthians were seeking for outward show in their Christian lives is supported by 1 Cor. 12: 31, reading from the Diaglott. This is a Greek and English translation, and gives a different meaning to the King James Bible. It reads—"But you earnestly desire the more eminent gifts; and yet a much more excellent way I point out to you." Paul is not saying, "Covet earnestly the best gifts", but he is saying, "That is what you are doing." You are seeking to shine with outward show in these gifts of the spirit. Yet he would point out a much more excellent way, the development of the fruits of the spirit which he goes on to elaborate in the next chapter. Paul was seeking to wean them away from the gifts appropriate for the church in its infancy. It is a mistaken idea to assume that where the holy spirit is mentioned in the New Testament it always means the gifts of the spirit.

Gifts of the Spirit to Cease.

The Apostle shows in 1 Cor. 13: 8 that the gifts of the spirit were intended only for a limited time. We read—"Charity (love) never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, **they shall fail.**" What kind of prophecies is the Apostle referring to here? Undoubtedly the **gift of prophecy**, the ability to foretell coming events by the miraculous gift. "Whether there be tongues, **they shall cease.**" What kind of "tongues" is he speaking of? Without doubt the **gift of tongues**, the miraculous gift of speaking in another language apart from the one known by the speaker. They will cease, he says. "Whether there be knowledge, **it shall vanish away.**" What kind of knowledge is implied here? Surely not the knowledge of God and His truth. No, but the **gift of knowledge**, the miraculous understanding of knowledge, given only to the early church.

An indication as to how the gifts of the spirit ceased is given in the account of Philip's ministry in Samaria, as

recorded in Acts 8: 5-8, 14-17. (Please read.) It required the Apostles to bestow the gifts of the spirit upon members of the church in Samaria, because, while Philip could perform certain miracles in this early church he could not bestow the gifts upon others. Peter and John, two apostles, were sent for this purpose. So, when the Apostles finished their earthly ministry, no further bestowing of the gifts could be made and they automatically ceased when those upon whom the Apostles had bestowed the gifts also passed away.

A text often quoted to support the claim that God's plan for tongues in the early church is still operative today is found in Heb. 13: 8. It is a very lovely verse when rightly understood—"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever." This verse is often used to imply that what happened in our Lord's day with certain miracles and in the early church with the tongues would also apply today and for ever. But God's plan is not always the same for every age, or part of an age in the history of the human family, and the same applies to the long period of the call for the Bride of Christ, covering at least 2,000 years between our Lord's first and second advents.

Our Lord's words to His apostles in Matt. 10: 5-8 are very revealing in this same connection. He said—"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give." We have instances of the apostles actually raising the dead to life as a result of our Lord's commission to them, in addition to the other miracles performed by them through the power of God. (See Acts 9: 36-42; 20: 7-12.) The important point to note in these verses given by Jesus in Matt. 10, is the fact that the raising of the dead was equally within the power of the apostles as any other of the gifts of the spirit, because it was God's will at that period of the church's history. But who amongst the preachers of speaking in tongues would attempt to raise the dead to life today? Yet, if the claim that Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever" meant that tongues and healings were God's will for today, then the raising of the dead would also be in order at present. It is obvious that the Adversary can deceive so far, and no further. What the text in Heb. 13: 8 really implies is, that our Lord is the same sympathetic overseer of His church—as He was on earth, so He is in heaven. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" were His words as He ascended on high.

Another passage of Scripture often used in support of the gifts of the spirit operating today are the verses in Mark 16: 9-20, which passage is not found in the best manuscripts, and is therefore spurious. Verses 16 and 17 are often quoted, and verse 18 which is also not part of the Bible has led to some people losing their lives. There can be no doubt that the warning of the apostle in his day, found in 2 Cor. 11: 13-15, applies very definitely today—"Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

Again we have Paul's warning respecting those who are deceived by various errors today, in this end of the age, as recorded in 2 Thes. 2: 8-12. The Apostle refers in this chapter to the great "mystery of iniquity" that was already working in his day, and for the end of the age he says—"Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his presence: **whose coming is with the working of Satan** with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this **cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie**; that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." That is a very strong statement, that God would send people who desire these gifts, these tongues, a strong delusion so they will believe a lie. They are so sure of their own ideas, that God allows them to be deceived in this matter, because they do not seek the truth in the love of it. They have pleasure in making a great show before people, instead of seeking the lowly, quiet development of the fruits of the spirit in their hearts. God allows people to follow their own course, and they lose His spiritual blessing, though they will have the opportunity of being helped in the Kingdom age, when Satan is bound.

Yes, how different it will be when Satan is bound, to deceive the nations no more for the thousand years of Christ's kingdom. Then "all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest", and "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain (kingdom); for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11: 9). And again—"In this mountain (kingdom) shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things. . .

And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering (death) cast over all people, and the vail (ignorance) that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 25: 6-8).

Convention News

WE are very thankful to the Lord for His blessings throughout the Annual Convention arranged by the Melbourne Class over the Christmas season. It was a great pleasure to welcome visiting brethren from Adelaide, Sydney, Tasmania, and one brother from U.S.A., all of whom contributed helpfully to the gatherings with addresses, and at the studies and in fellowship generally. It was expressed by more than one of the brethren that this Convention was the "best ever", and we lift up our hearts in gratitude to the Lord, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, at the same time thanking all who contributed, by the Lord's grace, in making the gatherings so profitable.

During the four days of Convention two Bible studies were enjoyed on the passages—Eph. 6: 13-18, and 1 Cor. 13: 1-8. Brief thoughts on these studies, also on all the addresses are contained in the Convention Notes, supplied to all who desire these. Some thoughts on the passage in 1 Cor. 13: 1-8 are also contained in this issue of "Peoples Paper."

Helpful addresses by the brethren were delivered on the following subjects—"Reflecting Christ"; "The Heavens Declare the Glory of God"; "Things That Come Not Back"; "Our Resources in God"; "Love and Good Works"; "I Will Give Water From The Fountain of Life"; "A Thousand Years of Peace"; "Light"; "The Peace of God"; "Introspection and Control of Thoughts"; "Incentives"; "Edification"; "Whose Heart the Lord Opened"; "All Things Through Christ"; "Signs of the Times"; "Restitution"; "Being Strong and of Good Courage" and "Clean Every Whit." Some of these addresses are expected to be published in later issues of "Peoples Paper", and all appear in brief in the Convention Notes now ready.

Messages with Christian love and greetings were greatly appreciated from a number of Classes and brethren throughout Australia and from overseas. Five or six brethren in U.S.A., who have visited Australia sent their love and greetings, as also did the brethren in Bangalore, India; this message arriving just after the Convention being gladly received. Also through Brother Sironi of Sydney a message was warmly appreciated from the brethren in Italy who sent their love and greetings; this message, translated by Brother Sironi, appears in this issue of "Peoples Paper." At the Fellowship

Meeting on the last day of Convention the passage of Scripture in Eph. 6: 13-18 was selected as the Convention message to be sent to all brethren with the warm Christian love of all in attendance at the Convention gatherings.

At the three Fellowship Meetings opportunity for Praise and Testimony and the "Hymns We Love and Why" session added to the benefits of the gatherings. Expressions of the Lord's blessings at being able to attend the Convention, and of the overruling by the Lord of their lives throughout the year past were made by a number of the brethren, as they also looked forward with confidence to the Lord's continued goodness and mercy in the days ahead.

It was a pleasure to have a number of our Polish brethren fellowship with us also at the Convention, and we were glad that more of our Polish Brothers contributed with addresses, their good efforts in handling the English language quite well being much appreciated. We are looking forward to hearing more from these brethren in the days ahead. At the usual Love Feast the closing hymns, "Blest be the tie that binds", "And God be with you till we meet again", were sung, and the prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord and asking His guidance and blessing upon all His dear people everywhere, brought to a close the profitable 1970 Melbourne Convention.

Convention Message from Italy

A MESSAGE to the Australian brethren gathered at Melbourne, on behalf of the called out ones of Italy.

Dear and beloved Brothers in the same hope. May grace and peace abound upon you all from our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ our hope and glory. Amen!

While you are gathered in this festival of love, we from a very far and very old land, send to you a wish of brotherly love, of communion, of peace and of spiritual uplifting. This is a wish that comes from the hearts of the Italian brethren to you all.

Italy, as you all know, is a peninsula in the form of a boot which stretches itself in the most popular sea of the world, the Mediterranean Sea. Popular because of its thousands of years of history, called by Daniel the Great Sea, Dan. 7: 2. The one and the other occupy a very prominent place in the prophecies of Daniel and of Revelation: in the Mediterranean were formed the great empires of the past, the so-called "Great Civilizations."

The nation of Italy occupies a very important place in the prophecies alongside the other nations of Europe

and the world: not a very bright place though, but of darkness and errors, because of this continent was born and developed the two greatest institutions of the old world, of- the kingdom of darkness—the Papacy and Babylon the mystic!

Nevertheless, right here, in the centre of error, and the seat of the beast, we your brothers in Christ, give our testimony with great sacrifices, bringing to fulfilment that part which Jehovah God has given us, to carry out His plan. It is a very hard work, because it is done in a society which is 99% Roman Catholic, a society that enjoys all the privileges and immunity, a society that stretches his control in every field of public life in general.

However, in Italy, Europe in general and even in the countries behind the “Iron Curtain” the witnessing for the Truth goes on, because the work is not ours but of Him that has got control over all the heavens; He who has the control of all the events of history, and guides His Church in the last stage of its earthly pilgrimage.

We have a strong need to feel and being united with all the brethren who in like manner are strangers and pilgrims on this earth, and that do the same job and experience the same trials, while announcing the same grand and noble truths of the plan of God, and that are also watching and waiting like us for the coming event of all times—the return in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are living in a time when those who fight against the spiritual wickedness in high places, Eph. 6: 12, must have the need to know each other, to love each other and to unite each other in one spiritual communion; we have a great need of your prayers and of your brotherly love.

The first half of this 20th century has brought to the family of the Bible Students in all the world the pain of divisions, contrasts and sectarianism; the second half should make us aware of the need for Christian fellowship, the communion of the saints, the unity of the spirit. This is a must, for the time is ripe! And the conditions of the world today make it imperative, to the ecumenicalism of Catholic-Protestant-Orthodox Babylon, we should withstand with an ecumenicalism of the Bible Students family, known throughout the world under different names, but which is faithful to the one message, “The Restitution of all things.” This message will then have the strength to spread itself in all the world and will constitute in every sense of the word “the latter rain”, James 5: 7. This, dear brothers, is our dream!

Please notify us of your activities, which we shall gladly publish in our magazines. That will be of encouragement and uplifting to all your brethren in this country. All the brethren in Italy send their warmest Christian love, and united to you are waiting for their deliverance when the Lord shall appear. Pray for us, the same we will do towards you.

Little Foxes and Little Lambs, a humorous, yet thought-provoking, illustrated book of clever poetry. The first poems call attention to the “little foxes” in people’s lives—common faults and failures such as lying, evil-speaking, pride, laziness, anger. Next, attention is given to the “little lambs”, such as truth, humility, patience, courtesy. Children will enjoy coloring the pictures that go with the poems. Paperback, 63 pages, price 70c post paid.

Thoughts On 1 Cor. 13:1-8

VERSE 1. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” The word “I” here is used in the popular sense, as the apostle designs to illustrate his idea by a reference to himself, which, it is evident, he wishes to be understood as applying to those whom he addressed.

The gift of speaking in tongues seems to have been too highly esteemed by the Corinthian church, and the apostle shows that this gift even though possessed in the highest degree would be of no avail if we do not develop in the character of love—the character-likeness to Christ. It would be just like “a noisy gong, or a clanging cymbal” (Rev. Ver.). The word translated charity is from the Greek “agape” meaning disinterested love.

Verse 2. “And though I have (the gift of prophecy), and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.” Prophecy means not only foretelling but forth-telling. “Prophecy” and the word “prophet” have two meanings. The one is the foretelling of events yet future, the other is the uttering the meaning of the Scripture, or speaking to the edification and comfort of Christians. Regarding the word “prophet” see Acts 13: 1; 15: 32; 1 Cor. 14: 1-3. “And understand all mysteries, and all knowledge.” “Mysteries”—Diaglott “secrets.” This word would refer to the hidden features of God’s Plan of the Ages. “Knowledge”—we learn from 1 Cor. 12: 8-10 of the various “gifts” bestowed upon the early church. These miraculously bestowed gifts of prophecy, knowledge and faith, etc., were given in the apostolic times for

the purpose of establishing the church. Many who possessed the miraculous “gifts” lacked the seal and witness of the spirit. The apostle shows that one may have the miraculous gifts of prophecy, knowledge and faith, yet if I have not love I am nothing.

Verse 3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” The apostle says that if **all** that a man had were dealt out in small portions, so as to benefit as many as possible, and yet were not attended with true love towards God and towards man, it would be all false, and really of no value in regard to his own salvation. It would profit nothing; it would not be such an act as God would approve. Though good might be done to others, yet where the **motive** was wrong, it could not meet with the divine approval. We see, then, that the thought is that we must cultivate in our hearts the graces of the holy spirit, meekness, gentleness, patience, love, etc., and that we must have these in abounding measure to be pleasing to the Lord, to bear “much fruit.”

As one has said—“The spectrum of love has nine ingredients: **Patience—**”Love suffereth long.” **Kindness—**”And is kind.” **Generosity—**”Love envieth not.” **Humility—**”Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.” **Courtesy—**”Doth not behave itself unseemly.” **Unselfishness—**”Seeketh not her own.” **Good Temper—**”Is not provoked.” **Guilelessness—**”Thinketh no evil.” Sincerity—”Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” In these verses 4-7 the apostle describes the character and actions of heavenly love.

Verse 4. “Love suffereth long.” Love is **patient**. This is the normal attitude of love; love passive; love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love suffers long, for love understands, and therefore waits.

Kindness—”Love is kind.” If “long-suffering” is a victory over a just resentment, this is a victory over idle selfishness, and comfortable self-pleasing. See 2 Pet. 1: 5-8; Matt. 5: 42-48. “I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.” See Rom. 12: 10; Phil. 2: 1; John 13: 34, 35.

Generosity—”Love envieth not.” That is, it is not idly vexatious at the superiority of others, begrudging them their endowments and privileges and advantages, Phil. 2: 3. Love does not envy, because it is content. Great illustrations of unswerving love are seen in the attitude of Jonathan towards David, and of John the Baptist towards Jesus. 1 Cor. 4: 6, 7. “Love never boils over with jealousy” (Amplified).

Humility—”Love vaunteth not itself.” “Love is not boastful or vain-glorious” (Amplified). “Love makes no parade” (Moffat). There is no brag, no swagger about love (Phil. 2: 5); “love is not puffed up:” Love is not arrogant, but humble (Judges 7: 2). Love knows nothing of presumptuous self-satisfaction, of pride with contempt of others. It “gives itself no airs”, is never haughty, but humble and gracious (John 5: 19).

Verse 5. “Doth not behave itself unseemly.” **“Courtesy—**The manners or behaviour of love. Perfect love develops courteousness along with humility. A thoughtful man has said—”Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The one secret of politeness is to love. A gentleman is one who does things gently, with love.” “Love does not willingly offend, hurt, or wound another’s feelings. Love is gentle and considerate in her manner” (Phil. 2: 3).

Unselfishness—”Love seeketh not her own.” This may well be termed the aim or central purpose of love. Love “seeketh not its own”, but finds its joy and wealth in self-forgetfulness for the sake of service. The good of others is always in love’s motive, whatever it may be doing. “Its learning is for’ the light of others; its toil is for the good of others; its prayer and faith and sacrifice are for the cleansing and the comforting of others.” Love realises itself in self-lessness. “It seeketh not its own” (Phil. 2: 4, 5; 1 Cor. 10: 24, 33; Rom. 15: 2, 3).

Good Temper—”Love is not provoked to anger” (Diaglott). Prov. 16: 32; 19: 11. “Love is not provoked” (Rev. Ver.). 1 Pet. 2: 21-23; Luke 11: 53, 54. Let us remember that in this chapter we have presented the perfect character—the character of Christ. Christ did not on one single instance lose His perfect self-control and gentleness; and, as one has truly said, “If Christ be in us (in sufficient measure) His love will not be provoked even as of old.” Henry Drummond says—”Souls are made sweet not by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in—a great love, a new spirit, the spirit of Christ. Christ, the spirit of Christ, interpenetrating ours, sweetens, purifies, transforms all.” Will-power does not change men. Time does not change men. Christ does. Therefore “let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” Heb. 1: 9.

Guilelessness—”Love thinketh no evil.” Love will look for some good motive. This has been rendered as “Love does not surmise evil” Matt. 5: 8. Or again, “Love imputeth no evil.” Rev. Ver.—”Love taketh not account

of evil.” “Love covers a multitude of sins”—defects. “Love does not impute evil motives.” Love works on healthy lines of thought. “Love is never resentful” (Moffatt). Prayer is the first remedy when the fever of resentment begins to rage high. Someone has said, “We can pray for those who hate us, but we cannot hate those for whom we pray.” Love thinks of Him who was bruised for our iniquities, and because she has been crucified with Him, and He now lives in her, the power of His grace is sufficient to crush all unworthy bitterness.

Verse 6. “Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” **Sincerity**—This phrase is many sided; it means first of all, compassion for the fallen. Moffatt translates this—“Love is never glad when others go wrong; love is gladdened by goodness.” One has said, “Only one who has a very loving heart can deal helpfully with the failings of others. Harshness never helps them, censoriousness never heals them, a spirit of judging never uplifts them; but ‘ye which are spiritual restore the one that is overtaken in a fault, in a spirit of meekness’.” Love rejoices when the truth is honored, or when it prospers. Love will rejoice in the work of Christ being done by others, as well as that being done by itself, and by whatever means the cause of Christ is being promoted, it can say with Paul, “Therein do I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice.”

Verse 7. “Love beareth all things.” **Love’s Bravery**—The “bearing all things” seems to have reference to suffering wrong without exhibiting resentment; to bear patiently neglect or indignities. Gal. 6: 2. **Passively**, love “bears” by suffering wrong done to itself without retaliating. We remember it is written of Christ that, “when he was reviled, he reviled not again.” **Actively**, love “bears” when it gets under the load of life, and bravely carries it. Someone calls this “Love’s quiet sweetness under attack.” Dean Farrar rendered these words—“Love has a gracious tolerance”—she is proof against the malice of her detractors. Weymouth—“She knows how to be silent”, not sullenly but serenely, and she understands how to keep an unbroken front.

“Love believeth all things.” **Love’s Trustfulness**—Perfect love is not suspicious, but on the contrary is disposed to be trustful. The context seems to indicate that this expression is to be understood in respect of the conduct of others. We should be trustful, and inclined to believe that those around us are sincere in their effort to do the will of God. Love takes the best and kindest view of all men, in all circumstances; as long as it is possible to do so. Love studies motives, and makes all possible allowances. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”

“**Love Hopeth All Things.**” Perfect love is not easily discouraged. This is the secret of love’s perseverance; having learned of God, and having become a partaker of His spirit of holiness, it trusts in Him and hopes undismayed for the fulfilment of His gracious covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings. Love’s hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the Vail, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages. See Heb. 6: 19.

“**Love Endureth All Things.**” One has said. “This hopeful element of love is one of the striking features of the perseverance of the saints, enabling -them to endure hardness as good soldiers.” Love’s hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged and put to flight, the spirit of love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. James 1: 2-4, 12; Heb. 12: 3; Job 13: 15.

“**Love Never Faileth.**” Not only is love the greatest of all graces and really, as we have seen, the sum of them all in combination and unification, but it is the most lasting grace. “Love never faileth”—will never cease, and he who has this character of love will never fail, will never cease. It is for such that eternal life has been provided in the Divine plan. “He that endureth to the end; the same shall be saved.”

Verse 8. “But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.” Let us bear in mind the apostle’s argument to the Corinthian brethren: (1) that the gifts of miracles, tongues, etc., bestowed upon them by the spirit were divided amongst them according to talent or divine wisdom, and were not the results of their own efforts; (2) that he is pointing out to them a **grace** much more excellent than those “gifts”—of much more value than all of them together; a grace that might properly be termed a **fruitage of the spirit—love**. Having described this wonderful and necessary element of character in its perfection, the apostle comes back and contrasts it with those “gifts” they so highly appreciated, and shows that the chiefest of those “gifts” are inferior to love.

Further information on this verse 8 of 1 Cor. 13 will be found in the front article in this “Peoples Paper”—“Does Speaking in Tongues Promote Understanding of the Bible?”, under the sub-heading, “Gifts of the Spirit to Cease.”

Pilgrim Way Ended

The following information is to hand from Adelaide. On December 10th last our dear Brother Bartel of Adelaide reached the end of his pilgrim way in his 75th year. Our brother had been enjoying the knowledge of God's wonderful plan of salvation for over 50 years, and had been associated with the Adelaide Class of Bible Students for most of that time. Brother Bartel was a devoted student of God's Word; and his constant endeavour was to follow in the steps of his Lord and Master in the narrow way of self-denial and sacrifice of the good things of this world.

We believe our brother was "faithful unto death", and has now joined the ranks of those faithful "overcomers" who are to be associated with Christ in the grand work of blessing all the families of the earth, according to the Lord's promise to Abraham, Gal. 3: 8, 16, 29.

Adelaide Easter Convention

The brethren of the Adelaide Class extend a warm invitation to all friends to attend the Easter Convention to be held (D.V.) on April 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th in the Manchester Unity Hall, (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide. Further information may be had from the Class Secretary—Mrs. R. Jordan, 14 Newark Road, Torrens Park, South Australia, 5062.

Passover Memorial 1971

The anniversary of the Memorial of Christ's death falls this year on the evening of Thursday, 8th April. It is the privilege of the Lord's people to observe this memorial at this season "In remembrance of Christ."

Melbourne—Sunday, 4th April, at 6.30 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond.

Adelaide—Sunday, 4th April, at 6.15 p.m., at M.U. Hall (2nd Floor), 16 Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Perth—Thursday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at Women's Service Guild Rooms, 7 Harvest Terrace, Perth (opposite Parliament House).

Sydney—Thursday, 8th April, at 7 p.m., at Masonic Hall, 280 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield.

Bible Student Manual, otherwise known as Berean Comments, are now in limited supply. With nice appearance, bound in strong cloth, with gold lettering, the price is \$4.00, plus postage of up to 70c interstate.

Poems of Dawn, 320 pages of original poems with additional choice Christian poems are now in stock. Excellent as gifts. Black simulated leather, handy size, price \$2.20, plus postage 25c.

Books Available

"God's Promises Come True"—\$2.20.

"The Divine Plan of the Ages," Cloth bound-80c; paper covers-55c.

"Emphatic Diaglott," New Testament—\$2.20.

"Daily Heavenly Manna," birthday pages—\$1.10. "Tabernacle Shadows"—68c.

"The Book of Books," Reviewing the Bible as a whole—\$1.10.

"Our Lord's Great Prophecy"—15c.

"Manner of Christ's Return"—15c.

"Christ's Return"—15c.

"Some of the Parables"—15c.

"Hope Beyond the Grave"—15c.

"God and Reason"—15c.

"Where Are the Dead?"—10c.

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