



## PEOPLE WHO USE AND HANG ON TO YOU WRONGLY

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For the sake of space we are going to shorten our scripture text greatly. **2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 5:20**, **"But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, and not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, behold even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound the two talents of silver into bags, and with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bear them before him. And when he came to the tower he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and the vineyards,**

**and sheep, and oxen, and men servants, and maidservants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow".** The prophet Elisha had just performed a great miracle in curing Naaman from leprosy, who was an army commander for the King of Syria. After this divine miracle, Naaman declared there is no god in the earth like the God of Israel. Thus, Naaman encouraged Elisha to take a gift from him; but the prophet of God said: I will receive nothing. However, Naaman urged him to take a gift, but the prophet of God refused to take any kind of a gift from the commander Naaman. Gehazi, like many people today, tried to take advantage of other people's goodness. People in authority often times attract what I would call 'hangers-on'. These people enjoy basking in the power and spiritual position, coupled with leadership, that God has placed upon the lives of those whom He has personally chosen. These people or hangers-on try to exploit the anointing of the Holy Ghost which God has placed upon the minister or the person with whom they are closely associated with. Gehazi was such a person. Gehazi, needless to say, did serve a legitimate function by attending to the needs of the prophet of God Elisha. The truth is, Gehazi inappropriately used his position to feather his own nest by pursuing Naaman. What Gehazi had done was one of deception and duplicity: thus demonstrating

The impurity of his heart. Often people that are around people of authority and leadership feign true discipleship and loyalty, but in retrospect their hearts are sinister, self serving, and self centered. Here in the south, we use the old cliché, **"So you are trying to ride my coattail."** Simply put, when you're riding someone else's coattail, you're trying to get something for nothing at the expense of your fellow laborer or companion. I witness weekly, and I'm sure that many of you do as well in your own personal lives, people trying to get something for nothing. These kind of people never support nor give back to you in any capacity but rather they seek to take advantage of the position and posture in which the Lord has given you. Gehazi was trying to deceive the army commander Naaman into believing that Elisha had now changed his mind and wanted to receive some type of a financial gift from him: not for himself but for two other servants of God. Gehazi was now trying to use his leverage and connection with the prophet of God in a very self-serving and self-centered manner. People in leadership today must watch for and discern those who are supposed followers who are like Gehazi. These people are like a creature called a Remora. Remora attach themselves with a sectorial disk to the underbellies of sharks in order to feed off the scraps that fall from the mouths of the sharks while they are devouring their prey. The Remora produce no fruit or labor but largely consume and enjoy the leftovers of what falls from the

mouths of the sharks as they consume their prey. Regretfully, the devil puts people like that into our lives for the purpose of continually taking from us and putting nothing back into our lives. The truth is, these scavengers, and their presence within our lives add very little substance or support to our lives in any way whatsoever. Basically they are scavengers living off the efforts of others. Regretfully, many of these people call themselves Christians but there is absolutely no fruit of Christ from within their lives. The problem with people who hang on to our lives in such a manner often times find a way to compromise our reputation and integrity because of their attachment to our lives personally. Let me remind you it doesn't matter how slothful, vile, and wicked these kind of people are they always have some type of influence with other people. Someone will believe them no matter what the truth may be. Many times people will believe those who are using us and hanging onto us rather than believing the ones God is actually using and has anointed. It is imperative that leaders who care about maintaining their own impeachable record should prayerfully seek discernment in selecting subordinates with whom they associate themselves. Many would say the man of God Elisha dealt harshly and too quickly with his servant. But one must remember Elisha had a double portion of the anointing of the Holy Ghost, thus he was double careful in protecting the anointing and mantle that God had placed upon his life. I have learned in my own personal life it is my responsibility to protect myself, to guard myself,

and to nurture myself in being sober to those with whom I allow into the circle of my life. Like many of you reading this newsletter, you have allowed people into your life that somewhere down the road they did irreparable damage to you because of their selfishness and self-serving disposition. We are to never covet anyone's anointing or gift that God has placed upon a person's life. No one has a stake or claim on God Almighty. It is the Father above who endows men with spiritual gifts and the anointing of the Holy Ghost. I know this newsletter will speak to many and there will be those who will not receive much from it. Those of you that may not be in a place of spiritual authority or leadership should still guard your life and protect yourself from those who ultimately have the ability to harm or injure you. Remember, a good name is better to be had than riches. When we become born again, it is your responsibility from henceforth to take care of your name. Judas Iscariot once had a great name, but sin destroyed his name. One of our recent presidents of the United States will always be forever remembered for his lying to this nation concerning the immoral discretion he brought upon his own personal life. Not only did he scar his life permanently but he scarred the life of another young lady. You cannot play with sin, neither can you have fellowship with vile and wicked people. We are told in **Ephesians 5:11, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"**. Elisha sought quickly to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: thus he terminated his relationship with his servant. We are reminded by the apostle Jude found in **Jude 21, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our**

**Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life"**. Without prayerful consideration along with spiritual discernment, it is very easy for someone to come into our lives and complicate our lives with personal hardships. As we enter into the end times it will be more important than ever to be mindful who you allow into your personal spiritual circle. We read in **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness"**. There is a vast difference between a believer and an unbeliever. Simply put, an unbeliever says they believe but they do not believe on the same level that you believe: however, they seek to attach themselves to your life because they see something that God has given you and thus they covet it. Again, it is your responsibility to guard and protect yourself from allowing these people that hang on to you to perpetually usurp your strength and spiritual energy. May the Lord God of Abraham faithfully order your steps here in these last days and I trust you will never give up in serving the Lord God of Abraham with all of your heart, with all your mind, and with all or your spirit. Again, thank you so very much for your special love, prayers, and support for The Voice of Evangelism International Ministries.

Serving With You All,

Pastor David W. Lankford