

Messianic Rabbi: Should Believers Take Part in Civil War Against a Tyrannical Government?

This week, like everyone else in the USA, I have had many conversations concerning the election and its repercussions. The discussions, at least in some way, all included the possibility of civil war and, if not civil war, at least armed riots.

That led to the discussion of what believers in Yeshua should do if armed conflicts begin and whether or not we should we join the battle.

Let me say at the start I hope and pray that we never have an armed conflict again where brother raises arms against brother within our nation.

In response to the above discussions, I began to pray, search the Scriptures and search my heart concerning the question. As a rabbi, I felt that I needed to have an answer to a question of such importance.

In my study I looked through Biblical text and history. It was easy to find references to Israel rising to battle both against outside forces and in civil war. But while that shows that civil war among the people of G-D has taken place, it didn't answer my question: "Should believers in Yeshua participate in a civil war or a war against a tyrannical government?" But I didn't only want to know if believers fought in such conflicts; I wanted to know if their participation in the fighting appeared to be blessed by G-D.

As I studied, I realized that we do have a historical example

of Jewish believers in Yeshua rising up against tyranny during what is known as the Bar Kochba rebellion. For those unaware, the Bar Kochba rebellion took place between the years 132 and 136. It was an uprising of Israel against the Roman empire, and history is clear that believers in Yeshua fought alongside non-believers in these battles.

It is also clear that at the start of the rebellion Israel was very successful in battles. In fact, these Jewish warriors were able to drive Rome out of Jerusalem and Israel and for a short time become an autonomous nation. In other words, G-D was blessing Israel in their fight against Roman tyranny and paganism.

However, this all changed once Rabbi Akiva proclaimed Bar Kochba as Messiah. The believers in Yeshua who would not accept anyone as Messiah other than Yeshua left the army of Israel and the war dramatically reversed, leading to the Roman defeat of Israel.

So, it is very clear that a believer in Yeshua can arm themselves and fight against tyranny and paganism. We can rise up and fight to preserve our freedom to worship and live out our faith against those who would attempt to take those rights away.

But it is also clear that we cannot do so marching under the banner of any messiah other than Yeshua. I watched this year as more and more people who believe in Yeshua as their Messiah walked closer and closer to at least appearing to bestow upon President Trump a messianic mantle.

Let me stop for a moment and say I am a biblical conservative, and I voted for President Trump this election. I did so strictly because of his policies. There is no way I could possibly ever vote for the ungodly policies put forth by the Democratic Party. So, I am not anti-Trump as president.

But I have seen believers write things like "Trump is our only

hope,” which at least borders on messianism. I write this today because the answer to my initial question is “Yes, believers can arm themselves and fight against tyranny, but we must check our hearts to make sure whose messianic banner we are fighting under.”

I hope and pray we never have another civil war, but if we do, the historical evidence shows if we choose another Bar Kochba to exalt and proclaim as the savior of our values and rights, we will lose the battle. {eoa}

Eric Tokajer is the author of *Overcoming Fearlessness*, *What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?*, *With Me in Paradise*, *Transient Singularity*, *OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry*, *#ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer*, *Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians* and *Galatians in Context*.

The Complex World Jesus Encountered in Jerusalem

While the bulk of Jesus’ ministry took place in the region around the Sea of Galilee, He did go to Jerusalem on several occasions to celebrate the great feasts of Israel. We know He attended the Feast of Tabernacles, Hanukkah and Passover along with tens of thousands of other religious Jews from around the country.

While there He encountered a complex arena of differing religious factions, as well as heightened expectations during the various feasts. It was no coincidence that during Hanukkah—the celebration of the defeat of the Greek Seleucids—men came to Jesus hoping He was the one to free them from Roman rule. During the Feast of Tabernacles, He used the water libation ceremony to point people to Himself. He also ended up in a heated debate with some of the religious leaders.

A common mistake we make when reading the Gospels and Jesus' interactions with the various factions is to lump all of the Jews into one homogeneous group. Jesus was navigating a complex arena of Jewish theologies and ideologies. In addition, most questions posed to Jesus were not with ill intent but reflected a religious culture of probing, questioning and debating. Nevertheless, the more Jesus answered, the more argumentative conversations became.

To understand Jesus' interactions with these various religious groups, join me for this week's *Out of Zion* podcast titled *Jesus Goes to Jerusalem*. You will understand much better the words of Jesus when you understand the context He was speaking into. {eoa}

Dr. Susan Michael is USA director of the *International Christian Embassy Jerusalem* and host of the *Out of Zion* podcast.

How You Can Break Free From the Chains of Offense

It takes effort to stay free from offense. Paul compares it to exercising. If we exercise our bodies, we are less prone to injury. I'll give you an example. While in Hawaii, I climbed a wall to take a picture. When I did, I pulled a group of muscles in my knee and could not walk for four days. "If you had been exercising regularly," the physical therapist told me, "this would not have happened. Because your muscles are out of shape, you are prone to injury."

Once I was able to walk, another expert instructed me, "You must do these exercises to bring your knee muscles back into proper shape and condition." It took a few months to get my knee back to normal. The Greek word for "stive" in Acts 24:16 (NKJV) for "strive," which quotes Paul as saying, "I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men," is *askeo*. *Vine's Expository Dictionary* defines *askeo* as "to take pains, endeavor, exercise by training or discipline."

Sometimes others offend us, and it is not difficult to forgive. We have exercised our hearts so they are in condition to handle the offense; therefore, no injury or permanent damage results. Many people could have climbed that wall in Hawaii and not been injured because they were in shape. Likewise, some are conditioned to obey God by exercising their hearts. Our degree of maturity determines how well we will handle an offense without injury.

Some offenses will be more challenging than those for which we've been trained. This extra strain may cause a wound or injury after which we will have to exercise spiritually to be free and healed again. But the result will be worth the effort.

Maturing Through Hardships

We have to remember that we grow in the tough times, not in the easy times. Hard places will always come in our journey with the Lord. We cannot escape them but must face them, for they are part of the process of becoming perfect in Him. If you choose to run from them, you will seriously hinder your growth.

As you strive, or exercise, to remain free from offense, you will become stronger and more compassionate. You will fall more in love with Jesus. If you have come out of hardships and do not feel this way, you have probably not recovered from the offense. Recovery is your choice. Some people get hurt and never recover. As cruel as this may sound, it is their choice.

Jesus learned obedience by the things He suffered. Peter learned obedience by the things he suffered. Paul learned obedience by the things he suffered. What about you? Have you learned? Or are you hard, calloused, cold, bitter and resentful? If you answered yes to the last question, then you did not learn obedience.

Yes, it's true that there are some offenses that will not roll off you like "water off a duck's back." You will have to work through them, striving to get free. But in that process you will grow and mature.

Maturity does not come easily. If it did, all would attain it. Few reach this level in life or in their faith journeys because of the resistance they face. There is resistance because our society is not godly but selfish. The world is dominated by the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2b). As a result, in the course of entering into the maturity of Christ we will face hardships that come from standing against the flow of selfishness.

Paul was compelled to return to three cities where he birthed churches. His purpose was to strengthen the souls of the

disciples. How did he strengthen them? The Bible tells us he encouraged them by “exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God’” (Acts 14:22b).

He did not promise them a life of ease. He did not promise them success according to the world’s standards. He showed them that if they were going to finish their course with joy, they were going to meet up with much resistance that he called “tribulation.”

If you are rowing on a river against the current, you will have to row continuously in order to progress against the flow. If you stop rowing and relax, you will eventually be taken in the direction of the current rather than in the way you were heading. Even so, when we are determined to go God’s way we will meet up with many tribulations as we fight the current. The trials will all show the answer to one main question: Are you going to look out for yourself as the world does, or are you going to live a self-denied life? Are you going to continue to head in the direction God has for you, or are you going to go with the flow?

Remember that when we lose our life for the sake of Jesus, we will find His life. Learn to fix your focus on the end result, not the struggle.

Peter put it so well:

“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy” (1 Pet. 4:12–13).

Notice that he compares the extent of suffering to the extent of rejoicing. How can you rejoice to that extent? When His glory is revealed, you will be glorified with Him. This glorifying is to the degree that you allow Him to perfect His

character within you. So don't look at the offense. Look at the coming glory. It will motivate you to strive to remain free from offense. Hallelujah! {eoa}

Excerpted from: Chapter 13 of *The Bait of Satan* by John Bevere (20th anniversary edition, Charisma House 2014).

How You Can Avoid a Fortune-Cookie Mentality About the Future

My wife and I recently stopped at a Chinese take-out to pick up lunch. In addition to the delicious smelling and tasting food was the ubiquitous fortune cookie.

Usually, their words of wisdom are merely innocuous ideals, often with rhyming words. But they do provide a momentary satisfaction to mankind's quest to know the future.

But there is really only one reliable source for knowing and understanding what to do about the future and that little fast-food diner is not it.

People actually approach the future emotionally before they know or understand the facts. Consequently, they are often involuntarily moving toward the future with either fear or faith.

The New Testament says that "faith is the substance of things

hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). The best way to develop faith about the unseen future is to acknowledge the universal sovereignty of God. He is in charge and rules (and overrules) the affairs of men and women.

This Sovereign of heaven often selectively reveals His plans for the future to trustworthy spokespersons (like Daniel, in the Old Testament) before they happen. Then, these prophetic seers share these words of insight, knowledge or faith for the future with others. The recipient can either accept or reject them and adjust their lives and actions accordingly.

God Guides the Future

The Old Testament Prophet Daniel lived five centuries before Jesus and served and advised four prominent kings and three kingdoms in a special role for over 70 years. Specifically, he served in the governments of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian.

First, he saw Nebuchadnezzar rise up in power and fall in disgrace, ending up eating grass like an ox before he humbly praised the Highest God and honored the King of heaven (Dan. 3:26-4:27). Apparently, the next king, Belshazzar (Dan. 5), was not as proud as Nebuchadnezzar, but he was more presumptuous and paid for it with his life.

After a bizarre event at a royal banquet, King Belshazzar called for Daniel to interpret some supernatural handwriting on a wall—the banquet guests actually saw a hand writing cryptic words “on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace” (Dan. 5:5b). The king acknowledged to Daniel that he had heard that “the Spirit of God is in you” and “light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you” (Dan. 5:14). After Daniel interpreted the cryptic words and their meaning, he was promoted to a high position.

Scripture relates that when King Darius (of the Medes and Persian dynasty) came into power, he preferred the prophet

Daniel to be prime minister and lead as a kind of “chief among equals” with the other two presidents, with 120 princes serving under them to govern in regional areas. Daniel was preferred in these roles “because he had an excellent spirit within him” (Dan. 6:3).

Finally, Daniel saw Cyrus the Persian, whose name had been prophesied one hundred years before his rule (see Isaiah 44:28-45:1), become an instrument in God’s hands for rebuilding the city of Jerusalem and laying the foundation for the rebuilding of the Jewish temple there.

0 King, Live Forever

Three times in the writings of Daniel we read the diplomatic words of entre, “0 King, live forever” (Dan. 2:4, 6:6, 6:9). No mere human has the power to live forever or to design and guarantee their own futures. But the words appealed to the kings’ pride and vanity and got their attention for the courtier to have an audience with the king!

The COVID-19 pandemic proved that mankind is in a mess, everywhere and at the same time. We can’t control our own present, let alone our futures. As the predicted events of the “birth pangs” of even greater problems, which Jesus predicted (Matt. 24), are unfolding, we must acknowledge that there is a God in heaven, and He rules in the kingdoms and futures of men.

“In the days of these kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44).

The calamities around us only continue as the God of heaven allows. One day soon, King Jesus is coming back to do away with the kingdoms of this world and to set up His kingdom of righteousness, where He will rule forever!

“Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many, and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin but to save those who eagerly wait for Him” (Heb. 9:28).

How are you approaching your future? I urge you to choose faith over fear, “cast your care on Him” and “eagerly wait” for His soon return. {eoa}

Gary Curtis served in full-time ministry for 50 years, the last 27 years of which he was part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the Van Nuys' California Foursquare church. Now retired, Gary continues to write a weekly blog and frequent articles for digital and print platforms. Gary and his wife live in Southern California and have two married daughters and five grandchildren.

Why We Need to Stop Preaching Forgiveness Without Responsibility

One of the things that I love about the Bible is that while each story we read is powerful on its own, every word of it is a part of the greater narrative of the story of Yeshua (Jesus).

As we read through the history of Israel, we find within it a history of G-D's redemptive plan. Within each prophetic utterance runs a thread woven into the tapestry of G-D's plan

from the foundation of the world. So, when you and I read a verse, chapter, or book from the Bible, we must always first read the words for what they say on the surface. Then we should look for where it's placed in the framework of G-D's perfect plan.

Let me provide an example that you may not have considered in this way.

Why was Levi chosen to be the priestly tribe of Israel? It wasn't because Levi was more righteous than his brothers. After all, Levi, along with his brother Simeon, deceived and murdered all of the men of Shechem, as we read in Genesis 34. Levi also went along with his brothers' plan to sell Joseph into slavery. So, we can see that it was not because Levi lived a life that was more righteous than his brothers. Why then was Levi chosen to be the mediator, or intercessor, between the nation Israel and G-D? It is because of G-D's mercy based upon Levi's repentance as seen when Joseph reveals himself to his brothers.

To better understand this mercy, let's look at the blessing Israel speaks over Simeon and Levi before his death in Genesis 49:5-8 (TLV):

"Simeon and Levi are brothers, instruments of violence are their knives. In their secret counsel may my soul not enter. In their contingent may my honor never be united. For in their anger they slew men, and in their self-will they maimed oxen. Cursed be their anger for it was strong and their rage for it was cruel—I will disperse them in Jacob, I will scatter them in Israel."

Notice the mention of knives and scattering. The tribe of Levi became the priests of Israel who performed ritual animal sacrifices for all Israelites, and the tribe of Levi was scattered within Israel. They did not receive a land inheritance; rather, they lived within the inheritance of the

other tribes. G-D, in His infinite mercy, reversed Levi's history while fulfilling the words spoken by Levi's father, Israel.

Levi received mercy and forgiveness. Levi was restored and was even raised up to serve G-D and G-D's people. But, that forgiveness came with weighty responsibility. Levi sinned by shedding the innocent blood of men who had entered covenant with G-D. In His plan to provide Levi's mercy, forgiveness, restoration and raising up, G-D required Levi to shed the innocent blood of animals for those who would enter covenant with G-D.

It is for this reason the body of believers are called to be both kings and priests. Every one of us, just like Levi, are sinners and, just like Levi, G-D had a plan for us to receive mercy, forgiveness, restoration and to be raised up. But, with that mercy, forgiveness, restoration and raising up comes responsibility. That responsibility is our calling to be priests in His kingdom. As we read in Isaiah 61:6, Exodus 19:6, 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 1:6. We must become intercessors and mediators for the Kingdom—not by sacrificing bulls and goats, but by fulfilling Romans 12:1:

“I urge you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy, acceptable to God—which is your spiritual service.” {*eoas*}

Eric Tokajer is the author of *Overcoming Fearlessness, What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?, With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians and Galatians in Context.*

Gospel for Asia Says COVID-19 'Feeds Slave Trade, Sexual Exploitation'

COVID-19 is feeding the "growing evil" of human trafficking, pulling more of the world's children into slavery and sexual exploitation, a new report reveals.

The pandemic has "cemented human trafficking as the third biggest illicit trade on the planet, behind illegal arms sales and drugs," says the report by Texas-based humanitarian agency Gospel for Asia ().

"The global pandemic has only heightened the desperation of those at risk and deepened the cunning of the traffickers," says the report, citing worsening poverty and hunger as key drivers of the \$150 billion a year global slave trade.

"The horrific exploitation of children and young adults for sex and forced labor is the most vile crime," said GFA World founder K.P. Yohannan. "We must act now to cut off this growing evil."

Travel and border restrictions—intended to slow the spread of the virus—have driven traffickers underground and made victims more difficult to identify, the report says. Of the estimated 20-30 million slaves in the world today, four out of every five are women or girls.

A Wider Net

The surge in online activity due to lockdowns is giving traffickers a wider net to entrap potential victims, including

children. Police in Canada warn that “chatter in dark web forums” shows predators view the pandemic as an opportunity to lure children into the sex industry.

In some parts of Asia, traffickers enlist or coerce parents and other relatives to sell their children to “placement agencies”—fronts for domestic slavery.

Predators are even “masquerading as helpers” to find new victims. “Forced prostitution and chosen sex work are going to acquire a new momentum in the post-COVID-19 world,” the report says.

Interpol, the international police agency, says the pandemic “has not blunted the determination of organized crime groups to prey on the vulnerable.”

Traffickers are taking even greater risks, too often resulting in the tragic deaths of their victims. In March, 64 African migrants suffocated in a shipping container; in May, 39 Vietnamese migrants were found dead in a refrigerated truck in England; and in June, a former official in Arkansas pleaded guilty to smuggling women into the U.S. to put their babies up for adoption.

In Europe’s lucrative soccer industry, it’s estimated there are 15,000 trafficking victims every year.

Emergency Interceptors

Faith-based humanitarian groups like GFA World and International Justice Mission are on the frontlines in the fight against slavery—with GFA World’s indigenous workers acting as “emergency interceptors” in city slums and remote villages where millions are easy prey for predators.

“Through vocational training for women, protecting girls by providing safe water access, and our Bridge of Hope children’s program, we’re saving tens of thousands from falling victim to

traffickers,” said Yohannan, author of *Never Give Up*. “This is how we confront the evil of human trafficking head-on and show people the love of God.” {eoa}

Gospel for Asia () is a leading faith-based mission agency helping national workers bring vital assistance and spiritual hope to millions across Asia, especially to those who have yet to hear about the love of God. In GFA’s latest yearly report, this included more than 70,000 sponsored children, free medical camps conducted in more than 1,200 villages and remote communities, over 4,800 clean water wells drilled, over 12,000 water filters installed, income-generating Christmas gifts for more than 260,000 needy families and spiritual teaching available in 110 languages in 14 nations through radio ministry. For all the latest news, visit our Press Room at .

Jonathan Cahn Reveals the Biblical Foreshadowing of a Single Day—and the ‘Only Hope for America’

As this challenging year of 2020 winds down, millions of Americans are looking forward to better, brighter days. On this topic, bestselling author Jonathan Cahn, known worldwide as the creator of one of the year’s biggest publishing successes, *The Harbinger II: The Return*, has a key message:

There are prophetic, biblical explanations for the many trials we have experienced—and an even stronger message for what we must do moving forward.

Among other revelations, Cahn—in *The Harbinger II: The Return*—pinpoints a specific day on the Hebrew calendar that brims with significance. And he reveals how America is following a template from Jeremiah 39 that leads to judgment.

In a recent interview with Shannon Scholten on *Voice of Truth*, Cahn discussed the vital prophecies contained within *The Harbinger II: The Return*.

“When you look at the judgment of Judah, the southern kingdom that had rebelled against God, there was a day that sealed that judgment,” Cahn explained. “It was the day the walls of the city were breached by the Babylonians.” Once that happened, Cahn said, “Judah’s hedge of protection was gone. The king fled the city—and those who were supposed to be defending the walls took off, so the defense was broken through.”

Added Cahn, “It happened on the ninth day of the fourth month. The fourth month of the Hebrew year is Tammuz, so the Ninth of Tammuz was the day that the end began. It became a day of sorrow, fasting and mourning—the day that sealed the destruction of Judah.”

Cahn then revealed how this occurrence foreshadowed the breaking of America’s own “hedge of protection.” “For the first time in history, the Supreme Court redefined marriage. They basically struck down biblical, or traditional, marriage as it has always been. This is major,” Cahn continued, “because God made marriage. If you change it, you’re messing with a vessel of God. So what happened on that day in American history was gigantic, and it is still affecting all of us. It’s affecting religious freedom. It’s affecting everything.”

Cahn is referring, of course, to June 26, 2015—the very date

on the Hebrew calendar that is the Ninth of Tammuz. On that exact date, said Cahn, the Supreme Court insisted that the U.S. Constitution protects same-sex marriage—and “it’s the day when the defenses of American civilization were gone. This is an absolute, gigantic warning.”

In *The Harbinger II: The Return*, Cahn says that when a nation turns away from God and its very foundations, that turning of spirit “will inevitably lead to a turning of values, the changing of standards, laws and precepts.” Cahn urges Americans to pray, repent and seek God’s blessing. “If a nation should uphold the ways of the Almighty, then it shall be upheld. But if it should pass judgment upon the ways of the Almighty, then upon that nation shall the judgment of the Almighty be passed. A return to God and His ways is the only hope for America.”

With the release of *The Harbinger II: The Return*, on Sept. 1, 2020, thousands of new fans all around the world have embraced Cahn’s messages and prophecies. His new book, available for purchase online and everywhere, made the Amazon Bestsellers Top 10 lists of all books in the world and took three of the top 10 spots on Amazon’s Christian Books for print, Kindle and audio—each charting as a Top 10 Bestseller, including No. 1 Christian Prophecy and No. 1 Christian Prophecies. *The Harbinger II* also catapulted Cahn’s earlier books back onto bestseller lists, including *The Oracle*, *The Paradigm*, and *The Harbinger*.

The author has made multiple media appearances, including on CBN’s *700 Club*, TBN’s *Praise*, and *Family Talk* with Dr. James Dobson. Cahn is continuing to do TV and radio interviews.

Cahn’s first book, *The Harbinger*, became an instant *New York Times* bestseller when it was published in 2012. His next four books were also *New York Times* bestsellers: *The Mystery of the Shemitah*, *The Book of Mysteries*, *The Paradigm*, and *The Oracle*. Along with Billy Graham and Keith Greene, Cahn was named one

of the top 40 spiritual leaders of the past 40 years who has radically impacted the world.

Called the prophetic voice of this generation, Cahn has spoken on Capitol Hill, at the United Nations and to millions around the world. Cahn is known for opening the deep mysteries of Scripture and bringing forth messages of prophetic import. He leads Hope of the World ministry, an international outreach of teaching, evangelism and compassion projects for the world's neediest. He also leads the Jerusalem Center/Beth Israel, a worship center made up of Jews and Gentiles, and people of all backgrounds, outside New York City in Wayne, New Jersey. His ministry can be contacted at and on Jonathan Cahn Facebook.

For more information about *The Harbinger II*, visit . *The Harbinger II: The Return* is published by Frontline, an imprint of Charisma House. {eoa}

4 Supernatural Anointings for Women

I believe that God has set forth four key anointings to impart to women of God in this season. All four of these anointings will manifest in the lives of modern-day Esthers, and their influence will expand God's kingdom in the earth.

An Unshakable Love for God That Will Cause Us to Love Others

In this season God is releasing to women an unshakable love

poured out to us from His heart that will enable us to love all people. We are getting ready to experience a surge of revival in the world, and this will cause an influx of people into our lives with whom we may never have come into contact otherwise.

We must let God define what this love looks like. We must set our affections on things above (Col. 3:2). The Holy Spirit will teach us how to love God and how to love one another. Love is not humanistic. We can't love God any way we want to. We must love Him with all our minds, all our hearts, and all our strength (Mark 12:30). We are coming to a place of affection-based obedience. Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15, NKJV).

This love will cause us to be ready to lay down our lives for others. It's not sloppy agape. True love will break through anything and cause us to see the human in those who have been dehumanized—even those whom we would normally fear or shy away from.

You have the greatest level of influence on a person when they know you love them. They will trust you to speak into their lives. They will trust you to pray for them. They will trust you with their lives. Think about it. When you know that God loves you, you have faith. The Bible says that "faith ... worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6, KJV). Personally, knowing God loves me causes me to believe what He says. When you understand how much He loves you and that He will move heaven and earth on your behalf, you will have faith. This is the love that we are designed to display in order to be an influence to those around us.

Supernatural Wisdom to Influence and Disciple Nations

The wisdom I am referring to is not the *gift* of wisdom, given by the Lord for a particular situation. Rather, I believe He is releasing a supernatural anointing of wisdom, an abiding

anointing, that will serve you in every circumstance you are presented with in your own life or the lives of others. God will give you supernatural wisdom for major life decisions. He will give you supernatural wisdom for the person on your job who loves to tell you about their problems, or that millionaire in your circle who doesn't know what to do about their schizophrenic child.

You may not be one who preaches messages publicly in the pulpit, but you can preach the best message to someone's life, healing and delivering them through the wisdom of God that flows through you.

This is the same wisdom that Solomon had (1 Kings 4:29). Solomon asked God for supernatural wisdom, and God gave it to him. God will release to you this same anointing for supernatural wisdom. You will know things you aren't supposed to know, things you haven't studied or been told. He will give you this wisdom by inspiration. Such wisdom allowed Solomon to be a king, a judge, an inventor and a songwriter (songs penetrate the human heart). This is the same wisdom that was with God when He created the earth. To modern-day Esthers, God will give inventions, cures, books, songs, solutions to problems, words of wisdom and knowledge that has the power to shake nations.

Ask God for supernatural wisdom. James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (NKJV). Why not you; why not now?

We need divine wisdom to rest upon us, to fill us up and to pour out of our mouths. Through this wisdom we will bring forth the influence we were designed for.

Uncompromising Boldness to Preach the Gospel

This particular anointing for boldness will cause us to preach the gospel without fear or compromise. It is not so that we

can boast and promote ourselves. It is not so that we can build our own kingdoms. This boldness will give us courage to speak the truth of God's Word wherever we are, to whomever needs to hear the good news. The Bible says that we have a debt to everybody to preach the gospel to them (see Rom. 1:14-15).

The gospel is what fills the empty places in people's lives. When we speak the truth of the gospel, we crush the windpipe of the devil, who is trying to speak lies to them. He tells them that they are nothing, that they are nobody. When we tell people instead that they are fearfully and wonderfully made, we shut the mouth of the enemy. When we preach the gospel to our children who are confused about who they are, we are putting our foot on the enemy's neck and crushing it. This is what it means to tread upon scorpions and serpents. The anointing to boldly preach the gospel of Jesus Christ brings the miraculous power of God into dismal situations and increases the influence of God's kingdom.

An Outbreak of Miraculous Healings, Deliverances, Provision and Salvations

The Lord wants to reach people of all nations and bring them to salvation. He is using women who will operate in resurrection power in places where women have been oppressed. We will be a sign and a wonder to our oppressors (see Isa. 8:18). In many nations women are considered nonthreatening, so the authorities don't interfere with us and then are often baffled by those who preach in power and authority.

The Lord is empowering women with miraculous power to influence human hearts for the glory of God. He releases miracles to show that He is a loving God who acts on our behalf. Supernatural healing shows God's compassion, causing many to turn to Him. When Jesus raised the widow's son from the dead, the people said, "God has come to help his people" (Luke 7:16, NIV).

The power of the Holy Spirit comes to encourage belief in the one true God and validate the message of the messenger. First Thessalonians 1:5-6 (NKJV) says: "For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit."

There are many people today who may never accept the idea of women being preachers, but they won't be able to deny the hand of the Lord resting upon our lives. God's hand will empower us to accomplish great healings and deliverances on His behalf. Scores of women with issues of blood, daughters who are dying and other problems need our healing hands in their lives. We must not be hindered by the misleading words of man's wisdom; we must go forward and manifest the power of God. {eoa}

Excerpted from Chapter 10 of The Esther Anointing by Michelle McClain-Walters (Charisma House 2020).

Why Was Jesus So Hard on the Pharisees?

Have you ever wondered why Jesus was so down on the Pharisees? Over and over again in the gospels He berated them. That's because He hates the self-righteousness and legalism that characterized them. God the Father hates it as well. It

quenches and grieves the Holy Spirit. It hurts the testimony of the church.

And yet, if we are completely honest, we must admit that we can identify. However, we can truly see Pharisaism in ourselves only by the gracious work of the Holy Spirit.

The Pharisees believed they were righteous before God because of their outward good works. But anyone depending on their personal righteousness to save them will cause the person to forfeit salvation in Jesus Christ. Paul, himself a Jew and brought up as a Pharisee, said:

“Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them [Jews generally] is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom. 10:1-4, ESV).

I have often asked non-Christians, “If you were to stand before God and He were to ask you, ‘Why should I let you into My heaven?’” I invariably receive a reply that reflects self-righteousness. For example, during the last 20 years I was at Westminster Chapel, I spent two hours every Saturday working with a street evangelism team we called the Pilot Lights. We gave out Christian pamphlets in Victoria, around Big Ben and in Buckingham Gate. When a person would say, “But I don’t believe in heaven; I don’t believe in God,” I would say: “But if there really was a heaven and you did stand before God, and He asked you, ‘Why should I let you into My heaven,’ what would you say?”

The reply almost invariably was something like this: “I have been good to people. I have been kind. I have lived a good life. I haven’t done anything terribly wrong.” In other words, all people reveal that they are—at bottom—self-righteous. This

is because we are products of the fall; we are born *non posse non peccare*—not able not to sin.

When I declare that I am good enough to get into heaven by my good works, I sin right then. To say that or even to think that is to sin.

We must not forget that many of the Pharisees in Jesus' day were in a sense pious men. Some scholars reckon that a number of Pharisees actually did the things they boasted of—fasting twice a week and giving a tenth of all they earned, not to mention the fact that they would never be guilty of wrongdoing such as robbing someone or physically committing adultery. They were regarded as the truly righteous people of their day. They were without question the backbone of their synagogues and would in some cases be like certain evangelical Christians today who faithfully bring their Bibles to church and would never smoke or drink or watch a movie that was anything but family-friendly. But they tended to look down on those who did not keep their rules and called such people “sinners.”

Given the fact that Pharisees were pious, faithful and the stalwarts of the synagogues in ancient Judaism, why was Jesus so hard on them? You would think He would have congratulated them, as if to say, “You are greatly needed here in Jerusalem these days. I can't imagine what things would be like were it not for you.” No. He never congratulated them once or gave the slightest hint that they were either needed or appreciated. He was harsh and rugged with them.

Interestingly, Jesus was patient, loving, and gracious to other sinners, such as the woman caught in the sin of adultery—unlike the Pharisees who were indignant that they found this woman in the act of sin (John 8:3-11). But He never appeared to show tender feelings toward the Pharisees. He was not nice to them, despite the fact that they upheld the infallibility of the Bible, believed in resurrected life beyond the grave (unlike the Sadducees), and adhered to a

number of practices that Jesus also affirmed.

When I was a young Christian, I used to wonder why so much attention was given in the four Gospels to the Pharisees since they do not exist today. Was this not a waste of space? Why should we have to read about irrelevant people? I have since learned, of course, that Pharisees *do* exist today. And I fear I am one of them—in too many ways! Are you? It is essential that we heed what Jesus said to and about them because, to the degree that we also are Pharisees, we would be the objects of Jesus' firm words.

We are not exempt. His ruthless exposure of the ways of the Pharisees bears our attention. If Jesus was angry with them then, the Father feels the same way about us now. And If Jesus was not nice to the ancient Pharisees, we cannot expect Him to be nice to us if we are like them.

Excerpted from Chapter 2 of You Might Be a Pharisee If... by R.T. Kendall (Charisma House, 2021).

**Is There a Scripture That
Changed the Course of
American History—And Can It**

Happen Again?

In January 2012, Jonathan Cahn's blockbuster book *The Harbinger* was released, and it foretold the events that have now come upon our nation—everything from 9/11, to a worldwide pandemic, to civil unrest, to the collapse of the global economy.

Yet, the mystery of *The Harbinger* has never stopped. Today, in 2020, it is still coming to fulfillment—and it's at a much more dangerous stage. And so, after eight years, Cahn has written the long-awaited sequel, *The Harbinger II: The Return*.

This stunning new book reveals the parallels between the signs of judgment that appeared in the last days of ancient Israel and the same signs of judgment that have now appeared in America.

In a recent interview with Shannon Scholten, host of *Voice of Truth*, Cahn explained in detail about the ancient mystery that holds the secret to America's future and the Scripture that changed the course of American history.

"We've been replaying the ancient biblical mystery of judgment," he said. "And since *The Harbinger* came out, the mystery has only increased, the template has continued, and America now stands in much greater danger in the years since that time."

America in Danger

One of the dangers Cahn spoke about was civil unrest and another time in history when the nation was threatened by race issues. "The Civil War was one of the greatest calamities in our history, threatening the existence of America," he said. "America was in danger then, as it is now. If the North had accepted peace, then the South would have broken away, and America would not be what it is today."

“In his second inaugural address, Lincoln said the Civil War was the judgment of God on the nation’s sin of slavery. In the same way our nation is facing judgment today because of the sin of abortion and the blood of children; Lincoln was talking about the blood of slavery.”

Cahn pointed out a stunning turning point that happened in 1863, when the war was at a low point. “The North was losing badly; it got to the point that there was a danger of letting go of the South,” he recounted. “But what happened at that moment in Washington was a stirring. On April 30, Lincoln declared a national day of prayer. The proclamation ended in the hope of three blessings: that the nation’s prayers would be ‘heard on high,’ that God would grant ‘the pardon of our national sins,’ and begin the ‘restoration of our now divided and suffering country.’

“Those were the exact three blessings promised in that Scripture and cited in the exact order in 2 Chronicles 7:14: ‘If my people called by my name ... ‘

“In the darkest days of that war, Lincoln called the nation to prayer and repentance before God based on 2 Chronicles 7:14.”

The Turnaround

Cahn gave a brief history lesson to show the dramatic outcome of Lincoln’s proclamation. “The campaign to take Vicksburg had been underway since the winter of the preceding year,” Cahn recounted. “Gen. Grant, commander of the Northern troops, had made five attempts to take the city and all of them had failed.”

“But in the spring of 1863,” he continued, “everything changed as Grant led his men across the Mississippi River and, the next day, won the first victory of the entire campaign. It was called the Battle of Port Gibson, the first of five victories that would lead to the taking of Vicksburg. It was at Port Gibson that the war turned around. And it happened on May 1,

1863—one day after the national day of prayer and repentance took place on April 30, 1863.

“America as we know it would not exist today if not for that day of prayer,” Cahn said. “And think of the ramifications. America wouldn’t have existed to stop Hitler, or stop communism, or many other things. It all began with the prayers of God’s people.”

Miracles Through Prayer

Cahn noted that this powerful prayer of repentance was again prayed over America in the 1980s.

“Beginning in the 1960s, America was falling apart with Vietnam and Watergate,” Cahn said, “and then in 1980, under Carter, the economy fell apart, morale was low, and Iran took 52 American hostages. Every day on the news we saw Iranians chanting ‘death to America.’ Then Carter sent in troops to save them, and those troops crashed in the desert. It was a disaster, and gloom settled on the country. In many ways it looked like the end of America as a nation.”

But that wasn’t the end of the story, Cahn said. “In the spring of 1980, there was a gathering of believers in Washington,” he recounted. “I remember it because I was there. I was a new believer, and we gathered on the National Mall to pray for the forgiveness of sins and the sins of the nation, for God’s mercy on the nation, and for His healing of the land.

“I also remember praying for two particular things—the release of the hostages and the upcoming election. We prayed according to 2 Chronicles 7:14: ‘If my people ...’ At one point during that day, everyone in the group stretched out their hands toward the Capitol building, to the western terrace. And we prayed, ‘Lord, you put who you want in office as president in this election.’”

Not long after, Cahn pointed out, Ronald Reagan was swept into power. "When Reagan was sworn into the presidency," said Cahn, "it was supposed to be held where inaugurations had been held since the days of Andrew Jackson—on the east side of the Capitol. But it changed to the west side—so now Reagan was facing the exact place where we had stretched our hands in prayer saying, 'God put who you want.' Literally it was like God saying, 'I answered your prayer.'

"Not only that," said Cahn, "but when Reagan was sworn in, he put his hand on the Bible on a particular Scripture. What Scripture had he chosen? Second Chronicles 7:14: 'If my people who are called by my name ... ' God was saying yet again, 'I will heal your land.'"

Reagan's election and inauguration weren't the only miraculous outcomes, according to Cahn. "During the inauguration—the very hour that Reagan was in sworn into office—the hostages were released.

"So, we had two prayers answered the same day. And it turned America around—the economy, the morale—everything turned around, and it lasted all the way to 9/11 in many ways. Even the Soviet Union fell, and it was all linked to this. It all began with the prayers of God's people."

Now Is the Time

"The turning of history began with the prayers of God's people," Cahn said. "And it could happen again. But we need to pray and repent, now more than ever.

"We need to have a true contrite spirit—not just go through the motions. We can't repent and then continue to live the lifestyle we've been living. We must truly set our face toward the Lord, bowing our hearts and really truly repenting for everything—we need to be humble.

"We need the love of God to come in and to understand where we

are as a society because if there is not repentance, it will be game over. Now is the time to return to God—to repent, and get right, and be redeemed, and come to salvation.”

Find out more at . {eoa}