

AN UNCANNY PARALLEL

Gary McDade

Charlatans in religion continue to make difficult the presentation of pure New Testament Christianity to a lost and dying world. One such example is famed Benny Hinn. A recent network television exposure of his fraudulent activities ebbed not away from his wild popularity particularly among Pentecostal people. One point a former business manager of his brought into the spotlight on the television program was an example of the money drained from the sea of people who attend his so-called healing services in arenas and coliseums. The man told of \$450,000 cash collected in one night! And, the disposition of this large sum goes unaccounted for by those who manage his business. Yet, Benny Hinn Ministries unabatedly continue.

The demonstration that Benny Hinn is not about miraculous healing was proven by his recent trip to Memphis. He conducted a healing service at the Mid-South Coliseum. There are no sick people at the Mid-South Coliseum except those claiming to be sick that he brings with him for show. Now, in Memphis we have a renowned medical center including St. Jude's Children's Research Center. If someone wanted to heal the sick, a place like that is where he would go, would he not? Why did Hinn go to the Mid-South Coliseum? Because there he can take up collection on into the night until he bilks the people for the amount his marketing team says should be available according to the demographics of the area.

An uncanny parallel to the folly of Benny Hinn appears in a study of the healing of Naaman the Leper in II Kings 5. Naaman left Syria for Israel hoping to be healed of his leprosy. He took gifts along with him, "ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment" (v. 5). When at last he heeded Elisha's command to "Go and wash in Jordan seven times" and he went down and "dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean," he offered Elisha a blessing (vv. 10, 13). Elisha refused it saying, "As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused" (v. 16). Elisha's servant Gehazi went against God's will as spoken by his master. The Bible says, "But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he

lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow” (vv. 20-27).

Gehazi told three lies. One, his master did not send him. Two, the goods were not for two sons of the prophets. Three, he did go somewhere. Elisha knew Gehazi was lying, and he told him so. Moreover, because Gehazi disrespected and disregarded the word of the man of God the leprosy of Naaman cleaved unto Gehazi, “and he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.” Elisha told Gehazi he was not healing Naaman to get the gifts he offered, but Gehazi begged to differ with him.

Take the money out of the Benny Hinn crusade and the whole event would fold up. Benny Hinn is a modern day Gehazi with two exceptions: First, at least Gehazi collected on a genuine miracle; Benny Hinn can perform no miracle. Second, Gehazi’s folly was known to all immediately; Benny Hinn’s folly will meet him at the judgment bar of God. Jesus promised, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matt. 7:22-23). When you think of Benny Hinn, think of Gehazi, a leper as white as snow.

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An Excerpt from
“Modern Day Faith Healers”

By Steve Higginbotham

“This past weekend, Richard Roberts, son of Oral Roberts, was scheduled to hold a healing session for more than 2000 followers at the Elmer S. McVety Centre in Toronto, Canada. However, the event was cancelled at the last minute. Do you know why? Due to the World Health Organization issuing a travel advisory for Toronto because of the number of SARS cases reported there, the Roberts organization cancelled the event for fear of exposure to the SARS virus! Can you believe that?

“Seems to me that rather than cancelling the event, if he has the powers he claims to have, that’s exactly where he needed to be! What do you think?”