
News Updates

CAMPING FAILS AGAIN

May 21, 2011, began and ended as every other day in history: Jesus did not return. While most of the world's population was not expecting anything extraordinary, followers of Harold Camping and his Family Radio ministry were. Camping had forecast that on May 21 a massive earthquake would shake the world apart and the true believers of Jesus would "be carried into heaven, while the rest of humanity will endure 153 days of 'death and horror' before the world ends on October 21," according to a report in *Daily Mail*.

End-time prognostications are nothing new to Camping. Nearly two decades ago, the aberrant Bible teacher scheduled the return of Christ and the end of the world on Sept. 6, 1994.

For many months leading up to the May 21 date, Camping's devotees engaged in campaigns across the country warning that Judgment Day was approaching, boldly proclaiming, "The Bible Guarantees It." A group of 10 members from his Oakland, Calif., base gave up jobs, families, and possessions to embark on "Project Caravan," a convoy of RVs with their side panels completely painted with the doomsday message. Billboards in the United States and across the world proclaimed the impending end of the world.

Camping, as he did with every previous prediction, insisted on the accuracy of the 2011 date. "I know it's absolutely true, because the Bible is always true," he told CNN. Camping arrived at his predictions based on numerical codes he ascribes to Scripture and Bible events. He says his 1994 date failed because of a misreading of the Bible codes he used to interpret the date of the Rapture.

—MKG

HINN SUED BY PUBLISHER

The *National Enquirer* has the distinction of being dubious in its news stories. Yet despite its reputation, fallout from its reports seems to be incessant. Just ask healing evangelist Benny Hinn. Last August, the super-market tabloid published an article linking Hinn with twice-divorced televangelist Paula White. The magazine featured photographs of the couple hand-in-hand emerging from a hotel in Rome, Italy. At the time the story hit the newsstands, Hinn himself was going through his own divorce.

Now, as a result of that initial report, Hinn is being sued by his longtime friend and colleague Stephen Strang. Strang's publishing company had signed a three-book deal with Hinn and is now suing him, saying Hinn's admitted relationship with White violated a morality clause in their contract. Strang Communications Company has filed a complaint in Seminole County, Fla., and is seeking \$250,000 from Hinn.

In 2009 Strang published Hinn's *Blood in the Sand*, subtitled as a guide to "Understanding the Middle East Conflict." Reports indicate that Hinn was paid a \$300,000 advance for the book.

The lawsuit also stated that Hinn further "violated the contract by failing to work hard enough to market *Blood in the Sand*," according to a report in *The Orlando Sentinel*. The newspaper also said that Hinn "failed to make television appearances to promote it, including several on *700 Club*."

Immediately following the *National Enquirer* feature, Hinn went on the offensive and while admitting that a friendship with White "did develop," stated that there was never any immorality. He told his television audience that his "friendship" with White is over.

Hinn maintained that he was in Rome because the Vatican had made him a Patron of the Arts, a person who solicits donors to sustain the Vatican's art collection. Hinn claimed that he invited White to come with him to Rome to enlist her as a donor. However, according to the International Coordinator of The Patrons of the Arts in the Vatican Museums, Father Mark Haydu, "To my knowledge, Paula White or Benny Hinn were not invited to the Vatican Museums in any official context, nor did we find anyone on our donors database of Patrons under those names."

Hinn has a lengthy record of personal overstatements and untruths as documented in *The Confusing World of Benny Hinn*.

—MKG

LEAD "ARTIFACT" OF DEEP SECRETS MET WITH SKEPTICISM

A "tempest in a teapot" boiled up in March 2011 as a Galilee Bedouin and others tried to put one over on the Israel Antiquities Authority.

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