

Antisemitic Attack on American Airlines Flight 618 Targeted Jewish Author Days Before Rosh Hashanah

The violent outburst aboard American Airlines Flight 618 that ended with a passenger duct-taped to his seat included an explicitly antisemitic threat against the Jewish man seated beside him, according to a new firsthand account of the incident.

That passenger was Jonathan Cahn, the bestselling Jewish author and defender of Israel who had remained unidentified in initial reports of the Sept. 3 flight from Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport to Newark Liberty International Airport.

"I will punch your [expletive] Jewish face in," Cahn recalled 67-year-old Arizona passenger Arthur Layne Lundeen telling him before the confrontation became physical.

The alleged threat adds an antisemitic dimension to an incident initially reported as involving racial and anti-gay slurs, vulgar comments and violence against passengers and crew.

"I was the unidentified passenger," Cahn said in a video describing the attack. "And I was actually attacked 30,000 feet in the sky."

Cahn said the encounter began peacefully. Lundeen spoke about his family and religious background while Cahn discussed his writing, Jewish heritage and faith.

The two reportedly remained friendly for several hours. Cahn said the atmosphere changed abruptly after he shared biblical

prophecies concerning Israel and personal experiences that strengthened his faith.

"When I told him about these things, the gospel and the power and the reality of God, at that moment, in an instant, everything changed," Cahn said.

"I have never seen someone change in a split second from light to dark as I saw that," he added. "As if something had taken him over. He went from the friendliest guy in the world to this dark person."

According to Cahn, Lundeen began cursing God and directing profanities toward him. Cahn attempted to disengage from the conversation and work on his laptop.

Lundeen allegedly struck the computer twice, causing existing damage on its screen to spread. He later reached across and placed his hands around Cahn's neck in what initially appeared to be an imitation of a chokehold.

The situation escalated again when Lundeen saw the cover of Cahn's newly released book, *The Altar of Pergamon: The Mystery of the Dark Angel and the Future of the World*, displayed on the laptop.

"He sees the cover," Cahn said. "And it triggers him."

Cahn said Lundeen became increasingly agitated and demanded, "What did you do?"

Lundeen then issued the threat against Cahn's "Jewish face" before allegedly striking him in the chest and moving toward his face.

"Then, he starts hitting me," Cahn said. "I'm trying not to fall into this trap. I'm restraining myself."

Cahn said he called to the flight attendants for help while attempting to avoid further engagement. When he stood to leave

the seat with his computer, Lundeen allegedly lunged toward him and tried to take it.

"He grabs the laptop violently, trying to wrest it out of my hand," Cahn said.

During the struggle, Lundeen allegedly grabbed Cahn's previously injured left arm and reinjured his shoulder.

Other passengers independently reported that Lundeen became belligerent and physically aggressive. Juan Mejia, a former law enforcement officer aboard the flight, told ABC News that Lundeen directed derogatory remarks, racial slurs and vulgar language toward airline employees and passengers.

Mejia and fellow passenger Richard O'Lenick intervened after the disturbance became physical. Flight attendants provided zip ties and duct tape, which passengers used to restrain Lundeen until the plane landed. Lundeen allegedly bit Mejia during the struggle.

Flight 618 diverted to Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, where Maryland Transportation Authority Police arrested Lundeen. The flight later continued to Newark.

Lundeen was charged with disorderly conduct and second-degree assault for incidents authorities said occurred aboard the aircraft at BWI. The FBI began investigating his alleged conduct while the aircraft was in flight. The Federal Aviation Administration also opened an investigation.

American Airlines said it does not tolerate violence and thanked its employees for their professionalism.

Long Realty Company later ended its association with Lundeen, saying his reported behavior conflicted with its standards of professionalism, integrity and respect. Lundeen was released on his own recognizance and scheduled to appear in court Oct.

19.



Order Jonathan Cahn's New Book, "The Altar of Pergamon" on !

Attack Came Days Before Rosh Hashanah

The confrontation occurred two days after the Sept. 1 release of The Altar of Pergamon and eight days before Rosh Hashanah began at sundown Sept. 11.

The attack also fell during Elul, the final month of the Jewish year and a traditional period of prayer, repentance and preparation for the High Holy Days.

Cahn's book examines his belief that the ancient Altar of Pergamon, connected in Revelation 2 with the phrase "Satan's throne," influenced spiritual and political developments throughout modern history.

The book traces the altar's relocation to Berlin and explores its connections to Germany, Adolf Hitler, Nazi imagery, the Holocaust, communism and modern antisemitism.

Cahn identifies antisemitism as more than a political or cultural prejudice. He views it as part of an ancient spiritual campaign against the Jewish people and God's covenant with Israel.

"The first anti-Semite wasn't a leader," Cahn said. "It was a dark angelic entity."

"This hatred of the Jewish people is of satanic origin," he added.

Cahn also addressed conspiracy theories accusing Jewish people of secretly controlling governments or attempting to dominate

the world.

"The fear that there's a conspiracy of Jewish people to try to take over the world, that's because the enemy is afraid of a Jewish kingdom that's going to rule with Messiah," Cahn said.

A leading Jewish voice and longtime defender of Israel, Cahn has repeatedly taught that God's covenant with the Jewish people remains in effect. During his conversation with Lundeen, he discussed biblical prophecies concerning their scattering, persecution and eventual return to Israel.

"One day I saw the prophecies in the Bible that spoke about the end times, how the Jewish people would be scattered to the ends of the earth, and they have," Cahn said. "They'd be persecuted from one nation to the other, they were. And then God would gather them back to the land of Israel, and He did. Israel would be reborn into the world. It is."

Cahn said the timing of the attack reflected what he describes as the enemy's strategy of attempting to stop God's purposes at their beginning.

"When something is of God, it's going to go forth," Cahn said. "The enemy will seek to preempt it, to stop it in some way or attack it."

Despite the antisemitic threat and alleged assault, Cahn said he holds no hatred toward Lundeen.

"As for the guy, listen, I have nothing against him," Cahn said. "He didn't know what he was doing. I pray for him. I pray for the best. I pray he gets saved."

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a journalism background from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and at the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common*

Man's Commentary and a contributor to Charisma magazine. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.