



Books in Review

THE HARBINGER: FACT OR FICTION

by David James

The Berean Call, 223 pages, \$15.99

David James received his masters in Biblical Studies from Dallas Theological Seminary and is preeminently qualified to write this cutting-edge critique of *The Harbinger*, Jonathan Cahn's runaway best-selling fiction. James documents heavily that Cahn can fit into most any religious environment. James shows Cahn to be a real chameleon who is able to tailor and present himself in different ways to different audiences in accordance with their expectations.

Is Cahn a modern-day prophet who reveals mysteries and new revelations as some believe? Or is he someone who has tried to connect imaginary dots that are not really there? James leaves no one wondering. He is meticulous in his research and documentation. He believes that Cahn is creating optical illusions with words that match neither reality nor proper interpretation of the Scriptures. James gets to the root of Cahn's problem and addresses Cahn's departure from sound hermeneutics.

Cahn's book, *The Harbinger*, is clearly fiction, but he says that what is behind the story is very real. His premise is that Isaiah 9:10-11 shows a pattern of God's judgment for America. He says that nine harbingers or warnings coincide exactly with events in the United States starting with the 9/11 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers. James shows that there is really no biblical justification or support for seeing the Isaiah passages as a template for America.

Cahn asserts there are too many events in U.S. history that correspond to Isaiah 9 to be coincidental. James disagrees and backs up his arguments. He shows that coincidental events are no proof of God's direct intervention. For example, James shows a fascinating set of coincidences between the assassinations of Presidents Lincoln and Kennedy, as well as eerie similarities between the sinking of the Titanic and a novel called *The Wreck of the Titan* written 14 years before. James rightly warns, "believers need to be careful about assigning

God's action to specific events with absolute certainty apart from special revelation from Him" (pg. 23).

James documents that Cahn's seminal idea about Isaiah 9 may have, in fact, originated with David Wilkerson. Wilkerson was known for many false prophecies and he was embarrassed again and again with prophetic failures. James does us a favor in documenting a few of Wilkerson's failed prognostications. Given Wilkerson's pathetic record of outcomes, we can hardly take seriously any views he would have on Isaiah 9.

James employs investigative skills by digging into Cahn's background and documenting that he has been passing himself off for years as a revealer of hidden mysteries and ancient revelations.

Another of Cahn's flaws pointed out by James is the almost total absence of Christ, a missing Church, and missing Christians. Cahn's scenario is deficient. In *The Harbinger* there is no discussion of the present age of grace, the future of Israel as a nation, the future tribulation period, and nothing directly mentioning Islam, only the word terrorists.

James examines all of the so-called harbingers or warnings, showing that they are all specious with some being founded on circular reasoning. Every one of Cahn's claims is carefully dissected.

The rest of James' book shows numerous red herrings and misleading statements. James shows clearly that the so-called Isaiah 9:10 effect and its claims of inevitable outcomes has been made up by Cahn and is not biblical at all.

James also critiques Cahn's horrible misuse of the Old Testament Shemitah law and demonstrates Cahn's fudging with numbers.

If *The Harbinger* is selling as hotly as the advertising claims it is, James' book is a huge bucket of ice water which needs to be thrown on Cahn's adoring fans to get them back to reality and into logical biblical thinking. James uses the scalpel of the Word to deliver the death of a thousand cuts to Cahn's book.

Discerning Christians need to stay current with the various whimsical fads infiltrating the Church (Acts 20:30-31). And to this end, it may sound cliché to say that James' new book is a must-read — however it is a must-read.

—GRF

Editor's Note: The publications featured in PFO's *Books in Review* section are available from **Personal Freedom Outreach** (P.O. Box 26062, Saint Louis, Missouri 63136). Please add \$2.50 to the price listed for shipping and handling. Due to occasional price changes by the publishers, the retail amounts listed are subject to change without notice. These publications are also available to those who help to financially support the work of PFO. Please see our funds appeal flyer for details.