

# Arrgh!!! – An Upgrade

*This is one of those very rare times I actually use exclamation points.*

Well, it was not the fun thing to do. However, according to the release notes the upgrade would fix a critical security flaw and various other issues. Okay. I guess I'd better do it – and soon.

Should I mention that disasters always seem to happen at the most inopportune time? I performed the steps for an upgrade of the blog software. Went to upgrade the database and everything looked okay, except all the special characters (those beyond ASCII's 128 standard characters) were all strange when I looked at the front page of the blog. In short, it was not displaying UTF-8 encoding correctly.

Uh, not good. That means lots of work to correct the improper encoding after I log in.

I try (notice I said "try") to log in. It takes the username and password, and then the screen goes blank, that is, white with nothing displayed. The url shows that I am still on the login page. This is really not good. I try other pages, Nope – nothing. Nada. No dice. I now have no access to the Administration of the blog.

***I hate this.***

Try to troubleshoot. Dump the files. Reload. Rerun the upgrade. Nope – no fix.

Change the parameters for accessing the database in the configuration file. Does it connect – Yes, it connects because with invalid parameters it won't connect.

Okay, change the password, maybe it got scrambled during the upgrade. Okay, it changes, but still can't login.

Get into MySQL and use phpMyAdmin and check the database. It says the database has broken links in the indexed fields – not good.

By this time, due to reading, researching, and trying different things, it's now 0300 hrs Saturday morning, and I have to prepare for a presentation on Sunday.

Bye – it's broke.

I'm going to bed.

Get up at 0800 hrs. Try again. Read and research some more.

By now it is 1100 hrs, and I have gotten nowhere. I even tried rolling back the upgrade. No dice. Nothing works. By now I am worried that I may have to completely reload each and every post and page – plus all the comments. In prep for this I access phpMyAdmin and backup and download the database.

I also run the repair and optimize options on the database. It says everything is good.

### ***Strange.***

How can my database be good, yet not return back the calls by the php script in the blog software. And, why am I hanging on login?

Okay, try deleting unnecessary (certain plugin) tables in the database. Still no workee. Time to quit. Got too many other things to do. Will have to wait until Monday.

### **Monday Morning**

Can't work on it now, other things pressing.

Finally start at about 1300 hrs. Have a thought – what if the problem lies in the way the database got upgraded? Like – maybe some of the plugin fields in the tables are causing the problem? Also, what if, since the database is already setup as

UTF-8, the [define] statement in the configuration file is conflicting with the database setup? After all, all my UTF-8 encoded characters do not display correctly.

So I access phpMyAdmin again in the MySQL administration portion of the host control panel. The [Options] table has a LOT, and I mean a LOT of old plugin entries that were never deleted when I deactivated and removed them.

Clean-up time.

I get it cleaned up and reset the software version number and database version to the pre-upgrade numbers.

Get back out and change the configuration file to remove the [define] statement.

Load all new and clean files for 2.5.1

Rerun the upgrade. Look at the front page of the blog. Hey, all my extended characters look normal.

Try to log in. It takes. The page title appears at the top of the browser screen and it very nicely says [Dashboard – WordPress].

Success. Thank the LORD!

So, what went wrong?

This one line:

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define('DB_CHARSET', 'utf8');
```

This line created a conflict with the database setup and content and would hang the scripting software and not allow the characters to display correctly. It also wouldn't allow access to the admin functions of the blog.

How many hours consumed by this one little line?

About eight.

However, it wasn't all bad. I learned a lot in a hurry about MySQL database administration and phpMyAdmin. I also learned a lot about what makes WordPress tick.

I couldn't have posted on Saturday or Sunday anyway. Saturday I was preparing for Sunday. Sunday I was two hours away at my home church in Missouri presenting the mission and ministry.

See, not a total loss. In fact, I could look at it as no loss at all – just a learning experience.

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## Moving Forward (I think)

After some time of neglect (I really cannot put it any other way) I returned my attention to my website – [Reproach of Men](#) and began to deal with some of the issues created by the browser wars (primarily IE6 and below). I finally gave up on trying to have a decent fluid layout for IE6 and below and set everything for IE (up to version 6), to a fixed-width of 800 pixels. I hate that as I like liquid and elastic layouts ((Yes I know, this theme is fixed-width – I didn't catch that when I first looked at it. However, I like the theme, but cannot find the author to talk about changing it – so I am in the process of making it liquid.)). However, I cannot tolerate the quirks and weirdness of IE6, and so I am forced to do something I don't like.

For the rest of the standards-compliant browsers out there ((if you don't have one, please get one – they're usually free to download and use – besides, your web experience will be so much better)), the layout remains liquid from 400 to 1200 pixels (there is a limit you know). After that the page is a

column in the middle of the screen with a black background. I know, kinda stark, but it draws your attention to the content, and only the content.

I am also in the middle of revising the coding for all the hymns pages, which ought to be done in the near future. Then, LORD willing, I will rework and actually properly format the rest of the articles on the site. I really do not want to do content management for the site, but may be forced into it if things ramp up considerably.

However, before I quit this post, I would like to say one last time how very much I hate IE. In fact, I really don't care for Microsoft either. Particularly since Bill Gates is such a liberal and donates a considerable sum to causes that are destroying America and its people. Unfortunately, time is the most precious commodity I have, and it takes time to learn a new OS like [Ubuntu Linux](#). For now, I am kind of stuck – just like having to code for IE.

That's really not moving forward is it?

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## Oprobio de los Hombres blog

After considerable delays, the Español page has information directing those who speak Spanish, or who are acquainted with Spanish speakers, to [the blog for the Oprobio de los Hombres website](#). The blog is not complete as the Spanish language version of WordPress is not entirely in Spanish. However, I expect that to change in the not too distant future. Along with that, the theme of Oprobio de los Hombres blog will change as well.

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# WordPress 2.5 Update

Last week I wrote a note that I had upgraded to WordPress 2.5 and was not entirely happy with the result. I lost one of my favorite plugins and the blog was running slow, etc. I was pretty much not happy with things overall concerning the blog and software to run it.

However, things change. For one, the host fixed the problem with accessing the blog in a timely manner so that access time went from 3-5 minutes down to 3-10 seconds (for dial-up that is pretty quick). Also, the plugin I like so well got upgraded to work with version 2.5, and I found that Firefox 2 works better with WordPress than Opera 9.26 when working in the admin pages. Additionally, I went back in and tweaked some of stylesheets to change the appearance a bit (hopefully for the better).

Now that these things are working better I can go back to my plan of changing the theme from fixed width to liquid, or at least elastic. We shall see how that goes.

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## Upgrade to WordPress 2.5

Well, I upgraded the blog software to version 2.5. There are some issues that need to be resolved with plugins and the theme. We will see how it goes.

There are a couple of things I am not pleased about with the new version, particularly concerning the editor.

There is also still the problem of my host's MySQL server not handling the volume. They are adding more capacity, but it will be a while.

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## Blog Upgrade

Did it Saturday evening. (*No, I won't go into what that makes me for doing it on a Saturday evening!*) It was an interesting experience, particularly when I viewed the blog in the browser after finishing it, and refreshed the browser – and no posts whatsoever, no links, no calendar, no categories, just the theme! Just a little disturbed, I went to login and that worked okay. Then a new screen telling me I had to upgrade the database.

Did that. It told me it was successful. That's good. I then opened a new tab in the browser and revisited the blog. After refreshing the window, everything came back. Big sigh of relief.

Now we are running WordPress 2.3.3. Quite a few different options and upgrades from the older version that I was running.

However, this post would have been done last night, but the web host I use had a failure of the MySQL server about the same time I went to publish this post. You can just imagine my surprise when I received a white screen with the message "Cannot connect to database." Uh, okay. That's not what I call good. Tried to go to the blog. Not happening, same message.

I logged into my hosting account and tried to reach the MySQL Administrator and could not go there. Called the host "We are experiencing heavy call volume at this time." Hung up.

I'll bet. I think I'll go to bed.

Checked it this A.M. and the blog worked fine. Somebody (or sombodies) had a long night. However, they made sure that it came up as quick as possible. Which is why I use them (plus they're very helpful when you call, and not rude like some folk).

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## New website launch

I have built a new website for Faith Baptist Church in Harrison, Arkansas. You are invited to go there and take a look. Your comments are also welcome.

The URL is [www.fbch-ar.org](http://www.fbch-ar.org)

I was holding off announcing its launch until an issue with the domain name pointing was resolved, but I do not believe that will be an issue.

Enjoy the site.

**One little note:** Due to the type of domain redirection (stealth), the pages will not validate. The validator will attempt to validate the frame the page sits in and not the page. It will fail every time.

**Update:** I finally migrated everything over to the new platform and moved the Domain [www.fbch-ar.org](http://www.fbch-ar.org) to its rightful account and everything is pointed correctly and working. thank the LORD for small miracles. The stealth redirection is no longer in effect.



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# test post (I've been migrated)

New platform test

This post was originally done earlier today when testing the new platform that my webhost implemented. I was testing the blog in this environment, in parallel with the blog in the old environment. Rather than delete the post, I decided to use it as an announcement of the change, and a warning that I am also in the midst of changing registrars. If that doesn't go well, this website may disappear temporarily. Only in the world of computing can something be there, but not be there. In short, the physical server and disk space will exist, and the logical partition, ip address, directories and files will still exist, but the address will vanish. In the world of computing, without an address, we don't go anywhere.

We shall see what the LORD allows. It may be interesting.

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## Internet Explorer – All the joys of having a tooth pulled

Microsoft never ceases to amaze me. Since I build websites (my own and a few others), it is important to me that the site look the same in every browser (well, at least all the major ones). Thus, the fact that IE6 requires its own styles is a pain that I (and every other website developer) could do

without. So, when I read that IE7 was “standards compliant” I thought that I could use the same styles that I use for Opera, Firefox and Safari. Silly, naive me. I didn’t research it out enough and simply took the word of some Microsoft apologists (had I known they were apologists for Microsoft I would have never listened), and thought I was done last Friday evening with recoding the mainpages of the site.

Today, I was informed that the pages didn’t float right in IE7 – not good. Thus, enduring the lengthy dial-up download of IE7, I (under duress – but I have to check the pages) then installed it on my wife’s computer. Sure enough – none of the floats were correct. In fact, it had the exact same problems as IE6, just in different directions. Joy. Now I had to have a second IE stylesheet to fix the problems of IE7, and I had to hack a fix for the articles section on every page that has articles.

However, it is done, and all without anesthetic (it would have felt better if I had had a tooth pulled). It does display (mostly) correctly, but I hated having to do it. Once again, Microsoft has proved that they don’t know what their doing.

Have I mentioned that I hate Microsoft products?

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## Preaching

I have added a new section to the website: [Preaching](#). The Introduction begins with this:

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (*1 Corinthians 1:21*)

It is interesting that the LORD God chose a method of delivering His message to man that the world considers foolishness. After all, aren't there more effective ways of getting the message across? Surely dramas, movies, and songs all are more effective at influencing people to believe in something?

Well, that depends upon what you are trying to achieve. More importantly, it depends upon what you can perceive about a person, versus what LORD God actually knows about man, and particularly about a specific person. Fundamentally, the method used to reach and influence people does depend upon what you can perceive about them, and their true motivations. In this regard, man is at a significant disadvantage, versus the LORD. The LORD made this very plain to the prophet Samuel, when Samuel went to anoint a king to replace Saul. . . [more](#)