

THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS WERE UNTIL JOHN

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HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT JESUS MEANT WHEN HE SAID, THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS WERE UNTIL JOHN: SINCE THAT TIME THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS PREACHED, AND EVERY MAN PRESSETH INTO IT? HAVE YOU WONDERED HOW A PROPHET WITH AN OLD TESTAMENT ANOINTING COULD FIT SCRIPTURALLY INTO THIS AGE? I KNOW SOME OF YOU HAVE; THEREFORE, BY THE HELP OF GOD WE WILL TRY TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS, AND HELP YOU TO SEE GOD'S PURPOSE IN IT ALL.

WE WILL ALSO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT MATERIALISM, FALSE DOCTRINE, AND THE FAN IN JESUS' HAND. READ THE ARTICLE, AND ASK GOD TO REVEAL THESE VARIOUS POINTS TO YOU, FOR AS LONG AS YOU ONLY HAVE A HEAD KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD: THE DEVIL WILL TAKE YOU AROUND AND AROUND, BUT A SPIRITUAL REVELATION WILL SETTLE YOU FOREVER.

TEXT - LUKE 16-16

We are not publishing this message just to be argumentative, but rather to answer some questions that various one's have written me about, in the past year. I did not reply to the individual's questions at the time, for I felt that time itself would present the opportunity to deal with them in a complete message, if the will of God moved in that direction. Now, as has been the case with other subjects, it seems that this is on my mind, and that it is time to give an answer. I just pray that God will give me utterance to get it all out for you, as plain as I see it myself. Now the question is this; Bro. Jackson, how do you reconcile your teaching about a prophet in this age with **Luke 16:16**? Jesus spoke about John the Baptist and the kingdom of God in that verse; therefore we will read the text, and take up our thought from there.

WRAPPED UP IN TRADITIONS

Open your Bibles to **Luke 16:16**, and let us see what there is in that verse that could trouble people so much. **"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."** People in our day are no different than they were in the day when Jesus spoke those words. When someone begins to teach something from the Bible, that is a little contrary to their old traditionally established religious teachings, they immediately close their eyes to any investigation of the scriptures, and spend their time finding fault with the person who would dare to teach something different. That is what the Pharisees did to Jesus. They just simply could not bear to hear Him teaching the people something that they themselves did not know anything about. In this particular setting, Jesus was teaching His disciples the value of true stewardship when the Pharisees began to deride Him. He looked over at them, and said, **(15) "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."** Then He continued, and spoke the words which we are using for our text: **(16) "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."** Some take that to mean that there could never be another prophet for any reason whatsoever, regardless of what we find written in other scriptures, and they are not always kind and gentle in the ways they disagree with you. That is why I have said many times, Religion is cruel. It was not the dope addicts and drunks, nor the bums, that cried, Crucify Him, when

Pilot asked what they would have him do with Jesus. It was those religious people who were supposed to be a light to the Gentiles, those who had the lively religious oracles, and the law and covenant of God. Yet they crucified the very one that came to give all that a living reality. That which the law and the prophets looked forward to, they rejected. They spoke often to the Messiah that was to come and deliver them, and when He came, what did they do with Him? They rejected Him. When John, the forerunner of the Messiah, came on the scene, what did they do with him? They rejected him. Why did they reject them? Because neither of them came according to their pre-conceived opinions of how the scriptures were going to be fulfilled. Of course they wanted their Messiah to come, but they expected Him to be born of one of the elite families in their social realm; they could never accept the idea that God would allow such a worthy person to be born under the conditions that Jesus was born under. In other words, they were just like denominational Christendom today; they wanted all the benefits that the scriptures spoke of, but they did not want to walk in the light of truth that those scriptures contained. That same old religious spirit has passed right on down through every age, and in our day we see its efforts magnified. It seems that almost everyone you meet is religious, but very few of them know anything about true Bible Christianity. They love to speak of grandma's religion and all of their religious works, but the very minute you mention anything about God sending a prophet to this age, they reveal what is hidden under their outer shell. "There is no such thing in our day," they will say. Did not Jesus say, "**The law and the prophets were until John, and since that time the kingdom of God is preached?**" Don't be trying to sell us on that idea of a prophet to this age. Jesus fulfilled all the law and the prophets, and gave us the plan of salvation; therefore, we do not need another prophet. How many of you have heard people talk like that? They are wrapped up in their traditions, and feel that God would never do anything without clearing it with their group first. I have news for all who think like that; God is not even in their little denominational club, and neither is He in these large denominational social clubs; He is in His true people, by His Spirit that indwells them, and He is revealing things to them that are hidden from the denominational clubs.

THAT ELIJAH ANOINTING

One thing that He has revealed from His word, that they (denominational people) cannot see, is **Malachi 4:5 and 6**, which speaks of an Elijah anointing that is to rest upon someone, and the purpose for that anointing. Let us read those two verses, **(5) "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: (6) And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children, to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."** Brothers and Sisters: We all know that the great day of the Lord was when Jesus came in His first advent, and He is the very one who said, **(Matthew 18:3-4) (3) "Except ye be converted, AND BECOME AS LITTLE CHILDREN, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (4) Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this LITTLE CHILD, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."** But what did Malachi say? **"I will send you Elijah the prophet BEFORE the coming of the GREAT DAY of the Lord."** Now that might not mean as much to us if we did not have the words of the angel of God that appeared to Zacharias, the father of John. But we do have those words, and they are found in **Luke 1:15-17. (15) "For he (John) shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. (16) And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. (17) And he shall go before Him (the Lord Jesus) in the spirit and power of Elias, (or Elijah) to turn the hearts of the FATHERS to the CHILDREN, (This is what Malachi said Elijah would do.) and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."** You will notice that the angel did not quote all of what Malachi had said; he only applied part of it to the ministry of John. Therefore, that still leaves something further for that Elijah anointing, on out beyond John the Baptist. We will get to that later, but right now I want to say something in connection with our text scripture, and I want you

to pay attention to how I say it. John truly had an Old Testament prophet anointing, but he was not a prophet that was to write another book to be added to the Bible. His Old Testament anointing was for the purpose of introducing and ushering in another dispensation of time; he was a preaching prophet. He fulfilled scriptures for the first time, that had been hanging for years. He revealed scriptures that pertained to the first advent of Jesus Christ. Therefore, from the standpoint of his total ministry, you would have to conclude that he was a bridge between the Old Testament and the New, and he fulfilled precisely, everything that had been written of him in the writings of the Old Testament prophets. He came on the scene a little ahead of Jesus, and begun to call men to repentance. He prepared a people to receive their Messiah. He led them to a place where they could receive truth, in repentance and humility, as it is with a little child. When you tell your little children something, they do not stand there arguing about whether you have told them the truth or not; they just believe you. Therefore, since Jesus used that as an example, we would have to say that John was anointing to call some people away from their traditional concepts of the scriptures, and get them in such a state of mind that when Jesus began to teach them about the kingdom of God, they would receive it gladly. Now we all readily agree that John was a prophet, but he was a preaching prophet; he did not add anything to the chronology of the scriptures. The only record we have of his ministry, is what other New Testament writers recorded in their writings.

A TURNING POINT IN TIME

What did Jesus mean when He said, **“The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached?”** What He is actually having reference to, is the fact that until John’s hour, in order to be acceptable to God, everyone had to keep the law of Moses, and take heed to the words of the prophets that God sent. But John’s ministry marked a turning point for mankind; they would no longer be justified by the strict letter of the law of Moses and the prophets, for the kingdom of God was opened up to them, and that is a work of grace and mercy. From John’s ministry, on forward, no one would be compelled to keep the letter of the law for justification. The law was given by God, written by Moses, and ministered to the people by God’s servants, but it was only for the purpose of pushing man’s sin debt forward until such time as the debt would be paid in full. The law furnished types and shadows of the perfect sacrifice that would one day pay the sin debt for the whole human race, but once you reach what those types and shadows were pointing to, you do not need them anymore. That is exactly what Jesus was saying to the people. All of those sacrifices and offerings were pointing to the finished work at Calvary. Whatever each sacrifice typed, it was all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The law was righteous, but man, being a sinful creature by nature, was not able to live up to the righteousness of the law. It was only as he fulfilled the mandatory obligations of the law that God reckoned life to him; therefore, it required a continual offering of sacrifices, the blood of bulls, goats, and so forth, but they could only push the yearly sins forward; they could never cancel the sin debt. It was a continual process, carried on through generation after generation, and century after century, all pointing forward to a time when God Himself would provide a perfect sacrifice, which would pay the sin debt for all mankind, from Adam all the way to the end of time.

LONG RANGE PROPHECIES

As time moved on, and the Israelites moved from one state of apostasy to another, God began to raise up prophets in their midst, to rebuke them for their evil ways, and turn them back to the Lord. You can find the names of many prophets recorded in the pages of the Old Testament, but they were not all writing prophets that would write and add to the chronology of the scriptures. Take Elijah for instance. He was a great prophet; much is written about him, but he did not write one paragraph of the scriptures. Neither did Elisha. They are only referred to as they lived and ministered in their hour of time. But when Elisha left the scene, God began to raise up another type of prophet. These were called prophesying

prophets. They made long range predictions of things to come, even the great plan of God for the redemption of lost mankind was unfolded through the writings of these prophets. God would raise them up in their particular generation; they would rebuke the people for their departure from the word of God, and for their idol worship, and many times be the means by which God would deliver them out of hard circumstances. The Israelites were a rebellious type of people that were never consistent in following the word of the Lord; therefore, it was necessary for God to keep sending them prophets, but those same prophets that rebuked and ministered to Israel, also began to speak and record long range prophecies concerning a Messiah that would come to deliver Israel from her oppressors, and sit in the seat of David, ruling with a strong arm, and of a time of peace, and how all nations would come to Jerusalem to worship, and so forth. Just listen to a few words from **Isaiah chapter 11**, spoken more than 700 years B.C., but carry all the way into the millennium. **(1) "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: (2) And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord: (3) And He shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: (4) But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. (5) And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins. (6) The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."** We will stop there, for in those few verses you can see how the spirit of God working through Isaiah the prophet, reached out into the future more than twenty seven hundred years prophesying things that would come to pass. Looking back to **Isaiah 9:6 & 7**, we find these words recorded, concerning Christ Jesus. **(6) "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. (7) Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."** That little portion of scripture could help a lot of people get straightened out on the Godhead, if they would only absorb what is written there. Let us look at a couple more prophecies before moving on. More than 500 years B.C., Zechariah spoke these words, **3:8, "Here now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH."** That Branch is Jesus Christ, **verse 12 and 13 in chapter 6**, opens it up a little more. **(12) "And speak unto him saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord: (13) Even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the GLORY, and shall SIT, and RULE upon HIS THRONE."** Now turn back to **chapter 4**, and let us see there, something that will take us to **Revelation 11:4**, into the first half of the seventieth week of Daniel. **Verse 1, "And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, (2) And said unto me, What seest thou: And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick of gold, with bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: (here it is now) (3) And the two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. (skip to verse 11) Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof: (12) And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? (13) And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord. (14) Then said he, These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of**

the whole earth.” Remember now, These words were uttered more than 600 years before the apostle John, on the isle of Patmos, wrote the words we are about to read from **Revelation 11:4**. Let me say this, and then we will read that verse. No one prophet wrote the whole plan of God. One by one their writings were added to the chronology of the writing prophets. Each one wrote what the Spirit of God revealed to him, and not one of them ever contradicted what another one had wrote, and at no time did God ever have two of them on the scene at the same time. We are going to read that verse from **Revelation 11:4**, now, to back up Zechariah's prophecy and you will see that at that time God will have two prophets on the scene at the same time. We will save most of our comments on that for the conclusion of the message though.

FULFILLING GOD'S PROJECTED PICTURE

When grace for the Gentiles runs out, and God again starts marking time for the Jews, the last week of Daniel's 70 prophetic weeks will be in motion, and these two prophets will fulfill their role. Let us read **verses 3 and 4. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothes in sackcloth. (4) These are THE TWO OLIVE TREES, AND THE TWO CANDLESTICKS STANDING BEFORE THE GOD OF THE EARTH."** An Old Testament prophet, and a New Testament apostle both wrote the same thing more than 600 years apart, and more than 1900 years, or maybe we should say almost 1900 years before the actual event takes place, figuring from John's writings, in 96 A.D. Do not bother to say, Why will God have two prophets on the scene at the same time, for as God closes out this age both to the Jews as well as the Gentiles, getting ready for the millennium, you are going to see Him doing a lot of things you never thought He would do. Up to that hour, He has allowed people to play around with His word, build their great programs, and get everything so messed up, that it looks almost impossible for anyone to get over the mountainous heap of forms and rituals, to find any reality, but let me tell you, When God gets through shaking all of that, there will be nothing left but a pile of spiritual rubble. Only that which is anchored upon the revealed word of God will stand the final test. Your 50 years of Bible theology will all go down the drain. Jesus is not going to come according to your theology; He is going to come according to His word. Theologians have projected all sorts of theories as to why Jesus should have come so many years ago, and could not, because someone failed to do so and so. But that is not true at all; He will come again, exactly, and precisely according to the total plan of God for the ages. In other words, every verse of scripture that builds the whole projected picture that God saw when He counseled with Himself, before He ever started to create anything, must fall into place before He closes this thing out. He came the first time, according to His word, and the theologians of that day missed it, because their theology had them blinded to the word of God that was being fulfilled in their day. When He comes again, it will be the same way, for men love their denominational theories more than they love truth. They try to interpret what the prophets wrote, and the prophets themselves did not understand what they were prophesying by the Spirit of God. Now my point is this, Those prophets spoke under the anointing of the Spirit of God, not understanding the things they were prophesying, because it was not for their day, the apostle Paul who had a great revelation of what those prophets wrote said, **"The natural man (a person without the Holy Ghost) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."** But, Bro. Jackson, that applies to the man of the world. Brothers and Sisters, listen to me. Anyone who tries to interpret the deep things to God apart from a genuine revelation by the Holy Ghost, is just as far from the truth as the man of the world who couldn't care less. If you do not believe what I am saying, listen to some of the prominent preachers of our day, as they come on the radio and television teaching on the Godhead, and Revelation, and Daniel, and how man fell in the beginning, and you who are spiritual, will immediately see just how far wrong their interpretations are. These things to them, are just like the mystery of Christ (As it was called) concerning God's plan for the salvation of Gentile people, was to the Jewish rabbis. Prophet after prophet, from

generation to generation, spoke words that built into a mystical picture to those Jewish rabbis. They just simply could not understand those things, but they had their theories.

UPSETTING THEORIES

Listen to the words of the apostle Paul to the church of Ephesus. **Ephesians 3:1**, “**For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, (2) If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you -ward: (3) How that BY REVELATION He made known unto me the mystery; as I wrote before in few words, (4) Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ (5) Which in other ages was NOT MAN MADE unto the sons of men, as it now REVELATED unto His holy apostles and prophets BY THE SPIRIT; (6) That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel.**” There are natural minded religious people, even in our day, that do not yet understand that the mystery of Christ (as spoken of in various scriptures) was revealed by the Spirit of God, to those first age disciples, 1900 years ago. In other words, understanding the scriptures in their revelatory scope, is more than just interpreting them with our natural mind. The Holy Ghost must put the pieces in their proper place, in order for the puzzle to become a beautiful picture. Those first age scribes and Pharisees had the writings of Isaiah, Joel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and all the others, but they could not put the prophetic picture together. All they had were a lot of theories, which they had reasoned out in their seminaries. They were haughty, high minded, and felt that if anyone wanted to know anything about God, he would have to learn it from them, but, What happened? One day they heard that there was a crude looking fellow, out there in the wilderness of Judaea preaching, about the kingdom of heaven. I can just hear them responding to that news, “Who does he think he is? He is trying to teach those people about God, and he doesn’t even know how to dress himself properly. Some of you priests and Levites, go down there, and find out who that fellow is.” Old John was standing out there by the river of Jordan, **REPENT YE: FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND!** People were coming from every direction to be baptized by him, for he was preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees in the crowd, he looked at them, and said O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, and do not bother to say, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that god is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. He knew what they were thinking, so he just headed them off. “The axe is laid at the root of the trees, every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” They had never heard anyone speak like that. He spoke with authority, and without fear. When those priests and Levites asked, Who art thou? John said, I am not the Christ. What then? Are you Elias? No. Well, are you that prophet? (Meaning that prophet spoken of in **Duet. 18:15**, which actually was referring to Jesus Christ) No, I am not! Who are you then? We have to give an answer to those who sent us. What have you got to say about yourself? “**I am the VOICE of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.**” John is just fulfilling what the writing prophets had written about him. No more, and no less.

WHAT THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH DOES

When Jesus said, the law the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached. He was merely stating that the ministry of John was a dividing line between two dispensations. Before John came, those who followed the word of the Lord God, had certain mandatory laws they must keep, laws that were given to Moses, from God, for the Israelites. They had also, the writings of the prophets which spoke of things to come, some of which was concerning the very ministry of John. There stood John fulfilling all that was written about him, so they would have no need to look any further, for that, in the prophets. Then, since he was introducing, or paving the way for the Messiah that was to come, they

would no longer need to look to the prophets for that. Jesus came, and those who had been prepared by the ministry of John, received Him. He taught them for 3½ years, then offered Himself as a sacrifice to pay their sin debt, and free them from the mandatory keeping of the law of Moses. Therefore, no longer would God's servants point hungry souls back to the law of Moses, but rather to the cross of Calvary. You have to get that word UNTIL, straightened out in your mind. It applies to the setting of our text, but do not try to apply it to every other scripture, or you will run up against a brick wall. Technically the law was still in affect until the supreme price for man's sin against God was paid at Calvary, but Jesus used the ministry of John as a marker between the old covenant and the new covenant, between the law age and the grace age. From John, forward, the message is different. Now the message is repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Then, on the day of Pentecost, after the sin debt had been settled, Peter took it one step farther. **“Repent, and be baptized every one of you IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghosts.”** If we can get a true vision of what God did through the ministry of John, or the place that John had in what God did to open up the grace age, then we should have no problem understanding what that same anointing on another man was for, as the grace age begins to close out. If we can see how John faded into the background, and allowed Jesus to be magnified, after he had fulfilled the first half of **Malachi 4:5 and 6**, then we ought to be able to allow Bro. Branham to fade into the background, and allow Jesus Christ to be magnified, after he fulfilled the 2nd, and last part of **Malachi 4:5 and 6**. Just as the fathers of John's day had to be ministered to by that God identifying spirit of Elijah, in order for them to receive the gospel in childlike faith, so did the children, the spiritual descendants of those fathers, have to be ministered to, by that same spirit, that same God identifying anointing that was upon Elijah and John, in order for them to be returned to the truth that their spiritual fathers believed. That anointing is always the same. It cries out against apostasy, and points people to the true God. It reveals the true God to the people, but it never exalts the human vessels to try to take the place of God. It is only carnal minds that do that, because they are not able to spiritually discern what is happening.

KNOWN BY HIS FRUIT

Open your Bibles to **Matthew, chapter 11**, and let us see how Jesus vindicated the man, John, even though John had actually doubted in his mind, after he was put in prison. Now the text scripture was used for this message was spoken by Jesus, in 33 A.D., toward the close of His own ministry, but the setting of **Matthew 11**, was in 31 A.D., in the early stages of His ministry. John has been taken prisoner because he rebuked Herod the tetrarch, for taking his brothers's wife from him, and for other evils which he had done, and in prison, John begins to wonder if that one he proclaimed to be the Lamb of God, was really who he believed Him to be. His doubts were very humanlike, but did not detract one thing from what he had been anointed to do previously. He had been anointed to awaken a people to the spiritual reality that their Messiah was coming, and he had done that. He was a voice in his hour. The Rabbis had their interpretations of how God was going to fulfill those scriptures pertaining to the Messiah, but when God began to fulfill those scriptures, it was not as they had supposed it would be; therefore God set a voice in the land, to cry out against apostasy, and awaken a people to the reality of what was about to take place in their day. As we pick up the setting here in **Matthew 11**, the multitudes have left John, and are now following Jesus. But there are yet a few loyal souls who are sentimentally attached to John, and we see two of them here, as we begin reading in **verse (2)**, **“Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, (3) And said unto them, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?”** Jesus did not rebuke them, and find fault with John because he had doubted, He merely called their attention to the works that were being done by Him. He said unto them, **(4) “Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see:** (He did not take them to the scriptures and say, Now you read such and such, and you will know. They had been witnessing the miracles that were taking place, and John knew what the prophets had said He (Jesus) would do,

when He came, so He just sent them back to tell John what they had seen and heard.) **(5) The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.**” That is what they were to go back and tell John. While they were gone, Jesus took that opportunity to vindicate John’s ministry. That causes me to feel that, if, while John was in prison, and could no longer stand and speak for himself, his life and ministry was vindicated as to what God’s purpose had been in it all, there should be a justifiable place in this age of perversion and confusion to stand and do the same for the human instrument that God made in this hour, to do much the same as John did then. If Jesus had come in His first advent, without John first coming to prepare the people to receive Him: then everyone would have missed Him. Likewise in our day, if that Elijah anointing had not rested on a human vessel, that stood calling spiritually asleep people out of their denominational traditions, and back to the word of God, we would all still be spiritually unprepared to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, or to be received of Him. He is not coming back for a people that is faithful to their traditional routines and rituals; He is coming for a people that has been washed clean by the washing of His word.

JESUS VINDICATES JOHN

Let us continue reading. After Jesus told John’s disciples what they should say to John, He added, **verse 6, “And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. (7) And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?”** Try to catch the picture of comparison here. You have all, no doubt, seen swampy areas where cattails and little bamboo canes grow up out of the water. The winds blow those little reeds in every which direction. That is like a man who preaches one thing today, and the next time you hear him, he is preaching something contrary, and so on, never able to stand steadfast. In other words, Jesus is asking the multitudes who had followed John, Is that the kind of man you saw standing out there in the water baptizing repentant sinners? Of course not. You saw a man that knew what he was there to do, and he did it without wavering, and without respect of persons. **(8) “But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings palaces.”** No! They did not go out to see one of those Hollywood television evangelists, with his two toned shoes, and his nine hundred dollars suit, and bushy, uncut hair, with half a can of hair spray holding it in place. What they saw was a man, dressed in a piece of old camel’s skin, who went around poking his hand in holes in rocks, getting wild honey, and catching and eating the legs off of grasshoppers. He ate wild honey and locusts. Surely you do not think those locusts were 5 or 6 pound creatures, running around out there in the desert, that John had to kill and cook up real nice before he ate them. No. They were just overgrown grasshoppers, but the point is this, John was not going to be obligated to anyone. He had a message burning in his soul, and his only concern was to preach it. Clothing and food were secondary. No wonder the elite of his day had such a hard time: it took a lot for them even to bear the sight of him, much less to believe that he was a prophet of God. **Verse 9, “But what went ye out for to see? A prophet?”** Brothers and Sisters: There are a lot of people who, when they give reference to Bro. Branham who fulfilled much the same ministry as John, make much out of that verse. They build it to such exaggerated proportions, “Oh he was more than a prophet, he was God.” That was not the sense in which Jesus said that about John, so why should it be any more so, when it is applied to Bro. Branham? Only a carnal minded Gentile could think like that. He was more than a prophet, only in the sense that he was chosen to proceed the Lord, and prepare the way for Him. **Verse 10,** makes that clear to me; I hope it does to you. Notice how, when Jesus said, and more than a prophet, He went right on to say, **(10) “For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.”** Malachi was the one who prophesied that. Don’t you think he would have loved to have been the one who would fulfill that prophecy? I believe he would have. Isaiah was the one who prophesied, saying, **“The voice of one**

crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.” Do you believe Isaiah might have been considered to be more than a prophet, if he had had the special honor of actually introducing their Messiah, to the children of Israel? I believe so. But that is all the significance I see in such a statement, and I do not believe Jesus meant for anyone to see more than that. Those other prophets had prophesied about a Messiah that was to come, but John had the special honor of actually introducing their Messiah, to the children of Israel. That is exactly why he was more than a prophet; he was that special messenger of **Malachi 3:1**. That did not make John, God. Neither did it mean that he had a better moral life than those other prophets, he just had a greater opportunity than they had. Malachi prophesied, **“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.”** John was the messenger that would prepare the way for the messenger of the covenant, which was Jesus Christ. Jesus was the messenger, or mediator of a new covenant. Not a political covenant that would figure into the weeks of Daniel’s prophecy, but a covenant of grace, to replace that covenant which God made with the house of Israel when He led them out of Egypt. Paul explained it in the **8th chapter of Hebrews**, beginning with **verse 1**. We will pick up **verse 6**, for our purpose here. **(6) “But now hath he (Christ Jesus) obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (7) For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (8) For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: (9) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. (Paul is quoting this from the 31st chapter of Jeremiah.) (10) For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. (11) And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (12) For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. (13) In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxed old is ready to vanish away.”** I am taking the time to clarify this covenant that Malachi mentioned, so you will not try to apply it to the covenant of **Daniel 9:27**, which the Antichrist makes with Israel and other nations. The covenant Jesus mediated, was a covenant of grace, to replace the old covenant of the law. This new covenant is planted in the hearts of the children of God, by the Holy Ghost; thereby giving them a revelation of what the types and shadows of the old covenant pointed to. This new covenant is what Jesus had reference to the night He took the passover with His disciples. He passed the cup of wine to them, saying, All of you drink of this, for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. He was the mediator of this better covenant, and it was His very own blood that sealed it, or made it to become effective. No more would God be represented to the people in a box called the ark of the covenant. Now He is in the body of His word, dwelling in the hearts of believers. That makes Jesus Christ the mediator of a better covenant, just like Paul said.

GET THE STORY STRAIGHT

Brothers and Sisters, I want you everyone to pay attention to me now. There is not scripture anywhere in the Bible that makes room for a 3rd covenant! DID YOU HEAR ME? THERE IS NO SCRIPTURAL GROUNDS FOR A THIRD COVENANT! If there is a third covenant, there has to be blood shed to seal it. Where is that blood? The first covenant was ordained, and sanctified, by the blood of bulls and goats,

all of which pointed to the perfect One that was to come. When He came, He set in motion, and sanctified the second covenant with His own blood, and the apostle Paul referred to that covenant, as the everlasting covenant; (**Hebrews 13:20**) that leaves no room for another one. I know some of you do not even know why I am saying these things, but I am going to tell you why. There are a lot of carnal minded people running loose in the world tonight, claiming to be some kind of spiritual leaders that have a great revelation, that Bro. Branham was the mediator of a new covenant, a 3rd covenant. That is just as much Antichrist as praying to Mary. They are not satisfied to let him be acclaimed God's prophet messenger to the Laodicean church age; they have to surround his name with some great mystery, claiming that he was more than that. But they cannot even keep their story straight, for in one breath they will say that he was a prophet messenger, to restore truth to the church, and then turn right around and tell you to lay your Bible aside, and live by the Spoken Word books, and particularly, by the Seven Seals book. Anyone with any spiritual insight at all would be quick to realize that if he was sent to return a people back to the Bible that they had gotten away from, he certainly would not be anointed to preach something that would take people out of the Bible again. That is just plain common sense, when you stop to think about it. I sat under his ministry for years, and I never heard him teach anything that was designed to lead people away from the Bible. What I heard loud and clear, above everything else he said, was his constant screaming, GET BACK TO THE BIBLE! GET AWAY FROM THOSE RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS! Some of you may not like to hear me talk about this the way I do, but I feel that it is important. We get letters, almost every week, from poor confused souls that have been beat over the head with some preacher's spiritual club, and threatened, because they just simply cannot agree with all of this garbage that has been attached to Bro. Branham's name. I wish some of you would just take the time to read how God dealt with certain priests and monks during the Dark Ages, to get them back into the Bible, then tell me if you still think God sent a prophet to our age, to get us back out of the Bible again. If I am speaking to anyone that has ever been guilty of saying, I am going to believe what the prophet said, no matter what the Bible says, you are ten times worse than a Catholic priest. You will receive four-fold more judgment than any of them, for you have crucified the truth in order to reach such a place. If any of you think these words are bold; it is because I am alarmed at the way preachers are playing with crowds of people in this age. I am alarmed at the extreme measures they will go to, to dodge the truth. Truth is hated. The devil has always hated truth; he has always done everything he could to keep it hid, or to pervert it, and we are living in an age when he has plenty of help doing it.

WHAT CATHOLICS TEACH

I have always been amazed at how few words it takes for God to straighten up years of error, when He finally gets a person's attention. I was reading a little testimony of a certain Catholic priest that lived in Montreal, Canada, born in 1809. All his whole life, God had dealt with him about the Bible. He was highly educated, and honored by the Catholic diocese of Quebec, as one of the most educated and eloquent speakers in the Catholic Church. (He was also a friend of Abraham Lincoln in his later years, and was the one that warned President Lincoln, not to let that spirit get in America.) On one particular Sunday, he was asked by the bishop to preach on the subject of why they pray through the virgin mother, Mary, the mother of Jesus, in order to get their prayers answered. They felt that he was highly qualified to deal with the subject, and he agreed to do it. As he stood before that great crowd of people, his message was to this affect. "What mother on earth does not love her son? What son does not love his mother? If a son loves his mother, and she comes asking him to reconsider some decision, he will usually do what mother wants him to do. We have all transgressed; we cannot go direct to Christ with our petitions, (Now you and I know we can, but this is how they had it all twisted out of place.) For He is royalty. You have to think of this in the same sense as if you had rebelled against an earthly king, and you wanted to plead your case; you first get a mediator, someone to go between and speak on your behalf. That is the way we plead our case before king Jesus, against whom we have transgressed. We know that the virgin mother

loves us, and we know that she loves the Son, and that He loves her; therefore we believe that she definitely has the place as intercessor between us and Him. We believe that He will grant our petitions that His mother presents on our behalf." He went on to expound on all the finer details of all that is involved, and had that great crowd in tears. (Modern day preachers enjoy telling sad stories that will get their congregations to boo-hoing, for then, they will literally stand on their heads proclaiming, what a great message that was, and he was no exception.) But what do you think happened when he went home that night, and kneeled down to pray and study? When he opened his Bible; it just fell open in such a way that his eyed looked directly at the words of Jesus in **Luke 8:19-21. (19) "Then came to Him His mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the press. (crowd) (20) And it was told Him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. (21) And He answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it."** When he finished reading those words, this priest went to bed thinking about it, and that same audible voice that had been speaking to him for quite sometime, said, Why did you lie? Why did you not preach my word? He had been praying night after night, Father, take that voice away. Don't let it bother me anymore, not knowing that God was trying to get his attention. The essence of all this is, God finally got his attention through these few short words that Jesus spoke, and the man led more than 50 thousand souls out of that Catholic church system, and they settled out here in the state of Illinois. The Catholics ousted him, because he believed the Bible, and I see that same spirit among many that claim to be following Bro. Branham's teaching. If they were truly following Bro. Branham's teaching, they would love truth, like he did. They would love the Bible like he did. But, no! Many of them are ready to oust you from their assemblies, if they find out that you take the Bible as your final authority. That is why I say, Any person that would hold the Seven Seals book above the Bible is no different, and certainly no better off spiritually, than those Catholic priests who hold the word of the Pope above that of the Bible. What is the difference? You can believe me; God is not going to give anyone a revelation that will cause them to lay their Bible aside. To you who have done that, let me say this, You did not get your great revelation from the Spirit of God; it came from another spirit. Furthermore, I still believe the Bible, where it says, For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required. Some of you have turned your backs on a lot of truth, and I am fully persuaded that God will hold you accountable for it. You cannot turn your back on truth, without paying the bill for it later. Bro. Branham preached enough truth from the Bible, to put every true child of God back in the scriptures, but God also allowed him to say some things that has served to separate a lot of make-believers from among the flock, and you do not need me to point them out to you; just measure their message by the only yardstick that God has ever given, His holy, inspired word, the Bible.

OF THE SAME MIND

When Jesus vindicated John, He did it by the scriptures. John did exactly what the scriptures said he would do. He did not say anything that would take people away from the truth of the scrolls they had at that hour. "But there was a new covenant that followed, after those days," some will say. Yes, but it was a covenant that God had announced by the mouth of His prophets, and it fell right in line with the scriptures. It fulfilled the scriptures. He was the messenger of **Malachi 3:1, and Isaiah 40:3**, and he was sent to announce something, and to prepare some people to receive what he was announcing. What was his message? Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. What did that mean? It meant, the law age is closing out; there is another dispensation being ushered in, and that dispensation, we all know, required the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, to put it in force. Jesus goes right on speaking of John, there in **Matthew 11:11**, and says, "**Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.**" What a contrast! In **verse 9**, He had just said, "**But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.**" Who wouldn't

like to be looked to as a prophet? He was truly a prophet, and his great opportunity made him more than a prophet, yet the least one in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Why? How could that be? The kingdom of heaven is a dispensation of time, whereby the kingdom of God is in the hearts of His people, and His indwelling presence makes us sons of God. Therefore to be a son of God, regardless of how great or small, is greater than anything outside of that kingdom, for God has the same love for all of His children. Now the kingdom of God is not in you, until you receive Him by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but to have the very Spirit of God take up abode in you, is greater than anything that John ever was. That is just a simple fact, and does not detract anything from John, nor from what he did. In **verse 12**, Jesus goes on to say, **“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”** Many people read that verse, and apply the word, NOW, to our day, but Jesus made the application only for the few short months or maybe a year and a half, from the time John began to preach until the day Jesus spoke those words. John’s ministry began to open up this new dispensation, called the kingdom of heaven, but there was much opposition from the religious leaders of that hour, and they stood in the way of those who would enter in, causing them to have to force themselves with a steadfast attitude, I am going on; I will not stop, no matter what you do. There are always a lot of people opposed to anything new, regardless of whether it would be good or bad for them. They just simply do not want a change. These scribes and Pharisees were always out in the road, trying to stop those who were going to John’s baptism. No wonder Jesus said, What can I compare this generation to? John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, **“Behold, a man gluttonous, and wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.”** It is customary for Jewish people to drink wine, but you never see them getting drunk on it. However, the angel had said to Zacharias, John’s father, speaking of John, **“He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink,”** so John was just fulfilling those words spoken by the angel. He kept himself separated from the customs of the people. He went to the wilderness, and ate wild honey and locusts, while on the other hand, Jesus was always eating and drinking with the people, and it was not unusual for Him to be in the home of what those religious leaders called, or referred to, as sinners. The human nature of John and Jesus were completely opposite. John was an isolationist, and liked to stay in the wilderness and in the desert. That is where he preached, and the people went out there to hear him. On the other hand, Jesus enjoyed being with people. He visited in the homes of various ones, talked with them, ate with them, and preached to them, and taught them, but they both did exactly what they were ordained to do. When it came to recognizing that old make-believer spirit in those scribes and Pharisees, they were both right to the point, also. John called them a generation of vipers, and asked them, **“Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”** Jesus called them serpents and vipers, and asked them, **“How can ye escape the damnation of hell?”** Jesus went one step farther and told a bunch of them that they were of their father, the devil. That was spoken to those great ecclesiastical trees, who stood there with their degrees branched out all over them. They just came out to make trouble, anytime truth threatened their hierarchy. John looked at them, and said, You bring forth fruit that will testify of your repentance: otherwise, the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, and every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire. His very words just simply cut a lot of those proud trees down.

LOVE AND HUMILITY EXEMPLIFIED

There are many things in the scriptures that may seem very insignificant to a lot of people, but they every one serve a certain purpose, and there are lessons to be learned from them. Take for instance, the Pharisee named Simon, that invited Jesus into his house for a meal. In such instances, it was customary for the host to see that the guests were furnished water to wash their hands and feet, but Simon had not even done that. Jesus sat there at the table just like He came in off the street, with the road dust still on Him. There came in also, a little woman who did not have a very good reputation in the city, but when

she heard that Jesus was there, she bought an alabaster box of ointment, and came in, and stood at His feet weeping, and when her tears began falling on His feet, she dried them with the hair of her head. There is your lesson, or example of love and humbleness. It might not have been a very pretty picture, but Jesus saw it for what it was. On the other hand, the old Pharisee looked over, and saw what was happening, and said within himself, IF He were a prophet, He would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him: for she is a sinner. That old self-righteous Pharisee sat there choking on the sight of this, but just did not know how to deal with it. Jesus let it go on until the knot in Simon's throat was about all he could take, then Jesus said, "**Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he said, Master, say on.**" Jesus knew what he had been thinking, "IF HE WERE A PROPHET HE would know such and such." That is just like this religious world of today. In their pious, self righteous, haughty ways, they act like they think any genuine man of God ought to just stop preaching and throw out any sinner who might come in to the assembly. But these are the very ones that the gospel is preached for. Those who feel that they are more righteous than the preacher can never receive anything, and Jesus knew exactly what was in old Simon's mind that day. To get His point across to Simon, Jesus said, **(Luke 7) (41) "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. (42) And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? (43) Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. (44) Jesus turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she has washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. (45) Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. (46) My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."** In other words, (let me just paraphrase this) Simon, you did not even extend to me the usual and customary courtesies that a guest should receive, but this woman has gone much beyond that. Therefore I say to you, Her sins which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. He turned to the woman, saying, Thy sins are forgiven. Naturally that give those others even more reason to be critical of Him, and they said within their hearts, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? But Jesus looked at the woman, and said, "**Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.**" In an incident such as this, you can find every kind of attitude being expressed. It just goes to show, no matter what you do, nor how hard you try, you cannot please everyone. Some will find fault with you if you eat, and others will find fault with you if you do not eat. Some will complain about the truth you preach, and others would jump right down your throat if they found you holding back the truth. Some criticize you if you have a nice car to drive, and there are always some who will criticize you, if you do not have a nice car. Saints: I am so glad that none of these are my final judge. Hallelujah! The same One that looked at that little woman, and said, Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee, is the only one that can render a true judgment, and my confidence is in Him tonight. Praise His name! I love Him. Old Simon was one of those proud Pharisees, one of those trees that John spoke to. We can only assume, as to why he ever invited Jesus into his home to eat, but it was probably done just to check Him out, and maybe to embarrass Him. He was not a disciple or he would not have been sitting over there saying within himself, "IF HE WERE A PROPHET, HE WOULD KNOW." Nevertheless, the occasion furnished an opportunity for Jesus to exemplify exactly what the will of God is toward those who will humble themselves, and come to Him, no matter how sinful they may have been in the past. That little woman's determination serves as an example of what Jesus meant by, "**The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.**" To go all the way with God requires a certain attitude and determination that could be described as violent. It is an attitude, I am not going to let anything stop me, no matter how much opposition I encounter. She could have looked at all those invited guests there in Simon's house, and been afraid to go in, but she saw her opportunity to minister something to Jesus, to express her faith and love, so she went right on it.

STANDING FOR TRUTH

There are an awful lot of people who have the attitude, "If God wants me, He will drag me in somehow." Maybe that is because they have received an out of focus glimpse of election and predestination, I do not know exactly why some people talk like that. But I do know, that when the Bible said, Go ye out to meet Him; it did not mean, just sit down somewhere and sit there until the Lord comes to get you. God requires us to step forth and take a stand for what we see to be the truth, and there is no allowance made for hurt feelings. Some will say, You just do not know how much I have been hurt, trying to stand for truth. From now on, I am just going to stay at home and mind my own business, and wait for the Lord to come. You had better watch out! That attitude does not display the kind of determination that possesses the kingdom of God. Do you not realize that if God be in you, He will not sit still? That is not the kind of attitude that got John's head cut off, Stephen stoned to death, and Peter crucified upside down. If you truly are a predestined seed of God: when truth strikes your soul, you will stand right up in the midst of all those who persecute you, and still hold on to that truth. They could feed you to the lions, as in days gone by, but you can never give up that truth. If you think Christianity is all quiet and peaceful, with nothing to disturb your tranquility, you surely have never read your Bible. Christianity started out with a fight, and it will require a fight all the way through. I am talking about a fight with the enemy of our souls. Satan will not give up on you, as long as there is a breath of life left in you. Why do you think Stephen was stoned to death? He was stoned to death, because the head of the church, so to speak, the Sanhedrein, did not like what he was preaching. They were afraid they would loose their people. Couldn't Stephen have just kept quiet, and still been a Christian? He was confronted by a satanically inspired gang that put him to the test, and when they could not cope with the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake, they dragged him up before the council, and set up false witness to accuse him. It was a situation where he either had to put up, or shut up, but he had something burning deep down within his soul, that would not let him shut up. He stood right up before the council, and said, **(Acts 7:2-3) (2) "Men, brethren, and fathers hearken; (Listen to me!) The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, (3) And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee."** He went on to give them a brief history of the dealings of God with Abraham and his seed, and brought the story right on down through the ages, and right up to their present hour. He told them about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Jesus Christ, and how that Jesus fulfilled **Deut. 18:15**, where Moses had said to the children of Israel, **"A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear."** As he came close to the end of his testimony, he really came down on them. In **Acts 7:51**, we read, **"Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. (52) Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: (53) Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."** When they heard those God anointed words: they were cut to the heart, and began to claw at him, and gnash on him with their teeth. They screamed, stopped up their ears, (foamed at the mouth, I imagine) and all ran upon him at once. They cast him out of the city, and stoned him to death, while Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee, looked on. God was pleased with what Stephen had done, for he drew back the curtain of heaven, and allowed him to get a glimpse of His glory, and to see Jesus already robed with the right hand authority of God.

WHO WERE OUR SPIRITUAL FATHERS?

That same truth got Paul into trouble many times after that, for even though he was a Pharisee named Saul, at the time of Stephen's death, it was not long until God dealt with him, and humbled him, and filled him with the same Spirit that had made Stephen so bold that day. When you get over to the **23rd**

chapter of Acts, you find him standing before the council giving his testimony. He then had that same flame burning within his soul. That is the kind of affect truth will have when it strikes the soul of a predestinated seed. We will not all have to be tested to that degree, but you can take my word for it; Satan will test every one of you. Some kind of spiritual persecution will come upon every one of us to test our revelation, and try our faith. Regardless of how hard it may be on your flesh though; if you have a genuine revelation, you will not recant. In your heart you are going to say, It's still right, no matter what they do to me. Peter, James, John, and every one of them had that same revelation in their soul, and they are the fathers that the ministry of Elijah was to turn us back to. If the ministry of Bro. Branham has turned you to anything else, other than the revelation that those fathers had: you did not hear the message he delivered to this age. You have been listening to another voice. What I heard him say, was, I have preached the same thing Paul preached. Therefore I ask you, What did you hear? If he preached the same thing Paul preached, he preached that Jesus Christ was God manifested in flesh, and, that, in Him (Jesus) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. **(Col. 2:9)** Speaking through the apostle John, Jesus said, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. **(Revelation 22:13)** How can you squeeze another God into the picture, without crucifying the truth Bro. Branham restored us back to?

GREAT DAY - DREADFUL DAY

As Jesus continued to speak of John the Baptist there in **Matthew chapter 11**, He said, **(13) "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. (14) And if ye will receive it, THIS IS THAT ELIAS, (ELIJAH) which was for to come."** Now that **verse 14**, takes you right back to **Malachi 4:5 & 6**, and **Luke 1:17**, and **verse 10**, takes you back to **Malachi 3:1**, and when you get them all tied together, by revelation, you can see just how silly a lot of this religious junk really is, that is being crammed down people's throats by so called, followers of Bro. Branham's ministry. Like we said earlier, Malachi was the last of the Old Testament writing prophets, but God spoke a prophecy through him, that has served as a great light to us, here at the closing of this age. It was spoken to the Jews, and they looked for that Elijah that was to come, but most of them failed to recognize him, when it was only His anointing that came, because it was on a man that, to them, just simply did not fit their preconceived ideas of what was to come. Let us read it again, **(Malachi 4:5 & 6) (5) "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:** (Before I read **verse 6**, there are two points I want to make. In **Matthew 11:14**, Jesus said that John the Baptist was that Elias that was to come, but He said it in the light of **Luke 1:17**, which only covered the first half of what Malachi prophesied, concerning Elijah that was to come. The other point is this. **Verse 5**, speaks of the GREAT and DREADFUL day of the Lord. Think about that for a moment while we read **verse 5**, and I am sure you will agree that the GREAT day of the Lord, is not the DREADFUL day of the Lord also. Therefore to get them pinpointed, which is what, is to realize that John the Baptist could not fulfill both parts of Malachi's prophecy, even though it was spoken as one prophecy.) **(6) And he (this Elijah) shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, AND the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."** You can find other translations that read, "BEFORE I COME AND SMITE THE EARTH," which seems more appropriate than the word LEST, which means perhaps, or maybe, or for fear that. We know from other scriptures that God is definitely going to smite this old earth with a curse, so the ministry of that Elijah spirit, in the 2nd part of its fulfillment, is to be accomplished BEFORE that day.

CHILDREN BECOME FATHERS

Now we learn from **Luke 1:17**, that the ministry of John was only to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord,

(or prepared for the GREAT DAY of the Lord, when He came in His first advent.) That still left the 2nd part of Malachi's prophecy to be fulfilled by someone else that would have that Elijah anointing upon him, to turn the heart of the children to the fathers, before that DREADFUL DAY OF THE LORD, when He comes to smite the earth with a curse. We are the children of the 2nd part, and we were to be turned back to the faith of our spiritual fathers. Now our spiritual fathers were the children of John's day, and in that day when Peter, James, John, Phillip, Stephen, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and all those, were the children: the fathers were those Judaistic leaders that Stephen and Paul, and all those others, were constantly harassed by. You will notice that Stephen started his testimony, MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS. John got the attention of those early disciples away from their Judaistic fathers, and prepared their hearts to receive the gospel as little children, just like Jesus said it would have to be received. Therefore, the children of the New Covenant, became the fathers in return. Those men received the gospel as little children, and by the leading of the Holy Ghost they were molded into the fathers of our faith. But as time moved out of that first age, Satan worked through various ones, to pervert that gospel message. Little by little, the simplicity of the gospel was replaced by strenuous rituals and routines, until it reached an hour when the children had very little of what those fathers taught. The reformation had restored it by fragments, but it was divided up among so many different denominational groups, that it just simply did not project a true revelation. One group had the just shall live by faith. Another had sanctification, another predestination, another eternal security of the believer, and so on down the line. But all of this truth belongs to the bride of Christ, so how was she to get it? God sent that Elijah anointing again, and this time, it was to turn the hearts of God's predestined children back to the faith of their apostolic fathers. That is what Bro. Branham's ministry was to do, and that is exactly what it did. Anything that has been added to it was not his fault. He loved God; he loved the Bible, and he loved people. He loved people so much, that many times they took advantage of him, but he still fulfilled the 2nd part of Malachi's prophecy about that Elijah that was to come, or we would still be wandering around out here somewhere, in an old cold, dead, denominational church system.

THIRTY, SIXTY & HUNDRED FRUIT

Now some might ask, What did John or Bro. Branham, either one, do, that made them a prophet? First of all, in the case of John, let me remind you that Jesus said he was a prophet, even more than a prophet. It is true, he never wrote another book to be added to the other writings of the prophets, but he had that Old Testament prophet's anointing, that cried out against apostasy of this age, and led many souls out of their old 3 god systems, and into a true revelation of the oneness of the Godhead. He was a God identifying, devil revealing prophet to this age. Furthermore, he collected the apostolic truths that were scattered around in so many different denominations, and presented them all in one package to the predestinated children of this age, to fulfill the 2nd part of **Malachi 4:5-6**. Why do we say, to the predestinated children? Simply because they are the only ones that will receive truth in a pure revelation. As far as his ministry, it was to the multitudes, just like the ministry of Jesus was, but in both cases, only a few ever received a genuine revelation. Jesus showed that in the parable of the sower that went forth to sow seed. (**Matthew 13:3-11**) Some seeds fell by the wayside, and the birds ate them, others on stony ground, and for lack of moisture, burned up. Some fell among thorns, and the thorns choked them, or smothered them out. But some fell on good ground and brought forth fruit, thirty, sixty, and hundredfold. After Jesus told that parable, He said, "**Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**" Then Jesus revealed something to those who have ears to hear. In answer to their question, Jesus said to His disciples, "**Because IT IS GIVEN UNTO YOU TO KNOW THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, BUT TO THEM IT IS NOT GIVEN.**" Naturally, He was speaking of those Jews that would reject the gospel, in that particular setting, but when He explained the parable, the application of it applied to the whole grace age. Read **verses 18-23**, and understand, that only the good ground which brings forth fruit, 30, 60, & 100 is the predestinated children of God. The others, which are many, may receive the word,

and appear for a while as dedicated Christians, but the very fact that they never bring forth any fruit to maturity, reveals that they never received a new birth experience. I know some of you do not want to believe that, but on the other hand: if we do not believe what the Bible teaches, we are no better off than anyone else that has missed the way of truth. The only one's that ever make it, are those who believe the revelation of truth that comes forth in their hour. People ask, What about this one, or that one who died four hundred years ago? They did not have a revelation that God is one. They were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Did they go to hell? Listen to me, Brother & Sister: whoever you are that may have a question like that. This Bible, from front to back, speaks of a true and just God. I can find nowhere in it, where God ever held anyone accountable for something they knew nothing about. In every age, believers have been accountable to God, only for what was revealed up to their hour. Four hundred years ago, the reformation was in its early stages, and the oneness of God along with baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, were still lost truths of the Dark Ages.

THE FAN IN JESUS' HAND

Looking back to John now, we want to look at two prophecies he gave, which are recorded in the scriptures, and still hang right over us. We will just take them from Luke's account, so open your Bibles to the **3rd chapter**, and we will pick up **verse 16**. As John stood there instructing those who had asked, What shall we do? Some of the people began to say, **(16) "Could this be the Christ."** John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: **(17) Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable.**" Actually this was a three phase prophecy, and all three phases of it are still in effect, even though the Holy Ghost and fire part of it began to be fulfilled almost 2000 years ago. Everyone understands that Jesus Christ is the one who baptizes with the Holy Ghost and fire, and that this prophecy began to have its fulfillment on the day of Pentecost, Just 10 days after Jesus ascended to heaven. Also, I am reasonably sure that most everyone understands, at least in general terminology, about the burning of the chaff, at the climax of His dealings with mankind. But I wonder just how many of you actually do understand the part about the fan in His hand? Naturally the thought conveyed here, is of an ancient threshing floor where the wheat was dumped, to be cleaned. The process was for some to stand there with paddles, throwing the wheat up into the air, and that would allow the wind to blow the chaff away while the pure grain, which was heavier would fall back to the floor. Now this purging of His floor is to be accomplished here at the end of the age, while Jesus Christ is still on the mercy seat in His mediatorial work. How will it be done? It is already being accomplished. Think back to John's prophecy for just a moment. Who did he say would baptize with the Holy Ghost? Jesus. Whose hand was the fan to be in? The same one that would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire, Jesus Christ. Alright then, since He did not have to be present in corporal body to baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire, neither does He have to be, to purge his floor. His fan is in His word, and in His authority to allow human instruments to say things, right in the chronology of their sermons, that others take, and weave together, to make a fan. Naturally I am pointing to the messenger to this age, Bro. William Marrion Branham. God brought him on the scene with a message to put us back in the Bible. But his ministry is serving another purpose, also. While he stood preaching and teaching, under the anointing of the Spirit of God, he would lay everything right in line with the scriptures, everything pertaining to the subject he was dealing with, I should say. Now I know some of you are going to be offended by what I am going to say, but truth is truth, regardless of where it applies. Furthermore, it is fulfillment of John's prophecy, so we will have to say that God ordained it to be that way. There were many times when the brother would be dealing with a particular subject, that he would throw in remarks, or statements, unrelated to what he was dealing with, and those statements would be contrary to what he had taught in another service. Those statements have become a fan, in his message, Oh, Brother

Jackson: You had better watch out. That is God's prophet you are saying those things about. I know he was God's prophet; I have never had any trouble recognizing that, But I do know, that when a person says something two different ways, so that they cannot possibly be taken to mean the same thing, at least one of those statements has to be wrong. In his messages, are found many dual statements. By that, I mean, he would teach one a subject, and lay it right in line with the scriptures, then later, make reference to it in another message, and say it, or explain it differently. I have examined these dual statements through the years, and have always found that in every case, one of them was right in line with the scriptures, while the other became a fan, that fanned some off of the word. I would be more alarmed about this, if it were not for John's prophecy, but knowing that every prophecy of the bible must be fulfilled, I just have to see God in it all. The great multitudes that follow God's anointed seldom get a revelation of the truth that is being lifted up among them. Only a few catch a revelation, and the others follow the signs. That is why Jesus said, "**Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth into life, and few there be that find it.**"

ONLY THE CHAFF IS FANNED AWAY

In the ancient winnowing process, if there were not sufficient winds blowing, artificial winds had to be created by fabricating, or weaving fans, usually from something like palm leaves, and have someone do the fanning as the grain was pitched up into the air. Winnowing was only to separate the chaff from the grain; the straw had already been separated, with a pitchfork. Therefore spiritually speaking, this separating of the true grain from the chaff, is only taking place in this message. The denominational straw is not even in the picture. They never reach the threshing floor. This threshing process is only to separate the genuine seed from the make believers, of those who have been called out of denominations already. That is why the fan has to be in this message; it is not needed until the grain is already separated from the straw. But if you know anything about wheat, you know that there is always a lot of husk hanging on to the grain, after it is separated from the straw, and that is what the fanning is to get rid of. When we give this a spiritual application, we must look at it like this. If you do truly have the holy Ghost, you will eventually get a true revelation of this word of God. But if you do not have the Holy Ghost, you are only a carrier of the letter of the word of God, and something has to separate you from the genuine born again believers. You heard the prophet preach, and you enjoy the spirit which you felt in those services; we all did. You heard him preach on the seventy weeks of Daniel, when he proved by the scriptures that there is still one full week (7 years) left to the Jews, and you yelled, Amen! So did I. Then you sat in those services when he preached on the seven seals, and you heard him say a number of times, that Jesus was cut off in the middle of Daniel's seventieth week, and that the Jews only have 3½ years left, and you yelled, Amen! Not even caring that there was a contradiction between the two statements. So was it also, with the conflicting statements about the prehistoric animals, and age, the way life was to be brought into the world, when the people of God would walk out upon the ashes to the wicked, and other things that he said in two different ways. Those who have the Holy Ghost will receive the statement that lines up with the scriptures, and leave those other statements to become a fan for the purpose of purging God's threshing floor. Bro. Branham was a voice in this hour, just like John was in his hour, but God allowed him to speak some things to fulfill John's prophesy, as well as Malachi's. Therefore, do not look for a corporal bodied Christ to walk along with a huge fan in His hand, fanning people off the word, no more than you would expect Him to be here in corporal body, to baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Jesus committed unto the apostle Peter, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, saying "**Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be**

loosed in heaven,” but Peter was never able to use those keys until after he had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and he did not receive the Holy Ghost until 10 days after Jesus had ascended into heaven, yet John had said that Jesus would be the one who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and fire. We not only have the prophecy of John to look at, we also have the prophecy of Jesus Himself. In the gospel of **John, chapter 14, verses 15-18**, we read these words. **(15) “If ye love me, keep my commandments. (16) And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; (17) Even the Spirit of truth; (THE HOLY GHOST) whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, AND SHALL BE IN YOU.** (He is talking about the Comforter, the Holy Ghost that is going to be in them.) **(18) I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS: I WILL COME TO YOU.”** What was the prophecy, or promise, as we normally refer to it? You are going to receive the Spirit of truth, and He shall be your Comforter. He now dwelleth WITH you, but will soon be in you. We all know that He was referring to the Holy Ghost, which was the promise of the Father, prophesied by **Isaiah, (44:3)** and by **Joel (2:28)** and reconfirmed by Jesus in **Luke 24:49**. Then in **Acts 1:4-5** we read, **(4) “And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of me. (5) For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”** We are looking at scriptures that will definitely let you see that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, and the promise of the Father, are all one and the selfsame Spirit, and that it is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which is also the Spirit of the Father, and the way Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost was that He came back in Spirit form and entered into those believers, on the day of Pentecost, and He has been doing that for believers ever since. Now if we will go back to **John 14:26**, we will see just exactly what this Comforter is to do, once He is within believers. **“But the Comforter, WHICH IS THE HOLY GHOST, whom the Father will send in my name, HE SHALL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS, AND BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE, whatsoever I have said unto you.”** Let us also read **John 16:13**, in connection with this. **“Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into ALL TRUTH: (Not into false doctrine and idolatry.) For He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come.”** Alright now, let us think about this for just a moment. This Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, is not only to be a comfort to us, but He is also to guide us into ALL TRUTH, TEACH US ALL THINGS, AND SHOW US THINGS TO COME. That lets me know that the little bride of Jesus Christ is going to know some things that the world will not know. It also lets me know why old Peter knew exactly how to use those keys to the kingdom that day, when three thousand Jews asked, **“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”** What he told them, unlocked the kingdom of God to them. Listen to his answer (**Acts 2:38**) **“Repent, and be baptized every one of you IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.”** (The promise of the Father.) Peter was one of about 120 souls that had already received that promise of the Father, and they received it without the corporal body of Christ being present. Therefore, we must conclude that if He can baptize with the Holy Ghost without being present in corporal body, He can also use the fan to purge His floor likewise. Now, Brothers and Sisters, let me ask you something. How is He going to separate the chaff from the pure grain, spiritually speaking? Truth separated the grain from its old denominational stalk, but the truth alone will not separate that make-believer from the true child of God; they have to have something else other than truth to grab hold of, something that will shake them loose from the word, and fan them away. God just made sure that the prophet to this age fed both elements of his following. To those whom the Spirit of truth is teaching all things, he was God’s prophet, to turn them back to the faith of their apostolic fathers. But to the rest, he spoke statements that the Spirit of God has allowed, to become a fan in Christ’s hand. There is no need to get offended at anyone for saying that, for it is a fulfillment of prophecy, prophecy that could only be fulfilled among the generation living at the end of the grace age.

GIFT AND GIFTS OF HOLY GHOST

“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.” Nothing that I have ever taught or preached about Bro. Branham, would be contrary to those words of Jesus, for everything that has been taking place since the days of John the Baptist, are things that were prophesied and pictured in the law the prophets. Even the ministry of Bro. Branham, and the effects of the dual statements he made. The reason some people cannot see that, is because they have never received the promise of the Father, furthermore, they cannot receive that promised benefit, because their every thought is carnal; they do not hunger for righteousness; they only hunger for something new and exciting. Anyone who is going to move with God: has got to be open to whatever God does in fulfilling His plan for the ages. You just simply cannot put a period at the end of something that has been done already, and say, That is all there is; everything is fulfilled already, for I want you to know, that if time lasted another 100 years: God would still be revealing things to those who walked with Him. Let me say this also. Just because Bro. Branham taught, that speaking in tongues was not necessarily evidence that a person had received the Holy Ghost, some of those who followed him, and hung on to his every statement, cannot stand to be in a service where someone speaks in tongues, even though that is definitely one of the gifts of the spirit. Some of them will say, I would rather have love for the brethren, than to speak in tongues. Why not have both, if the will of God moves that way? Every born again child of God should have love for the brethren, but that should not hinder anyone from receiving the gifts of the Spirit, spoken of by the apostle Paul, in **1st Corinthians 12:1-11**, for the Holy Ghost bestows these gifts according to the will and purpose of God. The GIFT of the Holy Ghost is eternal life, but the GIFTS (plural) of the Holy Ghost, are those gifts of the Spirit that we find in **1st Corinthians**, but none of them are to be taken as evidence that a person has the Holy Ghost, for Satan is a counterfeiter. He has a counterfeit for everything that God is doing in these days. He first tried to destroy Christianity by martyring Christians, but when he discovered that he could not do it, he formed another plan, that was to get inside the church structure, and counterfeit every manifestation of the Spirit of God. How did he do that? By planning make-believers, imitators, false prophets, and false teachers in every assembly of believers. Throughout the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th church ages, Satan was busy, through those make-believers, substituting creeds, rituals, and ceremonies in the place of the revealed word of God. In the 4th church age there was very little true light of the gospel of Christ left. Satan did his work very effectively. He put together a system that the whole world looks upon, as the church. Roman Catholicism is what represents the true church in the eyes of the world, but the truth of it all is, that it is Satan’s church. There is nothing about it that God will accept, and yet there are people who claim to be following Bro. Branham’s message, that are just as far from the truth, as any Catholic pope or priest has ever been. There is no more salvation in the Catholic church, that you could order out of a Sears, Roebuck catalogue, and I know that you will say Amen to that, but how many of you know that God has withdrawn His Spirit from the protestant daughters of that system, and left them to return to their mother? That is what your ecumenical council is all about. It is busy reuniting all the harlot daughters with the old mother whore. **(Revelation 17:1,5)** Saints: Please do not think that I am picking on individual people; I am not. Most of them are what they are, because they have been raised to believe that what they are in is the true way. Their minds have been molded that way, and unless the grace of God gets into that mind, it will keep right on believing as it does.

A DEEPER CONVICTION

If God had not got the attention of men like Luther, Know, Calvin, Wesley and those other reformation leaders, you and I would no doubt be Catholics today. God gave the world a new covenant, a covenant of life, through Jesus Christ, and Satan changed it to a covenant of death. But in spite of all that; in every age there have always been a few people who had a conviction that they should live above what the

general view of Christianity to be: God can usually use those people to hold up a revelation of truth before the world. In the Dark Ages, it was just a matter of living it, but since the days the reformation started, God has used vessels like that to restore truth that had been lost. Not only did God use men like that to restore lost truth to the body of Christ; there had to be men like Columbus also, a man who had something stirring within him, that would not allow him to follow the general line of thinking, for in his hour, most men believed that the world was flat, and that if they went too far across the Atlantic, they would fall off the end of the world. God used Columbus and his crewmen to pave the way for this new frontier land to be opened up. I have seen the exact spot, down here in the Caribbean where Columbus was supposed to have landed. It is called Discovery Bay. This new world discovery was just a little ahead of the dawning of the 5th church age, when God began to raise up men like Luther, Calvin, and Knox, who were all Catholics, but they protested that old ungodly church system that had been responsible for slaughtering thousands who would not bow to their form of religion. The reformation started in the early 1500's, and just about 100 years later, in 1620, the first Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. They were not called Pilgrims at that time though; that name was given to them in the year 1793, well over into the 6th church age. When that 6th church age opened up, there had already been a country hewed out of the wilderness, called the United States of America, and in 1776 she fought a war with her mother nation. The Constitution of the United States was written just about the time John Wesley's message was being proclaimed throughout all England, a constitution that guaranteed freedom of religion to all that came here. God was getting this nation ready to play her end time role in fulfilling prophecies of the scriptures.

MATERIALISM

From 1776 to 1900, America grew out of her pioneer stage. Her towns no longer carried that big frontier look, they began to take on a metropolitan image. St. Louis, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, New Orleans, all these stood out, and became pace setters for a new way of life. As she come into 1900, America was also taking on an industrial image. She began to establish a trend of materialism. During the years from then until now, she has given to the world the automobile, the electric light, the telephone system, the radio, the television, satellites, computers, and on and on. During the early years of this period the Holy Ghost fell on some folks who were seeking God in a special way, and that ushered in the Laodicean age, the 7th church age. America not only received the Pentecostal message, she also produced the 7th church messenger, and heard the last day message. By the time God's messenger delivered his message to this Laodicean Age, this nation had completely taken on an image that was foreshown in **Revelation 3:14-18**, which spoke of a literal church that existed in Asia, in the days when the aged apostle John was still alive. This church had been caught up in materialistic living, to the point where God was almost left completely out of the picture. They had become so self-sufficient in their materialistic ways of life, and so lukewarm toward God, that they were sickening to God, so to speak. Because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth, John was told to write them. Why? **“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”** Brothers and Sisters: That is a picture of America in the eyes of God today. All eyes are upon materialism. The generation that remembers when folks used to walk 3 to 5 miles to church on Sunday, will soon pass off the scene, if the Lord's coming does not proceed it. People walked further to church in those days, than a lot of people are willing to drive, in our day, and they still had to hit the fields on Monday morning, but not before they had fed the stock, and milked the cows. They did not have those nice electric lights, but one things they did have was a respect for God. By the outward appearance, one might think there are more Christians today (from the percentage standpoint) that ever before in the history of this nation, for almost anyone you ask will tell you that they are a Christian, no matter how they live. Religion is very popular, but true Christianity is mighty scarce. Materialism has become the god of an awful lot of people. It was always like that with the people of Israel; when God would bless them with

everything their hearts desired; they would turn from God to worship idols. It seems that people just do not know how to allow God to bless them, and still remain true to Him, and give Him first place. Nevertheless, just as the church at Laodicea received a message from God in that hour, so has the church AGE that was typed by that literal church, received a message from God. Anyone who will examine that message with a right motive, will see that it was a message to turn us back to the true covenant of grace that Jesus Christ sealed with His own blood. That message delivered to this Laodicean age, did not have one thing in it that suggested God would make another covenant with man kind to replace the present one. Why should He need to make another covenant, when the present one will accomplish everything that the prophets and the law ever pointed to? The keys to the kingdom of God are still the same keys Peter used 1900 years ago, and Pope John Paul II does not have them. His keys will not unlock revealed truth. If some lost sinner cried out, Pope John Paul II, what must I do? Would he reply, Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? That is the only keys that will work, and they belong to the covenant that was made by the messenger that John introduced, Jesus Christ.

A VOICE FOR OUR AGE

Some of you will no doubt wonder why I keep stressing the fact that there is no scripture to substantiate a 3rd covenant. The reason I keep saying that, is because there is an element of people who are teaching that Bro. Branham made a new, or another covenant, and everyone that would know God must come by his covenant. That is a lie of the devil. Don't you believe one word of it. Those same people will use **Malachi 4:5 & 6**, to get your attention, and then try to feed you something else that could not possibly be related to **Malachi 4:5 & 6**. Just plain common sense would teach one, that the spirit of Elijah which came to turn us back to the faith of our spiritual fathers, would not establish another covenant that would take us back out of the Bible, and away from the faith of our spiritual fathers. Listen to me, saints of God! There is not time left to play around with the word of God, as denominational people have in the past. We are living in the closing days, or years of this dispensation, and true saints of God are being washed by the waters of God's word. What ever is left, yet to be revealed to them, will be revealed by His Spirit, according to His written word which makes room for it to be so. This is the hour when God is revealing His word to His people, not hiding it even deeper to be discovered by the shrewdness of natural man. In other words, God did not send us a restoring, revealing prophet messenger to hide His word from the bride of Jesus Christ. Through Bro. Branham, God did exactly in reverse, what He did to start the kingdom of heaven age. Coming from humble parentage down in a rural section of the state of Kentucky, Bro. Branham had many experiences of God dealing with him in life, and just like John the Baptist stood in the Jordan river, calling men to repentance, and baptizing them, so did Bro. Branham stand out there in the Ohio River baptizing according to the last revelation given to Pentecost, water baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the gateway to eternal life. While baptizing, there in the river, a light came down over him, and an audible voice said, "As John the Baptist was sent to forerun my first coming, you will take a message around the world that will forerun my second coming." Now if that was to be true, it was all because the hour had come for the last phase of **Malachi 4:5 & 6**, to be set in motion, because, as we all know by now, the last part of **Malachi 4:5 & 6** was, he shall turn the hearts of the children to their fathers. Now our spiritual fathers were men like Paul, Peter, James, John, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and all those who carried the truth of the gospel in its unadulterated form in that first church age. That is what Bro. Branham's message turned me back to; he certainly did not turn me back to the faith of my genetic forefathers. I will admit there was a time when I thought that was what that scripture pertained to, for I looked at all the juvenile delinquency, and how teenagers were running away from home, and disobeying their parents, and thought, When that spirit of Elijah comes, it will reconcile all these homes. It did not reconcile homes at all. If anything, it reactivated the sword that Jesus spoke of in **Matthew 10:34-39**. Like I said earlier, that spirit of Elijah always deals with apostasy when it comes on the scene.

Just as John was a voice in his hour to cry out against apostasy, and awaken an element of people for the first advent of Christ, so was Bro. Branham a voice in this last church age to do the same thing, in preparation for the second coming of Christ. That is why **Revelation 10:7**, speaks of THE VOICE OF THE SEVENTH ANGEL. He was a voice, a messenger, announcing something to this seventh church age. What he announced was the soon coming of Jesus Christ, the bridegroom, and the catching away of the bride, the church of the living God, and I want to say this; it will all take place in this generation. Everything that John spoke of, was completed in a generation. That is why Jerusalem fell, and was destroyed before the last ones of that generation passed off the scene; John forerun Jesus Christ who spoke of certain things that were to take place in that generation. Likewise, Bro. Branham's message is forerunning His second coming, and He (Christ) spoke of certain things that were to be accomplished in the generation that would be living in this hour. (You can read **Matthew 24** for a quick run down of what is to take place in a generation here at the end.) Bro. Branham definitely was that Elijah, to fulfill the 2nd part of Malachi's prophecy. But some have attributed a much higher purpose to his ministry, and they have become the ministers of idolatry which God hates. They do not like to hear me say that, but let me stress it even more. Anyone who believes and teaches that Bro. Branham was God, is just as pagan as any Gentile ever was, before the gospel ever came to them, and their idolatry is just as abominable to God as when the Israelites worshiped idols in days of old.

AS I SEE IT

As I see it, the thing about Bro. Branham's ministry that has caused many people to actually believe he was God, was the gift of discernment whereby he could look into the lives of individuals, and know the secrets of their heart, just like Christ Himself. When they would sit in a service and watch that gift operate, they actually felt that they had seen Jesus Christ walking on the scene. It was God's way of giving to the Gentile church, a manifestation, that only the Jews partook of in the 1st advent of Christ. Gentile people have not been privileged to know Christ after the flesh, as those first age Jews did, but God did give us a little display of that same Holy Ghost anointing to close out this dispensation, or I should say, in preparation to close out this grace age. I can say with complete victory in my soul, that the part of Bro. Branham's message that put this generation back in the Bible, is the message that will close out this grace age. I say it like that because it is obvious that some hear another message that took them back out of the Bible again. They did not have ears to hear what the Spirit was saying to the church of the living God. That is all you can say about it. To me, he brought a beautiful message; he explained that, that had never been clear to me before, and cried, Come back to baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. Come back to one God revelation. Come back to that sanctified life. Be full of the Holy Ghost, and prove all things by the word of God. He put predestination in its place, and explained eternal security of the believer so simple that even a little child could understand it. He fulfilled exactly that scribe position, that Jesus spoke of, in **Matthew 13:52**. When Jesus asked His disciples, Have ye understood all these things? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then He said unto them, (**Matthew 13:52**) Therefore, every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. Brother & Sister: He went right back into the treasure, and brought out those old truths; the just shall live by faith, eternal security of the believer, predestination, sanctification, baptism of the Holy Ghost, water baptism (according to **Acts 2:38**) in the name of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, and the fact that God is one, and not three, and that Jesus Christ is coming again as a bridegroom, and very soon. Then when it came to the new, here he come with the serpent seed revelation. They really got mad about that. Those denominational big wigs cried, That serpent seed doctrine is out of the pit of hell, but some had ears to hear what the Spirit was saying to the church, and that cleared up another mud hole, so to speak. Once you can see how that serpent seed fits into humanity, it clears up a lot of previously unanswered questions. Before long, here he came with the revelation of the first 6 seals, something else new. He laid it right out by the scriptures, didn't he?

Some think he revealed 6, and hid one of them to find later, but I say unto you, and I hope you hear well. They will not find the revelation of the seventh seal in any of Bro. Branham's sermons. That seventh seal is for a later time. When it is revealed: their time of playing around with truth will just about be over with. Even if they do see the error of their ways, it will no doubt be too late for it to do them any good. They will not admit that God placed a fan in Bro. Branham's message, but they are being fanned by it just the same. Now if it be the fan in Christ's hand that is fanning them away, I want you to know, the husk, the chaff, does not come back to the threshing floor and mix again with the pure grain, after it has been fanned away. I hope you get the picture. Jesus started out the kingdom age saying, He that has ears to hear, let him hear, (**Matthew 11:15**) and the age is to end up with the same admonition. (**Revelation 13:9**)

ONE GOSPEL FOR ALL

Now let me say to you who have an ear to hear, Bro. Branham was not another writing prophet, that left us additional scripture. He did not leave us one verse of new scripture; he was a revealing prophet. Yet I know certain ones who will say, The Bible was the word of God for Paul's day, but Bro. Branham brought us the word of God for our day. Saints: Beware of those idolaters. The word of God that Paul preached was for the Gentile church of all ages, but she got away from it, and that is why that Elijah spirit had to come again. We were on the brink of destruction when he cried out, Stop! Turn around! This same gospel that Paul preached, was preached by him, also, and it is the only gospel that Gentiles will ever have. Those who are made ready according to what is written in this old book, will be ready for the rapture when Jesus comes, and they will come back to earth with Him for the millennium, and all of that will still be fulfilling what is already written in the scripture we have. Therefore, let me say to you once more. The gospel for Paul's day is also the gospel for our day. If we obey it, we will be acceptable to the Lord, but on the other hand, all who become idolaters will be rejected by the Lord, just like it is written in this time tested old book I hold here.

THE TWO WITNESSES

Now let me say just a few words about the two witnesses of **Revelation 11:3-12**, that will prophesy to the Jews for 3½ years, after Gentile time has run out. Never before, has God had two prophets on the scene at the exact same time, but then, He will have. They have been referred to as Moses and Elijah, and when you read what they will be doing during that time, you will understand why. That same God identifying spirit of Elijah will be revealing their Messiah to those Jews, and denouncing apostasy, and at the same time, their ministry will be accompanied by all the signs that God manifested to Pharaoh, through the ministry of Moses. They will be revealing things to those Jews that are not written in the Bible, but none of it will contradict the scriptures. They will reveal the Antichrist to them, warn them not to have any part with him, and tell them exactly where they should flee to, when that man of peace breaks his covenant with the nation, and begins to slaughter them. God will have a place prepared where He will protect and feed them, for the 3½ years of great tribulation, and those two prophets will tell them exactly where that place is. Now there is no place in the Bible that tells where that place is, therefore, that lets us know that God is going to be revealing some things here at the end time that have not been previously written in the scriptures. Just like those seven thunders of **Revelation 10:3-4**, which, in this hour has been explored by so many different one's, but they still yet have not sounded their voices, therefore no one can tell you what they said. We will close this little message now, hoping that there has been something said that will help clear up the questions some of you had. Now let each and every one of us take our stand for truth as this age closes out, that we may be ready to meet the Bridegroom when He comes. Amen!