

"Oh Og"

Does it seem that the Christian life is getting easier? You would hope that the closer we get to heaven, our struggles would be easier, but the truth is our struggles seem to get bigger.

In Numbers 2:33, Israel is reaching the end of their 40 years in the wilderness. It was about time to cross the Jordan and move into the Promised Land. It should be getting easier, right?

Israel is now on the road to Bashan and a battle with Og, king of Bashan. The Jews had watched God defeat the Egyptians at the Red Sea. The Amalekites fell as long as Moses held up his arms. They had experienced battles against Sihon and the Amorites. God had given them some great victories.

God now says to "fear not." Why fear now as they trek toward Bashan, and why does God encourage them now? It was because they were facing Og.

Who was Og? He was the king of Bashan with a huge reputation. He was a terrifying warrior who had subdued other lands and kings. People were afraid of him. We know from Deuteronomy 3:11, that he was the only giant left. His iron bed (more likely his coffin) measured 9 cubits by 4 cubits. That would measure 13½ feet by six feet wide. This guy was a giant. This was in the days before Goliath, and you will remember that it was the giants in the land that kept Israel from going into the land forty years before. Now, before crossing Jordan, they were headed to meet the legionary giant Og. He was so big his head would be above the backboard on the basketball court. In order to dunk, he would have to bend over.

God says to Israel, "Don't be afraid." I've delivered him to you. We read in the verses that follow, that they smote him and his sons, leaving none and possessed his land.

Remember, the way doesn't get easier as we get closer to the Promised Land. There will be more battles to be won. They may be bigger than anything else you've faced thus far. Do you have a giant facing you right now? You have been in



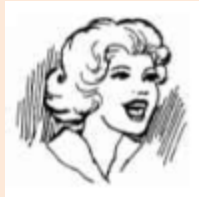
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other battles, but this one seems so huge. What do you do? You listen to God say, "Fear not, I've delivered it into your hands." It may be the death of a spouse, the diagnosis of cancer, or it may be financial ruin, but God says, "Fear it not." There are no giants to God but only puny problems that have to be dealt with. Stay on the road, He is leading you. Be assured of His presence. God will often allow a giant Og to be a part of your experience.

Why does God bring an Og experience? I think it may be for one of two reasons. First, it will prepare you for bigger problems ahead. Israel had to go into Cannon and fight. Joshua 2:10 indicates that Rahab and the inhabitants of Jericho had heard of the victory Israel had over Sihon and Og. "Whom ye utterly destroyed." Joshua 9:10 says the Gibeonites had heard of this victory that instilled confidence in Israel, and fear into the enemies of God (Psalm 135:11). Whenever you put an Og "to bed," your trust in Jehovah grows.

Secondly, when God demonstrates His own greatness, it leaves you with your mouth wide open and in awe of Him. Don't fear any giant that you are or will face.



WOMEN WHO WORSHIP

- By Dot Davis

Favorite Food

"Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart... (Jer. 15:16)."

"You are what you eat," they say. For some of us, that's not good news! What's your favorite food? Pizza? Cheesecake? Chocolate? Chances are if you're like me, it's not something healthy like broccoli or Brussel sprouts. We love to eat what we love, and often what we love to eat isn't what's best.

Spiritually speaking, the prophet Jeremiah knew what the best food was for his heart and soul. When he was spiritually hungry, God's words came to him and he devoured them with delight. As far as the prophet was concerned, nothing was



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more satisfying or delicious. He loved eating what he loved, and his choice of food was definitely the best.

But what about us? As believers today, we have the bountiful blessing of being able to feast upon God's Word. Yet so many believers are eating other things, things that taste better to them but don't nourish their souls and spirits. "The Bible is boring." "I don't get anything out of it." Or perhaps they wouldn't say such things aloud, but their neglect of the Scriptures demonstrates their lack of appetite for it.

And probing a bit further, the question might be asked, if not God's Word, what are we feasting on? Using Jeremiah's own words, how would you fill in this blank: "_____ is to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart?" What things or activities delight and satisfy you? What are you feeding on? Is it God and His Word or some worldly morsel?

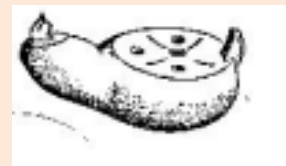
Jeremiah finished his thought in verse 16 by adding, "...for I am called by thy Name, O Lord of hosts." As one who belonged to Jehovah-sabaoth, Jeremiah found his greatest source of pleasure in hearing about Him, learning His will, and partaking of fellowship with His Lord. Could you say that as well?

Remember, you are what you eat. Every day our hearts and minds are feeding on something. As one who is called by the name of Christ, what are you eating?

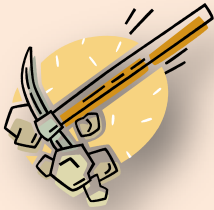
A Lamp Unto My Feet

(Word studies from the original language

by Dr. Robert Williams)



BEMA – This word may refer to a stride or a foot (12 inches): Acts 7:5, "inheritance. . . not so much as to set his foot on;" a speaker's platform, (Acts 12:21, 23); or a raised judicial bench (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). There are seven more references in this category, but all refer to the judgment seats of Roman or Jewish leaders, not of Christians. Romans 14:10 and Second Corinthians alone refer to the tribunal or raised judicial bench of Jesus Christ. Our study will be confined to this seat.



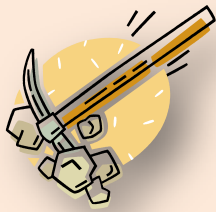
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The Premillennial Pre-tribulation Rapture view of the church places great emphasis upon the word *Bema* in order to help define the time and place when the believer shall appear before Jesus Christ to answer for his life on earth. We cannot more than mention the Amillennial and Postmillennial positions, neither of which has a literal tribulation period nor a literal millennium. Both have a general resurrection and a general judgment. Both, in some way, connect Second Corinthians 5:1-10 with the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 10:11-15 and, in various ways, make both passages teach a judgment for sins in this life and see the two passages involve a sentence either unto eternal life or eternal death. Such is not the case with either. While it is true that all judgments are according to works, one must keep in mind that Romans 14:10 and Second Corinthians 5:10 assess the value of works in this lifetime to determine the reward the believer will have in eternal life. This is not to determine whether one is saved. That is decided in life upon earth. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). In Revelation 20:12 the unbelieving dead will be judged according to their works to determine their degree of punishment in the lake of fire.

We know our conversation (manner of life) is in heaven (Phil. 3:20-21). We are in Christ and Christ is at the right hand of the Father (Col. 3:1; Phil. 3:20-21; Heb. 8:1; I Peter 3:22). The entire context of Second Corinthians 5:1, 2, 8, 10) teaches us that, when we die as a believer, we go to be with Christ and that the *Bema* is located somewhere in heaven, very possibly in Paradise, from where we will accompany Christ when He comes into our region of the heavens to conduct the rapture (I Thess. 4:13-17).

We may conclude the *Bema* is a judicial seat where Christ sits, and from that place in the heavens he evaluates the life of each believer for reward in eternal life.



Pastor's Desk



Pastor says this has been a difficult month, and that three of our members died. Funerals were held for Harriet Barrett, Kathleen Webster, and Leon Monell. He says they were all members of the First Baptist family, and knew the Lord.

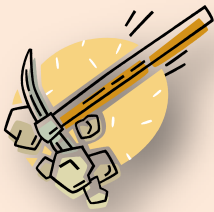
The Spiegels just got back from Ohio and a BCP meeting, but pastor says they're leaving again soon. He says he is looking forward to going to Lancaster to see "Behold the Lamb" at Lancaster's Sight and Sound. There is a group going from church. The Spiegels are going to Yorkshire to the ESF Conference, and the following week flying to Florida for a couple of days. I wish he would stay home. He'd have more time to prepare for the last Valley Classics until the fall. He and the Mrs. will be doing another fun and games session. The Spiegels, along with several others, got pins awarded on March 15th for memorizing Psalm 1 and Psalm 23. They signed up again for this year's memory verses in Psalm 19. I would memorize verses, but I can't remember how to.

The Awana banquet is being held on May 4th. Our church is celebrating 50 years in the program, and everyone is invited for the spaghetti supper. Our kids will get some awards. Pastor Rollin Howard, a former clubber here, will bring the devotions.

This is Easter month. I hope you will all get to church for the special services celebrating Jesus' resurrection. Pastor's got something for the kids.

Ladies' Missionary Fellowship

The Ladies' Missionary Fellowship, which meets on the second Tuesday of every month, has moved the missionary closet downstairs to a more attractive and functional place. Get involved with the ladies of our church and their projects. They are currently working on gift baskets that will be donated to BaYouCa Camp for their fund raisers. See Peg Hochberg if you would like to help.



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Missionaries - April 26th

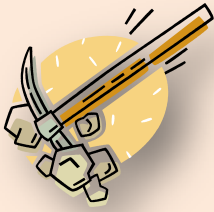
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Special Business Meeting

The congregation will hold a Special Business Meeting on March 25th to consider the proposal from the Property Committee and the Deacons to proceed with the pouring of a new floor in the gym,. We are recommending that we replace the existing heating with radiant heat that would be in the floor. The cost for the project would be about \$30,000, We currently have close to \$20,000 in the gym fund and we are proposing to take the additional monies needed from the Capital Improvement Fund and avoid borrowing any money for the project. Completion would be set for this Spring. The regular quarterly business meeting will be on April 15th.

Easter Services

Join us for our special Resurrection Day Celebration on April 12th. Things get underway at 8:00 a.m. With a "Sonrise" Service. We will be celebrating the rising of the Son. Pastor will bring a message, and the early service will be followed by a breakfast, sponsored by our teens. Following the regular Sunday School hour, the resurrection celebration begins at 10:45 a.m. and will feature a Junior Sermon, "New Life in Jesus," and the choir presentation of "Behold the Lamb." There will be no evening service Easter night.



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Ladies' Bible Study Begins!

When was the last time you experienced real joy? When you received a bouquet of flowers? When you got a new car? Or when you went on your last vacation? Well, you may be surprised to learn that joy has nothing to do with any of those things. In fact, a person stuck in prison can experience real joy....Paul did! And we can too!

Join us for 10 sessions as we consider a study of the book of Philippians and other Scripture passages that teach us about "A Deeper Joy." Ladies' Bible Study begins this year on Tuesday evening, May 5th at 7:00 PM in the Heritage Room. After that, we will meet every other Monday evening until early September. Get a copy of Lesson One on Sunday, April 19th from Dot Davis. Why don't you come out and bring a friend, too? The Lord always gives us a blessing as we study His Word!