

## A Bitter Refuge

by Mike Tucker \*

In November of 1930, The Chicago Examiner reported the story of Harry Havens, who went to bed and stayed there for seven years, with a blindfold over his eyes, because he was angry with his wife.

Havens told the reporter that he had always tried to be a good husband. He worked around the house, took care of the yard, carried out the trash, and even helped with the dishes. But the final straw for Harry came when one day his wife complained that he wasn't doing it right. Right then and there, Harry decided that enough was enough. He said, "All right, if that's how you feel, I'm going to bed. I'll stay there for the rest of my life, and I don't want to see you ever again."

Harry went to bed, put a blindfold over his eyes, and stayed there. According to the Chicago Examiner, he finally got up again when the bed started to feel uncomfortable...*seven years later*. Seriously!

The article's headline states, "*Man Spites His Wife By Staying Blindfolded in Bed Seven Years*." Maybe his exile did get on her nerves somewhat, but whom did Harry really spite? Who was the biggest loser in this extended temper tantrum? It was Harry himself. He lost seven years of his life. He lived seven years in darkness. No reading. No walks in the sunshine. No laughter with friends. Just seven long, miserable years trying to settle a score that maybe was never settled.

The writer of Hebrews said, *See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. (Hebrews 12:15)*

Truly, bitterness can damage a relationship. But most of all, it damages you. It destroys your happiness and peace of mind, and it causes you to miss out on the grace that God offers to each of us.

This reminds me of what Nelson Mandela once said: "Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies."

It took Harry Havens seven years to decide that his refuge of bitterness felt uncomfortable. How long will you wait to let your bitterness go?

With love,  
Mike

Faith Moment  
June 16, 2014

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