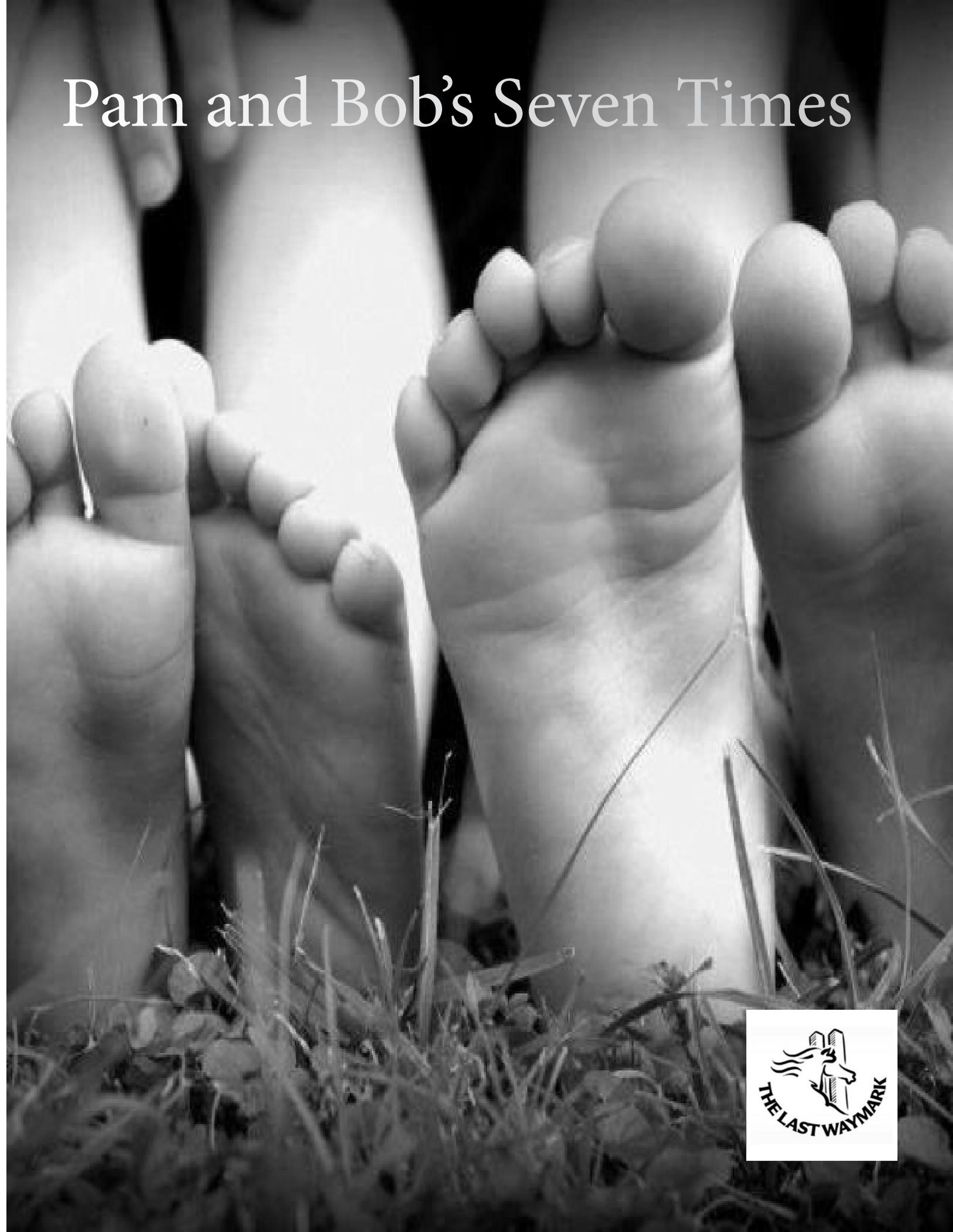


Pam and Bob's Seven Times



Bob and Pam resumed their play on the floor, while their mother went to start the car. She had just left the room, but before she left she instructed them to get dressed for the party. She explained to them that they were running late and that if they were not ready upon her return, they would not go to the party. When they nodded yes to understanding what she had said, mom began to leave the room. She got to the door and there turned to find Bob and Pam eying their toy with a longing desire. "Listen," mom began "the game has to be put away now, okay? You can't do the game and get ready, so one has to be set aside. I will be back."

Bob looked at Pam, who looked back at him and then they both looked at the game. "We only have one spin left" Bob announced. Pam, understanding what he was suggesting picked up the thought. "We can just do that one spin and then do as mommy said." No sooner had Pam said so, than the game was on, and the last spin done. That last spin was then followed by a chiming noise that told the children they had won the game. Along with the noise there were funny dances and faces made on the screen and these displays made the two children laugh. The screen remained alive for a minute and when it stopped they wanted to see it again. "Let's play it again," Bob said and Pam nodded a yes in response. They played the game so fast this second round, that they got to the final spin and waited for the screen to come alive again. They laughed the louder when they saw all that came on the screen to congratulate their victory. "Again! Again!" encouraged Pam and when Bob clicked yes to play again, Pam's smile widened.

It was on their seventh replay that Mom entered the room to find the children as they were at the very first. She looked angrily at them and with her loudest sound she called their attention to her being in the room. "Bob and Pam!" she screamed and startled her children from their fun. "Did I not ask you to do something the last time I came in this room?" She received no reply. The children's heads were now hung down in shame and sadness. Understanding them to be sad, Mom stopped at being angry and called them both to herself. As they neared her, she led them down the stairs and sat them down in the living room. She asked them if they remembered the Bible story they covered during morning worship. They responded with a nod. Following their response Mom said: "God was very clear with the instruction He gave to Israel, just as I was clear in my instructions to you. He told them to not do bad things and to be obedient to Him. I never told you two those things but I do expect you to obey all my instructions. Do you understand me children?" "Yes, mother" returned the response. "Now," continued Mom, "I told you both that if you got dressed in time I would take you to the party and if you did not do so the opposite would have been true. Similarly, God put before Israel two options and results: the first was for obedience while the last was for disobedience. In keeping with the actions of Israel, God responded; and in keeping with both your actions I am going to respond. You two will not go to the party. But do you understand why?" "Yes mother" came the answer tearfully. "Good!" concluded Mom. She then asked that they take the game they were playing to her and after receiving it, she instructed that they tidied their rooms and write in their journals the reason they missed Ben's birthday party.

While making her rounds through the house, Mom found the journals and took them to her room to read them. Bob in his journal wrote: Today, my actions told mommy that I didn't want to obey her or go to Ben's party and so Pam and I did not go. I was sad at first but then I understood that I and Pam were wrong and deserved our punishment like Israel did when God gave them the Seven Times

Pam in her journal said: Today, Bob and I chose playing our new game over going to Ben's party. We didn't mean to but that's what our actions showed and mom, in return, did what we acted out and didn't take us to the party. She had warned us though; because she knows how Bob and I are whenever we get new games. Mom "seven timed" us like God did Israel and it hurt us like it hurt Israel.

Tears stood in Mom's eyes as she read their words. She was thankful to God that they understood their punishment and the lesson from morning worship.

The End!