

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES

Benny Hinn: His Doctrine and Practices

By Reuben Kigame

(Extracted from a letter sent to the Kenyan Pastorate prior to Mr. Hinn's visit to Nairobi in April 2000)

WHY THIS COMMUNICATION?

During the last four years, I have followed with great concern the teaching and overall ministry of Benedictus Hinn and noted with great astonishment just how much his influence is in Kenya and other parts of the world. He is not a new character to many Kenyans because of his books, videos, audio cassettes and television programmes received presently through Family TV but actually broadcast via Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN). Most Christian leaders in Kenya and those they lead know something about Benny Hinn. Nevertheless, I am now convinced more than ever before that very few Christians, (leaders included) stop to think about the relationship between what Benny Hinn teaches and what the Scriptures teach.

This is the sole purpose of this write-up: to bring you face to face with the actual teaching of Benny Hinn and the nature of his ministry so that you can judge for yourself with the help of the Holy Spirit whether or not it is in line with Biblical truth. The Bible in 1 John 4:1 asks us to "test the spirits to see if they are from

God." That is the least we can do. Only after looking closely at this teaching should you then take a step and encourage or discourage your members, friends and other Christians under your leadership to attend the coming crusade. I am, however, seriously convinced that:

1. A lot of what Benny Hinn teaches or propagates is unbiblical and out of keeping with the fundamental doctrines of our faith as taught in the sixty-six books of the Bible.
2. His charisma, flashy lifestyle and oratory tend to stand in the way of the discernment of Biblical truth in the midst of doctrinal error. I am not against Christians being economically or socially successful in this regard. What I am talking about is the mistaken and predominant conviction in many believers that such affluence is the mark of doctrinal certitude. I am talking about Christians viewing affluence, fame and appeal as a mark of God's blessing and approval. My focus is on believers viewing someone like Benny Hinn as possessing an express and unquestioned form of anointing that is vindicated by the fruit of his ministry rather than the truth of God's Word.
3. The apparent attitude of invincibility that frequently characterizes Hinn's teaching and goes unquestioned by many believers suggests that the Church could easily fall into one of two deceptions about him; either that he is so spiritual that he can say anything and go unchallenged in matters of Christian doctrine and practice, or that we ourselves believe what he teaches to be sound and acceptable Christian truth.

The one insistence of this presentation is that we as Christians, and especially Christian leaders, cannot afford to be indifferent to what Benny Hinn is teaching and what he is going to probably be teaching or doing in Nairobi this April. We have to make up our minds and lead our flocks accordingly on this matter to the whole Council of God's Word. If we mislead any one of them in this matter, the Lord will require it of us. If we help save at least one of them from deception, we will have made an indelible mark of eternal value to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

BIBLICAL MANDATE

In the recent past I have spoken to a number of people on the doctrinal concern I have with regard to the teaching of Benny Hinn. Some of the response has been in the line of: What exactly has he taught that is wrong? I have found this open and enhancing to discussion. But some of the response has been harsh and condemning. I have been told that I have absolutely no right to criticise or even talk negatively about anointed servants of God such as Benny Hinn. I have also been told that the power at work in Benny Hinn's life is so great that it should not be put to question. It is with the latter kind of response in mind that I ask: When a particular doctrine as taught by the preachers of today is in question, is it at all our concern to examine it or test it against the Biblical record? Is it wrong to examine the teaching of certain individuals and/or even mention them by name? Benny Hinn believes that he should not be criticised for the reason that he is anointed (and the Lord's anointed must not be touched and no harm should be done to them - 1 Chronicles 16:22). Many of his followers (including those in Kenya) believe exactly that. On Praise the Lord show, telecast on Trinity

Broadcasting Network on November 9, 1990, Hinn did not mince his words concerning such criticism:

You wonderful people of God quit attacking men of God by name. Somebody is attacking me because of something I'm teaching. Let me tell you something brother, you watch it! ... I don't mind if they attack Benny and the way he is and the way he walks, but don't attack the anointing on my life ... there is a group here in California that thinks they are the judgement seat of Christ! They judge everything that you do. Then listen here fellah, let me tell you something, you're not my judge. Jesus is my judge! You walk around with your stiff lip and collar on your neck - dear God in heaven I wish I could just - oooh! They call it a ministry, my foot! You know, I've looked for one verse in the Bible I just can't seem to find it, one verse that says "If you don't like 'em, kill 'em. I really wish I could find it! ... Ladies and gentlemen, don't attack God's servants! Don't publicly attack them by name! ... Don't mention people's names on your Radio program and your TV program - thinking you are doing God's service - you are not! You stink - frankly that's the way I think about it! ... Quit it! I'm sorry, I'm not exactly the normal kind of guy you know, I'm from Israel. Sometimes I wish God will give me a Holy Ghost machine gun (sic) I'll blow your head off!

Yes: that is Benny Hinn, former pastor of Orlando Christian Center (renamed World Outreach Church and then in 1999 Faith World Church). This is the anointed servant of the Lord who is coming to Kenya at the end of April this year. He is too anointed and too extra-ordinary to be criticised. Yet as I read the Bible I do not think that a servant of Christ and a minister of the Gospel at that should be beyond scrutiny in matters of doctrine. It is not unkind and inappropriate to analyse what ministers of the Gospel teach in the light of Scripture (Acts 17:10, 11). Even the apostle Paul severally found it necessary to rebuke people by name in the letters he had written to the Churches. Such letters were to be read publicly and so he must have wanted recipients to be warned of such people.

In 1Timothy 1:20 Paul mentions Hymenaeus and Alexander as having rejected and turned away from faith and taken up the practice of blaspheming. In 2 Timothy 2:17 Hymenaeus is mentioned again and Philetus is added to the list. Verse 18 describes them as having wandered away from the truth. In the latter case, they are associated with the heresy that taught that the resurrection had already taken place, and were condemned for destroying the faith of some people. Philippians 4:2 says, I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord ... The Apostle John who wrote considerably on the love of the truth also directed condemnation to Diotrephes (a church leader) who was ignoring the apostles teaching. (3 John 9-10)

I do not think it, therefore, unkind or unloving both to mention Benny Hinn by name and warn the body of Christ concerning what I consider serious departure from Biblical truth. I am reminded of Paul's charge to the leaders of the Ephesian Church in Acts 20:28-31. Paul is certain that he might not see them again but makes sure that he leaves them one clear warning and reminder. In the same

spirit, I write to you knowing that some of you may not want to hear from me again. For some of you, I may look like a mere "heresy-hunter" who should desist from criticizing men of God, even by name. Before sharing with you what I have found in studying the teaching of Benny Hinn, I wish to commend you to the grace of Christ and to the authority of the Holy Scriptures of the Bible. I have no other authority and I have no personal gain in talking about these things. I wish to resound those very words of Paul, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the other apostles and leave it in your judgment to take a bold stand on this matter, informed by the Holy Scriptures of the Bible. Paul told the leaders of the Ephesian Church:

"Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears." (Acts 20:28-31)

Please notice that it is not for me to judge anyone. I do not set out to judge Benny Hinn as a person. That is the work of our Lord, the righteous Judge. Mine is to do what the apostle John told us to do, that is, "Test the spirits to see if they are from God." (1 John 4:1). Mine is to heed the warning of the apostle Peter to the exiles (and indeed to us) that we should be careful because"... there were also

false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them - bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. ...'. (2 Peter 2:1-3).

Paul further warned in Galatians 1:8-9 that an eternal condemnation awaited anyone who would propagate a different gospel from what the apostles preached: But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching the gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

Our Lord Himself fore warned with an eschatological focus: "For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect - if that were possible. He solemnly added, See I have told you ahead of time." (Matthew 24:24-25).

From our Lord's words, I need to resound two things:

1. It is possible for the false prophets to even deceive the elect.
2. One key deception trap is signs and wonders or miracles. As you may already know, even the Antichrist will be able to perform miraculous signs and wonders in the last days. In Revelation 19:20 we read: "But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshipped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulphur."

According to Revelation 2:2 and 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, we find the clear possibility that people could even claim to be apostles of our Lord but be found to be false. For this reason, no Christian should make the mistake of assuming that signs and wonders validate God's truth. What I mean is that they are not

unique because even nonbelievers under the influence of Satan are capable of performing signs and wonders. Remember the magicians of Egypt. We must also not forget that the devil could masquerade as an angel of light and deceive many.

The underguarding principle here will remain examining the Scriptures for yourself and deciding whether or not what I am about to present is in line with the Bible or not. The Berean Christians were commended as "noble" because they "...examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." (Acts 17:11). I wonder how many of us do this as we watch Christian videos, read Christian books or listen to Christian radio broadcasts! My prayer is that we may do this not just with regard to the information below but also as a constant practice as we attend to any teaching, Christian or otherwise.

WHO IS BENNY HINN

Hinn was born on 3rd December, 1952 in Jaffa, Israel of Greek and Armenian heritage. The family immigrated to Toronto, Canada, in 1968. His public ministry began in December 1974 in Oshawa, Ontario. In the early 1980's he moved to Orlando, Florida where he became pastor of the World Outreach Center. His international crusade and daily television ministry began in 1990, and This is Your Day is now aired in over 190 nations. In the summer of 1999, Benny Hinn Ministries moved its headquarters from Orlando, Florida to Dallas, Texas.

Hinn has written several books including, Good Morning, Holy Spirit, The Anointing, The Blood, This is your Day for a Miracle.

Benny Hinn is married to Suzanne and they have three daughters, Jessica, Natasha and Eleasha and a son, Joshua.

ABOUT THE TEACHING AND PRACTICE OF BENNY HINN

What I am about to share below is born out of my study and analyses of the writings of and about Benedictus Hinn and several other materials such as video and audio tapes I have interacted with during the last four years. Although I have (with the help of friends) visited a number of websites on the internet to ascertain the accuracy of claims made about him, a large degree of dependence is made on Hinn's published works which I have interacted with. I have done my best to quote as accurately as possible from Hinn's own utterances to prove my point; yet if I have in anyway misrepresented Hinn's teaching, I take full responsibility with the submission that it would not be in my interest whatsoever to merely doctor such utterances to make him look slanted and wrong. As much as possible I have let the scriptures and God -given reason be the sole judges of what you are about to read about Hinn. I love Benny Hinn with the love of Christ but have trouble with the following:-

1. Questionable teaching on the Trinity:

The Bible warns in the book of James chapter 3:1, Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

If this warning were taken seriously (and it must), then to mislead one person is a dangerous thing. Yet what would one say of a pastor who misleads a

congregation of, five hundred, one thousand or seven thousand people, or stadium crowds numbering hundreds of thousands of men and women like Benny Hinn often has? What if such a pastor were to come to church one Sunday morning and begin to tell his church members: "... God the Father is a person, God the Son is a person, God the Holy Spirit is a person." So far so good. What if he went on to add: "But each of them is a triune being by Himself. If I can shock you, and maybe I should, there are nine of them. "What if he was even to tell you in the same sermon that God the Father has a spirit body. Just remember that he does not, as your pastor at this point ever see himself as a Mormon at this. You may be saying, this is quite unchristian. Yet, why is it not possible for us to say so now, for the simple reason that these were the words of Benny Hinn in a sermon delivered at the Orlando Christian Centre and which was telecast on Trinity Broadcasting Network on 13th October, 1990. If you have doubt about this, find out from TBN. On the same telecast, Hinn adds: "Do you know the Holy Spirit has a soul and a body separate from that of Jesus and the Father? God the Father is then a triune being within Himself. God the Father is a separate individual from the Son and the Holy Ghost, who is a triune being who walks in a Spirit body and He has hair ... eyes, ... has a mouth ... has hands"

Please notice that during the entire broadcast Benny Hinn does not allude to the use of this kind of language as anthropomorphism, (attributing human form or qualities to gods) but states it as fact; as revelation knowledge; something he has learnt because of intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit who, he claims in his writings, instructs him directly because the Spirit is his "teacher." If this is from the Holy Spirit of the Bible, then we perhaps need to go back to school and be trained on reading beyond what is plain.

When Hinn was challenged on the misleading nature of this doctrine by the Christian Research institute and other apologists of the Christian faith, he supposedly recanted; yet some of the publications that carry this doctrine (e.g. Good Morning Holy Spirit) remain in circulation to this day. He has not recalled the books, stopped the publishers from carrying reprints and newer editions or disowned such publications all together.

All over the scriptures, the unity of God is clearly seen. Yet, it is a fact that He has manifested Himself in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19, 1 Corinthians 8:6 and Deuteronomy 6:4). The idea of nine forms or personality (whatever the case maybe) in the Godhead is both foreign and absent from the Bible. We read in John 4:24 that God is a Spirit. This means that He is not corporeal. He does not have flesh and bones. He must not, according to the first three commandments, be represented in any physical form. This would be idolatry and, as someone has observed, Idols are Idols whether metal or mental Paul added that God does not live in temples made by human hands. (Acts 17:24-25). This teaching by Hinn is not only a brand of Mormon polytheism but also contrary to Biblical Christianity. I think we even need as a church to go back to the fundamentals of the doctrine of God as taught in the Apostles' Creed which on the large does not find ready acceptance in the charisma of Benny Hinn and the other televangelists of our day. Most significantly, this teaching needs to be read and checked against the Bible. It will be found seriously apostate.

In his book, "Good morning Holy Spirit", Benny Hinn does not mince his words about the fact that God is more than spirit. He argues that the Father has physical parts. In Chapter 6 titled "Spirit, Soul and Body", Hinn declares:

"You say, 'I've been taught that God is a Spirit.' Yes, but He is a spirit with

mysterious form, not some cloud floating in space. ...He continues: To my amazement I found out that God has the likeness of fingers and hands and a face. After the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave him the tablets of stone, 'written with the finger of God'... Then the Lord said to Moses, 'You cannot see my face, for no man shall see me and live' ..." (Page 82).

Later on page 87, Hinn declares that God the Father looked like Christ when He was on earth. He writes: "Although I've never seen Him, I believe - as with the Holy Spirit - He looks like Jesus looked on earth." Question is raised here on Hinn's understanding of the Incarnation and the warning in the first two commandments, especially given the rest of his theology on this subject.

Looking at all this, one is faced with a number of options: Either John 4:24 is an accidental, unfortunate revelation from God which is superceded by Benny Hinn's "new Spirit revelation", or, Benny Hinn needs some hermeneutical help that distinguishes anthropomorphic language from literal language, theophany from vision, etc; or we are face to face with "high error" which every Church leader needs to challenge and reject. And I think we must reject with the same vehemence what Hinn teaches in the same chapter about the physical nature of the Holy Spirit and of Jesus Christ for the reason that he attaches literal interpretation to the Scriptures that talk about such manifestations. Consider the following passage in this same Chapter 6:

"It is the question of the "body" of the Holy Spirit that causes much confusion. A man (notice that it is a man, not God or His Word) recently said to me, "Benny, the body of the Holy Spirit is really that of a dove. That's how He descended from heaven." I replied, "If that's true, then you must believe that Jesus was really a little lamb. That's how He is presented in Revelation. ... John the apostle heard an elder say, "Do not weep. Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah ... has prevailed" (Rev. 5:5)" Benny Hinn explains, "He turned expecting to see a roaring lion, and instead he saw a gentle lamb that had been slain. ..." ("Good morning, Holy Spirit", page 85).

Shortly after all this explanation, he then denies what he has just affirmed. What is the believer to make of all this? This is the confusing world of Benny Hinn. Today he says something, tomorrow he says "I was joking" (as he has done even on camera). Today he preaches or writes this, tomorrow, "I changed my mind on that theology." The question is, if he changes his mind on a given truth, was it God's truth revealed to him in the first place? If it was, would he be changing his mind about it? If it wasn't, why would he publicly tell his audience that God had revealed it to him? Or does God change? I believe He does not. Hinn here needs a loud resounding of Proverbs 26:18-19, Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death, is the man who deceives his neighbor, And says, I was only joking!

2. Questionable teaching on the redemptive work of Christ:

In 1988 and then in 1990, Benny Hinn was documented as saying: on his recorded sermons and later on Trinity Broadcasting Network, that Jesus took on the nature of Satan when He became sin for us. He preached, "First, He died

spiritually, and then He died physically, and He was carried for three days and three nights to the underworld as a prisoner." As if this is not bad enough, Hinn has declared:

"Before He died, I should say, on that cross, something happened to Him which began the wheels of the New Creation moving that was this: He died spiritually! ...Jesus Christ understood that spiritual death is union with the satanic nature. ...What is spiritual death? Separation from God" (New Creation in Christ sermon, late 1988).

During the "Benny Hinn Broadcast" of December 15, 1990, Hinn declared:

"Jesus at His death became one with Satan," and that "Christ became one with the nature of Satan and was born again in hell."

Elsewhere, Hinn presents Jesus as being righteous by choice and saying, The only way I can stop sin is by me becoming it. I can't just stop it by letting it touch me; I and it must become one. Hinn continues: Hear this! He who is the nature of God became the nature of Satan when he became sin! (Trinity Broadcasting Network, Praise the Lord show, December 1, 1990).

One astonishing aspect of these words that Benny Hinn attributes to Jesus is that they are not found anywhere in the Bible. Jesus cannot even be said to have revealed such words to Benny Hinn because they utterly contradict the record of redemption which appears in the Bible. Jesus was righteous by nature and not by choice and, being God, he could never adapt his holy nature to enjoin it with that of Satan. For this reason, I argue that this is a false gospel - a different gospel that deserves total condemnation (see Galatians 1: 6-9). It is the subjective journey of experience, no doubt, that has led Benny Hinn to these unscriptural conclusions and all in the guise of revelation knowledge.

This is not surprising; perhaps if we consider that in "Good morning, Holy Spirit", Hinn argues that it is the Holy Spirit that enabled the sacrifice of Christ to be acceptable before God the Father. He writes:

"Even before Christ faced Golgotha, He offered Himself to the Father through the Holy Ghost... Had He not offered Himself through the Holy Ghost, He would not be accepted in the eyes of God the Father. Nor would He have endured the sufferings of the cross. Had He not presented Himself through the Holy Ghost, His blood would not have remained pure and spotless. Had the Holy Spirit not been with Jesus, He would have sinned ..." (Page 135).

Although this may sound alright to a number of people (especially those who will excuse anything as long as the Holy Spirit is mentioned) as faultless theology, it leaves many issues unattended. For instance, did Jesus actually sin before His baptism, then? Why raise this argument, given the obvious reason that it is at his baptism that the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus. If what Benny Hinn is saying is correct, then Jesus was only sinless for three years of His life. Second, was the

sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross a voluntary act or a dependent one? The answer is found in Philippians 2:6-8: "...being in the very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but He made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!" This was not a dependent act on the Holy Spirit as if Christ were unwilling or unable to decide whether to redeem mankind. Definitely, the Holy Spirit empowered Him for this task of redemption, but notice that redemption was already determined from the foundation of the world. (See Rev. 13:8; 1 Peter 1:18-20).

Benny Hinn as a man who acclaims himself to be a servant of Christ ought to be thoroughly acquainted with the deity and Lordship of His Master Jesus Christ well enough to desist from presenting Him as a weakling who needed help to accomplish the redemptive plan. He needs to learn that although the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14), the Word was God (John 1:1). Several Scriptures also remind us of this fact of deity. Colossians 1:15-17 speaks of Christ as the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. John 1:3 says that through Christ all things were made and without Him nothing was made that has been made. Isaiah 9:6 speaks of Him as possessing the prerogatives of divine government and power. Matthew 1:23 even declares Him as God with us. In Mark 2:5-7 He forgives the sins of the paralytic. If He did this, could any sin be attributed to Him as Benny seems to suggest possibility in his sermons? During the temptation, Jesus even tells Satan not to put Him (The Lord your God) to the

test (Luke 4:12; cf. Deuteronomy 6:16). In John 10:30 He resounds the reminder that He and the Father are one.

Hinn also needs a serious reminder of the credal passage in 1 Timothy 2:16 Speaking of Christ, Paul says, He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory. This is the Christ of glory; the Christ of the Bible; not the Christ of Good morning Holy Spirit.

A clearer understanding of the redemptive work of Christ can be seen in Isaiah 53. Here, Christ endures suffering for our sake. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, He endured the wrath of God on the cross for us. This is not the same as becoming one with Satan. Even when men sin, they simply reflect the nature of but do not become "one with Satan" for the reason that Satan cannot be saved but men can. This is a strange understanding of the atonement. If Benny were spending quality time with the Bible, this mistake might not have occurred.

Jesus does not and cannot share the nature of Satan. He is holy; Satan is unholy and wicked, rebellious and condemned. Jesus did not need salvation as Hinn claims, let alone obtaining it by going to hell. Our redemption was not acquired via a union of Christ and Satan. This is bad theology and it must be condemned.

3. Reading a little too much into the atoning blood of Christ:

There are certain pictures in Scripture that are particularly enriching to the imagination as they are applied to daily life, but there are others which can very easily be overread and misapplied. While it may be healthy, for instance, to imagine that God is like a father to us and so cares, a shepherd to us and so He can lead us, our light and salvation, shield, etc, the Bible does not at all encourage us to actualize these images of analogous relationships to a point

where we are limited by them. Why? Because, although God is like a father to us, He is more than that. Jesus speaking of the excellence of God the Father says, "If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:11). Although the Lord is our shepherd, the picture of the shepherd is relational for us to understand His protection, watch and concern, etc. He is more than that.

I share this to put into perspective just how dangerous Benny Hinn's rendering of the blood could be for the reason that he has stretched the concept of the blood to such width that the blood of Christ resembles some kind of magical blanket that every believer should be covered with. Where the Bible explicitly does not lay emphasis on the blood, Hinn has "pulled the veil" to see the ramifications of blood underneath. Just in one book and a number of sermons, Hinn has almost replaced for some Christians the cleansing or purifying role of the blood of Christ with the protective and supplicatory functions. The result is such statements common in the circle of believers as "Pleading the blood", "applying the blood" and "covering" ourselves, our loved ones, our work, etc with the blood.

Perhaps a close look at some of what Benny Hinn has written in his book "The Blood" with what the Bible says will help us decide whether or not this is mere hair-splitting:

In Chapter one of this book which he titles, "Power and Promise", Hinn quotes the experience of Maxwell Whyte who lived in England in World War II. Going through many dangerous and horrifying air raids as buzz bombs flew everywhere, Maxwell and his family is said to have slept through it all primarily because they "covered themselves" with the blood of Jesus. Hinn quotes Maxwell's words, "The protection of the blood of Jesus was so real that it seemed like we were sleeping in a strong shelter. In fact, we used to speak of the Blood as the "best air raid shelter in the world" ("The Blood" page 21). Hinn explains that we apply Jesus' blood through prayer and faith but it is the Lord who covers us.

It may be assumed that Hinn expounds on this special protection by the blood for the reason that the Bible is not clear about God's protection for His people. But is this true? I do not think so. Examine the following Scriptures for instance:

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. ...I will say of the Lord, "'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.' Surely He will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, just how much Maxwell needed this Scripture during the bomb-jammed Second World War, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at mid-day. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. ..." (Psalm 91: 1-7).

This is a sweet and compact assurance of God's definite protection for those who trust in Him. And what shall we say of those cherished words, Even though I walk

through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)

If we can obtain such comfort and the promise of protection from God's Word, why would we have to bother with "covering ourselves with the blood", a doctrine that Scripture does not appeal to. Anyone who gets cleansed from every power of sin and wickedness automatically comes under the protection of Christ. That adoption through the atonement is complete. We do not have to keep doing some form of prayer ritual that implies that we are covered and then uncovered by the blood. On page 69 of his book, "The Blood", Hinn says:

"Do you want to live in victory and be free from bondage? ... People have asked, Why should we ask God to cover us with the blood every day? Isn't this vain repetition? Aren't we being superstitious? Aren't we acting out of bondage?'... Asking the Lord to cover me with the blood continually is not because of bondage - but because of fellowship." ("The Blood" page 69).

If this is fellowship, one wonders why Jesus had to say to the Jews who believed in Him that if they continued in His words then were they truly His disciples. He also said that if we abide in Him, and His words abide in us, then are we truly His disciples. Fellowship is based on truth and not just experience. Although experience has a place in Christian life, it is not the sole foundation of our faith. It must be undergarded by truth. Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them by the truth. Your Word is truth." (John 17:17). If only the word has said, "Pray that you may be covered by the blood daily, for in this way will you have true fellowship with God!" But it does not say anything like this. These are the ideas of men including the fact that this is done on a daily basis as if the Lord gives us His protection and removes it daily. Benny Hinn climaxes the authority of what he has just said above by returning to his faithful teacher, Miss Kuhlman: "As Kathryn Kuhlman once said, 'We don't live on yesterday's glories, nor on tomorrow's hopes, but on today's experiences.'" (Ibid)

It must be noted that even with reference to the First Passover that Hinn dwells on quite a bit in this book, the Jews did not celebrate the Passover daily, not weekly, not monthly. It was just once every year. The High Priest went into the Holy of Holies with the blood of atonement only once every year. The book of Hebrews which Hinn constantly refers to in order to prove his point actually presents Jesus Christ as the perfect High Priest who has gone into the perfect Holy of Holies just once and does not have to do it yearly like the high priests of Israel. I think this dishonest interpretation of Hebrews and the whole concept of the atonement might even inspire Hinn to make doctrinal assumptions in the future such as that God has feathers and wings with which He covers the saints when they go to sleep and that these are real, perhaps wings and feathers that you might even touch as a blanket.

Yet, more seriously, Hinn misrepresents the atoning work of Christ but over-reads the meaning of Hebrews 9:11-12. On page 82 of "The Blood", he states:

"Remember that the Lord purchased man's redemption by His atoning death and resurrection, then ascended to His Father and there presented the blood which was the evidence of redemption."

He then argues with reference to the Hebrews 9 passage that when the Father accepted the blood, Jesus received from the Father the gift of the Holy Spirit to pour out upon those who believed in Him.

A closer look at Hebrews 9:11-12 will indicate that first there is a contrast between earthly tabernacles and the perfect heavenly tabernacle. Second, there is the contrast of the blood of goats and calves with that more perfect blood of the Son of God. The verses that follow compare the efficacy of Christ's blood with that of goats and calves. It is all a matter of the new covenant versus the old. The sacrifice of Christ was already accepted on the cross as Christ was in the presence of the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God. To Him He said, "Father, into your hands I give my spirit." God was not waiting in uninformed anticipation that Christ would come and perform some official and ceremonial presentation of the blood shed on the cross. God is not caught up in the limitations of time and space. Heaven, in a sense, is His throne and the earth His footstool.

Whether we are talking about God's "covering of Adam and Eve" which Benny Hinn sees as principally characterized by wet, bloody skins; or Hinn's declaration that Cain's sacrifice was not acceptable because it was not an animal sacrifice, to

the outright application of the Levitical cleansing of the leper to the modern Christian, we are face to face with a theology that needs serious revisitation in terms of doctrinal accuracy. Or what shall we say of the confusion that now urges us to esteem the word of God above everything and quickly followed by the overriding need to pray daily for the covering by the blood? And what about what Hinn describes as "communion in the communion" in the last chapter of his book, "The Blood" which sends us back to the Roman Catholic view of Jesus as being actually present in body when the bread and cup are shared? This is extremely confusing.

We cannot conclude this section without making reference to the most commonly used Scripture to justify the "covering" by the blood. Revelation 12:11: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony ..." The focus here is not, once again, some mysterious "blanketing" that needs to be "pleaded" or "applied" daily but the victory of the saints over the "accuser of the brethren." Because of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross (the blood of the Lamb), leading to the forgiveness of sins, no accusation (not even that by Satan, the accuser of the brethren) can stand against the believers. (See Romans 8:33-39). This is ultimate, glorious victory. Any deviant reading of this verse needs to be challenged.

4. The unscriptural teaching that Christians are divine:

Like many other faith and prosperity preachers of today, Hinn teaches that we are gods. In "The Berean Call", 1992 Media Spotlight Special Report which was published in February 1994, Hinn is quoted as saying:

"We are 'little gods' and even part of God with all the power of God; and we are 'little messiahs', everything that Jesus ever was."

On one of his tapes in the series "Our Position in Christ" Tape #AO31190-1, Benny Hinn shockingly declares:

"...Are you ready for some real revelation knowledge ...you are god ..."

On Trinity Broadcasting Network, Benny Hinn preached saying on December 1, 1990,

"...Though we are not Almighty God Himself, nevertheless, we are now divine."

This has been echoed by Morris Cerullo, Kenneth Copeland, and closer home, Bishop David Oyedepo of the Winners' Chapel and Bishop Crivella of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God.

Examine the following claims that grow wilder and wilder and decide for yourselves in the light of Scripture whether Benny Hinn is speaking as an anointed servant of Christ, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

...What else are you? Quit your nonsense! ...If you say, 'I am,' you're saying you're part of Him, right? Is He God? Are you His offspring? Are you His children? You can't be human! You can't! You can't!" (Our Position in Christ#2, 1990, audiotape, sd2).

"When you were born again the Word was made flesh in you. And you became flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. Don't tell me you have Jesus, you are everything He was and everything He is and ever shall be. Don't say, 'I have.' Say, 'I am, I am, I am, I am, I am.'" (ibid.)

"When you say, 'I am a Christian,' you are saying, 'I am mashiach,' in the Hebrew. I am a little messiah walking on earth, in other words. That is a shocking revelation. ...May I say it like this? You are a little god on earth running around" (Praise-a-Thon, TBN, 6th November 1990).

"In my case, I know I have lost complete desire for anything to do with the world. My worldly desires are gone..... I no longer have any rebellion in me." (The Anointing, p177-8).

"SO, I'M BENNY JEHOVAH!" (Spiritual warfare seminar, May 2, 1990).

"Say after me: 'Within me is a God-Man.' Say it again. 'Within me is a God-Man.' [Congregation repeats] Now, let's say even better than that. Let's say, 'I AM A GOD-MAN.' ...This spirit man within me is a God-Man....Say, 'I'm born-of-heaven-God-Man. I'm a God-Man. I'm a sample of Jesus. I'm a super being.'" (Praise the Lord, TBN, December 6th 1990).

A God came to earth and touched a piece of dust and turned it into a God. ...Are you a child of God? Then you're divine! Are you a child of God? Then you're not human!" (TBN, December 1st 1990).

"When I stand in Christ - I am one with Him; united to Him; one spirit with Him. I am not, hear me, I AM NOT PART OF HIM, I AM HIM! THE WORD HAS BECOME FLESH IN ME! ...When my hand touches someone, it's the hand of Jesus touching somebody" (Our Position in Christ). "I [Jesus] loved you enough to become one of ya! And I love you enough to make you one of me!" (TBN, December 1st 1990).

While Benny Hinn would like us to believe that Christians are divine the Bible has a very clear teaching that human beings are fallen, sinful, limited, unworthy of God's mercy and seriously in need of redemption. (see Psalms 25:11, Jer. 17:9, Rom. 5: 12, Rom. 7: 18-21, Heb. 12:1, James 2:10, 1Jn. 1:8, Mark 12:32)

Besides, nowhere in the entire canon does the Bible ever present the doctrine a god-man or spirit-man which comes into us when we are born-again. There is no place for Hinn's claim that this spirit-man was created before the foundation of the world. The truth is, we are not divine and the Bible records that we possess a fallen nature that is in dire need of redemption. (see Romans 5:8-12 and 3:23)

One Scripture that is often quoted to justify the teaching that we are gods is Psalm 82:6 and Jesus' reference to it in John 10:34. One thing must be understood in the context of this passage: this is a comparative passage between the authority of human leaders that is limited, with the unlimited power of God who actually sets these leaders in power (Psalm 2:6 and Romans 13:1-7). Notice that even among human societies like Egypt, the kings (pharaohs) were seen as gods. But their power is comparatively lower than that of the omnipotent God (in actual sense, incomparable.) The usage by Jesus of "ye are gods" is not affirmative. It is critical. In other words, if human leaders can be called "gods" then certainly the Messiah could be called God. This is not to mean that we are divine, because even in the case of the pharaohs, their being called "god" did not imply they were divine. They died just like any ordinary men (See Psalm 82:6). Many passages in the Bible draw a world of distinction between fallen, mortal, finite human beings and the Almighty God. To allow this kind of teaching in the church as Benny Hinn does is to create a door for Pantheism and especially its New Age fashion, for it teaches that we are divine. Mormonism also teaches this kind of doctrine.

5. A wrong view of Adam:

Benny Hinn has taught that Adam was a superhuman with abilities of dominion that surpass what the average reading of Genesis is all about. On the "Praise-a-thon" Show on Trinity Broadcasting Network recorded in November 1990, Hinn declared:

"Adam had complete dominion over the earth and all it contains. Adam could fly like a bird, swim under water and breath like a fish, and walk on water. ...

Adam went to the moon. Adam was a super being. He was the first superhuman that lived. Adam had dominion over the sun, moon and stars."

It is hard to determine where Hinn obtains this kind of heresy. If it is by the enabling of the Holy Spirit as he claims, then the average Christian needs to ask whether the Holy Spirit would teach something more than is in the Bible. This teaching overstretches the abilities of our first parents and puts them in a class totally different from ours. It may be this kind of erroneous teaching that once led Hinn to declare that women were originally designed to give birth from the side. It is simply not in the Bible.

6. Uncontrolled possession by the Holy Spirit and being used as His channel:

Benny Hinn is not only known to claim personal intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit to a point of addressing Him every morning, "Good morning Holy Spirit!", He claims that the Spirit could control him to a point that he does not remember what he has just said. Hinn claims to be a channel for God to speak through and use and that God enters him and takes over his mind and tongue to the point where he is unaware of what he has said even to his congregation.

A sermon he gave at the Orlando Christian Centre in Florida on 31st December, 1989 illustrates this. During this service he gave several future prophecies but could not remember what he had said after the service. He claimed that he was "drunk", presumably on the Holy Spirit, and asked someone to tell him what he had just said:

"I wish somebody would make sure to tell me what I said. Did you tape that,

brother? Did you tape that? Ooh! I was totally drunk. I'm still drunk. Lord, if you spoke through me, if what you said is of you, then as I stretch my finger towards the people let your power fall on everyone of them. If what I've said, Master, is of you, let the power flow now. Here it goes in the name of Jesus."

Some people in the audience shrieked while some fell as a "proof" of the divine nature of all this. Benny Hinn was in total control here as he led the innocent church members and those in attendance into altered states of consciousness. Here, Hinn acted exactly like Shamans do and not like a Christian minister of God. Shamans in the occultic world usually enter trances and pretend to act as intermediaries between people and the gods or spirits. Usually Shamans predict the future or pronounce cures to diseases and solutions to problems facing those who go to them.

Even more serious in this regard, however, is the nature of inspiration that Hinn purports God uses to reveal things to him. Dangerously, Hinn gets to trancelike states only to resemble in comparison those of occult mediums and those who delve into divination. The Bible in Jer. 14:14, Deut. 18:10 and Acts 16:16 among other passages does not encourage such involvement or even inspiration. Divine inspiration is not mechanical or subject to personal manipulation. When God spoke through the prophets, they were not "drunk" to the point that they could not remember what the Lord had just said to them. Paul even put it more vividly, "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the control of the prophets." (1 Cor. 14:32).

7. Misleading teaching on wealth and prosperity

When we do not give money to the Lord's work (and he says this in the context of his own ministry), we have one nature with the devil. On TBN April 21, 1991, Hinn said: "When you don't give money it shows that you have the devil's nature.." Scripture does not teach any such doctrine. And his own lifestyle, attire, luxurious home and car proves that Benny believes this seriously. As observed earlier, flamboyance and a flashy lifestyle does not necessarily confirm God's approval of someone's doctrine or lifestyle. It is easy to preach this kind of gospel and to forget quickly the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:24b-25).

It is near nonexistent hearing sermons and expositions about preferring a simple lifestyle devoid of the glamour of wealth. It is almost sinful and irreverent for any preacher to speak of poverty of social standing as a blessing. It is all either a "curse", lack of faith or the result of sin in one's life. For most tel-evangelists, you as a Christian have to live above the poverty line and indeed excel a hundredfold as "tangible "proof" that God is with you. This is the predominant preaching on Kenyan T.V., crusade grounds, publications, meeting tents, rented school rooms and cinema halls, churches, etc. Is this the "full gospel?"

Years ago they used to preach, 'O we are going to walk on streets of gold.' I would say, 'I don't need the gold up there. I've got to have it down here'"(Praise-a-Thon, TBN, 2nd April 1991).

"The wicked are piling up the funds and I love the way John [Avazini] teaches on this. He's the best there is on how to get the wealth of the wicked. Man, I like it!"

(Praise-a-Thon, TBN, 6th November 1990).

"Poverty is a demon. God had to show me a vision of a demon literally to prove this to me. All at the same time, when Oral Roberts came to tell me what he told me about believing God for my harvest. All at the same time, I had a vision in my bedroom. I was asleep and woke up, and right in front of my face I saw a devil. You say, you saw it? Yes sir, I did. If you have troubles with it, that's your problem. And that thing was mocking me in my bedroom. And the Lord spoke and said to me, "That is the demon of poverty." I didn't think there was such a thing. And the Lord said, "Now rebuke it." I sat up in bed and said, "I rebuke you." The Lord stopped me and said, "That's not the way you rebuke. You rebuke with My Word." And suddenly, out of my mouth, scriptures began flying out about the blessings of God. That demon vanished out of my sight, and from that day 'til now, there's been blessings on my life. (TBN, 1990).

We are going to believe that in one year you'll be out of debt. Now that's in the Bible! Genesis 26 states that Isaac sowed in famine and reaped in that same year. It says that he got a harvest that same year! If you want a harvest this year, it's gonna happen. I was out of debt in one year. (Praise-a Thon, TBN, April 1990).

Say after me, all of you, everybody say it, "The wealth of the wicked is mine". [The audience repeats] One more time. [The audience repeats]. One more time. [The audience repeats]. (ibid.).

On the contrary, our Lord urged, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where

thieves do not break in and steal." (Matthew 6:19-20). Of course in this kind of theology, Job becomes a disgruntled element and, as some of Benny Hinn's contemporaries have preached, Jesus must have lived a "rich lifestyle" and wore "designer clothes" which were gambled for at the moment of the cross. This is not biblical theology. It is wishful thinking and presumption.

John Piper in his book "Desiring God" sums the Biblical position well. This should be a reawakening for every believer. I quote it here because of its great pastoral importance:

"A wealth-and-prosperity doctrine is afoot today, shaped by the half-truth that says, "We glorify God with our money by enjoying thankfully all the things he enables us to buy. Why should a son of the King live like a pauper?" And so on. The true half of this is that we should give thanks for every good thing God enables us to have. That does glorify him. The false half is the subtle implication that God can be glorified in this way by all kinds of luxurious purchases.

"If this were true, Jesus would not have said, "Sell your possessions and give alms" Luke 12:33). He would not have said, "Do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink" Luke 12:29. John the Baptist would not have said, "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none" (Luke 3:11). The Son of Man would not have walked around with no place to lay his head (Luke 9:58). And Zacchaeus would not have given half his goods to the poor (Luke 19:8)

"God is not glorified when we keep for ourselves (no matter how thankfully) what we ought to be using to alleviate the misery of unevangelized, uneducated, unmedicated, and unfed millions. The evidence that many professing Christians have been deceived by this doctrine is how little they give and how much they own. God has prospered them. And by an almost irresistible law of consumer culture (baptized by a doctrine of health, wealth, and prosperity) they have bought bigger (and more) houses, newer (and more) cars, fancier (and more) clothes, better (and more) meat, and all manner of trinkets and gadgets and containers and debices and equipment to make life more fun.

"They will object: Does not the Old Testament promise that God will prosper his people? Indeed! God increases our yield so that by giving we can prove our yield is not our god. God does not prosper a man's business so that he can move from a Ford to a Cadillac. God prospers a business so that 17,000 unreached peoples can be reached with the gospel. He prospers a business so that twelve percent of the world's population can move a step back from the precipice of starvation ...

"The issue is not how much a person makes. Big industry and big salaries are a fact of our times, and they are not necessarily evil. The evil is in being deceived into thinking a \$100,000 salary must be accompanied by \$100,000 lifestyle. God has made us to be conduits of his grace. The danger is in thinking the conduit should be lined with gold. It shouldn't. Copper will do. (John Piper, "Desiring God", Portland, OR, Multnomah Press, 1986, 163, 167.)

8. The teaching that weakness, disease and suffering are not the will of God for the believer in Christ:

Many of you who know that I am visually handicapped may think that I have chosen to punch in this dissection of Benny Hinn's doctrine for the purpose of self-justification and vindication. I must say that this is far from the truth and that I would gladly benefit from a miracle of sight if this were God's will. I would exercise all the faith I had, however little, to be able to see again, read through the hundreds of volumes at my disposal and even carry out this research independently without having to solicit help and friends to read through Benny Hinn's books for me. Yet, the things I have learnt from the Scriptures tell me that suffering, tribulation, persecution, diseases, famine, poverty etc are not removed from God's means of perfecting and blessing His saints in this earthly life. (Romans 8:35-39 etc)

However, this is not what Benny Hinn and numerous "health and wealth" preachers teach today. For Hinn, in fact, there must never be any place in the life of the Christian for "If it be God's will." Although this is a clear teaching of Scripture, (James 4:15; Acts 18:21; 21:14; Romans 1:10; 15:32; Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:36 and Luke 22:42) Benny Hinn encourages believers not to approach God with this in mind. Hinn sees this kind of confession as faith-destroying.

"Never, ever, ever go to the Lord and say, 'If it be they will ...' Don't allow such faith-destroying words to be spoken from your mouth." (Hank Hanegraaff, Christianity in Crisis, Introduction page 11).

Yet Jesus not only prayed that the will of God be done during the greatest trial in His life, i.e. facing the cross, but also taught His disciples to pray to God the Father, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10). Jesus did not indicate anywhere that there are times when Christians should not pray in this way, but Hinn thinks so. In fact, he would claim that the Holy Spirit taught him this new revelation.

Hinn has been even more audacious in his teaching on this subject:

"There will be no sickness for the saint of God" (Rise and Be Healed! 1991, p14)

"He promises to heal all - every one, any, any whatsoever, everything - all our diseases! That means not even a headache, sinus problem, not even a toothache - nothing! No sickness should come your way" (ibid., p32);

"God's greatest desire for the church of Jesus Christ...is that we be in total and perfect health (ibid., p65); "If your body belongs to God, it does not and cannot belong to sickness" (ibid., p62);

Hinn goes on to justify that there have been overwhelming results from all this:

"Hundreds of verified healings and thousands of conversions have occurred including people rising from wheelchairs and leaving crutches. Several blind eyes and deaf ears have been opened and verified" (The Anointing, 1992, p94-95).

Although numerous questions have been raised on the fact of such miraculous healings, Hinn insists that they are regular in occurrence. Where medical

verification has been sought, the findings have been more disturbing than affirming of Hinn's ministry. Things have been made worse by media reference to the scandal of healthy people being planted in meetings with crutches who were prepared in advance to step forward and abandon their crutches at the crucial moment. This could not be the work of the Holy Spirit. A miracle by definition is a supernatural intervention for the benefit of human beings and which by nature is rare. This is not the case with Hinn's understanding of a miracle.

On page 9 of his book, "The Anointing, this is what he writes:

"I think we all agree that if there ever was a time when the body of Christ needed power, this is it. Only the miracle-working power of Almighty God can roll back the tide of sin and disease flooding the world in every corner."

I do not think that we all agree that this is the time the church of Christ needs power. I think the church of Christ needs unity in truth and faithfulness to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ ever than before. The church needs to return to the fundamentals of Scripture without manmade interpretations that spring from selfish ambition and a quest for power. A page later, Hinn adds, "Weakness is not our inheritance as Christians, yet many of us have settled for just that... "

If what Benny is saying here is true, we would have to rewrite chunks of the passages of Scripture that promise us such weakness or promise God's help and strength through them. We would have to forget about Paul's "thorn in the flesh" and the subsequent confession that when he is weak then he is strong. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). We would have to ignore his reminder that the "weakness" of God is stronger than man's strength. (1 Corinthians 1:25). We would have to ignore the man born blind and Jesus' words in John 9:1-4. We would have to ignore the truth that Elisha the great prophet of God died of a sickness. We would have to erase the story of Job altogether from the Bible. We would have to undo the sojournings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob altogether. We would need to forget about Jesus and His lowly lifestyle that led the King of kings to die on a cross and be buried in someone else's tomb having lived a life without anywhere to lay His head. We would have to pronounce the disciples of Christ as "terrible weaklings" for accepting flogging from the leaders of the Jews or convince everyone that they lived under a divine curse and that the Holy Spirit "had abandoned them."

Hinn's doctrine, if taken seriously would further lead us to delete from our Bibles verses like Exodus 4:11 which clearly tell us that it is God who allows suffering and conditions such as deafness, blindness, dumbness, lameness, etc. We would even have to ignore those incidents in the new testament when it is stated as fact that believers can be sick and God intervene in their circumstances, e.g. Matthew 25:36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. 2 Timothy 4:20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus. Philippians 2:26-27 For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare

me sorrow upon sorrow.

Hinn and his contemporaries would not be willing to come this far if their gospel of physical well being were to remain. To Hinn and such other preachers, we had rather pursue a gospel of "anointing" and "Spirit power" where all material, social and physical conditions are rectified at the blow of a breath, swing of a coat or developing an intimacy that puts the Spirit of God at your command so that each morning you could wake up and merely say, "Good morning, Holy Spirit." In the evening during prayer time, "He" might tell you that "He" was missing your company and needed "just five more minutes" with you. At that point you will say, "Weakness is not our inheritance as Christians". Is this the whole gospel or is it a different gospel? The fact is, not many Kenyans think something is wrong. That is why we will tune in for one more programme on radio or television, go for one or more crusade after a Sunday service, read just one more book on healing or how to receive your miracle. We read so much and listen or watch so much but so little happens in our lives. This is proved by the fact that we will always look for more, and more, and more. Where are we going as we get excited one more time that Benny Hinn is coming? After he has come and gone, what next?

9. Hinn's teaching that sickness and ailments can be transferred:

Another questionable aspect of Benny Hinn's teaching is that, by the power of the Holy Spirit who gives the gift of healing, if somebody opposes or criticises the ministry of a man of God, such a man of God may pronounce a transfer of ailments from the person being healed to the one who challenges his ministry. Although this is not the teaching of Scripture, Benny Hinn documents that it is a fact of Christian ministry. Anyone who opposes or challenges such ministry is viewed as blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. In an interview on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) with Paul and Jan Crouch on 13th September, 1999, Benny Hinn cites an incident that took place in the Philippines during the ministry of an evangelist called Tommy Reed.

Benny Hinn: When they said this -- "It's of the devil," He (said), "Ah this is one thing I won't forgive!" He spoke there, judgment; and the judgment He spoke was eternal damnation. He said I'll forgive any sin but not this one; and there he made the clear cut. So Tommy (Reed) said to the Lord, "All right Lord, here's what I want done." The last night of the meeting they brought this lady with arthritis on a wheelchair down front. The man came back, in the back again, began to do the same thing. "This is of the devil," screaming all this stuff. And Tommy said, "Lord now!" When he said "now," the Lord healed the lady with the arthritis and struck the man with her sickness, he switched sicknesses.

Paul Crouch: Jesus!

Benny Hinn: He switched sicknesses and took it off the lady and hit the man with it. And the man began screaming and ran out. With ARTHRITIS.

This is not only outrageous but unbiblical and every Christian needs to reject it

for the reason that it is a teaching that seeks to do nothing more than endorse the egotistic interests of men under the influence of a counterfeit spirit. Jesus Christ did not practice anything like this. His disciples did not. Jesus did not even promise that such sickness transfers would occur during the ministry of his followers. The prophets of old did not act in this way. The question is, where does Benny Hinn obtain the mandate to carry out such practices, let alone defend those who do this in the name of the Lord?

10. Knowing the presence of God via experience:

This is marked by people falling, great eloquence and charisma. For Hinn, the power of the Holy Spirit and His presence is dramatic and tangible. Early in his ministry, there were moments when these manifestations occurred and when they did not. When these things did not happen, he confesses:

Only hours before, I had simply spoken the word Jesus, and God's power had invaded the auditorium. ... But now ... I was saying everything I could think of, and nothing was happening. ... It was a disaster!" He gives the reason for this disaster as not having heeded the quiet voice of the Spirit during a lunch appointment with relatives he had not seen for a long time. (The Anointing, p.14.)

In Chapter 1 of Good Morning, Holy Spirit, Hinn narrates his shivering and trembling before and during a Kathryn Kulman meeting in Pittsburgh. On several other occasions, he explains that the Holy Spirit visited him in his room during prayer sessions. In short, for Hinn the presence of God in his own life and in the lives of those he ministers to is marked by an experience-based truth.

One is reminded of Elijah's experience after Mount Carmel when God did not manifest Himself in the wind and fire. Elijah learnt that the presence of God did not have to be seen through overt experiences. In 1 Kings 19:11-12 we read:

Then the Lord said, Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by. Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. After the fire came a gentle whisper.

This scripture should remind us something: It is not in the shaking or trembling of our bodies that God is manifested. It is not in the falling, screaming, rolling on the ground, foaming at the mouth of having what Hinn calls Fire Anointing. As a matter of fact such manifestations characterized certain demoniacs in the days of Jesus.

The people who attended his Anaheim Miracle Crusade in 1998 got to experience this Fire Anointing phenomenon firsthand. Those watching on TV were treated to the spectacle on a November 1998 airing of his This Is Your Day television broadcast on TBN.

Hinn told viewers, "Listen saints, what we're about to show you we rarely ever show on any program. The fire of God hit and the Lord kept saying to me, 'Say, Fire! Speak the word, Fire!' And as I did you're about to see the results. You may never be the same again after this."... "We're about to receive a revelation of Him for I believe the Body of Christ is ready now for a fresh manifestation of Christ."

What follows is a disturbing drama of people falling with several others put in place to catch them when they fall, when Hinn shouts: Fire! in the name of anointing from the Holy Spirit. This has no place in the Bible.

11. More dubious manifestation of the Holy Spirit's "anointing":

Benny Hinn's meetings have been known to be characterized by miraculous "healings" and other acclaimed signs and wonders. But, perhaps the most remarkable occurrence at most of his services and miracle crusades is a semi-theatrical demonstration of "power" dubbed anointing. Sometimes it is merely referred to as "being slain in the Spirit." Benny blows on people, into the mike or practically touches people's foreheads, necks, etc to impart this "Spirit power." Sometimes he will take off his jacket and rub it on his body, a sign of "rubbing on the anointing" and then hit people with it in a dramatic show of "Spirit power anointing" only comparable to the experiences in the late Kathryn Kuhlman's meetings.

Dave Hunt has observed correctly:

"This aspect alone of Hinn's meetings is enough to condemn him. He capriciously throws the "Holy Spirit" around in most irreverent fashion, using the third person of the trinity as his servant to attract attention to himself. Hinn acts as though the "anointing" is some metaphysical power at his disposal, to be rubbed off onto objects. It looks impressive, works largely by the power of suggestion, but has no purpose except to make people stand in awe of Hinn."
(Dave Hunt's "CIB Bulletin", February, 1992)

Hunt quotes a former member of Hinn's church, Bill James, as saying:

"It's scary, the people are mesmerized. ... When he comes out, he's like God."
(ibid.)

As already observed, scripture remains our centre of focus. It does not give any mandate for the rubbing on of the anointing, blowing the Spirit on people and in general, playing such games with God. I doubt that it will be long before this irreverent practices are silenced by the Lord Himself.

12. Reliance on the authority of fellow humans rather than the Scriptures:

Hinn obtains a lot of his inspiration from the ministry of Kathryn Kuhlman and other charismatic personalities. Talking about the price one has to pay to get the anointing he says:

"Kathryn Kuhlman, who was so important in my introduction to the Holy Spirit and to the truths of both the presence and the anointing of the Spirit, had talked about the price. She had paid it. I have also never forgotten my encounters with a man in England who had a tremendous anointing of the Spirit upon his life. Every time I got near him, my legs would shake. Sometimes I would feel weak just looking on him." (The Anointing p15)

If you have read "Good morning, Holy Spirit" and "The Anointing", you will not miss the clear influence on Benny Hinn by Kathryn Kuhlman. Although he singles out other influences on his ministry from pastors, evangelists and other personal friends, no reader could bypass the unquestioned inspiration of Kathryn Kuhlman.

So deep was this influence that Benny not only pays glowing tribute to her but dedicates an entire Chapter Six of "The Anointing" to her under the title "An Unusual Woman of God."

Instead of primarily consulting the Scriptures of the Holy Bible for guidance and instruction on how to go about ministry, Benny closely observes what Kathryn Kuhlman did in her meetings and then tries to do it in his meetings. The following should prove this point:

In his prayer to be filled with the Holy Spirit, Benny prays:

"Holy Spirit, Kathryn says you are her friend. I don't think I know you. Before today I thought I did. ..." (The Anointing, page 28).

Although the benefit of doubt could be given to Benny with the argument that this could be the confession of an honest searcher who was face-to-face with an experience only others seemed to have, Kathryn's influence shows clearly as a point of spiritual reference. Having learnt from Miss Kuhlman that miracles take place when people become quiet in the presence of God during one of her meetings, Hinn decides to try it out. He writes in "The Anointing",

"Minutes passed by. And at last she said, barely audibly, just a whisper, "He comes in," talking about the Holy Spirit, "when you are quiet.". She repeated it even more softly, 'He comes in when you are quiet.' He then adds, "I went back to Canada and thought about it. 'I am going to try this," I said, 'After all, I had already learnt and experienced so much from Kathryn's meetings.' (Ibid page 64).

I wish at this juncture Benny Hinn would have saturated himself in the Scriptures to ascertain whether or not what Kathryn was teaching was true and in accordance with God's revelation. When he finally decided to try the "quietness" in his meetings like Kathryn had done, it takes longer for any results to come by, but they do, just like Kathryn had taught him by example. The fact that Kathryn did it urges him on:

"In my early days of ministry I had a wild and wonderful choir,... and they were enthusiastic, to say the least. They were beautiful, but they could be noisy in their exuberance when worshipping the Lord. So this one Monday night - the hall was packed - I said in advance that I wanted them to be quiet at the crucial moment. Well, it took me twenty minutes to get them quiet because they kept on saying "Thank you, Lord; praise the Lord," the sort of thing that is perfectly normal for an excited charismatic Christian. I said, "Now quiet. If you want to move anymore I'm going to send you downstairs. And they did their best. I looked over my song leader and his face told me that he was wondering what in the world was going on." But then notice the next thing Benny Hinn says, "Quite frankly, about that time I was wondering myself what I was doing. I honestly did not know whether I was doing something right or not. All I knew was that Kathryn had done it, and the Lord had acted. ..." (Ibid, pages 64-65).

If only Benny Hinn had checked all this out with the Bible, not only would he have had a clearer assurance how God moves but he would save himself from the snare of simply doing what other people do. Not only does Peter rebuke Simon for merely wanting the power of the Holy Spirit so he could lay hands on the sick like he and the brethren were doing but the Bible does not give us a standard for following people except for Paul's exhortation that he be followed as he followed Christ. Christ is in the background of Paul's declaration just as He ought to be for Benny's practices. Christ and His Word should guide His doctrine and practice, rather than Kathryn Kulman. We should not follow the example of people in ministry unless they are following Christ and obedient to His Word. While one may argue that Simon was an evil man while Benny Hinn is a Godly man, the standard remains the same: We do not seek God's power so we can do like someone else does or minister like someone else ministers. This can degenerate into dangerous comparisons, emulation and competition.

13. Benny Hinn and false prophecy:

Someone has said, "time is the enemy of a false prophet." Indeed this may be true and time may pass and prove certain "prophets" of our age wrong. Yet masses upon masses will still flock their meetings for newer prophecies and revelations. This is the pathetic situation in Benny Hinn's case. For he has issued a number of dangerously false prophecies.

Drunk with what he deems the Anointing of the Spirit, Hinn has moved to trance like states and issued several daring predictions of the future. Unfortunately, all of them appear in bad taste and expressly discredit him as a prophet of God. Viewing himself as a channel for God to speak through to His people, Hinn has once again blown it by exposing the human origin of his prophecies.

2 Peter 1:21 clearly tells us: "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." The Lord warned Israel about listening to and following false prophets. In Jeremiah 23:16 He said: "This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord.'"

Unlike the prophets of the past who spoke truthfully in the name of the Lord, today's prophets like Benny Hinn will utter a false prophecy and then when it does not come to pass, they will try to justify it some other way or merely ignore it and move on in ministry. Some of them will call those who criticize them names such as "quenchers of the Holy Spirit" or issue the misapplied Scripture, "Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm" (1 Chronicles 16:22).

Yet the Bible does not mince words when it comes to false prophecy. In Deuteronomy 18:21-22, Moses clearly tells Israel that there is a standard for knowing whether a message is from the Lord or whether it is not from the Lord and what should be done to such false prophets. The standard is severe and thorough-going. We read:

"You may say to yourselves, 'How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord?' If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message that has not been spoken by the Lord. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him."

In Jeremiah 29:8-9 the Lord communicates His outright disapproval of men who

Speak falsely in His name and mislead His people:

"... Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them, declares the Lord."

If any prophecy does not come true, then it is not from the Lord, no matter who gives it. We are not to be afraid of such a prophet. He is a liar.

What false prophecies has Benny Hinn issued which sound alarm for you and me today?

On the cassette tape cited earlier of a service at the Orlando Christian Centre on December 31, 1989, Hinn gave some very daring prophecies of what was to take place in the 1990's. This was a New Year service. Some of these are shared here below: First;

"Our Lord says this year in Orlando you're gonna see new ministries arrive. Some are gonna move into Orlando and start new ministries but I'm not in it. They will come here because of the growth and the Lord says to tell you that ... what I do not begin will fall."

One of these ministries, Hinn claimed, would reach the young people of America with its base from Orlando in Florida. Hinn even added that this ministry would expose Satan's last hidden secrets and would even go into the High Schools of America and restore the place of God in the school systems. This new group of people that Hinn referred to as the "new breed of fighters" would even affect the minds in Washington D.C. concerning God and His place in America. All this would happen in the 1990's.

These might have been exciting words of promise to close the decade and look forward with into the future. Unfortunately, they did not come true. The 1990's are now gone but no such thing has taken place. Instead, statistics show an increase in drug use among the youth of America and suicide and other forms of decadence are actually on the increase. In July 1996, the Orlando Sentinel even wrote that heroine was proving deadlier than ever, causing more teenage deaths there in Orlando than in all the other cities of Florida and her other towns combined. By the Mid 1990s, Florida, from where Hinn has operated, was listed as the third most dangerous state in the U.S.A. In fact, it is only the Walt Disney Company with its theme parks, animated films, entertainment and other consumer indulgences that seems to be reaching more and more Americans and especially the youth, not the prophesied ministries Benny Hinn predicted in 1989.

Second, in the same message, Hinn prophesied that two notable deaths would occur within the Christian Circle in the next few years.

The Lord also says that two of His great giants will die in the mid 90's. They have held the torch of revival for the last forty years - these two."

There were no specifications on this prophecy. It was kept in the safety zone of generalization. He claimed that one would die suddenly while asleep and the other with sickness. This was still vague for anyone might have qualified for these kinds conditions. Hinn added that as these two die in the mid 90's, God would shake the world with the last revival. "Their deaths will be the closing pages of this move," said he, "And the new move will begin which I (God) have promised."

It will do you good to remember that the Bible does not promise an end time revival. It actually promises a falling away (2 Thes. 2:1-12; notice verse 3) and increased deceptions (Mat. 24:24-25 and 2 Pet. 2:1-2). Notice that in Hinn's prediction, there was no time frame or names given as the case was with Jeremiah's prophecy of Hananiah's death. Compare this with what we read in Jeremiah 28:16-17:

"Therefore this is what the Lord says, 'I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This very year you are going to die because you have preached rebellion against the Lord. In the seventh month of that same year, Hananiah the prophet died.'"

This was very specific and it came to pass specifically. Not so with Benny Hinn's prophecy. In June 1996, Hinn tried to justify this by saying that one of his close minister friends had died but he did not know when the next one would. This did not make his prediction right.

Third, on the same tape, Hinn prophesies about many resurrections and angelic visitations. There has not been any verified resurrection in the 90's. As the press has kept asking for evidence, the preachers of this kind of gospel have gone

silent. This is questionable.

Fourth, and even more daring, Hinn moves to prophecy, "The Lord also tells me to tell you in the mid 90's, about 94 or 95, no later than that, God will destroy the homosexual community of America." Hinn said that God would destroy this community by fire "...and many will turn and be saved and many will rebel and be destroyed."

Actually, on the contrary, the homosexual communities both in and outside America, have become more radical, overt and outspoken. This implies that Hinn spoke presumptuously. Walt Disney has even supported and given recognition to the homosexual community. If this has taken place right in Orlando, then Hinn's prophecy is far from being near true. The 90's are over; but the Lord did not rain fire on homosexuals and, shall we still have Hinn come and prophesy in Nairobi?

In another prophecy, Hinn says on the same tape, "An earthquake will hit the East Coast of America and destroy much of it in the 90's." Since the 90's are over and if any earthquakes have been known to affect America, they have mostly been in California on the West Coast not on the East Coast, Hinn has prophesied falsehood.

Benny Hinn also made several prophecies on the political scene. He claimed that a woman president would ascend the throne of America and rule from the White House and that this woman president would destroy America. It did not happen during the last decade. He anticipates the rapture around this time of the 90's and adds that Europe will rule the nations and greatly influence the world. He has been wrong on this as well.

Perhaps one of the greatest lies prophesied by Benny Hinn on the same tape is that Cuban leader, Fidel Castro would die in the 1990s. We are in the year 2000 and Castro is still alive. Brethren, this is extremely serious.

To crown it all, Hinn prophesied that a world dictator was coming:

"A world dictator is coming on the scene! My! He's a short man! He's a short man! I see a short man! Who's a perfect incarnation of Satan ... Never in my life have I had anything happen like what's happening to me now. This man will rule the world. The next few years you will see him. But not long after that you will see Me (God)."

The 90's are gone. No short man rules the world today. There is no world dictator yet governing the nations. Hinn has spoken presumptuously. He has lied in the name of God.

Lastly, we will focus on Hinn's prediction in the same New Year service that the economy of the United States would collapse.

"...And what will bring America to its knees, says the Spirit, is the economic collapse. And the allies she has depended upon will turn their backs."

But in the 90's, America's economy did not collapse as Hinn had predicted. Actually it stabilized and the stock markets were on their high. We have no room here to focus on his predictions of revival in Canada beginning with the West Coast in British Columbia. Even if we were to understand this to be the "Toronto Blessing", this originated in America with Rodney Howard-Browne, not in Canada. Toronto is in South Central Canada, not the Western part. Hinn has spoken falsely and, I do not understand all the fascination, excitement and following all over the world, including my own country, Kenya.

14. The dead will rise before TV screens

If any one of you reading this document is drawn to think that the above prophecies are merely an unfortunate record of past predictions which Benny Hinn has long desisted from, there is a lot to surprise you. Just recently, during the Praise the Lord show telecast on TBN on October 19, 1999, Hinn issued a semi-prophetic prediction that there is coming a time when TBN would be a channel of incredible miraculous resurrections of the dead. He claimed that the dead in their caskets would be raised to life in front of TV sets:

Abut here's first what I see for TBN. You're going to have people raised from the dead watching this network. You're going to have people raised form the dead watching TBN. ... There's going to be such power on these programs people will be raised from the dead worldwide. I'm telling you, I see this in the Spirit. It's going to be so awesome....

While many Benny Hinn lovers would hail this as a great declaration of faith, prophetic power and Spirit presence, I choose to differ with it because a) the

Bible does not promise any haphazard resurrections that are aimed at promoting television channels b) the rest of the programme seems to enter a more subjective realm of inspiration and revelation that proves its unauthentic nature and source; c) the Bible encourages every believer to look forward to the resurrection at the rapture and not some frivolous anticipations intended to puff up the spiritual egos of a few.

For purposes of clarification, I quote the above-mentioned claim at length as it appeared during the interview on the above show:

Benny Hinn: But here's first what I see for TBN. You're going to have people raised from the dead watching this network. You're going to have people raised from the dead watching TBN. Programs -- just plain programs -- programs that haven't done much when it comes to supernatural manifestations -- teaching programs. It's not going to be a Benny Hinn saying "Stretch your hands." It's going to be your average teaching program, your normal Christian program that's blessing the church. There's going to be such power on these programs people will be raised from the dead worldwide. I'm telling you, I see this in the Spirit. It's going to be so awesome. Jesus I give you praise for this -- that people around the world -- maybe not so much in America -- people around the world who will lose loved ones, will say to undertakers, "Not yet. I want to take my dead loved one and place him in front of that TV set for 24 hours."

Paul Crouch: Benny Hinn! Jesus!

Benny Hinn: I'm telling you. People will be -- people -- I'm telling you, I feel the anointing talking here. People are going to be cancelling funeral services and bringing their dead in their caskets, placing them -- my God! I feel the anointing here -- placing them before a television set, waiting for God's power to come through and touch them. And it's going to happen time and time -- so much it's going to spread. You're going to hear it from Kenya to Mexico to Europe to South America, where people will be raised from the -- so much so that the Word will spread that if some dead person be put in front of this TV screen, they will be raised from the dead and they will be by the thousands. You wait. Now the Lord just told me -- and I don't know whether this is true or not -- as I'm saying this, the Lord said He gave you that word many, many years ago.

Paul Crouch: I have said that, yes.

Benny Hinn: I don't remember you saying that to me ever.

Paul Crouch: No, I didn't.

Benny Hinn: [He said] 'I've told him this already.'

Paul Crouch: Yeah, the Lord spoke that to me in the very beginning of TBN and I didn't really...

Jan Crouch: And I had a dream.

Benny Hinn: You had a dream.

Paul Crouch: Yeah, tell him about that little...

Jan Crouch: That's just a dream -- people were being raised from the dead. Years ago.

Paul Crouch: It's on tape. I said the day is coming...

Benny Hinn: I see quite something amazing. I see rows of caskets lining up in front of this TV set and I see them bringing them closer to the TV set and as people are coming closer I see actually loved ones picking up the hands of the dead and letting them touch the screen and people are getting raised as their hands are touching that screen. With this program -- I'm not talking about my program -- I'm talking programs, plain programs aired -- the glory of God will be so on TBN that there's going to be divine resurrection happening as people bring their loved ones to the TV set.

Paul Crouch: Just because it's His time.

Benny Hinn: It's His time. Now here's something else I see. Jesus, I give You praise for this, I give You praise for this, I give You praise for this -- the day will come, Paul -- and I pray you'll be here. I pray the Lord will allow you to be here and see it. I mean, physically be here. You're in your 60s now. But the day is going to come when the gifts of the Holy Spirit will so intensify in the church that young children will be watching TBN and signs and wonders will begin to take place through them. Impartations of the Spirit will come to them. A little child that knows nothing about the gifts, knows nothing about the anointing, knows nothing about the power of God, will be imbued with power from on high as a child, as that TV set comes on, and will go out like fire torches to their schools and their playgrounds and their families. I see children, I see children, what looks like fire in their lips spreading -- but I see these kids touching the TV set, receiving it, and going out and spreading it. And it's going to happen with children in the U.S., Canada, all over the world. And I do see people being raised from the dead here, but I see masses of them overseas.

This is all ridiculous.

15. Benny Hinn's involvement with the power of the dead:

It is not enough to think back to the involvement of Benny Hinn in appearances on Psychic Hotlines in the Mid 90's and how he solicited funding from viewers, etc, in order to make this possible. It is more disturbing what he has got involved in to obtain more "power" and what he dubbs "anointing."

G. Richard Fisher and M. Kurt Goedelman of Personal Freedom Outreach have observed a phenomenon that ought to awaken the Kenyan church to the rise of

necromancy in Hinn's ministry. They have observed the following: "Hinn has long been infatuated with the late faith healer, Kathryn Kuhlman... Now Hinn has her as a female spirit guide. And with this claim, he is introducing a deadly spiritist virus to his followers." And they are right.

Hinn claimed in the late 90's that he was shown the future of his ministry from Kuhlman and Jesus in what he described as a "vision of the night." The account of this alleged vision was given to those attending a 1997 Partners Conference in Atlanta and those viewing the June 11, 1997 instalment of "This Is Your Day" programme. Hinn declared on the broadcast:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'm going to tell you something right now. The Lord showed me a vision about - goodness it's almost been a year now and I - I - I - I can tell you I sense now the time has come when this vision is gonna be fulfilled. I had a vision of the night. What I saw, myself walk into a room. I've shared this before but just in case you - you've not heard it I want you to hear it. I saw myself walk into a room and there stood Kathryn Kuhlman. And I have not seen Kathryn in a dream or vision in years. Uh, when she died, the day she died, the morning she died, I had a dream, what I - what I saw in a, - in a - in a - in a casket with a white dress. And when I woke up in - in the morning, I knew she had died, and it was on the news that same morning. And so it's been many years. And there she was standing in this room, and she was saying to me- Of course this was a dream, but really more of a vision. A lot of times dreams are really visions of the night and the Bible calls them that. When - when God gives to you in the fashion it really came to me, when I was a little boy, I saw the Lord in this dream. It was so real, it was so real a vision because when - when He appeared to me my body became electric just like electricity went through me and when I woke that

electricity was still on my body.'

Then he goes on:

"Well, in this vision that - that - that I saw - saw Miss Kuhlman, and she said "follow me", that's all she said. And I followed her to a second room. In that second room stood the Lord ... when I saw the Lord, Kathryn disappeared. She was just gone (Hinn snaps fingers). And now the Lord looked at me and said, "follow me." And I followed Him to a third room. In the third room sat a gentleman. I still remember his face. I can tell you, I still remember the man's face. And the man sat in his wheelchair in that third room. There was a big hole in the neck. A tube down his throat. He was crippled on that wheelchair. And he had tubes down his body. Totally crippled ...totally of course, paralyzed. The Lord laid His hands on this man and as He did the tubes disappeared, the hole closed, he was completely healed and got up off the wheelchair. It was a creative miracle. Now I'm standing watching the Lord in this vision heal this man. And now as the man was healed the Lord looked at me with piercing eyes ... and said, "Do it" ... and the dream and vision came to an end."

In a separate vision, Hinn cites Kathryn Kuhlman as appearing to him and telling him to ask for a healing ministry: "... Ask, we are waiting for you to ask! We are waiting for you to ask! We are praying with you to ask."

There is, however, a more dangerous aspect of Hinn's involvement with the dead. He claims that the graves of Kathryn Kuhlman and Aimee Semple McPherson possess a supernatural anointing, healing and even other forms of spiritual power and blessing. Although McPherson divorced twice and is suspected of having

died by committing suicide, Hinn still thinks she is a great spiritual hero (See Hank Hanegraaff's book, "Counterfeit Revival", pages 168-169).

On a cassette tape titled "Double Portion Anointing" occurring in the series "Holy Ghost Invasion" delivered at the Orlando Christian Centre in Florida on April 7, 1991, Hinn declared:

"One of the strangest experiences I had a few years ago (was) visiting Aimee's tomb in California. This Saturday I'm on T.B.N. Friday I'm gonna go and visit Kathryn Kuhlman's tomb. It's close by Aimee's in Forest Lawn Cemetery. I've been there once already and every so often I like to go and pay my respects 'cause this great woman of God has touched my life. And that grave, uh, where she's buried is closed, they built walls around it. You can't get in without a key and I'm one of the very few people who can get in. But I'll never forget when I saw Aimee's tomb. It's incredibly dramatic. She was such a lady that her tomb has seven-foot angels bowing on each side of the tomb with a gold chain around it. As - as incredible as it is that someone would die with angels bowing on each side of her grave, I felt a terrific anointing (sic) when I was there. I actually, I - I, hear this, I trembled when I visited Aimee's tomb. I was shaking all over. God's power came all over me ... I believe the anointing has lingered over Aimee's body. I know this may be shocking to you ... and I'm going to take David and Kent and Sheryl this week. It's incredible. And Kathryn's. It's amazing. I've heard of people healed when they visited that too. They were totally healed by God's power. You say, 'what a crazy thing'..."

My dear brethren, this is not a light matter. The prophet Isaiah strictly warned against necromancy and occultism in general just as did several other servants of

God.

"I have stretched my hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, according to their own thoughts; a people who provoke me to anger continually to my face ... who sit among the graves and spend the night in the tombs; who eat swine's flesh and the broth of abominable things ..." (Isaiah 65:2-4, NKJV).

Benny Hinn may not be spending nights there but if doing so would mean greater anointing, I am certain he would. He may not be "eating" swine's flesh, etc, but he deliberately loves to go to these tombs or take others there. In the history of Israel, dead bodies were considered unclean and anyone who touched them was considered unclean.

Usually Hinn and others of his kind will try to justify this practice by referring to the bones of Elisha which caused a young man to come back to life (2 Kings 13:20-21). A close look at this will however show that God's hand was on Elisha and not in league with the quivering experiences of the likes of Benny Hinn. There was a clear resuscitation and not merely a whimsy experience dubbed "anointing." Besides, Hinn and company may not take kindly the fact that Elisha died of a disease. For them, a man of God like Elisha should have lived above the petty limitations of mortality and faithlessness.

More horrifying, nevertheless, is the fact that if Hinn is receiving visions from the dead, then he must be in contact with spirits of the dead. If God warns against this kind of communication (Deuteronomy 18:10ff) then he is not speaking from God but from deceiving spirits and his messages therefore the "doctrines of

demons." As Paul said,

"The Spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron." (1 Timothy 4:1).

Isaiah asked, "And when they say to you, 'Seek those who are mediums and wizzards, who whisper and mutter,' should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?" (Isaiah 8:19). It must be noted that anyone who practised necromancy was supposed to die. (See Leviticus 19:31; 20:6,20:27; Deuteronomy 18:10-11). Saul, the first king of Israel actually died because of this practice.

We read in 1 Chronicles 10:13: "So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he committed against the Lord, because he did not keep the word of the Lord, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance.."

You may remember how he did it. He asked the witch of Endor to call up prophet Samuel for him from the dead. God had forbidden Israel to seek information via necromancy, a practice so common among the Canaanite pagans. The witch of Endor could not snatch Samuel out of God's hands against God's wishes. Whether a revival of Samuel or a vision of him, Saul was completely shocked and terrified; mediums cannot call the dead back to life because God forbids it and so, this must have been an apparition or deceptive demon spirit. If God hates something, it is completely wrong. Saul was judged and condemned to death because of this. The dead cannot come back to life through mans means. God must will it via a resurrection and not necromancy. Even the rich man

in Luke 16 wishes to go back down but is not permitted (Luke 16:28-29). Benny Hinn is wrong in pursuing this kind of practice and must be corrected rather than embraced wholesale.

16. An obsession with "the anointing":

To the point where Hinn has even authored a book bearing the title "The Anointing", it is clear that this is one thing that occupies a central place in the life and ministry of someone who had rather die than lose such a manifestation of "the Holy Spirit." In the second chapter of "The Anointing" titled "the most valuable gift", Hinn says,

Except for my salvation, I value the anointing the most." He adds, "I'd rather die than lose His touch." Hinn says that when the anointing of the Spirit comes upon your life, all confusion will vanish and you will be transformed forever. (See page 19 of "The Anointing.)

Yet the confusion in his doctrine (which he has had at times to recant) should prove just the opposite. The lies and inconsistencies surrounding his conversion, that of his family members, the claim that his father was the mayor of Jaffa when there is no evidence to prove this, etc, puts question to this statement or, at least, to the practical application of it in Hinn's life, even if this were the case. On this matter, as well, Benny does not leave Kathryn Kuhlman's influence and inspiration behind. He sees obtaining the power of the Holy Spirit's "anointing" as the key to the blessings of heaven.

"I had caught a glimpse," he writes, "but only a fleeting one - of the answer to

Kathryn Kuhlman's statement: 'If you find the power - you will find heaven's treasure.' (Ibid, page 36).

One page earlier in this book, Hinn dispenses of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit in preference of the power of the Holy Spirit:

"Our greatest desire should not be for spiritual gifts," he declares, "but for the presence and power of God. Gifts may not change your life, but the presence and power will, and that was what I tasted for the first time in Oshawa."

This is a narration about one of Hinn's early ministry experiences when he had been invited to speak in Oshawa but in which meeting he ends up talking about nothing but his newfound experience with the anointing. But just what is this anointing? Although Hinn does not give a clear definition of what he means by "anointing", his books are replete with the indication that by "anointing" he means the power of the Holy Spirit which enables the Christian to experience a supernatural presence either instantly or on an ongoing basis. Once the Spirit brings this "anointing" those around you will feel it, argues Hinn.

"Many times when my friends came to see me, they began weeping because of the presence of the Holy Spirit." (Good Morning, Holy Spirit, page 41)

"My brothers would tell you of the times they came near me and didn't know that was happening - but they felt something unusual... 'What I want, He tells the Lord, "What I want is what I have right now, ... Whatever it is, don't let it quit." (Ibid, page 42).

And, indeed, Benny would rather die than lose the anointing as we have already seen.

At the beginning of "The Anointing", Benny Hinn further tells us just what this is all about and for which reason he authors the book:

"My purpose in "The Anointing" is to further that beautiful, ongoing relationship and lead you into the reality of the power to serve the Lord Jesus in His particular calling on your life." He Explains, "The power is the anointing of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus after His resurrection: ..." (page 9).

In recent years, Benny Hinn has propounded a developed understanding of this anointing. He calls it double portion anointing by which he means, so much anointing characterized by body trembling, signs and wonders, being slain in the Spirit, etc. It is the source of his double portion anointing, (variously known as fire anointing) that is disturbing. Hinn obtained this brand of anointing by visiting the graves of Kathryn Kuhlman and Aimee Semple McPherson.

But, is all this in accordance with the word of God?

First, if Hinn would like us to believe that the anointing is a gift of the Holy Spirit, he needs to give us Biblical evidence that this is the case; for the passages that talk about and even list the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the books of 1 Corinthians and Romans do not include "anointing" as a gift of the Holy Spirit. In this sense, Hinn reads beyond the Biblical provision of spiritual gifts.

Second, for Hinn to say that our greatest desire should not be spiritual gifts but the presence of God and that gifts may not change our lives, he would have to outrightly ignore 1 Corinthians 14:1 which, in fact, elevates prophecy over the

other gifts and not the "anointing." If this is the state of things with Hinn's view on the gifts, one wonders what he would have to say on the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22!

One other thing needs to be said about anointing. This word has got to do with the consecration of kings, prophets and priests into office. Special objects of worship such as unleavened bread, the tabernacle and sanctuary vessels were also anointed for use. In this way they were set apart. Prophet Samuel anointed Saul and David to be kings over Israel.

How did it happen?

Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, has not the Lord anointed you leader over his inheritance? (I Sam. 10:1)

...Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power ... (I Sam. 16:13)

The only place anointing with oil is mentioned in the New Testament is James 5:14. It is clear that consecration for ministry and leadership are the key thoughts in the Old Testament and healing, in the New Testament. It is out of context to assume that people can be anointed via what Hinn calls, fire anointing. It is not in the trembling and falling. It is in righteous obedience to the call of God.

17. Appeal and outright influence from witchcraft:

While the Bible outrightly condemns the practice of witchcraft, Benny Hinn has been known to draw not only inspiration from the words of a witch, but to obtain biblical principles from them. On his "Praise the Lord" programme of 1st June, 1989 broadcast on TBN, he tells of an incident in which a witch gives him some insight into the power of the spoken word:

"I had a witch tell me this ... she said, 'You know that we are taught in witchcraft how to kill birds with words and how to kill people with our mouth ... We are taught with words to bring disease , on , on, on men ... by speaking certain words that defeat them.' She can actually cause sickness that could very well kill ... She said, 'with words I used to kill birds. I used to kill birds.' She said she would speak to a bird and the bird would drop dead. ... I said, 'Dear God, I didn't know the devil has such power.' And the Lord spoke to me and He said, 'the devil can kill with words, then you with your words can bring life.' And it just come (sic) and clicked inside of me, brother ... And we Christians don't realize the power in our mouths." (Cited in "Christianity in Crisis", by Hank Hanegraaff, Harvest house Publishers, Oregon, 1993, page 84.)

Talking to a number of Christians about Benny Hinn, I am drawn to think that they are so hungry for the sight of powerful manifestations that it does not matter the source of such power. Hinn marvels at how much power the devil has and believes that he can learn Christian ministry lessons from servants of the devil such as witches. Most of his followers have no problem with this. When I have pointed to them that I was not comfortable with the sources of Benny Hinn's inspiration, they have given the indication that I had missed the mark. One of them even told me that my conversation with her about this dubious source of power was in bad taste and unnecessary. She insisted that if people are

being healed and various signs and wonders were being wrought, Hinn should not be given such a harsh look.

Yet, what if she was to rethink this position with the above passage in mind? Would it still be a matter to ignore that a pastor, a minister of the Gospel of Christ with the Bible at his disposal, perhaps more than one copy of it, was actually drawing inspiration from witches? Has he read the Bible enough to know that witches are outrightly condemned and that they will not enter the kingdom of God? (Galatians 5:20; Exodus 22:18; Deuteronomy 18:10; 1 Samuel 15:23; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Micah 5:12; Nahum 3:4; etc).

Not to condemn Hinn at this implies a number of things:

- A. That we ourselves have no problem drawing from witchcraft;
- B. That it does not matter to us the source of any Christian practice;
- C. As long as anyone comes in the name of the Lord, it does not matter what he or she does or preaches; and
- D. We will go for anything as long as the majority says that something or someone is okay. Acts 17:11 needs to be resounded here once more. Hinn is not on track. He has missed it altogether.

If you thought that the power of the word affects us in this regard at the level of the occult, you have not heard it all. For Hinn, Job got himself into all kinds of problems because of his words. Hinn claims that Job's troubles came upon him as a result of speaking words of fear and making accusations against God. Describing Job as "carnal" and "bad", Hinn asserts that Job's mouth was his biggest problem. While the details of this deplorable theology will be discussed below, suffice it to draw the contrasts that emerge from Hinn's position here when set against the record of the Bible: Note that while God calls Job "upright", Hinn calls him "carnal". When God calls Job "good", Hinn calls him "bad." God sees Job as having spoken right, yet Hinn sees him as having made a negative confession. Despite the divine commendation given by God, Hinn insists that Job missed the mark.

18. Benny Hinn's assault on Bible passages:

In his writings and on his television shows, Hinn has repeatedly proved how little he knows of the Scriptures. If one wishes to insist that he knows enough Bible, then Hinn willingly twists and even alters, adds and subtracts from the Bible record to suit his own ends. If he reads the Bible, he should know clearly that we must not do this at all and that there is a serious penalty for it. See Revelation 22:18-19 for example:

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from the book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

I believe that the same applies to the entire canon of Scripture. Below is a microcosmic representation of passages Hinn has totally assaulted:

A. About Job:

Hank Hanegraaff has given us a mind-rending account of such assault:

"Despite the sombre warning of Proverbs 30:6 "(Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar") Hinn adds the word "never" to the text in Job 1:21 and thus completely reverses the meaning of the passage. Encouraged by his audience, Hinn sniggers, "You know what? We've said this a million times and it's not even scriptural - all because of Job:" The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21) I have news for you: That is not Bible, that's not Bible. The Lord giveth and never taketh away. And just because he said, 'blessed be the name of the Lord" don't mean that he's right. When he said, 'blessed be the name' he was just being religious. And being religious don't mean you are right."(Hank Hanegraaff, "Christianity in Crisis", page 98).

Notice that this teaching was going out to thousands and thousands of people both where it was preached and then broadcast on TBN on 3rd November, 1990. This is bad teaching, is dishonourable to the Bible and misleading on Scriptural teaching on Job. Hanegraaff explains this well, and for this reason, we quote him here at length:

"Hinn's outburst is not unique. ... the very next verse in Scripture commends Job with the following words: "In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with

wrongdoing" (1:22)

"Job steadfastly refused to curse his Creator in the midst of some of the most profound pain imaginable. He had been selected as the subject for a stern test of faith because he was indisputably the greatest man of faith alive. God declared that Job's faith was real faith. ...

"As Scripture reveals, Job not only passed the test of faith with flying colors but also demonstrated the remarkable depth of his faith when he uttered these unforgettable words: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised." Rather than cursing God, as his wife had goaded him to do (2:9), or blaming his tragedy on secret sin, as his cruel companions urged him to do, Job placed his fate in the hands of a God who is both infinitely just and infinitely merciful.

"Job's friends - like their descendants Hinn and the Faith teachers - declare that Job had sinned and thus deserved the calamities that befell him. ... All of these "comforters" clung to the belief that sickness and suffering were the result of secret sin or negative confessions. Yet God steadfastly confirmed Job as blameless and upright....

"The book of Job builds an airtight defence for Job's faith. Who can forget Job's unwavering utterance of faith, "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him" (13:15) This singular statement proved the depth of his reliance on God. He cherished his faith above even his life. His eternal perspective is enshrined forever in his words "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth"

19:25"

B. Misinterpretation of Isaiah 52:1ff

You will need to read this passage and concentrate on verses 1-9 to understand the level of departure. Benny Hinn says that the word "awake" in this passage has got to do with prayer:

"when it says 'awake, awake' it means 'pray, pray.' You will recall that the Lord Jesus, finding the apostle sleeping as He awaited His betrayer in Gethsemane, said 'watch and Pray' (Matt. 26:41) ..." (The Anointing page 55).

He further says: "... the passage begins by telling us to awake, awake, seek the Lord with all our might, enter into deep prayer, deep love, make Him our number 1 priority. Then six things occur:

1. We will put on spiritual strength - strength against Satan, strength against sin, strength against temptation. Weakness will go.
2. We will put on new holy garments, the garments of righteousness. Sin will not be able to touch us.
3. The uncircumcised and unclean will not be a part of us. We will no longer have fellowship with the wicked.
4. We will stop running here and there looking for someone to pray for us or get us out of trouble. We will shake ourselves from the dust - from our misery, from our mess. We will arise and be free.
5. And then we can sit down and rest. There will be peace - the real peace of Jesus.

6. We will loose ourselves from the grip of Satan and the sin that keeps coming back upon us....

"If we read on into Isaiah 52:3-5, we find the results of not awaking or of remaining prayerless. This surely will shake every one of us awake;...

1. Because we do not awake, we will sell ourselves to the devil for nothing.
2. We will go down to Egypt, back into the world.
3. We will become oppressed.
4. We will be taken away like slaves
5. We will wail and howl from the bondage we are in.
6. The wicked will blaspheme God, a condition we see in our country today because we Christians do not pray. ..." (country America)

Talking to Pastor Steve Maina of Nairobi, Kenya, I came to gain some insight into what Isaiah 52 is all about in context. When you look at this passage, you will notice just how far Benny Hinn has gone away from the meaning of this section of Isaiah. Below are some of the contextual insights Pastor Steve shared:

1. Isaiah 52 fits within the context of God comforting His people who are in exile by promising them restoration. The message of comfort runs from Isaiah 40 - 55. The theme of awake actually begins a little earlier than 52:1 since it appears in 51:17, "Awake, awake. Rise up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of His wrath ..."
2. What does this 'awake' mean? This is a call to action. God struck Israel

down by giving her the cup of his wrath to drink. But here she is told that wrath has been removed. God has taken the cup from her and given it to his enemies (v. 21-22) the objective facts are that she is not condemned anymore; she is forgiven. The problem is that Israel is still labouring under a sense of condemnation and it is like a drug that stupefies her. (Of course we can understand why. The people of Israel are still in exile. Nothing has changed in their outward circumstances, this will come later. It is the word of God that has come to them.)

3. Then we come to Isaiah 52:1-6 where the second call to awake is given. This second call is intended to counter a third cause of paralysis - a sense of utter worthlessness. Zion has been defiled (vs.1), enslaved (vs.2), sold (vs. 3), oppressed (vs. 4) and verse 3 and 4 captures the whole sense. She has been sold for nothing and taken away for nothing. This of course has made them to sink so low and so the message of Isaiah is to bring hope to a wounded, harassed and afflicted people.

4. Isaiah 52:1-6 thus challenges Zion to see herself, not as her enemies see her, or even as she sees herself, but as the Lord sees her. In His eyes she is as beautiful as a bride (vs. 1), she is beyond price (vs. 3), she belongs to God (vs. 4-6) and God's name is the one at stake when she is treated that way (vs. 5-6)

5. The good news here is that God is about to give a fresh expression of His love for Zion by totally reversing her circumstances - and all the world will see him do it (vs. 7-10)

Benny Hinn therefore misinterprets this passage because:

- a) He doesn't take the context of exile and restoration into account.
- b) The 6 horrible results he gives of prayerlessness are completely out of place. For God is not telling Zion they will go to Egypt, or be sold to slavery (future.) The passage is clearly in past tense and not future. They have already been sold to Egypt and into slavery.
- c) The text has nothing to do with paying the price. God's blessings in this passage are not conditional. God has already blessed them. They only need to appropriate, or accept his blessings and promise of restoration.
- d) The Scripture Hinn uses, matt. 26:41 where Jesus tells his disciples to watch and pray is taken out of context and the words used incorrectly. The word used in this passage is not awake, but watch which does not always mean that someone is sleeping! It may mean he is inattentive.

19. Cursing and blessing:

Inspired by Kathryn Kuhlman and the musings of his mind dubbed the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Benny Hinn has taught that Christians can use their mouths to bless or curse. There is a sense in which this practice may have been inspired by conversations with a witch as earlier cited. Yet Benny does not stop at teaching this. He has practiced it himself and allowed it to go on broadcast. During a Denver crusade broadcast by TBN on 13th September, 1999, this became quite apparent.

Benny Hinn: I've been preaching 25 years almost; I've never seen the anointing as frightening as I saw in Denver Friday night; and so when you hear me in just a little bit give blessings and cursings ... any who attack this anointing, I speak a judgment on them. ...

Benny Hinn: My skin is about to explode. Your body will tingle from the top to the bottom. Lift your voices. Lift your hands and ask him for it -- People of God, be healed! People of the Lord, be delivered! Rise up out of your sickness and jump into the river of healing and be healed, in Jesus' name. Take your seats; this is just the beginning of the service. (Hinn then brings up a man claiming two thirds of his heart is dead.) He's barely been able to walk (Hinn growls). The glory! The glory! If I don't release it, I'll blow up. If I don't release the anointing, I'll blow up. I got to release it on somebody. The demon must bow to the name of the master Jesus ... Yes Lord I'll do it!

I place a curse on every man and woman that will stretch his hand against this anointing. I curse that man who dares to speak a word against this ministry. But any man, any woman, that raises his or her hand in blessing towards this ministry, I bless that man. I bless that home. I bless that family. Any man, any woman, any person that raises his tongue in blessing toward this work, raises his tongue in blessing toward this anointing, raises his tongue in blessing toward this servant of the Lord, I bless them. I bless the work of your hands. I bless your life with His mighty power. I bless your home with divine protection. I bless your children with long life and I bless you (with) length of days. I bless you with healing. I bless you with prosperity. I bless you with the very presence of Almighty God. I, a servant, bless you in the name of the One I serve. I bless (your) people tonight in Denver. Lift your hands and receive the blessing. I rarely ever do what I'm doing now. This is the Holy Ghost on me telling me to do this. I bless you; I bless your homes, your life, your future, and your children. May every attack of Satan be destroyed. May every plan of hell be destroyed against you (change of voice) and every plan of God be established in Jesus name. Amen, amen. (This excerpt is from a video

screened during the programme.)

20. Controversy, confusion and outright lying:

Perhaps one of the saddest aspects of my sharing with you this information comes right here. Hinn has been known to offer divergent accounts of his conversion and those close to him, information about his father as mayor of Jaffa and other related matters which are quite confusing.

Looking first at conversion, he has noted that he had a vision of Jesus at age 11 long before he was converted. He adds that this appearance of Jesus continued even after his conversion. Yet, the when and how of his conversion is quite confusing. In some instances he claims it occurred in 1972 and yet in 1987 he claimed that an angel of the Lord took him in a vision into a room in the high school where he was saved. In his book "Good morning, Holy Spirit" he indicates that the angel dropped him off on Don Mills Road outside the wall of his school.

In the 1981 publication of the PTL Devotional, he said: "I got saved in Israel in 1968." In a 1983 message in St. Louis, Hinn gives a different story which says that someone witnessed to him and he got saved after he came to Toronto from Israel. Just when did Benny get converted? All of these cannot be true.

The account is confusing on the conversion of his family members as well. In the 1984 publication "War in the Heavens" he says that all of his family members were saved at the same time.

Let us turn to another kind of problem. This has got to do with Hinn and the

others' survival of a plane crash in 1983 on the PTL Show with Paul and Jan Crouch. Hinn claims that the Lord had spoken saying, "Nothing will happen to you." He said further:

"When I walked out of that plane, Paul, I did not have a scratch on my body." Paul Crouch responded, "We remember that! Not a scratch!" Hinn actually even added the claim that not only did he walk out without any injury or scratch but that right on the spot he healed one of the passengers' eyes that had come out of the socket.

Yet the Orlando Sentinel reported that all six occupants were injured. The Avon Park paper reported "Hinn said he was in a state of shock," and that "It will be the last time I will ever fly in one of these (single-engine planes) again." Except on the PTL Show, there had been no previous indications of miracles, not by Hinn and no reports from the victims. If a miracle has taken place, it has. There are no two ways about it. Records show that the Hinn's were in hospital. They would not be in hospital if they did not have any injuries. The records show that Hinn was released after two days and his wife stayed in for three days. According to the sheriff's report, Hinn had multiple contusions, abrasions and lacerations.

As concerns the healing of a man's eye, it is reported that Hinn prayed for his eye but it was not healed. After several operations at the hospital, the man is now able to see. This was a work of surgery and not Benny Hinn laying hands on him. God heals but we must not say he performed an instant miracle by the laying on of hands when He used a surgical process to reach this healing end.

Investigations have also indicated doubt on the claim by Hinn that he was miraculously healed of a stutter. His own friends, even those he names in his testimony don't seem to remember that he even stuttered. Yet, from his sermons, one might want to push the stutter into some form of existence given his constant repetition of words especially when saying something new. Little pauses can also be noticed in his speech. If any healing took place, this would be total. I think we need to be a little more careful with the use of God's name. One youth pastor from the church Hinn claims this miracle took place did not recall that he stuttered.

Perhaps one of the most serious controversies in this regard is Hinn's claim that his father was mayor of Jaffa when he was growing up in Israel. He documents this both in "Good morning, Holy Spirit" and "The Anointing" among other sources. An exhaustive search including a look at the mayoral lists of Tel Aviv-Jaffa indicates that this is a hoax. During the compilation of this material, I called up the Israeli Embassy in Nairobi which in turn referred me to Rabbi Zofar for assistance on this question. As we talked about whether or not a non-Jew could qualify as mayor of Jaffa, these were his words:

"I do not know of any law that forbids a gentile from being mayor but this would have been more likely before the independence in 1948. But if a search proved that Hinn's father, Constandi was never a mayor, why would anyone believe Hinn on this question?"

CONCLUSION

My dear brethren, I must draw to a conclusion of this discussion by reminding you a number of things.

First, I absolutely have nothing against Benny Hinn as a person. I love him with the love of Christ. What I am concerned with here is not the person but what he has taught authoritatively in the name of God and His Scriptures on many a pulpit, stadium, radio and TV screen. Guided by the mandate to test the spirits to see if they are from God, I am convinced that the Kenyan Christian who intends to go to Hinn's crusade will be approaching and listening to a man who has propagated more than meets eye or ear. It is my conviction that Hinn has been wrong on almost all the major doctrines of our faith and that he lacks the credibility that the average Kenyan Christian accords him.

I am also concerned with the pastor who will encourage members of his or her congregation to attend Hinn's meetings without warning them of what Hinn has taught or solicit ministry support and personnel to assist with the coming crusade. The question remains, on what basis or understanding would such a pastor be soliciting such support? Would it be upon the understanding that despite what Hinn has taught, it does not matter what level of support is given? Or, and I hope it has been, is it an involvement that is based on sheer ignorance of what this man has taught? If so, I pray that this document will reawaken us to the understanding that the Bible does not allow us to be party to such high error.

Second, it is my concern that given the material shared in this document, every leader who encourages his members to attend this crusade will also remind them to be open-minded enough to be discerning of what transpires during the meetings. After examining the facts in this document, to send members of your congregation or those under your leadership to this crusade without exposure to the dangers warned about here is like sending them unarmed into the wild where they may be torn to pieces by the unkind forces of deception.

Third, it is my hope that each of you entrusted with the responsibility of shepherding the flock of Christ will be sensitive enough to the upholding of truth above everything else. Experience has shown me that it is common place for Christians to insist on preserving unity at the expense of truth. After certain leaders gain wide acclaim or, in short, get very popular with congregants, some pastors may tend to fear losing them by telling them that their hero was wrong on account of this or the other doctrine. They had rather not correct, rebuke or even mention such doctrinal shortcomings for the reason that they will become unpopular themselves. At this, the question remains, what exactly is our primary calling? Is it the preservation of numbers and all the benefits that come with it or is it speaking the truth in love as we watch over the flock of the soon-returning Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ? Friendships, ministry relations, financial support schemes and even proclamation methods that blatantly ignore the centrality of the Bible and its focus on Gods absolute truth is dangerous and wanting.

Lastly, a quick word for all those who will stop at nothing with regard to attending Hinn's crusade. What will happen after Benny Hinn has been here and gone? How exactly do you view this coming visit to Kenya? What do we hope to gain when we go to the meetings: the ministry of Gods truth or mere euphoria of

being in the presence of a mighty giant of faith? Is your life going to be different because you will be drawn closer to God or because you will or hope to experience a falling, slaying in the Spirit, or a live focus on Benny Hinn?

Could it be that his coming to Kenya is so important that it will not allow you to focus at all on what he has taught? Could it be that your participation in this coming crusade or the desire to attend it has so clouded your heart and mind that you are not going to give heed to the Bible and what it has to say about the errors expounded in this document? Could it be that you are merely following the crowds?

It is my prayer that your faith will not be built on a human being and what he is able to do or say, even in the name of the Lord. May our faith be built on Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith! AMEN.