

- Prophecies, Knowledge, and Tongues (1Cor 13:8-13, Rev 22:9)

#1 Prophecies Shall Be Caused to Cease (1Cor 13:8-10, 1Pet 1:10-12, Dan 12:4)

- Tongues Shall Cease (1Cor 13:8, Rev 22:18, Hos 1:10, 2:23, Rom 9:25-26, Rev 14:10-11)
- Knowledge Shall Be Caused to Cease (1Cor 13:8-9, Matt 11:27, Eph 3:18-19)

#2. When That Which Is Perfect Has Come (1Cor 13:10, Rev 21:22-23)

- That Which Is in Part Shall Be Caused to Cease (1Cor 13:10, 1John 3:2)

#3 The Transition to Maturity (1Cor 13:11)

- Now We See Through a Mirror, Darkly (1Cor 13:12)
- Faith, Hope, and Charity (1Cor 13:13, Rom 10:17, John 17:3, Heb 11:1-3, 1John 4:7-13)

Please open your Bibles to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 1Cor 13:8 (2X). This is the fourth and the last installment on this love Chapter 13. We have already seen the first part, in verses 1-3, and we have seen the second part of this chapter in verses 4-7. We have already read these first two parts several times, that I am confident we do not need to start at verse 1. So let us now begin in the third part of this chapter, which is in verses 8-13. And here God introduces us to Prophecies, Knowledge, and Tongues, which later on are converted into Faith, Hope, and Charity. Therefore the title of this sermon is, **‘Eu>Faith, Hope, and CharityX/b> (2X). Let us begin wit**

- **Prophecies, Knowledge, and Tongues (1Cor 13:8-13, Rev 22:9)**

1Co 13:8-13 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

Charity or agape will never disappear; it will remain forever. But the following three gifts will not last forever: prophecies will fail, tongues will cease, and knowledge will vanish away. What are prophecies? To prophesy means to declare the words God has spoken to mankind. Therefore all the words in the Bible are prophecies. God speaks in Rev 22:9 about your brethren the prophets. We have to come to grips with the plain fact that after the cross many words in God's terminology have been changed. In the OT time there were many prophets, but most of the people were not prophets. In the NT time all those who have been born from above are called prophets, priests and kings. When we read out loud the words God has written in the Bible we are prophesying. Now we want to take a close look at the three verbs that were chosen by the translators in verse 8, because the translators have incorrectly used these four English words. In the original Greek text from which the KJV was produced, called the Textus Receptus, these are not four words, but only two verbs. The words fail and vanish away are the same Greek word, <2673> with parsings (5701), and the word for cease is a different Greek word. In fact, in verse 10 the words shall be done away is again exactly the same Greek word, <2673> with parsings (5701). The Greek word <2673> with parsings (5701) means it will be caused to cease or it will be reduced to inactivity. In other words, it is made inactive, or it is not effective anymore, but it does not mean that it comes to an end or will disappear. The other Greek word that was translated in verse 8: Tongues will cease actually means to come to an end. The phenomenon of tongues is ending especially through a willing cessation, either voluntarily, or made willing. How does all this affect the translation of verses 8-10? We find that the correct translation says:

#1 Prophecies Shall Be Caused to Cease (1Cor 13:8-10, 1Pet 1:10-12, Dan 12:4)

A better translation should reflect that the same verb is used in all three places in verses 8 and 10.

1Co 13:8-10 Charity never faileth: but if *there be* prophecies, they will be caused to cease; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it will be caused to cease. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part will be caused to cease.

Three times does the word <2673> with parsings (5701) appear in this chapter. What is God's message in doing this? Firstly, God is taking prophecy and knowledge together as one category, and He is considering tongues in another category. Then He says that prophecies and knowledge, as we presently experience it, shall be made inactive. It is not that they will disappear, because the Bible will never disappear, but they will be rendered inactive because they will be replaced by something better in the future. Secondly, God takes the phenomenon of tongues separately. Then He says that tongues, as the Corinthians knew it 1900 years ago, would come to an end; not come to an end forcefully like on the last day, but willingly cease some time after the apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthians. This is the first instance in the Bible where God indicates that tongues would disappear at some time in the future. This verse does not indicate when tongues will cease, only that it will be at a different time from the time when prophecies and knowledge will be rendered inactive. Thirdly, God says in verse 9, or we know in part, and we prophesy in part.³ Here again in verse 9 God takes knowledge and prophecy together. God is hereby indicating that our knowledge of Him, and our knowledge of salvation, and our declarations of what we understand the Gospel is, and our declarations of who God is from the words of Scripture, are only known by us in part and are only declared by us in part, because we do not fully know God, and we do not have the words which describe God perfectly in all His glory. This is not something we in our human nature can comprehend. We know only a part of what God considers the complete knowledge and prophecy of God. Our knowledge of spiritual matters is not complete. We are never done studying the Bible. It keeps revealing new information. For example, we can better understand this when we stand in the shoes of the OT prophets. Please turn in your Bibles to the First Epistle of Peter, 1Pet 1:10 (2X). God is speaking through the apostle Peter who praises God for saving the saints in Asia-Minor, and he praises them for their love and for their joy and for their faith. Then he says that they are receiving the end result of their faith, which is the salvation of their souls. Let us continue that thought in 1Pet 1:10-12,

1Pe 1:10-12 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

We see here an example of how prophecy grows. The OT prophets have searched diligently to understand what salvation is. They have read of the sufferings of Messiah, and they have read of His glory that should follow, but they did not fully comprehend what they were reading. Therefore God revealed to them that they

were not ministering to themselves, but to us were they ministering, preaching the mysteries of the Gospel. We pick up these declarations and continue in understanding where they left off. But we also do not succeed to understand all the doctrines that have been handed down, for even the angels, who are much smarter than we are, continue to look into these matters, for they also want to know. And thus, over time God reveals more to us, things which we have never seen before. However, we should be careful not to invent a new theology, and not to go beyond the plain first principles of the Gospel. And so the Gospel continues to grow, for knowledge shall be increased as time goes on (Dan 12:4). But when the end of time has come this kind of knowledge shall be done away. And so, in this manner prophecies shall be caused to cease or shall be made ineffective at the end of time. Likewise:

- Tongues Shall Cease (1Cor 13:8, Rev 22:18, Hos 1:10, 2:23, Rom 9:25-26, Rev 14:10-11)

1Co 13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they will be caused to cease; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it will be caused to cease.

When is it that tongues shall cease? We cannot wait to the end, for then we have included tongues in the same category as knowledge and prophecy. But prophecy refers to the Word of God, and we cannot allow tongues to have an equal status as the Word of God. Therefore, when we look for a point in time when the phenomenon of tongues ceased we arrive at the last page of the Bible. Please turn to the last page in your Bible, Rev 22:18 (2X). The aged apostle John was exiled to the island of Patmos. And here we see the last of the living apostles, who received the last message from the Lord Jesus Christ, and on the last page of this message the Lord gave the last warning concerning the holiness of the Bible. We read in Rev 22:18,

Re 22:18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

What does God mean when He said "this book" He referred to the Bible as "one Book" In fact, when we search for "the place" by combining Hos 1:10 with Hos 2:23 and with Rom 9:25-26, we can clearly prove that the Bible is that place, which means that the Bible is One Book. And thus, when God speaks in Rev 22:18 of "this book" it should be clear that this refers to the whole Bible. God says here that He is finished writing the Bible, which took about 1500 years to complete. And on the last page of this Book God says that He is no longer adding to the words that have been written herein. If anyone claims that he heard God speak additional words, he is lying, and he will be subject to the plagues that are written in this Book. What are those plagues? For example, God says in Rev 14:10-11, "they shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night." This is just one of those plagues. And so, it is clear that we may not add to the words of the Bible, and claim that God has sent an angel with additional words from God.

From where do people receive messages spoken in a tongue? They claim that they receive them from God the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit is God. Therefore, if today they claim that they have received a message from God the Holy Spirit, they are lying, for God will not violate His own rule. Moreover, those who claim

that they have received messages from God declare thereby that they are still under the judgment of God, and thus they have never been saved and they declare that they are bringing another gospel than the Gospel of the Bible. Therefore Rev 22:18 tells us that the phenomenon of tongues ceased to exist when Rev 22:18 was written, which was at about 100AD. Why is the penalty for breaking this rule so high? The penalty is so high because the Bible is the Word of God, and Christ is also called the Word of God. Therefore the Bible is the image of Christ, and if we have added to the image of Christ, then we are worshipping another god, another Jesus.

- Knowledge Shall Be Caused to Cease (1Cor 13:8-9, Matt 11:27, Eph 3:18-19)

1Co 13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they will be caused to cease; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it will be caused to cease.

1Co 13:9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

What do we mean when we speak of knowledge in this verse? It cannot refer to the knowledge of science, or the knowledge of ancient people of the Bible. It cannot even refer to the knowledge of the history that is in the Bible, for knowing that history has not saved anyone in their soul. This knowledge must refer to the knowledge of spiritual matters concerning salvation, and it must refer to the knowledge of knowing God and knowing Christ. The Lord Jesus said in Matt 11:27, *all things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* 3And thus, knowing Christ and knowing the Father is the essence of salvation, for it is he to whom Christ has revealed the Father. And yet our knowledge of the triune God is so limited that we can know Him only in part. But when we have been raptured to be with the Lord forever, our present knowledge of Him will not be done away, but it will be expanded to know Him fully as He is. In addition our knowledge of salvation will then be complete, so that we will know what Christ's atonement stood for, and that we will know what the battle of Christ with Satan was during the earth's existence. But our earthly knowledge of all that exists only in part, for we cannot fully comprehend it in this life. We can embrace the verses God has put down in Eph 3:18-19 where we read, 'That we may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.' 3But let us not fool ourselves. This is a prayer that we may obtain that wisdom, but our knowledge of the love of Christ is still far from complete in this lifetime.

#2. When That Which Is Perfect Has Come (1Cor 13:10, Rev 21:22-23)

1Co 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be caused to cease.

What does that mean? Many people are puzzled by the words 'That which is perfect' Could this be realized at any time here on this sin-cursed earth? No, never! Of course Christ is perfect. And when Christ has come out of heaven on the last day, that is the time when that which is perfect is come. 3And when we are joined to Christ body and soul then everything around us is also perfect. Please turn in your Bibles to the

Revelation of Jesus Christ, Rev 21:22 (2X). Presently our knowledge of God and of salvation is still incomplete, and the limited amount of prophecy that is in the Bible is still with us today. But on the last day when we have received our glorified body and we are forever with Christ, then everything will be complete and perfect. That will be the time when the limited knowledge and prophecy as we now experience it will be made ineffective. W. r. i. Rev 21:22-23,

Re 21:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

Re 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.

What does this mean? Why did God put this in the Bible? John writes of the appearance of the New Jerusalem,

as God shows it to him. He saw no temple therein. This does not mean that the temple-idea has been done away, but rather that it has come to its highest and fullest realization. There is no need for a special temple, for God Himself is the temple of His people in Christ. Through the Lamb God dwells with His people. Christ, through His Spirit, will perfectly and completely fill the glorified church; and through Him God will be with us in perfect and constant fellowship. The whole city shall be His dwelling place. We will see God everywhere, and dwell in His blessed fellowship. And all of life will be a constant worship of God in perfection.

- That Which Is in Part Shall Be Caused to Cease (1Cor 13:10, 1John 3:2)

1Co 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be caused to cease.

That which is in part, knowledge and prophecy, shall be caused to cease. Please turn in your Bibles to the First Epistle of John, 1John 3:2 (2X). You find First John a little bit before Revelation. We have here a passage which speaks of the children of God, and God's immense love for us, even in this life. And His love is an impulse of His sovereign will, for there was nothing loveable about us. We read in 1John 3:2,

1Jo 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

In our glorified body we shall see Him as He is in His glorified body. And we shall be like Him. What an amazing love of God that He is going to make us like Christ, and we shall sit with Him in His throne. And then all that we know only in part shall be completed, and we shall know Him in full, and we shall know God in full.

#3 The Transition to Maturity (1Cor 13:11)

1Co 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

Why did God throw this in? What has this to do with anything? Is God referring to tongues? No! Tongues have been done away in verse 8. This is a parable about our knowledge. God is continuing with the matters of knowledge and prophecy. In these matters of knowledge and prophecy we are on earth like little children. And compared with the knowledge and prophecy we shall have in the life hereafter we know almost nothing.

Just think of a two year old infant, bringing his father a glass of water; eight fingers around the glass, two fingers inside the glass, not very clean water, and spilling on the way. It is far from perfect, not very helpful, but much appreciated by his father. That is how our best works are here on earth. While we are on earth we do not rise above the level of an infant. Only in the life hereafter do we suddenly mature; then we do away those childish things which we did here on this earth. Now, this analogy of the child with the glass of water refers to good works, or our best works. It does not refer to our bad works, for our bad works have been done away at the cross of Christ. And thus we realize that our good works are of no consequence whatsoever, for they will be replaced by something much better. And our knowledge and prophecy will be replaced by a much better understanding.

- **Now We See Through a Mirror, Darkly (1Cor 13:12)**

1Co 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

What is this referring to? This is another parable about our knowledge of God. Our spiritual knowledge in this life is represented by an image dimly perceived in a polished metallic mirror. Two thousand years ago all mirrors consisted of polished metallic mirrors. The image is not very good. But then face to face refers to the time when we are going to be with Christ. Then we shall see Him face to face. Then we will understand everything. The second half of this verse says, Yow I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.3Then shall I fully know God, and understand how I was fully known by Him in this life. Then shall I fully know the love of God for unworthy sinners such as I am, and then shall I fully know the grace of God that lifted me up from the dunghill, and made me a saint, and made me inherit the throne of His glory.

- **Faith, Hope, and Charity (1Cor 13:13, Rom 10:17, John 17:3, Heb 11:1-3, 1John 4:7-13)**

1Co 13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

Faith, hope, and charity. How did these three fall into this portion of Scripture which started with prophecy, tongues and knowledge? Well, let us see how the development of this passage went. First of all verse 8 started with charity never faileth and thus we should expect to see charity in the end, and this we do see. Secondly, the matter of tongues came to an end in Rev 22:18, and thus tongues are no longer carried any further than verse 8. Thirdly, knowledge and prophecy are carried through, until the last verse, and then suddenly they were replaced by faith and hope. Are these four related to each other? And indeed they are. Prophecy produces faith. Perhaps you remember that God says in Rom 10:17, fo then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.3The word of God is not the Logos of God, but it is another word: it is the rhema of God. It is a spoken word from God, a creative word from God, as when God spoke and brought this world into being. And thus, what Rom 10:17 says is this: The faith that we receive upon salvation cometh by hearing the words of Scripture with our physical ears, but the spiritual hearing, the spiritual understanding, is created by a spoken word from God. Rom 10:17 does not tell us the sequence of events in the process of salvation. For this we need to go to the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead. The Lord Jesus went to the

cemetery. There at the tomb of Lazarus the Lord shouted: Lazarus come forth.³But Lazarus was dead; he could not hear the call. Therefore the Lord first had to make him alive, and then Lazarus could hear the call. And when he heard the call the Lord also gave him faith, so that he obeyed the call, and then he stood up and came to the front of the cave. This is how we were changed, for we were dead in trespasses and sins. We could not hear. First God had to make us spiritually alive, and then we could hear the call of Christ through the words of the evangelist, and when we responded in faith it meant that God has done a wonderful work in us both to will and to do according to His good pleasure. But all this tells us now that prophecy at the proper place and time, accompanied by the working of God the Holy Spirit, produces faith unto salvation.

Next we want to see how knowledge produces hope. And what is that hope we are talking about? It is not the hope that we use in our daily life. In the Bible hope is not an uncertainty, but a certainty that is going to manifest itself in the future, but it is called hope because we have not seen it; it is still in the future. God says in Rom 8:24, for we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? And so, we hope for something in the future, but it is not something that is uncertain, but it is certain to come to pass because we have the knowledge that it is a promise from God. This is how knowledge produces hope. The Lord Jesus said in John 17:3, and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.³In other words, knowing God and knowing Jesus Christ whom He has sent is the essence of salvation, and is the essence of eternal life. Therefore, if we are certain of our eternal life we have the hope of living with Christ in the NH&NE. This is how faith and hope are derived from prophecy and knowledge. How can we be sure of our salvation? How can we be sure that we may hope that we will be with Christ in the NH&NE? Please turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb 11:1 (2X). We have here a chapter that is entirely devoted to faith. Abraham's faith, and Isaac's faith, and Jacob's faith, and so on. What is the faith that God commands us to have? It is the faith to believe everything in the Bible, from cover to cover, in the original languages, mainly Hebrew and Greek. This is an unusual requirement, for we must make the commitment to believe all that we can find. This is not a faith that comes naturally, for the natural man has a great deal of critique on the Bible. The natural man will not believe everything God said in the Bible. But God said in Heb 11:1-3,

Heb 11:1-3, **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.³ When we can believe the whole Bible, we know that God has put this faith within us. And so we read here in verse 1, faith is the substance of what we hoped for.³What did we hope for? We hoped that we would be saved. And God says: Here is the substance of what you hoped for. Do you have the faith that is a gift from God, or do you have the faith that you conjured up yourself; but then you have the faith of the natural man. We also read in verse 1, faith is the evidence of things not seen.³What have we not seen? We have not seen the evidence that we have been saved. But God says: Here is the evidence. If you believe the whole Bible, and you make a commitment to believe**

everything you find there, even the things you do not like, then you have the faith that is the evidence that God has put this faith within your heart, and you should not doubt any more. And so, we see that we must have the faith that is a gift from God, and we must have the hope that accompanies that faith, for it is the hope that we shall live with the Lord Jesus Christ in the NH&NE. But what about charity? Please turn in your Bibles to the Epistle of First John, 1John 4:7 (2X). This is the love-chapter of 1John. After Hebrews you find James, then Peter, and then 1John. We have already seen in the first and the second part of 1Cor 13 that charity is an essential ingredient of salvation. Without it no one can be saved. Therefore God will give it to us at the time that He makes us born from above. We read in 1John 4:7-13

1Jo 4:7-13 **B**eloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. **H**e that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. **I**n this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. **H**erein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. **B**eloved if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. **N**o man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. **H**ereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

Faith, hope, and charity, but the greatest of these is charity. Why is the greatest of these charity? What is the agape that God has in view? It is an impulse of the will. It is an unconditional commitment to God and to our fellow man. It is a commitment to cross out our own self, because selfishness is the opposite of agape. And thus we must ask ourselves if there is within us an increasing desire to live according to God's will and to do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Charity is the essence of salvation, and it is the onset of salvation.

AMEN.

Let us turn to the Lord in prayer.