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**A0927 – July 5, 2009 – Acts 19:1-10 – Faith, Baptism & Tongues**

Today we start with Acts 19:1 and we begin with Paul on his third missionary journey. We've seen that the first two missionary journeys have resulted in the planting of churches outside the land of Israel. So when Paul begins his third missionary journey the first thing he does is his procedure of follow-up. Paul's procedure as a missionary was to go into an area, hit the synagogue, evangelize, move out into Gentile culture, evangelize, and then follow up quickly with teaching, giving them a base. Once they were firmly established he'd appoint elders and move on, leaving them in the hands of the Holy Spirit to take care of them. Paul never wanted to create a situation of believers depending on him for their spiritual life. He wanted them to depend on the Holy Spirit, so he didn't stick around 50 years, he'd go somewhere else. But eventually he'd come back and check in, he'd answer their questions and do some follow up ministry. That's his goal here. So he heads out from Antioch once more, he heads to the same churches he planted on the first missionary journey and the second missionary journey, until he comes to the crossroads of Antioch. It was at that crossroad on the second missionary journey that Paul intended to go into Asia and the Holy Spirit said, no Paul, not now. Paul got cut off, he had to turn north and eventually he was led over to Greece, across the Aegean Sea, he made his way down to Corinth and when it was time to leave he sailed to Ephesus for a few days, made some inroads with the Jews, but left for Jerusalem and eventually made his way back to Antioch. During his time in Antioch another man came to Ephesus, Apollos, a tremendous man of God, one of the most learned men in all of Church History able to powerfully refute the opposition, he came on the heels of Paul to Ephesus and after a short time was called to by the believers of Corinth to be their pastor. So now Ephesus is vacant of a Bible teacher, Priscilla and Aquila are there running their business and here comes Paul.

So what we've got here is the Holy Spirit now taking Paul back. Now the timing is right, the people in that province are prepared, Paul is prepared and some resources have been building to get a church off the ground. We also must understand something else that's happening here besides just the simple question of geography, and that is the main theme of the Book of Acts, which is the theme of *transition*.

Acts is unique in that it gives us the transition from where the Gospels leave off dealing with the kingdom of God being offered to Israel and the Epistles which work with the organism called the Church. Now, if we didn't have the Book of Acts we'd come to the end of the Gospels where the kingdom is being offered and step over into the Epistles and wonder, what is this Church thing Paul's talking about? We'd be completely lost. So Acts is added in by the Holy Spirit to transition us from the offer of the kingdom of God to the full realization of the Church. There's no question as you go through the Book of Acts that the kingdom of God is being re-offered to the nation Israel and if the nation will only repent then their Messiah will return to set up His earthly political kingdom. This offer however, gradually fades out in the Book of Acts till finally the emphasis is almost completely on the new distinct body of Jew and Gentile called the Church which is the main concern of the Epistles.

Now this transition in the Book of Acts is always neglected by people who have certain pet doctrines they've built from the Book of Acts that they want to make the norm for all time, the verse on salvation, the verse on how it must happen. Just because it happened this way in Acts therefore it must happen that way for the next 2000 years. Now this is illegitimate. Whenever you study a book of the Bible you have to discover the author's purpose for writing the book. And the purpose Luke has for this book is not to provide doctrinal norms and standards for the church. That's the purpose of the epistles. The purpose of Luke in Acts is to give us a look at the transition from the kingdom offer to the nation Israel over to the new dispensation of the Church. That's the story of Acts and that's the purpose of Luke's writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Now, as we come to Acts 19 we find something strange about the Jewish population around Ephesus. The first reason we know that is because of the man we met last time, Apollos. He arrived in Ephesus just after Paul had

left. He was a man from Alexandria, Egypt, apparently he was raised there under the tutelage of his Jewish parents who trained him in the Scriptures, so he was mighty in the Scriptures. And he'd also had correspondence with John the Baptist and his ministry over in the land of Israel. So he comes to Ephesus with this knowledge, tremendous knowledge, but it was deficient in things concerning Jesus Christ, he didn't have all the pieces so Priscilla and Aquila have to fill him in on the rest of the details. The second indication of strange beliefs among the Jews is the fact we have in the passage before us with these **disciples**, they're associated with John the Baptist but they haven't received the baptism of the Spirit. They're deficient too.

So all this put together tells us that at Ephesus there apparently was a John the Baptist sect, that is, genuine disciples of John the Baptist who had trusted the Scriptures up to that point but who had never trusted in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore you might say they were believing members of the OT dispensation of Israel but had not been brought into the NT dispensation of the Church. And the whole purpose of this passage we're studying this morning is to show that the Holy Spirit is bringing one element after another into the body of Christ and unifying it, so there is only one Church with only one foundation, Jesus Christ. That's the whole point of this episode.

So we come to Acts 19:1, and let's read the first seven verses, **<sup>1</sup>It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. <sup>2</sup>He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." <sup>3</sup>And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." <sup>4</sup>Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." <sup>5</sup>When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. <sup>7</sup>There were in all about twelve men.**

So in verse 1, **Apollos** has made his way to **Corinth** and here comes **Paul**. Paul has been making his follow-up rounds up in the **Galatia** region and he

heads west toward Ephesus, **through the upper country**, these were the highlands, you had two roads coming into Ephesus, the high road and the low road, the low one was the trade route, he's not interested in trading so he takes the more direct route from the north and **came to Ephesus, and found some disciples**, and that word we said, is a tip off that something is strange in Ephesus because a **disciple** in Luke's writings always refers to a well-trained person, someone well-trained in the Scriptures. For example, Apollos of the prior chapter was a similar individual, he was instructed in the way of the Lord, he was a disciple.

But there's something strange about these **disciples** because in verse 2 Paul asks, "**Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?**" So they are disciples but they do not have the Spirit. But why did he ask that? What was it that tipped Paul off to ask that question? There are many answers given to why Paul asked that question and we have to stop here and find out, why do you suppose Paul asked if they received the Holy Spirit? Now the Pentecostals and the neo-charismatics of our time insist that this is proof that Paul, everywhere he went asked if people had spoken in tongues after they became Christians. Did you speak in tongues? Did you speak in tongues? Did you speak in tongues? You haven't, well then you haven't received the baptism of the Spirit and so we have to be careful when we read it that we read it correctly. Why did Paul ask this question? Because these people, in fact, had not spoken in tongues. I don't think Paul is asking them if they had a grand experience and here's why. Back in the previous chapter at the end we met Apollos. Apollos comes in Acts 18:25, "fervent in the Spirit," "mighty in Scripture," which can only mean that his experience was normative, there was nothing abnormal about his experience, he prayed, he had zeal for the Lord, did this, did that and so on. In other words, in the context of this we find no experiential factor that is kind of saying hey, these people haven't really got close to the Lord. There's no experiential factor cited in the question, so we tend to disagree at this point with our charismatic friends, that that is not the reason that Paul asked the question.

Why Paul asked the question was because of the word **disciples**. Now how did Paul know they were **disciples**? Because Paul was an information gatherer. What was the first thing Paul did when he entered Athens? He gathered information. What's the culture like? How do these people think? What's their worldview? What languages do they speak? And so he's

discussing with these men and he can tell they are well-trained in doctrine, they're disciples, but they had missing pieces in their doctrine, so that's why Paul raises the question, **Did you receive the Holy Spirit?** Well you say, what is receiving the Holy Spirit got to do with doctrine. Everything. In the early church how were the NT doctrines taught, not the OT, we know how they were taught that. But how was NT doctrine taught? In other words, we have all these churches sprouting up, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Thessalonica, Philippi, Corinth. Now if you were to visit one of these churches one Sunday and sit down and listen to the teacher and ask, how much doctrine do they know? All right, well, they had the OT Scriptures, no problem there, plenty of Scriptures there for the OT. But the problem is they did not have the NT, because the NT had not been written yet. Well then, where did they getting their NT doctrine? They could only get it two ways; they could it from an apostle who had oral tradition or they could get it by someone who had the gift of prophecy or knowledge. And so since these gifts were given by the Holy Spirit they could at least begin to put together bit by bit, piece by piece certain NT truths that would tide them over till the NT was complete. So therefore when you see the word **Holy Spirit** in verse 2 Paul's not asking if they had a tongues experience. Paul's asking what's your doctrine? If you have the Holy Spirit I know the Holy Spirit gives gifts and He's supplying bits and pieces of data necessary for the Christian believer to make it while we don't have a NT canon. Do you have any of that?

So, we have uniquely in this period of history a canonical gap. Events have happened but they haven't been canonized in the Scripture. So you have these strange believers out there, they have some information but they don't have the whole story. Apollos didn't have the whole story; Priscilla and Aquila were able to supply the information. That's one way people were integrated. Here's another way, the direct working of the Holy Spirit giving the revelatory gifts of prophecy and knowledge. So Paul asked them, **Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?** Now to show you added confirmation that it's a doctrinal issue and not an experiential one, notice how they answer. They answer, **"No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."** That's not an answer saying we haven't had an experience; what they're saying is we never heard that doctrine, we don't even know about the teachings of the Holy Spirit. So this clearly confirms that it's a doctrinal gap in these people's understanding and that's why Paul asked the question. Paul was an information gatherer, he was always

interested in what people thought, how much doctrine you knew, so he'd listen and listen and listen and then ask a question and listen some more till he had you figured out. So he figured there was a problem.

And so he asked, verse 3, **“Into what then were you baptized?”** See, Paul's waking up now, if you guys haven't even heard of the Holy Spirit then obviously you weren't baptized by Him into Christ, for if you were you would be in Christ, you wouldn't have this defective knowledge. Paul can't imagine people being baptized into the body of Christ without even knowing of the Holy Spirit. And so they answer, **“Into John's baptism.”** So now it becomes clear that what we've got here is twelve OT saints doing the best they could with the doctrine they had available. There wasn't anything wrong with their baptism, it's just that they hadn't stuck around John long enough to see who John pointed out as the Messiah. They hadn't heard of Jesus. They hadn't believed in Jesus. They were still waiting for the Messiah, so Paul explains to them in verse 4, **“John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”** In other words, He whom John pointed out 20 years ago but you weren't there, I now point out to you, **Jesus**. So now they've been given the content for NT salvation, content to be integrated into the church, belief in Jesus. They knew what the Messiah would be like, they knew that John was the one who was to point Him out, they even knew that by undergoing John's baptism they were saying, we'll believe in the one John points out. But they never found out who He was. And so when they find out here that it's Jesus they believe in Jesus. If you doubt that what does verse 5 say?

**When they heard,** and how does faith come? Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. They heard the word of God through Paul. Paul had just given them the content they needed to believe and be integrated into the church. And so when they heard this they were believing in Jesus.

And then he says, **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** So, they'd been baptized by John, now **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**, this is water baptism signifying identification. They had been identified as disciples of John the Baptist, now they're identified as disciples of the Lord Jesus.

And verse 6, **when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.** Three things to notice, we'll spend most of our time here. First, when did they **believe** in Jesus? What verse? Verse 4 or 5, when they heard that Jesus was the Messiah they believed. But when did they receive the Holy Spirit? Not until verse 6. In other words there's a gap between when they believed and when they received the Spirit. And in that gap two things happened. Verse 5 they were water baptized in the name of Jesus and v 6 Paul laid his hands upon them. So here's the sequence, it's on your insert under Acts 19. Faith, then water baptism, then laying on of hands and finally the Holy Spirit baptized them. You say, that's strange? Yes it is strange. It doesn't happen that way in Acts 2; it doesn't happen that way with Paul in Acts 9 as explained by Acts 22; it doesn't occur that way in Acts 10 with Cornelius. Why is that? Because the Book of Acts is a transitional book. It tells us what happened, it does not tell us how it must happen; you have to go into the context to figure out why it happened that way. But to get the norms and standards for the Church you have to go to the Epistles, you cannot build out of Acts or you get conflicts. By the way, this same sequence does occur in Acts 8 with the Samaritans.

Second thing to notice in verse 6, the **laying on of hands**; here's another thing that is not standard procedure; in Acts 2 there is no laying on of hands. In Acts 10 there is no laying on of hands. In Acts 19 here there is laying on of hands, and in Acts 8 there is laying on of hands. Again, the Samaritan event parallels. So which is it, laying on of hands or not? The answer is again, the Book of Acts is a transitional book and if you try to normalize any of this for all time I have to ask you, which chapter are you going to normalize? Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 9, Acts 10 or Acts 19? There are your choices. Good luck getting them together. All the greatest minds of the church for 2,000 years have tried to get them together and no one's been successful. They weren't meant to be put together. Luke's point isn't to build doctrine, Luke's point is to say, this is what happened. So anyone that comes to you building a doctrine out of the Book of Acts you already know is on thin ice.

Third thing to notice; **tongues**. We've dealt with tongues before in Acts 2, Acts 8 and Acts 10, I refer you to the CD from Acts 2, *The Doctrine of Tongues* which gives an analysis of all the key passages. This has become a point of contention in the last 200 years so we have to deal with it. Now, we're not

going to go through the history of tongues like we did in Acts 2. Today we're going to answer one simple question. What was the purpose of tongues? Does the Bible define the purpose of tongues? This is *the* question; in all my years of analyzing the tongues issue the charismatics won't deal with. It's a very simple question? Why did God give tongues? What's the purpose? God doesn't just do something for no reason? God always has a reason. So what is it?

Let's go back into the OT, because remember in the NT there wasn't any NT, right. So the only Bible they had was the OT, so let's pretend for a moment all we've got is the OT. Deut 28:49. Could we tell, just from the pages of the OT what the purpose of tongues was, and of course we can. Now many of you recognize this passage as the one I always link with Lev 26. Lev 26 & Deut 28 are the two passages describing the blessings and the cursings upon the nation Israel for obeying or disobeying the Mosaic Law. Today in the Church we talk about the Christian being in fellowship or out of fellowship. Well, under the Mosaic Covenant the nation of Israel could be in fellowship or out of fellowship, and so it turned out that when the nation was obeying God's Law the nation would be blessed. The blessing would be economic blessing, blessing on their crops, blessing in their climatology, blessing in their fertility of the fields and so on, and there would be other blessings related to that, military victory and so forth. But when the nation disobeyed the Law they were out of fellowship and they would be cursed and Leviticus 26 gives you very clearly the five degrees of discipline which at each degree was an intensification of the discipline. The nation would disobey God, God would spank; the nation would continue to disobey, God would spank again, this time harder; the nation would disobey again, God would spank harder. And finally, if they simply would not repent and get back in fellowship they would come to the fifth degree of discipline which is they were going to be thrown out of the land. And when that occurred there would be certain signs that would be undeniable to the generation involved that they were indeed in the fifth degree of discipline.

And so in Deut 28:49 here is one of the signs. "The LORD will bring a nation against you," Israel, "from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand," a nation whose language you shall not understand? That's talking about a Gentile nation, not speaking some blah, blah, blah angel language, as far as we can tell anyway from the Scriptures all angels speak human languages. And this

is clearly a human language, a Gentile language. And the army marches in speaking this language Israelis don't understand. So obviously its a sign of judgment.

Let's go further in the OT to find out when that curse was about to be leveled on the nation, the prophets picked up Deut 28:49. Turn to Jer 5:15, Jeremiah is living in the day when the southern kingdom of Judah is going to be disciplined under that fifth degree of discipline. Now Jeremiah picks the same theme up, there's nothing new in the prophets, all the prophets are doing is applying the Mosaic Law. "Behold, I am bringing a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel," declares the LORD. "It is an enduring nation, It is an ancient nation, A nation whose language you do not know, Nor can you understand what they say." Now where do you suppose Jeremiah got that from? Just reading the Law, it's that simple. This would be Jeremiah saying, Judah you've reached the fifth degree of discipline.

Turn to Isaiah 28. Isaiah lives just a little bit before Jeremiah. He's speaking to the northern kingdom but he's dealing with the same problem, they're about to go under the fifth degree of discipline. And so Isaiah picks up the same theme of Deut 28:49. Same problem, same answer. Notice, in v 1, the drunks, this is a chapter for all the drunks of the northern kingdom. Everybody was drunk and Isaiah has to go preach to a bunch of drunks. Just look at them in verse 7, they "reel with wine and stagger," even "The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink." Verse 8, a beautiful picture, "all the tables are full of filthy vomit, without a single clean place," the bar is packed full of drunks and vomit, that's the kind of atmosphere Isaiah had to preach in and in verse 9, here's the drunks to Isaiah, "To whom would He teach knowledge, And to whom would He interpret the message? Those *just* weaned from milk? Those *just* taken from the breast?" In other words, what do you think we are Isaiah, little babies, and they're making fun of his teaching style, repetition, repetition. "For," they continue, "*He says*, 'Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.'" That was Isaiah's teaching style to these people. He couldn't go into any deep doctrine, it was all baby talk because they were spiritual babies, absolute spiritual idiots to the point all Isaiah can do is repeat fundamental truths and therefore, in verse 11, Isaiah answers, "Indeed, He will speak to this people Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue, <sup>12</sup>He who said to them, "Here is rest, give rest to the weary," And, "Here is repose," but they would

not listen.” In other words they’d been given every opportunity to hear the word of God and get back in fellowship so they could enjoy rest and they had refused and refused and refused and so the Lord says, hey if you don’t want to listen to My word from a Hebrew prophets maybe you’ll listen when I send a Gentile speaking foreign army into your land to kill you and your wives and your little babies. Then maybe you’ll pay attention. Obviously the same thing Jeremiah spoke about, the same thing Deuteronomy spoke about, the fifth degree of discipline had come, exile.

Now let’s turn to the NT where this theme is used, 1 Cor 14:21, the very key chapter on tongues. Paul has to deal with tongues in Corinth, everyone was flapping their jaws in Corinth and it’s out of control, completely out of control so he has to teach on this so he goes back to the Scriptures, which are the OT. Paul knew about tongues from the OT, he didn’t need a single NT passage to tell you what tongues were all about. All he needed was Deuteronomy, Jeremiah and Isaiah, and today people are so biblically ignorant they run around saying, I’m not going to believe tongues have stopped until you show me an explicit reference that says, tongues stopped. Paul would say what’s wrong with you, haven’t you read your OT? So let’s see what he does in Corinth to straighten out all the flapping jaws. And in 1 Cor 14:21 he simply quotes Isaiah, you can check your margin, Isa 28:11-12, we just handled those verses. It has to do with exile, so Paul quotes, “In the Law it is written, “BY MEN OF STRANGE TONGUES AND BY THE LIPS OF STRANGERS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE, AND EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME,” says the Lord.” And you wonder why does Paul say “In the Law,” I thought the Law was the first five books of the OT and this is Isaiah. You’re right, it is. But where did Isaiah get it? From Deut 28:49. So it is part of the Law. And we gather the tongues are for whom? Jews, the nation Israel and then it comes, verse 22, the clearest statement in all the word of God on the purpose of tongues, “So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers;” A sign to non-believers, and particularly Jewish non-believers. Why? To warn them of the fifth degree of discipline, that’s why. You mean tongues are going on in the Book of Acts for that reason. Yes, that’s exactly what the word of God says. The bible clearly states in four places that tongues are a warning to Israel that she’s about to enter the fifth degree of discipline, to show that her judgment of exile from the land is imminent. In other words tongues are not a blessing at all, tongues are a sign of cursing. If you’re seeing tongue’s Israel is about to go into exile.

Now let's observe the four places tongues occur in Acts and think a minute who's there, who's listening in. The first place that tongues occur is in Acts 2. Who's present in Acts 2? That one's easy, it's the Day of Pentecost, you had about a million Jews there from all over the world. They'd come to celebrate the great Feast of Weeks. It was a national holiday and people from all over traveled to Jerusalem. So who heard tongues and what was the context? The context was that Peter was about to get up and offer the kingdom to the nation Israel; tongues were there to show that you'd better get with the program or we're going into the fifth degree of discipline real soon. Tongues, therefore, was a warning sign that the exile was on the horizon.

In Acts 8, the second place where tongues occur in the Book of Acts, actually it's not explicit but it's implicit and who is there in Acts 8? Samaritans and Jews, two Jews, Peter and John, and what's the point in Acts 8? Two points; one, to show that Samaritans are not a separate church distinct from Jews, there was radical cleavage between these two groups so what better to do than show that we're all one in Christ, it builds unity. And further, Peter and John see the tongues, they know they had to think, uh oh, here comes the judgment on Israel, even Samaritans are coming to Christ, so things are opening up to non-Jews, it must mean trouble for the Jews, God is up to something. So it accomplished those two things simultaneously, unity and warning.

In Acts 10 we have the third place in which tongues occur in the Book of Acts and guess who's present there but a house full of Gentiles and Peter along with a number of Jews, all very hesitant to be there. And once again we can't have a separate Gentile church spring up, the Holy Spirit wants Jews and Gentiles in one church built on one foundation, the Lord Jesus Christ. So he gives them tongues, the Jews observe it; it's the same thing that happened to them on the day of Pentecost so God must be opening the way to Gentiles. God is up to something, and further, another sign that the Jewish nation is about to come under judgment. So we have Acts 2 Jews, Acts 8 Samaritans and Jews, Acts 10, Gentiles and Jews. You'll notice Jews are always present.

Now finally we come to Acts 19, the fourth place in which tongues occur in the Book of Acts and what's the odd thing that we observe about Acts 19? Simple; in Acts 19 you've got disciples of John the Baptist, also Jews. And so

again, another danger of a rival church thwarted by God the Holy Spirit and a sign that Israel's judgment is on the horizon.

So every time we see the tongues function in the Book of Acts there's some possibility of a rival church. And so it's a sign that uh, uh, we're not going to separate, we're going to integrate, whether you're Jew, Gentile, Samaritan or disciple of John the Baptist, we're all integrating in the one body of Christ, there's going to be one church, not four.

So we have two things to observe; we have the fact that the tongues, the purpose of them is to show God's judgment upon Israel, then simultaneously with the judgment upon Israel we have this building up of the Church and the fact that this Church will include non-Israelites. So that's the explanation for tongues, two purposes, bring about unity in the new entity, the Church and warn the unbelieving Jews that they were about to go into exile under the dictates of Deut 28.

Now, for a little more on tongues, turn to 1 Cor 13. We've been here before but it's worth it to go through it again. "Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are tongues*, they will cease; if *there is knowledge*, it will be done away. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part; <sup>10</sup>but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. <sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. <sup>12</sup>For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. <sup>13</sup>But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."

Now, most people take that to be the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. They look at verse 12 and say now when I'm "face to face" with the Lord, "now I know in part," but then I'm going to be omniscient. Well that can't be, that's a theological mistake. Even in a resurrection body you're not going to become omniscient; I'm not going to become omniscient, we're still creatures, we never lose our creaturehood even though we get a resurrection body. All right, that opens up possibilities. Moreover, people who think this is the Second Coming of Christ never stop to notice the overall argument of Corinthians. When does Paul relate the Second Coming of Christ? Not till chapter 15. So why in the world would Paul bring in the Second Coming in

chapter 13, way out ahead of it in the normal flow of his argument? So there are reasons why we do not take this passage to refer to the Second Coming of Christ.

There's something else here and the hint is in verse 13, it says, "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three;" Now those remain with the Church, do they not, until the end? So this passage is talking about some things that remain until the end and some things that do not remain till the end of the Church age. And those three things are listed in verse 8 as "prophecy, tongues and knowledge." Those three gifts will not remain; faith, hope and love will. It's a contrast. Now, in verse 8, two verbs are used, one verb is used of prophecy and knowledge, they will be done away, that's a passive in the Greek, passive voice, but the gift of tongues it says, they will cease, middle voice, they will cease in and of themselves. It means they will just die out. So knowledge and prophecy are linked together and tongues are treated different, but none of them will remain until the end of the church age.

Notice verse 9, knowledge and prophecy are mentioned, but tongues has dropped out. Why? Well let's see. The gifts of prophecy and knowledge were primarily revelatory in character, that is, God used those gifts to reveal new information to fill up the canon of Scripture. They already had the OT, but now He's giving us more in the NT. At the time all they had was the OT so in the early church God was giving these two gifts and so Paul says, verse 9, "For we know in part and we prophecy in part" meaning that we're getting a little bit here and a little bit there and bit by bit we're building up the NT through those gifts, it's all going to come to a close in 96AD when the canon is completed with the Book of Revelation. So those two gifts are gradually filling it in. Paul himself got revelation as time went on and he wrote it down in his epistles. We have to put ourselves back in the perspective of the NT era. Don't think of these people walking around with a little pocket NT, they didn't have a NT. They had to depend on oral tradition of the apostles, or somebody in the congregation that had the gift of prophecy or knowledge. And if there wasn't anybody around with those gifts they just sat back and kept working with the OT doctrine. So the knowing in part and prophesying in part talks about that time when these gifts were a little bit here, a little bit there, until it was all pulled together. And when he says in v 10, "but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away," perfect is in the neuter, not Jesus Christ, He's masculine, so the perfect is the canon and when it is

completed then the partial will be done away, the two gifts of prophecy and knowledge came to an end in AD96.

Now, we left out the tongues because Paul just left out it when he said it will cease in and of itself, middle voice. It's just going to die, we gather from 1 Cor 14:21, it's going to die when it has fulfilled its purpose. What was the purpose? To serve as a sign for the nation Israel that her fifth degree of cursing was imminent. Well, when did the fifth degree come on the nation Israel? The Fall of Jerusalem, AD70. The Roman armies under Titus who do not speak an ounce of Hebrew come in and wipe 1,000,000 Jews out and send the rest in to Exile. Exile? What's that? The fifth degree of cursing, Deut 28, Jer 5, Isa 28. We already went through all that. Now, I don't know any other way to understand the word of God. I've searched and I've studied and I've read the literature, the books, the articles and in the end you have to decide; am I going to build my theology on the sign gift of tongues from the word of God or from my experience? It's either the infinite infallible word of God or your finite fallible experience. If the purpose of tongues is to convince Jewish unbelievers to get right with God so they will not be exiled from their land and they were exiled from that land in AD70 then what purpose do tongues have for today?

For all the rest of prophecy in the word of God relates only to Israel's restoration to the land, there are no more exiles. Israel's being restored. And that restoration comes in two phases. We're already in phase 1, the regathering of the nation Israel in unbelief. That's been going on at least since 1948. The final regathering, phase 2, is the nation Israel in belief in the future Tribulation. So there are no more exiles from the land for the nation Israel. It's all over. So when do you think the tongues ceased of themselves? Obviously when the purpose for tongues ceased. AD70. Prophecy and knowledge went on till the completed canon, AD96 and then they went out. But faith hope and love remain. And faith, hope and love are sufficient. Shall we close with a word of prayer? Communion.

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