IT IS WRITTEN

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A REASON OF OUR HOPE

In I Pet. 3:15, we read as follows: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and BE READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU WITH MEEKNESS AND FEAR".

Some may be able to give a reason of their hope in a few words; but to me it's a longer story, so I shall try only to touch the main points.

Let us first think of what God has done for us, that we may have eternal life. We learn that long ago, **God,** who is "from everlasting to everlasting", made the promise to Abraham that, **"In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blest".** Then in the process of time, appeared Jesus, the seed of Abraham, and the only begotten son of God, whom he gave, "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". Again a promise of a blessing.

Luke 24:46,47, the words of Jesus just before he ascended to the Father: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem". I Cor. 15:17, Paul reasons: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins". Verse 20. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept". Verse 22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive". Now back to Matt. 28:18,20, "And Jesus came and spake unto them saying; All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to **observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you:** and, lo, I am with you

alway, even unto the end of the world". Rom. 1:16, Again Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek". Titus 2:11,13, Paul writes: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ".

Now when we see through an eye of faith, the wonderful things God has done, and promised us, we have a reason to hope for a part in that inheritance. But wait! Since faith without works is dead, and since hope must follow faith, then our hope must be preceded by works, if we expect to live. And our works must be in harmony with our faith; as whatsoever is not of faith is sin. And faith comes by hearing the word of God. So, unless our faith and works are according to the word of God, we can have no hope of everlasting life. I Cor. 15:19, Paul says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable". Col. 3:1,2, Again Paul says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,—Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth".

Now as a final word of exortation to help strengthen our hope, let us hear Paul again in I Cor. 15:58, "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord".

With brotherly love,

W. R. Farrar, Rt. 2, Carter, Okla.

HOW CAN ONE DIGRESSOR MEET ANOTHER?

I notice in the O.P.A. fighting the cups brethren, and the cups brethren fighting the non bread breakers. What a pity to see such. Neither of them have a right to point their finger at the other. Yes it's wonderful to hear one brag about what he has done. The only thing that either of them has to brag on is causing division. Both are preaching heresy. They are converting from one heresy to another, both claiming to be the church of Christ. That's just wonderful work isn't it? Yes the cups brethren can trace their cups hobby back maybe forty years, and the bread pinchers, or non bread breakers can go back maybe thirty years, and they both cry we are the faithful few. The cups brethren say the fruit of the vine is the cup, it's something you drink, it can't be a literal cup, as you can't swallow a literal cup. The non bread breakers tell us they are the faithful few, and they say that if the

one waiting on the table breaks the bread in any other way than to get his part he will break Christ's bones, but fifty of these same faithful can break off his part until it is all gone, and they won't break any bones. I didn't know that they had miraculous power. That would certainly be a miracle. Now aren't those two things something great to be dividing the Lord's church over? I don't know of any better food that the devil could be putting out, than just such as that. How my heart aches to see and hear of brethren that could be doing wonderful work for the Lord, and going about sowing the seed of discord, and then harp on Sunday school and instrumental music, discouraging the church. Some of these days God is going to call such to a halt, but it will be too late for them to repent. They will hear that awful denunciation, "Depart ye workers of iniquity". Brethren why don't you quit such, can't you see that you are not getting anywhere? You are just swapping around among yourselves. You have the people torn up, and they don't know what to do. I believe that God would come nearer giving you a blessing to keep quiet, rather than to teach the things you are teaching.

R. C. Clements, Broken Bow, Okla.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" I Jno. 4:1. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good". I Thes. 5:21. "But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life". Jude 17:21. "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer". Rom. 12:12.

L. E. A.

"THE PROOF OF YOUR FAITH"

I Peter 1:7, Genesis 22:1-12

ARTICLE ONE

The aforementioned Scriptures with several other related ones offer an interesting study concerning faith. Please first read Gen. 22:1-12 preferably Amer. Stan. version preparatory to the following.

Mount Moriah, the legendary site fixed at Jerusalem was a three days journey for Abraham, giving him ample time to repent of his designs as he drew near the scene of their accomplishment. Abraham however did not swerve from his original purpose. Isaac's thoughts interestingly were those of uncontrollable curiosity. He could see the wood, the fire, and the knife, carried as necessary adjuncts of sacrifice, but was at a loss to account for the victim. A feature interesting to us, but perhaps very toilsome to Abraham, was the transportation on a three days journey of flame or fire. In every particular it was a trying experience.

The mission was to **prove** or test Abraham. In those three days of trial he did not weaken or abandon the project. After the altar had been built, wood placed thereon, Isaac bound and laid upon the wood the most crucial moment had arived, but there was no appreciable interruption or pause in carrying out his objective. He reached for the knife to slay his son, when his hand was stayed by the voice of the Angel of God.

In God's words, **"Now I know** that you revere God" we have the repercussion or echo from Abraham's inner consciousness. We do not dispute God's power to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart (I John 3:20, Heb. 4:12) even in advance of any meditative action, **but** he did not do so. He required the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5) of the father of the faithful, as he also does from Abraham's children, in all the nations, since he was too the "father of many nations by faith." As Abraham was justified so are his children. Therefore it was not on account of Abraham alone that the words were written, but also on ours. (Rom. 4:23.)

A second time Jehovah called to Abraham out of Heaven, and again repeated and augmented the promises. **"Because thou hast done this thing"** (verse 16) **"Because thou hast obeyed my voice"** (verse 18) Whether God knew how Abraham would react, nevertheless he required the action, as it is now required of Abraham's children. That Abraham did not know prior to the test, is made certain by God's proving him. Scripture, human experience and Psychology prove that no one is certain how they will react in a crisis. So theologically speaking both God and man knows that men revere God **when obedience is terminated.** "By faith Abraham obeyed God "when summoned from his home into an unknown region. Faith enabled him when put to the test to offer up Isaac. (How?) He was ready to offer, **his only son,** though he had been told, "Your posterity is to arise through Isaac." Believing God, "he inferred that God was able to bring his son Isaac back from the dead "from whence in a figure he recovered him." Heb. 11:8,17,18,19. Rom. 4:17). In these examples of faith, he offered, he went out at call, thus faith has works for it's complement, by which it is perfected. This is the perfect faith of the Scriptures.

This too is the argument of James. James treats of works as the proof of faith, as does Genesis and John. Anything but an enabling faith which always "operates by love" (Diaglott) or works

by love is a proofless faith. (Gal. 5:6) "But do you want proof, my senseless friend, that faith without good deeds **amounts to nothing?** Was not Abraham our forefather made upright **for his good deeds,** when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that in his case faith and good deeds worked together. Faith found it's highest expression in good deeds." James 2:20-23. Goodspeeds Tran. By works was faith made perfect. A. Stan. So "faith without works is dead being alone."

As one does not know how they will react under trials it becomes necessary that our faith be put to the proof or test. "Try your own selves whether you are in the faith; **prove** your own selves. Or know you not as to your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed you be reprobate" (II Cor. 13:5, Amer. Stan.) or as others give it "Unless you fail to stand the test." Of that faith by which Christians are guarded Peter says, 1:6,7. **"Wherein** ye greatly rejoice though now for a little while, if need be, you have been put to grief in manifold trials, **that** the **proof** of your faith, being more precious than gold that perishes, though it is **proved** by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Trials are here likened to a refiners fire by which gold is melted and the dross or impurities removed, so have a refining influence. Gold in commerce usually ranges from ten to twenty-two carat, twenty-four carat being absolutely pure gold practically impossible of attainment.

"Esteem it all joy my brethren when you fall into various trials, knowing that the **proof** of your faith produces patience" Diaglott. Thus a faith which endures under trials necessarily is strengthened thereby; or otherwise it dies. If it abides it becomes by reason of the time factor patient under those trials. So by resistance to unfavorable influences strength of character develops. This is true of both mental and muscular development. By resistance of objects through gravity and elasticity muscular power is developed in training. Without such trials or exercises spiritual and muscular atrophy or degeneration results.

A test is necessary to determine whether we are in the faith. Our faith may be defective unless it is measured from known boundaries, since it is a mental state. Our faith may be unfavorably influenced by our emotions or erring mortals. Therefore we **must** measure with the Divine measuring reed, the word of God. Rom. 10:17. Which is firm and unchanging. As travelers toward the rim of eternity we note some interesting parallels. In air travel atmosphere forms no guide to direction or location, nor can one determine whether he is in an upside-down position or upright except in relation to the visible earth. In fogs or cloudbanks this may have to be determined by instruments. In train travel where two trains are moving uniformly on parallel tracks motion in the adjoining train is not perceptible, nor is it perceptible in the train in which we are riding except by comparison with stationary objects. Then how extremely foolish of us to enquire of our fellow

traveler to the bar of God for directions seeing his vision is as limited as ours. We must measure from the immovable word of God. In air travel relative position is calculated from fixed objects, as the poles by compass, or by cities, rivers, mountains, etc. Thus we as airman winging our way heavenward are seriously in danger of crashing if we fail to remain upright and neglect to keep in view known and visible boundaries, for if our theory (faith) is in error our practice suffers as a consequence.

A. L. Shaw, RD1, Rochester Mills, Penna.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

A SHORT BUT NICE LETTER FROM BRO. OSCAR MILLER

9-20-51

Dear Bro. Garrison:

I will drop you a few lines. Hope you are all well and getting along fine. We have had some nice rains. The church is doing very well. I am sending you a check for the paper.

Yours truly,

Oscar Miller, Gilliland, Texas

Thanks a lot Bro. Miller for your support and for the nice letter of encouragement. Keep up the good work there at Gilliland and much shall be the reward in the afterwhile.—C.G.

Grand Prairie, Texas, 10-15-51

Dear Brethren:

I would like to report on the work here at Grand Prairie. It was in July of 1950 that I first met Brother Glen Maddox and his wife of Garland, Texas. I don't believe I have ever enjoyed meeting anyone as much, especially because I was looking for someone to help me begin a congregation in this city. It was then that we began meeting just about any place we happened to be. Bro. Glen was not a member of the church at that time, but he and his wife would attend services with me at Arnett near Hillsboro, Texas. It was there, October 8th, that Glen obeyed our Lord's Gospel and began with his might to study and to try to carry on the work in my absence, on several occasions. We obtained the community house for night services (for which we are indeed thankful) and began meeting on the first night of April, 1951. It was but a short while until we had another family meeting with us, however it was to our sorrow that the wife and mother of this family, Sister Tommy Searles, passed from this life, being laid to rest July 20th, 1951. This indeed was a great loss to this man and children, and certainly a loss for the church here.

However, we had the good fortune and blessing of finding a young man and his wife, who feared God enough to obey the gospel

on August the 5th, 1951. Bro. Glen baptized them at the close of the service. Bro. Bill Garrett and his wife have proven that their transition into the Kingdom of Christ, is of a sincere effort to live a Christian life. I am at this time endeavoring to teach another family the truth and I believe with God's help, that victory for Christ shall be won. To date we have six who attend regular. Last Lord's day, we had ten in attendance (not counting the children) and of course you can imagine our joy of having just this many to attend. When you pray, would you remember us here that the work of our Lord may be carried on here in this place many and many years to come?

Your brother in the Lord,

Coy Garrison

A BIG TIME AT IDABEL, OKLA. LAST WEEK. LEWIS AND ALLEN DEBATE

Lewis affirmed that miraculous gifts had ceased. Allen denied. Lewis affirmed that the church of Christ was scriptural. Allen denied. Allen denied that the church of Christ, and the church of God were the same. Brother Lewis defeated Allen on every argument, but Allen pulled I Cor. 14:37 on Lewis, and Brother Lewis had to play shut mouth because the church that Allen stood identified with was guilty of what Paul was writing about. "Let your women keep silence in the churches." If Allen had said any more about it, (I Cor.) it would no doubt have ruined Lewis' church in Idabel. I don't know why the brethren at Idabel can't see that.

I am sorry that this item was overlooked last month.—L. E. A.

While visiting in New Mexico I was with the fine brethren at Carlsbad Sunday and Sunday night, September 23, and enjoyed being with them very much. I am glad to note that this little number of soldiers are strong in the faith, and zealous of good works. I also had the enjoyable privilege of visiting in the home of Brother and Sister Atchley, and was treated with the best of Christian hospitality. Brother Atchley is sacrificing much to put out *IT IS WRITTEN*, and in the service of our Lord. He is a man of sound reasoning, but not sacrificing the truth. Anyone passing that way will find a welcome, and the worship as can be read in God's word. The church here at Ozone is holding it's ground about as usual.

Yours in Christ,

W. E. Daniels, Ozone, Ark.

Brother F. H. Stringham of Chico, California is putting out some of the best tracts on the bread breaking hobby, and the cups

that I have ever read. To those who would like to post theirselves on these questions, it would be well to write him for some of them.

R. C. Clements

Dear Brother Earl:

I received the copies of *IT IS WRITTEN* a few days ago, and enjoyed them very much. I am sending you the name of another member and his wife who needs the paper, and our assistance in helping him fight for the truth. He is Brother Taylor H. Buckner, Rt. 2, Stilwell, Okla. He and his family are working out here in this country, and have been with us the last two Lord's days. In my visits with him, I have found him to be of good character, sound in faith and practice, and a good worker for the Lord. He and his wife have been worshipping in their home the past two years, since the congregation at Stilwell, where they once met, have turned to non-bread breakers. He thinks with the help of some good preaching, he might gain back a few members, and start again a working body of members for the truth.

We also had with us last Lord's day, Brother Lloyd Treat and family, and other visitors. Brother Treat preached for us and presented a very good sermon. Our assembly and service was all very encouraging.

As ever, your brother in Christ,

Willie Farrar, Rt. 2, Carter, Okla.

Thanks, Brother Willie, for Brother Buckner's address and the information about the church at Stilwell. I certainly am glad that Brother Buckner has enough faith and courage to stand for the truth as it is written in God's word, even though he is seemingly alone in the town he lives in. Surely, brethren, we can help Brother Buckner in his effort to reestablish a Bible church in Stilwell. If there is a preacher who can go there and help out, contact Brother Buckner. It may be that Brother Buckner has some preacher in mind that he would like to come and help him. If so, whatever arrangements are made, if he will let me know, I'm sure the brethren will support a meeting there.—L.E. A.

The churches at Somerton, Ariz., and LaHabra, Calif. have sent in support for the paper this month. We also received support from Bro. R. C. Clements of Broken Bow, Okla., and Brother Oscar Miller of Gilliland, Texas. I don't know if this was from Brother Miller personally, or from the church. Anyway, we are grateful to all who are helping us to carry on with the paper through your generous contributions.—L. E. A.