

Banaiah the son of Jehoiada was a brave man from Kabzeel who did some amazing things. He killed two of Moab's best fighters, and on a snowy day he went down into a pit and killed a lion. 2 Samuel 23:20

The milepost title is shamelessly borrowed from the title of a book by Mark Batterson, pastor of National Community Church, Washington, DC., based on this obscure verse about one of 30 warriors associated with King David.

With a flat-Bible (literal) interpretation, this could be (mis)used to defend killing national enemies and endangered species. Dentist Walter Palmer could use it to defend killing Cecil, a beloved lion in Zimbabwe.

But if we approach this verse with a desire to see how it is in sync with the entire counsel of Scripture, an application is clear: *run to, not from*, opportunities God places in our path. Jonah ran from God's opportunity, not because he was afraid of Nineveh, but because he knew God would save them.

Gordon and Mary Cosby, co-pastors of Church of the Savior, Washington, DC, devoted their lives to the study of God's calls in Scripture, concluding that God's calls are always: a) clear and simple; b) seemingly impossible; c) full of mystery; d) bring deep peace when embraced. Yes, these seem contradictory. That's our problem, not God's. All four fit Banaiah's call. The first three fit Jonah's call; peace eluded Jonah because as the story ends, he is still fighting God's call.

As we reflect on our individual calls now, and discern Shalom's call in January and February, let's keep these four characteristics in mind.

-Gary Martin

Looking Ahead: "The Spread of the Gospel"

Nov. 6 9:30 a.m. *Council-iation* Acts 15:1-33 Brian

Nov. 13 9:30 a.m. *Telling our story* Acts 26:1-18 Gary

11:00 a.m. Congregational Dialogue: *Mission Statement*

Gary's projected in town schedule: Nov. 5-7; 13-15; 20-22.