

The Gifts of God

Another
STUDY IN BIBLICAL ACCURACY
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The Scripture used throughout this study is quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Any explanatory insertions by the author within a Scripture verse are enclosed in brackets [].

In the New Testament there are nine words translated *gift*. Three of these nine are usually translated by some other words, and rightfully so.

Ephesians 4:7,8 says, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the **gift** of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave **gifts** unto men." In these consecutive verses the words rendered *gift* are two entirely different Greek words. Not knowing the difference, a student of the Bible may readily interpret both of them as speaking of the same thing. This has led to misunderstanding as to what are the gifts of God.

Of the six major words translated *gift*, *charisma* is the only one with a root different from the others. A *charisma* is an endowment of divine favor or benefit to the recipient. Greek words having the same root as *charisma* bear these meanings: joy, rejoice, grace and divine favor. Similarly, *charisma* is an endowment conferred by divine favor, emphasizing its grace aspect.

Charisma is always used of God's gifts, of which there are seven. They are: the gift of holy spirit (Acts 2:38), the five gift ministries (Ephesians 4:8,11), and gifts of healings (I Corinthians 12:9). These gifts are given by God's grace. Other words translated *gift* are also used in connection with these seven gifts, but whenever *charisma* is used it emphasizes the grace aspect. Sometimes it is used of all of God's gifts collectively, but each significance must be determined from its context.

The word *dōrea* is a gift that is a benefit to the individual receiver. The corresponding Latin word is *beneficium*, from which we get our English word benefit. When *dōrea* is used of the holy spirit gift, it emphasizes the gift, not the grace aspect.

When a believer receives the holy spirit inherently, it

is a gift of grace (*charisma*). When he begins to manifest that gift so that it benefits himself, it is called in The Word a *dōrea*. As the believer grows, his gift benefits people other than himself; then it becomes a *doma* (gift). A *doma* is a gift that is a benefit to others horizontally. As a believer builds himself up by speaking in tongues, he anticipates the time when his gift will be a benefit to others. Each individual arrives at this level in his spiritual growth according to his own believing.

However, not every *doma* is a *dōrea*. *Doma* is also used of a horizontal gift not the result of God's giving in Matthew 7:11, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" See also Luke 11:13. *Doma* is also used of a gift of money in Philippians 4:17, "Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account."

In Ephesians 4:7 the word gift is *dōrea*. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the **gift** [holy spirit gift which is a benefit to the individual] of Christ." In verse 8 the word for gift is *doma*. Since verses 9 and 10 are in parenthesis (a figure of speech by way of explanation), the thought context reads from verse 8 to verse 11:

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts [*doma* – gifts which are a benefit to others] unto men.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

The gift ministries are a benefit to others horizontally after the individual has received the gift vertically from God. When it is given vertically it is a *charisma*; but when it benefits others horizontally, it is a *doma*. Every

gift ministry is a *doma*; otherwise God would not have called that individual, but someone else whose ministry would be a benefit to the people he ministers to.

The structure of the sentences in these two verses is remarkable: he gave gifts unto men - he gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers (unto men). The gifts which are a benefit to others are the men who have received the gifts by grace. Hence, although a ministry is both a *charisma* and a *doma*, only the benefits of men with ministries to others are emphasized in Ephesians. The benefits are then given in verse 12: "For the edifying of the body of Christ."

A fourth word translated gift is *dōrēma*. *Dōrēma* is a combination of the roots of *dōrea* and *doma* and refers to a gift that benefits the recipient as well as others.

Dōrēma occurs only twice in the New Testament: Romans 5:16 and James 1:17. The number two is used in the scriptures to denote a division.

Therefore the word *dōrēma* denotes a division in its benefits as a gift: first to the receiver; second to others.

Romans 5:15-17 contains three of the above four words translated *gift*. "But not as the offence [out of Adam's works, which brought death], so also is the **free gift** [*charisma* – out of God's grace, which brought life]. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the **gift** [*dōrea* – a benefit to each receiver] by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many [here the *dōrea* becomes a *doma* in order to benefit many]. And not as it was by one that sinned [which brought death first to himself and second to others], so is the **gift** [*dōrēma* – which brought a benefit, life, first to Christ and second to others]: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the **free gift** [*charisma* – which is of grace] is of many

offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive [*lambanō* – to receive into manifestation] abundance of grace and of the **gift** [*dōrea* – which is a benefit, to reign in life as opposed to death reigning] of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." The contrast between the results of Adam's offence and the gift of God in these verses is remarkable. An understanding of the various words translated *gift* depicts once again the minute accuracy of the Word of God.

A fifth word translated *gift* is *dosis*. *Dosis* is not the gift itself but the act of giving. It should be translated as such in both of its occurrences, James 1:17 and Philippians 4:15.

Every good **gift** [*dosis* – act of giving] and every perfect gift [*dōrēma* – which is a benefit to the recipient and to others] is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. James 1:17.

The final word translated *gift* is *dōron*. It is used as an offering usually to or for God or His service in the temple. *Offering* is a more proper rendition of the word than *gift*. Twice *dōron* is used of an offering by a child to his parents. Once it is used of an offering from one man to another. Twice it is rendered as an offering to God or Christ outside the temple. Thirteen times it is used of offerings in the temple, at the altar or treasury.

Only one occurrence is found in the epistles addressed to the Church of God. The passage is Ephesians 2:8, "For by [in] grace are ye saved through [by] faith [believing]; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift* of God." In this usage it is not surprising to find that it is God's offering, not man's offering to God.

Before Pentecost men had to make offerings to God

and to work for their salvation; after Pentecost the work is already done. God made the offering in Jesus Christ. We cannot work for our salvation; this has been accomplished for us through grace. We need just believe and accept that which has been made available to us. Verse 9, further says, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Now since God has done this for you, you merely walk in the light He has already given you.