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Confusion is not of God (Confusion Pt 1)

This is our first study on the word *confusion* in the Holy Scriptures. There are twenty-six occurrences of the word *confusion* in twenty-five verses. To establish a meaning we will first consult the dictionary, then the Greek and Hebrew, and finally a meaning from the Scriptures.

A) Dictionary meaning:

According to the Oxford dictionary *confusion* means “act of confusing; confused state, tumult; (as imprecation)”. And *confuse* means “throw into disorder; mix up in the mind; abash, perplex.”

B) Greek and Hebrew:

In the Greek there are two words that are translated *confusion*:-

- i) *akatastasia* is also translated *commotion* and *tumult*, and
- ii) *sugkhusis* is only translated *confusion*, however, the Greek word *segkenoo* which is translated *confuse*, is also translated *confound* and *be in an uproar*.

In the Hebrew there are seven words that are translated *confusion*:-

- i) *Boset* which is also translated *ashamed*, *greatly put to shame*, *shame* and *shameful thing*, and
- ii) *platah* which is also translated *dishonour*, *reproach* and *shame*, and
- iii) *Qalon* which is also translated *dishonour*, *ignominy*, *reproach* and *shame*, and
- iv) *Haper* which is also translated *be ashamed*, *be brought to confusion*, *be put to shame*, and *bring reproach*, and
- v) *Kalam* which is also translated *make ashamed*, *blush*, *be confounded*, *hurt*, *reproach*, *put to shame*, and
- vi) *Tebel* which is only translated *confusion*, and
- vii) *Tohu* which is also translated *empty place*, *without form*, *nothing*, *nought*, *thing of nought*, *vain*, *vanity*, *waste* and *wilderness*.

C) From the Scriptures:

From the Scriptures we establish that *confusion* means; *shame* (Ps.35:4, 26, 44:15, 70:2, Is.30:3, 45:16, 61:7, Jer 3:25) and *confound* (Ps.35: 4). We therefore summarise the meaning of the word *confusion* as it is used in the Scriptures to mean: *tumult*, *commotion*, *disorder*, *shame*, *dishonour* and *reproach*.

In this study we will consider two points; (1) God is *not* the author of confusion, and (2) when we sin we bring upon ourselves confusion.

Let us add a little more detail to our points:-

1. God is *not* the author of confusion

1Cor. 14:33 *For God is not [the author] of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

Our context for this verse in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 is where Paul is providing instruction to the Gentile church on spiritual gifts and the role of women in the church. Could you imagine if the main-stream churches today subjected their doctrines of speaking in tongues and the role of women in the church to these passages in Scripture? For this passage Paul is instructing the church that when a person speaks in an unknown tongue (which according to Acts 2: 4 is not unintelligible gobbledy-gook but rather other languages, which the hearers do not understand) there are two or three speaking with one person interpreting (verse 27). And if there be no interpreter then those speaking in an unknown tongue are to cease (verse 28). And if a prophet speaks, they also should do so by either two or three. Then Paul writes, that the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets (verse 33). Then we have our verse “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” These guidelines for prophets and those who speak in unknown tongues are there to prevent confusion. And one could say, that given that the instruction for the women-folk to be silent in the churches is also within this context, then when women do speak in the church the fruit is confusion.

And what do the majority of main-stream churches do today? They either teach, or actively promote the gifts of the Holy spirit to include one person speaking in tongues with no translator present, and women ministers who obviously need to speak. If you look at the doctrine of speaking in tongues when a woman stands up in church and starts speaking in tongues the Bible says the result is confusion. And for those

who decide to believe the Bible and not put such instruction as being applicable only to the time of Paul's writing, but treat the letter as Holy Scripture that is doctrinally applicable to the church today (as Paul was writing to the Gentile church) then it makes logical sense. Because (a) no one can understand what the tongue-speaking woman is saying so it is *not* edifying to the body of Christ (see 1Cor.14: 26), and (b) the woman is disobeying two commandments, one for her to be silent, because it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church (verse 35), the second, there is no interpreter. So, is it any wonder that the Scriptures of truth say that such behaviour is confusing and cannot be of God, because God is *not* the author of confusion. So by adopting such an interpretation that allows women to speak in tongues by themselves the church disobeys two commandments in Scripture, and such interpretation is not seeking to understand God's word by comparing scripture with scripture, such that any meaning of a verse does not contradict other verses.

In the Scriptures when any one challenges the words of God, they introduce tumult, which occurred when Satan challenged what God said to Eve (see Gen.3: 1, 4 & 5), the result was Eve was confused. Today when the preacher, teacher or minister of God stands in his pulpit with one or more versions of the Holy Scriptures (each saying different words that God said) and uses a different version to make a different point, in doing so, the minister is introducing confusion about what God said. When the preacher of God's word decides what words God spoke and which He did not (like in 1Cor.14: 33 the NIV says "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace as in all the congregations of the Lord's people"), if the minister of God uses the NIV this verse would not be considered in this particular word study, and hence Satan shows evidence that he is using the same device on the minister as he did on Eve. The devil has deceived the minister just as the serpent deceived Eve. The problem is, most today appear ignorant of his subtlety (see 2Cor.11: 3). And if you then ask them questions, in my experience the majority feel threatened, rather than desiring to know the truth, they are more likely to defend their deception. This can be extended further when a preacher is using any one of the 200-plus versions of Holy Scripture and those in his congregation are using a different version. There is *confusion*. And God is *not* the author of confusion. If the fruit of the main-stream church preachers, pastors and teachers *is* confusion, then are they doing God's work or inadvertently (for some perhaps) doing the work of our adversary the devil? Well, that is what the Authorised Bible says. So let us remember that God is *not* the author of confusion.

2. When we sin we bring upon ourselves confusion.

Jer 3:25 We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day; and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God.
See also Dan 9:7, Ezra 9:7.

In our first point we looked at the stand-alone tongue-speaking women and the ministers who use multiple versions of Holy Scriptures to teach from, and in both examples those involved are being disobedient to God's word, which won't surprise us because the main cause of confusion is disobedience, and rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (1Sam.15: 23)). To confirm this I suggest you look at the garden of Eden before the fall, where there was no sin and there was no confusion! And God was not the author of confusion in the garden, but Satan was, and man became seduced by the devil. As a result Eve brought upon every man sin (see Rom.5: 12) and confusion.

I suggest that for every example in the Scriptures and in the world, inside the church and outside, when there is confusion, disobedience to God, sin has been the cause. I can only make this statement because the Scriptures say that when a man transgresses God's law, when he turns away from God and is disobedient to His commandments, he has sinned (1Jn.3: 4). The same book also says that when man breaks God's law he stimulates confusion (see Jer.7: 19, Dan.9: 7, 8, Ez.9: 7). And for a believer, when we sin, we not only open the flood-gate to confusion but our verse says we bring shame and confusion upon ourselves. Well, that is what it did to Israel and it would be no different for believers today. Then there are

passages where a person who sins brings confusion upon their face (Ezra 9: 7, Jer.7: 19 and Dan.9: 7 & 8). Other examples in Scripture are more direct where they say that when a person sins “it is confusion”, examples include:

i) It is a sin for a woman to lie down with a beast - it is confusion (Lev 18:23), and

ii) It is a sin for man to lie with his daughter in law - it is confusion (Lev 20:12).

iii) Trusting in false gods brings shame and confusion

Is.30:3 *Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt [your] confusion.* See also Isa 41:29, 45: 16.

Therefore, when you see a man bowing down to a false god, an idol that they have made with their hands, then you know they have not only broken God’s law (Ex.20: 4, 5), but they also bring upon themselves confusion, tumult and disorder. And as we established in our first point, the God of the Bible, God Almighty who created the heavens and the earth, He is not the author of confusion. The most well-known New Testament example of idolatry being identified as confusing, is in Acts 17: 16, where Paul asserted that “his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.”

How did Paul respond to his spirit being stirred?

When he was standing in the midst of Mars’ hill he preached to the idol-worshippers by referring to the inscription on their altar “TO THE UNKNOWN GOD” (verse 23), he goes on to say that whom they “ignorantly worship” I declare unto you, and he preached Christ, and concluded by calling them to repent (verse 30). Hence, Paul contextualised, he made relevant the gospel for their context. Why? Because then they could relate their actions, their sin, as the cause for their confusion, and their need to turn from disobedience to God and repent, and believe the gospel. Their idol-worship, their sin, was the cause of the confusion.

One of our modern-day examples is the Marriage Amendment Act which redefined marriage to allow sodomites to lay with one-another and call themselves married. During the various stages of the Bill becoming law the government received submissions from churches like St Andrews on the Terrace who promoted sodomite marriages and then others like the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand who outlined what the Scriptures say. And because one or more Christian churches supported the Bill and others did not, the church, the body of Christ in New Zealand, was seen as being divided, because one part of the body was calling evil good (Is.5: 20), hence sin caused confusion. Whereas, if the church put forward one voice to the government that proclaimed God’s abhorrence (see Lev.20: 23) then there would have been no confusion over what the body of Christ was saying.

Let us therefore pray for each other that we not be led away by Satan if he challenges us about what God says, or if we are challenged by a non-believer about what society sees as acceptable. Let us, as part of the body of Christ, be of one mind (Phil.1: 27 & 2: 2) on what God says, acknowledging that when we speak the same thing we are less likely to be divided (1Cor.12: 25), there is less likelihood of confusion. And as we have covered, God is *not* the author of confusion, and when we are disobedient to His word, and we sin, we cover ourselves in confusion.

Having said what we have said, let us say it again. In this our first study of the word *confusion* in the Holy Scriptures we have provided a meaning of; *tumult*, *shame*, *reproach*, and *disorder*, and we covered two points; (1) God is *not* the author of confusion, and (2) when we sin we bring upon ourselves confusion.