

# PETER TAN.NET

The Spirit Word Ministry of Ps Peter Tan

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PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT SERIES

## LEVELS OF PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

### **What is Praying in the Spirit?**

*For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (Romans 8:26)*

In the natural realm, we do not know what we should pray for as we ought to. This doesn't mean that we do not know what needs praying into but rather that we may not know how to pray effectively for it. For this reason the Holy Spirit aids us in our intercession. This is praying in the Spirit. This intercession comes in the form of "groanings which cannot be uttered".

Tongues are "groanings which cannot be uttered". They communicate audibly with God the Holy Spirit's intercession for us in utterances and words which are not found in our human vocabulary. The gift of tongues is a marvellous endowment to our spirit man by the Holy Spirit when we are filled with the Spirit. Tongues wonderfully helps our spirit man to communicate with God according to His desires and will and the exact need or action required in any situation.

Without the Holy Spirit, we won't know what the exact need or required action is in any situation because we only perceive things that our physical senses make us aware of. For example, without the Holy Spirit we won't be aware of the evil assignments sent by wicked spirits against us.

We do not know what we should pray for as we ought because we do not see realities as we ought. This is why we need the Holy Spirit to help us in intercession. The Holy Spirit enables our spirit man by the gift of tongues to make intercession for us according to the will of God. The Holy Spirit

knows exactly how to reach the mark where change for good can be effected.

### **Tongues: available to you**

You should expect to begin speaking in tongues from the moment you yield yourself and are filled with the Holy Spirit. In the book of Acts on each occasion when believers were filled with the Holy Spirit they began to speak with tongues. The first occasion was on the Day of Pentecost. *Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place...And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:1,4)*

Jesus instructed the disciples to stay in Jerusalem till they are baptised with the Holy Spirit. That is why they waited in an upper room till the Day of Pentecost arrived. On that day the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit began as declared by Joel the prophet. (Acts 1:4,5; 2:16-19.)

God is still pouring out His Spirit today so that you can be filled with the Holy Spirit. The moment you are - if you will do what the believers did on that Day of Pentecost - you will begin speaking in tongues.

What did the believers on the Day of Pentecost do? When they were filled they began to speak and as they began to speak the Holy Spirit gave utterance and to this utterance they yielded their tongues.

The Holy Spirit won't force the gift of tongues to babble through your mouth. If you're going to speak in tongues you're going to have to yield your tongue to the Holy Spirit's "groanings which cannot be uttered" and to have to open your mouth to speak the utterance He gives you.

### **Yielding to the Spirit**

The process of speaking in tongue is a yielding to God of two areas of our being. One is yielding our mind. We voluntarily yield our mind and give up trying to understand the words that come forth from our lips. It is a will. You make a choice. Those who are overly intellectual find it hard to give. For all our lives we are trained to at least comprehend the words that come forth from our lips. There is a yielding of the mind. Speaking in tongues is something the mind has to learn to let go. When we are willing to let the words flow out even though we do not understand those words, there is a surrender of the mind.

The other is yielding our vocal apparatus, which include our tongue,

our lips and our vocal cord. God will not force you to speak in tongues. In other words speaking in tongues is not an involuntary exercise. It is a voluntary yielding to God. All the works of the Holy Spirit flow through our free choice. You are doing the speaking but the Holy Spirit is giving the words.

*Acts 10:46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnified God. They heard them speak. It was not the Holy Spirit speaking. But it was the Holy Spirit that gave them utterance. Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid hands on them the Holy Spirit came upon them and they spoke with tongues and prophesy.*

They were the ones who spoke, and not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit only gives you the language. 1 Cor.14: 14-15 *For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the result then? I will pray with the spirit and I will also pray with understanding. I will sing with the spirit and I will also sing with the understanding.*

Verse 14 says 'for if I pray in a tongue.' Who prays? I. Who is that I? Paul. Paul says, "I pray." He did not say the Holy Spirit pray. And then he makes an emphasis and says my spirit prays. Now our spirit and the Holy Spirit are different. They are two different persons. Our spirit is we. The Holy Spirit is God. Paul is saying my spirit. He did not say the Holy Spirit. He says my spirit prays. And this is where some have difficulty with praying in tongues. I want to emphasize something here. When a man or woman get baptized in the Holy Spirit and pray in tongues, it is they who speak and pray and move their tongues and use their voice. If the Bible says they spoke means they are using their tongues, they are using their voice, and they are using their vocal cords. Not the Holy Spirit. We use our mouths and our tongues. But the origin of the language as you speak forth in tongues is from the Holy Spirit. However you are the one who choose to use it. When you speak in tongues, you choose to let it out or not to let it out.

There is no such thing as you have to wait for a particular feeling and then you can pray in tongue. That happens to people who receive the baptism in the Spirit under the anointing and don't realize that the anointing is different from the anointing within. Anointing upon and anointing within is different. Some people receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit when the anointing upon is working. Then when the anointing leave off and they are left with the anointing within, they don't understand that they can continue in tongues all the time without that special sensation that accompany the anointing upon.

Initially, it may be helpful for a first timer who is learning to speak in tongues to say a few words like "alleluia, alleluia". In most cases, the Holy

Spirit will seize hold of that person's tongue and form words on his tongue. There is a certain kind of rapid, involuntary movement of the tongue. After this initial experience, the Holy Spirit gives you the language inside your spirit. And you continue to speak them forth without the involuntary movement of the tongue anymore. You move your tongue and exercise your voice and you speak them forth. It sounds in the natural like you are making your own sound. But if you check carefully the language comes from inside. It is an out flow from inside.

### **The first level of 'stammering lips' and the second level of tongues as a language**

You ask, "what if my tongue is one syllable?" I had a problem in my early days. My tongue goes *bala bala bala*. Notice you are in control. You can control how loud you want it to be. How low you want it to be. You can pray in tongue in the C key or in the G key. The only thing you cannot control is the language. It comes from inside. So I asked the Lord why must it be *bala bala bala*. It makes me feel like a washing machine. God said the longer you pray in it, the more you will enjoy the language. How fast you want to pray is also under your control. God told me that just as you can speak in English fast or slow, you can also pray in tongues faster or slower. So enjoy it. Speak to me. Love me with that language. So I enter into God presence and I speak to Him as I speak to a person. You can slow it down. You can enjoy each syllable munching away chewing like the best food in the world. God said if you slow down you would begin to hear yourself talking in sentences. God said that if I pray more often in it, more and more come forth inside me. Then I began to realise sometimes our self comes into the picture. We only use one part of our mouth and say *bala abala bala*. God said you just let your tongue flow all over the place. You just relax then you just let your tongue flow out. Speaking in tongue is that way. You learn just like the baby talk. It is just like that way. Remember how a baby talk papa papa papa. Speaking in tongues is that way. So when you are moving in the realm of the spirit, at first your sounds are not so articulate but as you speak it out, more and more will come forth.

1 Cor. 14:21 *In the law it is written with men of other tongue and other lips I will speak to these people and yet for all that they will not hear me.* The bible says in the law. And Paul here in the context he is referring to tongue. Which part of the law? In Isa 28:11-12 *For with stammering lips and another tongue.* This is a same reference to what Paul has in 1 Cor. 14:21. For with stammering lips. People sometimes stammer when they are new to the things of the Spirit. Their tongues are not that fluent. Then as they begin to speak it forth they begin to go very fast and fluently. What have begun as stammering lips, now become fluent lips. The bible tells your tongues shall

start off with stammering lips. You begin to speak forth. As you yield yourself more and more to the things of God, you will go deeper and deeper in the gift of praying in tongues. And when you move deeper into praying in the Spirit, God is going to bring you into the spiritual realm. Many Christians are not doing what they should have with their gift of tongues.

When we first speak in tongues, our vocabulary would be very limited. I remembered hearing how Pastor John Osteen relates when he first spoke in tongue. He only got three words. He was a Baptist pastor for 17 years. He didn't get baptised in the Spirit yet. Then one day he was in a prayer meeting. He was so hungry for the baptism in the Spirit. Suddenly everyone started scattering. And he followed some of them and he found they went to the prayer rooms. He was sitting next to this dear precious old lady. And this lady was lifting up her hand. And she was worshiping God in tongues. John Osteen looked up and said I wish I had that. I wish I could know God like that. He became hungry for the things of God. And so he sought after the baptism in the Spirit. And the first time he got baptised in the Spirit, he got three words. I still remember the three words he had. He only got "O tor leo" He says after 17 years in the spiritual wilderness, even "O tor leo" sounds fantastic.

On the first level of praying in the Spirit, we start with stammering lip. Stammering lips doesn't speak so well. We have not learnt to release the flow of tongues fully. But the more you pray in tongues, the more it comes. It then grows into the second level where your tongues becomes a language. It is just like a tap. You look at the tap and you ask, " How can this tiny tap give me enough water for my whole house and fill my tank? How can so small a tap contain all the water that is needed?" The tap is connected to a reservoir. And in the same way, our spirit is connected to the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is connected to the throne of God. When you turn on the tap, there is an unending flow. At first it is only a trickle, then it increases and now it comes in an abundant flow. The more you pray the more words will come out. If you are so shy about your three little words in tongues, you may end up with only those three little words. But when you are bold, you say, " I don't care what people say. After all I am talking to Jesus and not to them." 1 Corinthians 14:1-2 *That if a man speaks in an unknown tongue, he is speaking to God.*

So you just speak to God over and over again in tongues until your mind gets tired and ask, "What are you doing? That is foolishness." Never mind, the foolishness of God is greater than the wisdom of man. You just continue until one day the reservoir just burst open.

See when God fills us with Himself, it is different from the way

demons fill a person. When demons fill and possess a person, he will lose consciousness. In fact you can cast out a demon from a person, and the person won't remember what happened. They have lost their consciousness. When God fills you with Himself, your own personality is infused with Him. You are still conscious. When we say Holy Spirit fill me, possess me with your own self. When He does that, we are still in control of our free will and choice. The way God fills and possesses us is different from the devil. The devil will give you no chance. He will dominate your personality and make you a slave. But when God fills you, He brings you to the fullness for the plan He has for your life. You still have a free will to choose. When we move into the realm of the spirit to do the things of God, we are still free to exercise our free will. 1 Corinthians 14:32 *And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.*

See the spirit of the prophet is in control. Your will is in control. If anything is of the Holy Spirit, you will always have a free choice to control it. So when God gives you a message, you can control when to give. You ask, "is that right?" Can you control tongues? Yes, the bible says we can control the tongues. We have our own free choice. I *will* to pray in tongues. I *will* to pray with my understanding. So in any area we can receive tongues as a language. I do not know how but slowly progressively, just like a child growing up. You don't notice the child growing every day. So I didn't notice the change every day but I continued pressing on until it became a language. So the interpretation of tongues also becomes very natural. You have to start somewhere.

I once heard Percy Collette describe in his tape how he was taken up to heaven and saw the wonders of heaven. Some of the things he said are too wonderful to imagine. He went to heaven for many hours. He said that when he went to heaven, he saw many rooms. And he said in heaven there was a special place for those who have not learned to worship God in tongues. And he said they were there practising. There was a school of holiness, a school of wisdom, all these different schools in heaven where people learn of the aspects of God to know Him and to get to know Him more. So if you have still not learnt to worship God in tongues, you will have to learn it up in heaven. Don't wait till you get to heaven to learn the heavenly language.

### **Various Languages**

The third level is when you began to speak in various languages. You could sense a change in language in your tongue. 1 Corinthians 12:10, *'To another discerning of spirit, to another different kind of tongues.'* 1 Corinthians 12: 28, *'varieties of tongues.'* 1 Corinthians 14: 2, *'for he who speaks in tongue does not speak to man but to God, for no one understand*



*him, however in the spirit, he speaks mysteries.'* In 1 Cor.12, lists the public gifts of tongue, which is different from private tongues. We are talking about private tongues here. We are not talking about the gift of speaking in tongues in the church as a public ministry. The difference between private tongues and public tongues is this. Private tongue is we speaking to God. Public tongue is God speaking to us. So when God speaks to us through a person, it needs interpretation. But when we are speaking to God, we don't need an interpretation because God understands all languages. So when we speak in tongues to God we are speaking mysteries onto God.

The third level a person can possibly move into is that their tongue can flow in different languages. We are talking about levels and areas. Levels talk about growth. Areas talk about function. So there are three levels of growth. One is a beginner stammering tongues. The other is it becomes a language the second level. The third level you move into various kinds of tongues. In flowing in the third level, your mind still doesn't understand what you are praying. You are still obeying by faith.

### **Spiritual Song**

Then the fourth level would be spiritual song. Where Paul says, ' I will sing with my spirit.' 1 Cor.14: 15. ' I will sing with my spirit.' I.e. the same with Eph. 5:19, 'Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual song or song of the spirit. So song of the spirit would be you magnify God with a melody. Even that there are some learning processes. In order to worship God, sing in the spirit, you need to be fluent in 2 areas. You need to have a melody and a fluent tongue. Then you could worship God and sing in the spirit. Some people can't do it yet. They have not got the new melody. To do two new things is harder than to get one. So what they do is they use the old melody that they know and they sing in the spirit with it. It is only half the process. Then as you mature in that, you will move into singing in the spirit. That means to say you need a new melody as well as fluent tongue. This is what the Bible call singing in the spirit.

Singing in the Spirit may also include blessing in the spirit. 1 Cor.14: 16 Paul says. ' I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding. Otherwise if you bless with the spirit, how will he occupy a place of the uninformed? Say amen and you are giving thanks he does not understand.' So he ties up singing with blessing. Blessing involves a psalm-like manner and singing in the spirit involves in a change of melody.

### **Warfare Tongues**

The fifth level is when you engage the enemy in warfare, and your tongues takes on a commanding tone. I did not realise the importance of praying in the Spirit until by His mercy, God had to show me its importance in an interesting situation. I was sitting in an easy chair and praying in

tongues, and I didn't feel anything. I didn't even feel good about praying in tongues. But there was something in me that told me to just keep on praying. And when I started it was easy. It just flowed out like a river without hindrance. I was doing it for about 15 minutes or so. Then suddenly I felt as if I was walking and crossing a boundary line. Suddenly I found it very difficult to pray in tongues. All my nice feelings disappeared. All the ease of praying did not come forth. I literally had to force myself to pray in tongues. And I felt I was munching and making the sound myself. It was a real struggle to pray in tongues. Yet I continued on and on for about forty five minutes, struggling. And then it happened suddenly again as if I have stepped across that line again and it became easy. That experience really puzzled me.

But that night when I slept, God showed me a replay of what happened. I saw myself sitting in an easy chair. And I saw myself praying nicely. And suddenly I saw on God's replay a black hairy fellow. He came in front of me. If I had known it, I would have really given it to him. He started waving his hands in front of my face. He was dancing around me. He did not touch me at all. I didn't know why he was doing that. But it sure made prayer difficult. He was at it for a considerable length of time. And then I saw myself struggling to pray.

But there was something else. As I continued prevailing in prayer, I saw something happen. Suddenly out of my mouth came a white substance, like a substance of light. And it slowly came forth from inside me. As I continued praying that substance of light came forth from my lips like some spiritual force and shot that hairy monster and the demon fell flat on the ground. Suddenly it was easy to pray. I saw myself in my dream responding with ease. And at that point when I shot him with my prayer, I was not even aware of it. But when the light came and shot him down I suddenly felt at ease in prayer. Then the demon was lying flat on the floor. He slowly crawled away. He said, "You are real."

When I came out of that experience, I began to wonder what was that all about. Then God began to tell me. Many Christians live in a flesh realm and in a mental realm. As long as you live in the flesh realm and mental realm you do not affect the spiritual world. But God says when you begin living and walking in the Spirit you are a torment to the devil. They become uncomfortable with your spiritual presence. They become uncomfortable with your spiritual exploits. See I could imagine all the demons are having a good time. And they are in one flock above the atmosphere. Here human beings are just living their own lives. Living in the flesh. Living in the mind. Couldn't care less about their spiritual life. The demons just look and laugh. But when a Christian begins to live in the spirit, he begins to affect them.



When you start praying, the wicked spirits in the high places asks, 'who is shaking my throne?' You begin to affect them. You become real in the spirit world to them. You begin to pull down their strongholds. Their thrones begin to be upset and I wonder how many times they have to fall off their thrones. And when that happen you will be real in the spirit world. You are no more living in the flesh and in the mind. And you live in the spirit realm. You affect them. Your presence in your work and walk affects them. And they feel the reality of your walk. They get upset all the time.

I once spent 48 hours praying in tongues. At the end of that time I couldn't tell whether I was in the spirit or in the flesh. I became opened to the spirit world. I saw light beams flowing out from the earth going up towards God. They looked like searchlights during World War II searching for enemy planes. I saw the whole earth was dark. That must have been what Jesus meant when He said that this world is in darkness. It is a spiritual darkness that is worse than physical darkness. And in the darkness there were beams of lights that were going forth from the mouths of praying Christians and piercing the dark clouds of demonic forces in the atmosphere surrounding the earth.

Ephesians 6 says that there are wicked spirits in heavenly places. They surround the atmospheric realm of this earth. They build their own kind of thrones. You read in the book of Daniel about how the prince of Persia was fighting against Gabriel and Michael came to help. In the atmosphere above us there are spiritual battles going on. These beams of light were prayers in the spirit rising up like a giant laser beam and punching holes in the darkness. Demonic forces were scattering all over. And it was very real. It starts from the earth and it slowly rises. And at the point where it touched the demonic forces are they began scattering and screaming. And then the light beam of prayer went right onto the throne of God. This shows the importance and power of Christians praying together. We are punching holes in the devil's net on this earth.

### **Worship Tongues**

I began to search the Bible and asked God what is that light? God said, 'It is My glory.' The Lord began to show me from the scriptures. Acts 2:4 *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.* This is the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is poured out upon the people and they begin to have a new language going forth to God. Notice the way the Bible puts it. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Notice this, *'they spoke as the*

*Spirit gave them utterance.'*

Peter in referring to speaking in tongues says in Acts 2: 26b *Therefore my heart rejoices and my **tongue** was glad.* He is prophesying about the time when our tongue will be glad. Now this passage in Acts 2: 26 is taken from Ps. 16:8-11 and verse 9 is the part I want you to note. *Psalm 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my **glory rejoices.***

There is one slight difference in Ps.16: 9, where it says, "my glory rejoices." But in Acts 2 Peter explains what the glory is. Acts 2:26 My heart rejoice and my tongue was glad. So the gift of tongues that God has given to us is a glory. It is the light and the substance of glory that flows out from our life. It is the same glory that Jesus said in Luke 24:49 *And I shall clothe you with my power.* He shall clothe us with His glory. That is the glory of God in our lives today. So I began to understand that the substance that came forth from our lips as we pray in the Spirit was the glory of God. The substance that came forth from the prayers of God's people is the glory of God arising. Didn't the word of God say, "and my glory shall be upon them."

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