

“And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he 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. And when he 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; For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.”
Acts 18:24-28.

“This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a READY SCRIBE in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given; and the king” – (i.e., of Persia, the world’s only super power at the time, **Ezra 7:1**) – *“granted him all his request”* – (i.e., to rebuild the House of God, **Ezra 6:1-15**), – *“according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.”* **Ezra 7:6.** Though these two men lived about 500 years and 1,000 miles apart, they are described by the Holy Ghost according to their relationship with the Word of God – which was mostly the Old Testament at that time.

It is true in a very real and lively sense, that God the Holy Spirit, the Elect of God living and dead, and all the innumerable myriads of Holy Angels – in other words everybody that counts – looks and regards every individual of mankind ONLY according to his relationship with the Bible. In other words, ask yourself, Are you mighty in the Scriptures? as was said by the Holy Ghost of Apollos. **Acts 18:24.** Are you a ready scribe in the Pentateuch? as was said by the Holy Ghost of Ezra. **Ezra 7:6.** Certainly, each and every member of a New Testament church should aspire to be. What do the Holy angels say about you? What do the spirits of just men made perfect say? What do God’s Elect – your co-Elect – say? Though in a slightly different context, God’s Elect, even those *“who are least esteemed in the church,”* are qualified *“to judge the smallest matters;”* to wit:

“Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?”
(1 Cor. 6:2-4)

God the Holy Ghost has commended Apollos to us, with a description of his heaven-blessed character and attributes; that we should adopt as one we should emulate. The same with Ezra, and with others. Let us then study these men – as revealed to us by the Holy Ghost. First we learn that Apollos was a Jew, born in Alexandria, and *“an eloquent man.”* **Acts 18:24.** Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great in 334 BC, and, promoted and financed by the great world warrior, leader and monarch, – soon became the greatest metropolis of the ancient world. The Encyclopedia Britannica says of Alexandria: *“Inheriting the trade of ruined Tyre, and becoming the centre of the new commerce between Europe and the Arabian and Indian east, the city grew in less than 100 years to be larger than Carthage; for several centuries it had to acknowledge no*

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superior but Rome. It was a centre not only of Hellenism (Greeks), but of Semitism (Jews), AND THE GREATEST JEWISH CITY IN THE WORLD. Philo the famous Jew lived there. Here the Septuagint” – (i.e., the authoritative translation of the Old Testament into Greek by 70 Jewish scholars) – I say, it was here in Alexandria in the 3rd century BC that the Greek Old Testament was produced. It was this Septuagint translation of the Old Testament that the authors and preachers mostly used when preaching and quoted in writing in the New Testament. The huge, 400 feet in height, Lighthouse of Alexandria – one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and the prototype of all lighthouses – was built. A great world center of arts, museums, libraries, universities, mathematics, industries, commerce and trade, and medicine, such that it is today the Middle East headquarters of the World Health Organization.

Now, couple all this with the meaning of the word translated in our version as “*eloquent*,” as in, “*Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man.*” Acts 18:24. Gill: “*An eloquent man;*’ in speech, as well as learned, wise, and prudent, as the Ethiopic version renders it.” And so, it is quite likely that the word which we translate as merely eloquent, as, eloquent in his ability to speak well, also means that Apollos was LEARNED, WISE AND PRUDENT. Just as Moses was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt in his own time, c. 1,500 BC; even so, Apollos was likely to have been learned in all the wisdom of Egypt (remember that Alexandria was also in Egypt) in his time, c. 1,500 years after Moses.

And so, should each of us call on the Lord to enable us to speak well (eloquent), to avail ourselves of all available learning opportunities (learned), “*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him,*” Jas. 1:5 (wise), and that we should seek the Lord for prudence, which means good judgment and common sense in all practical situations (prudent). And so, we learn much at the very outset of our study of Apollos; and the next attribute of this good man is that he had a hunger for the scriptures, as had brother Jeremiah; to wit: “*Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.*” Jer. 15:16. The same sentiments – express and implied – are found with brother Apollos; to wit: “*And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES, came to Ephesus.*” Acts 18:24.

How is it either express or implied in these words, that Apollos agreed with Jeremiah that God’s word the Scriptures was “*the joy and rejoicing of his heart?*” When the Holy Ghost said of Apollos that he was “*MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES,*” He at once, and thereby, said that Apollos spent many hours and days and years diligently reading and studying the Scriptures – a thing which is impossible to do unless the Scriptures are “*the joy and rejoicing*” of one’s heart – by the very nature of things.

Gill: “*And mighty in the Scriptures;*’ of the Old Testament, particularly in the prophecies of them concerning the Messiah; he had thoroughly read them, and carefully examined them, and could readily cite them, as well as had great knowledge of them, and was capable of explaining them; he was SKILLFUL in the Scriptures, as the Syriac version renders it; or, he KNEW them, as the Ethiopic; he had large acquaintance with them, and was well-versed in them; it is a Jewish way of speaking.”

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New Testament passages to somewhat the same effect include 1 Pet. 3:15; to wit: *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”* And, 2 Tim. 2:15; to wit: *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* The risen Savior called all mankind FOOLS who are not mighty in the Scriptures, like brother Apollos; and who are not ready scribes in the law of the Lord, like brother Ezra. To wit:

“Then he said unto them, O FOOLS, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself... And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms”– (i.e., the Old Testament en toto), – “concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”
(Lk. 24:25-27,44,45)

These are the same Scriptures (and the same translation, the Septuagint), which it is said in our text that Apollos was *“mighty”* in. – followed immediately by another descriptive sentence regarding Apollos; to wit: *“This man was INSTRUCTED IN THE WAY OF THE LORD.”* Acts 18:25(a). The word *“instructed”* as used in this place signifies *“catechized,”* and suggests that Apollos was brought up from early childhood in systematic training on this holy *“WAY”* – possibly taught by godly Jewish parents (ala, Timothy), who were themselves possibly disciples of John the Baptist, whose voice was often *“The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye THE WAY OF THE LORD* (note the exact same wording – *“The way of the Lord.”*), *make his paths straight.”* Mat. 3:3. See, also, 2 Tim. 1:5 & 3:15; to wit:

“To Timothy, my dearly beloved son; Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord... When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also... And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim. 1:2,5 & 3:15-17)

Beloved. God Almighty will see to it that His Elect get His Word, and it will be exceedingly sweet to their taste – however grim the message from God is, that they are required to publish – and whatever temporary pain and discomfort may attend the fervent and diligent publication thereof; to wit: *“And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions; be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them (publish), whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; for they are most rebellious. But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house; open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without; and there was written therein LAMENTATIONS, AND MOURNING, AND WOE. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak (publish) unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels*

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with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and SPEAK WITH MY WORDS UNTO THEM (publish).” Ezek. 2:6-10; 3:1-4.

Publishing words is sometimes likened unto sowing, or broadcasting, corn or wheat seed, and is often fraught with pain, discomfort and peril; to wit: *“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed (publishing a precious message from God), shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”* Psa. 126:5,6. Analogous to the Lord’s message that came to Ezekiel, referred to above; to wit:

“And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, THOUGH BRIERS AND THORNS BE WITH THEE, AND THOU DOST DWELL AMONG SCORPIONS.” (Ezek. 2:6)

Notwithstanding that Apollos was well-warned in the Old Testament of dangers attendant upon boldly and faithfully preaching God’s truth to apostate Israel, he is further defined as *“being fervent in the spirit he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord... And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue.”* Acts 18:25,26. Fervent, diligent, bold – three more indispensable qualities for each of God’s Elect.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.” (2 Tim. 1:7,8)

These glorious qualities define and characterize all God’s Elect, who are the real heroes of mankind, who walk as spiritual giants, in shining ranks, through the earth, – the only holy and true representatives on earth, of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Gill:

“‘And he (Apollos) began to speak boldly in the synagogue,’ using great freedom of speech, and showing much intrepidity and greatness of soul, and presence of mind; not fearing the faces of men, nor the revilings and contradictions of the Jews. ‘For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.’ His reasoning was so strong and nervous, his arguments so weighty and powerful, and the passages he produced out of the Old Testament so full and pertinent, that the Jews were not able to stand against him; they could not object to the texts of Scripture he urged, nor to the sense he gave of them, nor answer the arguments founded upon them; he was an over-match for them; they were refuted by him over and over; and the Jews were confounded to the last degree; and that publickly, in their synagogue, before all the people; which increased their shame and confusion; and was the means of spreading the Gospel; of bringing others to the faith of it, and of establishing them in it, who had already received it; ‘showing by the scriptures;’ of the Old Testament, which the Jews received and did acknowledge as the word of God; ‘that Jesus was Christ;’ or that Christ, that Messiah, which these scriptures spoke of, whom God had promised, and the church of God expected; and which was the main thing in controversy between the Jews and the Christians, AS IT STILL IS.”

There is absolutely no place for any kind of compromise on this point. Without Christ, all Jews (and impenitent Gentiles) are headed for Hell. Sine die.

I love you.

Amen.