

For those of us who are acquainted with the ministry of God's Prophet, Brother William Branham, we well know that people from around the world came for many years to be ministered to by him. The great drawing card was that this God-called man was given visions in which he was shown when and where certain individuals would be healed. Once the Lord had shown him the vision, he would say to the person, "Thus saith the Lord, you are healed, or you will be healed, you will not die of your disease."

In all the years that Brother Branham received such visions and pronounced the person well, it was never known to fail. It always came to pass exactly as it was shown in the vision. In the early years of his ministry, this fact quickly spread around the world and we can understand why people would make every effort to get to this man bringing their sick and dying loved ones, hoping and praying that he would have a vision concerning them. The stories are many telling of the sacrifices people made to reach this Prophet of God. Some spending all they had for the journey, and some even starting the trip without the money to make it all the way. They came from around the world.

We say again, it's no wonder that the people of the world would do everything possible to just stand in Brother Branham's presence for even a short interview! To many, it was truly a matter of life or death for themselves, or some friend, or loved one. Thousands times thousands were healed through the visions that God gave him. Thousands of others were healed as the gift of discernment operated through the Prophet, telling them things about themselves that only they and God knew. This often raised their faith to the level so they could know that God was

## "THUS SAITH THE LORD"

By C. W. Wood

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on the scene, and that He wanted them to recover from their sickness. This knowledge was all they needed to go home and get well, the knowledge of God's will to heal them!

It has been this writer's experience, in forty-two years of preaching the Gospel of healing, that anytime the sick person becomes absolutely convinced that it is God's perfect and gracious will to heal, they always recover. Any Christian knows God has the power to heal, but sadly, not all understand that He greatly desires to use that power for them personally. It was the great mercy of God that gave His Prophet the gifts that caused the people to believe He wanted them well. They soon learned that no man could read the secrets of their hearts, nor could he give himself a vision that announced the outcome of their sickness. It had to be God on the scene working through the man to increase their faith.

If they had only realized, as we do today, that if they had stood on the Written Word, God would have honored it without a vision. Psalms 107:20 has never changed, "**God sent His word and healed them.**"

But there was a great problem that arose in Brother Branham's life because of the gifts. The operation of the gifts and the coming of the visions took physical strength from him. So much so, that he could only minister personally to a very few of the multitudes that came to his meetings. We Message Believers know that he would say on the platform as long as he possibly could before having to, at times, be carried off with all his strength gone. I will not set out to explain this loss of

strength. My message is to point out another drastically important truth.

I will state it as I understand it, and then give the Prophet's own statements, as he explained what the Lord was teaching him. For somewhere around fourteen years, Brother Branham depended on the visions he had concerning certain individuals before he would say, "Thus Saith the Lord, you are healed." But as we have stated, he would only have the strength to minister to a very small percent of those who needed healing. This fact became a great stumbling stone to him, and he eventually began to seek the Lord for a better way to help the people. The Lord heard his desperate cries, and in the message, AS I WAS WITH MOSES, SO SHALL I BE WITH YOU, 1960, Brother Branham poured out his heart to the people, explaining how he had actually, without knowing it, misused the gifts God had given him.

The great outstanding truth is that the Prophet, without ever realizing what he was doing, was placing the visions ahead of the Word! He was leaning on the visions, more than what the Scriptures themselves said about God's will to heal the people. The gifts, which were graciously given by God to establish the fact around the world that He is a loving, compassionate Healer, was now being used to try and pacify some people who were stubbornly holding on to their unbelief. They would not believe that God wanted to heal them personally, unless He would minister the gifts to them individually!

No matter how many times the Lord had shown His will to heal the people in the prayer line, they refused

to believe it was for themselves, without a personal confirmation. Without regard for the physical strain it imposed on the Prophet, many of them demanded their own personal sign. And so, eventually, Brother Branham was driven to desperation. Because of his great compassion for the people, he overtaxed his strength, and his health was affected. It was at this point that the Lord began to show His Prophet that he was misusing the gifts.

Realizing that some of our readers will be offended that I should say Brother Branham was misusing the gifts, I respectfully remind you that I am only saying what he, himself, said. The great point of this sermon is to make us realize that the people were relying on the visions and the discernment BEFORE they would believe God wanted to heal them. All this time I say, "THEY HAD THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD THAT DECLARED IT OVER AND OVER!"

They had "Thus Saith the Lord" in their Bibles if they had only believed it, but they wanted a sign to prove the Word was right. God wanted His Prophet and the people to trust His promises in the Word to heal!

QUOTE: AS I WAS WITH MOSES, SO I WILL BE WITH THEE, PAGE 29, "To show that it wasn't exactly God's perfect will to do that, the sign always weakened me. How many knows that? (Congregation says, "Amen."—Ed.) Ask my wife back there. She can tell you. The one...She gets it worst. And everybody has to put up with me. Not knowing hardly where you're at, walking about, and — *this, that*. You don't know. Walk, go down the road a little piece, and stop.

Now, coming from these last meeting, I took those people in the line. First, we'd have couple nights, three, without giving out prayer cards. Then you got such a rally, we'd have to give out prayer cards. I would stand, some time, and run fifty or seventy-five. Maybe have forty or fifty discernments,

at one time, in each and every night. That right, Gene, Leo, and you that's around here, that's in the meeting? (The brethren say, "That's right."—Ed.) Sure was the truth! And what did it do? When It left, and they started home, I'd forget where I was at; want to know where I had come from, on the highway.

And you mean to tell me, God does that to a man? No, sir. It was the man doing it to himself, by taking a sign post instead of a commission. I stopped under a little tree there, on the side of the road, somewhere in Washington, or somewhere up in there. I said, "Lord, if You'll just let me shake back to myself, good again, help me to know what's truth, so I can get straight once with the people, and get the commission straight."

I got it now. Sitting down here on the mountain side, of Kentucky, the other day, about daylight one morning, He revealed it to me. And this is it. This is it. Now I go in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Uh-huh.

Believe it, and live. Believe it, and get well. I can't make no one believe it. You have to believe it, yourself. But I have told you the Truth. God has testified that it was the Truth, by His Word, by His Angel, by signs and wonders, for twelve long years. If they're not going to believe it now, they will never believe it. Is that right? (Congregation says, "Amen."—Ed.) But the hour has come, when I'm tired staying on this mountain. I want to go up to Jordan. I want to enter into the full promises. I want to get faith within myself, not looking to a sign, not looking to something God has revealed, or some kind of a signpost. I want to look towards Calvary, say, "By faith I come, Lord God. I'm coming in the Name of the Lord Jesus." (End quote)

The prophet said, "I've got it now, He revealed it to me." Reading between the lines, he was saying that he saw he must lead the people back to the Word. He said, "God has testified that it

is the Truth by His Word." He showed it is His will to heal all who will believe it. He showed it by His Angel and by these signs for twelve long years, and if you won't believe it's His will to heal you now, after all this proof, you probably never will believe it!" He said, "I want to get Faith within myself (By believing the Word only), not looking to a sign....or some kind of a sign post. I want to say by Faith (In the Word), I come."

Matt. 12:38-39, "Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered saying, Master, we would see a sign from Thee. But He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas." The people in Jesus' day had their Old Testament scrolls, and in them the complete story of Messiah's coming and His ministry was written. And at the time of their request to see a SIGN, He had already fulfilled many of the prophesies that spoke of Him. Yet, they demanded more proof that He was the One! Because of their unbelief, they received a rebuke from the Lord.

We have seen a modern day repetition of the unbelief of the Pharisees in that the people of this day had many promises in the written Word of God concerning His will to heal His people, yet they demanded a personal SIGN before they would believe it. In Jesus' days on Earth this grieved Him, and there is no doubt that He was grieved by it in our day.

We can not help but wonder if some of us who have been desperately sick at times, since the Prophet left, would have not been healed if God had supernaturally sent Brother Branham to us with "Thus Saith the Lord." This is our natural inclination to want "A God with skin on Him." But, God's plan is to bring us to the place of believing HIS WORD above ever other thing on Earth. He will not be satisfied until He has produced this Faith in us! God

knew He would take His Prophet home before the Rapture. He also knew that many people would be left in a deep pit concerning healing without the Prophet's "Thus Saith the Lord."

The great burden of this writer is to show that God's written promises in the Scriptures about healing are even surer than the visions of the Prophet. Every promise in the Book is "THUS SAITH THE LORD." The problem with many of us is, we seek some more reliable proof that God will heal us than what is written in His Word. If the doctor says we are getting well, we are apt to believe him. If we begin to FEEL better, we are apt to cling to that good feeling, but if it leaves we tend to slide back into our unbelief. God wants us to know that nothing can change His will and His Word concerning our healing.

Let us pray that in the following quotes of the Prophet, we will be able to see that God did not intend to leave His Bride in a hole concerning our health, but that He was only directing our attention back to His supernatural WORD. If the visions from God did not fail, how much more will His written Word never fail when we plant our spiritual feet on it. The people had let the visions replace the Word and the Lord had to bring us back to the central point of all true faith, His Promised Word! The Word is true with or without a vision, with or without feeling, with or without a doctor's conformation.

QUOTE: AS I WAS WITH MOSES..., PAGE 20, "Moses, when he went down there, he had a sign, with a stick and with his hand. The sign here is no more the commission than it was with Moses. What if all the Israelites say, "Say, all you Egyptians, all the rest of you Israelites, come over here? We got a man can do a trick with his hand. You ought to see it. We got a man can take a stick and make a snake out of it. Come, see it." That was just a signpost. That wasn't the commission. They wasn't waiting for a signpost. God help

us. They were waiting for a deliverance.

And this poor, sick, crippled-up world is waiting for a deliverance, and looking at a signpost. Have mercy! A sign post is nothing but a sign to prove the commission. There's the new ministry. It's just been revealed to me. "Pray for the sick. Get the people to believe you." God can never leave that. That's His commission, no matter what goes on, how much I fail. I fail miserably. I should never have went ahead with them signs. That wasn't the will of God, but God has blessed it anyhow. But I'm ready to leave this mountain. I want to go across Jordan, want to carry the commission. "Get the people to believe you." (End quote)

QUOTE: AS I WAS WITH MOSES, SO I WILL BE WITH THEE, PAGE 21, "Another woman there, said, "My back." She said, "They can't find what done it."

I said, "Do you believe me to be His prophet?" She said, "I do."

I said, "What happened, back yonder in the early month of June, you... They're—they're trying to work on you, and trying to operate for a slipped vertebra. It's not so. It's a pinched nerve. You got it by lifting the load, when you worked for McSpaddin's Market.

She said, "I remember when it was done. I remember it now."

That doesn't heal her. That only points to the commission. Quit leaning on the signpost. Let's go on to the city. Let's get away from this mountain. Let's get to the city. Let's cross Jordan.

I've wronged. I've done wrong. That's why I have based these sermons the way I have. 'Cause, He said, "As I was with Moses, so will I be with you," and when that Hand come down and pointed that very same Scripture. For a long time I've wondered, because I didn't know what the commission was. I've looked for something supernatural beyond that. God cannot get away from His commission. God give the com-

mission, that's what it must remain. (His commission is His written Word!)

But all the Pentecostal people like signs. They like to see it. The Bible said, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign." But the commission was, "Pray for the sick." And tens of thousands times thousands that I have failed to pray for, because they all desired the sign. They all desire it.

The other day, I was trying to work the ministry, got it into the room. And a man come on the platform, said, "Now, Brother Branham, wait a minute. My case is different. I've just got to know something." I said, "Well, the doctor could examine you."

"Oh, I don't want that. I—I want to know right now. My case is so different."

I said, "Well I hate to do this, Brother." Went on into it. And the first thing you know, the Holy Spirit moved. He said, "Praise the Lord. That's right."

I said, "The rest of you come on now. Let me pray for you."

When I did that, you know what the next one said? "My case is just as important as his." Then I got about six or eight, and closed the meeting. Like to kill me.

I've always wondered, why would that do that to me? Is because I was doing it wrong. That's just the signpost pointing to the commission. It's not the commission. That signpost has been nailed down, around the world. And languages, Africa, India, Asia, Europe, around the world, through tens of thousands and millions of people, they know about that signpost. I'm ready to leave this mountain. I want to go on across Jordan. I want to get into something yonder, where my faith will rise to a spot, when I pray for people, they'll be healed.

Watch, God puts it right back in the people's lap. "You were born to pray for sick people. If you can get them to believe." I said they won't believe." He said, "I'll give you two signs, and by

this they will believe." notice, then these sign, they've rallied for them, the signposts, instead of the commission. "Believing that you were sent to pray." (End quote) May the Lord help us now, as we try to sum up what the Prophet was teaching us in these quotes! The signs were simply to prove God's perfect will to heal all people. His requirement was, and is, "Only Believe." The signs were never meant to be used on every person who needed healing. Their purpose was to; once and for all, show that He greatly desired to heal all who would simply understand that He wanted to. The signs that He demonstrated through the Prophet was to be the PROOF of His gracious will. But the people, "Rallied for the signposts instead of the commission." They wouldn't believe the written promises to heal unless God gave a vision for them personally.

The revelation is God heals, with or without a vision, with or without a dream, with or without any kind of a sign. The one who demonstrated the signs is gone, but the One who promised in His Word to heal us is forever with us! If in your mind you suppose you would rise from your sick bed if the Prophet was still here to tell you, "Thus Saith the Lord," then be reminded, Dear Friend, that we have "Thus Saith the Lord" in the Bibles that we all carry! If the visions never failed, then the Scriptures are more certain than that!

It is within the plan of our all-wise God to at times change our circumstances from the sunshine of health and prosperity to the midnight of trial and adversity. It will not always be the brightness of the noon day sun, but we can expect seasons of sorrow and mourning. This is to cause us to seek our Beloved Lord in the darkness of our midnight hours. All of the Lord's chosen ones have had to mingle the joys of the Lord with the tears of doubt and fear. You are not alone in your time of trouble, Dear Friend; it is the Lord's providence that we should have joy and then sorrow, the bright sun then the midnight hour. But we can know that all our Father orders is wise and good. He is leading toward Perfect Faith!

What shall we do then, Beloved, when our Sun is behind a cloud? First, we must understand that it is only a temporary hiding of His face from us. We will continue to praise Him for His love and mercy, even when He seems to withhold it. Praise Him for the times of joy and also when the gloom of a trial is upon us. There is beauty in the sunrise, but there is also hidden beauty in the setting of the sun, as darkness approaches. We will only make a circle and come back to the sunrise again. We will believe that the nighttime of trial is as useful as the bright day. The bright stars of His promises shine forth at night, so that the way is not totally dark. What a glorious revelation to know He is always near!

Yes, God took His tired Prophet home to his rest. The visions and the discernment he had are no longer with us, but a merciful Lord has proven by them that He desires, "Above all things that we should prosper and be in health, even as our soul prospers." (John III, Verse 2) The Lord did allow us, for a time, to lean on the Signs, but in 1965, it was time for Him to start us back toward His Word.

There was to be change in the Prophet's ministry. It was to be healing for the people through his belief, and their belief in the WORD ALONE. The emphasis was to be on THE WORD rather than on visions and signs.

QUOTE: AS I WAS WITH MOSES...PAGE 20, ".....And by this they will believe, by these two signs...DON'T YOU FAIL TO GET THIS! The sign is not the commission. The sign only points to the commission (THE WORD). You get out here on the road and see a sign, and (it) says five miles to Jeffersonville. That isn't Jeffersonville. THAT'S A SIGN TO SHOW YOU YOU'RE ON THE RIGHT ROAD." (End quote) (THE SIGNS WERE TO SHOW US THAT GOD'S WILL WAS, AND IS, TO HEAL ALL WHO WILL SIMPLY BELIEVE THAT HE WANTS TO.) We are on the right road when we simply believe HIS PROMISED WORD!

Let's take, "Thus Saith the Lord" in His Word and live. Amen!

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