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EDITOR: KEITH A. MORSE

## Is the Bible a Book of Mysteries? Examining the Prophetic Shtick of Jonathan Cahn

by J. Greg Sheryl

When Messianic Jewish pastor/rabbi Jonathan Cahn's first book, *The Harbinger*, was published in 2012,<sup>1</sup> it became a publishing success. Almost two years later, it was reported to have been on the *New York Times* Best Sellers list for 100 weeks and to have sold more than 1.2 million copies.<sup>2</sup> In that book he used fiction to convey what he believed to be a truth that God had revealed to him: That the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center's Twin Towers in New York City initiated the replaying of what he called a "biblical template" or "pattern" of God's judgment<sup>3</sup> spoken of in Isaiah that had originally occurred when the Assyrians attacked the northern kingdom of Israel in 732 B.C. The Scripture passage Cahn cited was Isaiah 9:9-10:

"All the people will know — Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria — who say in pride and

arrogance of heart: 'The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with hewn stones; the sycamores are

cut down, but we will replace them with cedars'" (emphasis added).

Cahn's application of this Scripture to 21st-century America was novel and the book was hailed by some Christians<sup>4</sup> and criticized by others. The criticisms came particularly from those Christian discernment ministries such as Personal Freedom Outreach.<sup>5</sup>

Because of *The Harbinger's* success in the marketplace, Cahn was "asked to write and help put together a companion to the book as well as a study guide."<sup>6</sup> So Cahn produced *The Harbinger Companion and Study Guide* in 2013.

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