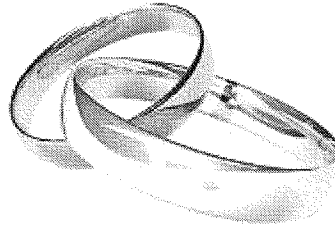


CHAPTER 6

The Castle of Holy Companionship



How did the institution of marriage originate? Did it gradually evolve from more primitive institutions and customs? Did a group of people meet together and vote in favor of starting marriages? Did an ancient and powerful king send forth an edict declaring that men and women should be joined together in marriage? When did the first marriage take place? Whose idea was it? How did marriage begin?

The book of Genesis is the book of *beginnings*, and in the first two chapters we are given some vital information concerning the *beginning* of marriage:

1. Who made man male and female (Genesis 1:27)? _____
2. Who declared that it was not good for man to be alone (Genesis 2:18)? _____
3. Who said, "I will make an help meet (helper suitable) for him" (Genesis 2:18)?

4. Who took a part of man and from it made a woman (Genesis 2:21-22)? _____
5. Who brought the woman to the man (Genesis 2:22)? _____
6. Who performed the very first marriage ceremony (Genesis 2:18-22)? _____
7. Who instituted marriage? Whose idea was it? _____

According to what the Lord Jesus Christ said in Matthew 19:6, who is responsible for **joining** a man and woman together in marriage (circle the correct answer):

- a. This is something the man and woman must do and no one else.
- b. The pastor
- c. The justice of the peace
- d. The local government
- e. The state government
- f. The living God

In Hebrews 13:4 we find some very helpful instruction about marriage:

"Marriage is _____ (precious, of great value, highly regarded) ***in all*** (in every way, in every respect)."

Marriage is something of great value and worth! Think of something very valuable and precious (gold, diamonds, jewels, a new car, five million barrels of oil, etc.) If a person really considers something valuable, then he will desire to have it, and he will patiently wait until he is able to get it. If a person already possesses something very precious, he will want to keep it and hang on to it.

To the Married:

If marriage is really of great value, would you not want to keep your marriage and hang on to it? If it were really precious to you, would you want to risk losing it (through sin, divorce, unfaithfulness, etc.)?

To the Unmarried:

If marriage is really something very precious and wonderful, is it worth having? Is it worth waiting for? Certainly a girl would not want her fiancé to present her with a fake diamond made out of glass as a substitute for the real thing! Likewise, would you want to accept any cheap substitutes for God's precious institution of marriage? Nothing can compare with the real thing (that wonderful thing which God has purposed and intended for a man and a woman)!



We also learn in Hebrews 13:4 that the marriage bed should be U _____ (pure, unsoiled, not polluted or contaminated or stained) and that God will J _____ whoremongers (fornicators) and adulterers.

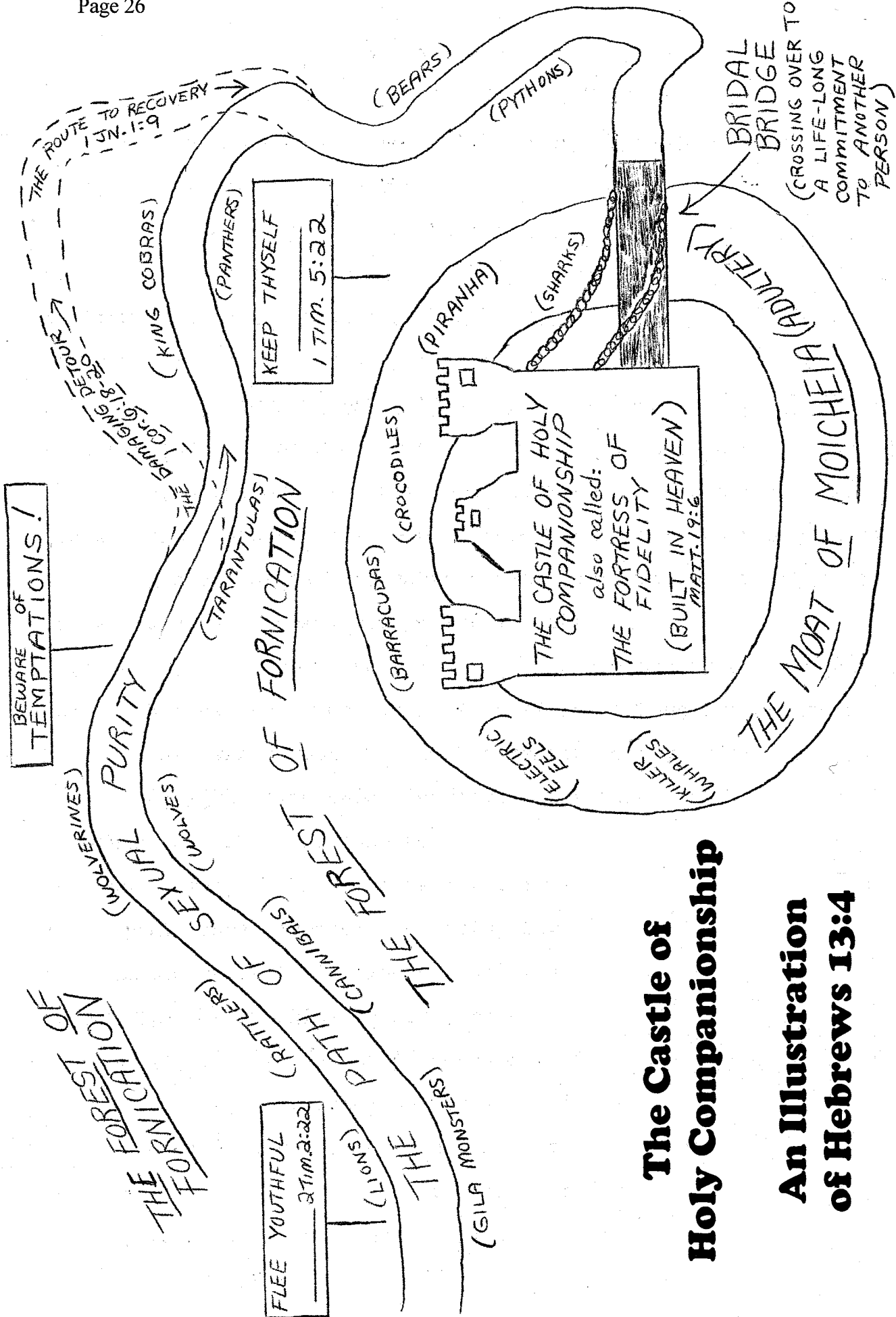
FORNICATION (Greek-Porneia) is a general word which refers to any kind of unlawful sexual intercourse (compare the English word "pornography"). It would include such things as sexual immorality, prostitution, premarital sex and even homosexuality. In Hebrews 13:4 it refers primarily to those sexual sins committed by unmarried persons.

ADULTERY (Greek-Moicheia) is a more specific word which refers to a married person having unlawful sexual relations with someone whom he/she is not married to (going beyond the marriage relationship to a third person). Thus in Hebrews 13:4 it refers to those sexual sins committed by married persons.

Please notice that Hebrews 13:4 does not condemn SEX. It is God's desire that great enjoyment come from sex (compare Proverbs 5:18-19). God intended the marriage bed to be holy and pure and right and a great blessing for a man and his wife. The verse does not condemn sex but it condemns **sinful sex**, that is, sex which is **OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE**. The world may condone and allow and encourage sex outside of marriage, but God condemns it and God will J _____ those who practice it (Hebrews 13:4).

Within the boundaries and confines of marriage, there is safety and satisfaction and sure delight. Step out of these safe boundaries and you are in for real trouble, for you must someday face the God you have sinned against. Marriage is too valuable and precious. Don't accept any cheap substitutes. Don't settle for anything less than God's best. Stay on the path of sexual purity until you arrive at the castle of holy companionship.

The following illustration might be of help (see the following page).



The Castle of Holy Companionship

An Illustration of Hebrews 13:4