

APOLLOS A Man 'in Christ' Before PAUL

Last week, we studied Barnabas the man who convinced believing Jews to accept Saul after he came into like-faith in Christ. Barnabas was a companion to Paul, yet he is almost completely ignored by 'mid-Acts-ers'.

This week, we'll study about Apollos, another of Paul's ministry associates. He is named 10 times in the scriptures. He is first mentioned in Acts 18:24 so we will examine some points of information around his introduction:

- Acts 18:24**
- And a certain Jew named **Apollos**,
 - born at Alexandria,
 - an eloquent man,
 - and mighty in the scriptures,
 - came to Ephesus.

Point 1. Apollos was **a Jew**.

Point 2. Since Apollos was **born at Alexandria**, people refer to him as an Alexandrian Jew. (Even though Apollos was from 'Alex'andria, there is 'no relation' between him and a certain 'teaching elder' in Illinois, who some 'mid-Acts-ers' have nicknamed Apollos. I am also aware that this particular 'teaching elder' specifically instructed a bishop NOT to call him a bishop.)

Point 3. Apollos was **an eloquent man**. He was 'learned', and skilled in literature, letters, and the arts, especially versed in history and antiquities (from which we get the word 'antiques' referring to the early period of time, ancient, old - men who were 'artisans' workers in skilled trades, craftsmen knowing customs, relics, and monuments of the distant past.

Point 4. Apollos was capable, powerful, strong, and influential with the Bible, which, at that time, was probably only the OLD testament writings.

Point 5. Apollos went to minister to the Ephesians.

Whether or not Apollos knew John the Baptist personally, we don't know, but we do know that he was a disciple of John the Baptist's teachings:

Acts 18:25 This man was instructed in **the way of the Lord**; and being fervent (**with great zeal**) in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently (**exactly, accurately, perfectly**) the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all recorded John's ministry, which was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it was prophesied:

Matt 3:1-3 In those days came **John the Baptist**, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,
 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
 3 For **this is he** that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias (from Isa 40:3), saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

Mark 1:1-4 The beginning of **the gospel of Jesus Christ**, the Son of God;
 2 **As it is written in the prophets** (Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3), Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
 Prepare ye **the way of the Lord**, make his paths straight.
 4 John did baptize in the wilderness,
 and preach **the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.**

FYI, Paul also preached 'the gospel of Christ' to the Romans (Rom 1:16, 15:19), the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Philippians, the Thessalonians.

Malachi prophesied that the Lord would send His messenger before the day of the Lord came. **John the Baptist was that messenger:**

Mal 3:1 Behold, **I will send my messenger**, and he shall prepare **the way** before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

Mal 4:5 Behold, **I will send you Elijah the prophet** before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

Jesus taught that **John the Baptist was that prophet** who fulfilled Malachi's prophecy of Elijah:

Matt 11:13-14 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until **John**.
 14 And if ye will receive it, **this is Elias, which was for to come.**

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John: **since that time the kingdom of God is preached**, and **every man** presseth into it. (also see John 1:17 to 'rightly divide the word of truth')

After Peter, James, and John saw Jesus transfigured before them, when Moses and Elias appeared and talked with Jesus He told them again that John the Baptist was Elijah:

Matt 17:9-13 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, **Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.**

12 But I say unto you, That **Elias is come already, and they knew him not,** but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13 Then **the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.**

Apollos was well-informed in **the way of the Lord,** as he confidently proclaimed the things of the Lord. A married couple, in whose house Paul had stayed (Acts 18:1-3), personally exposed Apollos to **the way of God** (which Jesus also taught in truth - Matt 22:16, Mark 12:14, Luke 20:21):

Acts 18:26 And he (Apollos) began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when **Aquila and Priscilla** had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him **the way of God** more perfectly (*exactly*).

Then with letters that encouraged the disciples to accept him, Apollos went to Achaia, where he greatly assisted the **'grace believers'**. Unafraid and openly, he used scriptures to teach that community 'Jesus was the Christ':

Acts 18:27 And when he (Apollos) was disposed to pass into **Achaia,** the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had **believed through grace:**

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

During a counsel meeting of the church at Jerusalem, concerning a certain sect of the Pharisees, which believed, that were trying to put the Gentiles under the law of Moses and require circumcision Peter dealt with the issue of **the Jews 'believing through grace' just like the Gentiles:**

Acts 15:6-11 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that **the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.**

8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, **bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;**

9 And put **no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.**

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of **the disciples,** (obviously speaking of the 'Gentile' disciples, that the Pharisees were trying to put under the law) which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But **we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.**

This is the **scriptural description** of those who "had believed through grace" both Jew and Gentile with no difference saved by faith through grace those who Peter witnessed to, those Apollos helped.

Just as Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos to expand his understanding of John's baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4) to the Holy Ghost's baptism (Acts 2:38) and belief on Christ Jesus Paul also helped John's disciples 'make the transfer' in the very same way:

Acts 19:1-10 And it came to pass, that, while **Apollos** was at **Corinth,** Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to **Ephesus:** and finding certain disciples,

(Acts 19:) 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized?

And they said, Unto John's baptism. (just like Apollos had been)

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that **they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.**

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, **disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.**

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of **that way** before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that **all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.**

When Paul wrote to the church of God at Corinth to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor 1:2) he scolded them for debating over who their ministers were and for separating in strife because of which man had taught them and who they followed:

1 Cor 1:10-12 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be **no divisions** among you; but that ye be **perfectly joined together** in the **same mind** and in the **same judgment.**

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are **contentions** among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of **Paul;**

and I of **Apollos;**

and I of **Cephas (that's Peter);**

and I of **Christ.**

Paul got them again, a couple of chapters laterfor the same thing, arguing over whose disciple they were. This time it was between him and **Apollos**. This passage, as well as the one we just read in 1 Cor 1:10-12, flies flat in the face of 'mid-Acts-ers' who promote "the distinctive ministry of the apostle Paul" and who say to "follow Paul". GOD said they were fleshly like babies that could only drink milk and not chew meat:

1 Cor 3:1-9 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet **carnal**: for whereas there is among you **envying**, and **strife**, and **divisions**, are ye not **carnal**, and walk as men?

4 For while one saith, **I am of Paul**;
and another, **I am of Apollos**;
are ye not carnal?

5 **Who then is Paul,**
and who is Apollos,
but ministers by whom ye believed,
even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 **I (Paul) have planted,**
Apollos watered;
but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is **he that planteth (Paul)** any thing,
neither **he that watereth (Apollos)**;
but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now **he that planteth (Paul)**
and **he that watereth (Apollos)** are one:
and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For **we (Paul and Apollos) are labourers together with God**:
ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

Paul didn't use words of man's wisdom (1 Cor 1:17, 2:4, 2:13) and Apollos was eloquent and impressive. But '**believing through grace**' was not about a popularity contest, as the carnal Corinthians made it.

Paul, Apollos, or Peter the minister made no difference. But I've heard 'mid-Acts-ers' talk about Apollos being in what-they-call "Israel's program":

1 Cor 3:21-23 Therefore **let no man glory in men.**

For all things are yours;

22 Whether **Paul**, or **Apollos**, or **Cephas**,

or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come;
all are yours;

23 And **ye are Christ's**;

and Christ is God's. (Keep reading):

1 Cor 4:1-2 Let a man so account of **us (Paul and Apollos and Peter)**,

as of **the ministers of Christ**,

and **stewards (Greek <oikonomos> a manager, governor, superintendent FYI, a similar Greek word <oikonomia> was translated BOTH 'stewardship' (Luke 16:2,3,4) and 'dispensation' (1 Cor 9:17, Eph 1:10, 3:2, Col 1:25))**

of the mysteries (Greek <musterion> FYI, the same Greek word was translated BOTH singular - mystery - and plural - mysteries.) of God.

God demands that His workers be trustworthy and true:

2 Moreover **it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.**

It is painful to rely on a man to be dependable, and discover he's not:

Prov 25:19 **Confidence in an unfaithful man** in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

Take care for your foot, and only place your assurance in the Lord:

Prov 3:26 For **the LORD shall be thy confidence**,
and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

Man will let you down, but God never will:

Psa 118:8 It is better to **trust in the LORD**
than to put **confidence** in man.

God taught the same principle through Paul. The arm of flesh will fail you:

Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have **no confidence in the flesh.**

Paul put himself and Apollos in the same boat. They were both good examples, having lowliness instead of conceit and vanity knowing that the Lord was their judge, and no man:

1 Cor 4:3-6 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, brethren, **I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.**

The saints were instructed not to be puffed up by knowledge, but to have charity which edifies (1 Cor 8:1).

Peter also encouraged the overseers of the church to be a pattern:

1 Peter 5:1-3 The **elders which are among you** I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, **taking the oversight (Greek <episkopeo> the same Greek root word as 'bishop' <episkope>)** thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being **ensamples** to the flock.

Paul taught the churches not to compete with each other, but to be humble:

Gal 5:26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Gal 6:3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

Paul claimed to be less than the least (Eph 3:8, 1 Cor 15:9) of all saints:

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, **not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think;** but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Paul really wanted Apollos to go back to Corinth, but he wasn't ready, so he said he would go when it was more suitable for him:

1 Cor 16:10-12 Now if **Timotheus** come, see that he may be with you without fear: for **he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.**

11 **Let no man therefore despise him:** but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

12 As touching our brother **Apollos**, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

The last mention of Apollos was in Paul's epistle to Titus, who history shows was ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia. Paul requested Apollos come to see him there:

Titus 3:12-13 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be **diligent** to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and **Apollos** on their journey **diligently**, that nothing be wanting unto them.

In everything we read about Apollos, nothing negative was written of him.

'Mid-Acts-ers' focus on Paul, and following Paul. They are often accused of worshipping Paul because they constantly repeat his name, like, "Paul said this," or "Paul said that" instead attributing GOD's word to Himself:

1 Cor 11:1 Be ye followers of me, **even as I also am of Christ.**

This is David Dowell, saying, "Think about it!"

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