

## **GEHAZI'S LOVE OF MONEY IN 2 KINGS 5: 20-27 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR "YAHOO BOYS" IN NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Money is the main instrument use for goods and services globally. Those who have or control money are respected in the society. A person's wealth is usually measured in monetary terms. However, the methods of acquiring and the use of money have brought a lot of problems into many organizations and nations. This study examined Gehazi's love for money in 2Kings 5: 21-27 and its implications for "Yahoo Boys" in Nigeria. The study considered what the love of money brought on Gehazi who was a young Prophet in training in a prophetic school and its implications for Yahoo Boys in the Nigerian Society. The Study used historical and exegetical methods. The study revealed that Gehazi was greedy and was driven by the love of money and acquisition of material things. These desires brought his life and prophetic ministry to an abrupt end by the reason of leprosy that came upon him and his family. There are strong indications that many Nigerian Boys practice "Yahoo-Yahoo" because of poverty, lack of job, covetousness, greed and excessive desire for money, these could also be the similar factors behind Gehazi's action in addition to love of money. Some Yahoo Boys have been reported sick and even dead. The goal of this work is to emphasis the reason for practicing "Yahoo-Yahoo" which is love of money and discourage the perpetrators. This study, therefore recommends that in other to alleviate poverty, Nigerian youths should also venture into business and artisan work since there is limit to what government of any nation can do, let alone Nigerian Government. "Yahoo – Yahoo" practice must be discouraged in Nigeria by parents, spiritual and political leaders.

**KEYWORDS:** Leprosy, Consequence, Love of money, Implications, Yahoo, Yahoo-Boys

### **INTRODUCTION**

Money is one of the most essential needs of man because it is a generally accepted means of exchange and measure of value. The general society seems to place a great regards on wealth and the wealthy ones. If not all things, money answers most things-religiously, academically, professionally, medically and socially. Hence, it is strange for anyone to have claimed that he or she hates money. The desire to have money and appropriate measure towards it are highly commendable. In fact when God is pleased with man or woman, He blesses him or her with wealth but when displeased, He could place a

curse of poverty on the disobedient ones. By implication, poverty could be seen to be a curse and prosperity a blessing from God.

Love of money in this context implies excessive desire for money to the detriment of one's/ people's welfare and life. This study examined Gehazi's love for money in 2Kings 5:21-27 and its implications for "Yahoo-Boys" in Nigeria. Gehazi was a young prophet in prophetic training under the leadership of Prophet Elisha. As a result of love of money, Gehazi displayed unfaithfulness and deception, which brought adverse consequences on him and even his generation. In like manner, Yahoo- Boys love money so much to the point of destroying other people many a times and in the long run destroy themselves. The channel engaged by the "Yahoo- Boys" is through the World Wide Web Technology known as "Yahoo E-mail" and also got the nomenclature.

### **UNDERSTANDING YAHOO E-MAIL AND YAHOO BOYS**

The introduction of the World Wide Web Technology known as "Yahoo E-mail" was welcomed with joy all over the world because it serves as a tool that facilitates speedy and easy communication around the world. However, the wicked ones are hijacking this channel to perpetrate evil, not just constituting to insecurity of money and properties alone but also of life. While agents of evil like Boko Haram, kidnappers, bandits, ISWAP and the like attack on the road, farm, school or at home, the enemy in focus attack at the web (cyber/internet). Insecurity caused by the Yahoo-Boys has compounded the insecurity challenges in Nigeria and has made the social life in the country to be on the edge.

Hardly a day passes without this new dimension of Yahoo- Yahoo and Yahoo-Plus activities making a headline in the Nigeria National Dailies. For instance, some of the headlines are: Reactions Trails Delta Killing by Ritualists- Yahoo-Yahoo Boys, Amaize reported (Amaize, 2018); Girls Run Mad, become Useless after We Use Them For Yahoo Plus-Yahoo Boys Confessed, according to Young (Young, 2023); A 32-year-old Afeez Olalere, who is a suspected internet fraudster, was, in January, arrested by operatives of the Lagos State Police Command. He confessed to killing his younger brother, with the help of their mother, for a demonic ritual in order to prop up his dwindling Yahoo (advanced fee fraud) business (*saharareporters.com*, 2022). Also, the police apprehended 20-year-old Moses Oko who killed his girlfriend, Jennifer Anthony (a student of the University of Jos), for ritual purposes, Lambo et al noted (Lambo and Abraham, 2023). According to Oludare, the boys aged 17 to 19 slaughtered a girlfriend and burnt her head for money ritual in Ogun State (Oludare, 2023). Just recently, as reported by Oludare, a teenager, Soliu Majekodunmi, confessed to killing his girlfriend, Sofiyah, for suspected money ritual purposes. I learnt this through Facebook, he added (Olatunji, 2023).

Nigeria, which is the focus of this study and African's most populous black country in the world, has been acclaimed as the African's capital of internet fraud and third (3rd) globally, Danbatta submitted (Danbatta, 2017). The above view was attested

to by the Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Prof. Umar Danbatta, on Tuesday April 2017. According to him, “Nigeria is currently ranked third globally in internet crime behind the UK and the US,” Danbatta added. In fact, a whopping amount of N127 billion is lost annually in Nigeria, according to the minister, Olaifa wrote (Olaifa, 2016). Lynette estimated that the annual damage of global cybercrime in 2017 alone amounted to as much as \$600 billion, about 0.8 percent of Global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Lynette, 2023). The above view was corroborated by the American Centre For Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), that noted in February 21, 2018, that “close to \$600 billion, nearly one percent of global income is lost to cybercrime each year, which is up from 2014 study that put global losses at about \$445 billion, as contained in “Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and McAfee” (<http://www.csis.org>, 2023). In the light of this, this study seeks to contribute to the literature on Yahoo-Boys who have graduated to Yahoo Plus in relation to human insecurity dilemma.

Yahoo! Mail is an email service launched on October 8, 1997, by the American Company Yahoo, Inc and Founders were Jerry Yang and David Filo. As of January 2020, Yahoo! Mail has 225 million users with about 1.33billion revenue, Pickavet remarked (Pickavet, 2023). Yahoo-Yahoo is a nickname given to internet fraud. It is named after international web portal and search. Internet fraud, according to Wikipedia, is a type of cybercrime fraud or deception that makes use of the internet and could involve hiding information or providing incorrect information to trick victims out of money, poverty and inheritance. Sackson defines cybercrime as a crime that is committed with the help of a computer through a communication device or a transmission media called the cyberspace and global network called the Internet (Sackson, 2023). In the same vein, Shinder defines cybercrime as any criminal offences committed using the internet or another computer network as a component of the crime (Shinder, 2002). Cybercrimes are offences that are committed against individual or group of individuals with a criminal motive to internationally harm the reputation of the victim or cause physical or mental harm to the victim directly or indirectly using modern/telecommunication networks such as internet and mobile phones. It can also be defined as the use of internet services or software with internet access to defraud victims or to otherwise take advantage of them.

According to Tade, Yahoo-Yahoo is the regular internet scam, but Yahoo-Plus involves rituals and the use of human parts for metaphysical purposes, as engendered by the harvesting of human organs (Tade, 2016). Most of the Yahoo-Boys have discovered a new strategy of blending spiritual elements with internet surfing to enhance the chances of their success in defrauding their unsuspecting victims. The Yahoo Boys usually cast a spell on their victims using mystical, spiritual and supernatural powers to lure their victims to access their monies or to a specific destination where they are killed with most of their vital organs removed for ritual purposes. They also use female under wears, and sanitary pads etc. for rituals. This has often led to the sudden disappearance of

most people who are later found with their vital organs removed. This is shocking, alarming and has constituted a serious problem in Nigeria, hence this study. Yahoo-Boys are fraudsters who are taking advantage of the vulnerability of digital space. They are people who practice Yahoo-Yahoo and Yahoo-Plus, though mostly boys but not limited to boys. Yahoo boys within the Nigerian context is also associated with Advanced Fee Fraud (AFF) or “419” fraud, Igwe opined (Igwe, 2000).

Forms and Methods of their operation include sending an e-mail falsely claiming to be an established legitimate business, setting up fake online shopping portals, identity theft, piracy, hacking, spamming, card fraud, lottery fraud, ATM fraud, social media fraud and matrimonial/dating fraud. For the tools of operation, they rely on their computers and software for hacking but today, spiritual elements are added (charms) (Ojedokun, 2021). There is widespread of this evil today because of unemployment, poverty, weak Bye-Law, feeble punishment, bad influence, poor parental attitude. Some fall victim due to ignorance, greediness, diabolical power influence and being desperate for love and marriage (romantic relationship). (<https://www.nairaland.com>)

## **THE BOOK OF 2KINGS: BACKGROUND**

As noted by Crossley, the two books of Kings like the books of Samuel were originally one book. The division of this work into two books was introduced by the translators of the Septuagint (the pre-Christian Greek translation of the Old Testament) and was subsequently followed in the Latin Vulgate (c.AD 400) and most modern versions. In 1448 the division into two sections also appeared in a Hebrew manuscript and was perpetuated in later printed editions of the Hebrew text (Crossley, 2002). To Boyd (1967), the division between 1 and 2 Kings has been made at a somewhat arbitrary and yet appropriate place, shortly after the deaths of Ahab of the Northern kingdom (1Kings 22:37) and Jehoshaphat of the Southern kingdom (22:50). The book of 2 Kings describes the history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, focusing on the spiritual successes and failures of each kingdom. The book also explains why Israel and Judah lost the Lord’s protection and were conquered, Proven observed (Proven, 1995). According to Harrison (1970), the kings were referred to throughout the book.

To Longman et al(2007), there is little conclusive evidence as to the identity of the author of 1, 2 kings. Although Jewish tradition credits Jeremiah, some scholars today accept this as likely. Whoever the author was, it is clear that he was familiar with the book of Deuteronomy- as were many of Israel’s prophets, House et al reiterated (House and Mitchell, 2017). It is also clear that he used a variety of sources in compiling his history of the Monarchy. Some scholars place the date of composition of 1, 2 Kings in the time subsequent to Jehoiachin’s release from prison (562 BC; 2Kings 25: 27-30; see also Jeremiah 52:31-34; and compare 2Kings 25:1-12 with Jeremiah 39: 10; 52:4-16) and prior to the end of the Babylonian exile in 538BC. But it is most likely that the original book

was composed about the time of the death of Josiah and that the material pertaining to the time subsequent to his reign was added during the exile c.550.

## THE EXEGESIS OF 2KINGS 5:20-27

In this section, the intention of the researcher is to explain the selected key word(s) and clauses/phrases from the passage in order to enhance understanding on the subject for discussion.

But before that, the passage shall be presented in both Hebrew and English language.

### 2 Kings 5:20-27 in Hebrew Language

וַיֹּאמֶר גִּיחָזִי נַעֲרֹ אֵלִישָׁע אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים הִנֵּה חֹשֶׁךְ אֲדֹנִי אֶת־נַעֲמָן הָאֶרְמִי הַזֶּה מִקָּחַת מִיָּדוֹ אֶת־  
אֲשֶׁר־הֵבִיא חִי־הוּהוּ כִּי־אִם־רַצְתִּי אֲחֲרָיו וְלִקְחֹתִי מֵאִתּוֹ מְאוּמָּה:  
וַיִּרְדֹּף גִּיחָזִי אַחֲרָיו בְּעֵמֶן וַיִּרְאֶה בְּעֵמֶן רֶגֶץ אַחֲרָיו וַיִּפֹּל מֵעַל הַמֶּרְכָבָה לִקְרֹאתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר הַשְּׁלוֹם:  
וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁלוֹם אֲדֹנִי שְׁלַחֲנִי לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עֲתָה זֶה בָּאוּ אֵלַי שְׁנֵי־נַעֲרִים מִהָר אֶפְרַיִם מִצְנִי הַנְּבִיאִים  
תְּנֶה־נָּא לָהֶם כֶּכֶר־כֶּסֶף וְשְׁתֵּי חֲלָפוֹת בְּגָדִים:  
וַיֹּאמֶר נַעֲמָן הוֹאֵל קֹחַ כֶּכֶרִים וַיִּפְרֹץ־בּוֹ וַיִּצֹר כֶּכֶרִים כֶּסֶף בְּשֹׁנֵי חֲרֻטִּים וְשְׁתֵּי־חֲלָפוֹת בְּגָדִים וַיִּתֵּן  
אֶל־שְׁנֵי נַעֲרָיו וַיִּשְׂאוּ לִפְנֵי:  
וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָעֶפְל וַיִּקַּח מִיָּדָם וַיִּפְקֹד בְּבֵית וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיֵּלְכוּ:  
וְהוּא־בָא וַיַּעֲמֵד אֶל־אֲדֹנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֵלִישָׁע (מֵאֵן) [מֵאִין־גִּחָזִי] וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא־הִלֵּךְ עִבְדְּךָ אִנָּה וְאִנָּה:  
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לֹא־לְבִי הִלֵּךְ כֹּאֲשֶׁר הִפְךָ־אִישׁ מֵעַל מֶרְכָּבָתְךָ לִקְרֹאתְךָ הֵעֵת לִקְחַת אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף וְלִקְחַת  
בְּגָדִים וְזֵיתִים וְכֶרֶמִים וְצֹאן וְכֶלֶךְ וְעַבְדִּים וְשִׁפְחוֹת:  
וַיַּרְעֵת בְּעֵמֶן תְּדַבֵּק־בָּךְ וּבְזֶרְעֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וַיֵּצֵא מִלִּפְנֵיו מִצְרַע כַּשְּׁלֵג: ו  
(2Ki 5:19-1 WTT)

### 2 Kings 5:20-27 in English Language

<sup>20</sup> But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him."

<sup>21</sup> So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw *him* running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?"

<sup>22</sup> And he said, "All is well. My master has sent me, saying, 'Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.'"

<sup>23</sup> So Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed *them* to two of his servants; and they carried *them* on ahead of him.

<sup>24</sup> When he came to <sup>[a]</sup>the citadel, he took *them* from their hand, and stored *them* away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed.

<sup>25</sup> Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, "Where *did you go*, Gehazi?"

And he said, “Your servant did not go anywhere.”

<sup>26</sup> Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go *with you* when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? *Is it* time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants?

<sup>27</sup> Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.” And he went out from his presence leprous, *as white* as snow.

## **The Exegesis**

### **In verse 20, the phrase “my master has spared Naaman this Syrian....”**

One of the characters in the above text is Naaman. Who was Naaman? **Na`aman** נָאֲמָן {*nah-am-awn*'}, the name means pleasantness (<https://www.thebump.com>) . Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honourable man.” Naaman was the chief military commander of a persistent enemy to both Israel and Judah. As recently as the days of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, Syria had fought and won against Israel (1 Kings 22:35-36). His position and success made him a “great and honourable man,” and personally he was a “mighty man of valour.” This same title was applied to Gideon (Judges 6:12), Jephthah (Judges 11:1), David (1 Samuel 16:18), Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:28), and Eliada (2 Chronicles 17:17). It seems that this is the only specific Gentile mentioned as a “mighty man of valour.” According to Jewish legends, as noted by Mandel, “the Rabbins tell us that it was he [Naaman] who shot the arrow wherewith Ahab was slain” (Mandel, 2007).<sup>1</sup> In the above verse, Elisha, the prophet of God speared in the sense that he did not receive from the gifts he brought to him as appreciation for his healing.

### **Also in verse 21 “So Gehazi followed...running after Naaman...”**

Gehazi, Geichazi, or Giezi גִּיְזִי; the name means valley of vision (<https://www.truthunity.net>), is a figure found in the Books of Kings. He was a servant of the prophet Elisha. When he saw all the gifts Naaman brought, he coveted and determined to get part of the gift by deceit. “I will run after him and take something from him,” Gehazi said (5:20): As Gehazi heard Naaman and Elisha spoke; he was shocked that his master refused to take anything from such a wealthy, influential, and grateful man. He figured that someone should benefit from such an opportunity, and he took the initiative to run after Naaman and take something from him.

### **It is also crucial to note the phrase “talents of silver” in verse 23.**

Silver כֶּה־שֶׁף {*keh'-sef*}. This is used about 403 times in the Old Testament and it could mean silver, metal, shekels, talents and ornament. The usage is connected to wealth/money as a means of financial transactions. Naaman took with him ten talents of silver, this amount was reckoned by Keil as equal to 25,000 thalers, or £3750; by Thenius as equal to 20,000 thalers, or £3000, about seventeen thousand dollars. The worth of what

Gehazi demanded and what he received showed that he was greedy- a talent of silver and two changes of garments.

**“Changes of garments” as seen in verse 23 is another important phrase.**

The practice of giving dresses of honour as presents continues in the East to this day. Raiment/clothing :בגדים (*bə·gā·dīm*), holiday suits, reuss, habits de fete. (See the same word, *haliphoth*, in Genesis 45:22.) Curiously enough, similar expressions (*nahlaptum*, *hitlupatum*) they were used in the like sense by the Assyrians (Schrader) meaning two set of covering, clothing, treachery or pillage. They were costly robes, to be worn on great occasions and of which the Orientals are very fond. These presents were all exceedingly valuable, and show the power and riches of Naaman. Dilday estimated that by the values of his own day, Naaman took more than \$1.2 million with him to Israel. All this together shows how desperate Naaman’s condition was, and how badly the king of Syria wanted to help him.

The Living Bible Paraphrased puts it thus: “So Naaman started out, taking gifts of \$20,000 in silver, \$60,000 in gold, and ten suits of clothing” (5:5b). According to Adeyemo in Africa Bible Commentary, “750 pounds (340kilograms) of silver, 150pounds (70kilograms) of gold, and ten sets of clothing (Adeyemo, 2006). The fact that Naaman handed the gifts to the two of his servants shows that it was a huge sum of talent. “It required two servants to carry these two talents, for, according to the computation above, each talent was about 120 lbs. weight” (Bible Works).

**A vital question was raised in verse 26 in order to explain the mistake of Gehazi: “Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants?”**

It seems that Elisha had no absolute law against receiving support from those who were touched by his ministry? Yet it was spiritually clear to Elisha, and should have been clear to Gehazi, that it was not appropriate at this time and circumstance. Obviously, Gehazi did not bring these entire things home with him from Naaman. Yet he wanted all of these things, and Elisha exposed his greedy heart.

**Another important phrase which is germane is seen in verse 27 is “leprosy.”**

The health challenge of Naaman was leprosy *טַרְסָרָא* {*tsaw-rah'*}, this is a verb and it refers to skin disease. (to be a leper, *Qal*; to have leprosy, *Pual*). The word appeared about 194 times in the Masoretic text. Naaman had a lot going for him, but what he had against him was devastating. He was a leper, which meant that he had a horrible, incurable disease that would slowly result in his death. No matter how good and successful everything else was in Naaman’s life, he was a leper. “Here was a heavy tax upon his grandeur; he was afflicted with a disorder the most loathsome and the most humiliating that could possibly disgrace a human being, Campbell-Jack noted (Campbell-Jack, 2000).”

Ancient leprosy began as small, red spots on the skin. Before too long the spots got bigger, and started to turn white, with sort of a shiny or scaly appearance. Pretty soon the spots spread over the whole body and hair began to fall out – first from the head, then even from the eyebrows. As things got worse, fingernails and toenails become loose; they start to rot and eventually fell off. Then the joints of fingers and toes began to rot and fall off piece by piece. Gums began to shrink and they could not hold the teeth anymore, so each of them was lost. Leprosy kept eating away at the face until literally the nose, the palate, and even the eyes rotted – and the victim wasted away until death. It is also incurable, Barker reinforced (Barker and Kohlenberger, 1994).

**In the same verse 27 the curse placed on Gehazi as consequence of his sin is stated thus: “Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.** This was a severe judgment, Mandel remarked, but as a man in ministry Gehazi was under a stricter judgment. When he allowed himself to covet what Naaman had, he thought only in terms of the money Naaman. Gehazi enjoyed a position of power but was ultimately corrupt, misusing his authority to cheat Naaman the Syrian, a general afflicted with leprosy. As punishment, Elisha cursed Gehazi, transferring Naaman's leprosy to him and his descendants forever (Mandel, 2007).

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR YAHOO BOYS TODAY

When Gehazi saw the presents brought to his master which was rejected, he coveted them. The reason for such covetousness is not stated but poverty could be a possible reason. He was a student in a school of prophet. On the average, most students do not have everything they desire in abundance. At times to meet basic needs may be difficult. Gehazi might be facing such a challenge of basic needs. In like manner, some young boys saw people enjoying and displaying wealth, so they coveted. In attempt to breakthrough, they join Yahoo-Yahoo. Some did so to meet their basic needs. The determination put up by Gehazi is seen in the curse formula he made to himself and how he pursued. The Hebrew word used is *vai-yir·dof* which means chase, persecute, haunt, hunt, and hound. Gehazi chase after a present he never deserve or labour for likewise the Yahoo-Boys. Some of the Yahoo-Boys, due to their determination travel distance and ready to do anything to achieve their goal. Recently, 3 boys left their parents in Delta and travelled to Edo State in search of where to learn Yahoo-Yahoo. They confessed that they had come to learn how to do Yahoo-Yahoo and were not Yahoo plus boys (*latestngnews.com*, 2023).

Gehazi deceived Naaman in order to get the financial and material benefits, he even implicated his master. Yahoo-Yahoo is all about lie, downright deception. On June 5, 2012, according to channels Television, a Federal High Court in Kaduna State sentenced a 25year old undergraduate of the University of Ilorin, Imonina Kingsley to 20years imprisonment on a four count of impersonation, possession of fraudulent documents and attempt to obtain money by false pretences (*channelstv.com*, 2023). A few days ago, a

story was told of how Obinna, a 30-year-old agricultural commodity export businessman, was fleeced of \$150,000 by those who posed as commodity buyers from Dubai. Upon investigations, it was discovered that the bank, which purportedly sent the letter of credit from New Zealand to a bank in Nigeria, is no longer in existence.

The fact that he handed them to two of his servants shows that this was a lot of silver. It required two servants to carry these two talents. The Yahoo-Boys in like manner are making huge amount of money. The Managing Director, Nigerian Inter-Bank Settlement System, Shonubi, on June 21, 2018, disclosed that “the banking industry lost the sum of N12.30 billion to various frauds between 2014 and 2017” (Shonubi, 2018). In the same vein, the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), which is a regulatory and supervisory agency of the banking system in Nigeria, on April 19, 2017, reported that, Fraud raised from 316 in 2013 to 1,271 and 1,471 in 2014 and 2015 respectively, a phenomena increase of about 365.5% between 2013 and 2015. It is estimated that the annual damage of global cybercrime in 2017 alone amounted to as much as \$600 billion, about 0.8 percent of Global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The FBI report, among other things, stated that “a total of 302,580 complaints, with reported losses in excess of \$1.4billion” were recorded around the world (<http://www.fbi.gov>, 2022).<sup>2</sup> Recently, court jailed 2 Yahoo Boys for #1.3 Billion fraud in Benin (*Naijaloaded*, 2022).<sup>3</sup> While it is true that some are into Yahoo-Yahoo because of joblessness, poverty, covetousness, the above evidences and facts suggest that some Yahoo-Boys are greedy also.

Instead of repentance, many of the Yahoo-Boys are just giving excuses to justify themselves. An internet fraudster who begged for anonymity agreed with this assertion. According to him, the fear of the unknown pushes many youths including students to Yahoo-Yahoo. He saw nothing wrong in the act. “Most of us do this to be established before graduation rather than waiting for after-school unemployment. By the way, I don’t see anything wrong with it, it’s just a hustle,” he said, Tade wrote (Tade, 2016).

Gehazi became a leper as a consequence of his sins of covetousness, greediness and love of money; hence the curse shall not be limited to him alone but shall extend to his generation to come. As consequences for the acts of Yahoo-Boys, many of them have been cursed which manifest in form of accident, sickness, madness, sudden/mysterious death and some have been caught by the law. In April 2012, Olasaidi Dare, an undergraduate of the Olabisi Onabanjo University in Ago-Iwoye, was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment for an attempt to obtain money under false pretenses in a cyber-café, Nnochiri noted (Nnochiri, 2012). Two internet fraudsters, who made multi-million dollars from Internet fraud, popularly called Yahoo Boys, Tobiloba Ibrahim Bakare and Alimi Seun Sikiru, were arrested, convicted and sentenced to three years jail (*saharareporters*, 2012). According to Oyero, the most recent social media celebrities, include Ramon Abbas, a.k.a. Hushpuppi (Oyero, 2022); Ismail Mustapha, a.k.a Mompha; and a promising young man, Obinwanne Okeke, otherwise known as Invictus Obi. Obi, a presently convicted fraudster, who was once listed by Forbes magazine as one of Africa’s brightest

entrepreneurs under the age of 30 year. Today, Invictus Obi is serving a 10-year jail term in the U.S. for internet fraud that caused the loss of \$11 million to his victims, the Guardian reported (*The Guardian*, Feb. 17, 2021). As Gehazi and his descendants were cursed, Yahoo Boys may suffer the consequences of their activities and also affect their descendants.

## **CONCLUSION**

As the number of people using the internet is on the rise, likewise the internet fraudsters. The increasing rates of cybercrime in the society have become strong threats to life and also to Nigeria's commerce growth and has led to ill- reputation intentionally and consequently denied some innocent Nigerians certain opportunities abroad. Therefore, while discouraging the Yahoo-Boys, innocent internet users should inculcate the habit of continuously updating their knowledge about the ever changing nature of ICTs, through this, they cannot only be well informed about the current trends in cybercrimes, but they will also have the knowledge about different forms of the said crimes and how the cyber criminals carry out their heinous activities. Thus, they can devise means of protecting their information from cyber criminals. Internet users should be security conscious so that crimes can be minimized if not totally eradicated.

The Yahoo Boys should know that they have control over their decisions but once the decision is made, they have no control over the consequences. Whatever excuses given for practicing Yahoo- Yahoo, there are consequences, and at times, it has implications on the future generation. Anyone passing through financial challenge should engage in a legal job even if it seems not to be dignifying. Money is good and essential to meet man's or woman's need but love of money with the excessive desire to make money in a dubious way is disastrous.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Government should start their campaign of war against fraud and criminality from primary school to enable underage students to be aware of the legal consequence of cybercrime.
2. Counseling team should be set up by the Nigerian government in all the local government areas to help sensitize the youths on the dangers of love of money and yahoo-plus for safety and security.
3. Awareness campaign for security should be carried out regularly by the counselors through the help of Government in order to reduce the menace of yahoo-plus activities.
4. Most of the affluent youths in any community whose wealth are questionable should be arrested to explain the source of their wealth and counselors should be deployed after found guilty to counsel them on the dangers of yahoo plus activities.

5. Orientation programmes on the evils and repercussions of Yahoo Plus activities in communities should be organized by counselors through the help of the government to discourage young ones in those communities from joining the Yahoo Plus.
6. Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), investigators, prosecutors, judiciary and other laws enforcement agents should do their job efficiently without bias, where life is involved, justice should be done.
7. All regulatory authorities should stamp out ritual killings for money movies.
8. The ostentatious display of wealth on social media by celebrities should be checked.

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