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## The Legend of William Branham

by J. Greg Sheryl

William Marrion Branham can justly be called the father of modern faith healers. One scholar wrote that he "was and is an enigma. He was born in poverty; he died in controversy, and his name is known around the world."<sup>1</sup>

According to one account:

"In 1946 Branham claimed that an angel commissioned him to be a prophet with the message of divine healing. From 1946 to 1955 Branham conducted a healing ministry that only [his ministry contemporary] Oral Roberts could match. The Pentecostal masses revered his legendary healing gifts, the ability to detect diseases by the vibration of his hand and the ability to discern the secrets of a person's heart."<sup>2</sup>

Branham had a storied ministry, especially in his heyday from the late 1940s through the late 1950s.

Branham's devotees have developed into what has become literally a "cult following" estimated to number in the millions worldwide.<sup>3</sup>



Some readers may remember reading or hearing within the past two years about a certain "Christian" pastor, Youcef Nadarkhani, who was imprisoned in Iran and facing a death sentence for refusing to convert to Islam. This pastor had ties to Branham. One article on Pastor Nadarkhani stated:

"He is reported to be the evangelical pastor of 'the Church of Iran'. However, what might come as a shock to many evangelical believers is that Pastor Nadarkhani is actually one of the leaders in a growing cult in Iran, which is linked with the Oneness Pentecostalism (Jesus

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