

Questions and Answers #30

Is Persecution and Martyrdom in store for the Bride

Brian Kocourek, Pastor

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This evening I would like to look at certain things brother Branham spoke concerning the persecution of the church. Some believe that it will take the persecution of the church to drive the believers back together. I do not know if I can see it that way based on certain things brother Branham has said concerning the persecution.

For instance in the sermon *Feast of the trumpets 64-0719M P:75* brother Branham said, *In the cunningness, as He said, he'd come in like flatteries. And what has he done? He's bringing the Protestant ecumenical council of the world churches, the spirit of antichrist, upon both of them, bringing them to the slaughter, just like they did the other in a hour to call the Bride. How? Loosed in the ecclesiastical church, spirit. Loosed upon what? Not upon the denominations, upon the Bride. But here you'd get it; the Bride will not go through that time. The Bible says not. The church will, but not the Bride. Can't you see? Ministers, can't you see that, brethren? You say the Church has to go through the persecution for the perfection of it. The Blood of Jesus Christ perfects the Bride. A man who chooses a wife don't put her through a lot of punishment; he's already found grace with her; she's found grace with him. He engages to her. And if there's anything, he'll keep her from every place to turn her hand. His grace is so great upon them, and so will it be upon the Bride, and so is it on the Bride.*

So here we have a very definitive statement from God's prophet that the Bride will not go through the persecution. Let's read another.

From His sermon *Questions and answers COD 64-0823M P:154 276*, preached well after the Seven Seals were revealed, Brother Branham reads a very definitive question concerning the Bride and the tribulation, *"Brother Branham, will the Bride go through the persecution as the early apostolic church did? No, I just explained that a few minutes ago. No, next thing is a rapture now. Remember, we're at the promised land; we're at the border. You understand the march of Israel?"* Now, you can't get any more plain than that. The Bride will not go through the persecution, period. Now, contrast that with a statement he made in the Message..

The Paradox 64-0418B P:62 preached a few months earlier. *We got to stay together. We're all believers in God. The Holy Ghost takes us all in. It'll be a paradox if God ever gets us together. But He will; just trust Him. The virgin birth... He knows how to send the persecution. It'll run us together.* Now, some might take this statement and believe by it that God will run us all in together. I do not believe God will use the persecution to drive the Bride together, because the bride will not be here for the Persecution which is also known as the Great Tribulation. So we see here a quote where brother Branham said the persecution will run us all together. But what does he mean here by persecution, and when he is speaking of all coming together who is he talking about?

Court trial 64-0412 P:54 *All the Pentecostal groups come together then. It'll take a persecution to run you people together. You'll never believe it. But when that time comes...*

Notice that he is speaking to the Pentecostal people, the Church, because we have already found him to say that the Bride will not go through the persecution. The Bride are coming together all around the world by the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which is the Doctrine of Christ. And everywhere I have been I see the brothers that are getting the revelation begin to teach it just as wonderfully as I have seen those who sat under Brother Vayle doing so. And when they see the relationship Jesus had with His Father, and that He has with us as our Eldest Brother in a vast family of brethren, they can see the real brotherhood of Christ and that revelation has really begun to tie the Message Believers together as nothing has been able to do so before.

Great commission 58-0301B P:28 But I believe, my brethren, that there is coming an hour that when a real rank persecution will run us together. Then we will be one, the Church will come together.

What we have to be careful about concerning the use of the word persecution is that just Like the word Christ can mean, the Anointer or the One Who anoints. It can also mean the One who is anointed, and it can also mean the anointing itself. So when we hear brother Branham use the word persecution we must understand in what context he is using that word.

In this next quote we find brother Branham use the word persecution as a tool that God uses to train and discipline His children. That is not the same as the persecution that speaks of the Great tribulation.

We have seen His star 63-1216 P:25 God is the great Refiner's Furnace, that where He has to put these things upon us, and trials, and persecutions and things to mold it together to make our testimony ring for a certain time, and a certain note that He wants rang out in a certain day. We're made different. We're all made different. We see different. But we all see one thing; that's Jesus Christ. Let's look at Him. And the only way you can see Him... If He looks contrary to this Word, you're not looking at Him, for That is Him. So if you see a creed or see some certain denomination that you just think, "I belong to that, and that's enough." If it doesn't look at that Word, then look away from it. Look to that Word. And that's what we're looking for: Christ, the manifestation of God's Word. He is the a-vindication of God's Word.

Again we see that God allows certain influences in our lives to mold us into the Image of His first born son. But the persecutions here are but the trials of our faith that God uses to mold His very nature into us, by His Word. The trials drive us to His Word, and if we are to be driven together by trials it will be driven to the Word, not to a certain group here and a certain group there. God never drives people to other people. He drives us to His Word.

Fifth seal the 63-0322 P:154 The ones that the Lord showed me, the Bride, she was not under the martyrs' block, no, the sacrifice altar of the martyrs, but had received white robes by accepting the pardoning grace of the living Word. Christ had give them a white robe.

Feast of the trumpets 64-0719M P:99 There was three stages of it, as I said: the martyrs, age the martyr for it, and then the stage of the reformers, and now the calling-out time. When finished, the Laodicean age, according to Revelations 10, the mystery of all the Bible would be knowed to the Bride. Is that right? Revelations 10... Listen close now. Bride called out by the Word, Christ Himself calling out the Bride, making plain Hebrews 13:8 (that He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, does the same, is the same; "He that believeth on Me the

works that I do shall he do also." See?), Luke 22--or Luke 17:30, and also Malachi 4, Hebrews 4, all these Scriptures that's promised, this is to be between the Sixth and the Seventh Seal and the Sixth and the Seventh Trumpet.

So we see that brother Branham is plainly speaking that the age of the church had three segments to it. The days of the martyrs, the days of the reformers, and the days of the called out by the Revelation of Jesus Christ among the Bride. Now, this by itself does not lay the ground work to say there will be no martyrdom or persecution of the Bride, but let's look further on this subject if we might.

Ephesian church age 60-1205 P:13** We're so glad as we read of **the martyrs of the days gone by**, how they sealed their testimony with their own blood; then, Father, it makes us feel that we're doing so little in this day. And I pray Thee, Lord, that Thou will forgive our negligence, as we are, about Thy business. And we pray that You'll anoint us afresh as we read of Thy Word, and **see the suffering that has been brought about in the days gone by to make up the canon of this great ransomed church of the living God.

Now, again this proves nothing of the present or future, but let's us see that the ages gone by made were made up by martyrs etc.

***Patmos vision 60-1204E P:4** And we use the word sometime as predestination, but it's a sure hanger in this church age that we live in. **It was certainly a great thing used in the days of the martyrs**, 'cause they certainly believed it. But it's got away from it now to the legalist ideas, the legalist teaching in the church which come... Which was a good thing, because all of it had gone Calvinistic in England till they didn't even have revivals anymore, and John Wesley come along preaching the Arminian doctrine which balanced it up. God will always balance it up. **So then the foolish virgin was the one who did not have oil in their lamps, that I believe that was cast out into outer darkness where there'd be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.** If you'll compare that on your footnotes, it'll run it right back again to the great tribulation. And **I think they're the ones that stays back and goes through the great tribulation.** Quite a lesson there, if we had time to go into it. If you...*

So you see here brother Branham points out that it will be the foolish virgin that will go through the persecution or Great Tribulation as he also calls it.

The next quote we read is from Questions and Answers where brother Branham is asked a question whether the foolish virgin will be saved or not.

***Questions and answers COD 64-0823E P:88** Now, just a minute. "Will the foolish virgin be saved."(Now, listen to brother Branham's answer.) **No!!!** Whatever happens, happens now. After that time she's in the state... Now, **she will have to go through the tribulation period.** And the reason of it is, is because **she has rejected the Atonement in Its fullness.** She is a believer, a professed believer, but **she will have to go through the tribulation period.** The Bible said, "And the rest of them, the dragon spurted water out of his mouth to go and make war..." And what an hour that is. There's never been a time in history where that the nominal churches has become so hungry to find the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I speak for the Christian Business Men. Constantly, it's Presbyterian, Lutheran, Catholic, and all, Baptists*

by the hundreds, Church of Christ, Nazarenes, Pilgrim Holiness, Seventh Day Adventists, every one of them flocking in trying to find... See?

So the answer is very plain. The Foolish virgin have rejected the Atonement which is the Word in It's fullness. They have rejected the Doctrine of Christ, and have not God. They have not the Holy Ghost, but are trying to get it some other way than what we are told in the scriptures to get it.

God hiding Himself in simplicity 63-0412E P:116 *Something happened the other day. You heard the tape, the seven thunders, "What Time Is It, Sir?" See? It happened the other day. You know these things... The time is at hand, church. The time is at hand. Don't--don't--don't wait any longer. See, how do you know the rapture's not going on all the time? First thing you know it'll be past, one disappearing here, and there. It'll be gone the first thing you know, and judgment will strike the world. You say, "Well, I thought this..." "It's too late now." You remember, they didn't know it until the day they entered into the ark, and then it was too late. The foolish virgin didn't know until she come back and found the wise virgin gone. Then she was left for the tribulation period.*

So we see the types are all there. Noah's day, and the foolish virgin not having the Holy Ghost and by the time they come back to find out how to get it, it will be too late then. That is why I am afraid that this great awakening that is happening all around the world is one last sweep by God to get those in that are ordained to come in. Remember, when brother Vayle first begin to preach on the Parousia they all mocked him, but now many of those that mocked are now preaching it in one fashion or another.

Br. Jack bell told me, "Brian, that book you wrote on the difference between the Father and the Son, there is no way anyone could come against what we believe concerning the Godhead," So you know what? One day they will begin to see that too, because to have God you have to have the doctrine of Christ, and without having the doctrine of Christ you don't have God and He is the Holy Ghost. So when they begin to come for the oil, they will have to come to the doctrine of Christ, but then it will be too late. Come now while there is still a chance.

Patmos vision 60-1204E P:4 *So then the foolish virgin was the one who did not have oil in their lamps, that I believe that was cast out into outer darkness where there'd be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. If you'll compare that on your footnotes, it'll run it right back again to the great tribulation. And I think they're the ones that stays back and goes through the great tribulation. Quite a lesson there, if we had time to go into it. If you...*

Patmos vision 60-1204E P:3 *Now, there's another question here that was given me last evening: Brother Branham, are the five foolish virgins of Matthew 25 counted as the Gentile remnant? I understand that the five foolish virgins were saved but have to go through the great tribulation period. Is this correct? If so, what will be their final destination? Could they be the sheep which are divided from the goats in Matthew 25:33 and 34? Pretty good theologian according to what I... think it too, that they are the remnant, the sleeping virgin is the remnant spoke of in Revelations of the woman's seed that keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. A woman will take a piece of goods and lay it down; well, now, that is what she's cutting or takes her pattern and lays anywhere she desires, which*

way she's going to cut that. And then what she has left over is called the remnant, but she chooses to cut it from a certain place by her own free thinking. But what's left over is called the remnant. Now, if you notice, there were five foolish and five wise virgins; all of them was virgins, made out of the same material. But by election, God chose His Bride by election before the foundation of the world, put their names on the Lamb's Book of Life slain before the foundation of the world; before the world ever began, God in His mind, being infinite...

QA God being misunderstood COD 61-0723E P:26 140. Now, were the five of the virgins lost? I presume that they are asking the question, "the five virgins," the five wise and the five foolish. Now, if you were with us in the last teachings in Revelation, you find out there that those virgins, **the five foolish virgins were not lost; but they were not permitted to go into the wedding supper, but they suffered persecution, and was martyred, and raised again at the general resurrection in the last day.** Those are the people where He separated the sheep from the goats (See?); they stood before judgment. You say, "Well, Brother Branham, don't we stand, the Church?" No, sir. **We do not stand before the judgment. We are now standing before the Judgment. God put our sins upon Christ, and "He that heareth My Word (St. John 5:24) and believeth on Him that sent Me has Eternal Life, and shall not come into the judgment but has passed from death unto Life."** No more judgment for the Church, (I believe brother Branham is peaking of the bride here, and not the church based on other things he says about the church. Sometimes brother Branham intermittently uses the word church for bride and visa versa. But when we look at all what he says, it is clear that the church goes through the tribulation period but the Bride is raptured.) **it's took up in the rapture, and comes back to pass judgment upon the people who did not receive the Holy Spirit. Does not Paul say that he dares any of us to take a matter to the court, to the unjust magistrate, when, "know ye not that the saints shall judge the earth?"** We will set with Christ and judge, kings, and priests, and judge these people that we preached to and told them about the baptism of the Holy Ghost and they refused to receive It. Think of it. **No, they were not lost, but they will never be in the Bride. They will come in the second resurrection, but never be in the Bride, to be judged according to the way they treated the Light that they received. Now, that part will be up to Christ. They were not lost though.**

Now, in this next quote brother Branham had just finished talking about a trip to Germany and the testimony of men there who had hid out during the war from Hitler and Nazi Germany, and how they had to pray food onto their tables, etc. Then he makes the statement **Handwriting on the wall 58-0618 P:22** Persecution makes the church strong. And God will strengthen this American church someday, hiding in a bomb shelter somewhere. Now, if we believe the Bride doesn't go through the Persecution then this is speaking of those left behind.

Questions and answers COD 64-0823E P:116 Now, the people say, "What about the early saints?" That was the changing of the dispensations. **That was under persecution**, which if you was here to hear this church ages, and to see how they went out into that darkness and had to do that, then **that shows where they had to take that persecution**, because each one of the church ages and everything begin to show that they went darker and darker, till they finally went to a complete place that they denied His Name and picked up another name that they lived and were dead: Sardis. And then it come on out, Thyatira and Sardis, and then come out, then it begin to come out to Philadelphia and so forth, and **then come to the time**

of the calling out of the Bride which was to escape all the damnation. It counted worthy to escape all this damnation and wrath that's to come upon the earth, that you might be counted worthy to escape it, not go through it, escape it. See? Do you understand now, everybody? See?

Feast of the trumpets 64-0719M P:94 At the Sixth Seal when it opened, the persecution struck the Jews in a literal standpoint, and here comes the persecution to the Church in the ecclesiastical standpoint, because the Bride is already called. The sabbaths are over and ready for the Jews to be called. Where to? The Feast of Atonement. Oh, church, don't you see that? So the persecution to the Jews under Hitler and Stalin is followed by the persecution to the church after the Bride is gone to Glory.

Now, for those who believe that Alpha must repeat in Omega, and thus there must be a persecution before we go in the Rapture, let's look what brother Branham says about the Alpha persecution. From his sermon, *Testimony of William Branham 60-0210 P:28* He says, *"Do you believe that? Scripture says that? After His death, burial, and resurrection, persecution set upon the church.* So if the persecution set in on the church after His resurrection, then I believe it will repeat in Omega as well. After the resurrection and rapture of the church.

What Holy Ghost was given for 59-1217 P:12 When men makes fun of you, they're not making fun of you; they're making fun of Him that sent you. So Jesus said, "Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for My Name sake. Blessed are you." And again, "All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." For when God made Hissself known in Christ, they hated Him. Who hated Him worse? The church. The church hated Him worse. They hated Him worse than the drunkard. They hated Him worse than all the other people. It was the church that hated Him. So therefore, when you see Kosmos, the world order... "The world knowed Him not" means the "church (so-called) knew Him not." "He came to His own and His own received Him not. But as many as did receive Him, to them gave He the power to become sons of God, to them that believed on His Name." Oh, how we should love Him and worship Him. The purpose of God, wanting to become in fellowship...

Now, that is a beautiful quote because it shows that the church hated the manifestation of God in the man Jesus and it will hate you today as well when it sees Christ in you the Hope of Glory. Now, that does not mean that we are to go about and speak evil all the time about the church people. No, if they reject you, just shut your mouth like Christ did. That does not mean you have go out of your way to get together with them. How can two walk together lest they be agreed. But you should be gentlemanly and lady like enough to acknowledge them when you cross their path, no matter how ill they treated you. Don't be their equal. Show that you have something they don't have. Christ in you, the hope of Glory. Even while hanging on the cross in His last breath he said, *"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."* And that should be our attitude as well. I have never told this church or my family to snub anyone or treat anyone with disdain. I have said, just leave it alone, because that is best, and that way you can forget about it. The Bible says how to treat a heretic. It says, reject them, but the word reject does not mean to speak evil of them, nor does it mean to snub them, but

simply it means to just leave them alone, and let them be. And if you can't do that with grace in your heart you need another trip to Calvary.

Smyrnaean church age 60-1206 P:63 I want you to notice something here in this Scripture. And I think it was one of the biggest puzzles to me for so long until I found out. Now, let's read that real close now. See? He that has an ear,... (in other words, "has a ear to hear"; see, **that's open to the Spirit**)... let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;... (Now, see, this same thing, this persecution and everything comes. **Every part of it laps over in every church, the churches.**)... Spirit says to the churches; **He that overcometh**... (In what church? Ephesian? Yeah. All right. Smyrna? Yeah, all of them)... He that overcomes... (in all the churches)... shall not be hurt of the second death. He in the Laodicean church that overcomes what? Overcomes the **Nicolaitanes**, overcomes **the things of the world**, overcomes these **denominations**, overcomes these **priesthoods**, overcomes **everything of the world**, and **sells out, and loves Christ**, he'll not be hurt of the second death. Why? He's got **Eternal Life**. **Eternal Life can't die**. Jesus said, "He that heareth Me has Eternal Life, shall never die. I'll raise him up in the last day."

So this plainly says that the things we must overcome in this hour are things to do with the world and how the church is controlled. Is it controlled by God or man. And if it is controlled by man, then blessed is he that overcomes that.

Adoption or placing 60-0522E P:17 When we were down here beginning at the early age of the church, after the reformation in Luther's time, just a man to say he was a Christian, either meant his life or death. They kill him for even saying he was a Christian. Therefore to go through persecution... **Every age, through every time, there's been persecution. "All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."** But that is not the Persecution which speaks of the Great Tribulation. Let me show you some quotes that tell us what sort of persecution we are to face and are facing in this hour.

Christ outside the door 58-0330E P:11 You know, any famous picture has to go through the hall of critics before it can go in the hall of fame. That's the way the church is. **The church, first, has to go through the hall of critics, before it can be taken in the rapture and put in the hall of God's fame.** All that lives godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. So you see, you've got to be criticized; you've got to be made fun of. There's no other way around it.

Return and Jubilee 62-1122 P:25 We need to go back to a power of God, and a something that can do the same thing today. Although in our numbers... **Persecution always gives strength to the church.** We've had it too easy. We get slothful. We get to a place where we don't want to move on, because everything's just handed to us. **It takes sorrow, and tears, and sweat, and prayer, and faith, and promise to move forward in the power of the Holy Spirit.** That zeal and power that they had in those days has long time vanished from our assemblies. I'm afraid if the windows would be shot out tonight, people'd run every way and never come back again.

Feast of the trumpets 64-0719M P:69 You remember the vision the other day? Remember the preview of it? How many remembers Sunday 'fore last? How there it was exactly come by; we seen it exactly, seen that dirty, filthy thing come up called the church (vulgarity is to the extreme), and that little Bride of every nation, each one of them dressed like their nation they

come from, just perfectly, walking before the Lord. You notice, there'll be a time some time when they'll say, "Well, **I thought the Church was to go before the persecution. I thought there's a rapture.**" **"It's already passed and you knew it not."** That's what He said about John one time, you know. Said, "How--why say the prophets that a--the scribes that Elias must first come?" He said, "He's already come." And even the disciples didn't know it. "They done to him what they listed." The rapture will be the same way. In a hour... He's promised to do that. He didn't promise to show Elias like that, but **He promised to take the Bride like that--in a hour that you think not, just a change in a moment of a twinkling of an eye be caught away; then you're left. Then that's the time.**

Wisdom verses faith 62-0401 P:120 Now, the Protestants got choked out. It choked the Spirit right out of them, when they began to take wisdom instead of faith in the Word--the wisdom in the organization, the organizational wisdom, instead of faith in the Word. (All that understand that say, "Amen." [Congregation replies, "Amen!"--Ed.] See?) Faith in what the--what the group of man of the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Evangelicals, and all got together... And soon they're to form up a confederation of church, which will be the image to the beast. And he will have the same power in this nation (Revelations 13:11) that they had over there, and **will cause a persecution upon the saints, just like they did at the beginning of the Roman church.** See? That's where it's heading right up now. And that's why the Word's being sowed right now everywhere: Stay away from it! Get out of it! See?

But remember he is talking about the church and not the Bride here. Let us pray. Dear father we are thankful that you have come down to deliver your saints in this hour, and we know that there are many reasons why you have come, and one is to save the Elect from your wrath and the wrath of man. To save Your Elect from perishing and for this we are grateful, and ever so thankful. Help us to keep our focus on Your promises for us in this hour and to keep our eyes off the circumstances that are ever so apparent to the natural man. May we leave this earth when you take your presence up from here, in Jesus name we pray, Amen.