

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. One of the more famous Christians who believed and taught this was William Branham (1909-1965). He was a Christian minister,

“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 the 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 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, is the belief that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three different modes (modalism) or aspects of God, as op-

ings (Serpent Seed and Modalism) are heretical. Branham had other false teachings as well:

“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

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. The Serpent Seed teaching didn’t originate with Branham. It appears in early Gnostic writings, such as the Gospel of Philip (c. 350 AD), and it was explicitly rejected as heresy by Irenaeus (c. 180 AD)¹³ and later Christian theologians.¹⁴ In the last 300 years it has been taught by Daniel Parker (1781-1844) and Arnold Murray (1929-2014).

William Branham

In the Wikipedia article on William Branham it states:

“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, though, Branham had become an extremely controversial teacher. 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 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 had ‘stepped out of his anointing’ and had become *a ‘bad teacher of heretical doctrine.*”¹⁹

posed 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.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 140.

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. 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. Biblical purity and womanhood wasn't valued by society and most Christian women, and consequently, moral decay and every perversion abounded, and continues to abound.

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

“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 Lord sent some people into Branham's life to warn him, *but Branham refused to listen*. One of them was his respected colleague and friend, Gordon Lindsay, who 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!’*”²⁸

Those two sentences reveal much about 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 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 head-on by accident.²⁹ “He was rushed to the hospital in Amarillo, Texas, but succumbed to his injuries on Christmas Eve.”³⁰ 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*.”³¹

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 before it happened*. God revealed to Hagin that Branham “*was teaching false doctrine*” and God was removing him “*because of his disobedience*.”³² Hagin's prophecy proclaimed,

“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.”³³

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ *Head-On Collision Kills 1, Injures 6*, Friona Star, December 1965.

³⁰ Harrell, *All Things are Possible*, p. 164.

³¹ Weaver, *The Healer-Prophet: William Marrion Branham*, pp. 153-154.

³² Ibid., p. 105.

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.*’ The sad thing is that unscrupulous men around him are putting words into his mouth, and due to his limited background he is taking them up.”³⁴

“*God later told Hagin: ‘I had to permit him to be removed because of the damage he was causing in the Body of Christ.’*”³⁵

Lindsay was also told of Branham's impending death *before* Hagin came to him. Lindsay writes of a ‘sister Schrader,’ a propheticess 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 was busy and I let that get by me, and 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 him as the Lord had instructed me, *but I saw that he wouldn't listen.*’”³⁶

Alexander Dowie (1847-1907), another man of God who was anointed with healing power, had also gotten into this same error 60 years earlier, proclaiming that he was the end-times ‘Elijah,’ the Messenger sent by God to proclaim that the Lord was coming. The prophecy, though, from Malachi 3:1f., speaks of John the Baptist coming ‘to prepare the way’ before Yeshua (Jesus):

“Behold! I send My messenger and he will prepare the way before Me. And Yahveh, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His Temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant in whom you delight. Behold! He is coming!,’ says Yahveh of Hosts. ‘But who can endure the day of His coming?! And who can stand when He appears?! For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver and He will purify the Sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to Yahveh an offering in righteousness.’” (Malachi 3:1-3)

Dowie proclaimed himself the Messenger of the Covenant, ‘Elijah,’ decades before Branham. Dowie, too, saw himself as Elijah the Restorer, sent by God *to prepare the world for the second coming of Christ*:

“The time has come,” he announced; “I tell the church universal everywhere, *you have to do what I tell you...because I am the Messenger of God's covenant.*”³⁷

³³ [The Enigma of William Branham.](#)

³⁴ Mrs. Gordon Lindsay, *My Diary Secrets*, Sixth Edition, p. 152.

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

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ [John Dowie.](#)

Serpent Seed Teaching

A major problem with the doctrine of Serpent Seed is that Scripture specifically speaks of Adam ‘knowing’ (having sexual intercourse with)³⁸ Eve and that it resulted in both Cain and Abel being born. Therefore, the Bible dismantles Branham’s teaching of Satan having intercourse with Eve—*Cain is not a literal descendant of Satan*:

“Now Adam *knew* Eve his wife *and she conceived and bore Cain*, and she said, ‘I have acquired a man **from Yahveh**.’” (She could hardly have said that she got Cain from Yahveh if the father had been Satan.) “Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.” (Genesis 4:1-2)

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—they are acting like Satan. It doesn’t mean that they are literally descended from Satan, as Yeshua Himself explains:

“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 them Sons of the Devil, was to be taken in a spiritual way; not a physical way, since He declares that they were from the lineage of Abraham, not Satan. Again, Branham’s teaching is wrong.

Also, when Yeshua spoke of those being sent to Hell by Him on Judgment Day, He didn’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. *Serpent Seed* teaching is a horrendously false teaching, and next to Branham being ‘the Messenger of the Covenant,’ were two reasons Jesus took him from the Earth. Branham had many heretical teachings.

³⁸ 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.’

Some of Branham's Heretical Teachings

Some other heretical teachings of William Branham's, 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,'³⁹ which added to the controversy surrounding his later ministry...his teaching was similar to the anti-Catholic teaching of classical Pentecostalism and Protestantism, which commonly associated the Mark of the Beast with the Roman Catholic Church. Branham, though, 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,' which is another false teaching.⁴⁰

³⁹ Orson Prat, *Orson Pratt: Writing of an Apostle*, p. 84, n. 6.

⁴⁰ See [William Branham](#) and [The Feast of Trumpets](#).

Conclusion

Over the last two hundred 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,⁴¹ which we know today is not of God, but is of the Serpent. This reveals that just because a man or a woman has the powerful anointing of the Holy Spirit 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,’⁴² ‘Once Saved, Always Saved,’⁴³ and the Serpent Seed doctrine.⁴⁴

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.

⁴¹ 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.](#)

⁴² 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.

⁴³ See [Once Saved, Always Saved?](#) for why it's a false teaching.

⁴⁴ [The Serpent Seed.](#)

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