

Bearer of the Harbinger

Jonathan Cahn's new book, The Harbinger, isn't just an exciting read; it's a bold prophetic message and biblical mystery wrapped in one powerful story. But there's far more to this timely revelation—and the person delivering it—than what's on the page.

As he looked across the waters of the Hudson River from the Statue of Liberty, the twin towers of the World Trade center spiking the New York City skyline, Jonathan Cahn had a deep sense of foreboding.

The Messianic rabbi had joined with other prayer and prophetic leaders at the nation's symbolic gate—Lady Liberty greeting the many immigrants arriving at nearby Ellis Island, where they would take their first steps in their new land—to seek God. They had gathered with a shared burden to pray for the city and a sense of concern about a possible terrorist attack on the United States.

Two years later, the suicide flights that stunned the world would touch Cahn's, too. His future wife, Renata, was to have been at the World Trade Center for an appointment but changed her plans at the last minute, as did other members of his congregation who worked there. Two who were in the Twin Towers were among those who escaped before the collapse.

But in addition to feeling personal relief, Cahn was pitched into a journey of discovery. It would take him to ground zero, historical sites and research libraries, collecting hundreds of pages of notes in a mission to uncover the deeper story behind the shocking news footage.

From disparate fragments of present-day events, key moments in America's past and somewhat obscure biblical passages, he has pieced together a jaw-dropping jigsaw puzzle that presents a disturbing picture of a nation on the brink.

Cahn shares what he has uncovered in his new book, *The Harbinger*, revealing that the 2001 terrorist attacks, the war on terror, the economic collapse, the actions of the U.S. government and even the words of its leaders all are part of a modern-day replaying of an ancient drama. Laying out current happenings over an Old Testament template, Cahn presents an uncanny match.

The message: Israel's fall to judgment for failing to return to God, as described in Isaiah 9, is being reenacted step by step in the U.S. today with the appearance of nine prophetic harbingers, or warning signs, from ancient times manifesting to America. The Assyrian invasion, Israel's ruin and ultimate exile are remarkably being mirrored in a sequence of events that started unfolding on 9/11.

Cahn reveals how Scriptures recording Israel's defiance of God have actually been quoted by America's leaders in the wake of the terrorist attacks and that contemporary events have often unfolded on dates with specific significance in the Jewish calendar. He traces the ways in which occurrences at ground zero have inexplicable links to Bible texts and connects the dots of the economic collapse to God's progressive judgment.

"We are at a crossroads," says Messianic movement leader and broadcaster Sid Roth simply of Cahn's book. "Either the church will act like the church in the New Testament or it will collapse and the U.S. will become a Third World country and we will not fulfill our destiny."

Though Cahn describes *The Harbinger*; as a trumpet call, it may ring bells for some who recall messages from David Wilkerson in the wake of 9/11. The famed New York City pastor and author told how he believed that the strikes at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were a sign of God's judgment—referencing Isaiah 9. *The Harbinger* expands on Wilkerson's early broad-brush alarm, with Cahn inheriting the now-deceased pastor's prophetic mantle and "building on the

shoulders of his revelation,” Roth says.

He became aware of the first stirrings of Cahn’s message several years ago. Cahn had spoken about what he believed God was showing him at the Messianic congregation he leads in New Jersey and some conferences. But Cahn turned down an invitation to talk more widely about the message on Roth’s TV and radio broadcasts, sensing that the time was not right.

After the economic collapse of 2008, Cahn realized that what was revealed and foreshadowed in the nine harbingers was affecting the entire American and global economies. Cahn says: “A lot of believers have a sense regarding America—this sense that America is rapidly departing from God and that if it doesn’t return, its future is bleak. The book is a revelation that behind this sense is a deep and uncanny biblical reality.”

Cahn leads Beth  Israel Worship Center, a Messianic congregation near New York City (Ha Navi Gallery/AJMU)

An Atheist Finds Yeshua

While the book releases in print only this month, its message has already created waves through early interest in an e-book edition, made available in September, and Cahn’s two appearances on Sid Roth’s *It’s Supernatural* TV show in the fall. The broadcasts—“the most important prophetic show you will ever see,” Roth says—produced “a phenomenal response.”

Though the bearded 52-year-old, who might be mistaken for an amiable college professor, may be unfamiliar to many, Cahn is well known and respected within the Messianic movement. Since 1988 he has led Beth Israel Worship Center, one of the country’s largest Messianic congregations. Members travel from

four states to a former furniture department store in Wayne, N.J., where Jerusalem's Western Wall and the old city gates are being recreated as part of the fellowship's celebration of the Jewish roots of their faith.

Located 20 minutes outside New York, the center is also home to Cahn's Hope of the World, an outreach ministry with radio broadcasts—including Cahn's weekday *The Nice Jewish Boy*—and compassion programs providing clean water and supporting orphanages overseas. Cahn has traveled to Cuba, Nigeria and India on ministry and spoken at the United Nations. He often symbolically blows the *shofar* at gatherings, echoing its Old Testament call to worship.

Cahn is known for unlocking Bible mysteries through the understanding born from his Jewish background, and his heritage and personal history have prepared him to sound the trumpet in *The Harbinger*. Descended from the line of Aaron, whose priestly role included calling the people to worship and leading Israel into battle through the sounding of the *shofar*, he grew up in a reformed Jewish home, the youngest of three children to scientist parents.

Though he attended synagogue services, he became an atheist at age 8. "In the synagogue, people would say the prayers by rote," he recalls. "There was no sense that God was real in their lives. It made me question the whole thing."

Cahn was dubbed "The Atheist" at school for his vigorous unbelief, but things started to change when he became a teenager. He began to question his atheism and then to embark on a quest for the truth through science, philosophy, the occult, even UFOs. He was surprised to find Jesus mentioned in many of the books.

"God got me through the back door," he says with a smile, recounting how in a store one day he stumbled across a book that seemed by its cover to be like some of the others he had

read. It was *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey, a best-selling exploration of end-times prophecy that brought many to Christ.

Eventually Cahn came to accept that the Bible was true and that Jesus, Yeshua, was the Jews' long-promised Messiah. He even witnessed to others about Him and led them to faith—but he wasn't ready to take the step himself.

Cahn told God he would surrender His life when he reached old age. Two car accidents within a few months—one of which saw him escape unscathed when his vehicle was crushed “like aluminum foil” by a train on a railroad crossing—caused him to reevaluate. As a 20-year-old college student, Cahn climbed to the top of a mountain overlooking the Hudson River and told Yeshua he was ready.

Cahn's first job as a new believer was as a night watchman, at one stage guarding property that included the headquarters of an outreach to Jews. Keeping night watchman hours to this day—he typically studies and works until the early hours, rising later in the day—Cahn observes of his past: “I think that the Lord prepares us in our life, and He gives us signs and indications of His will.”

The Start of ‘Something Big’

There was also a prophetic element to *The Harbinger's* acquisition by Charisma Media. Having finished the manuscript, Cahn had someone in mind to speak with about finding a publisher. “I wanted it to get out God's way,” he says. “There's conventional wisdom in publishing that you have to promote yourself, but I didn't want to do that.”

Mulling things during an early morning layover at a North Carolina airport on his way to speak at a Promise Keepers conference, Cahn bowed his head and prayed that the Lord would get the message of *The Harbinger* out His way. When he looked up from praying and reading his Bible, he noticed a man

sitting to his left.

“He was looking at me,” Cahn says, “and he said, ‘What’s the good word?’ I figured he was a businessman who didn’t know the Lord, so I started witnessing to him.”

Cahn was half right. The man was Hubie Synn, a New York accountant—a believer with a prophetic gifting. Synn had once told client David Tyree, a devout Christian and wide receiver for the New York Giants, that God was going to highlight his skills.

Synn’s word to the athlete was delivered several months before the 2008 Super Bowl, during which Tyree dramatically snagged an Eli Manning pass with his right hand, pressing the ball against his helmet. Footage of the stunning play became an Internet sensation, and *ESPN SportsCenter* dubbed Tyree’s catch “the greatest play in Super Bowl history.”

When Cahn realized that Synn was a fellow believer, the two began talking. “Then he began to prophesy over me,” Cahn says, “telling me that God was about to do something big.”

When Cahn later mentioned that he had been working on a book, Synn suggested that he contact Charisma Media founder Steve Strang, whom he knew for having published Tyree’s book, *More Than Just a Catch*.

Synn recalls being at the airport because his flight had been delayed and initially being reluctant to follow the nudging he felt by the Holy Spirit to speak to Cahn, because he was preoccupied with family concerns. “The way my gift works, I don’t really know what I say, it just blows right through me,” Synn says.

But when he bowed to God’s prompting and finished telling Cahn that an important book he had written would be published, Cahn told him he had been praying to know what to do about his book. “God literally answered his prayer right way,” Synn

says, "because he opened his eyes and I was there."

Cahn originally documented his revelatory findings as nonfiction but decided to rewrite and present them in story form to reach a wider, general audience intrigued by past-and-present mysteries such as *The Da Vinci Code* and *National Treasure*. "In the Bible, God uses images, symbols, stories and parables to convey prophetic messages or spiritual truths," he explains.

But why would God choose Cahn to deliver the message of *The Harbinger*?

Cahn shrugs, cross-legged in the chair of his basement home office that looks out over a small lake. "He chooses the foolish things of the world," he says. "At school I was known as 'The Atheist.' Perhaps that makes me the least likely person."

Roth offers other reasons, pointing to Cahn's prophetic gift, his rich understanding of the Old Testament as a Messianic believer, his proximity to ground zero and that premonition two years before 9/11 that something was going to happen. All of it makes him "a very unique person," Roth says.

He also wonders whether Cahn's personality—passionate but restrained, a combination Roth says makes him like "a kind John the Baptist"—fits him well to deliver such a sobering message.

With a thoughtful manner belying the intensity of his message, Cahn says that he is driven by love, not anger.

"If you see people who are in danger of calamity and you don't warn them, and you say nice things to them and make them feel good, that's not love," he says. "If you love them, you will sound the alarm. You will plead with them and you will do everything you can, even if it costs you, to get them saved. That's what love is."

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