

THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF ROBERT MENZIES AND ELLEN G. WHITE ON GLOSSOLALIA

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This thesis analyses glossolalia from the perspectives of Robert Menzies and Ellen G. White and, by extension, that of Pentecostals and Adventists, respectively. The analysis focuses on the interpretive perspectives, points of divergence and convergence, and the implications for contemporary understanding and Christian practice.

Glossolalia has long been a topic of great debate among theologians, particularly when engaging with Pentecostals who highly esteem the teaching and practice as a cornerstone of their beliefs. Therefore, the main aim of this research is to compare what Menzies and White discuss on the subject. Both views are then subjected to the Scriptures to determine how their conclusions align with the Scriptures. This research is significant in contributing to the literature on glossolalia and filling a gap of a comparative analysis between Menzies and White, leading

authors in their respective denominations on the subject which had previously not been explored.

The research surveyed the historical development of glossolalia through the ages and the writings of Menzies and White on the subject and did a comparative analysis of their methods and findings on the nature of tongues and their significance. The research found out that glossolalia as a practice does not align with Scripture as Menzies posits but an unacceptable practice that Paul condemned in the Corinthian church which was influenced by the Greek mysticism which later slipped into the Church. Tongues, as seen in Scripture, refers to intelligible known languages in which the Spirit empowered the disciples to facilitate a smooth propagation of the gospel.

The thesis concludes by looking at the purpose of tongues. While Menzies argues that tongues were evidence of the baptism of the Spirit, the research shows that tongues are not an initial evidence of Spirit baptism but an evidence of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. Both Menzies and White are on firm ground in their conclusions that tongues are an empowerment for proclamation of the gospel, a sign to unbelievers and sign of a fulfilment of the promise of Christ to grant the Spirit.

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A thesis

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

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by

Samakai Kahangu


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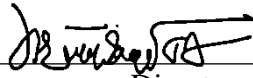
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To the Glory of God

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Problem	1
Statement of the Problem.....	11
Purpose of the Study	12
Significance of the Study	12
Definition of Terms.....	12
Delimitation of the Study.....	13
Methodology	14
2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF GLOSSOLALIA.....	15
The Greco-Roman Era and Glossolalia	15
The Patristic Era and Glossolalia.....	16
Medieval Era and Glossolalia (500-1500).....	18
The Reformation Era and Glossolalia.....	20
Glossolalia in Pentecostalism	21
Glossolalia in Adventism.....	24
Summary	27
3. ROBERT MENZIES ON GLOSSOLALIA	29
Biography of Robert Menzies	29
Menzies' Hermeneutical Approach	31
Menzies on the Nature of Tongues	34
Menzies on the Significance of Tongues.....	37
Tongues as Initial Evidence.....	38
Tongues as Edification.....	40
Tongues as Missiological Empowerment.....	41
Tongues as an Eschatological Sign.....	42
Tongues as an Ecclesiological Sign.....	43
Summary	43
4. ELLEN G. WHITE AND GLOSSOLALIA	45
Biography of Ellen G. White	45
White's Hermeneutical Approach.....	47
White on the Nature of Tongues	49

White on Tongues in Corinthians	51
Ellen White on the Purpose of Tongues	53
Tongues as Evidence	53
Tongues as Missiological Empowerment.....	54
Tongues as an Eschatological Sign.....	55
5. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MENZIES AND WHITE ON GLOSSOLALIA.....	57
Comparison of Hermeneutical Approaches	57
The Nature of Tongues	59
Glossolalia: The Terminology	60
Glossolalia: Examining the Attribution of the Nature	62
Examining the Miracle: Speaking or Hearing?.....	62
Examining the Nature of Tongues: Glossolalia or Xenoglossia	65
Examining Tongues in 1 Corinthians 12-14	68
Comparative Analysis on the Role and Purpose of Tongues.....	72
Tongues as Initial Evidence.....	72
Tongues as Empowerment for Mission	75
Pentecost: The Event and Meaning.....	76
6. SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, APPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....	79
Summary	79
Patterns and Relationships	81
On Hermeneutical Approaches	82
On the Nature of Tongues.....	82
On the Significance of Tongues.....	83
Implications and Applications	84
Conclusions and Recommendations	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY	88

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Glossolalia has been a subject of interest to many scholars and has witnessed heated debates over the years, with charismatics led by Pentecostals on the proponent end and traditional churches such as Adventists and Evangelicals offering contrary and cautious views on the subject.

The 20th Century saw a surge in discussions on baptism of the Spirit and speaking in tongues, as many scholars from different religious groups responded to the growing charismatic movements. At the dawn of the 20th century, in 1901, Charles Parham, while at the Bible school, originated the initial evidence doctrine in which he claimed that glossolalia was a mandatory initial evidence of Spirit baptism.¹ This led to the birth and the spread of Pentecostalism from the Azusa Street revival, as championed by William Seymour, a disciple of Parham. This sparked a call for embracing charismatic experiences at the center of religious worship. Therefore, many scholars and writers discussed tongues as a response and to highlight their contribution to this growing phenomenon within Christian circles. The following are some of the contributions from various scholars relating to the nature, initial purpose, and eschatological significance of tongues, which are the focus areas of this paper.

¹ William Seymour, *The Azusa Street Papers* (North Charleston, South Carolina: CreateSpace, 2012), 2.

In response to the proposition by Parham and Seymour, Benjamin Warfield opposed the continuation of tongues by formulating the classical cessationist view, in which he claimed that tongues ceased with the apostolic age.² He further argued that miraculous gifts, including tongues, were a temporary gift meant to authenticate the apostolic authority.³ Finally, he argued that the dismissal of modern tongues as practiced by Seymour and other charismatics was merely psychological and not biblical.⁴ His arguments prompted more reactions from other charismatic scholars and also ignited other cessationists to join the fray of the debate, which has continued to shape this discourse.

Donald Gee a cautious continuationist discussed tongues in the context of spiritual gifts. He defended tongues as a continuing gift of the Spirit, which is still valid today but subordinate to prophecy.⁵ He further rejected the proposition of Parham of the initial evidence Doctrine, stating that the work of the Spirit can never be confined to one specific manifestation.⁶ However, while he supported the continued existence of tongue speaking, he admonished against excesses, stating that tongues are never a measure of spirituality and orderliness in the assembly of worship by interpreting tongues as uninterpreted tongues create confusion as opposed to edification.⁷ Gee's contribution created a cautious group that is not entirely against but very moderate in the exercise, which inspired some cautious charismatics.

² Benjamin B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1918), 6.

³ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁵ Donald Gee, *Concerning Spiritual Gifts* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1937), 47.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 62.

In discussing tongues, Merrill Unger distinguishes the tongues spoken in Acts to those in Corinthians. He argues that tongues in Acts were xenolalic, given temporarily as a sign of the outpouring of the Spirit and a change in God's economy, a sign to Jews never to Gentiles and were merely a sign and not an apostolic gift in themselves.⁸ On the other hand, tongues in Corinthians were an actual gift of the Spirit, which was meant to be exercised in the public assemblies.⁹ He further admonished that the tongues practiced contemporarily in his time lacked biblical support, as he viewed both tongues in Acts and Corinthians intelligible.¹⁰ Eschatologically and contemporarily, he feels tongues are no longer necessary either for proclamation, edification, or for glorifying God, as God has given his word, which is the completed revelation of God.¹¹ Unger rightly discusses the nature of tongues being xenolalic, but his qualification of tongues in Corinthians as xenolalic lacks clarity on why Paul seemingly condemned the good practice. Furthermore, it is difficult to reconcile why tongues that are an apostolic gift should be of no use while other gifts remain relevant even today.

Smith suggests that all tongues mentioned in scripture are ecstatic and essentially unintelligible.¹² It was only on occasional occurrences that foreign words or phrases in bits and pieces in the mass of unrecognizable sounds, a phenomenon that can be explained psychologically.¹³ Tongues were initially given to authenticate the

⁸ Merrill F. Unger, *New Testament Teaching on Tongues* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1971), 73-74.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 94.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 166.

¹² Charles R. Smith, *Tongues in Biblical Perspective*, 2nd ed. (Winona Lake, Indiana: BMH Books, 1973), 40.

¹³ *Ibid.*

authority of the apostles and consequently their message. However, these tongues were only limited to the apostolic age and ceased as the Spirit no longer initiates tongues.¹⁴ Therefore, tongues practiced today are purely the work of product of the evil one and the psychological configuration of the individuals.¹⁵ Smith's contribution to the discourse on tongues is that tongues especially practiced today can be explained from a psychological point of view, something some psychologists agree to but his assertion that the Spirit is no longer present to initiate the gifts such as tongues is a weak argument in support of the cessationist position as the Spirit is still present and does not handle charismatics whose theology is built on the ministry of the Spirit.

Watson Mills a proponent of glossolalia, argues that all tongues in scripture are glossolalic as they are a tongue or a language of angels. While they may contain inflections characteristic of a language, most linguists maintain that samples of glossolalia studied do not correspond to any known language known to mankind.¹⁶ Both tongues practiced in Acts and Corinthians are essentially the same though Paul was aware of the intrusion of some Greek imitation of the original glossolalia which he admonished against.¹⁷ Throughout the ages, glossolalia has stood as a legitimate expression of the presence of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ Mills contribution in support of glossolalia does clarify how contemporary tongues carry vowel sounds in the similitude of known languages. Furthermore, he rightly differentiates that Paul seemed not to condemn the practice but at the same time condemned what was

¹⁴ Smith, *Tongues in Biblical Perspective*, 131.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Watson Mills, *Understanding Speaking in Tongues* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans 1972), 11.

¹⁷ Ibid., 60.

¹⁸ Ibid., 76.

practiced within the same church, this needs a thorough examination, however, his insistence that glossolalia has been a legitimate expression of the presence of the Spirit cannot be backed by scripture as many times the Spirit was present without glossalalic expressions.

Joseph Dillow asserts that Scripture seems to indicate that all genuine gift of tongues consists of foreign languages and that God's major purpose of the gift was as a sign to the nation of Israel and ceased with the apostolic age. Proper usage of this gift resulted in the edification of the entire church.¹⁹ He further argues in advancing the supremacy of prophecy that tongues are an inferior method of prayer and praise as no one can enter into that praise with you.²⁰ Eschatologically, he argues that the reference to Joel 2:23 about the former and later rain by charismatics to substantiate tongues is wrong as the former and later rain does not refer to the manifestation of the Spirit at Pentecost but to the riches of the Jewish kingdom under David and Solomon, and greater magnitude of the Jewish kingdom at the second coming of Christ.²¹ Dillow's observation on the supremacy of prophecy over tongues is critical, though his attribution of the former and latter rains to the Jewish kingdom lacks biblical support and does not clarify what how the later rains is equated to riches at the second coming of Christ when Joel talks about the last days.

James Dunn a strong commentator on Spirit Baptism, offered a strong critique to Pentecostal that on the subject. On glossolalia, he rejected the Pentecostal claim by Parham and his adherents for glossolalia as a required initial evidence. This argument was on the basis that Spirit baptism is not subsequent to the water baptism, hence his

¹⁹ Joseph Dillow, *Speaking in Tongues* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1975), 42.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 160.

²¹ *Ibid.*

argument that glossolalia cannot be evidence of Spirit baptism.²² He supported the continuation of the gift of speaking in tongues, arguing that Paul described the speaking in tongues in Corinthians as charismatic ecstasy, as opposed to human languages.²³ His main contribution to the already ongoing debate on glossolalia was the negation of glossolalia as initial evidence based on his clarification of Spirit baptism.

Robert Menzies as discussed in chapter three, supports the position and teaching of Parham of glossolalia as initial evidence and criticized Dunn for downplaying Luke's theology and for using the Pauline theology to dictate the understanding of the Lukan account, advocated for tongues as empowerment for mission and glossolalia as edification in understating of the Pauline writings.²⁴

Sam Storms in the recent past weighs in, in favor of continuationism of tongues arguing that Paul's address to the Corinthians Church on tongues was never a farewell address on tongues but a pastoral regulation to the abuse that was exhibited.²⁵ He rebutted Warfield's claims that tongues were a preserve of the apostolic age arguing that his canonical argument does not hold as Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 was speaking to the eschaton, the return of Christ as the time at which tongues shall cease not any time before Christ's second coming.²⁶ He proposed a separation of tongues

²² James Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experiences of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (London, United Kingdom: SCM Press, 1975), 239.

²³ *Ibid.*, 242.

²⁴ Robert P. Menzies, *Empowered for Witness: The Spirit in Luke-Acts* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 54-55.

²⁵ Sam Storms, *The Language of Heaven: Crucial Questions about Speaking in Tongues* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman and Holman, 2019), 42.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

into public tongues which are communal and must be interpreted and private tongues which is a prayer language used when communicating with God.²⁷

Adventists, have not shied away from this discourse over the years. Ellen White who contemporarily lived during the peak of this discourse contributed to the debate as seen in chapter four that surveys her writings on the subject. She advocated for the intelligibility of tongues, orderliness of worship, development of Christ like character as a result of baptism of the Spirit and the eschatological spiritual empowerment of the Spirit which she termed the latter rain. The following are some of the Adventist authors who have weighed in on this debate.

Harry Lowe, an early Adventist contributor, argues that the tongues spoken at Pentecost and other times in the book of Acts were actual known languages, given for the spread of the gospel.²⁸ He further says that Paul does not forbid tongues in 1 Corinthians 14 but only warns against disorderliness to worship. This is because tongue speaking is a spiritual gift like others, though not a superior gift.²⁹ He acknowledges the continuity of tongues as evidenced by the spread of the gospel through missionaries across the globe. However, he has warned against counterfeits in the last few days.³⁰ While Lowe rightly discusses the nature of tongues in Acts, his position on the continuity of tongues does not fully address the cessation of tongues that Paul mentioned and does not clarify how the perpetuity of tongues is different from the one championed by charismatics.

²⁷ Storms, *The Language of Heaven*, 42.

²⁸ Harry W. Lowe, *Speaking in Tongues* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press, 1965), 6.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 24.

Gerhard Hasel conducted a comprehensive study on the subject at the end of the century. He championed the intelligibility of languages, contending that the tongues in Acts and 1 Corinthians shared the same xenolalic characteristics.³¹ He further interrogated the contemporary languages employed from a linguistic and exegetical standpoint and deemed them unworthy of being classified as biblical tongues.³² Languages were bestowed for the dissemination of the gospel and the enhancement of the body of Christ. He challenged proponents of contemporary glossolalia to ensure that any endorsement of the phenomenon aligns with its definition and specifications as outlined in the New Testament, encompassing its source, purpose, nature, orderliness, and outreach design.³³ His research was more exegetical and not comparative. Further, his position that the tongues in Acts and the tongues Paul admonished against were both xenolalic poses a challenge in understanding why Paul spoke against them and why Ellen contradicts that view by calling them gibberish if they were xenolalic, this shows how his research lacks sufficiency.

Raoul Dederen previews the significance and the role of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. He stresses that the filling of the Spirit upon them was an equipment for Christian service. The work of the Spirit was beyond the tongues spoken, but helped them in resolving conflicts, taught them, preserved unity, strengthened them in daily service and transformed them individually.³⁴

³¹ Gerhard F. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues: Biblical Speaking in Tongues and Contemporary Glossolalia* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Adventist Theological Society Publications, 1994), 82.

³² *Ibid.*, 54.

³³ *Ibid.*, 153.

³⁴ Raoul Dederen, ed., "The Church," *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 2000), 578.

Gerhard Pfandl argues that tongues in Acts were known languages and that God promises a repeat of similar signs and wonders to that of Pentecost in the last days. However, he is quick to admonish that while signs and wonders can be supernatural, that doesn't mean they are from God. It is for this reason that he argues that the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days comes with a caution to test the spirits, as false Christs and prophets would perform miracles, signs, and wonders in the last days.³⁵ His research was very brief and dogmatic, was not engaging but a brief write-up to state a theological position, therefore not sufficient to help someone engage with the charismatics.

Jon Dybdahl in his recent work takes a somewhat different view from other Adventist scholars and calls on the Adventist movement to reconsider and moderate their position, by avoiding not dismissing other charismatic gifts in a quest to uphold order. He therefore has made an appeal for the embrace of charismatic movement within itself and be cautious against extremes.³⁶ He strongly feels the Spirit is still at work in the life of the Church and charisma is somewhat necessary when moderated.

William Richardson examines speaking in tongues as a spiritual gift and questions whether it is still a gift for the present age. He argues that the gift of tongues was a gift intended for the apostolic age. Furthermore, that the gift was meant to serve two purposes; firstly, to enable the apostles communicate in various dialects, and secondly, to grab the attention of the crowds, and thereby add credence and credibility

³⁵ Gerhard Pfandl, "Signs and Wonders (The Associate Editor's Desk)," *Perspective Digest* 14, no. 2 Spring (Spring 2009): 2.

³⁶ Jon Dybdahl, "A Call for Adventists to Reassess the Charismatic Movement," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 17, no. 2 (2021): 3-5, accessed September 5, 2023, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jams/vol17/iss2/4/>.

to the words of the apostles.³⁷ He further urged those who practice religion in the contemporary times to adopt the Berean mindset and test all other tongues as they are susceptible to abuse by false Christ's.³⁸

Hopewell Mandina in his evaluative thesis endeavored to examine speaking in tongues as evidence for the outpouring of the Spirit. With his primary focus being the evaluation of the Pentecostal belief in tongues as initial evidence, he argued and dismissed tongues as initial evidence by looking at the role of the Spirit in the life of the believer.³⁹ He argues that the outpouring of the Spirit resulted in the manifestation of different spiritual gifts and speaking in tongues just one of them. Hence, admonished his readers to avoid over cherishing speaking in tongues at the expense of the mission of the Church.⁴⁰ Did a commendable work in discussing initial evidence but his research was limited and did not comprehensively look at the doctrine in totality.

The different nuances the debate on the subject in the surveyed literature has affirmed the contestation and the amount of interest that has gripped this subject for centuries. It has also demonstrated that from the onset, once the Pentecostals developed this doctrine and its practice, evangelicals have been actively and directly engaging the Pentecostals over this doctrine. Furthermore, the more there was engagement over this discussion, the more it developed over the year. Therefore, the continued disputations raise not a call for a cessation of engagement but an appeal to

³⁷ William Richardson, *Speaking in Tongues: Is It Still a Gift of the Spirit?* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Biblical Perspectives, 2008), 55.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 113.

³⁹ Hopewell Mandina, "A Critical Examination of Speaking in Tongues as Evidence of the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostalism" (MA Thesis, Adventist University of Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, 2017), 57.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 81.

more engagement as it has proved to be of greater value in casting more light on the subject.

Most Adventist scholars who addressed the subject as seen from the literature reviewed, wrote from a dogmatic posture to apologetically state their position and understanding on selected aspects of interest on some aspect of this discourse. A further call among Adventists to reconsider their position against charisma shows how the church has continued to struggle with the practicability of this doctrine in the discharge of its mission. Therefore, this highlights a gap due to lack of a direct engagement through a comparative evaluation of a leading Pentecostal and Adventist authority on the subject from a holistic approach which includes the hermeneutical approaches of both traditions, the historical development and its influence on their doctrines, the theological positions and its synthesis, as well as the practicability of this phenomena in the church.

Statement of the Problem

From the dawn of the 20th century, which saw the development of the doctrines of glossolalia as initial evidence, the phenomenon of speaking in tongues has generated both theological interest and debate. Many scholars, especially Evangelicals, have been at the forefront of engaging Pentecostals over the subject. However, despite all this engagement, there has been a clear absence of Adventist involvement in the dialogue, with many writers contributing from a dogmatic and apologetic posture. Therefore, there is a serious research gap of a study that compares and evaluates a leading Pentecostal figure and an Adventist figure on this subject that reviews their hermeneutical approach to the subject, evaluate their theological positions and understanding of the phenomenon. This research seeks to address one pivotal question: how do the Adventists and the Pentecostals approach and understand

speaking in tongues through a comparative evaluation study of leading figures Ellen White and Robert Menzies respectively.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to conduct a comprehensive comparative study of the Adventist approach by Ellen G. White and the Pentecostal approach by Robert Menzies regarding the phenomenon of speaking in tongues, their theological positions, and their implications for mission.

Significance of the Study

This study seeks to clarify the theological understanding of the phenomenon of speaking in tongues as espoused by the two views, thereby appreciating the nature and purpose of the gift of speaking in tongues to the believers and the church at large. It contributes toward the pneumatological dialogue on glossolalia and equips Adventist theologians and practitioners with a clearer understanding of this phenomenon for teaching and successful mission exploits, especially to the Pentecostals.

Definition of Terms

Adventism: In the context of Christianity, it refers to the belief in the imminent Second Coming (or "Second Advent") of Jesus Christ, and it's a core belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In this paper, it is used synonymously with the Seventh Day Adventist Church and its beliefs.

Glossolalia: Etymologically is an English word compounded of the two Greek Words *glossa* and *lalein*. In its hybrid form, the term is understood to mean “to speak in ecstatic tongues” in an unnatural way.⁴¹

Pentecostalism: Pentecostalism is a form of Christianity emphasizing the direct experience of God through the Holy Spirit, often marked by practices like speaking in tongues and divine healing. In this paper, it is used to refer to charismatic Pentecostal movements and their beliefs.

Xenoglosia: Sometimes also known as xenolalia, is the supposedly paranormal phenomenon in which a person is allegedly able to speak a foreign language that was previously unknown to them and could not have acquired by natural means

Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this comparative study was intentionally narrowed to focus on the teachings of William Menzies and Ellen G. White as representative voices of the Pentecostal and Seventh-day Adventists understandings of glossolalia, respectively. While the study could have covered a broader range on the subject, the researcher deliberately delimited the investigation to a comparative analysis of these two authors. The primary objective was to examine and contrast their theological perspectives on the gift of tongues, while also exploring the historical and theological backgrounds that shaped their views such as their lives, education, the way they did their theology, and their theological contributions among others. This targeted approach allowed for an enriched and in-depth exploration of their specific teachings within the broader academic discourse.

⁴¹ Mills, *Understanding Speaking in Tongues*, 11.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative comparative theological and analytical method to systematically examine the views of White and Menzies on glossolalia. The research further integrates the hermeneutical approaches and historical developments to enrich the study and provide a fair, comprehensive and holistic assessment of their respective theological positions on the subject.

The research commences with a thorough survey of the historical development of glossolalia, an investigation of the writings of the primary sources, White and Menzies, to establish their hermeneutical approaches, foundational texts, and the theological argument they advance, and their positions on glossolalia. It is then followed by a systematic comparative study of specific thematic areas. The criteria for the comparison that has been adopted has been favored in a quest to expose the roots of the beliefs and divergent views, compare similar themes that emerge from their discussions on the subject and provide a structural coherence of the study that unearths the similarities and differences, and patterns and relationships to achieve the purpose of this study. Therefore, the areas of comparison comprise the hermeneutical approaches, arguments on the nature of tongues, and the role and significance of tongues. This study concludes with an evaluation of both views, the implications and applications, and finally make recommendations for further

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF GLOSSOLALIA

Glossolalia, though mainly more pronounced and associated with Christendom in the present day, is a phenomenon that has been dotedly witnessed and practiced in different epochs of human history. Apart from religious and Christian circles, it has also been observed in several ancient religions and mystical traditions. This chapter traces the presence, nature, and development of glossolalia from the Greco-Roman period till the present time.

The Greco-Roman Era and Glossolalia

Glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, is not a modern-day phenomenon, as it has been documented from ancient times during the Greco-Roman era. The Greco-Roman period, spanning from the 8th century BCE to the 5th century CE, was a time of significant cultural, political, and intellectual influence exerted by ancient Greece and Rome over the Mediterranean region and beyond.

Within the cultural context of the Greco-Roman civilization, numerous mystery religions and cults included glossolalia as an integral component of their ceremonial observances and customary activities. In the cult dedicated to Dionysus, the deity associated with frenzied and intense emotional states, fervent and euphoric ceremonies frequently involved devotees, known as Bacchantes or Maenads,

engaging in practices such as speaking in tongues and displaying other manifestations of ecstatic behavior.¹

These rituals were thought to facilitate a connection between worshippers and the divine, enabling them to achieve altered states of awareness. Similarly, in the veneration of Cybele, adherents, referred to as Galli or Corybantes, participated in fervent ceremonies characterized by glossolalia, percussion, and rhythmic movements.² Glossolalia was believed to serve as a means of expressing the deity's intentions and enabling connection with the divine.

Therefore, many of the people who in the later periods eventually became Christians were emanating from this background. In an attempt to unify these worshipers of diverse gods, the emperor of Rome brought about syncretism and mystical worship. It taught them to believe that though their gods bore different names, they were essentially the same, though mysterious. This contributed to the embrace of mysticism in early Christianity.³ contributed to this history is crucial in understanding how their transition from some of these practices such as glossolalic experiences would affect their Christian practice.

The Patristic Era and Glossolalia

The Patristic era, spanning from the first to the eighth centuries AD, was a formative period in early Christian history marked by the influential writings and teachings of the Church Fathers, who played a crucial role in shaping Christian theology, establishing doctrinal orthodoxy, and guiding the expansion of the Church

¹ Eric Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Oakland, California: University California Press, 1957), 19.

² *Ibid.*, 23.

³ Justo L. Gonzalez, *The History of Christianity*, vol. 1, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation* (Broadway, New York: Harper Collins, 2010), 20.

in the face of diverse cultural, social, and theological challenges.⁴ The church fathers dealt with a series of doctrinal debates that affected the church then, upon which they reflected and offered theological and pastoral guidance. However, it is striking that a survey of Christian history reveals the relative infrequency of glossolalia both as a practice and as a matter of discussion among the church fathers.⁵

During this period, glossolalia was only attributed to a particular heretical sectarian group in the second century known as Montanism. It was founded by Montanus of Phrygia, who urged his followers to await the end of the world and experience a fresh Pentecostal baptism. Eventually, he and some of his followers are said to have had glossolalic experiences.⁶ The Christian church, after initially exhibiting a degree of tolerance, ultimately deemed the movement heretical due to its assertions of new divine revelations. This served as a catalyst for the attraction of comments by the Church Fathers over the boundaries and veracity of glossolalia. Irenaeus (AD 130-200) made mention of glossolalia but somewhat in an obscure way. He talked of “speaking in all languages” as reference to spiritual gifts, tongues inclusive in the New Testament times and not as a phenomenon occurring in his day.⁷ Tertullian (160-220), who himself was a Montanist, in his challenge to Marcion, attests to the presence of ecstatic speech among his group in which the conscious mind was not in control.⁸ Chrysostom (345-407), a fourth century father, out rightly

⁴ Hubertus R. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church* (Ada, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2007), 1-3.

⁵ Anthony A. Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism: A Biblical and Theological Evaluation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1972), 9-10.

⁶ Heikki Raisanen, *The Rise of Christian Beliefs* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2010), 236.

⁷ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 14.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

testifies to the absence of glossolalia in the fourth century church. He deemed the subject of glossolalia obscure and a gift that had ceased occurring when commenting on Paul's discussion of tongues in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14.⁹ Augustine (354-430), in his sixth homily on 1 John, asserts that he observed no glossolalia in his day church.

The era of the Church Fathers demonstrates that glossolalia was not a prevalent occurrence and practice in the church except for the solitary trace of it among the Montanists. This is evidenced by the lack of discussions on the subject among the church fathers. However, it is important to note that the reference to speaking in tongues by the fathers such as Irenaeus, shows that their understanding of the New Testament tongues was of foreign languages.

Medieval Era and Glossolalia (500-1500)

The Middle Ages covers the period from 500 until 1500 AD.¹⁰ The medieval Christian Church held a central role in the lives of the largely illiterate population, wielding exclusive authority over the administration of sacraments, which were believed essential for salvation, and promoting the veneration of saints, Jesus, and Mary as intermediaries between the individual and remote, almighty God.¹¹

Generally, the medieval era saw a philosophical resurgence. Philosophy began to be explored and found itself within religious circles as theologians struggled with the question of faith and reason. Medieval theologians employed the methods and

⁹ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 16.

¹⁰ Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church*, vol. 4, *The Age of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans, 1999), 15.

¹¹ Miri Rubin, *The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 256.

logical techniques of ancient pagan philosophers like Plato and Aristotle to tackle complex theological questions and doctrinal issues.¹²

Away from mainstream Christendom, ecstatic glossolalia was observed and practiced by Christian mystics. Influenced by the resurgence of philosophies of Plato, they often viewed glossolalia as a means of achieving a deeper communion with God, transcending the limitations of ordinary language to express their encounters with the divine presence.¹³ Mystics like Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) and Meister Eckhart (1260-1328) believed that speaking in tongues allowed them to become one with the divine, experiencing a profound sense of unity and communion.¹⁴

Generally, glossolalia was interestingly relatively absent from the mainstream despite the church existing in a wonder age. But, similarly to the patristic era, it was practiced in a foreign language by some individuals such as Vincent Ferrier (1357-1419).¹⁵

The medieval era was characterized by the heavy institutionalization of the Catholic Church and the essence of sacraments in worship. Glossolalia was not a

¹² Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 98.

¹³ Bernard McGinn, ed., *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism* (London, United Kingdom: Random House, 2006), 97. The Christian mystical perspective on glossolalia was significantly shaped by philosophical concepts, especially those of Plato, who examined the essence of knowledge and the constraints of language in expressing genuine comprehension. Christian mystics interpreted Plato's notions of innate knowledge and the soul's pre-existing understanding as a manifestation of direct intuition or soul knowledge, providing the soul with immediate access to divine truths during mystical experiences. Moreover, Plato's focus on the existence of abstract, transcendent Forms or Ideas as the ultimate reality underlying the material world prompted certain Christian mystics to interpret their experiences of glossolalia as a direct engagement with divine archetypes or Forms. Plato's philosophical ideas profoundly impacted the interpretation of glossolalia and mystical experiences during the mystical era, as mystics utilized his concepts to express the ineffable quality of their divine encounters and highlight the inadequacies of conventional language in conveying profound truths.

¹⁴ Bernard McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing*, The Edward Cadbury Lectures 2000-2001 (New York: Crossroad Pub, 2001), 153.

¹⁵ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 18.

common feature and practice in Christendom in the era, except for sporadic occurrences with some individuals and among the minority group of Christian mystics. This demonstrates that even in this era, speaking in tongues was neither a common practice nor a sought-after experience by the church.¹⁶

The Reformation Era and Glossolalia

The 16th-century Reformation era was characterized by a resurgence of interest in the fundamental Scriptural doctrines of sin, justification, the inspiration of the Word, and the true nature of the church. However, leading Protestant figures such as Martin Luther (1483-1546), Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531), and John Calvin (1509-1564) did not place significant emphasis on glossolalia or charismatic experiences in their theological teachings.¹⁷ Luther's primary focus was on the doctrine of justification by faith and the authority of Scripture, while Calvin stressed the sovereignty of God and the importance of Scripture. Zwingli, on the other hand, concentrated on reforming worship practices and promoting scriptural teaching within the church.¹⁸

Glossolalia did not play a prominent role during the reformation era, unlike its later significance in the Pentecostal and charismatic movements. However, a sectarian group of non-Anabaptist reformers known as the radical reformers, who emerged from the mystical medieval Friends of God movement, are recorded to have practiced ecstatic glossolalia. The Quakers, followers of Edward Irwin, and the Shakers possessed a similar understanding and beliefs. They valued speaking in tongues as the

¹⁶ Rubin, *The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*, 279.

¹⁷ Jason Cockayne, *A Theology of Tongues: A Biblical and Historical Understanding of Speaking in Tongues* (n.p.: Independently Published, 2019), 37.

¹⁸ Gonzalez, *The History of Christianity*, 47.

most important gift among the gifts. Bresson records that the entire Quake movement literature was seriously pervaded by mysticism, visions, healings and power akin to that of Pentecostalism.¹⁹ However, it is important to note that the Reformation era, spearheaded by Martin Luther, demonstrates that glossolalia was not a common practice during their time and, consequently, was not a subject of the Reformation.

Glossolalia in Pentecostalism

Historically, glossolalia in Pentecostalism traces its origins to the 20th century to the teachings of Charles Parham at Bethel Bible School.²⁰ At the pinnacle of the holiness movement, Charles Parham, a former Methodist, held the belief that sanctification was a second act of grace that completely eradicated "inbred sin." He also maintained that even after attaining genuine sanctification and the abiding anointing, Christians should still experience an outpouring of power.²¹

In October 1900, Parham established a Bible college in Kansas and tasked his students to search the Bible for evidence of what accompanied the baptism of the Spirit. The students unanimously concluded after their research that speaking in tongues was the undisputable proof of the Pentecostal blessings, leading them to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit.²² On January 1, 1901, Agnes Ozman, one of Parham's students, became the first to speak in tongues after he laid hands upon her.²³ This

¹⁹ Bernard L. Bresson, *Studies in Ecstasy* (New York: Vintage Press, 1966), 96.

²⁰ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1997), 28.

²¹ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 24.

²² Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking: An Experiment in Spiritual Experience* (London, United Kingdom: Hodder and Stoughton, 1964), 61.

²³ *Ibid.*, 62.

experience is considered the beginning of the modern Pentecostal revival and glossolalia.²⁴

Parham then spread the Pentecostal message to other cities in America, eventually holding a Bible school in Houston, Texas, in 1905. William J. Seymour, a Negro holiness preacher, was one of the attendees of that Bible school and upon conviction of this message, he preached the Pentecostal message to small groups and homes until they moved to a building on Azusa Street, which eventually became the center of Pentecostalism. It was from here that the famous Azusa Street Revival took place in 1906.²⁵

Therefore, the early 20th century saw the rise of Pentecostalism, a significant religious movement that emphasized spiritual experiences and a strong belief in the manifestation of the Holy Spirit's gifts. The Azusa Street Revival, led by Seymour, played a crucial role in the emergence of Pentecostalism and the global popularization of glossolalia.²⁶ Those who participated in this revival reported being filled with the Holy Spirit and were able to communicate in ecstatic languages, a phenomenon they had not previously experienced. Participants believed that glossolalia was of importance on both individual and social levels, as it was seen as a means of personal spiritual empowerment and a form of prophetic speech that required interpretation for the edification of the assembly. The Azusa Street Revival, therefore, is considered a momentous and influential event in Christian history, catalyzing the global

²⁴ Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking*, 61-62.

²⁵ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 24-25.

²⁶ Robeck McCall, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 263.

dissemination of Pentecostalism and the widespread acceptance of glossolalia as a valid manifestation of the Holy Spirit's presence.²⁷

The ensuing years after the Azusa Street Revival witnessed a rapid growth of Pentecostalism globally. Many groups were formed, some without the Pentecostal name, such as the Churches of God, International gospel churches, Catholic Apostolic churches, etc. Besides these, several other churches were bearing the Pentecostal name. The largest and the most influential of these Pentecostal groups is the Assemblies of God. Fifty years after the Azusa Street revival, this group had grown to a membership of over half a billion with thousands of branches in the United States. Later came others such as the Church of God in Christ, the Church of God, and the United Pentecostal Church, among others.²⁸

The practice of glossolalia cannot just be limited to mainline Pentecostal churches. The glossolalic influence spread to some other traditional churches referred to as Neo-Pentecostal churches. They are called Neo-Pentecostals due to their embrace of some Pentecostal beliefs and practices, especially glossolalia. From the 1960s, glossolalia has spread and is practiced among many Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and some Baptist churches.²⁹ Glossolalia, therefore, till today, stands as a universal identity among many Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Church across the globe.

²⁷ McCall, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement*, 263.

²⁸ Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking*, 85.

²⁹ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 31-32.

Glossolalia in Adventism

Glossolalia has never been a universally acceptable belief and practice within Adventism. Early Adventist in the 19th century, did not accept the glossolalic style like that of Pentecostals which they deemed as fanaticism, aligning it to the Holy Flesh Movement.³⁰ This understanding and position continued through the 20th century life of the Church which emphasized orderliness in worship.³¹ However, there have been questionable pockets of its existence in some quarters individual congregation of the church and its origins can be traced back to the emergence of the holiness movement. In spite of this, the church never officially recognized and embraced the practice.³²

The Adventist Holiness Movement emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, emphasizing the reception of the Holy Spirit to empower believers to live a Christian life. A. T. Jones, a prominent figure in this movement, believed that the Lord was leading His people step by step, with the first step being the preaching of righteousness by faith at the 1888 General Conference session and the second step being the gift of the Holy Spirit.³³

The Adventist Holiness Movement was part of a broader holiness revival in American Protestantism, particularly Methodism, which reached its peak in the 1890s. This movement spawned numerous new denominations, including the Church of the Nazarene, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and various Church of God groups.

³⁰ George Knight, *A Search for Identity* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 2000), 176.

³¹ Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2000), 497.

³² Knight, *A Search for Identity*, 178.

³³ George Knight, *A. T. Jones: Point Man on Adventism's Charismatic Frontier* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 2011), 192.

Adventists were familiar with holiness literature, such as Hannah Whit all Smith's *Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, and Jones studied the teachings of the Keswick movement and Frederick B. Meyer.³⁴ Jones, known for his charismatic and emotional approach to religion, encouraged praise meetings and emotional expressions of faith. While Ellen White warned him not to seek excessive feelings in his preaching, Jones was not alone in the Adventist Holiness Movement. A. F. Ballenger and Mrs. S.M.I. Henry also published works on the Holy Spirit during this period.³⁵

In Indiana, Adventist holiness evolved into Adventist Pentecostalism through the holy flesh movement, which grew out of the "Receive Ye the Holy Ghost" message. Although not entirely in harmony with the movement, A. T. Jones inadvertently stimulated some of its excesses through his teachings on "translation faith," "the power to overcome every tendency to sin," and the idea that perfect holiness encompasses both flesh and spirit. Despite the similarities between his theology and that of the holy flesh advocates, Jones flatly repudiated their movement, claiming it would lead to fanaticism. The advocates believed Jones and the General Conference opposed them, and Jones's rejection of the movement was likely due to their differing views on the sinfulness of Christ's human nature rather than their Pentecostal excitement. Interestingly, Jones's final religious affiliation was with a group of tongues-speaking, Sabbath-keeping Pentecostals, highlighting the complex relationship between his teachings and the holy flesh movement.³⁶

³⁴ Gary Land, *Adventism in America: A History*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998), 155.

³⁵ Knight, *A.T. Jones: Point Man on Adventism's Charismatic Frontier*, 193.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 194-96.

It was against this background that commencing at the Indiana after the 1900 session, she declared that the deliberations had no truth in its whole fabric. In 1901 at the Battle Creek session, Ellen White condemned the holy Flesh movement and their fanatical emotive expressions calling it mere noise and no evidence of sanctification and reception of the Holy Spirit.³⁷

There were about four incidences related to tongue speaking in early Adventism. The first occurred in Michigan (1853), where a woman claimed to be speaking in some Garlic Indian language. Upon examination by some Indian language experts, it was discovered that her claimed tongues had no semblance to any of the 17 Indian languages, therefore thwarting her claims and rendering them fanatical. The second occurred in Wisconsin in 1860, involving Thaddeus M. Steward and his wife. They claimed to have been experiencing utterances and, as leaders, influenced others into their experiences, which prompted James White to visit and help address the issue. After guidance and counselling, backed by Ellen Whites' confirmatory visions, Steward and others were guided against these utterances and eventually became trusted leaders of the church again. The third incidence occurred in Portland, Maine, in 1864 and 1865 and involved Samuel Hancock, a Sabbath keeper but deeply immersed in ecstatic experiences. Ellen White again received a vision and spoke against what she termed fanatical experiences. The fourth incidence occurred in 1908 and involved Ralph Mackin. He sought the guidance of Ellen White, wanting to know if the utterances that accompanied the apostles after receiving the Spirit would be a similar experience by those who receive the Spirit in the present times. In answering his question, Ellen White was hesitant to affirm his assertion but was equally cautious to dislodge them immediately. It was not until after much prayer, study, and receiving

³⁷ Herbert E. Douglass, *Messenger of the Lord* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 1998), 198-200.

guidance through visions that she emphatically guided Ralph against seeking such utterances, declaring that they were not from God but a work of the evil one.³⁸

In more recent decades, Walter Read confirmed the occurrence of various types of tongue manifestations such as messages preached by Adventist members in Massachusetts in languages unknown to them in the year 1919. In other instances, messages were preached in the usual known language of the speakers but heard in other languages by some listeners. At other times, a sermon preached in Singapore and South Africa in Malay and Afrikaans was heard and understood in Chinese and Spanish, respectively.³⁹

It is clear from this historical discussion that White and the Adventist Church, cognizant of their occurrence, do acknowledge or accept these sporadic ecstatic occurrences of tongue speaking. However, it is also very clear from history that the Church does subscribe to tongue speaking that speaks to known foreign languages. The Adventist Church and Ellen White have never subscribed to ecstatic utterances as a present phenomenon in the church nor an experience for members to seek. Any form of ecstatic utterances that mushroomed were vehemently rejected and regarded as fanatical and a work of the devil.

Summary

Throughout the history of Christendom, glossolalia has never been a mainstay practice or subject of discussion. However, it has left its sporadic mystical imprint on various epochs and religious movements. From its enigmatic presence in ancient religious rituals and ecstatic experiences to its spread and mainstay practice in most Pentecostal churches today, glossolalia has evolved into a fully-fledged Pentecostal

³⁸ Douglass, *Messenger of the Lord*, 199.

³⁹ Walter Read, "The Gift of Tongues," *Ministry Magazine*, August 1964, 18-20.

teaching and identity. It has experienced an absence through the ages, with only a peripheral showcase within Christian mysticism in the Middle Ages. The Azusa Street Revival in the early 20th century saw glossolalia emerge in a new form, marking the beginning of the modern Pentecostal and charismatic movements. Glossolalia continues to be an important and controversial aspect of many Christian and non-Christian spiritual practices. Its journey through the ages reflects the ever-present desire of humans to mysteriously commune with the transcendent God, offering insights into the eternal quest for spiritual connection and divine expressio

CHAPTER 3

ROBERT MENZIES ON GLOSSOLALIA

Historically, as earlier observed, Pentecostalism as a movement emerged in a quest to experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the subsequent ecstatic experience. Therefore, glossolalia sits at the fulcrum of Pentecostal beliefs with many of their scholars writing on this subject. Among those acclaimed Pentecostal theologians is Robert Menzies. This chapter, therefore, delves into Menzies's writings to explore his perspective on glossolalia in the Lukan and Pauline writings.

Biography of Robert Menzies

Robert Menzies is a distinguished scholar and missionary with an impressive educational background and extensive experience in ministerial work. He obtained his B.A. in Biblical Studies from Evangel College in Springfield, Missouri (1976-1980), followed by a Masters of Divinity in Theology/Missions from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California (1980-1983). Menzies then pursued his Ph.D. in the New Testament at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland (1985-1989). Under the supervision of I. Howard Marshall, completed his thesis titled "The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts" in 1989.¹

Menzies began his teaching career at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (APTS) in the Philippines in 1983. After completing his Ph.D., he and his wife,

¹ Silas Daniel, "On Pentecostal Theology: An Interview with Robert Menzies," *Asian Centre for Pentecostal Theology*, April 21, 2021, <https://pentecost.asia/articles/on-pentecostal-theology-an-interview-with-robert-menzies/>.

Joanne, resumed their missionary work in Asia, which has spanned over 30 years. For the past 28 years, they have served in China, focusing on leadership training and holistic community development. Menzies currently serves as the Director of Synergy, an organization dedicated to enabling rural villagers in Southwest China to lead productive and fruitful lives. He also holds a position as an adjunct faculty member at APTS in Baguio City, Philippines.

Throughout his career, Menzies has taught at various Bible schools and seminaries across the globe, including institutions in Australia, Fiji, Holland, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Russia, and the United States. His writings on New Testament pneumatology, particularly Luke's distinctive contribution, have stimulated fresh thinking and discussion in this field. Menzies is currently engaged in research on the missiological purpose of Luke-Acts.

In addition to his academic and missionary work, Menzies has served as an Assemblies of God Missionary (1983-1985, 1989-2001), an instructor at the Far East Advanced School of Theology in Manila, Philippines (1983-1985), and a faculty member at APTS (1990-1994 full-time; 1994-2001 and 2014-present part-time).² Menzies has authored and co-authored numerous books, including *Empowered for Witness: The Spirit in Luke-Acts*,³ *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience*,⁴ *The Language of the Spirit: Interpreting and Translating Charismatic*

² Daniel, "On Pentecostal Theology."

³ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*.

⁴ William Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2000).

Terms,⁵ *Pentecost: This Story is Our Story*,⁶ and *Speaking in Tongues: Jesus and the Apostolic Church as Models for the Church Today*,⁷ among others. This makes him a Pentecostal authority on the subject.

Menzies' Hermeneutical Approach

In theology, to comprehend one's theological nuances and doctrinal beliefs, it is essential to grasp their hermeneutical orientation. This is necessary because hermeneutics dictates the resultant theology. Thus, it is vital to examine both Menzies' and Pentecostal hermeneutics to understand Menzies' views, particularly regarding glossolalia fully. Therefore, this hermeneutical discourse briefly examines his overarching hermeneutical perspectives, primarily focusing on his interpretative model of the books of Luke and Acts and their subsequent influence on his understanding of Scriptures on speaking in tongues.

Menzies posits that the book of Acts, when rightly interpreted, is critical to the life and purpose of the contemporary church. He submits firmly that Pentecostals consider the Book of Acts as a paradigm for the contemporary church today. Therefore, their hermeneutical approach is characterized by its simplicity and directness, centering on the narratives in Acts as individual experiential encounters.⁸

The hermeneutic of most Pentecostal believers is not overly complex. It is not filled with questions about historical reliability or outdated worldviews. It is not excessively reflective about theological systems, cultural distance, or literary strategies.⁹

⁵ Robert P. Menzies, *The Language of the Spirit: Interpreting and Translating Charismatic Terms* (Cleveland, Tennessee: CTC Press, 2010).

⁶ Robert P. Menzies, *Pentecost: This Story Is Our Story* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 2013).

⁷ Robert P. Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues: Jesus and the Apostolic Church as Models for the Church Today* (Cleveland, Tennessee: CTC Press, 2016).

⁸ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 9.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.

This narrative hermeneutical approach by Menzies which he also attributes to Pentecostals, is confirmed and backed another acclaimed Pentecostal theologian Lee Roy Martin. Martin compares the ancient apostolic hermeneutical shift after Pentecost to the Pentecostals' shift following the baptism of the Spirit experience. He contends that the apostles' biblical interpretative methods underwent a metamorphosis on the day of Pentecost, deviating from traditional Jewish exegetical interpretive norms. Four new contextual elements—introduced by Jesus' life, teachings, resurrection, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—impacted this shift. Similar interpretive presumptions from the early 19th-century church, which employed conservative hermeneutical methods, were passed down to the Pentecostal movement in its early years.¹⁰ Early Pentecostals recognized the necessity to adjust their biblical interpretation based on their encounters with the Holy Spirit. They viewed the receiving of the Holy Spirit as a cataclysmic occurrence that drastically changed their perspective on life. Although there were some similarities, Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal hermeneutical methods varied significantly.

Pentecostalism's interpretive framework therefore showed some fundamental characteristics. Pentecostals initially saw the Bible as a unified story describing God's salvation plan, which the Five-Fold Gospel summarized. This narrative approach also made them use intertextuality to support readings that fit the main plotline where they found Pentecostal themes all across Scripture. Thirdly, they believed biblical stories to be ideal examples for modern Christians to follow, with Acts acting as a particular blueprint for the church, claiming Jesus set an example for followers to follow, and

¹⁰ Lee Roy Martin, ed., *Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Reader* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2013), 13.

the early church in Acts provided a model for Pentecostals to copy in their own communities.¹¹

Menzies, in endorsing this Pentecostal interpretive framework, contends that although Evangelicals emphasize the author's intent and contextualize passages historically and literarily, they err in contrast to the Pentecostal perspective on the books of Luke and Acts due to two fundamental issues: the rejection of the Acts narrative and the apostolic church as a model for contemporary church practice, and the reduction of New Testament theology to exclusively Pauline theology.¹²

The Pentecostal movement derives its inspiration from the events of Pentecost in the book of Acts, shaping the church's mission and emphasizing its role as a prophetic community that transcends age, gender, and race. They contend that Luke underscores the significance of remaining vigilant to the Spirit's guidance, exhibiting a courageous testimony, and expecting extraordinary events, consistent with the early church's appeal for boldness and miracles, which ought to be the contemporary reality of the Church.¹³

Pentecostal hermeneutics generally diminishes the importance of meticulous exegetical and hermeneutical techniques as rational, preferring instead to interpret Scripture supernaturally with the guidance of the Spirit. Pentecostals assert that the Spirit's role in scriptural interpretation extends beyond mere illumination. The Spirit's role in attributing meaning to texts seeks to reinstate their mystical quality and the presence of the transcendent, which has been diminished by rationality. They perceive the conservative exegetical hermeneutical model as rationalistic, prioritizing religious

¹¹ Martin, *Pentecostal Hermeneutics*, 14.

¹² Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 8.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 9.

experience over human reason in the Pentecostal paradigm. Kenneth Archer, a prominent Pentecostal theologian, asserts that the truthfulness of Scripture was discovered relationally, personally, and experientially rather than scientifically.¹⁴ Consequently, Pentecostals assert that Scriptures ought to be experienced and re-experienced rather than merely comprehended and elucidated. This is why Russell Spittler asserts, Pentecostals provide testimonies whereas fundamentalists present arguments. They assert that there is a substantial difference between cognitive fundamentalists and experiential Pentecostals.¹⁵

Menzies on the Nature of Tongues

Menzies commences the discussion of the nature of tongues by addressing what he terms a misconception about the presence of glossolalia in the early church. He argues that contrary to the belief that glossolalia was rare or non-existent, the text argues that the New Testament contains numerous references to this practice. He argues that Luke demonstrates that glossolalia was a well-known and widely practiced phenomenon in the early church.

Menzies asserts that Luke's mentions of speaking in tongues (λαλέω γλώσσαις) in Acts 10:46, 19:6, and potentially 2:4 pertain to unintelligible vocalizations prompted by the Spirit, rather than the articulation of previously unacquired human languages. He contends that Luke's narrative consistently depicts speaking in tongues as a distinct form of prophetic discourse, linking it to prophecy in

¹⁴ Kenneth Archer, "Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Retrospect and Prospect," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8 (1996): 73.

¹⁵ Russell Spittler, *Are Pentecostals and Charismatics Fundamentalists? A Review of American Uses of These Categories* (Oakland, California: University California Press, 1994), 108.

each of the three passages that delineate this phenomenon in Acts (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6).¹⁶

Regarding the nature of tongues, he believes that "speaking in tongues" primarily refers to unintelligible language (glossolalia), as opposed to the miraculous ability to speak in foreign languages (xenolalia).¹⁷

In his writings, he asserts that in 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul explicitly references glossolalia, which consists of unintelligible utterances inspired by the Holy Spirit. This perspective is endorsed by individuals who assert that the Holy Spirit articulates matters beyond human language.¹⁸ This glossolalic interpretation in the Pauline writings is substantiated by Paul's remarks on the necessity of interpreting these tongues. He contends that Paul's reference to the necessity of interpretation, which necessitates an individual endowed with a unique gift of the Holy Spirit, coupled with the absence of anyone possessing such knowledge during his discourse, sufficiently demonstrates that comprehensible human languages were not the focus at that juncture.

Menzies contends that the phenomenon of tongues in the Book of Acts has conventionally been perceived as the miracle of disciples speaking in foreign, previously unknown languages. However, he proposes an alternative explanation,

¹⁶ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 34.

¹⁷ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 55.

¹⁸ Mahesh Chavda, *The Hidden Power of Speaking in Tongues* (Shippensburg, Pennsylvania: Destiny Image, 2003), 15. When we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit articulates concepts that we are unable to convey in human language. As it is inherently a "unknown tongue," engaging with it necessitates humility and submission from us. We must willingly surrender every aspect of ourselves to the King of Glory—our body, mind, spirit, tongue, and vocal cords—in faith. All submits to Jesus. To the untrained intellect, this may appear absurd or intimidating; however, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1:25). What we willingly and completely relinquish to Jesus in humble faith He will bless and multiply exceedingly, surpassing our own capabilities with our resources.

suggesting that it may represent a two-fold miracle: the first, the disciples spoke in an incomprehensible spiritual language, and the second, the diverse crowd miraculously comprehended this glossolalia in their respective languages.¹⁹

He further substantiates his argument by asserting that Luke's employment of distinct Greek terms for "language" (*glōssa* and *dialektos*) in Acts 2:1-13 may signify a purposeful differentiation between incomprehensible spiritual utterances and intelligible human languages. He contends that the expression "in his own language" in Acts 2:6 and 2:8 qualifies the verbs of hearing, implying that the miracle pertained to the act of hearing rather than the articulation of recognized languages. Moreover, Luke may be deliberately engaging with various interpretations of "tongue" (*glōssa*) throughout the passage. This interpretation may elucidate why certain bystanders alleged that the disciples were inebriated, a seemingly peculiar response to the perception of coherent foreign languages. It also corresponds with the usage of *glōssa* in Acts 10:46 and 19:6, where it presumably denotes glossolalia.²⁰

Menzies argues that translating *glōssa* as "tongues" rather than "languages" in Acts 2:4 is more appropriate, as it captures the nuances of both possible interpretations and maintains the verbal connection between different passages in Acts. This analysis challenges the traditional understanding of the Pentecost event and suggests that the phenomenon of speaking in tongues in Acts may consistently refer to glossolalia rather than xenolalia, potentially impacting our understanding of this spiritual gift in both historical and contemporary religious contexts.²¹

¹⁹ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 29.

²⁰ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 58.

²¹ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 21.

To further cement his glossalalic interpretation of tongues in both Lukan and Pauline writings, he highlights three issues to support the interpretation of the tongues discussed by Paul and Luke being glossalalic. Firstly, he notes the similarities in vocabulary (λαλέω γλώσσαις) used in Acts 10:46 and Paul's writings in 1 Corinthians 12-13, entailing that the tongues spoken of are of the same nature.²² Secondly, he notes that all these texts associate speaking in tongues with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.²³ And thirdly, he notes that it all describes inspired speech associated with worship and pronouncements.²⁴ These similarities indicate that Luke in Acts and Paul likewise portray glossolalia rather than xenolalia as the nature of tongues.

Menzies on the Significance of Tongues

From Menzies's examination of Lukan writings on speaking in tongues, it becomes evident that the Lukan writings provide a strong case for the widespread use of speaking in tongues in the early church.²⁵ Menzies also argues that these writings highlight the importance of glossolalia and establish a biblical foundation for its practice, not only in the early church but also in the present-day church. He proposes that Luke views glossolalia as of immense significance and as having an ongoing role in the life of the contemporary church.²⁶ Therefore, the significance of glossolalia is five-fold: initial evidence, edification, missiological, eschatological, and ecclesiological.²⁷

²² Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 23.

²³ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

²⁵ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 35.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁷ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 89.

Tongues as Initial Evidence

Menzies, on the subject of tongues as initial evidence, wishes to answer the question of what is the relationship between the Pentecostal gift and the spoken tongues? He is of the view that Luke presents the Pentecostal gift as a source of prophetic inspiration and this inspiration includes charismatic revelation, intelligible speech and glossolalia. Of these, glossolalia due to its unusual and demonstrable character, suits as initial evidence.²⁸

Menzies asserts that significant differences exist between Luke's pneumatology and Paul's, with Luke prioritizing charismatic and prophetic aspects over soteriological themes. This distinction reinforces the Pentecostal view that the baptism of the Spirit is a separate and empowering experience, distinct from the act of conversion.²⁹ Consequently, Spirit-baptism occurs after conversion, thus establishing a two-stage process. He integrates the perspectives of Luke and Paul to address evidential discourse. He contends that Paul perceives the private use of tongues as beneficial, commendable, and accessible to all believers.³⁰ Luke associates inspired speech with the Pentecostal gift, highlighting the unique evidentiary characteristic of tongues.³¹

Moreover, he contends that the Pentecostal doctrine of evidential tongues constitutes a legitimate deduction from Luke's prophetic pneumatology. He argues that upon receiving the Pentecostal gift, one should expect to experience the

²⁸ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 250.

²⁹ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 13.

³⁰ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 19.

³¹ Robert P Menzies, "Evidential Tongues: An Essay on Theological Method," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies and APTS Press 2* (1998): 113.

manifestation of speaking in tongues as a definitive and observable evidence of this gift.³² The Pentecostal doctrine asserts that baptism in the Spirit is an experience that occurs after conversion and that glossolalia serves as its primary physical manifestation.³³

Despite being expressed in contemporary terminology, this concept traces its origins back to the early apostolic era, as it tackles inquiries that emerged during the church's spread among non-Jewish individuals. Evidential tongues promote a biblical belief in anticipation, highlighting that speaking in tongues is a fundamental, uplifting, and widely accessible aspect of the Pentecostal gift. Significantly, it acts as a potent reminder that the church, utilizing the Pentecostal gift, is a prophetic community endowed with the ability to carry out missionary work. This interpretation of evidential tongues establishes a connection between contemporary Pentecostal customs and their historical origins and missionary objectives.

Menzies concludes his arguments on tongues as initial evidence by stating that Luke presents the Pentecostal gift as the source of prophetic inspiration, which includes charismatic revelation, intelligible speech, and glossolalia. Of these tongue speaking possesses unusual and demonstrative characteristics which suits as initial evidence which he feels is affirmed by Paul's statement that private manifestations of tongues are desirable and universally available and must be spoken by all.³⁴ This position, he says, is drawn by systematic inference as Luke does not explicitly state so, which makes the works of biblical theology impossible to arrive at this conclusion.

³² Menzies, *Pentecost*, 31.

³³ Menzies, "Evidential Tongues," 115.

³⁴ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 250.

Tongues as Edification

Leaning on the writings of Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:4, where he mentions that tongues are available to every believer and that they edify the one who speaks, Menzies believes that one of the critical roles of glossolalia is that of edification. In edifying the believer, tongues function as prayer, praise, and intercession, all of which benefit and edify the believer.

Menzies contends that Paul depicts speaking in tongues as a distinct mode of prayer and communication with God. In 1 Corinthians 14:2, Paul asserts that individuals who speak in tongues "do not speak to men but to God" and "utter mysteries by the Spirit." This form of prayer is characterized as edifying to the speaker, despite the mind being "unfruitful" or lacking comprehension of the words. Menzies likens this experience to mystical traditions that prioritize direct, non-cognitive communication with the divine.³⁵

Furthermore, he contends that Paul defines tongues as a form of doxological prayer, or praise directed at God. This is evident in passages like 1 Corinthians 14:14-17, where Paul addresses the act of praying and singing with the spirit. In Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:16, Paul exhorts believers to be imbued with the Spirit and to sing "spiritual songs," which Menzies likely interprets as including the practice of singing in tongues. These expressions are regarded as spontaneous, Spirit-inspired declarations that glorify God.³⁶

Ultimately, he asserts that Paul defines tongues as a form of intercessory prayer, specifically in Romans 8:26-27. Paul illustrates the Spirit interceding for believers with "groans that words cannot articulate." He believes that this text likely

³⁵ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 120.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 130.

relates to glossolalia, as it illustrates Spirit-inspired expressions that the speaker does not fully understand but which are meaningful to God.³⁷

Consequently, Menzies asserts that these types of prayer—be it direct communication with God, praise, or intercession—are all initiated and empowered by the Holy Spirit. They are regarded as edifying to the individual believer and, in certain settings, to the broader Christian community. He emphasizes that Paul perceives speaking in tongues not as an indication of spiritual superiority, but as a manifestation of human frailty and reliance on God.³⁸

Tongues as Missiological Empowerment

Furthermore, for Menzies, tongues function as sign of missiological empowerment. One pronounced role that glossolalia plays is a clear demonstrable sign of empowerment for the mission. Tongue speech is a decisive sign of God's initiative in breaking through racial and economic barriers for mission.³⁹

Menzies proposes a parallelism between the pneumatological experiences of Jesus and the disciples as portrayed in Luke-Acts. He argues that Luke's narrative of the Pentecost event (Acts 2) should be interpreted in light of the earlier account of Jesus' anointing by the Spirit (Luke 3:21-22; 4:18-19).⁴⁰ According to Menzies' exegesis, just as the Spirit descended upon Jesus to empower Him for His messianic mission, so too did the Spirit come upon the disciples at Pentecost to equip them for their apostolic witness.⁴¹ Menzies contends that this parallel underscores Luke's

³⁷ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 135.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 77.

³⁹ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 254.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 255.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

emphasis on the missiological dimension of the Spirit's work in the early church, aligning with his broader pneumatological perspective throughout Luke-Acts.⁴² For Menzies, therefore, everything about tongues is a reminder of the mission at stake. The diversity of tongues reminds them of the scope and nature of the mission. The strangeness of tongues reminds them of the need to rely on the Spirit. The intimacy of tongues reminds them of God's assured presence with them on the mission. And the drama of tongues reminds them that a transcendent God delights to communicate with them.⁴³

Tongues as an Eschatological Sign

Additionally, to their edifying and missiological functions, Menzies suggests that glossolalia in Pentecostal theology is also interpreted as an eschatological signifier.⁴⁴ This phenomenon is perceived as a tangible indication of the inauguration of the eschaton and a confirmation of the believers' prophetic vocation in the culmination of salvation history.⁴⁵ Pentecostals view themselves as the fulfillment of Joel's prophetic utterance, with the manifestation of tongues serving to authenticate their kerygmatic role.⁴⁶ This self-understanding positions contemporary Pentecostals as eschatological prophets, commissioned to proclaim the prophetic word.

The ongoing occurrence of glossolalia within Pentecostal communities is regarded as a persistent reminder of their eschatological context. It situates modern Pentecostals, like their apostolic predecessors, within the terminal phase of

⁴² Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 258.

⁴³ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 162.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁴⁶ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 158.

redemptive history - the interim period of divine salvific activity that immediately antecedes the parousia. This eschatological interpretation of glossolalia thus serves to reinforce Pentecostal identity, validate their theological narrative, and underscore their perceived role in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan in the last days.⁴⁷

Tongues as an Ecclesiological Sign

In Pentecostal ecclesiology, speaking in tongues can be viewed as a unique "sacrament," representing a visible sign of an invisible spiritual reality.⁴⁸ Unlike traditional sacraments administered by clergy, tongues are accessible to all believers, regardless of their position in the church hierarchy. This characteristic gives tongues a powerful democratizing effect on church life. The phenomenon challenges conventional ecclesiastical structures by offering a more egalitarian model of spiritual empowerment. It suggests that every believer can directly experience and express spiritual gifts, regardless of their formal role in the church. This understanding of tongues contributes to flattening church authority structures and encourages a more participatory model of worship and ministry. It aligns with the Pentecostal emphasis on the priesthood of all believers and the direct accessibility of spiritual gifts to all faith community members.

Summary

In summary, Menzies argues that speaking in tongues has fivefold significance in Pentecostal theology: initial evidence, edification, missiological empowerment, eschatological sign, and ecclesiological indicator. He views glossolalia as a form of prayer, praise, and intercession that edifies believers, empowers them for mission,

⁴⁷ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 184.

⁴⁸ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 87.

signifies the end times, and serves as a democratizing "sacrament" in church life, challenging traditional hierarchies and promoting egalitarian spiritual expression. Ultimately, Menzies concludes that Luke presents a challenge to the contemporary church to reconsider its apostolic calling and charismatic roots, with glossolalia serving as a sign that the calling and power of the apostolic church remain valid for believers today.

CHAPTER 4

ELLEN G. WHITE AND GLOSSOLALIA

The emergence of the holy flesh movement in the 1900s which advocated for their claim that believers could achieve sinless perfection and physical transformation, a revival that featured emotional excesses including speaking in tongues, prompted the Seventh Day Adventist Church and Ellen White to examine, provide biblical guidance, and pay attention to charismatic ecstatic utterances which had mushroomed within the new denomination.¹ It was from this backdrop that White began to make comments on the subject of speaking in tongues. This chapter, therefore, examines White's perspectives on Pentecost and speaking in tongues from both the Lukan and Pauline writings.

Biography of Ellen G. White

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) was a remarkable woman who played a pivotal role in the founding and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Her writings and public ministry have had a profound impact on millions of people worldwide, and her spiritual gifts are highly regarded by Adventists.

During her lifetime, she claimed to have received over 2,000 visions and dreams which she claimed to have been divinely inspired. Consequently, she wrote extensively, producing more than 5,000 periodical articles and about 40 books covering theology, health reform, education, and practical Christian living. Today, her

¹ George Knight, *A Brief History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 2004), 112.

writings have been compiled into over 126 titles available in English, making her one of the most translated authors in history. Her works cover a wide range of subjects, including education, health, prophecy, nutrition, cultural and ethnic-linguistic issues, creationism, and the origin of life. Her most famous work, "Steps to Christ," a guide to successful Christian living, has been translated into more than 144 languages.²

Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen White was more than just a talented writer; they consider her to be a divinely appointed messenger whose purpose was to draw attention to the Holy Scriptures and help prepare people for the second coming of Christ. Throughout her life, from the age of 17 until her death 70 years later, she received approximately 2,000 visions and dreams, varying in length from a few seconds to nearly four hours. The insights and guidance received through these revelations were then written down and shared with others.

While Adventists accept Ellen White's writings as inspired, they do not consider them to be on the same level as the Bible. The Holy Scriptures remain the unique standard by which all other writings, including White's, must be judged. However, as White herself noted, the presence of the Holy Spirit is still necessary to help illuminate and apply the teachings of the Bible.

Ellen White's life and work were instrumental in establishing and growing the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Her writings continue to be a source of guidance, inspiration, and spiritual nourishment for millions of Adventists around the world, and her legacy as a prophet and messenger of God is an integral part of Adventist history and belief.

² Douglass, *Messenger of the Lord*, 192.

White's Hermeneutical Approach

Ellen G. White, as one of the pioneers of Adventism, was instrumental in influencing the hermeneutical approaches of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church and its subsequent theology. Her books, visions, and letters provide various insights into her hermeneutical convictions despite her not providing a laid-out hermeneutical model. The following discussions highlight some of her hermeneutical perspectives from her varied discussions streamlined to those that are pertinent to this study.

White emphasized the divine origin and infallibility of the Bible while asserting its inspiration and authority.³ This belief is unanimously affirmed and espoused by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, that the entire Scripture is divinely inspired without exception. On inspiration, Adventists advocate for thought inspiration and not verbal inspiration. White believed that inspiration took place at the level of the mind and will. Therefore, it is not the words in the Bible that were inspired but the men who wrote them. As she puts it, the writers of the Bible were “God’s pen men and not His pen.”⁴

She admonished individuals wishing to know more about God to study the Scriptures diligently for themselves and while studying, allow the Bible to be its own interpreter. This prevents the bible from being misinterpreted but instead allows God to speak through His written word. The reader's personal views and opinions must be subservient to the Scriptures.⁵ White further advocated for readers to contemplate the

³ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages Book 1* (Silver Spring, Maryland: Ellen G White Estate, 1958), 21. Discussing on the inspiration of scripture she argues that the Bible is written by inspired men, not God's mode of thought and expression. It is not God's words, logic, or rhetoric, but rather the human mind, influenced by the Holy Ghost. The divine mind and will are combined with the human mind and will, making the utterances of the man the word of God. The Bible's words are not God's, but rather the human mind's expression.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Believe His Prophets*, vol. 1 (Silver Spring, Maryland: Ellen G White Estate, 1955), 191.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 1903), 190.

historical and cultural context to acquire a more profound comprehension of the intended meaning.⁶

Based on her writings, Gerard Damsteegt outlined several hermeneutical principles, which include consideration of time, place, and circumstances that were prevailing at the time of the writing of the Scriptures as critical areas of hermeneutical consideration.⁷ This demonstrates White's conviction on the importance of interpreting the Scriptures in a balanced and contextual manner. Paying attention to the historical-cultural context and the words of the Scriptures aids in obtaining the author's intended meaning of the text without infusing it with any mystical, alien, or spiritual meaning that is not apparent therein. She gives a stern warning against overstraining the meaning of sentences in the Bible that the "plain teachings of the Word of God are not to be so spiritualized that the reality is lost sight of."⁸

White also touted the importance of biblical harmony, urging the reconciliation of passages that appeared to be in conflict stating that the Bible as a whole is but one unified book. This entails that there must be agreement throughout the Bible over any particular subject.

⁶ White, *Education*, 190. She emphasizes the significance of history and culture in biblical interpretation. The historical and cultural context of the Bible is essential for comprehending its characters and doctrines. It clarifies the figures of the Bible and emphasizes the significance of Christ's teachings. It is essential to meticulously examine the Biblical context to prevent erroneous doctrines or unchristian practices. (MB 1) Ellen White underscores the importance of comprehending the original significance of Scriptural words, advocating for a historical exploration to grasp the sentiments and perspectives of the original audience. This enables us to comprehend the profound lessons and meanings inherent in the words of Jesus. She advocates for an exhaustive examination of the complete significance of the Bible and the essence of the sacred oracles. Ellen White advocates for a verse-by-verse approach to comprehending biblical texts, emphasizing the importance of contemplating the divine message within each verse until it is internalized (CT 461). The Scripture principle can elucidate the concealed significance of the text, rendering the authentic meaning of the Scriptures apparent.

⁷ Gerald Damsteegt, "Adventist Doctrines and Progressive Revelation," *Adventist Theological Society* 2, no. 1 (January 1991): 77-79.

⁸ White, *Selected Messages Book 1*, 170.

The Biblical Research Institute, in their recent book edited by Frank Hassel on hermeneutics, Ekkehardt Mueller highlights all these principles espoused by White and comprehensively discusses the Hermeneutics of Adventism. The book also aligns the Adventist Hermeneutics to the Historical Grammatical method among the broader hermeneutical approaches.⁹ By and large, this entails that White's hermeneutics speaks to this same model and shows that White's position on hermeneutics is in agreement with that of the Church.

White on the Nature of Tongues

Ellen White generally regarded tongue speaking as a miraculous gift of the Spirit and was spoken as an actual and recognizable language. A time of emergency missionary work necessitated this gift of speaking in tongues.¹⁰ This conclusion is drawn because, in her observation, the occurrence of speaking in tongues manifested and was exercised for the spreading of the gospel and the salvation of souls. It was the deficiency on either part of the speaker or the listener to communicate in clear terms due to language barriers that God would facilitate a smooth communication miraculously for the sake of the gospel. She further argues that when the missionary knows the foreign languages of their missionary terrain, or there is availability of a translator, there is no need for the provision of this gift.¹¹

The Book of Acts records three incidences of speaking in tongues. The first and major one recorded in Acts 2, is the Pentecost experience with the others in Acts 10:44-46 and 19:6. According to White, the tongues spoken at Pentecost were known

⁹ Ekkehardt Mueller, "Principles of Biblical Interpretation," in *Biblical Hermeneutics: An Adventist Approach*, ed. Frank M. Hasel (Silver Spring, Maryland: Biblical Research Institute, 2020), 215.

¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Silver Spring, Maryland: Ellen G White Estate, 1911), 38.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

languages that people could hear, recognize, and understand thoroughly. The speaking in tongues at Pentecost was necessitated by the presence of all people from different native lands and of varying language orientations which proved to be an obstacle to the spreading of the gospel. To overcome this challenge, God had to intervene miraculously to compensate for the apostle's lack of proficiency in languages. The apostles spoke in other tongues or languages unknown to them but known and understood by some sections of the audience.¹² The audience was astonished because each individual heard them speaking in their native tongues (languages), as stated in Acts 2:6. White puts it this way:

Every known tongue was represented by those assembled. This diversity of languages would have been a great hindrance to the proclamation of the gospel; God therefore in a miraculous manner supplied the deficiency of the apostles. The Holy Spirit did for them that which they could not have accomplished for themselves in a lifetime. They could now proclaim the truths of the gospel abroad, speaking with accuracy the languages of those for whom they were laboring. This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven. From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate, whether they spoke in their native tongue or in a foreign language.¹³

Through this miracle of tongues at Pentecost, God endorsed the ministry of the apostles, fulfilled the promises of Jesus of them speaking other tongues in Mark 16:17 and of the reception of power for witness promised with the coming of the Holy Ghost in Acts 1:8.¹⁴ Samuele Bacchiocchi agrees with White that two adjectives “new” and “other” link the two passages in order to clarify that the promise to speak in new tongues in Mark 16:17 was fulfilled a few weeks later (Acts 2:7-11) when the

¹² White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 39-40.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁴ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2005), 822.

disciples spoke in other tongues.¹⁵ White's convictions also denote the immediacy with which the effect of this gift of speaking in tongues occurred. Upon receiving the Spirit, the apostles immediately began to speak in other tongues. This gift was also permanent in nature, as they continued to spread the gospel with the same gifted tongues at Pentecost in Acts 10:44-46.¹⁶ In this instance, God repeats the Pentecost gift but now endowed on gentiles to annihilate prejudice and empowered gentiles also to propagate the gospel.

The tongues spoken at Ephesus in Acts 19:4-6 affirmed God's desire for those who accepted the gospel in the early days after Christ's ascension to be missionaries in spreading the gospel. As such, He continued to empower them through the Spirit and gave them the gift of speaking in other languages for mission exploits.¹⁷

These conclusions by White that the tongues in Acts were intelligible known languages are supported by G. Hasel who further explains after a comprehensive evaluation of the doctrine of tongues that there is no biblical, linguistic, nor historical support for the conclusion that the tongues in Acts were ecstatic.¹⁸

White on Tongues in Corinthians

Paul, in the books of 1 Corinthians 12-14, discusses the gift of speaking in tongues. Tongues are mentioned in a larger discussion of the gifts of the Spirit for the Church. He discusses these gifts in descending order of importance but echoes that all

¹⁵ Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Biblical Perspectives, 2008), 292.

¹⁶ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 139.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 283.

¹⁸ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 55.

these gifts are intended for the perfecting of the Church. Superlative gifts are those that edify the church community.

On the nature of tongues spoken in the Pauline writings in 1 Corinthians 12-14, White holds the view that the leaning of the discussion on speaking in tongues by Paul is deliberately designed to combat a specific existing problem in the Corinthian Church which was seemingly the abuse of the gift of tongues by those who possessed it. In correcting this, Paul draws a comparison between the gift of prophesying to that of speaking in tongues and further weighs their value to the Church. Paul uplifts the gift of prophesying over uninterpreted tongues because the former edifies the church and can convert both the unbelievers and believers. However, both gifts, as intended by God and to actualize their gifting, must be endowed with love. As White puts it, “Paul insists that no matter what gift one might have or how spiritual they might be, it counts for nothing unless it is manifested in love.”¹⁹ Paul further gives guidance on the usage of these gifts in public worship. He admonishes that both prophecy and tongues must be orderly. He uses an illustration of a music orchestra with different instruments playing simultaneously but producing harmonious sound because of the orderliness of the music notations intentionally created to produce harmonious sound. All the sounds they emit must be precise enough for the listener to know what is being played. In the case of the trumpet, the call to battle must be clear enough for the soldiers to know what to do.²⁰ The exercise of all such gifts must be orderly and understandable to every worshiper, hence speaking in clear terms which should be understood by everyone.

¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages Book 3* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 1980), 13.

²⁰ Angel M. Rodriguez, ed., “1 Corinthians,” in *Andrews Bible Commentary: Light, Depth, Truth*, International ed. (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 2024), 1645.

Ellen White on the Purpose of Tongues

For Ellen White, it is evident that tongues played a significant role at the point of reception and into the foreseeable future for the recipients of the tongues in Scripture. In her understanding, the purpose and role of tongues is three-fold; evidentially, missiological empowerment and eschatological sign.

Tongues as Evidence

The disciples awaited the coming of the Spirit with patience. While on Earth, Christ promised when he stated to His disciples, "It is expedient for you that I depart; for if I do not depart, the Comforter will not come to you."

White holds the view that Christ's ascension to heaven signified that His followers were to receive the promised blessing.²¹ They were required to wait before commencing their work. Upon entering the celestial gates, Christ was exalted amidst the adoration of the angels. Upon the conclusion of this ceremony, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in abundant waves, and Christ was truly glorified, even with the glory He shared with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring signified Heaven's announcement of the Redeemer's completed inauguration.²² Following His promise, He dispatched the Holy Spirit from heaven to His disciples as a sign that He, as both priest and king, had obtained all authority in heaven and on earth and was the Anointed One over His people. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."²³ This was an emblem of the gift then bestowed on the disciples, which enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted. The appearance of fire

²¹ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 38.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

signified the fervent zeal with which the apostles would labor and the power that would attend their work.²⁴ As Gerhard Hasel puts it, the rushing winds and tongues of fire were two emblems of the power of the Holy Spirit, which manifested the coming and presence of the Holy Spirit.²⁵

Consequently, White asserts that the speaking in tongues at Pentecost served as evidence of the Spirit's outpouring upon the earth and the disciples. This signifies a baptism of the Spirit; however, it does not denote a subsequent act of conversion.

Tongues as Missiological Empowerment

Ellen White fully believes that at Pentecost and the subsequent occurrences of tongues speaking in Acts were an empowerment for the preaching of the gospel. The Spirit descended upon the anticipating, supplicating disciples with a completeness that permeated every heart. The Infinite One manifested His power to His church. It appeared that this influence had been constrained for an extended period, and now Heaven exulted in the opportunity to bestow upon the church the abundance of the Spirit's grace. Under the influence of the Spirit, expressions of penitence and confession intertwined with hymns of praise for sins absolved. Expressions of gratitude and predictions were articulated.²⁶ The Holy Spirit achieved for them what they could not have accomplished in a lifetime. They could now disseminate the truths of the gospel widely, articulating accurately in the languages of those they were serving. This extraordinary gift served as compelling evidence to the world that their commission bore the seal of Heaven. Henceforth, the discourse of the disciples was

²⁴ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 39.

²⁵ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 68.

²⁶ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 39.

unadulterated, straightforward, and precise, regardless of whether they communicated in their native language or a foreign tongue.

Furthermore, the divine illumination caused the Scriptures explained by Christ to manifest before the disciples with the brilliance of absolute truth. The barrier that had obstructed their understanding of the abolished matter was now lifted, allowing them to grasp with complete clarity the purpose of Christ's mission and the essence of His kingdom. They articulated with the authority of the Savior; as they elucidated the plan of salvation to their audience, many were convicted and persuaded.²⁷ The traditions and superstitions instilled by the priests were eradicated from their minds, and the teachings of the Savior were embraced. The empowerment came both as an ability to speak other tongues and the clarity with which they understood and spoke the gospel.²⁸

Tongues as an Eschatological Sign

White holds the view that the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost in A.D 31 was what she terms the early rain as the disciples waited in Jerusalem for the Father's promise. While waiting, they were constantly in the temple, praising and blessing God while humbling their hearts in repentance and confessing their unbelief. They prayed for the ability to meet men and speak words that would draw sinners to Christ. After complete unity, the Spirit was poured out. The early rain resulted in thousands of conversions in a single day, as the Holy Spirit enabled them to speak fluently in languages they were unfamiliar with. Their hearts were filled with such profound and

²⁷ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 74. The purpose of the gift of "speaking in tongues" is to emphasize that God had lifted any linguistic barriers to the proclamation of the Good News. Furthermore, the gift of tongues as manifested through the Holy Spirit reveals that by means of this gift of audible communication the church has become worldwide. The 120 that were assembled were enlarged into a worldwide church with persons from all the civilized world of that day

²⁸ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 39.

far-reaching benevolence that they traveled to the ends of the earth to testify to Christ's power. Converts flocked to the church from all directions, and backsliders were reconverted. Believers sought to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and work for the expansion of His kingdom.

The promise of the Latter Rain is similar to that of the Former Rain, which was given near the end of the earth's harvest to prepare the church for the arrival of the Son of Man. This work will be similar to the Day of Pentecost in that the "latter rain" will cause the third angel's loud cry and prepare the saints for the time when the seven last plagues will be poured out.

Therefore, for White, tongues at Pentecost were a sign that the promise of the Spirit had been fulfilled as promised by Christ. Eschatologically, the Pentecost occurrence points to the culminating outpouring of the Spirit, which will bring about the final harvest of the saints, while the early rain marked the commencement of the harvest.

CHAPTER 5

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MENZIES AND WHITE ON GLOSSOLALIA

After studying the historical development of glossolalia and the two views by Menzies and White, this research turns to a thorough analysis of both views. In addition, it highlights some notable similarities and some glaring opposing views, and eventually determining their veracity through an evaluation of the arguments put forth in their respective positions. The adopted criteria for comparison aim to reveal the origins of beliefs and differing perspectives, analyze analogous themes arising from their discussions, and establish a coherent structure for the study that uncovers similarities, differences, patterns, and relationships to fulfill the study's objectives. Consequently, the comparative areas that include hermeneutical methodologies, debates regarding the nature of tongues, and the role and importance of tongues.

Comparison of Hermeneutical Approaches

A comparative study of Menzies and White on Glossolalia cannot suffice without evaluating their methods of doing theology (hermeneutical approach). The methods of doing theology directly impact the resulting theology because the methods of doing theology always determine the theology. As earlier observed, Menzies and other Pentecostal theologians employ a narrative theological approach in their interpretation of Scripture and in arriving at their conclusions on glossolalia in particular. White and Adventists, on the other hand, employs a systematic approach to Scripture and by the same margin, their conclusions on glossolalia.

A systematic approach to Scripture helps to create a coherent understanding of the Bible by organizing teachings across different passages, addressing potential contradictions, and providing a comprehensive view of what the Bible says on a particular topic, allowing for deeper theological analysis and informed application to contemporary issues; it also helps to guard against misinterpretations by considering the broader context of Scripture. Therefore, all Bible students must affirm the Scripture and its systematic study as the *norma normans*, which means the norming norm from which every theology must be derived.¹ However, for Pentecostals, their major problem arises from the poor method of interpreting the narratives (historical accounts) especially the book of Acts. As Menzies and others have shown, there is very little said about the principles governing this method except that is it normative for the church today.

Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, some Pentecostal theologians put across a few important principles notably that narratives do not teach a doctrine directly, that narratives usually illustrate a doctrine taught positionally elsewhere, that they record what happened and not necessarily what should have happened or what should happen every time, and that we ought to judge the occurrences in the narratives based on what God has already taught directly and categorically in Scripture.² While it is true that many Christian movements look to the early church as a model being the initial Christian church, the question is that it is a model for what? What are we to emulate

¹ Frank M. Hasel, "Introduction," in Frank M. Hasel, 2. Hasel is on record that Adventists are committed to affirming Scripture alone as the final norm for all of our theology and praxis. Thus, for Seventh-day Adventists, the Bible is the *norma normans*—that is, the norming norm from which our theology is derived. This makes the issue of biblical hermeneutics a watershed for any theology, and particularly for Seventh-day Adventist theology. A hermeneutic not in harmony with the self-claims of Scripture produces serious theological problems, leads to wrong conclusions, and, ultimately, even generates heretical teachings. That is why a sound hermeneutic is crucial for the correct understanding of our Bible-based theology, message, and mission

² Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1981), 78.

from them? Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart rightly observe that unless Scripture explicitly tells us we must do something, what is merely narrated or described can never function in a normative way.³ As the Scott Theological College Theological Advisory group rightly observes, these narratives cannot be made normative unless the principle is taught elsewhere. Nor can we infer from them something to be normative for all Christians. We need to look for normative principles in the narratives of the book of Acts, which are taught elsewhere in Scripture, rather than looking for normative patterns even though the Bible nowhere clearly teaches them.⁴

In conclusion, to arrive at the normative which we must look for in the narrative, we must employ a systematic approach to Scripture which is designed to produce a coherent understating across the Scriptures which then becomes the principle which can be sought for in the narratives and prescribed as normative for Christians alike.

The Nature of Tongues

Another critical issue about speaking in tongues, as noted from the discussion of both Menzies and White so far that needs careful examination is the nature of tongues. Whenever tongues are mentioned in Scripture, on face value, it is difficult to deduce of what nature are the said tongues. This has resulted in three main different views. Some scholars Menzies inclusive, believe that all reference to tongue speaking in Acts and Corinthians is glossolalic (ecstatic) in nature, others believe the tongues in Acts are intelligible languages while the ones in Corinthians are ecstatic and the last group believe all tongues referred to in Acts are intelligible with the ones Paul

³ Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 97.

⁴ Scott Theological College Theological Advisory Group, *Baptism with the Holy Spirit: Have You Received It?* (Nairobi, Kenya: Kijabe Printing Press, n.d.), 65.

addresses in Corinthians intelligible but admonishes against a misnomer ecstatic tongues that were being practiced. Therefore, a question still remains, of what nature were the tongues discussed in the bible?

About the nature of tongues in the book of Acts, Menzies is of the view that the tongues at Pentecost and other occurrences in Acts are glossolalic or unintelligible. As observed earlier, he argues that upon baptism in the Spirit, the apostles spoke in the tongues of angels, which are ecstatic. On the contrary, White believes the tongues at Pentecost were xenolalic, which entails that the tongues were unlearned and unknown by the speakers but were actually known foreign languages. A look at the terminology of glossolalia, the nature of the miracle, and the nature of tongues in Acts has been examined to evaluate the views of the two authors on the nature of tongues in the book of Acts.

Glossolalia: The Terminology

The divergence in perspectives between Menzies and White regarding speaking in tongues is particularly evident in their understanding and usage of the terminology of glossolalia and its prevalence in Scripture. While Menzies posits that the tongues referenced in Scripture are ecstatic, unintelligible languages (glossolalia), White categorically refutes the presence and existence of glossolalia in biblical texts as a normative. White acknowledges the existence of glossolalia only as an unacceptable practice in the Corinthian Church as well as a contemporary Christian practice and as an extant phenomenon in non-Christian contexts. This disparity necessitates critically examining glossolalia's existence in Scripture as terminology and practice.

The term "glossolalia" is absent from biblical texts; rather, as Menzies himself attests, it is a coinage attributed to the scriptural phrase "to speak in tongues" (glossa

lalein).⁵ This attribution emerged in the late 19th century as researchers began to examine the phenomenon of speaking in tongues through linguistic and psychological lenses. Therefore, *prima facie*, agreeing with White's dismissal of glossolalia's presence in scripture, both terminologically and practically, appears tenable on the basis of its non-existence as a terminology in scripture. However, further investigation is warranted to ascertain whether the attribution of ecstatic, unintelligible language to the expression "to speak in tongues" is exegetically sound.

Pentecostals justify this coinage (glossolalia) by claiming that glossolalia is like the word "trinity" which is not found in scripture but is coined and attributed rightly to the Godhead. Furthermore, Menzies is fully convinced that by way of interpretation, "to speak in tongues" through his hermeneutical lenses in all the scriptures in which this expression is found speaks to ecstatic unintelligent utterances.⁶ However, White through her interpretive model dismisses this ecstatic interpretation but subscribes to the long-standing traditional understanding that it meant miraculous speaking of foreign languages.⁷ This preliminary conclusion aligns with Gerhard Hasel's comprehensive analytical study which encompasses the usage of *glossa lalein* in the New Testament, alleged instances of glossolalia in the New Testament, the employment of *glossa lalein* outside the New Testament and in the Septuagint, and modern hypotheses proposing glossolalia as unintelligible speech. Hasel concludes that there is no linguistic or historical basis for interpreting "to speak in tongues" as referring to unintelligible, ecstatic speech.⁸ Therefore, since Menzies

⁵ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 37.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁷ "To Speak in Tongues" [Acts 2:4], *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1976-1980), 6:139.

⁸ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 41-52. The Greek expression "*glóssa lalein*," signifying "to speak in tongues," is examined in the New Testament and various ancient Greek writings. It appears

equally agrees that the terminology does not exist in Scripture but is a mere coinage attributed to speaking in tongues as a practice, which White still refutes, it is important to examine this attribution by analyzing whether the tongues spoken of in Scripture are intelligible or ecstatic.

Glossolalia: Examining the Attribution of the Nature

Having rightly observed that the term glossolalia was a coinage attributed to the expression “to speak in tongues,” which is what is found in Scripture, we now turn to the examination of the attribution. This is to seek to understand its basis and efficacy to qualify or disqualify this attribution by Menzies and other charismatics or sustain or disqualify White’s dismissal of the glossolalic nature of tongues. Two aspects about tongues in Acts that are examined include: what was the nature of the miracle of tongues and also what was the nature of the tongues spoken in the Lukan account of Acts?

Examining the Miracle: Speaking or Hearing?

Both Menzies and White agree that the expression “to speak in tongues” as described in Acts 2 and subsequent occurrences in Acts involves a miraculous

rarely in the New Testament, primarily in Mark, Acts, and 1 Corinthians, with Acts 2 explicitly referencing the utterance of recognized foreign languages. The phrase was uniformly understood as referring to foreign languages until approximately a century ago; however, recent scholarship has proposed two distinct interpretations: recognized languages in Acts and ecstatic, incomprehensible speech in 1 Corinthians. There is a lack of definitive evidence for glossolalia in Hellenistic religions or other ancient Greek texts, and the Delphic oracle does not incorporate glossolalia. In Greek literature beyond the New Testament, “glóssa” consistently refers to either the physical tongue or a recognized language, rather than ecstatic or unintelligible speech. The Greek translation of the Old Testament consistently denotes communication in standard human languages, rather than glossolalia. Contemporary theories propose that Paul either invented a new technical term for glossolalia or that it originated in pre-Christian Judaism; however, there is no substantial evidence to support these claims. Consequently, there exists no linguistic or historical foundation for interpreting “speaking in tongues” in 1 Corinthians as denoting unintelligible, ecstatic utterance.

endowment and ability. Whether glossallic or xenoglalic, its agreeable that this does not stem from natural abilities. Therefore, to speak in tongues as understood by both authors entails being granted the ability by the Spirit to speak a language outside one's domain. What differs, though, in their interpretation is the explanation of the nature of the miracle that took place at Pentecost. Menzies is of the view that the miracle was twofold: the disciples miraculously spoke in an ecstatic language under the influence of the Spirit, and the crowd miraculously was made to hear the ecstatic language of the disciples in their language, implying a second miracle, that of hearing.⁹ White, on the other hand, is of the view that the Miracle was in the enabling of the disciples to speak in previously unlearned languages.¹⁰ In summary, both agree that the disciples miraculously spoke in a different language, though they differ in the nature, while Menzies further proposes a second miracle of hearing. The question, therefore would be, what nature of miracle took place at Pentecost? was it a speaking or hearing miracle?

Christ foretold the phenomenon of speaking in tongues in the extended conclusion to Mark's Gospel. In Mark 16:17, Christ declares, "They shall speak with new tongues," signifying the miracles to be performed by the disciples after His ascension. The fulfillment of this promise occurred a few days later at Pentecost. Acts 2:4 indicates that on Pentecost, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." "Individuals from various nations inhabited Jerusalem, and each person understood them speaking in their native language." The conclusion by White that the tongues spoken at Pentecost were known

⁹ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 51.

¹⁰ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 39.

languages linguistically and contextually finds support in the following brief word and contextual analysis.

The gift granted at Pentecost was one of speech, rather than a gift of auditory perception for the present Jews. This is demonstrated by its classification as the gift of tongues. It occurred "as the Spirit gave them with utterance," not as the Jews were granted perception. Though Paul later discusses the gift of interpretation, it is very clear that the miracle at Pentecost was that of speaking. The expression "as the Spirit gave them utterance" indicates that the occurrence was not solely a human reaction to the Holy Spirit's influence.¹¹ The Holy Spirit had a direct influence on the disciples' actions at that time, as well as their oration and motivation. They also spoke in languages that non-Palestinian Jews could understand, implying that these were local dialects rather than Greek, which would have been understandable to most participants.

Furthermore, Frank Hasel rightly observes that it was the disciples who received the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost, not the crowd, as evidenced by the visible and audible manifestation of the coming of the Spirit through the wind and fire.¹² Any attempt to introduce a miracle of hearing transfers the miracle from the disciples to the multitude, which is impossible to substantiate through the narrative in Acts other than through suggestive inference. Luke's treatment of this entire discourse demonstrates that he wanted it to be understood as a miracle of xenoglossia, where the disciples spoke in known languages previously unknown to them.¹³ It is therefore safe

¹¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 1157.

¹² Frank M. Hasel, "Elements of Biblical Hermeneutics in Harmony with Scripture's Self-Claims," in Frank M. Hasel, 44.

¹³ Cyril G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* (Cardiff, Wales: University of Wales Press, 1981), 25.

to conclude based on the arguments above that the miracle at Pentecost was the miracle of utterance, not that of hearing, as Menzies alludes. This negates the proposed second miracle of hearing, which is difficult to justify from a careful analysis of Scripture. This leaves us with the burden to examine the nature of tongues in the miracle of speaking, which both authors agree.

Examining the Nature of Tongues: Glossolalia or Xenoglossia

Another aspect that begs an evaluation due to the divergent views of the authors concerns the nature of tongues in the Lukan accounts. Menzies is of the view that the tongues were unintelligible, while White understands them to be intelligible. To evaluate the nature of tongues in Acts 2, it is important to briefly carry out a word analysis in selected verses to examine further the nature of tongues.

In Acts 2:3-4, “And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (RSV), the words resting on each one of them, filled, began to speak, other tongues, gave them an utterance need some careful observations to fully understand what Luke intended to communicate. Firstly, the word gave (*edidou*) in the greek language is used to describe the gift nature of the tongues as the verb employed is used in the NT to convey the act of giving or granting of something. Secondly, the word began (*erxanto*), is used in the Greek language to denote immediate commencement or initiation of some significant event. The words “gave” and “began” imply that the ability to speak in tongues was not acquired through learning. It was a divine gift of the Holy Spirit to the believers.¹⁴ This differs from the practices in Pentecostalism and

¹⁴ William E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (EDNTW)* (1979), s.v. “Erxanto.”

neo-Pentecostalism, characterized by their "tarrying" meetings. As Grant Osborn further elaborates that during these meetings, groups of individuals would 'linger' and receive instruction on how to broaden their consciousness to transcend the intellect to facilitate the practice of glossolalia.¹⁵ A theory akin to that of philosophers who argued that man cannot communicate to God unless transported in the atemporal realm of God beyond their consciousness. However, upon the Holy Spirit's descent upon those gathered in the Upper Room, a tangible external manifestation occurred. There was no apprenticeship, no instruction, and no learning phase: "They began" (erxanto) to speak immediately.

The significant phrase is that they spoke "in other tongues." The NRSV, a dynamic translation, interprets this phrase as "in other languages." The initial term requiring meticulous consideration is "tongues" (Greek glossais), the conventional translation of the original word in English versions. The Greek term employed in Acts 2 is identical to that in Mark 16:17. The previous discussion demonstrated that the Greek term "glóssa," meaning "tongue," can refer to both the organ of speech and the concept of language, encompassing native or foreign dialects.¹⁶

The term "tongues" in verse 4 is explicitly clarified by Luke in Acts 2. In verses 6 and 8, he equates this term with "languages." In the final two verses, the Greek term dialektos is utilized instead of the word glóssa. The term dialektos signifies "the language of a nation or region." In Acts 1:19, the term dialektos refers to the vernacular language of a specific country or region. It conveys the identical meaning in Acts 2:6 and 2:8.¹⁷ The proposal by Menzies and other charismatics that

¹⁵ Grant R. Osborn, "Speaking in Tongues," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Ada, Michigan: Baker House, 11984), 99.

¹⁶ Vine, *EDNTW*, s.v. "glossa."

¹⁷ Vine, *EDNTW*, s.v. "Dialektos."

Acts 2:6 and 2:8 do not refer to genuine foreign languages, but rather to "dialects," an ecstatic spiritual language, akin to a "supernatural Esperanto," falters due to the equation of "tongue" and "language" in verses 4 and 11, in addition to verses 6 and 8 in Acts 2. In Acts 2, there is a scholarly consensus equating "tongues" with "dialects," which signifies "languages."¹⁸

The believers demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is enacting a miracle by speaking in different languages. Further considerations provide substantial evidence that the "tongues" are, in fact, "languages." Initially, observe that the listeners who have not yet achieved faith lack the ability to interpret. They comprehend the adherents who articulate in tongues without the necessity of interpretation or translation. Secondly, the populace is astonished and perplexed (Acts 2:7). The audience realizes that the speakers are not foreigners but Galileans, who could not have acquired these foreign languages through any natural means. This indicates that the audience does not perceive the discourse as a "spirit-language," "supernatural Esperanto," or any other form of communication, nor as a speech that a Galilean could articulate just as effectively as anyone else. The profound astonishment stemmed from the phenomenon of these uneducated Galileans suddenly articulating in the native languages of the diverse audience.¹⁹

The account in Acts 2:3b highlights that the Holy Spirit "rested" (ekathisen) upon each one of them. The subject of the verb "rested" may refer to either "tongue," less likely "fire," or most probably the Holy Spirit mentioned in the subsequent verse. While the Greek text lacks clarity regarding the verb, the verb "kathizo" signifies "to

¹⁸ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 71.

¹⁹ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 68.

sit down, rest."²⁰ It signifies a permanent establishment, whereas the aorist tense here implies the initiation of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The expression "and it rested on each one of them" indicates that the Holy Spirit was individually bestowed upon each person present in the house, signifying that this was not a transient occurrence limited to the Day of Pentecost. It was a perpetual endowment enduring for the lifetime of the recipient of this gift.

Ultimately, the Holy Spirit empowers the disciples to speak boldly (2:4c). The term employed by Luke is translated as "utterance" (NKJV, NASB) or "ability" (NRSV). The term employed is "apophthéggesthai," which in non-biblical Greek signifies "to articulate audibly and distinctly" or "to express with emphasis."²¹ The "bold" speech of individuals possessing the gift of tongues "does not refer to ecstatic utterance, but rather to a discourse that is distinct, emphatic, loud, and clear.

Examining Tongues in 1 Corinthians 12-14

In 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul addresses issues related to glossolalia in the Corinthian church, with scholarly agreement recognizing his response to the misuse of this spiritual gift. According to Swindoll, the Corinthians utilized tongues to exhibit spiritual superiority, in total contradiction to his guidance on corporate worship.²² Nonetheless, substantial hermeneutical divergence persists among scholars concerning Paul's specific concerns.

Charismatic theologians such as Menzies argue that the Corinthian manifestation signifies ecstatic utterance based on two principal assertions: (1) the

²⁰ MacArthur, *MacArthur Bible Commentary*, 1765.

²¹ Vine, *EDNTW*, s.v. "apophthéggesthai."

²² Charles R Swindoll, "Spiritual Gifts," *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary*, vol. 7, 1 & 2 *Corinthians* (Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House, 2017), 209.

necessity for interpretation implies intrinsic unintelligibility, and (2) the allowance for uninterpreted tongues as private prayer serves personal edification despite cognitive disengagement ("the mind is unfruitful").²³ These conclusions, however, represent inferential extrapolations that may conflict with Paul's comprehensive argument, requiring detailed discourse analysis.

Paul's examination of glossolalia in chapter 12 contextualizes it within a comprehensive pneumatological framework as one expression among various charismata. In chapter 13, he prioritizes agape over tongues and utilizes rhetorical hyperbole concerning "tongues of angels," which is a theoretical concept rather than a validation of the ability to acquire celestial languages, as there is no scriptural basis for human access to angelic communication methods. Notably, Paul consistently places glossolalia at the end of his charismatic lists, implying a hierarchical subordination. The notable absence of tongues in comparable spiritual gift lists (Rom 12:6-8, Eph 4:11, 1 Pet 4:9-11) further substantiates this hierarchical evaluation.

Chapter 14 analyzes the ecclesiological role of glossolalia in communal worship, focusing on its liturgical misapplication. The interpretive tension arises as Menzies depicts the Corinthian phenomenon as an ecstatic, non-linguistic expression, whereas scholars such as Gerhard Hasel assert a continuity between the Lukan narratives in Acts and the Pauline accounts in Corinthians.²⁴ White and Gerhard Hasel's stance prompts exegetical inquiries, as Paul recognizes intelligible tongues as conditionally permissible (necessitating interpretation) while concurrently underscoring their restricted edifying significance without translation and delineating stringent guidelines for their suitable manifestation in communal settings.

²³ Menzies, *Speaking in Tongues*, 96.

²⁴ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 73.

This interpretative divergence requires a thorough analysis of the Pauline discourse to ascertain whether he advocated for regulated practice or a fundamental shift away from glossolalic expression in ecclesiastical contexts, and whether the phenomenon in question is linguistically coherent (xenoglossia) or ecstatic utterance (glossolalia).

The solution to this quandary lies in the understanding of Paul's usage of the singular tongue and plural tongues in chapter 14. As MacArthur rightly observes, the distinction between "tongue" (singular) and "tongues" (plural) suggests that Paul refers to two separate types of activities occurring. The church at Corinth was engaging in a form of tongue (singular), distinct from the gift of tongues (plural) bestowed by the Spirit of God upon the church.²⁵ In the city of Corinth, the temple worship involved communicating with the gods through a singular tongue comprehensible solely to the deities. This language emerged from emotional rituals during which participants occasionally became so engrossed that they would chant incoherently until they fell into an unconscious state.²⁶

Paul commences 1 Corinthians 14 by emphasizing two key points: first, love should be the impetus for any gifts utilized within the church; second, all gifts are bestowed for the benefit of the church rather than for individual gain. In this context, Paul elucidates three fundamental truths in this chapter: first, that tongues are subordinate to prophecy (vv. 1-19); second, that their purpose serves as a sign for unbelievers (vv. 20-25); and third, that the application of tongues within the church must be systematic and orderly.

²⁵ MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary*, 1600.

²⁶ Osborn, "Speaking in Tongues," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 99.

Tongues did not serve as a prayer language connecting the individual praying with God. Individuals who advocate for a “prayer language” frequently reference 1 Corinthians 14:13-19 as supporting evidence. Those who hold this interpretation are indeed correct that tongues were utilized in both prayer and song in the Corinth Church. However, if a specific language were intended for private prayer, wouldn’t it be highlighted favorably? Moreover, why does everyone not have the personal ability to pray to God for self-edification? Why is it that “prayer languages,” particularly if we are to explore them, are not referenced beyond 1 Corinthians 14? O’Loughlin argues that when Paul talks about the tongues of angels, he was being hyperbolic, deliberately placing an exaggerated emphasis to stress his point not to mention it in the context that it actually exists²⁷

Gaining a deeper insight into the connection between prayer and tongues as described in 1 Corinthians 14 is essential. To begin with, charismatics claim when someone prays in an ecstatic tongue, their mind becomes “unfruitful” (verse 14). Something that charismatics stand on to support unintelligible tongues that they pray in a Spirit; hence, no need for the fruitfulness of the mind at that point. However, prayer is a meaningful dialogue with God, demanding comprehension rather than mere sounds or nonsensical utterances. Those who possessed the gift of tongues were urged to seek interpretation through prayer (verse 13). Paul, who possessed the gift of

²⁷ James O’Loughlin, *The Truth about Speaking in Tongues: An Examination of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Doctrine and Experience* (Fort Mill, South Carolina: Veritas International Institute, 2011), 336-37. The expression “tongues of angels” in 1 Cor. 13:1 (the initial of three hypothetical and conditional statements) likely serves as a figure of speech (specifically, hyperbole - an intentional exaggeration for emphasis, not intended to be interpreted literally) signifying, “Even if I possessed the capacity to articulate every imaginable language with the proficiency and eloquence of the most esteemed individuals or angels, devoid of love - it amounts to mere meaningless religious clamor.” However, if this phrase is interpreted in a strictly literal sense as the genuine language of angels, it would not substantiate the notion that tongues are inherently unintelligible, as every instance of angelic speech in the Bible was conveyed in comprehensible human languages (e.g., Gen. 19:1-21; Josh. 5:13-6:5; Luke 1:11-37). In every instance of dialogue and disclosure between humans and supernatural entities (i.e., God, angels, Satan, and demons) documented in the Bible, the communication consistently occurred in comprehensible human language.

tongues himself, inspired us to engage in prayer or song in tongues, as noted in verse 15. Secondly, these prayers aimed to edify the listeners. They were not just meant to grasp the meaning of their prayers; they were also tasked with uplifting those who were listening (verses 16-17).²⁸ To emphasize that praying in an unfamiliar language is not the objective, Paul stated that even though he possessed the ability to speak in various languages, he would “prefer to speak five words with my understanding to teach others, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue” (verses 18-19). Thus, when tongues were employed in prayer or song, their value lay in being comprehensible and edifying to others.

Comparative Analysis on the Role and Purpose of Tongues

The following chapter comparatively analyzes the two authors on their view on the role and purpose of tongues.

Tongues as Initial Evidence

One of the issues about tongues that calls for re-evaluation is the consideration of tongues as initial evidence for the baptism of the Spirit. Pentecostals, including Menzies, view Spirit baptism as a distinct post-conversion experience with tongues serving as its initial physical evidence. They support this position with two arguments: the pattern in Acts where Spirit baptism coincided with tongues (2, 10:46, 19:6), and Christ's promise in Mark 16:17 listing tongues among signs following believers. For Pentecostals, Pentecost provided power for witness rather than inaugurating a new covenant.

²⁸ Cockayne, *A Theology of Tongues*, 22.

Conversely, Adventists reject tongues as evidence of Spirit baptism, viewing baptism as concurrent with conversion.²⁹ They argue that disciples were already converted before Pentecost, making the Spirit's outpouring an inauguration of His earthly ministry. The accompanying phenomena (tongues, fire, wind) merely signified the Spirit's arrival and commissioning for mission rather than evidence of completed conversion.³⁰

From these two views, it is clear to note that both White and Menzies agree that in Acts the tongues spoken did serve as evidence to the outpouring of the Spirit. However, they differ regarding it being an initial evidence of Spirit baptism and its subsequent usage in the contemporary church. For Menzies, as the Spirit continues to be poured out, tongues will continue to be witnessed as evidence³¹ but for White, the Spirit was poured out and inaugurated at Pentecost.³² They must not necessarily be experienced now because the event as Pentecost and in Acts were tied to the inauguration of the Spirit's work on earth which is not continuous event.

To grasp a better understanding of this matter, it is imperative to understand what baptism in the Spirit is understood to be among Pentecostals. The baptism in the Spirit is considered a second encounter with God after the first encounter of conversion, in which the individual Christian begins to receive the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit into his life.³³ Thereby, the Christian is brought into a deeper relationship with Christ.

²⁹ Pfandl, "Signs and Wonders (The Associate Editor's Desk)," 11.

³⁰ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 103.

³¹ Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 112.

³² White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 40.

³³ Don Basham, *A Handbook on Holy Spirit Baptism* (Monroeville, Pennsylvania: Whitaker House, 1974), 11.

Spirit baptism thus understood brings many questions on the purported baptism which took place at Pentecost to warrant the qualification of tongues as evidence. Was there baptism at Pentecost in the context of a completed sanctification? Did all the subsequent conversions result in glossolalia? If that is not the case, then this view needs a re-evaluation to harmonize it with scripture. To address these unresolved issues, it is important to note the following.

Firstly, the disciples had already received the Spirit and were already converted to Christianity before Pentecost. I chose to agree with Hoekema and Gerhard Hasel that if tongue speaking was evidence of baptism of repentance and conversion, how come the 3,000 Peter preached to, got converted, baptized and received the Spirit but did not manifest tongues after their conversion and baptism.³⁴ Several other groups of people were filled with the Spirit but are never recorded to have spoken in tongues, such as Peter before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:8), Stephen before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:55), and the apostle Paul as he confronted Elymus (Acts 13:9), among others.³⁵

This demonstrates that the views by Menzies that tongues were evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit cannot be substantiated scripturally. It is interesting to note that the several decades later, the TAG observes that William Seymour who championed tongues as Bible evidence for the baptism of the Spirit and led the Azusa Street revival in 1906 as we saw in chapter 2, declares that speaking in tongues might not be the evidence of the baptism of the Spirit and that the true evidence of the baptism of the Spirit is a life marked by holy living filled with love. This he concluded after suffering racial abuse from those who had received the baptism of the

³⁴ Hoekema, *Tongues and Spirit-Baptism*, 34.

³⁵ G. Hasel, *Speaking in Tongues*, 103.

Spirit, which prompted him to re-read the Scriptures, which eventually led to this conclusion.³⁶

This calls for further investigation of what occurred at Pentecost, for which tongues were a sign. Therefore, the major question that begs an answer and calls for thorough comparative investigation is: what kind of tongues and for what purpose were the tongues used at Pentecost?

Tongues as Empowerment for Mission

One of the common thematic areas between Menzies and White is that tongues at Pentecost were an empowerment for the proclamation of the gospel. A divergent point, though stands because for Menzies, this occurred through the ecstatic utterances as the Spirit concurrently performed a miracle of hearing on the listeners.³⁷ However, White believes the disciples preached through the intelligible gift of tongues and preached the gospel with clarity.³⁸

The challenge with the position taken by Menzies is that it is difficult to sustain the fact that every time they engage in glossolalia there must be a miracle of hearing for the gospel to be preached. This makes it difficult to substantiate the tongues in line with this purpose of proclaiming the gospel. As Matthew Henry rightly observes, the purpose of tongues at Pentecost was for the disciples to preach the gospel to the world.³⁹ However, taking a closer look at most of the activities and practices that Pentecostals and other charismatics engage themselves in, one can

³⁶ Scott Theological College Theological Advisory Group, *Baptism with the Holy Spirit*, 41.

³⁷ Menzies, *Pentecost*, 67.

³⁸ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 38.

³⁹ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 6, *Acts to Revelation* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1935), 28.

easily conclude that their experience and exercise of tongue speaking is not biblical because they do not fulfil the intended purpose as the disciples were empowered for the commission.⁴⁰ Bacchiocchi further observes the tongues at Pentecost and other occurrences in Acts were ignited by the Spirit solely for the intention of spreading the gospel within the Jewish circles and widened to the gentile world.⁴¹ To the contrary, the Pentecostal scenario today is that the person should prompt the tongues, and the Spirit should be present all the time to respond to such promptings for purposes of self-edification, which defeats the entire initial purpose of this gift.⁴²

Pentecost: The Event and Meaning

The event of the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts is not referred to as Pentecost coincidentally but for the very fact that it fell on the day of Pentecost. Historically, the feast of Pentecost, also known as ingathering, was the third of the three major Jewish festivities, after Passover and the feast of Tabernacles. It was referred to as Pentecost (fiftieth) due to being a harvest festival occurring 50 days after Passover. The event was an agricultural festival during which the Jews offered to the Lord two loaves of bread made from fine flour and baked with leaven as the initial fruits of the harvest. The initial sheaf of barley was presented to God the day after Passover (Lev 23:11), and the first sheaf of wheat was offered fifty days later, signifying that Passover and Pentecost delineated the commencement and conclusion of the grain harvest. It symbolized beautifully a great harvest of faith that was brought about by the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:41).⁴³

⁴⁰ Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 6, *Acts to Revelation*, 46.

⁴¹ Bacchiocchi, *Popular Beliefs*, 296.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Rodriguez, "Acts," 1474.

Therefore, to explain the solemn moment when the promised Spirit had been bestowed with the commitment of the church to the mission, Luke makes use of an unusual verb. For him, Pentecost was *sympleroo* (“accomplished”; 2:1). He uses the same form about the ascension of Jesus in Luke 19:51. The wind, noise, and fire during the outpouring of the Spirit were a visible manifestation of the presence of God, a theophany in itself. When God came down on Mount Sinai, there was thunder and trumpets, fire and lightning (Ex 19:16-18). Similarly, the sound of a mighty wind and the tongues of fire at Pentecost indicated that the coming of the Spirit indeed was a manifestation (theophany) of God.⁴⁴ This is further solidified by the unrepeatedness of the occurrence even in the succeeding events in the book of Acts.

Furthermore, the events at Pentecost were not only a sign that the disciples had received the Spirit, but also an indication of something greater that had transpired in heaven. White holds the view that on that day, Christ's sacrifice had been accepted, and he was coroneted in heaven, and the outpouring of the Spirit was an inauguration of the Spirit in His new office here on earth.⁴⁵ This view is supported by Froom, a seasoned pneumatologist, who said that Pentecost was the inauguration of the Spirit as the new administrator of God's Church.⁴⁶ Since Pentecost, the Spirit has taken on a new position entirely.

Summary

In summary, the research shows that Menzies and White agree on the significance of the outpouring of the Spirit on the disciples. They further agree on the role of tongues being for the proclamation of the gospel and being an eschatological

⁴⁴ Rodriguez, “Acts,” 1475.

⁴⁵ White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 42.

⁴⁶ Lee Roy Froom, *Coming of the Comforter* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 1956), 92.

sign of the fulfilment of the promise of Christ for the disciples would receive the Holy Spirit, something that is expected to be repeated in the end times.

However, a thorough biblical evaluation of both authors shows some deficiencies in Menzies' hermeneutical approach and his resulting theological positions which have grave implications. It has been discovered that tongues spoken at Pentecost were xenolalic in nature and not glossalilic as claimed by Menzies, as ecstatic tongues lack biblical support. It has further been observed that tongues condemned by Paul at Corinth were ecstatic, something that should not be tolerated today. Paul seemingly sanctioned the xenolalic tongues only when interpreted for the edification of the community of believers. On the purpose of tongues, the research shows that tongues were an evidence of the outpouring of the Spirit and one of the signs of having received the Spirit but not an initial evidence of the baptism of the Spirit in the context of subsequent conversion.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, APPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter of the thesis, the researcher summarizes the work's findings and draws objective conclusions. Furthermore, a few areas are suggested that need further study.

Summary

The focus of this research has been comparing Robert Menzies's and Ellen White's understanding and interpretation of Glossolalia. The paper attempted to survey the general historical development of glossolalia through the ages, the hermeneutical approaches of both Menzies and White, and their interpretation of the nature of tongues, as well as their significance then and to the contemporary church.

Historically, it was observed that glossolalia has been a present practice among the practitioners of mysticism through the centuries but hardly a practice within the Christian church as evidenced by its absence through the various epochs of Church history. However, the birth of the Pentecostal movement which sprung during the Azusa Street revival on the premise of their understanding of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with tongues as its initial evidence, has seen this become the hallmark of Pentecostalism.

However, this research has revealed several points of convergence and divergence from the hermeneutical approaches employed by the two authors, their

interpretation of the nature of tongues as well as the purpose of tongues. These points are summarized in the tables below.

Table 1 below summarizes the key findings on the similarities between Menzies and White on the nature of tongues.

Table 1. Key Findings on the Similarities between Menzies and White on the Nature of Tongues

Thematic Area	Menzies	White
The Inspiration of the Bible	Menzies and other Pentecostals believe in the Inspiration of the Bible	White Equally believes in the inspiration of the Bible and rule of faith.
The role of Acts in the life of the Contemporary law	The book of Acts is prime importance to the church today as it guides the church on many things	The Book of Acts is important to the life of the church today being the first Church that Jesus left.
Tongues as Fulfillment at Pentecost	Tongues were a fulfilment of the promise of Christ in the long ending of Mark	Christ Promised the Spirit in Mark and it was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost
Tongues as empowerment for mission	Menzies strongly believes the tongues were an empowerment for mission to the believers	White believes it was for the sake of mission that the tongues were given at Pentecost and later occurrences in Acts

Table 2 below summarizes the various points where Menzies and White hold different views

Table 2. *Key Findings on the Differences between Menzies and White on the Nature of Tongues*

Thematic Comparative Area	Menzies	White
Hermeneutical Approach	Employs a narrative approach to biblical interpretation	Employs a biblical systematic approach to interpretation
Normativity of the Book of Acts	The book of Acts is normative for the church today, their experience and story, is our story today. What they experienced, we must equally experience	While the book of Acts is important, experiences of the believers do not carry explicit normative power for the church to emulate and experience
Nature of tongues in Acts	Tongues in Acts were unintelligible in all occurrences	Tongues in Acts were intelligible in all the occurrences
The Miracle at Pentecost	Two miracles occurred: Speaking in tongues (ecstatic) by the disciples and the miracle of hearing by the crowd.	Only one miracle. The miracle of speaking in previously unlearned languages by the disciples
Tongues at Corinth	Paul practiced and encouraged ecstatic tongues, which are important in prayer as they edify the speaker	Paul spoke intelligible tongues but strongly condemned the ecstatic tongues being practiced by some sections of the Corinthians.
Tongues as evidence	Tongues were evidence of the baptism of the Spirit, baptism being a second work of grace	Tongues were together with fires and wind at Pentecost as evidence that the disciples had received the Spirit as promised by Christ.

Patterns and Relationships

The study as seen from the summary which shows the points of convergence and divergence between Menzies and White in their understanding of the subject of speaking in tongues, reveals that while they have different conclusions on many aspects of the subject, they equally share several common aspects. This section highlights the patterns and relationships in their beliefs and shoes the broader

perspective and framework of their teachings. The synthesis of the patterns and relationships revolves around the hermeneutical approaches and their relationship to the resulting theologies, the nature of tongues, and the role of tongues.

On Hermeneutical Approaches

The research has revealed that both Menzies and White share a common belief in the inspiration and authority of Scripture. This entails that they both hold the scripture as the primary basis for the interpretation of scripture and as a source of doctrine. Therefore, this reveals that their divergent conclusions do not emanate from a disregard of the scriptures but more from the hermeneutics employed. The Pentecostal hermeneutical approach that adopts the book of Acts as normative experience as opposed to the systematic synthesis that builds a doctrine from scripture upon scripture, puts pressure on many to seek this manifestation often times leading to psychological self-hypnosis.

On the Nature of Tongues

The research has shown a disagreement on the nature of tongues. The Pentecostal emphasis on the tongues being unintelligible and used both for proclamation and as a prayer language, reveals that their understanding and justification that there is a need for an angelic language that would bridge the gap in mortals communicating with God is not backed by scripture but highly influenced by the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle who suggested that man is incapable of engaging with God unless elevated spiritually into an unconscious atemporal realm. The understanding that one carries of the nature of tongues has a direct relationship and impact on the role they assign them.

On the Significance of Tongues

Both Pentecostals and Adventists share a similar emphasis on the significant role that the Spirit plays in the life of the Church and the believers. There is a common belief that Christian life can never be done without the Spirit of God. Therefore, there is also consensus on the fact that the reception of the Spirit upon believers should leave an indelible mark as a signifier of His presence. This stems from the shared restorationist roots that both cherish as seen in their emphasis on the role of the Spirit eschatologically in the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel. However, there are significant differences in the expected indicators of the presence of the Spirit with Menzies emphasizing the initial evidence as glossolalia and White emphasizing the development of the fruit of the Spirit which is the character of Christ as the result of the baptism of the Spirit. From the research done, it has been seen that it is difficult to sustain glossolalia as a sign of Spirit baptism as many other occurrences where baptism occurred did not result in glossolalia. The other proposition that glossolalia is a prayer language for edification goes against the initial purpose of tongues and becomes more personal than corporate as initially intended by God. The disappearance of tongues over the ages of the church also goes to show that the proposal for a deeper result like character development is more sustainable than a mere outward manifestation of tongues. Therefore, it is more prudent for Christians today to seek the gift that can be counterfeited but seek the fruits of the Spirit that can sustainably counterfeited over a period of time.

Implications and Applications

The points of convergence and divergence have revealed several critical things with grave implications and applications for today's readers which include the following:

1. The method of doing theology (hermeneutical approach) must be chosen carefully to avoid arriving at wrong theological conclusions. Every theological conclusion is directly attributable to the method employed. As observed, Menzies employed a faulty theological framework (narrative hermeneutical approach), and its deficiencies can be seen from the numerous issues that have put his glossolalia in a quandary after a thorough biblical evaluation, while White's method proved right at correctly interpreting Scripture.
2. The nature of acceptable tongues in the Bible is intelligible tongues and never ecstatic tongues as practiced today. The study of both views has shown that tongues in Scripture are always intelligible.
3. Furthermore, historical data has shown that glossolalia is not unique only to Christianity. Several non-Christian religions such as Hindus and Islam, voodoo cultist, and even witchdoctors, have experienced tongue manifestations. Therefore, glossolalia cannot be touted as evidence of spirit baptism and a mere display of tongues does not in itself prove anything at all about one's spirituality. The reformation period which was a period of great revival of biblical doctrine and spiritual worship, seemingly made no attempt to recover glossolalia which shows that it is not fundamental to the Christian message.

4. The teaching about tongues though has been made the center of Pentecostal theology, is regarded to be of less value to the church in our times as seen from Paul's discussion and admonition to the Corinthian church. While it is one of the spiritual gifts of the Spirit, there are more superior gifts that the church must concern itself about than just tongues.
5. Missing the Initial Purpose. A harmonious study of scripture shows that the initial purpose for which the gift of tongues was given was for purposes of evangelism. But the glossolalia being advocated today shifts the purpose from mission to personal edification. This can be attributed to hermeneutics that separates the Lukan and Pauline writings.
6. Glossolalia cannot rightly be attributed to the tongues spoken in the Bible as the evaluation of this attribution did not qualify the acceptable spoken tongues in the Bible to ecstatic.
7. Whenever necessary and granted by the Spirit as at Pentecost, tongues are a helpful factor in the proclamation of the gospel. They enable the speakers preach the word without any barriers of language.
8. Pastors can develop learning modules using this comparative pneumatology study to equip in their lay Evangelists endeavors and help them navigate how they can deal with individuals who may claim glossolalia as evidence of salvation.
9. To enhance interfaith dialogue, Pentecostals and Adventists can conduct joint program leveraging on shared views.
10. To enrich the worship practice practices, Adventists can adopt the experiential component that Pentecostals emphasize to ensure that as they

seek the ultimate fruit of the Spirit, individuals do not just worship God but experience God through things such as meditation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This thesis aimed to carry out a comparative evaluation study on how Robert Menzies and Ellen White and by extension, Pentecostals and Adventists approach the subject of glossolalia and their respective interpretation of its nature and purpose in Scripture.

Based on the two views on glossolalia (Menzies and White), the findings of this study revealed that the teaching by Menzies lacks biblical support, whereas White's teaching is in line with the Bible. From a biblical point of view, speaking in tongues does not refer to glossolalia (ecstatic utterances) as Menzies espouses, but to miraculously speak intelligible known languages that were previously unknown to the speaker. Furthermore, it has been noted that all tongues referenced and acknowledged in these texts were intelligible except those practiced by some saints in the Corinthian church, which Paul admonished against.

This study contributes by filling an identified gap stemming from the absence of a direct comparative evaluative study between a prominent Pentecostal and Adventist authority on the subject in a particular that of Robert Menzies and Ellen White, employing a holistic approach that encompasses the hermeneutical methodologies of both traditions, their historical evolution and its impact on their doctrines, the theological stances and their synthesis, as well as the applicability of this phenomenon within the church.

While this study provides a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge, it is not void of limitations. The subject of tongues is broad, with many nuances from which to discuss. This study, therefore, was limited as much as possible to the

common discussions guided by what Menzies and White have discussed on the subject.

Given the limitedness of the scope of this study, the following recommendations are made for future studies:

1. There is a need to look into the cessationist theories around the gift of tongues as a separate paper in light of the Adventist teaching on the latter rain
2. The area of tongues as a spiritual gift, especially in the context of its selectiveness in light of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
3. Students of language may wish to carry out selective portions of Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians 14 to do some exegetical papers on specific words to add to the collections of linguistic works on tongues from Adventist scholars.

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