



# - - BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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August 5, 1985

85-93

Trustees Adopt Response  
To Job Lesson Errors

By Linda Lawson

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board adopted a statement expressing regret and concern about errors in a July 7 Sunday school lesson and urging study of editorial processes and care in selecting writers.

In the lesson which appeared in "Adult Bible Study," a periodical in the Life and Work Series, several statements present incorrect interpretations of Satan in the book of Job.

The recommendation from the Bible teaching committee drew only one negative vote after addition of an amendment proposed by committee chairman Morraine George, Dallas.

"As trustees we have reviewed carefully the events regarding the 'Adult Bible Study' interpretation of Job, especially July 7. We join with the administration in expressing our concern and regret for the errors included in this lesson," the amendment says.

The recommendation goes on to reaffirm the principles "which have served us in curriculum preparation, and to encourage those in administrative positions as they study and evaluate and make needed changes to exercise special care in determining the doctrinal and biblical commitment of writers by carefully reviewing their published works, their public statements and their personal testimony."

The recommendation was adopted after defeat of a substitute motion by Ned Mathews, pastor of Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia, N.C., by a vote of 41-27.

The substitute motion would have instructed the trustees to "implement a more discriminating policy for the employment of lesson writers," specifying five criteria: needs of Baptists, consistency with "Baptist Faith and Message", reflection of strong evangelical commitment, confidence in the accuracy of Scripture and devotional spirit.

Mathews said he felt his motion was stronger than the committee recommendation. "I sense the administration needs to have its hand strengthened. If the 'Baptist Faith and Message' were sufficient, I don't believe this would have happened," he said.

Dean Mathis, pastor of Taylor Memorial Baptist Church, Hobbs, N.M., said he did not believe the Mathews motion was any stronger than the committee recommendation.

Winford Hendrix, pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tenn., said, "What has happened has been a human error. We don't have a problem with existing principles or guidelines."

In his report to the trustees, BSSB President Lloyd Elder said the errors in the lesson have generated 155 letters and telephone calls as of July 31.

In response to trustee questions, Elder said the first Baptist Press story dated July 19 noted that errors were mistakes made in the editing process and were not the fault of the writer, John I. Durham, professor of Hebrew and Old Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. The story was based on a study of the most immediate questions raised by Baptists about the lesson, he said.

"The Baptist Press release was accurate regarding those initial concerns," said Elder.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

"However, a more complete review of the entire lesson shows the manuscript by Durham is not unlike what appears in print. However, the Sunday School Board is accountable and responsible for final editing of all manuscripts."

He attributed the mistakes to "human error, human judgment and time factor. These errors were compounded one by the other."

At the time the manuscript was edited, Elder said, the permanent editor had changed jobs, the supervisor was retiring, a temporary editor was enlisted to work within a short time frame and the same person was later mistakenly enlisted to serve as appraisal reader on the manuscript he had edited.

"I do not want us to be fault finders, but to assess our accountabilities and call upon our people to be accountable," said Elder. "We will continue to publish a large volume of high quality Bible study material and call upon our people for continued trust in our literature."

Discussion among the trustees centered on whether the major problem to be addressed in preventing future problems is editorial processes or writer selection.

George, chairman of the trustee Bible teaching committee, said, "Steps have already been put into place to correct this problem. There is no system in which mistakes will not occur."

"I don't believe we have to select (writers) from a broad base," said Wayne North, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Tucson, Ariz. "The fact that writers are Bible believers is what is important. We need more checks and balances to eliminate this type of thing."

Several trustees, including those who had voted for the substitute motion, expressed appreciation for the committee recommendation as amended.

Bill Tisdale, pastor of First Baptist Church, Henderson, Texas, said, "I really believe this (recommendation) will help those of us trustees to go back and say to people, 'We dealt with this, we are disappointed with the interpretation given in this material and trust it won't happen again.'"

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BSSB Trustees Approve Budget  
Pledge Peace Committee Support

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press  
8/5/85

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—A 1985-86 budget of \$159.3 million, a Broadman book publishing statement and a pledge of support for the Southern Baptist Convention peace committee were adopted by trustees of the Sunday School Board meeting at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center Aug. 1-2.

In another action, Bill Banks, a 12-year employee of the board, was elected to direct the special ministries department, a new department authorized by the trustees in February.

Banks, 38, has been design and process specialist in the Bible teaching division and will assume his new post Oct. 1. The special ministries department includes language publishing, special education, Bible correspondence and black church development.

The 1985-86 budget presented by Jerry Lee, Jackson, Miss., represents an increase of approximately \$10 million over the projected 1984-85 income of \$149.5 million.

The budget was adopted after a report by E.V. King, vice-president for finance, showing income for the first nine months of 1984-85 was \$106.7 million, which was below budget by \$7.2 million but above last year by \$5.5 million. King said the board's financial position remains strong because product costs and operating expenses have been kept \$5.2 million below budget.

The Broadman book publishing statement was adopted in response to a motion at the February 1985 meeting by Larry Holly, a layman from Beaumont, Texas, calling for the board to review all Broadman books in light of the "Baptist Faith and Message" and to remove any from publication that fail to meet these guidelines.

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The statement was adopted with no opposition after a brief discussion. It notes Broadman books are published for a general Christian market and also states: "All books are written by devout, Bible-believing Christians who affirm their confidence in the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture. The editorial guideline in doctrinal matters is the 'Baptist Faith and Message.' Within this guideline, Broadman publishes books which reflect a wide range of viewpoints and interpretations."

Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder said a representative selection of the 875 Broadman books in print had been reviewed. "We discovered Broadman Press is right in the mainstream of Southern Baptists," he said.

The pledge of support for the 22-member SBC special committee authorized by messengers to the 1985 convention in Dallas to seek solutions to the controversy in the denomination was approved unanimously without debate.

The statement affirms the role of the committee, invites the committee to review the work of the board and supports the call to all Southern Baptists to exercise restraint and refrain from divisive comments while the committee works.

"Finally, we will pray for the 22 members of your committee, expecting Christian statesmanship from you and bid you 'Godspeed,' brothers and sisters, on your mission of peace with purpose and principle," the statement concludes.

The trustee action followed a July 15 letter of support to the committee from Elder. Three BSSB trustees—Jodi Chapman, Wichita Falls, Texas; Edwin Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Houston, and SBC President Charles Stanley (ex-officio trustee), pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta—are members of the special committee.

Trustees also approved an increase in 1986 conference center housing rates which averages approximately 2.7 percent. Conference services fees and meal costs will remain the same. Trustees also approved several changes in the board retirement plan and employee benefits.

Elder reported he had conducted a careful investigation into questions raised earlier this year about a commentary on Joshua written by board employee Trent C. Butler before his employment at the board and published by Word Publishers. Questions were raised in a letter to Elder and copies of a second letter were sent to all trustees by Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, Dallas.

Elder said, while he disagreed with some statements in the book, Butler has conducted all of his work at the Sunday School Board within the guidelines of the "Baptist Faith and Message." "I pursued this matter not only to satisfy concerns of Brother Paige Patterson but also my own. Butler has rendered excellent service to the Sunday School Board. I am confident that he will continue to make a superb contribution," said Elder.

In his report on the state of the board, Elder emphasized Bold Mission Thrust is the top priority. "We're serious about Bold Mission Thrust and we want each of our 17 programs to speak to this priority," he said. "We're going to keep our commitments to Southern Baptists. When we fail we're going to say so, but we're going to keep our joy and confidence in the tasks we've been given to do in this great denomination."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by BSSB bureau of Baptist Press

New Postal Rates Remain  
Uncertain; Hike Possible

Baptist Press  
8/5/85

WASHINGTON (BP)—Postal rates for non-profit publications including state Baptist newspapers and church newsletters are likely to rise Oct. 1, though figures remain uncertain.

Before adjourning for its August recess, Congress passed a fiscal year 1986 budget calling for \$748 million in federal subsidies for the U.S. Postal Service to provide reduced mailing rates to a wide category of non-profit mailers.

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That figure falls \$233 million short of what would be needed to keep non-profit rates at the current level. According to a spokesman for the Postal Service, the shortfall would translate into about a 30 percent rate increase for such mailers, effective Oct. 1 when the fiscal year begins.

But congressional sources say the shortfall may be considerably less. An aide to Sen. Quentin N. Burdick, D-N.D., told Baptist Press the Senate appropriations committee may restore funds to the subsidy in September, when Congress returns from its traditional summer break. She said the final figure could run as high as \$961 million, only \$20 million less than what the Postal Service spokesman said is needed to retain the subsidy at its current level.

Burdick, an advocate of the subsidy, succeeded July 31 in having the appropriations panel pass an amendment to the budget calling for an \$801 million subsidy, the same amount provided in a House-passed budget bill last May. The amendment must await final action until September.

According to the North Dakota senator's aide, the reason the numbers are so elastic at this stage of budget deliberations is that the budget passed just before Congress adjourned sets general spending levels for the various departments of the federal government, but leaves specific appropriations to those agencies for subsequent congressional action.

Before going to the respective House and Senate appropriations committees next month, the postal rate figures will be taken up by the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee and the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. A spokesman for the House Budget Committee could not predict what those panels might recommend.

Although the final figure for the subsidy is uncertain, every person contacted agreed it will be no lower than the \$748 million contained in the authorizing budget. That figure is dramatically higher than the \$100 million included in a Senate budget passed May 10, a figure itself well above the \$39 million originally sought by the Reagan administration.

Non-profit and other subsidized mailers are presently at step 14 of a 16-step plan to eliminate the subsidy. Step 15 is scheduled to take effect July 1, 1986. These mailers have pressured Congress all along to stay with the phase-out schedule announced in 1970.

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HBU President  
Named Chancellor

Baptist Press  
8/5/85

HOUSTON (BP)--W.H. Hinton, president of Houston Baptist University since its creation in 1962 will be named chancellor, HBU trustees have announced.

Hinton will continue as president until assuming the position of chancellor, anticipated by fall 1986. Trustees also announced the appointment of a presidential search committee to seek an educator-administrator of the "highest order" and to plan for the orderly transfer of administrative duties to the new president.

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Book Store Clerk Helps  
Serve Hispanic Community

By Frank Wm. White

Baptist Press  
8/5/85

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Spanish-speaking clerk Wendy Fuentes has helped the Baptist Book Store in Oklahoma City meet the needs of the growing Hispanic population in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma City, like other cities throughout the nation, is experiencing an increase in its Hispanic population and Fuentes has helped the store serve the literature needs of Spanish-speaking customers more effectively, according to Don Turner, store manager.

The Spanish community in Oklahoma is growing. About 20 percent of the residents near one downtown Oklahoma City Baptist church are now Hispanic, Turner pointed out. Oklahoma City's Hispanic population increase is similar to situations in other cities throughout the nation.

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Although half the nation's Hispanic population is concentrated in 10 cities or metropolitan areas, others are scattered throughout the nation, according to Chuck Padilla, language consultant at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"They're in Nashville, and even in Mississippi and North Carolina," Padilla said. "The need for reaching Hispanics is not just in the traditional Hispanic areas."

Nationally, the Hispanic population is growing faster than any other group. There are now 25 million Spanish-speaking persons in the United States, which is an increase of nearly 25 percent in the past 10 years. Southern Baptists have fewer than 2,100 churches and missions for Hispanics. In Oklahoma there are about 75 Hispanic missions and one Hispanic Southern Baptist church in Oklahoma City.

For the book store, the number of Hispanic customers and sales of Hispanic literature have increased considerably since Fuentes began working there 18 months ago, Turner said. Before Fuentes was hired Hispanics would visit the store but would not ask clerks for help.

"They know I can help them. I talk with them about what they are looking for and explain what's available," Fuentes said, adding most Hispanic customers are church workers looking for teaching materials and literature to use in their churches.

Being able to read the titles and knowing what programs the materials are planned for has helped Fuentes organize the store's display of Spanish literature since "there wasn't much to choose from before and what was here was all mixed up." Now Spanish materials fill a display section near the front of the store.

Fuentes not only relates to the Hispanic customers through the language but a Baptist background helps her understand what they need. Her father is pastor of the First Hispanic Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. Fuentes said Baptists must work hard to reach Hispanics because background and cultural ties make it difficult for them to join a Baptist church.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by BSSB bureau of Baptist Press

Palen Joins (BP)  
Washington Bureau

Baptist Press  
8/5/85

WASHINGTON (BP)—Kathryn Ann (Kathy) Palen, director of public relations at Oklahoma Baptist University, will join the Washington bureau of Baptist Press (BP), news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, about Sept. 15. Her primary assignment will be to cover Congress.

Palen, 29, will also become assistant to the director of information services at the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington.

The Tulsa, Okla., native, a 1978 journalism graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, has directed the school's public relations program for the past two years. Before that, she was assistant public relations director, news and publications editor and adjunct instructor of journalism at the Shawnee, Okla., institution.

Palen also has studied at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and taught briefly in Tulsa public schools.

In 1984 Palen won the Albert McClellan Award for exceptional achievement in publications and print media from the Baptist Public Relations Association. She currently is editor of the group's newsletter. She also currently is president of the Oklahoma College Public Relations Association, and has been listed in Outstanding Young Women of America.

The Washington office is one of five (BP) bureaus in addition to the home bureau at the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee. By an arrangement dating to 1957, the Washington bureau is housed with the Baptist Joint Committee, and both (BP) writers in the nation's capital work also as information specialists for the BJC.

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