

WILLIAM BRANHAM—SERPENT SEED

by Avram Yehoshua

[The Seed of Abraham](#)

Serpent Seed is the name of a teaching that is based on the Serpent (Satan or the Devil; Rev. 12:9) having had sexual intercourse with Eve in the Garden of Eden, and consequently, producing descendants from her, especially Cain, often called the Seed of the Devil or the Seed of Satan, hence the teaching of “Serpent Seed.” One of the more famous Christians who believed and taught this was William Branham (1909-1965). He was a Christian minister, and Douglas Weaver states that Branham is,

“generally acknowledged as initiating the post World War II healing revival.¹ American historian David Harrell Jr. described him as,

“an unlikely leader...his preaching was halting and simple beyond belief, but William Branham became a prophet to a generation. A small, meek, middle-aged man with piercing eyes, he held audiences spellbound with tales of constant communication with God and angels. Night after night, before thousands of awed believers he discerned the diseases of the sick and pronounced them healed.”²

In this teaching of Serpent Seed, which didn’t originate with Branham, he taught that,

“*Eve and the serpent had sexual intercourse and Cain was born.*³ Consequently, every woman potentially carried the literal seed of the devil.⁴ Cain’s descendants were today masquerading as the educated and the scientists,⁵ who were ‘a big religious bunch of illegitimate bastard children.’⁶ The central sins of modern culture were immoral women and education, which were the result of the Serpent’s seed.”⁷

Branham’s attitude toward culture and education seems to be an over-reaction to his having been very poor as a child and his own lack of education. As part of his teaching ministry *Branham also heretically taught that the Father was Jesus.*⁸

“During the mid-1940s William Branham was conducting healing campaigns almost exclusively with Oneness Pentecostal groups.”⁹

Oneness Pentecostals believe that the Father was Jesus. This means that Jesus is not God the Son, but just a manifestation or different mode of God, which is called Modalism and Sabellianism.¹⁰ These two teach-

¹ C. Douglas Weaver, *The Healer-Prophet: William Marrion Branham; A study of the Prophetic in American Pentecostalism* (Mercer University Press; 1987), p. 22.

David E. Harrell, Jr., *All Things are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Indiana University Press; 1979), p. 28.

² Ibid., Weaver, p. 25.

³ Ibid., p. 98.

⁴ Ibid., p. 111.

⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

⁶ Ibid., p. 125.

⁷ [William Branham](#).

⁸ See [Yeshua—God the Son](#) and [Yeshua—His Deity and Sonship](#) to know why the Father isn’t Jesus ‘in another form.’ This heresy is called Modalism or Sabellianism.

⁹ [Branham’s Public Ministry](#).

¹⁰ Sabellianism in the Eastern church, called Patripassianism (the crucifixion of the Father) in the Western church,

ings (Serpent Seed and Modalism) are patently false. Branham had other heretical teachings as well, which reveals that just because the anointing of God to heal is upon or given to a person, as it was to Branham, it doesn't mean that God validates the person's teachings. Weaver writes:

“Although not always consistent with each other, his primary concerns were eschatology, the denial of an eternal Hell, Oneness Pentecostalism, predestination, eternal security” (i.e. once saved always saved) “and the Serpent's Seed.”¹¹

A major problem comes when Branham insisted that his teachings were given to him by divine revelation.¹² This makes him doubly accountable for them, insisting that they came from God, when in reality, they came from the Devil and hence, how ironic the Serpent Seed teaching is. It didn't originate with Branham. It appears in early Gnostic writings, such as the Gospel of Philip (c. 350 AD), and much earlier than that it was explicitly rejected as heresy by Irenaeus (c. 180 AD)¹³ and also later Christian theologians.¹⁴ In the last 300 years it was taught by Daniel Parker (1781-1844) and Arnold Murray (1929-2014).

William Branham

The Wikipedia article on William Branham alleges that many of his healings weren't healing at all:

“Controversy surrounded Branham from the early stages of his ministry. In 1947, a minister in Saskatchewan, Canada stated that *many who Branham pronounced as healed later died*. A year later, W. J. Taylor, a district superintendent with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, raised the same concern and asked for a thorough investigation, presenting evidence that *claims of the number of people healed were vastly overestimated*. He said that, ‘there is a possibility that this whole thing is wrong.’”¹⁵

Andrew Strom though, says of Branham's early years,

“he was one of the most anointed men of God that has ever lived in modern times...endued with power to a degree that has rarely been seen since the days of the Apostles.”¹⁶

By the 1960s Branham had become a very controversial teacher, and not just because of his heretical teaching and possibly suspect healing. In 1963 Branham taught that he was,

“*the End Time Messenger, who was the Angel of the Seventh Church Age, in these final closing days of time*” and **‘had come in the spirit of Elijah.’**¹⁷ But an analysis of his teaching on the identity of the Laodicean prophet-messenger reveals *an array of conflicting and confusing assertions and disclaimers*. Branham clearly believed that he was (and desired to be) the eschatological prophet, but he also had doubts about his role.¹⁸

“The result of his controversial teaching was that *many* Pentecostals judged that Branham

is the belief that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three different modes (modalism) or aspects of God, as opposed to the correct view of three distinct Persons within the Godhead.

¹¹ Weaver, *The Healer-Prophet: William Marrion Branham*, p. 98.

¹² Ibid., p. 118.

¹³ ANF01; The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus (Christian Classics Ethereal Library).

¹⁴ [Serpent Seed](#).

¹⁵ [William Branham](#).

¹⁶ [The Enigma of William Branham](#).

¹⁷ Harrell, *All Things are Possible*, p. 163.

¹⁸ Weaver, *The Healer-Prophet: William Marrion Branham*, p. 133.

had ‘stepped out of his anointing’ and had become a ‘*bad teacher of heretical doctrine.*’¹⁹

Branham declared that he was a prophet. He had a prophetic revelation in June 1933 that comprised seven major events that would occur before the Second Coming of Christ.²⁰ He believed that five of the seven prophecies, relating to world politics, science and the moral condition of the world, had been fulfilled. The final vision detailed *the destruction of the USA*, which he said *would be fulfilled by 1977, subsequent to which Christ would return.*²¹

After 1977 a number of Branham’s followers left him, although some explained the failed prophecy away by saying that Branham’s comments about 1977 were a ‘prediction’ and not a ‘prophecy,’ which obviously wasn’t true. Many disciples began to look toward 1988 *as the time of Branham’s return,*²² meaning that he would rise from the dead.

Scripture reveals how to determine a true prophet of the Lord from a presumptuous prophet and false prophecy:

“And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which Yahveh has not spoken?’ When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, *if the thing does not happen or come to pass*, that is the thing which the Lord has *not* spoken—the prophet has spoken it *presumptuously*. You must not fear (e.g. reverence) him.” (Deuteronomy 18:21-22)²³

Hank Hanegraaff, in *Counterfeit Revival*, states that, “*Branham’s failed prophecies were exceeded only by his false doctrine(s).*”²⁴ Branham is viewed as having been well outside of Christian orthodoxy by most evangelicals. Michael Moriarty in, *The New Charismatics*, states:

“Branham’s *aberrational* teachings not only cultivated cultic fringe movements like the Latter Rain Movement and the Manifested Sons of God, but they also paved a pathway leading to false predictions, revelatory madness, doctrinal heresies, and a cultic following that treated his sermons as oral Scriptures.”²⁵

Not everything that Branham taught though, was wrong, but it could not outweigh the sheer perversion of his heretical teachings and false prophecies. For instance, he spoke of,

‘the progressive decline in the way women dressed, deliberately exposing their bodies more and more in an ever-increasing display of brazen sensuality.’²⁶

This led men into lust and sin, and it has only gotten worse since his death, although women throughout history have always dressed provocatively. Biblical purity and godly womanhood isn’t valued by society and most women, even Christian women, reveal the moral decay and perversion of their times, which continues to abound in our day.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 140.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 29. See [The Enigma of William Branham](#). for an account of the five prophecies which did come true.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 30-31.

²² Ibid., p. 155.

²³ Branham also believed and taught the Rapture, which is another false doctrine. To understand why, read [The Feast of Trumpets](#).

²⁴ Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival* (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988), p. 152.

²⁵ Michael Moriarty, *The New Charismatics: A Concerned Voice Responds To Dangerous New Trends* (Zondervan, 1992), p. 55.

²⁶ [The Enigma of William Branham](#).

Branham's Death

The author of *The Enigma of William Branham* states that Branham believed that he was the Elijah or John the Baptist of his (end) times. Some Christians saw his downfall in taking upon himself a teaching ministry, which he was not anointed for, although the author believed that Branham was called to be a prophet:

“By the 1960s Branham had clearly become convinced that *he was the end-times Elijah and the true ‘Messenger of the Covenant’* (i.e. Elijah/John the Baptist; Malachi 3:1-2) ...A number of writers believe that it was when *Branham took a ‘teaching’ ministry upon himself that he fell into error*. It is clear that he had been anointed and commissioned by God to have a prophetic–evangelistic ministry, but never one of teaching. As soon as he got into this area of teaching doctrine he began to trespass into realms to which God had never called him, thus opening himself up to ever-increasing deception. It has been reported that towards the end, *some of his teachings almost bordered on the occult*. However, the original sign-giftings that God had given him never left him, right up until the time of his death in 1965.”²⁷

The Gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29), and one doesn't have to be specifically anointed to teach God's Word, meaning that Branham's anointing to teach was not as great as his anointing to heal, but to consistently and continually preach false doctrine makes one a false teacher. The Apostle Peter wrote:

“But there were also *false prophets* among the people, even as there will be *false teachers* among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and bring on themselves swift destruction*.” (2nd Peter 2:1)

That Jesus was not the Father is simple and clear enough for a ten year old to see. That Branham was not able to understand that speaks volumes for his inability to correctly discern God's Word and consequently, teach it to others.²⁸

The Lord sent some Christians into Branham's life to warn him, *but Branham, unteachable, refused to listen*. One of them was his respected colleague and friend, Gordon Lindsay, who actually worked for Branham. Lindsay writes,

“I begged him not to teach...Leave the Bible teaching to the teachers. Just go ahead and preach and exercise the Word of Knowledge and Gifts of Healing as the Spirit wills and be a blessing to the Body of Christ.’ *Branham said, ‘I know I’m not a teacher, but I want to teach! And I’m going to teach!’*”²⁹

It seems that Branham had a huge inferiority complex when it came to his poor education and teaching. Those last two sentences of his reveal Branham's pride. Allegedly a meek and humble man, he was going to teach despite the fact that he knew he wasn't a teacher. This disobedience to God led to his premature death.

On December 18, 1965, Branham and his family (except his daughter Rebekah) were returning to Jeffersonville, Indiana from Tucson, Arizona, for the Christmas holiday. About 70 miles southwest of Amarillo, just after dark, a car coming from the opposite direction came into Branham's lane and hit Branham's car

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ 2nd Tim. 2:15: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, *a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*”

²⁹ [The Enigma of William Branham](#).

head-on.³⁰ “He was rushed to the hospital in Amarillo, Texas, but succumbed to his injuries on Christmas Eve,”³¹ a fitting and symbolic time for a false teacher and a false prophet to die. Christmas is a pagan holiday that has no business among God’s people.³² Weaver writes,

“Branham’s followers were understandably shocked. Many believed he would rise from the dead. His funeral was held on December 29, 1965, but his burial was delayed indefinitely as a result of Branham’s expected resurrection. He was finally buried on April 11, 1966, the day after Easter Sunday. Most still believed that he would return to fulfill (another) vision (failed prophecy) *that he had regarding future tent meetings.*”³³

Gordon Lindsay’s eulogy stated that Branham’s death was *the will of God*, and privately, he accepted the interpretation of Kenneth Hagin, *who had prophesied Branham’s death two years earlier*. God revealed to Hagin that Branham “*was teaching false doctrine*” and God was removing him “*because of his disobedience.*”³⁴ Hagin’s prophecy stated,

“At the end of ’65, he who now stands in the forefront of the healing ministry as a prophet *will be taken out of the way*. He’ll make a false step and Satan shall destroy his life, but his spirit will be saved, and his works will follow him. Ere ’66 shall come, he shall be gone.”³⁵

Gordon Lindsay’s wife *confirmed* the account given by Hagin. Mrs. Lindsay wrote:

“One day Kenneth Hagin came into our offices. He handed Gordon a piece of paper on which was written a prophecy he said the Lord had given him. The prophecy stated that the leader of the deliverance movement was soon to be taken in death because *he was getting into error* and the Lord was having to remove him from the scene for that reason. Gordon took the prophecy and placed it in his desk. After brother Hagin left I asked, ‘What do you think about this? Is this Branham?’ Gordon answered gravely, ‘*Yes, it is Branham. He is getting into error. He thinks he is Elijah. He thinks he is the Messenger of the Covenant.*’”³⁶

“God later told Hagin: ‘*I had to permit him to be removed because of the damage he was causing in the Body of Christ.*’”³⁷

Lindsay too, was also told of Branham’s impending death *before* Hagin came to him. Lindsay writes of a ‘sister Schrader,’ a prophetess who was part of the ministry, speaking of it twice during their prayer time:

“This past year, I was praying with my wife, and sister Schrader, about the work of the ministry. We were praying about different projects in our ministry. Right in the middle of the prayer, sister Schrader blurted out, ‘*Go warn brother (Branham) he’s going to die!*’ Lindsay said, ‘...I didn’t go warn him like I was supposed to. Then later, my wife and I and sister Schrader were again praying about ministry projects. Again Sister Schrader blurted out right in the middle of prayer, ‘*Go warn brother (Branham) he’s going to die! He’s walking in the way of Dowie!*’ After his morning meeting Lindsay said, ‘I talked to

³⁰ *Head-On Collision Kills 1, Injures 6*; Friona Star, December 1965.

³¹ Harrell, *All Things are Possible*, p. 164.

³² See [Xmas and its Origin](#).

³³ Weaver, *The Healer-Prophet: William Marrion Branham*, pp. 153-154.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

³⁵ [The Enigma of William Branham](#).

³⁶ Mrs. Gordon Lindsay, *My Diary Secrets*, Sixth Edition, p. 152.

³⁷ [The Enigma of William Branham](#).

him as the Lord had instructed me, *but I saw that he wouldn't listen.*”³⁸

The reference to Alexander Dowie (1847-1907), another man of God who was anointed with tremendous healing power, spoke of the same error of pride, 60 years earlier. He too proclaimed that he was the end-times ‘Elijah,’ the Messenger sent by God to proclaim that the Lord was imminently coming. Dowie said:

“The time has come!...I tell the church universal everywhere, *you have to do what I tell you...because I am the Messenger of God's covenant.*”³⁹

The Serpent Seed Teaching

A major problem with the doctrine of Serpent Seed, that the Devil had intercourse with Eve and hence, that's how Cain was conceived, is that Scripture specifically speaks against that. The Word of God states that Adam ‘knew’ his wife Eve (had sexual intercourse with her)⁴⁰ and as a result, Eve conceived and in time, Cain was born. Therefore, the Bible dismantles Branham's teaching of Satan having intercourse with Eve—*Cain was not a literal descendant of Satan*. Genesis 4:1 records:

“Now Adam *knew* Eve his wife *and she conceived and bore Cain*, and she said, ‘I have acquired a man *from Yahveh.*”

Eve could hardly have said that she got Cain from Yahveh if the father had been Satan. Scripture never says that Satan or the Snake ‘knew’ Eve, yet that is the way Scripture speaks of sexual union (e.g. Gen. 4:17, 25, 38:26; Judges 11:39; 19:25; 1st Samuel 1:19). There is no mention anywhere in Scripture of Satan having sex with Eve.

When Yeshua speaks of someone having Satan as their father (Mt. 13:37-39; John 8:44), or someone being a ‘son of the Devil’ (Acts 13:10; cf. 1 John 3:8, 10), He means it in a spiritual way—he is acting like Satan. It doesn't mean that they are literally descended from Satan. Yeshua Himself explains the meaning:

“Then Yeshua said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples! You shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free!’ They answered Him, ‘*We are Abraham's Seed (descendants)*, and have never been enslaved to anyone! How can You say, ‘You will be made free’?!’” Yeshua answered them and said, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, *whoever commits sin is a slave of sin*. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. *I know that you are Abraham's Seed* (descendants), but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.’” (John 8:31-37)

It's clear to see that what Yeshua meant, by calling those Jews who came against Him, Sons of the Devil, was to be taken in a spiritual way; not a physical way, since He Himself speaks of their lineage coming from Abraham, not Satan. Branham's teaching is not built upon a proper understanding of Scripture.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ [John Dowie](#).

⁴⁰ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, based on the lexicon of Wilhelm Gesenius; Edward Robinson, translator and E. Rodiger, editor, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, Abridged (Accordance Bible Software), paragraph 8838. The Hebrew word *yadah* יָדָה can be used in the ordinary sense, as in to ‘know, learn to know, good and evil,’ and in the intimate sense of a man having sexual intercourse with a woman; to ‘know of a person carnally.’

Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, authors; M. Richardson, translator, *The Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 2 (Boston, MA USA: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), p. 391; ‘to know sexually, have intercourse with.’

Also, when Yeshua spoke of those being sent to Hell by Him on Judgment Day, He doesn't call them Satan's *sons*:

“Then Yeshua will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you *cursed*, into the *everlasting* Fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.’” (Matthew 25:41)

If those going into everlasting Fire had lineage back to Satan, Yeshua would have said, ‘into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil, *his Seed* (sons and daughters) and his angels,’ but Yeshua didn't say that. The *Serpent Seed* teaching is a horrendously false teaching, and next to Branham being ‘the Messenger of the Covenant,’ were two reasons why Jesus took him from the Earth. Branham had many heretical teachings.

Also part of the teaching is that Cain's “Serpent” descendants or Seed were among us today, but this is easily squelched by the fact that all of Cain's Seed were destroyed in the Flood. Only Noah, righteous Noah, from the line of Adam and Seth, went into the Ark. Of course Noah's three sons were with him, but obviously, none of them were from the Seed of Cain.

Some of Branham's Other Heretical Teachings

A few more of William Branham's heretical teachings, and there are many, are these:

1. [Branham and the Bible Diverge.](#)
2. [Branham was the Last Sign.](#)
3. [Branham's Contradictory Teachings.](#)
4. [Branham's credibility.](#)
5. [Branham's prophecies.](#)
6. [God never meant for Man to have sex.](#)
7. [Who was William Branham?](#)

Branham taught that Jesus was not the eternal Son of God, and that only at the baptism of Jesus was God made flesh. Branham believed that denominations were ‘a mark of the Beast,’⁴¹ which added to the controversy surrounding his later ministry. Branham uniquely associated the image of the beast *with Protestant denominations*.

In his later years he came to believe *all denominations were 'synagogues of Satan.'* A key teaching of Branham's message was a command to true Christians to ‘come out’ of the denominations and accept the message of the Laodicean messenger (i.e. Branham), who had the ‘message of the hour.’ He argued that continued allegiance to a denomination was an acceptance of the mark of the beast, which would mean missing the rapture,’ another false teaching.⁴²

⁴¹ Orson Pratt, *Orson Pratt: Writing of an Apostle*, p. 84, n. 6.

⁴² See [William Branham](#) and [The Feast of Trumpets](#), p. 9ff.

Conclusion

Over the last 200 years there have been a number of men and women whom God anointed with power to heal, and all of them, like William Branham, taught Sunday, Easter and Christmas,⁴³ which we know today is not of God, but is of the Serpent. This reveals that just because a man or a woman has a powerful anointing from God to heal, it does not mean that everything they teach is of the Lord. This is especially true of Branham who taught a number of deviant and bizarre heresies, such as ‘the Father is Jesus,’⁴⁴ ‘Once Saved, Always Saved,’⁴⁵ and the Serpent Seed doctrine.⁴⁶

How Jesus healed through William Branham was nothing less than divine, but Branham strayed far from the Path in his later years. Neither William Branham nor his teachings should be followed. Congregations that center around him and his teachings are a cult, and should be avoided at all costs.⁴⁷

⁴³ For further understanding of why Branham wasn't a teacher of God's Word see these articles:

1. [A Snapshot of Church History and Mosaic Law.](#)
2. [The Feasts of Israel as Time Markers After the Resurrection](#) for why Sunday, Easter and Xmas are heretical teachings.
3. [The Feasts of Israel and the Church.](#)
4. [God's Way vs Church Way.](#)
5. [Grace, Holiness and the Pharisaic Church.](#)
6. [Hebrews and the Change of the Law.](#)
7. [Law 102.](#)
8. [Law and Grace.](#)
9. [No Longer Under the Law?](#)
10. [Romans 14 and the Dietary Laws.](#)
11. [Seven Ways Yeshua Fulfilled the Law.](#)
12. [Take the Quiz! Five Quick Questions about the New Testament.](#)
13. [The Hebraic Perspective.](#)
14. [The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21.](#)
15. [The Sabbath and Yeshua.](#)
16. [The Two Babylons—The Full Hislop.](#)

⁴⁴ See Matthew 3:16,17; John 1:1-14; and John 15:26 and [Yeshua—God the Son](#) and [Yeshua—His Deity and Sonship](#) for why the Father isn't the Son, and how the Son shares deity with His Father.

⁴⁵ See [Once Saved, Always Saved?](#) for why it's a false teaching.

⁴⁶ Also see, [The Serpent Seed.](#)

⁴⁷ This article was revised on Saturday, April 6, 2024.