

### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### **THE VINDICATED MESSENGER**

**(THE MANIFESTED VINDICATION)**

**Convinced by the Word** that there is a Prophet-Messenger to this last age, we now begin our search for that prophet. We're looking for a man sent from God with a **prophetic ministry**, YES, with an **open vision ministry**. Thus would he be known?

According to our understanding of Scripture, **this man will not be recognized by the religious systems** and orders of the day; so we cannot look for him there. He will not be numbered amongst the ecclesiastical mighty. In fact he could well be **as obscure as was John or Jesus**. His birth would no doubt be as humble as that of all the other prophets. Without a doubt **much of his ministry would be disputed while a part of it would be welcomed**. And if he is the Messenger, he will, of course, run true to the **Bible pattern**.

In **the recent history** of the evangelical healing revivals of the modern world, there were no doubt **hundreds of Evangelists** who hung out their shingles, **declaring themselves** to be "God's man of faith and power" or "God's man of the hour" **BUT which of these ministries** will fit the description of the "Elijah" ministry spoken of in **Malachi 4:5-6 and Rev. 10:7? Which of these ministries** bore the earmarks of a **prophet** with prophetic **vindication**?

In 1975 Professor David Edwin Harrell, Jr., published (Indiana University Press) a history of the healing and charismatic revivals in modern America under the title All Things Are Possible. It's an excellent, clear, uncluttered account of the revivals of the 1940's, '50s and early '60s. After extensive research **he singled out the ministry of one man** as the initiator of the great healing revival. He said,

*Most of the participants of the 'healing revival' which erupted in 1947 looked upon this man as its initiator. Out of his massive union meetings in 1947 spread reports of hundreds of miracles and marvels. He seemed an unlikely leader. He had been a pastor in a small independent Baptist church; his preaching was halting and simple beyond belief.*

*But he became a prophet to a generation. A small, meek, middle-aged man with piercing eyes, he held audiences spellbound with tales of constant communication with God and Angels. Night after night, before thousands of awed believers, he discerned the diseases of the sick and pronounced them healed.*

Another church historian, Gordon Lindsay, who worked closely with many of the Evangelists of the Revival, also wrote an historical record of the Revivals. In his books "My Story" and "A Man Sent From God," he also **singled out one ministry AND ONE MAN** which stood out among all the others. Concerning this ministry he stated.....

*The story of the life of this 'Man Sent From God' is so out of the ordinary that were there not available a host of infallible proofs which document and attest its authenticity, one might be well excused from considering it far-fetched and incredible.*

*But the facts are so generally known, and of such a nature that they can be so easily verified by any sincere investigator, that they must stand as God's witness to His willingness and purpose to reveal Himself again to men as He once did in the days of the prophets and the apostles. The story of this Prophet's life - for He Is A Prophet - indeed witnesses to the fact those Bible days are here again.*

**Another contemporary of "This Prophet" said,**  
*Place the Man Sent From God in one side of the scales of Power and Anointing and it would take the combined efforts of most of the Evangelistic ministries of our day to tip the other side of the scales.*

Truly, he was absolutely **Scripturally vindicated** as being the Prophet-Messenger to the Laodicea Age. **He has met every requirement as set forth in the Word.** His ministry is accepted in part, and in part rejected. His birth, upbringing, education, preaching, teaching, ministering in the Spirit, has every scriptural qualification and he is thus vindicated.

### **Who Is This Man?**

He is **William M. Branham**, He was the first child born to a very young couple on **April 6, 1909**, in a most humble log cabin in Burkesville, Kentucky. For two days after his birth his fifteen-year-old mother, eighteen-year-old father, and visitors saw **hanging over his crib, a white hazy light** that had come in through the window, and stood over his head at birth. No one understood the significance of it, and no one, therefore, put any stock in it relative to his future life.

As long as he could remember, **he received visions** that he could not understand, and yet whenever a vision was of a future event, it **never failed**

to come to pass exactly as he saw it.

### The Voice In The Whirlwind

One day **when he was but seven years of age**, as he was carrying water for his father, he was startled to hear **the sound of wind** in the leaves of the tree under which he was resting for a moment. He looked up, but there was no visible movement. As he started to leave, **the sound came again**, but this time it was louder. Looking up he saw a whirlwind in the tree, and **out of the whirlwind** there came an **audible voice** saying, *"Don't ever smoke, or drink, or defile your body in any way, for there will be a work for you to do when you are older."* He was naturally frightened and ran screaming into the house. Somehow he was unable to tell his mother the experience, so she concluded that William was a very nervous boy and needed rest.

### Vision Of The Ohio Bridge Disaster

A few weeks later while outside playing, a vision broke across his eyes and he saw a bridge being built over the Ohio river (he was now living in Jeffersonville, Indiana) and as men worked he saw a span fall, taking to death a number of workmen. **Twenty-two years later** when the bridge was being built at that exact spot as seen in the vision, a span did break away, hurling those men to their death.

### Tempted To Smoke And Drink

Since he did not come from a spiritual home (his father often bootlegged whiskey) he did not realize that God was dealing with him. Thus, when **social pressure** was placed on him by his father and companions, he would try to drink, smoke and go to dances, etc. But his trials were failures, for **each time he tried to smoke or drink he heard the peculiar sound of the wind blowing and felt the presence of an unseen being**. Being frustrated and nervous he tried to keep away from the peculiar life that was his, but he could not.

### Experiences With Astrologers

As a young man, he was twice **approached by astrologers** who attempted to explain to him that he was born under a sign. **They both told him** that he was the possessor of "a gift", though neither told what it was. One of them told him that **she saw a Light following him**. To explain these things, one of the astrologers went into the Scriptures to give him details.

Later he understood about astrologers and mediums and rebuked the spirit

by which they operated, taking authority over them in the Name of Jesus. BUT it's entirely Scriptural that these should recognize the gift of God before the clergy and professed servants of God. (Note: **Acts 16:16-18; Matthew 8:28-29**).

### **His Conversion**

Not being born again, these things would at times **trouble the young man**. He was already aware of **the Light** that stood over him at birth, the **visions**, the **Voice** in the Whirlwind and the **strange rushing sound** of wind when he tried to smoke and drink whiskey. But **he did not understand** all these things **in the Light of Scripture** because he didn't know what the Bible said.

William Branham, the boy, though he had these **remarkable manifestations** in his life, yet he was not converted. For a time **he still resisted the call of God** on his life. At the age of fourteen he was seriously wounded while hunting and had to spend seven months in hospital. God dealt with him then, but still he did not take heed. Nevertheless the urgency of the call became more and more conscious to him. Inasmuch as his parents were not Christians he did not get any encouragement from them. As he became older the enemy tried to stifle that 'still small voice' that was ever speaking to his heart.

### **He Goes West**

When he had reached the age of 19, he decided that he would go out West to work on a ranch. **In September of 1927**, he told his mother that he was going on a camping trip to Tunnel Mill, about fourteen miles north of Jeffersonville. He told her this, knowing that if she were aware of his true intentions to go West, she would plead with him not to go. When his mother finally heard from him, instead of being in Tunnel Mill, he was far away in Phoenix, Arizona. In reality, down in his heart, he knew that he was running away from God.

Of his experiences in the West and the call of God which was ever upon his heart he says.....

I remember the first heard of cattle I helped drive out of the mountains. I thought I was a real cowhand. **When evening came** I rode off that horse, got my blanket and used my saddle as a pillow. And there was an old guy there we called Slim. And another guy from Texas with a guitar, and they were playing songs. Old Slim was playing a comb with a piece of paper behind it. The herd was all settled down for the night. And after a while they begin to play "*Down At The Cross Where My Savior Died; It was down there for cleansing from sin I cried.*" My heart began to jump. **I took the blanket and pulled it over my head to keep from hearing it because**

**I was a sinner.**

I lay there pretending I was asleep. But when I pulled the blanket down, I thought, "Now, it'll all be over, because they've stopped playing their music and gone to bed..." But when I looked up, the big stars were hanging just above me. Something said: "Who put them up there and Who's holding them in place?" Just then the wind come through those whispering pines and it seemed like there was a voice that said, "There's a land beyond the river that they call the sweet forever. And we only reach that shore by faith's decree." I got my blanket and pulled it around my ears again.

Brother, God is so great He will find you; I don't care where you are. Don't try to hide from Him. You're fighting a losing battle.

And a 'losing battle' it would be for William Branham. This life, chosen of God, would eventually succumb to the Heavenly Father's Will. Almost beaten into the dust from whence he came, Bro. Branham would rise on wings of faith to serve his God.

### **A Sad Message Arrives**

One day **the young man received a letter from home** informing him that one of his brothers was very ill. It was Edward, the one next in age to him. He did not think the illness was serious and believed everything would be alright. However, one evening a few days later, he returned to the ranch from the city, and as he was coming through the mess hall, there was a message given him which read, "Bill, come to the north pasture. Very important." He immediately walked out to the pasture and the first person he met was an old Lone Star ranger whom they called "Pop." He had a sad expression on his face and he said, "**Billy boy, I have sad news for you.**" At the same time the foreman came walking up. They told him that his brother, Edward, had died.

You can **imagine the shock** this was to the young William Branham as he realized that he would never again see his brother alive in this world. **Events begin to move swiftly** from then on. **Each time he resisted God, tragedy or sorrow of some kind would come to him. When he yielded and obeyed God, the Lord would bless and prosper him.** Would that we all could learn by what others suffered, rather than by our own bitter experiences.

In his own words, Bro. Branham explains his thoughts at the time and how he felt....

When I realized the news of my brother's death, for a moment I could not move. It was the first death in our family. **I remember wondering about**

**whether or not he was ready to die.** As I turned to look across the yellow prairie, tears ran down my cheeks. **I remembered how** we struggled together when we were lads and how hard it was for us - not enough food to eat and not enough clothes to wear. **BUT, Oh how I remember that day** when mother gave us Pop corn in our school lunch. That was a real treat. So to be sure that I got my share of it, I went out before noon and took a good handful before my brother got his share. **How I wished** I could have told him that I was the one who took it. Thinking of these things, there on that prairie, **God began to deal with me again** - but as usual I kept pushing it to the back of my mind.

I made ready to return home for the funeral. During the funeral services, Rev. McKinney of Port Fulton church preach and exhorted those not right with God to accept Him as their Lord and Savior then and there. **God began to deal with me again.** Oh, how I grasped my seat, resisting the call of God.

After the funeral, I wanted to go back to the West but mother begged me not to go. I agreed to stay if I could find work. I did get work with the Public Service Company of Indiana.

### **Sickness Strikes**

About two years later, while testing meters in the meter shop at the gas works in New Albany, I was overcome with gas, and for weeks I suffered from it. I went to all the Doctors I knew. I could get no relief. **I suffered with acid stomach caused by the effects of the gas.** Finally, two specialists in Louisville, Kentucky said it was my appendix and advised surgery. I didn't understand it because I had no pain in my side. Still, **they insisted on surgery.** Agreeing to have it done, I insisted that they use local anesthetic so I could watch the operation.

After surgery, when they were taking me from the table to my bed **I felt myself getting weaker** and weaker all the time. **My heart** was hardly beating. I felt death upon me. **My breath** was getting shorter. I knew I had reached **the end of my road.** Oh, friend, wait until you get there, then you will think of a lot of things you have done. **I knew** I had never smoked, drank, or had any unclean habits, **but I also knew** I was not ready to meet God.

### **God Speaks in the Hospital Room**

**It began to grow darker** in the hospital room, as though it were great woods. **I could hear the wind blowing through the leaves,** yet it seemed a great way off in the forest. You have probably heard of a puff of wind blowing the leaves, coming closer and closer to you. I thought, "Well, this

is death coming to take me." Oh! My soul was to meet God; I tried to pray but could not.

**Closer** the Wind came, **louder** and louder. **The leaves rustled and all at once I was gone!** It seemed that I was back again a little barefooted boy, standing in that lane **under the same tree**. I heard that **same Voice** that said, "Never drink or smoke." And the leaves I heard were the same that blew in that tree that day so many years ago. **But this time the Voice said**, "I called you and you would not go." The words were repeated the third time. Then I said, *"Lord, if that is you, let me go back again to earth and I will preach your Gospel from the housetops and street corners. I'll tell everyone about it."*

When this vision had passed, I found that I felt better. My surgeon, who was still in the building, came into the room and looked at me with a surprised look. He said, *"I am not a churchgoing man, my practice is so great, BUT I know God has visited this boy."* After a few days I was allowed to return home. This time I would not forget the call of God's warning.

I started out to seek and find God. I went **from church to church** but **found nothing** to satisfy the hunger and thirst in my heart.

One night **I became so hungry** for God and a real experience that I went out to the old shed, at the back of the house and tried to pray. I did not know how to pray, so I just begin to talk to Him as I would to anyone else. **All at once there came a Light in the shed and it formed a cross.** A **Voice from the cross** spoke to me in a language I could not understand. It then went away. I was spellbound. When I came to myself again, I prayed, *"Lord, if that is you, please come and talk to me again."* I had been reading my Bible since I had returned from the hospital and I had read in 1st. John 4, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God."*

I knew that something had appeared to me, and as I prayed **it appeared again**. Then it seemed to me that there had been a thousand pounds lifted from my soul. **I jump up and ran** to the house and it seemed as though I were running on air. Mother asked, *"Bill, What has happened to you?"* I replied, *"I don't know but I sure feel good and light."* I just couldn't stay in the house any longer. I had to get out and run.

Not long after this experience of conversion, William Branham sought and found excellent fellowship and teaching with the Missionary Baptist Church. Shortly thereafter **he was ordained to preach the Gospel**. God gave him good success for his **tent** often had crowds of 3000 and there



were many people truly born again.

### **Pillar Of Fire Appears**

It was during **June of 1933** that as he was baptizing the converts in the Ohio River that a most amazing and **well documented phenomenon** occurred. As he was baptizing the seventeenth person **before a crowd estimated at about 4000 there appeared a blazing whirling star out of heaven with the sound of rushing wind audible to all**, and it came and hovered over him. As **many ran** in fear, and **others knelt** in prayer, **a voice spoke out of the pillar of fire** to him and said...

*"As John the Baptist was the forerunner of the first coming of Christ, so your message is the forerunner of the second coming of Christ."*

Of course **he alone heard the words though others heard the sound**. This is exactly as it was when Paul was blinded by God and heard His voice. Others heard a sound but not the actual voice or the words of the voice.

Being a firm believer in the whole Word of God, and standing firm on the fact that **Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever**, he did not hesitate to pray for the sick. Thus **all through his ministry** he sought to help the infirm. The results were most gratifying until even the hospital personnel admitted to the power of God and knew that when the **"little Baptist preacher"** came, someone was going to get well.

**Now that he was firmly in the Word, it might be expected that the visions would cease. On the contrary they became multiplied** and with tremendous results for good, for the visions usually indicated a great need that was going to be met by God, and surely it would take place with **never a failure - no not one**. Whatever he saw in the vision he would tell, and the results were invariably what the end of the vision indicated. It was a literal **"Thus saith the Lord"**. It was then clearly established that he must be one of whom it is said, **"Your young men shall see visions."**

Not only did he see visions that always came to pass relative to his personal ministry but **he had many recorded visions (which he also related) which dealt with worldwide affairs that must come to pass before the return of Christ**. Perhaps the most remarkable of these were the following seven:



## The Seven Visions

In **June of 1933** when Brother Branham was conducting his services in the old Masonic hall on Meigs Avenue, **seven major events** which are to come to pass before the return of the Lord came to him by way of a vision. It was on a June morning just before he was to teach a Sunday school class that this series appeared while he was in a trance.

### Vision One:

He saw in a vision that the dictator of Italy, **Benito Mussolini**, would invade Ethiopia and **according to the voice speaking to him**, Ethiopia "would fall at his (Mussolini's) steps". However, the voice continued and prophesied a dread end of the dictator, for he would have a horrible death and his own people would literally spit on him.

### Vision Two:

The next vision indicated **America would be drawn into a world war against Germany** which would be headed up by the Austrian, **Adolph Hitler**. The voice predicted that this terrible war would overthrow Hitler and he would come to **a mysterious "end"**. In this vision he was shown the Siegfried line whereat a great toll of American lives would be exacted.

It might be well to mention here that a subsequent vision relative to this war predicted that President Roosevelt would declare war against Germany and in so doing would eventually be elected for a fourth term.

### Vision Three:

The third part of the vision showed that though there were **three ISMS, Fascism, Nazism, Communism** in the world: that the first two would come to nothing but that Communism would flourish. **The voice admonished him to keep his eyes on "Russia" concerning future involvements**, for Fascism and Nazism would end up in Communism.

### Vision Four:

The fourth vision that appeared to him was one in which there was predicted to be tremendous technological **advances right after the war**. This was symbolized by an **egg shaped car** with a plastic bubble roof, going down beautiful highways completely under perfect **remote control**.

There was no steering wheel in the car and the occupants of the car

appeared to be playing a game like checkers.

#### **Vision Five:**

The fifth scene that appeared involved the **womanhood of the world**. In this scene there appeared the **fast moral decay of women**. Starting back when she received her so-called liberty to enter into worldly affairs by means of the vote, she soon began to wear clothes that were too revealing. She bobbed her hair and adopted the clothing of men. Finally the vision showed her all but stripped naked and she merely covered herself with a tiny apron about the size and shape of a fig leaf. With her womanhood so little valued a terrible decay of all flesh came upon the earth and with it perversion even as set forth by the Word of God.

#### **Vision Six:**

Then **there arose in the United States a most beautiful woman** clothed in splendor, and **great power was given to her**. She was lovely of feature but there was a hardness about her that defied description. Beautiful as she was, **she was yet cruel, wicked and cunning. She dominated the land with her authority; she had complete power over the people**. The vision indicated that either such a woman would literally arise or that this woman of the vision was merely a type of an organization which is scripturally characterized by a female. Though the voice did not speak out and reveal who she was, **he felt in his heart that this woman represented the rising Roman Catholic Church**, and he inserted in parenthesis beside at the end of this vision which he had written out, (perhaps the Catholic church).

#### **Vision Seven:**

**The voice bade him look once more**. As he turned and beheld, **a great explosion** rent the entire land, and **left the land of America a smoldering, chaotic ruin**. As far as the eye could see there was naught but craters, smoking piles of debris, and no humanity in sight. The vision then faded away.

**Some fine scholars of scripture would warn him that his visions were not inspired of God**. He was worried many times about this, and earnestly sought God to let this peculiar ministry pass from him. **Yet the visions kept breaking before his eyes and ever coming to pass**. No one was harmed by them, but on the contrary the children of God prospered because of them. At this point he had not realized that **even Jesus was accused of being of the devil**. Neither had he seen that his ministry being identified by astrologers was no different from the time that devils identified Paul's.