In Other Tongues I Will Speak to These People

On Praying in Tongues and Their Interpretation

Josef Bajzík

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Foreword

I have known Josef since childhood and first attended his discipleship meetings in 2019. From the beginning of Josef's intensive ministry to the gospel, praying in tongues has been an integral part of his communication with God. He certainly did not neglect the gift of the Holy Spirit in this regard; on the contrary, he continues to grow in praying in tongues and its interpretation. He discovered that there is much more to it than we often think. He began to apply it practically, and the results have been visible in his ministry for a long time, and it also inspires me personally.

We all have areas where we need to learn a lot and areas where we can already teach a lot. One of the topics that Josef certainly has something to say about is praying in tongues.

I am very happy that his insights and practical experiences are not only in the form of sermons, but are also available in this comprehensive text. I highly recommend this book – it is not just a collection of biblical knowledge and interesting insights. It is interwoven with many testimonies and tips for simple practical application that every child of God can achieve.

I remember Josef coming up to me at a conference and simply asking if we could pray together in tongues. It was early in my faith journey, and no one had ever asked me such a question before. I hesitated a little. But it was definitely worth letting myself be drawn into this joint prayer. I hope this book will inspire you to similar challenges and questions that we will ask ourselves and others. In this way, we will eagerly seek the work of the Holy Spirit. (1. Corinthians 14:1.39) and encourage ourselves and others to do good deeds. (Jews 10:24).

However, the following pages do not focus solely on the power of the Holy Spirit and His work. Throughout the book, there is a thread connecting us with the Holy Spirit on a personal level. Because He is

a person. Loving Him and loving the people around us must always remain the central theme of our lives. Thanks to this book, we will not only grow to love praying in tongues and its interpretation more, but I believe it will also lead us into an even closer relationship with our heavenly Father.

Prokop Mejstřík
AC Olomouc

A Word of Introduction

"With strange tongues God will speak to this people."

Isaiah 28:11

The Bible clearly promises that God will speak to us – and that He will use prayer in tongues to do so. Unfortunately, not all of us in the church practice this type of prayer, or at least not on a regular basis, and so we are greatly deprived of all that God wants to do in us and through us. I have noticed that this is mainly because the church often lacks teaching on this subject. I would like to help fill this gap with this book also.

Through praying in tongues, we are filled with the Holy Spirit and literally overflow with Him. We hear His voice more clearly, and our minds are influenced by Him. If we begin to act under His influence, we will see God at work through our lives and our prayers. He leads us into all truth and teaches us. But it's up to us to take action. The Holy Spirit is like wine; under His influence, we act differently than before. But we are the ones who must drink it.

I believe that tongues are *promised* to each of us. God's Word defines a *promise* as something that God *plans* to bring to pass in our lives. And so I believe that you, too, will speak in them and interpret them. I believe that you will make prayer in tongues and its regular practice your own. I also believe that we should *strive* for the greater gifts of grace, whether we think they are for us or not. I want to encourage you even more now: pursue praying in tongues. Strive for it; desire it. It will change your life, and nothing will ever be the same again.

In addition to personal testimonies, this book contains a wealth of biblical material for understanding the Holy Spirit, but above all, prayer in tongues and its interpretation. Above all, I want to share with you – regardless of your theological views – how praying in tongues, or speaking in tongues, has changed my life, how it has

deepened my relationship with God, and how it has broadened my thinking. Thanks to speaking in tongues and its interpretation, for example, I wrote my first two books, prepared countless sermons, and wrote my bachelor's thesis for school. I believe you will eagerly pick up this book and let yourself be inspired by someone who has spent thousands of hours over the past ten years praying in tongues.

Josef Bajzík
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Part I

Holy Spirit

1 Pentecost

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on ***each*** *of them.* ***All*** *of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the* ***Spirit*** *enabled them."*

Acts 2:3-4 (emphasis added by the author)

This marked the beginning of the Church's magnificent work, that in just a few decades, spread to every corner of the world, shook kingdoms, and aroused both awe and a sense of threat among rulers wherever it went. For it was the *fire* of the Holy Spirit with which the disciples were baptized and that they continually *kindled* – precisely through praying in tongues. I firmly believe that this book will help *kindle* and sustain that fire of the Spirit within you as well, because the Holy Spirit has the same concerns at heart even today.

When I reflect on God's overall plan for the church, I realize that the key to life in the New Covenant is to be *constantly* filled with the Holy Spirit. The New Covenant is not about *doing*, but about *being* who we are. Or rather, it is about letting God be who He is. Baptism (by the Holy Spirit) is not some magic word; it means immersion. Immersion into God. For God has descended into us, lowering Himself to our level, but only so that He might lift us up to His own. He takes us from the natural to the supernatural – or rather, from what is natural to us to what is natural to Him. So let us immerse ourselves in Him and allow ourselves to be filled by Him.

2 Get to Know the Holy Spirit

Before we delve into the individual chapters on praying in tongues, we need to realize that the essence of the New Covenant certainly does not lie in praying in tongues, but in receiving the Holy Spirit. He is the promise from the Father (Acts 2:33, Galatians 3:14); He speaks to us; He speaks in tongues through us; He gives us revelation and guides us in life. He is not merely a language or some other manifestation. He is a *person*. When the Bible describes the Holy Spirit, it says that He has His own mind, His own purposes, His own character, and His own manifestations (Romans 8:6, Romans 8:27, Galatians 5:22–23, 1 Corinthians 12:8–10). Jesus even says of the Holy Spirit that His presence is far better for us than if Jesus were here alone:

"But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."

John 16:7

For the Holy Spirit does not merely walk with us; He has taken up residence within us when we received Him. He is our personal helper, counselor, and guide. We are His temple, the place where He dwells. He is within us with all His wisdom, thoughts, expressions, gifts, character, and power. We need to stir Him up so that His character, His power, and His wisdom may be manifested in our lives. Therefore, if we truly want to live the Christian life to the fullest and unleash the potential that God has placed within us, we need to get to know the Holy Spirit. We need to make room for Him. He will not force Himself upon us. The more we come to know Him and submit to Him, the more useful we will be to Him and to God's work here on earth.

3 What is the Holy Spirit like?

So, what is the Holy Spirit like? First and foremost, He is *holy*. This description runs throughout the entire New Testament from beginning to end. He is also referred to as the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of love, the Spirit of power, the Spirit of soundness of mind, the Spirit of faith, or the Spirit of life (John 14:17, 2 Timothy 1:7, 2 Corinthians 4:13, Romans 8:2). At the same time, we also know that He is a gentleman (1 Corinthians 14:32). Other characteristics of His are described in Isaiah, chapter 11:

"The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord – and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. "

Isaiah 11:2-5

And indeed, as we begin to come to know the Holy Spirit, we will begin to understand God's wisdom, discernment, courage, and reverence for the Lord. We will be zealous for righteousness and justice, just as He is. We will begin to long for the things He longs for, and we will want to be holy, just as He is. All of this will happen regardless of who we were before – it will be God's work within us. And when we make room for Him, He will reveal Himself to this world through us.

4 Why Do You Have the Holy Spirit?

Let's take a closer look at God's will and God's purposes regarding the Holy Spirit. When we understand *why* the Holy Spirit was given to us, we will better understand our mission and the ways in which the Holy Spirit is eager to help us. Let's look at Jesus' life and what He says about the Holy Spirit:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 4:18-19

To paraphrase, we see that the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus because Jesus had *set himself apart, dedicated himself* to proclaiming the good news to the poor and the destitute, setting the captives free, healing the sick, and being there for the brokenhearted. He demonstrated that God wants to reveal His favor to people. Therefore, if we are His disciples, we can be certain that if we, too, dedicate our lives to what the Lord Jesus did, the Holy Spirit will also lead us into service, and we will begin to experience a completely different dimension of our relationship with Him.

When we read passages about spiritual manifestations, we discover that all the gifts of the Spirit revolve around one thing – God wants to *meet* all people's needs through His means and His power. The Holy Spirit is the One who loves to help people. If we want to experience more of the Holy Spirit, we need to devote ourselves to the things that are close to His heart. A Formula 1 car belongs on the racetrack and an ATV belongs off-road; if you drive them the other way around, it will not work at all.

5 He Brings about Justice

The work of the Holy Spirit is also mentioned in other passages. It is often associated with bringing freedom to people, delivering them from oppression, healing them, and strengthening them:

"Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope."

Matthew 12:18-21

This passage speaks of the fact that the Holy Spirit is here to *secure justice for people*. For this world is under the Devil's oppression, and the Holy Spirit, with His power, is here to deliver us from this oppression.

"how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him."

Acts 10:38

So if we have a sense of justice – whether in the form of healing the sick or in some other way – the Holy Spirit wants to be there and help. It is very important to know this. Moreover, as we begin to get to know the Holy Spirit, we will discover that He is very practical. He will guide us at work, at home, and in the garden. And, of course, when preparing sermons as well. He will touch every aspect of our lives.

6 The Holy Spirit Helps

For the Holy Spirit loves to *help*. God's Word describes us believers as *doers* of God's will (Mark 3:35) and the Holy Spirit as our helper:

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

John 14:16-17

And here the word *Advocate*, from the Greek *paraklétos*, means *one called to help, an attorney, an advocate, an intercessor*. That is precisely why we do not see the Holy Spirit at work very often. If we do not do God's will – God's Word – the Holy Spirit has nothing to help with. But how do we know God's will? We simply need to take God's Word – that is His will.

For example, this is how George Müller began establishing orphanages – he read that true piety is "to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world" (James 1:27b). He said he had no "special" guidance; he simply wanted to prove that God would stand by His Word. And God did stand by His word, and children passed through his orphanages who then went on to preach the gospel or became successful in business – to the point that religious people took offense that they "were living beyond the limits of what they were (pre)destined for".

If we do not act on God's Word or pray, the Holy Spirit has nothing to work with. In the same way, it was "only" on the basis of the Bible that I began ministering to the sick through healing or started praying in tongues regularly. John Wesley said: "It seems that God cannot do anything on this earth unless He moves a person to pray." The Holy Spirit responds to our faith in God's Word.

7 He Defends

In addition to the Holy Spirit *acting* and helping, He loves to stand up for people. This may involve bringing about justice, as we have already discussed, or it may involve working with our thoughts. This is very good to know. Sometimes our own thoughts condemn us and eat away at us. These are not thoughts from the Holy Spirit. It is precisely at this moment that it is ideal to begin praying in tongues, and we will observe one thing – our thoughts will begin to change. Condemning thoughts will be replaced by thoughts of assurance, comfort, and peace. This is because the Holy Spirit's activity will increase, and He will begin to work and permeate our minds:

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

John 14:26-27

And elsewhere:

"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father – he will testify about me."

John 15:26

It is therefore very important to be filled with the Holy Spirit. If we want to experience the peace that this world does not know, it is essential. It is precisely when we are filled with Him that He permeates our minds and begins to give us His thoughts – thoughts of peace and assurance. He is the source of peace and our Advocate.

8 Peace

For the Holy Spirit is not only the Advocate whom God has given us; He is also the Peace from God that surpasses all understanding. Just as love is a person, so too does the Bible personify peace:

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

John 14:26-27

It is interesting how many verses link peace and prayer. In my opinion, this is precisely because when we pray, the Holy Spirit's activity increases and God's peace fills us. Paul even writes to the Philippians that this peace will guard us *militarily*:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, that transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7

If we want to experience supernatural peace, it does not mean that we will avoid difficult and crisis-ridden situations. On the contrary, it means that we will *stand with God in everything*, He will act and be glorified through our lives. He says that we are *the light of the world* and that light is not hidden; rather, it is placed in visible places so that it may shine (Matthew 5:14–16).

9 He Reminds Us of what Jesus Said

Another aspect related to the Holy Spirit's work in our lives is that it reminds us of what Jesus said:

"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

John 14:26

It is good to keep this in mind when we are filtering our thoughts or responding to situations. The Holy Spirit reminds us of God's Word or of things He Himself has already told us. For the Holy Spirit speaks only what He has heard from Jesus (John 16:13–15). It is up to us not to let the Devil steal these words from us, but rather to hold on to them and act according to them (Matthew 13:19-23). It is wonderful that we can retain and recall these things through the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 1:14). Praying in tongues helps with this as well. When I pray briefly in tongues, I commit to memory or recall the things I need.

It is good to be aware of how the Holy Spirit works at the very moment when we are inspired to share the gospel with someone or when God's Word begins to come to us in the midst of a situation. It is important to follow this guidance. The apostle Peter experienced the same thing when he was preaching at Cornelius's house. Peter does not even say that the Holy Spirit told him anything; he simply presents it as if he *remembered* Jesus' words:

"As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"

Acts 11:15-16

10 He Shows the Future

"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."

John 16:13

Another thing the Holy Spirit reveals is the future. Nowhere does God discourage us from knowing the future; rather, He urges us to learn about it from the right source – from Him alone. God reveals the future to us with a specific purpose. As His co-workers, He wants to keep us informed and wants to shape the future together with us. He does not want us to live according to what we see before our eyes, but He wants us to live according to what He reveals to us, so that we may be in the right place at the right time (2 Corinthians 4:17–18). Please realize that when Jesus began preaching in Galilee (Matthew 4:17), Isaiah describes it as a place where there were soothsayers and spiritists, and he points out that the people should seek guidance from their God, not from the spirits of the dead or mediums:

"When someone tells you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? Consult God's instruction and the testimony of warning. If anyone does not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.Then they will look toward the earth and see only distress and darkness and fearful gloom, and they will be thrust into utter darkness. Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan"

Isaiah 8:19-20.22; 9:1

11 He Bears Witness

Another manifestation of the Holy Spirit is that He bears witness – or rather, bears witness together with us. It is difficult to imagine the spread of Christianity without the power of the Holy Spirit:

"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father – he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

John 15:26-27

But we come back to the fact that the Holy Spirit works together with us. He accompanies God's Word, and if we do not preach it, the Holy Spirit has nothing to confess. We are the ones who carry out the Word; He is the Helper. Not the other way around. The Holy Spirit confesses God's Word.

"Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it."

Mark 16:20

In fact, working with God requires faith. God delights in faith and responds to it. Countless times, I have started preaching the gospel or praying for people, and it was only at that moment that people began to be healed or that I received a word of knowledge for them. We need to act in faith in God's Word – not just wait to see what will happen.

12 The Gift of God

The Holy Spirit is the gift from God that has been given to us. He is the treasure we are to cherish. The Apostle Peter speaks of Him as a gift:

"When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit... Peter answered: 'May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!'"

Acts 8:15.20

And elsewhere, the Apostle Paul, for example, speaks of him in the same way:

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

2. Timothy 1:6-7

He is the gift we need in our lives. All other gifts are merely *manifestations* of Him (1 Corinthians 12:7). They manifest through us when we give this *gift* – the Holy Spirit – the space to be who He is. Once we have the gift of the Holy Spirit, we no longer need *more* of God. We need *less* of ourselves. We already have all of God within us; we cannot receive more of Him. He simply needs space to be more visible. We do not need another "deposit" or an extra anointing. As John the Baptist said: "He must increase, but I must decrease." He grows in our lives as we diminish. Let's stop thinking in terms of lack, as if we are missing out on something, but rather let's realize who we *have* within us.

13 God's Dwelling Place

This Spirit, with all the qualities listed, with His desires and intentions, and with all His experiences, usually manifests itself through someone. And that is why He has taken up residence within us. *Within* us:

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

John 14:16-17

John makes this clear to the disciples – He remains with you and will be *in you*. The Apostle Paul speaks in a similar vein:

"And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you."

Romans 8:11

And regarding God's work through his life, he says:

"To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me."

Colossians 1:29

Is not it wonderful to let someone with such virtuous intentions live within us and through us? Is not it amazing that God Himself has taken up residence within us and wants to carry out His plans together with us? Is not it beautiful to let such a virtuous being completely transform us into His likeness?

14 Divine Transformation

Let us realize that we have *become* God's dwelling place, God's temple. The Holy Spirit no longer comes and goes from us; He *dwells within us*. We are His temple, His body, and He performs His works in us and through us. If we make room for Him in our lives, He will begin to manifest Himself more and more in us and through us. Paul speaks of our transformation, for example, as follows:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

Galatians 5:22-25

And when it comes to improving his memory, he points out:

"Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you – guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us."

2. Timothy 1:14

In the past, when fabrics – such as white linen – were dyed red, the result was that the fabric became inseparably imbued with the dye and *changed color*. Let us, then, allow ourselves to be so imbued by God that we become inseparably different and like Him. Is not that wonderful? Paul *did not struggle against God*; he submitted to God; God transformed his character, and they fought for God's causes together. Let's also note that Paul was aware that God was working *powerfully* through him. We all have the same potential – the Holy Spirit is fully within us. But it is up to us what we do with it.

15 Do Not Quench the Spirit

We have now discussed several characteristics of the Holy Spirit and the manifestations of His work. We will save some of them for later. However, the reasons mentioned above should be sufficient motivation for us not to quench or grieve the Spirit, as Paul writes. For the Holy Spirit is like a fire; He wants to burn within us, not just smolder:

"Do not quench the Spirit."

1. Thessalonians 5:19

And elsewhere:

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice."

Ephesians 4:30-31

The Holy Spirit will not abandon us or leave us when we say something wrong or when we fail to follow Him, or when we do not make room for Him. But when we quench Him within ourselves, He withdraws, and we will no longer sense His presence. I have heard several testimonies of people who, out of fear, did not say or do what they should have. In the end, this inaction torments a person far more than the feeling of uncertainty they experience when they step into a situation. I want to encourage all of us: when God encourages us to say or do something, let's do it. He is able to sustain and save us (Jeremiah 1:7–8).

16 You Are to Kindle Him!

On the contrary, we are not to quench the Holy Spirit, but rather to *kindle* Him. I often hear Christian songs asking God to set us on fire, to ignite us. For example, I am reminded of a line from a song: "set Your church on fire". But this stands in contrast to what the Bible teaches us. Paul writes to Timothy:

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

2. Timothy 1:6-7

and elsewhere, to Ephesus:

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord"

Ephesians 5:18-20

These passages say that YOU are the one who must kindle it. It is our task to increase our zeal for God's work. You do not tell your partner to fall in love with you, either. You can kindle the Spirit through praying in tongues, prayer, giving thanks to God, praise, proclaiming God's Word, reading the Bible, preaching, sharing your testimony, or preaching the gospel. The Holy Spirit is eager to manifest Himself when we speak about Him. This is not just semantics. It is essential. We wait for God to do something, yet He has been waiting for us all along! Because of our traditions, God's Word loses its power and effect (Matthew 15:3, Mark 7:13).

17 Rivers of Living Water

If we use the parallel of *water* instead of *fire* for the Holy Spirit, let's use the word *stir up* rather than *kindle*. The Holy Spirit, stirred up, leads us to action, just as Jesus did at Lazarus's tomb:

"When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled."

John 11:33

The word *stir up,* from the Greek *tarassō*, means *to stir up, to agitate, to fan into a blaze.* It is also used in reference to the angel *stirring up* the water (John 5:4–5). So when we stir up the Holy Spirit, let us not be surprised that He drives us to action. For the Holy Spirit is like streams of living water flowing from within us – from within everyone who believes and receives the Holy Spirit:

"'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."

John 7:37b-39

As Christians, then, we should never *be thirsty.* On the contrary, we should have water to spare (John 4:14). If we are thirsty, it is usually because we are not stirring up the Spirit. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit, like a river, washes away negative thoughts or things we have been unable to come to terms with. When we pray, it is like exercising: either it energizes our whole body and releases energy within us, or, on the contrary, it calms us so much that we fall asleep (1 Timothy 4:7–8).

18 Meeting Place

A river has always been a place that nourished the surrounding area, around which cities were built. If we give the Holy Spirit room to work, our lives, too, will become such a place. When we pray in secret, He will reward us openly. We will be like poplars among the grass.

"This is what the Lord says – he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams."

Isaiah 44:2-4

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit will also bring life to our surroundings (Ezekiel 37:1–10, 47:1–12). He will begin to draw people to us. This is what happened to Jesus. The Holy Spirit flowed from him, and people came to him. The Holy Spirit is like a river, a well, or a spring. A well is a *meeting place*:

"Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'"

John 4:13-14

And that spring *is within us.* We need not thirst; on the contrary, we can become a source of life for those around us and for other nations. The New Covenant is about the ministry of the Spirit; if we are unable to serve through the Spirit, we help only as human beings, not as new creations (2 Corinthians 3:6).

19 Does the Holy Spirit Have You?

That is all pretty great, is not it? Everyone would like to have the Holy Spirit to help them and others, to advise them, and to guide them through life. However, whether or not we have the Holy Spirit has never been the central question of the New Covenant. Anyone who asks for the Holy Spirit will receive Him (Luke 11:13). The central question of the New Covenant is whether the Holy Spirit *has us*.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship."

Romans 12:1

Does the Holy Spirit have us? Do we live for ourselves, or for Him? Have we placed our lives at His disposal? (2 Corinthians 5:14). These are the key questions we need to ask ourselves. In Acts, the phrase is used that the Holy Spirit *fell* upon someone. The word for *fall*, the Greek *epipíptō*, means *to fall, to seize, to take possession of.* Has He fallen upon us as well? Surrendering to the Holy Spirit is a conscious process when we freely submit our will to God's will. We do not submit to a God who is somewhere up in the clouds, but to a God who has taken up residence within us. We can also observe this process of submission in Jesus. The Holy Spirit descended upon him, filled him, but in the end he returned from the wilderness *in the power of the Spirit.* And that is when the real journey began. It was not about having the Holy Spirit, but about fully surrendering to Him, letting Him act. When we shift from asking "whether we have" the Holy Spirit to asking whether "He has us", we begin to realize that He has a plan for us and that we *want to live* for Him.

20 Stay in the Word

Before we dive into praying in tongues itself, I want to point out a few things you need to be prepared for, so that you can navigate more easily and quickly through the challenges I, too, had to face. Regular prayer in tongues has the potential to transform your entire life. However, it can never replace your Bible study. Never neglect God's Word. God's Word and prayer are like two sides of the same coin. Through praying in tongues, the Holy Spirit's work in your life will increase so much that you truly need a firm foundation in God's Word and the ability to clearly discern and distinguish between what is God's voice and what is not:

"Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil."

1. Thessalonians 5:20-22

As soon as God's work in your life begins to increase, the Devil will try to attack it. He will start to discourage you through thoughts or other people. Alternatively, he'll try to discredit you by planting his own thoughts in your mind – thoughts that, if you fail to discern that they are not from God, will lead you astray. You will look like a "weirdo" rather than like Christ. On the other hand, there is nothing to fear. If you remain in God's Word, you will see how the Holy Spirit has spoken and what fruit that has borne, so you will be able to clearly discern what is from God and what is not. Just in case, at the end of the book you will also find biblical tests for discerning the Lord's words. If you are not able to clearly distinguish what is from God and what is not, return to God's Word and to obedience to Him. God's commands are our guide.

21 Focus on God

Another thing I would like to point out to you is that you should focus on God, not on yourself. This will help you more easily grasp what God wants from you. What do I mean by that? Today, the emphasis is often placed on us, on "our anointing", and "our gifts". From my perspective, however, this is somewhat misleading. In the Bible, we see an emphasis on *being filled with the Spirit*, on the manifestations of *the Holy Spirit*, on *His gifts*, and on *His work*:

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work."

1. Corinthians 12:4-6

This is a slight shift in focus. However, it has far-reaching consequences. With this shift in thinking, God can *manifest Himself* through us in whatever way is characteristic of Him, and He can *work* through us as He sees fit (Philippians 2:13-14). When we think of ourselves and "our gifts" and "anointing", we set limits; when we think of God, we live without limits, like the Apostle Paul, who said that he had become "all things to all people so that he might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22). As John G. Lake said, the key to successful ministry was not in who he was, but in the fact that he had developed the ability to forget who he was. We will begin to see that nothing is impossible for us (Mark 9:22).

Let's realize that when we speak of the manifestations (gifts) of the Holy Spirit, we do not mean natural talents, gifts, wisdom, or intelligence. People who do not know God also possess such talents. When we speak of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, we are speaking of the manifestations of God, who has come into us with all that He is.

22 The Consequences of This Shift

As I briefly mentioned, when we begin to *be filled* with the Holy Spirit and give way to His *manifestations* and *work*, it will have far-reaching consequences. One of them is that we will become unpredictable to the Devil, and thus we will become more dangerous to him and more useful to God. As long as we cling to the mindset of *our own gifts*, we often do nothing beyond what we are good at. Of course, this helps us organize our time and define why we are here, it is important given the limits of our bodies and human capacity. However, if this leads us to do nothing beyond that, the Devil will trap us in our own little box, even while we are working for God, and we will not even notice it:

"...in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes."

2. Corinthians 2:11

Furthermore, if we want to experience answered prayers, we must move from a life where we are in control to a life of faith, where we fully rely on God to *meet our needs*. On the other hand, if we *are filled with the Spirit* and take the steps the Holy Spirit leads us to take, we begin to see that we can do a number of important things. It becomes easier to catch the Devil off guard, but we can also more easily end up overworking ourselves. So I have adopted the mindset that when I see the abundance of things in the Spirit – what can be done and what opportunities are opening up – I try to assess what will bear the most fruit for God's kingdom at that particular time, what is most likely not being done by anyone else, and where I can make a key difference.

23 The Dynamics of Life

Our lives take on a completely different *dynamic*. We stop focusing on our position in the church and begin to see that God gives us individual *tasks*. This transforms our static lives into a mission. Notice that God does not say to Moses: "Moses, you are such-and-such a prophet." Instead, He gives him a task – "Go and lead my people out of Egypt." It was the same with Abraham and with Joshua. When we are filled with God's Spirit, we become people of *mission*. And when we are on the move, God's movement begins. That is how it was with the Apostle Paul as well:

"From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed."

Acts 14:26

The Apostle Paul and Barnabas had a mission – a task that spanned two chapters of the Book of Acts – and then they moved on to other tasks. Of course, a task can be a lifelong one, or it can change over time, or we may be given smaller subtasks within it. But if we stop focusing on the *Lord* – on our *why* for doing things – we lose our drive, and the life drains from our service.

Furthermore, if we focus on the Lord and our tasks – rather than on our positions or "gifts" – we stop competing with others. We stop feeling threatened by the fact that someone has the "same gift" as we do, but we begin to see that we have a specific task and so do they. We can therefore support one another and seek common ground. For example, God *entrusted* the apostleship to the Gentiles through the Apostle Paul and to the Jews through the Apostle Peter. From our perspective, they had "the same gift" – or rather, the same ministry or calling – but their tasks were different.

24 Identity

Ultimately, however, all of this begins to affect our *identity*. But what is our identity? Do we really see ourselves as *children of God*, or rather as a *pastor*, *worship leader*, *businessman*, or *small group leader*? It may seem like a trivial question, but I once spoke with a pastor who had resigned from his church. As he was leaving, they asked him: "Well, who are you now? Nobody?" The fact that we identify with *what we do* rather than with *who we are* is a common problem. Paul saw it this way:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God,..."

2. Corinthians 5:17-18a

In me, as a new creation, *everything is new*. And how do I know what that is – or rather, who I am? When I come to know God. Because "all of this comes from God". Where is my identity? In God. What is impossible for me? Nothing, because nothing is impossible for God. What can God use me for? Anything, because He can do all things, even through me. When we have our identity in God, when we identify with Him or with Christ, we do not feel threatened; on the contrary, we rejoice when someone joins God's work, because then we can focus on other things. There is plenty of work to be done in God's work. We do not identify with our calling or our position in the church. We stop seeing ourselves as pastors or worship leaders, but we begin to see ourselves as *sons of God* who serve as pastors or worship leaders. God's work in our lives can change over time and from place to place. Do we need pastors and worship leaders? Definitely. But above all, we need people with a healthy sense of identity. Therefore, let us identify with Christ, not with a position.

25 Responsibility

Furthermore, we begin to realize the responsibility we have. I have often heard that God is a God of many chances, and if you miss an opportunity, He will not condemn you but will give you another chance. That is true. However, if we do not step into the things God shows us, it will have consequences for other people. We will share responsibility, for example, for their suffering. For instance, Elijah was given three tasks:

"The Lord said to him, 'Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet.'"

1. Kings 19:15-16

The truth is that Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire, so he truly had a good relationship with God (2 Kings 2:11). However, of the tasks listed, he fulfilled only the third one, and because of that, Israel suffered under Jezebel's rule for years to come – perhaps even decades. Yes, Christ loves us and forgives us, but we need to mature. Let us realize that through Christ we have a blood covenant with God. We are bound to Him. When we ask Him, He hears and acts (Philippians 4:19). But when He speaks and asks – whether through God's Word or through God's voice – we, too, are obligated to act. Hearing from God is therefore a great privilege, but it also brings great responsibility. In this world, we are not playing a game of hearing God's voice; what is at stake is the eternity of people who would otherwise go to perdition. So as we read the following chapters, let us keep in mind what we are getting ourselves into. It is one thing to see God in action; it is another thing that there will be no turning back.

Part II

Tongues

1 The Hoax of the Century?

And now, on to the tongues. Some people point out that speaking in tongues is a phenomenon that has only existed since 1900 within the "Pentecostal movement". And because, according to them, this is a historically unfounded "novelty", they even claim that this movement is from the Devil. This was, for example, the conclusion of the Berlin Declaration of 1909, that was not officially revoked until 100 years later (2009).

However, is not it rather the case that God is gradually reminding the church of *truths* that have been lost throughout history? Martin Luther introduced the doctrine of salvation by grace in the early 16th century – not because it was a "novelty", but because this truth had been lost. After him, the Baptists began to *emphasize* water baptism. In the early 18th century, the Moravian Brethren launched a massive wave of worldwide missions and even influenced John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, who emphasized that salvation *is* for everyone, not just for the elect.

Dorothea Trudel and John Alexander Dowie then began to revive the ministry of healing in the church on a large scale, and the Pentecostals followed in their footsteps. Charles Parham and a group of people in Tulsa, USA, fasted and studied the Bible for several weeks in order to understand the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the Lord independently revealed to them that speaking in tongues is a concomitant manifestation of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Then, one by one, they were baptized in the Spirit. Well, as it is written, the Pentecostal experience is for absolutely everyone who accepts the Lord:

"The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Acts 2:39

2 Hearing God's Voice

I am not saying that we are unable to hear God without praying in tongues. Jesus Himself says that His sheep "hear His voice" (John 10:4-5). However, I have noticed that people who regularly pray in tongues – by regularly stirring up the Holy Spirit – hear God speak to them very often, almost daily. It is as if, instead of drops of water from a dripping faucet, whole streams of water are released. Our life with God enters a completely different dimension. In connection with the baptism in the Holy Spirit and praying in tongues, Peter highlights these verses:

"These people are not drunk, as you suppose. ...No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.'"

Acts 2:15a.16-18

It is not that these things did not happen before – people had dreams, visions, and prophesied even in the Old Covenant. But in the New Covenant, everything has *intensified*. God spoke to Abraham a few times in his lifetime *externally*. With Moses and the Israelites, He met them *face to face* or from the tent of meeting. But now He wants to speak *within us* and through us! So let Him! Let's not keep living at the level of the Old Covenant, but rather let's pray in tongues and let Him *work* in us and through us. For baptism means *immersion*. When we are immersed in water and look around, we see *as if underwater*. When we are immersed in the Spirit, let us not be surprised that we see *in the Spirit* – we have dreams, visions, or we prophesy.

3 As Long as the Church is Here

Let's not be mistaken: the Devil can never come up with anything on his own; he is not creative – he is just a *thief* (John 10:10). If we are concerned that spiritual manifestations are not from God, I understand. Some strange occurrences truly are not. But if there are *false* spiritual manifestations, there must also be true ones. Furthermore, Paul clearly explains that God established tongues in the church, not just among the apostles or in the first century. This means that as long as there is a *church*, there will be tongues:

"And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues."

1. Corinthians 12:28

Prayer in tongues has appeared throughout history. Christians spoke in them in the early centuries, but so did, for example, the Waldensians and the Moravian Brethren (Jeffreys, 2010). And do we still have a church today? I believe we do. So as long as we have a church, we also have speaking in tongues. I have heard a more blunt explanation of this verse, that reads as follows: "Can we say that we have a church if we do not have speaking in tongues within it?"

Furthermore, Pentecost – when speaking in tongues was first recorded in the Bible – is described as the *culmination and conclusion* of Jesus' ministry here on earth. Jesus died and rose again, but after our purification, He sat down at the right hand of the Father and "poured out what you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33b). And now He intercedes for us in heaven (John 7:25). The early church neither suppressed nor denied the Holy Spirit or speaking in tongues. On the contrary, they were *not ashamed* of them and gladly explained these realities to people.

4 The Smallest of Gifts

I would like to take this opportunity to distance myself from the claim that "'The gift of tongues is the least of the gifts.'" I am glad that I did not hear this claim until after I was already speaking in tongues fluently and had seen their great fruit in my life. This claim stands in complete contrast to what God's Word teaches about praying in tongues. Let's look, for example, at the Apostle Paul:

"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy."

1. Corinthians 14:5

Paul wants *everyone* to speak in tongues and for *everyone* to prophesy. Furthermore, Paul explicitly mentions that he is *grateful* for speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:18). Furthermore, why are tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and prophecy the only spiritual gifts to which an entire chapter is devoted? If we want to know anything about healing or words of knowledge and words of wisdom, we must examine how the prophets, the Lord Jesus, and the apostles exercised these gifts. But when we want to know something about tongues and prophecy, we have a very rich theoretical foundation, described in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. Why, though, would Paul devote himself to this if tongues were so insignificant as to be almost useless? Does not this rather explain that this gift is absolutely essential and crucial, and that he wants everyone to function in it? Based on my experience and observation, the latter is more likely to be true. Regular prayer in tongues completely opens the door for all of us to all the other gifts of the Spirit. And I believe that praying in tongues is one of the "greater" works we do (John 14:12).

5 Everyone Was Talking

Now that we see that tongues are relevant even today, and that they are a very fundamental manifestation of the Spirit in our lives, let's move on to the next question. Are tongues for everyone? There are only two possible answers to this question – yes or no. There are several verses that support the first assertion. Take, for example, the Day of Pentecost, when all 120 of those present began to speak in *other* human languages:

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Acts 2:4

Something similar happened in Ephesus, where Paul went; 12 men began to speak in tongues and prophesy. The Lord Jesus Himself, for example, spoke about speaking in tongues for everyone:

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues..."

Mark 16:16-17

And the word *new* used here – *kainos* in Greek – means *unprecedented, of a new kind, unheard of.* The Bible describes these languages as different from human languages, but they can evidently be completely different as well. Paul and Isaiah say that this is a means of communication established by *God* (Isaiah 28:11, 1 Corinthians 14:17). And Peter explains to the crowds that this promise is for everyone whom the Lord calls (Acts 2:38–39). So I believe that the baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues are for you, too.

6 Tongues for Everyone?

It is therefore interesting that, even though it was clear in the early church that speaking in tongues was for every believer, people today have doubts. This is likely due to two passages from the First Letter to the Corinthians, where Paul writes:

"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,..."

1. Corinthians 12:7-8

"Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way."

1. Corinthians 12:30-31

The first passage speaks of the Spirit *giving* manifestations and the Spirit bestowing them as He *wills*. However, let us keep in mind that Paul is writing about a *church gathering*. So indeed, one person may offer healing, another interpretation, and a third a word of knowledge. But at another gathering, anyone can offer *anything* else from that list.

The second passage mentioned is similar. It emphasizes that we should strive for *greater gifts* and for love, through which all of God's manifestations function best. This passage does not say that speaking in tongues is not for everyone. I can just as legitimately answer "yes" or "no" to the question posed. Furthermore, there may be new converts or even unbelievers present at a gathering, and you would not even want them to speak in tongues. So let's feel free to answer "No." At the same time, speaking in tongues is still for everyone. The Lord would not command us to speak in tongues if we were unable to fulfill that command (Jude 1:20).

7 Just like We Did at the Beginning

On the other hand, if you do not speak these languages yet, I do not want you to feel bad. On the contrary, I want to inspire in you a desire to want more and not let yourself be held back. I like a verse from the Book of Acts where Peter comments on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles. He says:

"As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning."

Acts 11:15

It was such a powerful experience for Peter that he even mentioned it at the church council in Jerusalem:

"God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us."

Acts 15:8

He says here that he gave them the same gift as *us*. Peter was a great advocate of equality; in his letters, he says that we were given the *same faith* as he was (2 Peter 1:1). So I want nothing less for myself or for you than what the apostles received – and they spoke in tongues, healed the sick, and raised the dead. This is the desire of God's heart, and Peter knew it. If we have not been born again, let us turn to Jesus and accept Him as Lord. If we have not been baptized in the Spirit, let us ask God, and He will give us His Spirit (Luke 11:13). He is that gift from God. In Him are hidden all of God's gifts, that are actually "only" manifestations of Him. Let us not settle for anything less than what we read in the Bible. Let God's Spirit speak through our spirit!

8 Culture of Heaven

As long as we do not speak the language of a nation or society, it is clear that we are foreigners in that country, even if we have been living there for some time. Paul applies this principle to praying in tongues as well.

"If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker is a foreigner to me."

1. Corinthians 14:11

We are spiritual beings and need to navigate the spiritual world. How can we successfully navigate the spiritual world if we do not speak its language? If we do not speak the languages of the spiritual world, will we not always remain strangers there? And without using God's languages, will we not then be vulnerable to abuse, theft, or temptation?

God is spirit, and we need to communicate with Him in spirit as well (1 Corinthians 14:2). And that is precisely why tongues are our *bridge* of communication to God and into the spiritual world. Through them, God gives us His guidance and assurance, and the spiritual world is revealed to us, allowing us to begin to understand its reality. If we want to experience revival – both in ourselves and in society – tongues are a key tool for this.

Unfortunately, the interpretation of tongues is often lacking in the church, so some people use this passage as an excuse to avoid using tongues that others do not understand. The Bible describes *other tongues* as other human languages, but there are also instances where it speaks of angelic tongues, tongues for spiritual warfare, and tongues that *no one* understands (Acts 2:4, 1 Corinthians 13:1, Ephesians 6:13–18, 1 Corinthians 14:2).

9 Start Speaking

And how does one begin to speak? In the Book of Acts, we find several instances of people beginning to speak in tongues. This phenomenon was associated with baptism in the Holy Spirit and with the fact that people simply *began to speak in tongues*, or someone else laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they *began to speak*. To "come," the Greek word *érkhomai*, means *to move from one place to another*, so when you lay hands on someone, the Holy Spirit moves upon them. However, the absolutely key thing is to *begin speaking*. Most often, praying in tongues begins when, during our baptism in the Spirit – a full immersion in Him – sounds start popping into our minds, and we begin to speak those sounds and syllables. We begin to speak, and the Holy Spirit gives us the words. It is so wonderful!

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Acts 2:4

The apostles did it even though they did not know what lay ahead; they had no precedent. We already have one. We need to *start speaking*, and the Holy Spirit will give us *what to say*. We must open our mouths and *start speaking*. It goes beyond our limits and control. Someone other than us – God Himself – will begin to use our mouths and will speak. It does not come from us, from our minds, but from the realm of the spirit. It is not something we can come up with on our own. It has even been scientifically proven that when praying in tongues, the speech centers in the brain (Broca's and Wernicke's areas) are not engaged, but rather the limbic system, that is unrelated to speech production. This system is active, for example, when someone startles us and we cry out. It is a center of the brain that our minds do not control.

10 Does God Speak to You?

Beginning to speak in other tongues is, in fact, key to hearing God's voice on a regular basis. Prayer – *prosechō* in Greek – is not meant to be a monologue, but a dialogue. Quite often, however, I encounter people who are troubled by the fact that God is not speaking to them. I have a question for them – "Do you pray in tongues regularly?" The answer is usually that they do not. I encourage them to start. The Bible says that God will speak to us through tongues. That is another reason why we should strive to speak in tongues.

"In the Law it is written: 'With other tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord.'"

1. Corinthians 14:21

Can we all see this? The Lord says that through tongues He "will speak". If we do not pray in tongues – or do not even want to pray in them – yet still want the Lord to speak to us, it is like wanting to pick someone up at the train station who has long since arrived at our home. If someone tells us, "I will wait for you in front of the house," it is not appropriate to wait for them somewhere else. Furthermore, Paul refers to the Law, therefore, we find this promise already in the Old Covenant:

"Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people,"

Isaiah 28:11

And what God has promised, He fulfills. Of course, God can speak to us in other ways as well – He is God, after all – but we have no *promise* that God will use any other method. With speaking in tongues, however, we do. Ever since I began praying in tongues regularly, God's communication with me has intensified from months and years to days and hours.

11 Strange Tongues

I know people – and I am sure you do, too – who belittle their prayers in tongues by claiming they consist of only one or two syllables. But that is such a shame! Through Isaiah, the Lord God shows that this is exactly how prayer in tongues begins:

"Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people,"

Isaiah 28:11

This beautiful passage reveals to us what praying in tongues looks like – like babbling or a foreign language. We need to grasp this. Babbling, from the Hebrew *laeg*, means *stammering, mocking, stuttering* speech. Our spiritual language often begins just like our natural language – as syllables and unidentifiable sounds. As we use it, it develops and evolves into a true *foreign language* with its own syntax, various forms, stresses, and usages. However, let us not despise these humble beginnings, but let us strive to grow. Of course, if someone prays fluently from the start, that is good, and there is no need to hold them back.

For example, one of my friends, who prayed "only" with a single syllable in tongues, said that one evening he was overcome by evil thoughts. When he prayed, they went away; when he stopped, they returned. After this happened several times, he began praying in tongues using that one syllable, and all the thoughts went away; they did not return, and he fell asleep peacefully.

At the same time, the word *speech* is *saphah* in the original and means *lips* or *dam*. It is therefore up to us whether we let the streams of living water flow in the form of tongues, or whether we dam them up.

12 The Wisdom of the Wise

A good question, however, is why God chose tongues. We have already mentioned one reason. Tongues bring culture and help us navigate the (spiritual) world and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, tongues may not make sense to us at first glance. Speaking in tongues is strange; no one understands them (or at least that is how it seems to us), and sometimes we even feel odd while doing it. However, the reason God chose tongues is likely precisely so that we must humble ourselves and accept that God's wisdom surpasses our own.:

"For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.'"

1. Corinthians 1:19.25

The more we approach the subject of tongues, the smarter we think we are, and the more we try to intellectually analyze things and control them, the harder it is for us to grasp tongues, accept them, and let them flow through our lives. Speaking in tongues, in fact, goes beyond our control, beyond our limits. Praying in tongues is about trusting God, about humility and surrendering to Him. Furthermore, Paul clearly teaches that *every* tongue *has meaning* (1 Corinthians 14:10). If every tongue has meaning, something always follows. Language was primarily created for *creation* (God created the world by His word) and is also used for communication. Therefore, when speaking in tongues, we *always* create something in the spiritual and, by extension, the physical world, or we communicate something to the spiritual and physical world.

13 Tongues Are Signs

And the very fact that tongues are a phenomenon that leaves many people "baffled" is one of their fundamental functions. Tongues are, in fact, a sign. Not necessarily for us personally – for us, our faith is what gives us certainty – but tongues are important for the people around us:

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues..."

Mark 16:17

New tongues are a sign meant to accompany us believers. The word *shall* is expressed with the strongest possible emphasis; it means that they *truly* will accompany us. Tongues were also a sign at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–13); thanks to praying in tongues, Peter recognized that the people in Cornelius's house had undoubtedly received the baptism of the Spirit and God's grace (in his reasoning, he uses the word *for*, Acts 10:44–48). For us personally, our faith should be a sufficient sign of our new birth (Hebrews 11:1–2). However, speaking in tongues is a key sign for those around us, as the Apostle Paul writes:

"Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is not for unbelievers but for believers."

1. Corinthians 14:22

People around us sometimes do not understand these tongues; other times they laugh at them, but signs are what this generation is looking for (Luke 11:29). That is why it is very important to speak in them, not to be ashamed of them, but rather to explain them (Acts 2:32–33).

14 Types of Tongues

Furthermore, the Bible does not describe "the gift of tongues", but "kinds of tongues":

"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (...) to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,"

1. Corinthians 12:7.10

As we grow in praying in tongues, we will see that we have not been given just "one tongue", but that there are many. This applies to both the tongues themselves and their uses. The number of tongues we can speak is unlimited. God, who speaks every tongue that exists, has taken up residence within us. The ways we use these tongues are similar to learning a foreign language. First, we learn basic sentences, but as we immerse ourselves in the study, we learn past tenses, future tenses, conditional sentences, and the imperative mood – and if we really want to communicate, we must devote hours a day to that language. At the same time, we must keep practicing the language; otherwise, we forget what we have learned.

At the same time, it is important to realize that every tongue and every function of that tongue is *for the common good*. Therefore, if we do not make use of a tongue and its functions, we impoverish not only ourselves but also the church. For we are one body and are interconnected. We will now go through several types of tongues and their functions. Some tongues are more for personal use, while others are for public use. As we pray in tongues regularly, we will find that their intensity, tone, and words change. Sometimes we need to fight for things, other times we praise God, and still other times we just pray. We need to learn to work with every single tool we have at our disposal.

15 Evangelism

The first manifestation of tongues in God's Word was for the purpose of evangelism. This manifestation was recorded right at Pentecost:

"When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs – we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!' Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?'"

Acts 2:6-12

The Moravian Brethren, for example, had experience with this. Before their mission to Japan, they held a six-week prayer meeting, after which the participants began to speak Japanese fluently. Carrie Judd Montgomery even carried on conversations for hours in tongues she did not know (Johnson & Miskov, 2016). Another man of God, John G. Lake, once longed to share the gospel with a group of Italians at a train station but was distressed that he could not reach them. Suddenly, he sensed the Spirit leading him toward them and began speaking in tongues. In the end, he evangelized them in Italian for about 45 minutes. On another occasion during his mission in Africa, when he saw the multitude of tribes and dialects, he realized that God had a plan to bring the gospel to Africa and the whole world quickly – and by that he meant speaking in tongues.(Liardon, 1999).

16 Angelic Tongues

Even in the early days of the Pentecostal movement at the beginning of the 20th century, great emphasis was placed on tongues and their use in evangelism. When the phenomenon of tongues began to manifest itself, government experts came to study this phenomenon. They discovered that tongues do indeed have a sentence structure. So, when someone began speaking in tongues, they would determine which language they were speaking, and then that person was sent on a mission with a one-way ticket. If someone was unwilling to serve as a missionary, they were not even prayed for in tongues for the baptism of the Holy Spirit during the early days of the Pentecostal movement. However, after a few years, this led to the movement's decline, because they were unable to identify some of the tongues (Liardon, 2000). This changed only when they came up with another fundamental revelation: that tongues need not necessarily be human, but could also be angelic:

"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal."

1. Corinthians 13:1

This revelation has revitalized the Pentecostal movement and broadened our horizons. It is indeed possible that the tongue we speak is not spoken anywhere else in the world. However, as a result, we may be neglecting to consider whether our own tongues are meant for evangelism, and we may not be seeking to discover to which country God wants to send us – and in doing so, we are missing our life's calling. Of course, I do not want to pressure anyone into anything, but as long as we fail to fulfill our calling, we will remain inwardly dissatisfied. It is time to seek it out.

17 Does the Devil Understand Tongues?

A discussion about the different kinds of tongues naturally leads to the question of whether the Devil understands tongues as well. The answer is somewhat Solomonic – it depends. This makes sense. The Devil presumably understands human languages, since he has been here since the creation of the world. Given that he is a fallen angel, he probably understands angelic tongues as well. But does the Devil really understand everything we say in private with God? The answer is provided by another verse from Paul, who sets the record straight:

"For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit"

1. Corinthians 14:2

This verse speaks of tongues that *no one understands*. So we need not fear that the Devil understands us when we pray. Furthermore, this verse allows us to silence critics who point out that in the early church, tongues were used for evangelism, as in Acts chapter 2, and not as "incomprehensible babbling". However, this view is very narrow-minded and reveals a lack of understanding of the issue of tongues. The early church clearly had experience with various *types* of tongues. It had experience with tongues used for evangelism, and at the same time, there were instances where *no one* understood certain tongues. Furthermore, we need not be afraid to speak God's truth directly to the entire spiritual world, whether in tongues or in Czech. Even the people of the Old Covenant, such as the psalmist David (Psalm 148:1–14), were not afraid to do so.

18 Speak to Yourself and to God

What actually happens when we pray in tongues that neither we nor those around us understand? Let's go back to 1 Corinthians:

"For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit"

1. Corinthians 14:2

and further:

"If anyone speaks in a tongue, two – or at the most three – should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God."

1. Corinthians 14:27-28

Even when we do not understand tongues, at least two things happen through them: we speak *to ourselves* and we speak *to God*. It is rapid, two-way communication at the spirit-to-spirit level. God is Spirit; He speaks to our spirit, and we speak to His. The Psalmist David himself speaks to himself, urging his soul to "bless the Lord and remember all He has done." The Psalms are also filled with people speaking to God and marveling at His greatness, majesty, and splendor. And through prayer in tongues – even when we do not understand it – these very two uplifting things take place: we strengthen ourselves in the Lord and focus on His majesty (Acts 10:45–46). For we are born of God and share the same DNA as God (2 Corinthians 5:17–18). Thus, when we marvel at God, we are simultaneously building ourselves up.

19 Tongues for Personal Development

As we have already mentioned, one of the functions of tongues is that it builds us up.

"Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves..."

1. Corinthians 14:4a

In Greek, the term *oikodomeō* is used for *building*, it means *to build a house, to erect a building, to build from the ground up, to rebuild*, or *to lay the foundation*. I think the analogy with building a house is truly ideal. When we begin to live with God, He rebuilds and constructs us from the very beginning so that we may truly be His temple, a place where He will be pleased to dwell. If we do not know how to adapt ourselves to God so that everything pleases Him, it does not matter – we just need to feed on God's Word and pray in tongues. For prayer in tongues alone builds us up. We do not need to understand them, nor do we need to interpret them. When we pray in tongues, it really often sounds like babbling. Isaiah describes it as follows:

"For it is: Do this, do that, a rule for this, a rule for that; a little here, a little there. Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people,"

Isaiah 28:10-11

But what sometimes sounds like incoherent babbling is actually a process of building – one moment we build here, and the next there, layer by layer, brick by brick. To those who accept and practice this, it is the power of God; to those who do not understand it, it is folly.

20 The Fruits of Building

That is one reason why I believe Paul wrote to the Corinthians that he did not want them to be in ignorance (Greek: *agnoeō*) regarding spiritual matters:

"Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.(...)There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them."

1. Corinthians 12:1.4

From this perspective, we are responsible for our own spiritual growth, but if we do not understand tongues – their function and meaning – we may miss out on it. As Isaiah says, even if God speaks in other tongues, people will not listen (Isaiah 28:13).

When we pray in tongues, we speak to ourselves and to God, and this builds us up. It is important to build ourselves up so that we can build others up. If we want to be spiritually strong, it is not enough to just mumble something in tongues. We need to speak clearly and loudly, with vigor, and engage our whole body in prayer. This style of praying in tongues has a much greater effect on our strength and vigilance in both the Spirit and the body.

In addition to a transformation of character, I also see other fruits of edification. For example, before I began praying intensely in tongues, I was prone to quickly adopting other people's viewpoints. Now I am much more confident in what God is telling me, and I find it easier to stand up for myself and face opposition. A second example of spiritual edification is the realization of who truly determines events in our country – it is spiritually strong people, just of a different spirit. I think this is happening because Christians do not practice praying in tongues enough. When we start practicing it regularly, we will be strengthened inwardly, and we will begin to set the course for our society.

21 Praise and Worship I

Another type of tongue is that of praise and worship. We praise God for what He does and what He has done. We worship Him for who He is. We need to praise and worship God constantly so that we remain focused on who He is, rather than on our own weaknesses and circumstances. Through praise and worship, we become more aware of God and His presence, even though He is always with us (Psalm 139:7–8, Matthew 28:20). In the early church, when people were baptized in the Spirit and began to speak in tongues, one of the accompanying signs was the praise and exaltation of God:

"The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God."

Acts 10:45-46a

God was already being praised on Pentecost. Moreover, they proclaimed the mighty works of God:

"...we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

Acts 2:11b

And we should not do this only in tongues, but also in plain language – so that not only the entire spiritual world, but also the physical world, may know this (Ephesians 3:10–11). Paul also tells the believers in Corinth that they should not only praise in the Spirit, but also with their minds:

"... I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding."

1. Corinthians 14:15b

22 Praise and Worship II

As believers, we were created to praise and worship God. The psalmist writes about this, speaking in his time of a people who *would be created*. By this he meant us, who have been recreated from people of the *Adam* type into people of the *Christ* type (1 Corinthians 15:45–49):

"Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the Lord:"

Psalms 102:18

For never before in history has any other people been created. Furthermore, the Apostle Peter quotes this Psalm and applies it directly to us:

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

1. Peter 2:9

The difference could not be more striking. We have passed from death to life, from darkness to light. When we praise God, we are in harmony with Heaven. When we praise – when we sing in tongues – new praises and spiritual songs may come to us as an interpretation (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16). We praise God in tongues even when we cannot express our praise in any other way. God is pleased when we worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). And that is certainly what happens when we worship in tongues. The Holy Spirit always speaks the truth about God.

23 Gratitude

Furthermore, Paul immediately links praise with blessing and thanksgiving. Paul does not condemn giving thanks in the Spirit, but he says that it does not edify anyone around him. That is why tongues must be interpreted in the church (1 Corinthians 14:13).

"Otherwise when you are praising God in the Spirit, how can someone else, who is now put in the position of an inquirer, say 'Amen' to your thanksgiving, since they do not know what you are saying? You are giving thanks well enough, but no one else is edified."

1. Corinthians 14:16-17

And it is not just my experience that shows that gratitude, praise, and worship of God are the most common things that come up when interpreting the tongues of others. I remember my first experience of someone interpreting tongues for me. It was in the spring of 2016 at a cabin with a group of young people from Prague. My future wife, Stanka, and her friend Karin were the ones who spoke about interpreting in tongues there at the time. The introduction to interpreting in tongues was simple. After a brief talk, we split into pairs, where one person would pray in tongues and the other would simultaneously say whatever came to mind. I was paired with a guy who definitely could not have known me, and when I started praying in tongues, he kept repeating that I was grateful to God – going on and on about it – and that was all. On the one hand, he did not say much, but on the other hand, it was very powerful for me, because my whole life, people had told me I was ungrateful, and even though I tried to be grateful, I never knew if it was enough or still not enough, and so on. This simple interpretation reassured me, encouraged me, and built me up, and I have never struggled with this issue again in my life.

24 Spiritual Warfare

Lester Sumrall said that spiritual gifts are not meant for us to play around with, but that they are *tools for spiritual warfare* (Sumrall, 2005). God Himself wants to help His army (the church) grow and stand firm. Faith, tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and prophecy are primarily for building up God's army. Miracles, healings, and words of knowledge are manifestations of the Spirit primarily intended to reach unbelievers. Words of knowledge, words of wisdom, and the discernment of spirits are gifts meant to help us think strategically and uncover the enemy's plans. The church cannot stand without the Holy Spirit. Spiritual warfare requires spiritual weapons. The apostle Paul knew this as well, and in the passage about spiritual warfare and the armor of God, he speaks of our needing to pray at *all* times, with *every* prayer and supplication. This is possible through praying in tongues, which is not dependent on our thinking.

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

Ephesians 6:18

Let us therefore pray without ceasing. There are tongues for our edification, for praise and worship, for evangelism, and for teaching in the assembly. But there are also tongues for intercession and spiritual warfare, when we are fighting for things. These are the prayers in which we pray in authority. Even during these prayers, we have experienced on several occasions that people began to pray in a completely different tongue than they had been praying in until then. Let us not forget that we are not fighting against people, but against defeated powers, and let us be aware that at least advanced sorcerers and Satanists also speak in tongues – unfortunately, in demonic ones.

25 The Kingdom of God

Jesus clearly links the manifestation of his kingdom here on earth with the Holy Spirit. He cast out demons and healed the sick through the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:14–23), and when his disciples asked him about the establishment of the kingdom for Israel, he focused on the Holy Spirit:

"... 'For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Then they gathered around him and asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them: is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.'"

Acts 1:5-8

The disciples were thinking of a physical kingdom, but He was thinking of a spiritual one. Peter, however, realized this, and when he spoke about it a moment later, he also linked the coming of God's kingdom to the Holy Spirit:

"Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"

Acts 2:33.34b-35

That is one reason why we must *kindle* the Holy Spirit. If we want to see God's reign in our lives, we must make room for Him. God does not control everything that happens in the world; rather, He expects us to take the initiative and act (Matthew 6:10, Matthew 18:18-20).

26 Invasion of the Heaven

The Kingdom of God is, in fact, wherever God reigns. If we give Him control over our lives, He will begin to transform them. If we give Him control over our tongue, He will begin to tame it – He alone can do this (James 3:1–5). When we surrender control of our business or work to Him, He will begin to act there as well. And He is not alone in this. For when we pray in tongues – meaning we allow God to pray through us – we "activate the angels" who are waiting for God's word – and, technically speaking, it does not matter to them from whose mouth God's words flow:

"Praise the Lord, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word."

Psalms 103:20

And they will then prepare the way for us, it is the reason why things will often go "like clockwork" for us. Both Abraham and the Israelites had experience with this. An angel prepared the way when seeking a bride for Isaac and when Israel entered the Promised Land (Genesis 24:1–67, Exodus 23:20–33). At other times, we will also experience their protection, just as the prophet Elisha did:

"Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. 'Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?' the servant asked. 'Don't be afraid,' the prophet answered. 'Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' And Elisha prayed, 'Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.' Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

2. Kings 6:14-17

27 God's Protection

Let's not forget: God has two-thirds of the angels, that is a huge advantage, and once they are set in motion, they are unstoppable. It is clear that people throughout the Bible experienced the work of angels; however, the book of Acts – following the baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues – is a true distillation of their work. Angels rescued the disciples from prison, shifted the political balance of power, gave the apostles clear guidance, and encouraged them. (Acts 5:17–20, 12:6–11, 12:22–23, 12:25–28, 27:21–26). And the psalmist, the prophet Daniel, and the Lord Jesus all associate the work of angels with our protection (Psalm 91:11, Daniel 6:23, Matthew 4:6). And it is precisely this protection that Jude directly links to praying in tongues in his epistle:

"But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit (...) To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy"

Jude 1:20.24

For example, I have a friend who went on a business trip with his boss, and in a situation with poor visibility, they came very close to an accident while driving at high speed. My friend began praying intensely in tongues (his colleague was a non-believer) and said that suddenly everything was like a slow-motion scene; they managed to swerve out of the situation, and no one was hurt. But we can also find protection in the fact that, through praying in tongues, we stir up the Holy Spirit, by whom we can put to death the flesh that harms us and thus live above sin (Romans 8:12–14). Paul says that because of our faith in God, we are able to "extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one" in battle (Ephesians 6:16).

28 The Enigma Code

The spiritual realm is truly a battlefield. And as we know, in war, the opposing sides use *encrypted* language to communicate. This is precisely what praying in tongues is – a language that *no one* understands. God communicates visions, strategies, and plans to us that the Devil does not understand, and He writes them into our spirit. We then decode them through the interpretation of tongues and put them into practice. It is therefore also clear that the Devil tries to decode these tongues himself; however, I believe that God is God and is capable of devising new codes and new tongues at any time.

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues"

Mark 16:17

As we said, the word *new* is the Greek word *kainos*, that means *new, unused, unworn, unheard of, of a new kind, unprecedented*. Since God's Word is true at all times, we constantly have unprecedented tongues of a new kind here. God always finds a way to outwit the Devil. Furthermore, the Bible proves that God can encode things in such a way that the Devil can *never* decode them. If he could, for example, he would never have crucified Jesus (1 Corinthians 2:8). For the Devil is neither omniscient, nor omnipotent, nor omnipresent. In contrast, the Holy Spirit is omnipotent (Genesis 17:1), omnipresent (Psalms 139:7), and has been here since the beginning (Genesis 1:2).

29 God's Strategy, Vision, and Plans

Just as God uses coded language, God – as a true commander – has His own strategies, visions, and plans. This is revealed to us in Romans, chapter 8:

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:26-28

The word *thought*, from the Greek *phronema*, means *what one has in mind, one's thoughts and intentions*. So it is wonderful that just when we *do not know* what to pray for or how to pray, the Holy Spirit steps in with His plans and purposes, that – based on this passage – we see are *good*. This passage gives us tremendous confidence in praying in tongues. We also see here that the Bible assumes we will not know what to pray for or how to pray. It further tells us that when we allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us, it is good and always leads us to what is good. And we also see that if we want to know God's purposes, visions, and plans, we need to pray in tongues, and He will reveal them to us. Once He reveals them to us, we then need to *intercede with groans that cannot be expressed in words* so that God's plans and purposes may be fulfilled.

30 Intercession

Another point I want to highlight from the previous passage is that the Holy Spirit *intercedes*. But let's not forget that He does this only *together with us*. When we do not pray, neither does He. So if we are looking for an intercessor, let's not forget that when we start praying in tongues, we already have one – and He is the most powerful one:

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:26-27

To intercede, the Greek word *entynchánō*, means *to intercede, to pray, to plead, to meet with someone for the purpose of consultation, or to intervene on behalf of a person or matter*. In the first instance in this text, this Greek word is even used with the prefix *hyper-*, that means *even more, more than*. There are various kinds of prayer in tongues – prayer for sustenance, tongues for praise and worship, for evangelism, for personal edification, for spiritual warfare, but also for *intercession*. So when we pray in tongues, we go beyond ourselves, beyond our selfishness, because the Holy Spirit within us intercedes not only for us but also for *the saints, the believers* all over the world. When we pray, the Holy Spirit imparts His thoughts to others and touches their lives. Just as we sometimes find ourselves under the pressure of negative thoughts, the Holy Spirit surrounds people in a similar way – but these are positive thoughts. For spiritual warfare takes place primarily in people's minds.

31 Working in the Spirit

When we pray, we work in the spirit, and that changes the physical reality of the world around us. We can see this in the letters of the Apostle Paul as well:

"Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis."

Colossians 4:12-13

Let's note that Epaphras *constantly* wrestled in prayer and put in *much hard work* for the Colossians and others. He prayed for them, wrestled, and worked. Perhaps they did not pray, and he prayed for them. Perhaps he supported their prayers with his own. But one thing is clear. If we go to work and our coworker is not working, it is obvious, and someone has to finish that work. Or, because of this, some projects may not be completed. It is the same with prayer. If we do not pray, someone else must pray, or some of God's plans will not be fulfilled. Jesus clearly tells us to pray, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Prayer is work in the spiritual realm. When we pray God's Word, angels respond to it and fulfill it. That is why I want to encourage you: Pray! Nothing is more important than praying and thereby establishing God's kingdom here on earth. People like George Müller even cut their workday short by an hour so they could spend that hour praying and leading others to do the same (Harvey, 1998). Why? Because thanks to their prayers, they were more effective at work, everything went more smoothly for them, and they were able to accomplish even more. Prayer is irreplaceable.

32 To Be Born of the Spirit

Furthermore, the Bible states that things must be *born, formed* in the spirit. For everything visible came into being from the invisible. Consequently, everything we observe in the physical world *must* have its counterpart in the spiritual world. And one such thing is birth. Did you know that? Paul speaks of the Galatians *giving birth again*:

"My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you,"

Galatians 4:19

We can find what Paul meant to say in the Old Testament:

" Lord, they came to you in their distress; when you disciplined them, they could barely whisper a prayer. As a pregnant woman about to give birth writhes and cries out in her pain, so were we in your presence, Lord. We were with child, we writhed in labor,..."

Isaiah 26:16-18a

Another similar passage can be found, for example, in Jeremiah 30:6–9, Isaiah 66:8, and 1 Kings 18:42–46. We see that when we pray, we can bring things into being in the spirit. So if we are lacking something in the physical world, the solution is clear. We must *pray* and first bring things into being in the spiritual realm. God's work will not come to pass until we bring it to fruition. In this way, for example, I am "building" a place for missionaries in Zruč nad Sázavou, a small city 50 kilometres from Prague on the highway to Brno. I believe that what is happening today is not only due to – or because of – the prayers or lack of prayers of today's church, but also thanks to the prayers of previous generations. Let us, too, think of future generations (Acts 7:2–6).

33 Shaping People

However, the passage from Colossians mentioned earlier reveals yet another effect of prayer: namely, that through prayer we *shape* people into the likeness of Christ. Let's take another look at it:

"Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis."

Colossians 4:12-13

Epaphras fought for them in prayer so that "they might be mature and complete in every way, according to God's will". Do you know what Epaphras was doing? He was shaping them. Through his prayers, he was shaping them into the likeness of Christ. When we pray, we speak words. And words shape us. Words and faith both have creative power. Do you know what has shaped each of our lives? Words. The words of other people. Words have the power to shape our identity and our entire lives. That is why God gave us His Word and wants it to work in us (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Prayers function as messengers through that we convey information to others. Tongues are God's weapon capable of tearing down strongholds – thoughts and ideas that rise up against the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 10:4–5). That is why we are also to pray for others and shape them into God's image. Through tongues, we tear down ungodly thoughts not only in our own minds but also in the minds of others.

When we were still living in Žižkov, one of the Prague's city districts, whenever I prayed in tongues for Žižkov, I would bless the local people. Afterward, almost everyone I spoke with was open to talking about God.

34 When You Don't Know What to Pray For

We are all familiar with those situations when we are weak and do not even know how to pray about them, are we? But God has thought of that, too. One of the benefits of praying in tongues is that even when we *do not know* what to pray for or how to pray, the Holy Spirit prays for us:

"n the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:26-28

It is wonderful to learn to rely on God and to be completely certain that when we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit intercedes according to God's will (how could He do otherwise, since He and God are one?), even for things that are beyond our comprehension and understanding. Paul also speaks of this in his letter to the Philippians. Even when situations are complicated, the Holy Spirit works for our good! Prayer is a powerful weapon. When we pray, God works miracles:

"But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance."

Philippians 1:18-19

35 Tongues for Maintenance

When we pray in tongues, we do not always have to focus on the prayer. We are able to pray while letting our minds wander. While speaking in tongues, we can think about the weather, lunch, or even read a book. This is because when we pray in tongues, we engage a different part of the brain than the one we use when forming speech. Paul describes this by saying that we pray *in the Spirit*, but our mind is *unengaged*:

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding;..."

1. Corinthians 14:14-15a

I call this prayer in tongues – that we practice both while washing dishes and on the tram – a "maintenance" prayer in tongues. It is better than not praying at all – it keeps us focused on the Holy Spirit and thus spiritually alert. However, it is certainly not the pinnacle of what God has in store for us. When we pray, we need to set ourselves apart and get *out of ourselves*. Although it is challenging at first, eventually we will not want to stop. When we pray only *superficially*, we do not enter into the depths of the Spirit, and we do not experience the intense prayers that move things (James 5:16b). However, it is a matter of practice. We can grow both in prayer and in concentration. The Holy Spirit is *the Spirit of a sound, disciplined, and trained mind* (2 Timothy 1:7).

36 Pray Without Ceasing

So we see that there really is a wide variety of prayers in tongues. If we want to grow in praying in different kinds of tongues, we can pray that the Lord will help us enter into other kinds of tongues. Or, in a group where everyone prays in one or more kinds of tongues, we can pray and shift between different kinds of tongues. One person will lead the prayer, and the others will join in. In this way, too, we can release additional types of tongues within ourselves and in others.

I know people who are able to pray in different kinds of tongues as needed, and I have heard of specific people who are able to "switch" between different tongues – meaning that God is truly able to speak through them in an infinite number of tongues. For these two reasons, Paul writes:

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people"

Ephesians 6:18

It really is possible. We really are able to pray *anytime, anywhere.* It is possible to pray constantly:

"pray continually"

1. Thessalonians 5:17

And it does not matter whether we pray at home or on a hill. When we are kings, we are kings whether on a hill, on the road, or in the living room. Rather than looking for the right place and time, we need to *know how* to pray, know how to handle prayer, and use it for God's glory (John 14:12–14).

37 God's Dynamo

Speaking in tongues has other benefits as well. John G. Lake described praying in tongues as the tool that established his ministry (Liardon, 1999). People who describe their experiences with praying in tongues say that a whole series of miracles began to occur right after they had been praying in tongues for an extended period of time. For example, Curry Blake describes how the Lord supernaturally rescued him several times while he was praying in tongues (Blake, 2012). John G. Lake, in turn, traveled in the Spirit during congregational intercessory prayers in tongues (Liardon, 1999). The Apostle Paul also had experience with both:

"...the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them."

2. Timothy 3:11b

And we know that he prayed in tongues very often:

"For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is."

Colossians 2:5

When we look at the life of the Apostle Paul and his experiences, we see the following: he often prayed in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:18), God worked powerfully through him (Acts 19:11), he had revelations like few others (2 Corinthians 12:7), the Lord delivered him from every trouble (2 Timothy 4:18), and he clearly lived by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 5:3). Let's take a moment to reflect on which of these we can influence and whether, for example, praying in tongues might be one of the triggers that could unlock other elements from this list in our own lives.

38 Obedience

One of the fundamental effects of regular prayer in tongues is that, as we pray, we get into the habit of *surrendering* to God. Every time we begin to pray in tongues, we surrender our mouths to God and let Him speak through us. This is an important habit because surrender becomes natural to us, and then we become more submissive and obedient to God in other areas as well:

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Romans 12:1-2

We do not submit ourselves to a God who dwells on a cloud, but to a God who dwells *within us*. And only by submitting ourselves to God do we begin to discover *what God's will is*, what is good, acceptable, and perfect. It is like starting a new job – we begin to understand many things only after we start working and become involved in the process, not beforehand. For God delights when we trust Him. That is how it was for me with praying in tongues as well. Out of obedience, I began praying for 15, 30, and 60 minutes a day, and it was not until half a year later that I began to understand everything that was happening as a result. On another occasion, God showed me how to act in a particular situation. I asked Him why He was showing me this. The answer was simple. God told me: "If you want to experience what I experience, you must act as I act." We need to trust God and act like Him; then we will begin to understand Him and think like Him.

39 Recovery

One of the first benefits of praying in tongues described in the Bible is *revitalization and rest.* When praying in tongues, stress, depression, fatigue, and burnout can be alleviated (Bevere & Bevere, 2015). The prophet Isaiah already describes this effect on our bodies:

"to whom he said, 'This is the resting place, let the weary rest'; and, 'This is the place of repose' – but they would not listen."

Isaiah 28:12

People often engage in physical forms of rest, such as sleep, or mental rest, such as trips into nature. But we usually forget about the *spiritual* form of rest, that brings praying in tongues. And that is a real shame. The spiritual aspect of our being is, in fact, superior to both the mental and the physical. Although it is said that "a healthy mind resides in a healthy body", that is not the whole truth. God's Word goes further and teaches about the human spirit. For example, Proverbs states: "The spirit of a man can endure his sickness, but who can bear a crushed spirit?" (Proverbs 18:14) or, just before that, in Proverbs 17:22: "A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." The apostle Paul also writes that the Spirit *gives life* to our *mortal* bodies (Romans 8:11). Therefore, when we engage in spiritual practices such as praying in tongues, it has a positive effect on both our soul and our body. There are even studies showing that praying in tongues *improves* immunity. This is because Hebrew uses the same word for *Spirit* as for *breath – ruach.* And indeed, the Spirit of life is both our breath and our second breath. We have had many experiences where, after praying in tongues, we felt a surge of new energy or our fatigue vanished.

40 The Lightness of Being

Another aspect that speaking in tongues brings into our lives is *the lightness of being* (Chavda, 2023). There were times when I struggled with depressive thoughts in the morning that made me not even want to get out of bed; however, thanks to regular prayer in tongues, I now get up gladly, with ease, and feeling motivated. When I pray regularly in the morning and evening, I find that in the morning *praise* resounds in my spirit, and I wake up with joyful feelings. I would best express this with the following words – as soon as I wake up, I sing praises to the Lord in my heart, I exalt Him, and I thank Him:

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 5:18-20

It is wonderful that God Himself enables us to shine in this world, because we know a power that this world does not know. Our lives are not meant to be natural, but supernatural. Or rather, natural from God's perspective:

"You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

2. Timothy 2:1

So let's not forget that, and let's live more in the Spirit than in the flesh. It will not come naturally at first, but we will be happy to get used to it.

41 Unleashing the Faith and Finding Courage

Another manifestation of regular prayer is the unleashing of faith and courage in our lives. For the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of faith:

"It is written: 'I believed; therefore I have spoken.' Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak"

2. Corinthians 4:13

His work in our lives leads to a release of faith. We do not have to try to believe something; in this regard, faith does not come from us. The key is to be filled with the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of faith – and to be nourished by God's Word, the word of faith (1 Timothy 4:6). And God Himself will lead us into a life of faith. Because of this, we will not be able to remain silent about Jesus, as it is written: 'I believed, therefore I spoke.' And this was also the case in the early church. Peter and John were uneducated and simple men (in Greek, *agrammatos* and *idiōtēs*), but by their boldness, others recognized that they had been with Jesus:

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."

Acts 4:13

Courage brings freedom, and freedom brings courage (2 Corinthians 3:17). Similarly, Paul writes to Timothy, urging him to stir up the Holy Spirit and not be ashamed of the gospel (2 Timothy 1:7–8). We find prayer, boldness, and the preaching of the gospel intertwined in the second half of the fourth chapter of the Book of Acts as well. There, in fact, *the entire church* prayed and then went out to preach. Isaiah already mentions the work of the Spirit through boldness (Isaiah 44:3-5). The question for us is: Will we pray?

42 Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit

By praying regularly in tongues, we increase our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. Even though He is always with us and we are in His presence – even when we are not aware of it – it helps us greatly when we hear His voice (Matthew 28:20, Acts 8:29). The Holy Spirit is a guide we can rely on. He guides us through life. But the Gospel is about salvation – in Greek, *sōtēria* – that means *to save, to heal, to secure, to guide safely through life*:

“ ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ ”

Acts 2:40b

At other times, we may not even notice that He is speaking to us. We will simply have thoughts that bring *life and peace* (Romans 8:5-6). Or we will feel peace in our hearts (Colossians 3:15). For we are one with Him (1 Corinthians 6:17). Therefore, when He experiences peace, we experience it too. And when God does not have peace about something, neither do we, as long as we remain focused on Him. The Holy Spirit is like oil, and thanks to Him, our lives flow more smoothly.

Praying in tongues is like a receiver that allows us to tune in to the Spirit's wavelength. For example, Fred F. Bosworth testified that before his baptism in the Spirit, he was constantly changing jobs and did not know how to move forward in life. But as soon as he was baptized in the Spirit, he knew his life's direction clearly (Liardon, 2014). David Hogan, in turn, organizes meetings in the Spirit through prayer, since they cannot use conventional methods. Thus, only those who are sensitive to the Spirit attend these meetings (Woodrow, 2008). Elsewhere, Luke writes that through the Holy Spirit, Jesus gives His church commands and thus guides it (Acts 1:4).

43 Freedom

Another thing the Holy Spirit brings is freedom:

"...and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

2. Corinthians 3:17b-18

And elsewhere:

"The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"

Romans 8:15

So if you are struggling with religion, legalism, or a lack of freedom, start praying in tongues and notice how God will gradually transform you and set you free. He will cut every bond and break every yoke. He is the Spirit of life. I have a friend who did not leave the house for several months because of anxiety. But after he began praying in tongues for an hour three times a day, his situation changed within a few weeks, and now he is living a normal life – he is married and has healthy children.

At the same time, I firmly believe that if we give more and more room to the Holy Spirit, it will bring significantly more creativity to the church – for example, new ideas for business. People will be freer and more resourceful in every positive way. Let's not miss out on this – let's be a part of it, too!

44 Work Efficiency

The result of praying in tongues is that our work becomes more effective. Paul writes that he worked harder than anyone else, but that it was only by God's grace:

"But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me."

1. Corinthians 15:10

The Holy Spirit is the grace that God has given us. When we stir up the Spirit, He works through us, and when we pray in tongues as much as the Apostle Paul did, then the Holy Spirit works powerfully. The Greek word for "to work" is *energeó*, and it means *to act, to be active, to operate*. But let's not confuse the Holy Spirit with energy. He is a being who does work and releases energy. Just as we are not our work, but we do work and release energy.

When we pray in tongues and have the matters of God's kingdom on our hearts, things fall into place for us; we hear from people we need to meet or in whom the Spirit is working in the same direction as in us (John 15:7). We will also hear from people whom we can serve through healing, prayer, or by leading them to salvation. At other times, praying in tongues shapes our thoughts, and ideas from God come to us. All of this helps us accomplish more in less time, and our world is so dynamic that we go further than people who have no covenant with any spiritual being – or who have a covenant with Satan. We need to learn to do things by the Spirit, not by the flesh (Zechariah 4:6).

45 Unity of Thought

Another manifestation of the Holy Spirit's increased presence is *unity*. And that is what I believe is happening right now in the Czech church:

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;"

Ephesians 4:4

There is one Holy Spirit, and if everyone in the church allows Him to work through them, He will lead us into unity, give us the *same* mindset, guide us in the same direction – or even if He guides each of us differently, it will make sense and create harmony (1 Corinthians 12:12–14). We will be in unity with God and then also with other believers (John 17:21–23) or within marriage. Through the Holy Spirit, God can transform a disparate group into an army (Chavda, 2023). None of this, however, can be achieved by human effort; it must be brought about by God's Spirit. The opposite of unity is *division*, that stems from carnal human thinking, that, as the Lord Jesus indicates in His conversation with Peter, is from the Devil (Matthew 16:23). Although division can sometimes be from God (1 Corinthians 11:19), it often arises from pride, fear, or insecurity – these are truly not of God. If we are constantly separating ourselves and drawing boundaries, there is nothing spiritual about it; quite the contrary:

"For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? For when one says, 'I follow Paul,' and another, 'I follow Apollos,' are you not mere human beings?"

1. Corinthians 3:3b-4

46 To pray more than anyone else

And apparently for all these reasons, Paul goes even further in his teaching. He claims that he prays in tongues more than anyone else – or at least more than anyone in Corinth:

"I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you."

1. Corinthians 14:18

When I read this verse, I told myself I would have a "race" with the Apostle Paul – not out of competitiveness, but to encourage myself to do good deeds (Hebrews 10:25). If we want to experience God at least as much as the Apostle Paul did, we probably need to pray the way he prayed. I think it is great to learn about speaking in tongues from someone who actually has practical experience with it.

In addition, I heard a somewhat unusual analogy. Praying in tongues is the gateway to the manifestations of the Spirit, much like marijuana is the gateway to the world of drugs. If someone already has experience with the manifestations of the Spirit, it is usually through praying in tongues. But whoever begins to develop this prayer habit more and more will enter the world of the Spirit's manifestations and His power, knowing that all of this can only be God. Paul clearly exhorts us all – to strive for the *higher* gifts of grace. In the original text, this means gifts that *serve better and bring greater benefit.* Furthermore, God's manifestations work best through love, as we have already discussed:

"Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way."

1. Corinthians 12:31

47 The Art of Loving

However, the right motivation for speaking in tongues and for other manifestations of the Spirit is love. Without it, speaking in tongues may be beneficial, but we will receive no reward for it (1 Corinthians 13:1–3). If we are unsure of our motivation, let us pray anyway. Through speaking in tongues, God also corrects our motivations. Praying in tongues itself helps us to love others more deeply and to receive God's mercy. Indeed, truly loving others is something that is generally accomplished by mature and spiritually strong people. Paul writes about this:

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,"

Ephesians 3:16-19

And Jude agrees with him as well (Jude 1:20–21). Both of these passages link the strengthening of the inner person and spiritual growth to the work of the Holy Spirit and the outpouring of God's love and grace. Paul even tells Timothy that if he stirs up the Holy Spirit, he will be able to endure *hardships* for the sake of the gospel (2 Timothy 1:8). For example, I have a friend who was struggling in his marriage, but he began praying in tongues for an extra hour each day, and he fought his way through the marriage, even though it was not easy for him. Furthermore, when we pray in tongues for people, we invest time in them, and our attitude toward them changes. At the same time, we become united with God's way of thinking, and it becomes easier for us to love and walk in grace.

48 The Fear of the Lord

When we see all these things in our lives – transformation, the efficiency of our work, the freedom of our being, vitality, and rapid spiritual growth – it will lead us to one thing: the fear of God. For the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the fear of the Lord:

"he Spirit of the Lord will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord – and he will delight in the fear of the Lord."

Isaiah 11:2-3a

You may be afraid that all these things will ultimately lead you to spiritual pride, but the opposite is true. I think once we live our lives in a dimension that we know completely transcends us, we will realize that it is not really about how *good* we are, but that it is God's work. It will be so good and far beyond us that we will be in awe of God.

The only way to persist in this life is to continue to seek the Lord. If we ever stop and try to live life in our own strength, we will quickly fall, because we simply will not have what it takes. A lifestyle of prayer and witness will force us to continue in this way of life. As George Müller said: 'People think I have these testimonies because of who I am. But that is not true. I have these testimonies because I decided to live a lifestyle that requires them.' Well, we cannot afford to begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh (Galatians 3:3).

Part III

Interpretation of Tongues

1 The Gift of Power

Through baptism in the Holy Spirit, we did not merely receive the gift of tongues; we received the Holy Spirit in His entirety and *all* of His power:

"On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' (...)'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'"

Acts 1:4-5.8

That makes a lot of sense. It is clear that when the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us, He brings everything He has with Him – His character, His mind, and His power. The following verses reveal why we do not see much of God's power in our lives:

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Acts 2:4

This verse shows that the coming of the Holy Spirit into a person's life was accompanied by certain manifestations. The first of these was evidently praying in tongues. Through the Holy Spirit, God gave us His power; through praying in tongues, He gave us a way to ignite that power. But once we begin to live a life sustained by God's grace and power, we must continue to do so. If we want to see more of God's power in our lives, let us pray more in tongues.

2 Unleash Your Potential

There is a big difference between not having power and having power but not knowing how to use it. If we own a car but do not know how to drive, we have to walk like someone without a car; but if we learn to drive, we no longer have to spend any money on buying a car – that can cost thousands, tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands. The initial cost is therefore usually the deciding factor. Likewise, God's Word tells us that we have the Holy Spirit in full, God's power, God's Word, Jesus' authority, and everything else. But Paul then distinguishes in his letters the extent to which we know how to work with these things. The Bible distinguishes between the potential we have in Christ and the extent to which He is actually working in us:

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

Ephesians 3:20-21

In our everyday lives, it is therefore clear that what matters is not the potential for power that lies within us, but how much power is actually *at work* within us. And that is something we are very much aware of. If God is acting through you, you know it:

"To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me."

Colossians 1:29

And if we do not know that God is working through us, let's pray regularly in faith for an hour in tongues, and we will see!

3 Ministries

It is very important to be trained in the things of God. Although God has given us everything through Christ, if we do not know the Holy Spirit, we will not be able to grasp it (Romans 8:32, 1 Corinthians 2:12). If we do not have ministries in the church, God can teach us Himself, but it tends to be a slower process (1 John 2:27). Part of growth involves learning from people who already have experience in these areas. When there is an opportunity to learn, it is better for growth to be a disciple than to be self-taught:

"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ."

Ephesians 4:11-15

And that is precisely the purpose of this book: to *teach* you how to use what you *have*. So that you will not be like children – in Greek, *nepios*; in English, *childish, untaught, unskilled* – so that we may be able to withstand the Devil's snares and grow into the fullness of maturity, into Christ. That is our goal. As for tongues and other manifestations of the Spirit, the Bible shows that we can move from "random" manifestations of power – where something happens here and there – to a consistent flow in the Spirit and walking in God's power. That we can not only wait for God's power but also direct it (John 2:24–25, John 3:34, Luke 4:14, Matthew 12:15).

4 Direct God's Power

The fact that God's power *can* be directed is something Christians rarely realize. And yet, with every prayer, we direct God's power. When we first begin to experience spiritual manifestations, we feel as though something is happening *here and there*. However, the Bible speaks of the fullness of the Spirit, when we consciously use God's power for His glory (John 3:34). That is why the Lord Jesus never specified what kind of gift was being manifested, but simply *flowed* in the Spirit. Likewise, Paul acted quite confidently – as if the manifestations of God's power depended on him (1 Corinthians 2:4, 4:19–20). Paul was a son; he used God's power. He elaborates on this further in his letter to the Thessalonians:

"With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

2. Thessalonians 1:11-12

Paul says that he prays that God, by His power, will fulfill *every* good *intention* and *act* of faith. God fulfills our good intentions – the *Acts* of faith – through His power. That is why, when we pray in tongues for specific people, things, and situations, the Lord acts. That is why we are to lay hands on the sick – Moses also constantly held his staff in his hand, Elisha held the piece of wood he threw into the water instead of an axe, and the Lord Jesus held the bread in His hands before distributing it to the crowds (Exodus 4:2, 2 Kings 6:1–7, Matthew 14:16–21). At the same time, these verses reveal *why* the Lord does this. He does it so that the name of the Lord Jesus may be

glorified, and we in Him. It is not just for its own sake; it is for the glory of the Lord Jesus and His work in us. We do not deserve it; it is God's grace.

5 Gifts work the same way

Let's realize that all spiritual gifts work the same way. They all originate in God; they come from the same Spirit. They are simply different manifestations of His power. So if, through our intentions and acts of faith, we can direct God's power through tongues, the same applies to the interpretation of tongues, prophecy, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, working miracles, healing, faith, and discerning of spirits. However, for this power of God to be manifested, it is necessary to release faith. That is why Paul reminds Timothy of his sincere faith and then tells him what kind of Spirit he has – the Spirit of power, love, and a sound mind:

"I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner."

2. Timothy 1:5-8a

All the gifts of the Spirit came to us with the gift of the Spirit; however, as John G. Lake (Liardon, 1999) said, we need faith to begin to put them into practice. At the same time, it is interesting that Paul knew much better what was in Timothy than Timothy himself did. For Paul knew the Holy Spirit and knew that He was also in Timothy. So he encouraged him to learn to cooperate more closely with the Spirit. It is the same as when you get a new phone and someone who already knows how to use it advises you on all the things you can do with it.

6 Do Whatever Comes to Mind

This contrasts with what is usually taught about God's power, but we need to grow in our understanding. Jesus does not tell us to wait for His prompting and "guidance". His word is our guidance. The Holy Spirit will confirm this (Mark 16:20). Therefore, we should not wait, but begin to act in faith in God's Word, and the Holy Spirit will begin to confirm it. The prophet Samuel already saw it this way in the Old Testament. He said to Saul:

"The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be transformed into a different man. And when these signs are fulfilled in you, do whatever comes to mind, for God is with you."

1. Samuel 10:6-7

"When the Spirit of the Lord comes upon you... Do whatever comes to mind." He does not tell him, "Wait to see how God will lead you," but rather, "Do whatever comes to mind." God has blessed us with His Spirit and power, and He wants us to use them for His glory. This may shock us, but let's consider how we pray in tongues. Sometimes we sense that we should start praying; other times we simply *begin* to pray. It is the same with the other gifts of the Spirit. Sometimes we sense God's guidance; other times we simply do something. We are God's co-workers, not His puppets. He expects us to be aware of the situation; He does not want to constantly remind us of our duties. You can tell a child is growing up by the fact that they clean up after themselves, not by the fact that they clean up only when you tell them to. We can see this in Jesus as well; it is not usually written that He was *led by the Spirit*; sometimes He was moved by compassion, other times He healed those who needed healing. Sometimes He fed the crowds because He *wanted* to do so. All of this is important.

Jesus' life was not about methods and procedures; it was about the fact that Jesus simply was.

7 Order at the Gathering

Regardless of how much speaking in tongues brings edification and benefits to our lives, there are still voices *opposed* to praying in tongues. In my opinion, that is a great shame. Concerns about praying in tongues often stem more from a lack of understanding. Paul, in fact, makes himself clear:

"Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."

1. Corinthians 14:39-40

I understand that it is not always appropriate to speak in tongues – Paul himself says that among people, he would rather speak five words clearly than ten thousand words in a tongue. On the other hand, he had to pray somewhere. Thus, he highlights the fundamental importance of tongues, but also the difference in their value when they are without interpretation, in private use, and in a gathering. Furthermore, this passage shows that *people* are responsible for the use of spiritual gifts, not God. We are able to work with them, release them, correct them, and stop them again (1 Corinthians 14:32).

For example, when people pray in tongues together, it can sometimes be chaotic because everyone is praying in a different kind of tongue and they are not unified. But this can be worked on to bring prayer in tongues into a very effective and efficient form. Paul also mentions order in the church meeting – let two or three speak in tongues, and let the tongues be interpreted. Everything is to be done decently and in order. However, no one can ever prevent us from praying at least on our own, thereby building ourselves up spiritually and growing. So let's move on to the interpretation of tongues so that we can get the most out of them, not only in our private lives but also in the assembly.

8 Tongues and Prophecy

As Christians, we tend to over-categorize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. We often try to say: "This is prophecy, this is the interpretation of tongues, this is a word of knowledge." However, when reading the Bible, we can see that both Jesus and the disciples moved *seamlessly* between the manifestations of the Spirit, and the Apostle Paul himself used categorization of spiritual manifestations only for teaching purposes. We can already see this in the example of Jesus, who moved seamlessly between the word of knowledge and prophecy (Matthew 16:17–19). But the same is true of prophecy and prayer in tongues. What Joel applied to prophecy, the Apostle Peter evidently applied to speaking in tongues at Pentecost:

"'And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.'"

Joel 2:28

"No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: »In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.«"

Acts 2:16-17

And if the Apostle Peter was so open-minded in this regard, we, too, should focus more on allowing the Holy Spirit to flow freely rather than constantly trying to fit Him into our human categories.

9 Interpretation and Prophecy

The same applies to the interpretation of tongues and prophecy. The Apostle Paul teaches us that when tongues are accompanied by interpretation, they are equivalent to prophecy:

"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified."

1. Corinthians 14:5

A verse later, it even states that one of the most common functions of interpretation is prophecy, that serves to admonish, build up, and comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3). We can also infer from the book of Acts that after being baptized with the Holy Spirit, people spoke in tongues, and it is quite possible that they interpreted them right away. Luke, however, describes this as prophecy:

"When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all."

Acts 19:6-7

So please, let's not be too narrow-minded and let the Spirit work. Let's not try to explain and rationalize everything; instead, let's give the Holy Spirit space and freedom. At the same time, let's not deprive ourselves of the interpretation of tongues – it is not just for super-spiritual people. On the contrary, it should be a common occurrence.

10 The First Interpretation of Tongues

Now let's return to the Old Testament and look at the first account of tongues described in the Bible. We have already discussed the fact that tongues are mentioned in the Old Testament, specifically in Isaiah. Some even associate tongues with the Tower of Babel, claiming that the confusion of languages occurred at Babel and that on the Day of Pentecost, they were unified in one Spirit. However, have you ever considered that the interpretation of tongues is also mentioned in the Old Testament? Yes, as you have probably already guessed, it is in Daniel:

"'This is the inscription that was written: mene, mene, tekel, parsin' 'Here is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.'"

Daniel 5:25-28

We see that Daniel was the first person in the Bible to interpret tongues, even though he probably did not even speak them. I think this should be a clear encouragement to us, since the Lord Jesus quotes John and says that 'even the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than the greatest of the prophets' (Luke 7:28). So let us pray that we, too, may interpret. After all, few of the prophets interpreted tongues, yet they all looked forward to the time we live in (1 Peter 1:10)!

11 The Interpretation is for Everyone

Another important question is for whom the interpretation of tongues is intended in the New Testament. Paul's answer is unequivocal – for everyone. Paul encourages everyone who prays in tongues to begin interpreting them as well:

"So it is with you. Since you are eager for gifts of the Spirit, try to excel in those that build up the church. For this reason the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that they may interpret what they say."

1. Corinthians 14:12-13

Of course, a few verses later there is a passage stating that tongues should not be spoken at a gathering if there is no interpreter present:

"If anyone speaks in a tongue, two – or at the most three – should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God."

1. Corinthians 14:27-28

But when we put it all together, the only reason why speaking in tongues should not take place at a public gathering is that no one has experience interpreting it (1 Corinthians 14:31). And when we combine this with the fact that both Paul and Jesus clearly wanted everyone to pray in tongues, it is clear that everyone who believes should strive not only to pray in tongues but also to interpret them. Not so that they can boast about it, but so that they can build up the church and be more useful to the Lord.

12 The Interpretation Builds

As we flow in prayer in tongues and the interpretation of tongues, we will begin to act more according to the Spirit and less according to our own soul. This will give our lives much greater certainty and dynamism. For the Spirit *knows*, while the soul tries to figure things out. And when we know – and when we cooperate with God, who knows everything – then we truly know, and everything goes more easily and quickly. I have already mentioned my first experience with the interpretation of tongues. And I usually have a similar experience with the interpretation of tongues. Because of this, I am not afraid to say that I have never seen a more progressive, confident, and focused group of Christians than the one that practiced praying in tongues and the interpretation of tongues:

"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified."

1. Corinthians 14:5

So let's not be afraid of even small beginnings. Just like praying in tongues, interpretation can also start out very small. But it will gradually develop. I remember that when I first interpreted tongues for someone, I took a month-long break right after my second experience. Afterward, though, I was overcome by the feeling that I would probably never be able to do it again. I told myself that the best way to get back into interpreting would be to take advantage of the next big conference, go around to a few Christians, and interpret tongues for them. Over the course of four days, I managed to do this a total of seven times; some of the interpretations were in English, and someone even prophesied back to me for five minutes. It really encouraged me. Since then, I have never been afraid of interpreting tongues again.

13 What is the Key?

So how do we begin to speak in tongues? Immediately after encouraging us to pray for the gift of tongues, Paul explains how to do it:

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding."

1. Corinthians 14:14-15

Paul urges us to pray with both our spirit and our mind. In other words, he says: "Pray with focus." When we pray in tongues, let's not just let our minds wander aimlessly. Let's unite the efforts of our spirit, soul, and body. For when I begin to focus on various people and situations during prayer, words of knowledge start coming to me, and so I know what is happening. I also pray for words of wisdom so that I know what to do with that knowledge. Often, when I immerse myself in prayer like this, I begin to perceive and see what is happening in the *spiritual* world – I have visions of what is taking place or what will take place. I receive ideas on how to respond to people's complicated emails, how to react in various uncomfortable situations, what to say in response to questions on the radio; I have received words for colleagues at work, for people at church, ideas for buying gifts, or words to help me better assess tense situations. At other times, I literally sense how things are shifting in the spiritual realm. I usually write down what comes to me, and when I pray with others, I share it as well. I do not always say everything right away; sometimes I wait until the time is right. Well, it is written that *the fervent prayer of a righteous person accomplishes much* (James 5:16b).

14 Interpretation is not Translation

A common stumbling block people encounter when interpreting tongues is their idea of what such an interpretation looks like. We often imagine it as a *translation*. However, that is not the only meaning of the word *interpretation*.

"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified."

1. Corinthians 14:5

To interpret, from the Greek *dierméneuó*, means either *translation* or *to elaborate on the content of what was said; to explain, to interpret.* And because of this, our interpretation can often be much longer or much shorter than the original message in the tongues.

We can imagine it as follows. Let's say I start describing a city. I begin by describing the streets, neighborhoods, squares, roads, schools, and historic buildings in the center. And I will continue describing the city for several minutes. But then someone else comes along and simply sums it up by saying: "That is a city." And so it can be with interpretation as well. We describe something in great detail in tongues, and another person captures it in a single word. But it can also be the other way around. Someone keeps repeating just one word (let's say "city"), and another person begins to describe it at great length. That is fine, too.

Other times, people ask whether someone can interpret their single phrase in tongues in different ways than someone else. They can. For example, they can focus on a different passage and interpret that one. Or, simply put, even though we are speaking the same sentence or passage in tongues, that same passage means something different in another language.

15 How the Interpretation Comes About

Now that we know that interpretation is available to each of us, it is good to understand what it looks like. The interpretation of tongues comes in a way similar to prophecy. Sometimes I like to call it "prophecy with a cheat sheet," because when I perceive how the Holy Spirit is working in another person, it is easier for me to start prophesying than to simply begin prophesying in faith that what is coming to me is from God. However, this can vary from person to person. What will not vary much, though, are the ways the interpretation comes, so you can find a similar passage in our book on prophecy (Bajzík *a kol.*, 2021). When we pray with focus, we notice that words, verses, and images come to mind, or we have "inner impressions". It is important to grasp this speech of the Spirit:

"This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1. Corinthians 2:13

Although people sometimes make fun of charismatics and Pentecostals for always "seeing" something somewhere, according to the Bible, this is entirely legitimate. The first word associated with prophecy and speaking in tongues at Pentecost is, in fact, the Greek word *horasis*, that refers to *inner* or *outer* vision (Acts 2:17). This word relates to the baptism of the Holy Spirit – our immersion in Him. When we are immersed in the Holy Spirit, we have the ability to perceive both physical reality (with *external sight*) and spiritual reality (with *internal sight*) at the same time. And this is enhanced precisely by praying in tongues. Thanks to their interpretation, we then learn to use this ability even better.

16 How the Interpretation Works

Once we know how the interpretation comes to us, we need to know how to work with it. It would be a shame to miss what God is trying to tell us.

"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit."

1. Corinthians 2:14

To understand God's speech, it is helpful to study the Hebrew words that the Bible uses to describe God's communication (Goll, 2012). The first of the Hebrew terms for God's speech is *nábá – flowing out, gushing forth like a spring.* This word indicates that God often speaks just one word to us. But when we say that word aloud or write it down, we receive a follow-up word. That is why it is important, when interpreting tongues, to start speaking or writing down whatever comes to mind. When we respond to God, He begins to explain and elaborate on that thought. In this way, the interpretation of tongues is similar to speaking in tongues or prophecy. When we say one syllable or word, another follows.

The second Hebrew word used in connection with prophecy is *nataf – to let fall like rain.* This word indicates that what God tells us unfolds gradually over time. That is why it is good to write down what the Lord shows us, especially when we are praying repeatedly about certain matters.

The third word for prophecy is *masa – "God's hand", that releases "God's burden"* (Goll, 2012). "God's burden" leads us into intercession for certain people, a region, or a nation. The Lord reveals things to us concerning this area and calls us to intercede!

17 Interpretation: Privately and Publicly

Just as with praying in tongues, there are many different interpretations of tongues. It can be very effective on a personal level, but also within a community. In this way, the Lord can guide us, a particular gathering, a small community, and even the entire church. As it is written at the beginning of the Book of Acts: "... through the Holy Spirit he gave instructions to the apostles whom he had chosen." (Acts 1:2b). Paul describes their personal use as follows:

"For this reason the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that they may interpret what they say."

1. Corinthians 14:13

The principle of interpreting tongues is the same at all levels. So we can interpret tongues for ourselves – afterward or by writing them down. We can also interpret them simultaneously in pairs. Or in a group of people with whom we are praying. In this case, I recommend choosing a common topic for everyone to pray about and then sharing at the end what each person received. Or you can designate one person to interpret the tongues right away. Last but not least, tongues can also be interpreted at a public gathering:

"If anyone speaks in a tongue, two – or at the most three – should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God."

1. Corinthians 14:27-28

However, Paul assumes that we will know one another, and mutual cooperation is expected. We are not supposed to pray *blindly* and wait to see if someone will interpret it. We should know that there is someone in the community capable of interpreting it. Not everyone has the courage (faith) to do this. But with a little practice, we will gain it.

18 We Are of the Same Spirit

I like the way my wife, Stanka, talks about interpretation. She always says that we all have the same Holy Spirit within us. And when we interpret tongues, the Holy Spirit, speaking through one person, begins to say what He Himself is praying in another person:

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body – whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."

1. Corinthians 12:13

So we can truly speak in tongues to ourselves, in pairs, at gatherings, and at prayer meetings. As we mentioned earlier, the Holy Spirit is like streams of living water flowing from within us:

"'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."

John 7:37b-39

When we pray together with others, we see that these streams flowing from within us come together to form one mighty river. And precisely when we are all praying in tongues, one person may begin to interpret those tongues, followed by another; alternatively, during these times of communal prayer, everyone can write down what comes to them – the images and the words. These words usually overlap, complement, and elaborate on one another. People are encouraged by the way the Holy Spirit is working and will become more deeply drawn into these matters.

19 Prayers Together

That is why it is very important to *learn* to pray in tongues together. It might be a little rough at first, but once we learn to focus and clarify what we will be praying for, what kind of tongues we will be praying in, and whether we will be praising the Lord, interceding, or fighting for things in tongues, a wonderful synergy will develop. That way, we will be built up not only as individuals but also as a community. We will be more connected and live more in the fear of God. I believe that thanks to this, we will reach a point where it truly is the Holy Spirit who leads His church:

"Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off."

Acts 13:1-3

We will experience truly *powerful* prayers that will bring results (James 5:16b, Acts 12:5). This will encourage and build us up. But to do this, we need to understand the authority we have on earth through Christ (Matthew 18:18-20), and we need to be in sync in our prayers. I believe that the Holy Spirit is calling the church right now to join in prayer – both globally and locally. Through prayer, we will make decisions that come from the Spirit, not from the flesh; we will see the enemy's weaknesses; and we will begin to penetrate areas where Christianity is not currently present.

20 Seeing in the Spirit

When we pray in tongues and focus our attention, God reveals spiritual reality to us. He wants us to know what is happening, not to remain in the dark. I have noticed that when I pray in tongues regularly and extensively, the Spirit reveals so many things to me that I cannot even keep up with them all. That is why I have learned to divide these revelations from the Holy Spirit into three basic categories.

Sometimes God shows me what is happening in the spiritual world, and my role is simply to pray for these things so that they actually come to pass and nothing stands in their way. At other times, the Holy Spirit lays on my heart things He wants to bring to pass, and my role is to set them in motion through prayer so they may come to existence. I am learning to trust the Lord that He will place them on someone else's heart so they can carry them out. And the third category consists of things I know I am supposed to do myself. Naturally, I strive to do these properly and in a timely manner.

Praying in tongues has led me into a completely different life of faith. It is no longer a matter of taking steps "blindly" "by faith," but rather of seeing things in the Spirit, acting on them, and then being in the right place at the right time. Moreover, this brings glory to our Lord. For God's things are, in fact, "eternal" things:

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

2. Corinthians 4:17-18

And that is the kind of life we want to live – to live according to what is happening in the Spirit and to shape it, rather than merely reacting to what we see around us (John 3:8).

21 The Holy Spirit Is Practical

Since the Holy Spirit knows everything that happens on earth, He is very practical – the things He tells us and reveals to us can therefore have a very practical impact on our daily lives. The disciples in Antioch also saw this for themselves:

"During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea."

Acts 11:27-29

And we see that not only did they receive the word from the Lord, but *the entire* church began to act in accordance with that word. Personally, I have had several practical experiences with the Holy Spirit, although none have yet reached the magnitude of what Agabus and the others experienced. For example, I used to pray in tongues before sitting down to write my bachelor's thesis. Typically, what would happen was that during prayer I would gather my thoughts, and then I would sit down and write and write and write. My work was much more efficient and faster that way. Another time, I was chopping wood at a friend's cabin and wanted to speed up the work somehow. I prayed in tongues for a while and received a vision of what to do to make the work go faster. And it really worked. Similarly, my friend Jolana was doing some renovations in her apartment – exactly as the Holy Spirit led her. But I believe that as the body of Christ, if we continue to grow in praying in tongues, we will see even greater things (1 Corinthians 12:26).

22 Let Him Lead!

Through the interpretation of tongues, we can receive a wide range of prophetic words, just as we do through other forms of prophecy. For example, God may use the interpretation of tongues to warn us about bad decisions (Matthew 1:20). At other times, He may show us our next steps or provide solutions to situations (Matthew 2:19–22, Genesis 20:3–7). At other times, through the interpretation of tongues, the Lord may reveal the condition of our hearts or our wrong attitudes (Proverbs 20:27). Furthermore, through praying in tongues and the interpretation of tongues, our lives take on an entirely different *prophetic dimension*. The apostle Paul knew this well. The Lord guided him in Corinth as follows:

"One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: 'Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.'"

Acts 18:9-10

I believe that when we respond to God, we will begin to see how everything makes sense, and our lives will gradually find their rightful place. We will become part of God's symphony, where everything makes perfect sense. This is true both in our personal lives and in the church. Paul writes that we are truly part of God's plans and His calling when we live in Christ, not when we live according to the flesh, in a human way. Only in Him can we avoid missing the mark (Ephesians 2:10). If we want to live according to our new nature – according to Christ in us – we need to adopt His mind, His way of thinking. This applies both as individuals and as a whole. And this is closely connected to cooperating with the Holy Spirit. It is impossible to live the new life by our own strength or human wisdom.

23 Revelation

Other aspects of the interpretation of tongues are described in 1 Corinthians:

"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified. Now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction?"

1. Corinthians 14:5-6

The word "now" indicates that the first statement implies the second. Paul speaks of the interpretation of tongues and follows up by discussing "revelation, knowledge, prophecy, and teaching". By this, he means that these very things come through interpretation. Revelation, in Greek *apokalypsis*, means *revelation, disclosure, instruction.* Through revelation, God reveals to us who we are, what His plans are here, and what we are to do. We can note that Paul says that it pleased God to "reveal" His Son in him (Galatians 1:15–16), and elsewhere, that God revealed things to His apostles and prophets (Ephesians 3:5). There are many other passages that speak of revelation. Revelations are those "aha" moments when we suddenly *know.* This certainty is the language of Heaven and unleashes faith. The mind thinks, but the spirit *knows.* Revelation is not something mysterious – it is quite the opposite. God shows us who we are and who He is. The devil has blinded our minds and hidden the truth from us. And it is precisely the Holy Spirit who reveals the truth to us:

"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

2. Corinthians 4:4

24 Prophecy and Admonition

Let's look at other aspects of the interpretation of tongues described in 1 Corinthians 14:5–6. Second, Paul mentions *prophecy.* It serves to edify, admonish, encourage, and comfort.

"But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort."

1. Corinthians 14:3

In his letter to Timothy, Paul emphasizes that Timothy is to fight the good fight of faith *through* prophecy:

"Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well, holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith."

1. Timothy 1:18-19

And I believe that among these words – that, together with faith and a clear conscience, enable us to fight the good fight of faith – are words that build up, admonish, and comfort. Not just some of them. Encouragement or admonition, in Greek *paraklesis*, is meant to draw us *closer to Christ.* More into His likeness and image (Colossians 1:28). Admonition has often been misunderstood in the church, and thus, people fear it. But if it is properly understood and applied, there is nothing to fear. Who among us would not want to be admonished if it transforms us more into the likeness of God (Proverbs 12:1)?

25 Comfort

Similarly, comfort – Greek *paramythia* – is a very neglected manifestation of the Holy Spirit today. The Holy Spirit gives us comfort in difficult life situations. For example, through the interpretation of tongues, the Lord gave comfort to John Lake after the death of his wife (Liardon, 1999). Thanks to this, even though he was greatly weakened and was simultaneously fighting for the life of his infant son, who was only a few months old, he was able to continue his mission in South Africa and expand this work of God for another three and a half years. Through praying in tongues and their interpretation, he was strengthened by God, and these adverse circumstances did not overwhelm him. The Apostle Paul also speaks of how the Holy Spirit comforts – or encourages (depending on the translation) – in *any* affliction:

"the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

2. Corinthians 1:3b-4

It is wonderful that no matter what happens in our lives, God enables us not to focus on our own problems, but rather to comfort and encourage others. So let's not forget God's instrument of comfort: praying in tongues combined with interpretation.

The Apostle Paul indicates that everything that comes through the interpretation of tongues – from revelation to knowledge, prophecy, and comfort – builds up us or the church. Through the Holy Spirit's work, we are being shaped, step by step, into God's Holy Temple, into Christ.

26 Knowledge and Teaching

Other forms of interpreting tongues mentioned are knowledge and teaching. *Knowledge* – or words of knowledge – comes to us when we pray for specific people and situations, and the Lord reveals to us things and truths that we could not know on our own. Revelation can also be connected with *knowing* God – not only on a theoretical level, but on an experiential level. Hosea even says that because of a lack of knowledge, we are perishing; the enemy is tearing us apart because we do not know who we are or what God is like, and we cannot serve as priests:

"my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. 'Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests;'"

Hosea 4:6a

Teaching is just as important. God Himself wants to teach His church. We are merely His mouthpieces through which He does so. It has happened to me countless times that, while preparing a sermon, the Holy Spirit Himself guided me, gave me revelation on specific topics, and showed me the structure and format for presenting even the same topics in different congregations. The Holy Spirit builds His church, and we must be available to Him so that He can do so.

Speaking in tongues truly brings understanding of God's Word. It happens to me regularly that I am reading the Bible and suddenly the Holy Spirit explains it to me – He gives me visions of the texts, reminds me of other verses, and things begin to make sense to me. And if He wants to do this for me, He wants to do it for each one of us as well. God does not show favoritism to anyone. All you have to do is believe that He wants to teach you and accept His instruction. He is looking forward to us making room for Him.

27 Discernment of the Spirits

I also use praying in tongues and the interpretation of tongues when *discerning* spirits. This applies whether it is regarding various matters that come to me or in various situations and decisions where I am not entirely sure.

"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God."

1. John 4:1-3a

My practice is as follows. I pray in tongues for a particular matter or situation and turn it over in my mind. As I do this, the matter or situation begins to "unfold" for me. That is when I begin to see the motives of individual people or the intentions behind why certain music was created. At other times, I discern that I have images and thoughts in my mind from a spirit other than the Spirit of God – for example, from the spirit of death or fear. I cannot imagine how people can function without discerning spirits. How can I discern that I am not caught up in religion, legalism, spiritual fornication, or manipulation? These are all things each of us needs to deal with. God's Word, praying in tongues, and discerning spirits are truly excellent tools for this discernment. At the same time, thanks to them, we can make the right decisions at work or in spiritual warfare. We can practice discerning spirits at any level – whether personal, church-wide, or global. We can act on this discernment at the very least in the areas we are responsible for; at other times, we can pass on the information to those who can do something with it.

28 Everyone Has Something

Let's now look at the following passage, also from 1 Corinthians, chapter 14. It is frequently cited by critics of large church gatherings, who argue that this text cannot be fulfilled in large gatherings, but only in smaller home groups:

"What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up."

1. Corinthians 14:26

Of course, I understand that in a gathering of a hundred people, it is hard for everyone to have a chance to speak. However, when we consider this passage in context, we see that it is not discussing the size of the gathering, but rather speaking in tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and prophecy. If we compare this passage with verse 6 of the same chapter, we see that they clearly correlate – both speak of the interpretation of tongues and of teaching, revelation, and the edification of the church. In my opinion, the conclusion is clear. If we want everyone to have something to say at a gathering, it is not about the number of people present. Rather, let's lead everyone to pray in tongues and interpret them, and we will see that everyone will always have something to say. For God is alive and loves to speak.

During our time of prayer together, we can also notice that everyone contributes slightly different words, and, when combined, form God's harmony. Some bring strategic words and visions; others emphasize words about a personal relationship with God and purity; still others focus on how to bring the gospel to unbelievers; and others highlight teachings or remind us of other people so that we do not forget them. So let us not pray only on our own, lest we become too one-sided.

29 The Conviction of Unbelievers

I would like to emphasize once again that it is truly important to concentrate while praying in tongues. The fruit is evident. When we pray, for example, for specific people, words of knowledge about them come to us, and when we share those words, it convicts them and leads to the fear of God:

"But if an unbeliever or an inquirer comes in while everyone is prophesying, they are convicted of sin and are brought under judgment by all, as the secrets of their hearts are laid bare. So they will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'"

1. Corinthians 14:24-25

Yes, this passage speaks of prophecy, not the interpretation of tongues, but let's not forget that the *entire* chapter deals with praying in tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and prophecy – and that tongues, when interpreted, serve the same function as prophecy. The difference is that when interpreting, you essentially pray in tongues and then release what the Spirit has spoken into language we can understand. In prophecy, you begin to speak from God even without the interpretation of tongues.

In addition, every now and then – for example, at work, or when I am just walking somewhere with someone – thoughts about that person start coming to me out of the blue. It is as if I have read that person completely in a split second. I think this is also a fruit of regular prayer in tongues. Praying in tongues works like a dynamo. God knows who we will meet and when, so when we pray in tongues, we store up God's power, which is released when it is needed.

30 What Does Isaiah Think about That?

Let's break down this interpretation a bit further. When Paul was writing the New Covenant, he had the Old Covenant and the Holy Spirit at his disposal. Paul therefore had to find the foundation for his teachings in the Old Covenant. Let's look back at Isaiah 28. We have already discussed verses 10–12, that are about building, God's communication, and rest. Let's look at the surrounding verses:

"And these also stagger from wine and reel from beer: Priests and prophets stagger from beer and are befuddled with wine; they reel from beer, they stagger when seeing visions, they stumble when rendering decisions. All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth. "Who is it he is trying to teach? To whom is he explaining his message? To children weaned from their milk, to those just taken from the breast? For it is: Do this, do that, a rule for this, a rule for that; a little here, a little there.""

Isaiah 28:7-13

Isaiah speaks of people who get drunk, and then he moves on to those whom the Lord will *teach knowledge* and whom He will *teach to understand*. Is not this similar to what Paul writes about the Holy Spirit? That we are not to get drunk on wine, but to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)? And that we *build ourselves up* through tongues, and through tongues come *teaching and knowledge* (1 Corinthians 14:2–6)? This passage speaks to this very point, as it is also referenced in other places (1 Corinthians 14:21). Furthermore, let us note the consequence of our ignorance of tongues – if they are merely gibberish to us, "one instruction after another", we are not headed for a good outcome. The Holy Spirit wants to guide us and show us the way through tongues and their interpretation.

31 The Holy Spirit – the Teacher

For the Holy Spirit Himself is our teacher, guide, and counselor:

"However, as it is written: 'What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived' – the things God has prepared for those who love him – these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us."

1. Corinthians 2:9-12

God has given us everything through Christ – forgiveness, deliverance, healing, blessings, and provision. But without the Holy Spirit, we cannot grasp this; He was given to us so that we might know what God has given us. Mere logic and memorization are not enough for this; we need to humble ourselves before God and let Him explain it to us Himself. And that is what He does – not with human words, but with spiritual ones – impressions, images, dreams, visions, "aha" moments (1 Corinthians 2:13). This is the *wisdom that the world does not know* (1 Corinthians 2:6–8). Wisdom that is destined for *our glory*. Then he goes on to say that these are things that "the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, and have not even entered the human heart". He then adds that God has revealed these things *to us*, those who love Him. Paul does not even place these revelations in the future, but says that they are here and now and that they come through God's Spirit. It is not through mathematics, nor through history, nor through AI. The Holy Spirit searches *everything*, even the depths of God. He can therefore give us revelation about *anything*, even if we ourselves do not know it. For God Himself lives within us.

32 The Mind of Christ

This brings us to the topic of sonship. When the Holy Spirit came to dwell in us, He came to dwell in us with His own mind – the mind of Christ.

"for, »Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?« But we have the mind of Christ."

1. Corinthians 2:16

And He gave it to us precisely so that we might understand Him, know Him, and comprehend Him. How can we *work together* with someone if we are not on the same wavelength? People say that "God's ways are higher than our ways", but that may not apply to us. If we do not know God's Word, we do not know His ways (Isaiah 55:8–13). That is precisely why the Apostle Paul urges us to transform our minds through God's Word:

"How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 'Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?' (...) Therefore, I urge you,(...)Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Romans 11.33b-34.12:1a.12:2

And that is also why God gave us His Spirit – to *instill* His way of thinking in us. So if we study God's Word and submit to the Spirit of God, we will begin to understand God's ways, and they will become our ways as well. We will stop thinking *fleshly*, but will become spiritually minded people. And so we will begin to understand God and the spiritual world. This will also help us grasp the broader context of world events, because this world responds to spiritual influences.

33 Trained by God

We are God's children, created in His image. God has given us His mind, His way of thinking. But it is up to us whether we use it. Have you noticed that Peter writes that He awakens our "pure mind" within us? So we can have a pure mind – God's mind – but we do not have to use it. If we want to use it, we need to nourish it and awaken it:

"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance"

2. Peter 3:1 (KJV)

The Holy Spirit awakens this way of thinking within us. For the mind of the Spirit is life and peace in every situation, at every stage of life, and in every aspect of our lives (Romans 8:6). Peace in our relationships, life for our bodies, and provision for our finances. It is God's way of thinking, in which there is no room for any lack, anxiety, fear, disappointment, or worry. It is the mind of the Spirit, who possesses all power, all experience, and all knowledge. And He has moved into us with all of this and wants to *pass it on* to us. We will not think like ordinary people who operate in the carnal mind. *Carnal* means *taught by the five senses.* It is a way of thinking based on our experiences. It is a very limited way of thinking. I remember that when we were launching the National Revival initiative (Národní Probuzení) and I was supposed to call individual bishops of the Czech churches, I felt inferior; I had no experience with that kind of communication. But during our prayers, God released His way of thinking and His feelings into me. Everything then went smoothly. When we allow God to work within us, we will gradually be taught by Him (1 Chronicles 28:19, John 6:45).

34 Sonship

Without revelation from the Holy Spirit, we have no understanding of our sonship – our true identity, that God gives us:

"Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.' So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir."

Galatians 4:6-7

We will never be able to grasp who we are in Christ, what our inheritance is, or that God has given us *everything* in Christ unless the Holy Spirit *reveals* it to us:

"But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles..."

Galatians 1:15-16a

I cannot imagine the Spirit revealing our identity to us as He intends without praying in tongues. Understanding who we are is crucial for our *new life*. For we are no longer people of the *Adam* type; we are people of the *Christ* type, and we truly cannot learn how to live out this new humanity from the world around us. To understand how to live out who we are in Christ, we need revelation from God; we need to be taught by Him. Let's also note the purpose of this revelation – so that we may proclaim the gospel. If we do not know who we have become, we will not even know exactly what we are supposed to proclaim to people.

35 Let's Think Like Adults

When Paul tells us to be mature in our thinking, he is speaking in the context of praying in tongues and interpreting them. We are not to think and act based on our own experiences, but on God's way of thinking and His experiences. As His children and heirs, we are to use everything He has given us.

"Brothers and sisters, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults."

1. Corinthians 14:20

When it comes to evil, we are to be like infants, but in our thinking we are to be mature. And he says this immediately after the passage where he emphasizes that he speaks in tongues more than anyone else and that God has chosen tongues as His means of communication.

Well, we need to be spiritually mature, not ignorant of spiritual matters. When we move into functioning in the mind of Christ, we will see the future, we will be in the right place at the right time, we will abound in wisdom, and we will make progress and discoveries for God's glory. And the verses we mentioned in the introduction will be fulfilled:

"We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began."

1. Corinthians 2:6-7

36 When Will Tongues Cease

Tongues will eventually cease, but not with the death of the apostles – rather, with the coming of the fullness. This is likely why Jesus himself did not speak in tongues:

"Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears."

1. Corinthians 13:8-10

When we reach the fullness of our humanity, we will walk in sonship, just as Jesus walked. Tongues will no longer be needed. We will know everyone and heal everyone. We will know the Father fully. We will understand our identity. We will have not only *knowledge* but also the *experience* of God's sons through daily practice (Greek: *epignōsis*). Everything will be revealed to us. We will be fully built up. We will walk in the fullness of the Spirit. And then there will be no reason for ministries or for praying in tongues. But until we get there – let's practice, train ourselves, and pray in tongues.

If we cannot imagine what it means to be transformed by the Spirit, let's take an example from the opposite end of the spiritual spectrum: reincarnation. People believe that before his death, the Dalai Lama determines where the next Dalai Lama will be born and then reincarnates. The reality, however, is that the spirit dwelling within the Dalai Lama reveals, before his host's death, whom it will next inhabit. It then moves to the place it has indicated. This young boy is then taught everything as the Dalai Lama, and that spirit imparts its thoughts and experiences to him, transforming him into its own image. Eventually, the boy exhibits the same character traits and way of thinking as every other Dalai Lama.

37 What Are We Missing?

Now that we know all about tongues, the potential of the Holy Spirit within us, and the ways to work with Him, the question arises: What is missing for us to enter a different dimension of life with God? The answer is simple: discipline, patience, and perseverance (Luke 18:1-8). These qualities are also among the fruits of the Holy Spirit, but they are often lacking in our lives (Galatians 5:22–23). Perseverance is also something Jesus mentions and that produced results in the early church (Acts 12:5, Hebrews 6:12, Hebrews 10:36). It is similar to the world of sports – there are plenty of talented runners, soccer players, and athletes, but not everyone has the discipline needed to reach the top and stay there. That requires not only talent but also willpower and determination. The same is true in spiritual matters. Paul makes this clear to Timothy:

"Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer."

2. Timothy 2:3-4

If we want to see results in our spiritual lives, we must commit ourselves to God and surrender completely to Him. It fascinates me how many people in the world – and even in the church – are willing to sacrifice their comfort, diet, and time for the sake of sports, business, or other forms of success, yet are unable to give up anything for the sake of progress in spiritual matters. I think that because of this, we are missing out on a lot. So I want to challenge you: set aside time for God; pray – pray every day for 15 minutes, half an hour, an hour, two hours, as much as you can – and you will not regret it. At first, it might take a little effort, but eventually we will get used to it.

38 Do not Wait – Take Action

Let us note that throughout God's Word, God spoke to people. He spoke, for example, to Moses, Elijah, and the apostles Peter and Paul. If we read these passages carefully, we will notice that God's voice led these men of God to *act* in accordance with God's Word. It is, in fact, a great privilege and honor to act in faith in God's Word. When we act on the basis of God's Word – whether written or revealed to us – it unleashes God's power. Acting in faith, the gospel, and God's power are, in fact, closely connected:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed – a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: »The righteous will live by faith.«"

Romans 1:16-17

And the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 44:3-5) already writes that the release of God's power – His presence – has a positive effect. The fruit of courage and boldness is that, thanks to God, our lives will stand out in our society. For we are blessed, and *we are a blessing*. But the Bible also speaks of the consequences of our inaction. For example, because of Elijah's laxity in the period following Mount Carmel, Israel suffered completely needlessly under Jezebel's rule for another decade, until his disciple Elisha fulfilled what God had wanted Elijah to do (1 Kings 19:15–21, 2 Kings 8:7–15, 9:1–37). We cannot afford such a "luxury". We are in a covenant with God – He is there to help us when we ask for something, but we should also be there when He asks of us. It is a two-way relationship (Joshua 9:1–10:15).

39 A Just Government

Isaiah, in fact, speaks about tongues in one more passage. In it, he connects stammering tongues with understanding – even for the thoughtless – with our identity, and with righteous government. These are all aspects we have already discussed, but I would like us to see that they are all interconnected. Let's start with tongues and understanding:

"Then the eyes of those who see will no longer be closed, and the ears of those who hear will listen. The fearful heart will know and understand, and the stammering tongue will be fluent and clear."

Isaiah 32:3-4

But just before that, the passage speaks of kings and priests and their righteous rule. And when we realize our New Testament identity – that we are kings and priests – we will understand that the entire passage is speaking about us, about praying in tongues, about the understanding it will bring us, and about what we are to do here on earth:

"See, a king will reign in righteousness and rulers will rule with justice. Each one will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in the desert and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land."

Isaiah 32:1-2

Let's also consider the effect this will have on those around us. *Each* of us will be like *a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in a parched land, like the shade of a mighty rock in a thirsty land.* Is not this the same as what we said at the beginning of the book? That the Holy Spirit flows from us like a river and irrigates the surrounding landscape?

40 Celebrate God within You

I believe it's now clearer to all of us that the whole world is waiting for us:

"The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Present Suffering and Future Glory I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed."

Romans 8:15-19

Let's not keep the world waiting! God Himself wants to shine through us (Mark 6:53–56). And this is a great truth – God has moved into us, humbled Himself to our level, so that through His Spirit He might lift us up to *His* level. And this applies to power, love, and thinking alike. For we have *the mind of Christ*, meaning that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we are able to think at God's level of thinking. God wants to give us genius in business, exceptional wisdom, or wants to heal people through us. God wants the church to be the answer to this world. Paul put it beautifully in his letter to the Galatians:

"And they praised God because of me."

Galatians 1:24

But the original text reads: "And they praised God *in* me." And that is how it is. God lives within us and wants to make Himself known to this world through us. Let us stop thinking about ourselves and start becoming aware of *God* within us.

Testimonies

Supervising Theses: When I was pursuing my Ph.D. in economics, I once prayed that I would supervise two theses. Within just two weeks, two students contacted me, and I did indeed supervise their theses. I also prayed for two projects involving international or inter-institutional collaborators, and within two weeks I received two offers. In the end, though, it was a lot of work, so I told myself I would never pray for that again.

What do you see?: When I started praying in tongues regularly, I spent half a year just praying every day. I did not see or perceive anything; I had not been taught anything about praying in tongues or their interpretation. I just knew that the Apostle Paul prayed a lot. Once, I was praying over Skype with my friend Filip, and I noticed that he kept his eyes closed and was moving back and forth while praying. I asked him what he did while praying in tongues. He said that the Holy Spirit was showing him various things in the spirit. From that time on, I, too, began to concentrate while praying in tongues, and I immediately noticed that images I had already seen were recurring – I just had not paid attention to them before. Then, once I started paying attention to them, my ability to interpret tongues developed further.

Write a presentation: Two months after my first experience with speaking in tongues, I fasted for 40 days without food, and during the last third of the fast, I was already quite tired. The Lord told me then to pray in tongues for one hour straight every day for the last 12 days. I obeyed Him, even though I was not used to it. During my prayers, I then saw a series of visions about how I was to write down teachings in the form of presentations on two topics – fasting and water baptism. Immediately after my prayer, I got to work. It

was my first experience of God using tongues and interpretation to lead me to write a *teaching*.

Preparing a sermon: Since then, however, this has become standard practice for me. I remember how, in 2019, my friends and I went on a tour of Czech congregations, visiting five congregations in five days. In each one, we taught about healing, went out with the locals to evangelize, then taught about prophecy and practiced prophecy. My teaching topics were always the same, but while preparing, I always prayed in tongues, and in every city, different points of emphasis came to me that needed to be highlighted.

Writing Books: Similarly, the first two books I wrote came to me during my regular prayers in tongues. One time, as I was praying, the structure of a book on prophecy played out in my mind, chapter by chapter. Three days later, while praying, the structure of a book on healing "came" to me – paradoxically, it was completely different from the one on prophecy. After that, all I had to do was sit down and write them. They came to me two months before the outbreak of COVID-19. The great thing was that I had already written 60% of the book on healing right when the COVID-19 pandemic began. After I finished writing the book, we sent it to all the Czech congregations.

What bears more fruit? When we lived in Žižkov, the Lord gave me a choice. I saw that I could either start a ministry with young people in the neighborhood, or I could begin mobilizing God's church throughout the country, thereby bringing dozens of people into ministry – that, in the end, would bear far greater fruit. So I chose the latter, even though it meant that I suddenly began to see fewer people being converted or fewer healings on a daily basis. I began to devote myself more to the people in the church than to street ministry, but it was worth it.

CBH: I also pray regularly for my home church, CBH Prague, and its leadership. When I saw that there was no group for mothers with children, I prayed, and within six months one was formed (though I am sure others were praying as well). I also pray for the leadership, and year after year I see more and more people entering into their callings in Christ – and I have even been offered the opportunity to help lead the congregation.

Church Retreat: Once, during a church retreat, I was talking with a friend from the congregation. I cannot really say that anything came to me, but I started voicing thoughts like: "God is showing you that you should also write a book – for children, about 50 pages long with pictures". Her answers to all my questions were "Yes." She also told me that I had repeated a prophecy she had once received. By this I mean that praying in tongues is like a dynamo – the Holy Spirit within us knows whom we will meet, and at the right time releases a word of knowledge that comes to us as a thought, even though at first glance we would not even realize we had received a word of knowledge.

Connect Training Camps: In the fall of 2020, during the lockdown, the Lord showed me that we should prepare a series of our training events – the Connect Training Camps – for June through September of the following year, focused on teaching and God's power. Despite the lockdowns, we continued our preparations, and when the restrictions ended in May 2021, we were ready. Over the summer, we held a series of 11 events throughout the Czech Republic, helping to revitalize the church, that had been put on hold due to COVID. We involved 15 young people in preaching at these events and connected with many interesting people. Shortly after our summer series ended, we met again, and after reorganizing, we began planning another powerful wave of events for the winter of 2022.

Kingdom of Heaven: Before the third series of Connect Training Camps, in late February 2022, the Lord laid it on my heart to hold a larger event in the fall – Kingdom of Heaven – where we would invite people who attend our events, and where various members of the Czech church would share their visions. We saw that the Lord wanted to advance networking within the Czech church and the sharing of expertise. And even though I had no preference whatsoever for large conferences – let alone organizing them – we went ahead and held an event where leaders from AC, Milost, the Salvation Army, CB, and other denominations shared their insights. Who am I to stand in God's way! 130 adults and 20 children attended. The event was a great success. The following year, we even organized two conferences of similar size.

LGBT: Once I was invited to speak on Radio Wave. A day and a half beforehand, I fasted and prayed in tongues. I sensed what they would ask me and how I should respond. They asked me about LGBT issues, and according to the pastor, my answers contained "wisdom from heaven". Another time, I was praying for my Sunday sermon, and the characteristics of various spirits and dangers – occultism, LGBT issues, and others – came to me. Somehow, it did not fit into the outline of my sermon, so I left it out. After the service, I found out that there was a girl there who wanted to undergo gender reassignment surgery, and I know that if I had said what came to me, it would have touched her deeply. Next time, I need to be more discerning.

Marital Community Property (MCP): Sometimes I preach on assigned topics that I do not fully understand. For example, I once preached at CBH Prague on the topic of marriage. I did not know how to approach the topic; I only knew the basic Bible verses. I began praying in tongues about the topic, and the Lord led me to

reflect on joint marital property, joint bank accounts, and representation between spouses. He showed me that with God (that is the example Paul uses to explain marriage; see Ephesians 5:21–33), we can have joint property – what is ours belongs to God and vice versa – but that many of us prefer to keep separate accounts and property arrangements with God. That is a shame for us, since "the whole earth and everything in it" belongs to God (Psalms 24:1). At the same time, he began to show me the limits of trust between spouses in our society. We can often handle matters on behalf of our spouse only by virtue of a power of attorney, yet God trusts us unconditionally, and from the moment of our rebirth, we can act *in His* name!

Revelation: At other times, the Lord shows me how the spiritual world works. For example, He showed me how various similar movements arise around the world, independently of one another. It was not because people had agreed to do so, but because a certain spirit (not necessarily God's) began to act in multiple places at once. At other times, He has shown me that things and ideas in the physical world truly arise from invisible things. Take Alza, for example, with its slogan: "Order tonight, it is in your AlzaBox by morning." Does not that remind you that we are to believe that whatever we pray for, we are to believe we have it *right away* (Mark 11:22–24)?

Things in Motion: When I pray in tongues, I often find that things seem to fall into place for me. I prayed for the Jesus Tram project, and that very same day, a pastor contacted me to say he wanted to support it. In the end, he and his congregation donated 50,000. Another time, I prayed for connections with business people, and that very same day, a man – whom I did not even know was in business – invited me to lunch. However, he is in business, and we are still in touch to this day. When we pray in tongues, we are creating a path – a future – that we then simply step into. If we pray in tongues

only when we are in trouble, the Holy Spirit will help us out. But if we limit it to just that, it is a shame.

Zruč: Back before the pandemic, my wife and I felt that we should buy a piece of land. In the end, we bought a plot in Zruč nad Sázavou. I knew that God intended to build a training center there. However, after some planning and drawing up the plans, we realized that in addition to the land, we should also buy a specific little house that was located nearby and happened to be for sale. We bought it, and now we use it to house missionaries who have returned from a mission or are about to go on one. The first missionaries arrived there just one month after we purchased the house. Furthermore, after we began advertising the house, at least three people from across the country contacted us, saying that Zruč had been close to their hearts for a long time and asking how the work there was going. Given that I personally have no historical connection to Zruč, I believe the Holy Spirit wanted to do something there, and through tongues and interpretation, we began to build it up. Similarly, Oral Roberts built the entire ORU university.

The Spiritual Realm: I pray regularly – for practically everything. I also pray for the events we organize with Connect and the National Revival. Once, I was praying in tongues like this on the eve of our event in Třinec, and suddenly I sensed some kind of evil spiritual being coming toward me from the Třinec region to Prague. I sensed it enter our bedroom, and suddenly I felt as if it were sucking all the life out of me – it was something like a Dementor. All at once, I felt hopelessness, apathy, and emptiness. The only thing that came to mind was to turn toward it and pray in tongues. I realized that no matter how I felt, I had authority over it. So I turned toward it and began to pray in authority; I spoke to it about the things of God

that await us, and that it would not stop us, and that it must leave. After a few minutes, it left, and everything returned to normal.

Receiving the Holy Spirit

If we are not speaking in tongues, let's now look at how to receive the Holy Spirit. The first important step is to *be born again*, to be born of the Spirit (John 3:3-8). This is done by giving our lives to Jesus in prayer, asking Him to forgive our sins, and accepting Him as our Lord and Savior into our hearts. At that moment, God's Spirit revives our spirit and becomes one with it (Romans 8:17, 1 Corinthians 6:17). At that moment, we are born of the Spirit; we have received the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). The word *receive* here means to accept immediately, without delay.

At this point, however, we still have not experienced what the *apostles experienced in the beginning* (Acts 11:15–16, Acts 15:8). Note that even though these people were born again and, according to the Gospel of John, *received* the Holy Spirit, this was not enough for the apostles:

"When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."

Acts 8:14-17

Here in Samaria, we see that the people believed and were baptized in water, but the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon them, and that is why the apostles came to them. The apostle Paul also assumed that people do not necessarily receive the Holy Spirit when they believe:

"and asked them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' They answered, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' So Paul asked, 'Then what baptism did you receive?' 'John's baptism,' they replied. Paul said, 'John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.' On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied."

Acts 19:2-6

And we can see that this was truly crucial for Paul – in fact, it was the very first thing he asked about! I do not want to get into whether you receive the Holy Spirit at the moment of your new birth, as the Apostle John writes, or whether you receive Him through the baptism of the Spirit, as we see in the Book of Acts, but I want you to desire to experience what the apostles experienced – the baptism of the Spirit with speaking in tongues. It is promised to us, to our children, and to all whom our Lord calls (Acts 2:39). This was crucial for the apostles. That was what they were seeking, because they knew that baptism in the Holy Spirit – being immersed in Him – is the very pinnacle and culmination of Jesus' earthly ministry (Acts 2:33, Acts 19:1–7). And they regarded *praying in tongues* as a clear sign of this (Acts 10:44–48). If we have not yet experienced speaking in tongues, let us pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for being immersed in Him. Some call this *the second experience*; others simply see it as another level of surrender to God. Nevertheless, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we surrender ourselves to Him, surrender our tongue to Him, and allow Him to speak through us.

In Acts, people received the baptism of the Holy Spirit before water baptism, after water baptism, spontaneously, or through the laying on of hands by someone who had already been baptized in the Spirit. Some received it immediately upon their new birth. We can

therefore pray for it at any time; we simply need to pay attention to the thoughts and syllables swirling in our minds and begin to speak them. The Holy Spirit is not a reward for good behavior; on the contrary, He helps us live a sinless life and triumph over the old self (Romans 8:12–14). Let us pray for the baptism of the Spirit on our own at home and expect the Lord to baptize us. If we are unable to receive the baptism, let us find someone who has already been baptized by the Spirit, and let that person lay hands on us and pray.

Discerning the Words Received

When we talk about praying in tongues and the interpretation of tongues, it is not enough just to *listen.* We must also *test* the words we receive (1 Thessalonians 5:21). For the Holy Spirit is not the only spiritual being who communicates with people. When reading the Bible, we can see that, in addition to the Holy Spirit, angels and even the Devil commonly communicated with people. That is why the Bible itself instructs us not to believe every inspiration, but to test what is from God and what is not (1 John 4:1–6). Distinguishing the Holy Spirit from an angel is not difficult. The Holy Spirit speaks from within us (Acts 8:29), while an angel speaks from the outside, unless he happens to appear to us in a dream (Acts 8:26). Nevertheless, the direction and fruit of the work of both the Holy Spirit and angels are the same [1].

Let us realize, however, that the Devil likes to disguise himself as an angel of light. This means that, at first glance, his speech may even resemble God's way of communicating. Jesus also warns us that we will hear the voice of the enemy as well (John 10:4–5). We are to follow Jesus' voice, but not the voice of the enemy. For God has good intentions for us, but the Devil tries to *lead us astray.*

Even the words we think come from God need to be discerned. For God dwells within us, in our spirit, and all His words flow through our mind and only then through our mouths. And it is precisely in our minds that we often adjust prophecies according to *our own understanding* of the Bible, our worldview, or our theology. That is why it is important to be attentive when both conveying and receiving prophetic words. This is different from the Old Covenant. Back then, God spoke to the prophets "from the outside", "whispering in their

[1] This entire section is abridged from Bajzík *a kol.* (2021)

ears". They relayed His words to the people exactly as they received them, even if they did not understand them. If they misquoted something, the punishment was stoning. Today, we no longer need to fear stoning. On the other hand, not everything we perceive is relevant.

Based on the reasons mentioned above, we will now look at the basic principles for filtering words, thoughts, and prophecies. For clarity, we have numbered the basic principles of discernment(Prince, 2001; Vallotton, 2014):

1. **Does the Word we receive bring us closer to God?** God wants to reveal Himself and the future to people (Genesis 18:17–33). But He wants us to know both Him and the future *from Him*, and not from any other source (Deuteronomy 18:9–13).
2. **Does the word we have received exalt Jesus?** Jesus should be the central figure of all prophecy and all other revelations that come to us (John 16:13, Colossians 2:18-19).
3. **Does the message we receive agree with Scripture?** God's Word is inspired by the Holy Spirit and helps us discern whether what comes to us is truly from the Spirit (Hebrews 4:12).
4. **Is the goal of the spoken word to encourage and edify?** The purpose of prophecy is *edification, exhortation, and comfort* (1 Corinthians 14:3). Paul even says that *everything* we say should edify others (Ephesians 4:29).
5. **Does the Word we have received give us freedom, or does it bring slavery?** The Holy Spirit gives freedom, not fear or anxiety (Romans 8:15). We must therefore be careful not only about what we say, but also about the spirit in whom we speak (1. Corinthians 14:33, 2. Corinthians 4:13, Galatians 6:1, 2. Timothy 1:7).

6. **Is the word we have received in harmony with the fruit of the Holy Spirit?** The Holy Spirit is a being of steadfast character (Galatians 5:22–23, Ephesians 5:9). And so the fruit that His work produces is consistent with that character (Matthew 7:15-20).

7. **Has the prophecy been fulfilled?** In the Old Testament, any prophecy that did not come to pass was not from God (Deuteronomy 18:18–22). On the other hand, even though God's plans for us are clear and good, the attitude we take toward them is also important. Prophecy is sometimes like a compass pointing to God's *purpose* (Luke 7:29–30). If we do not pray for it and strive for its fulfillment, it is practically useless to us. (Daniel 9:2-4).

8. **Does the word we receive resonate with our spirit?** Another advantage of the New Covenant is that each of us can *know God* (Hebrews 8:10). Paul writes in Romans that "the Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16). Clearly, it is important that the word we receive resonates with our "inner" being. In other words, that it brings peace within us (Colossians 3:15).

As we gain experience in receiving words from the Lord, these "tests" become second nature to us, and over time we perform them automatically. However, it is good to remind ourselves of them so that we do not lose sight of them. It is important to learn to be consistently "tuned in" to God's wavelength and to discern which thoughts are from the Lord and which are not (Acts 2:25). This is important because those that are not from Him stand in opposition to the knowledge of Him Himself (2. Corinthians 10:3-5).

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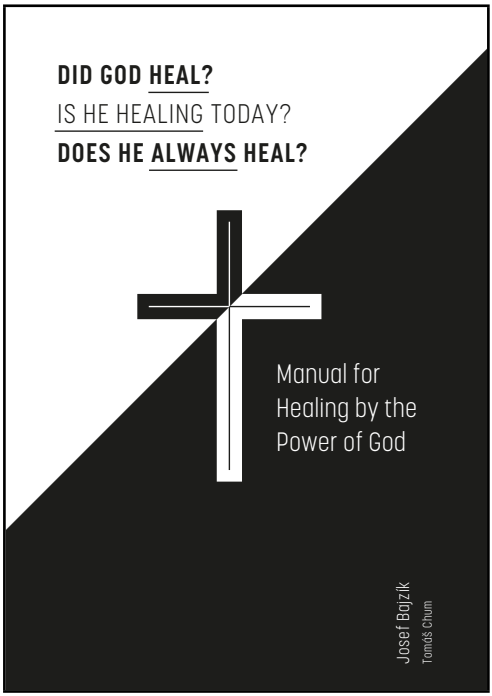
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For further study, we recommend:

Did God heal? Does He Heal Today? Does He Always Heal?

Josef Bajzík & Tomáš Chum



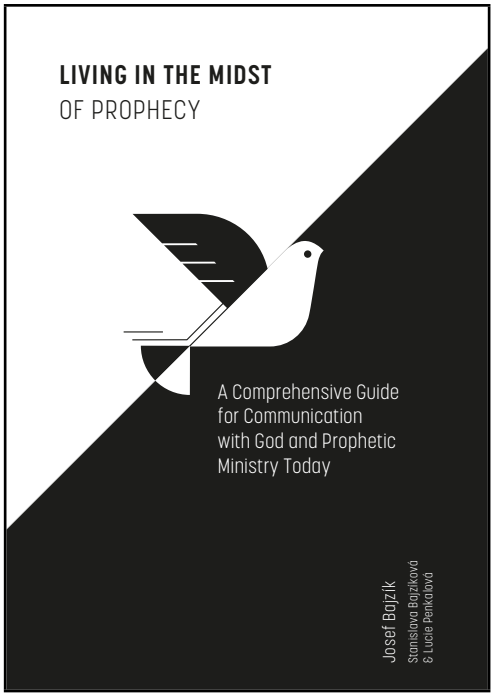
Although the Bible clearly reveals that our God is *Jehovah Rafa*, the God who heals us, there are many different views and opinions within the church regarding God's stance on healing. Let's answer questions on this topic as we read the New Testament. Let's look together at the life of the Lord Jesus and His ministry of healing. Let's gain clarity on issues that affect our daily lives. In addition to biblical stories, this book also contains a wealth of Greek words for study, as well as personal testimonies from the authors that will encourage you to live a supernatural life in God's power.

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Living in the Midst of Prophecy

Josef Bajzík, Stanka Bajzíková & Lucie Penkalová



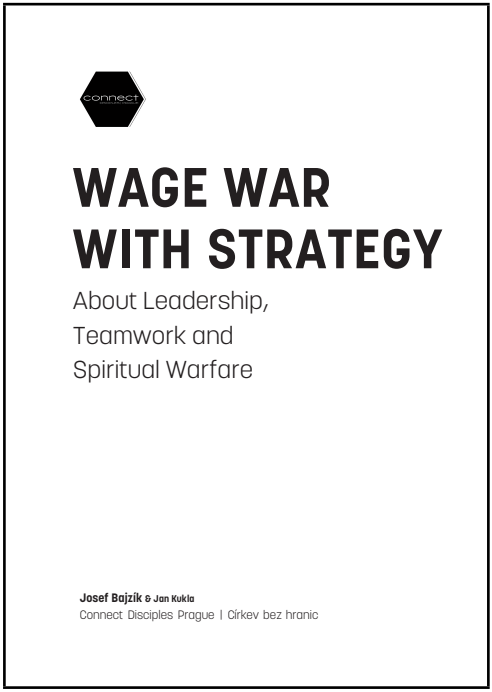
The Bible is full of prophecies – especially those fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ. However, biblical prophecies did not end with Jesus; they remain relevant even today. Let's slowly uncover the mysteries of prophecy together. Let's learn to prophesy and teach others around us to do the same. Moreover, let's reach the point where we find ourselves right in the midst of what has been said about us. This book is an excellent resource for both beginners and advanced students. It includes a glossary of several dozen Greek words, a glossary of biblical symbols, and dozens of practical activities for individuals and groups – whether at home, outdoors, or online.

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Wage War with Strategy

Josef Bajzík & John Kukla



Leadership, teamwork, and spiritual warfare. All of these topics are of fundamental importance for the further development of Christianity. On the following pages, you will find insights on these topics that we have gathered over the past few years of our lives, ever since we took over Connect. Connect was originally a youth ministry of CBH (Church Without Borders), that we gradually transformed into Connect Disciples Prague, a ministry dedicated to equipping disciples, and expanded its reach throughout the Czech Republic. Along the way, we encountered many challenges, that we sought to overcome with the help of our God.

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