

A **WIND**® SPECIAL REPORT



THE SHEMITAH

A PRIMER TO THE BIBLICAL SABBATH YEAR AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

LEO HOHMANN

THE SHEMITAH

Copyright © 2014 by WND

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, scanning, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer, who may quote brief passages in a review.

Published by WND Books, Washington, D.C. WND Books is a registered trademark of WorldNetDaily.com, Inc. (“WND”)

Book designed by Mark Karis

ISBN: 978-1-938067-77-8



CONTENTS

WHAT IS THE SHEMITAH?	2
“ALL THAT CAN BE SHAKEN WILL BE SHAKEN”	3
1973: THE TURNING POINT	7
FOUR BLOOD MOONS	10
HOW DOES ONE GET READY?	12
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	13
ABOUT WND	13

The idea that God would judge sin is neither new nor particularly startling to any Christian or Jew.

It is central to both Christianity and Judaism as it applies to individual believers. But what about nations? Are they held accountable to God in any way? And if so, is it possible to recognize God's hand in the life of a nation, whether it be as judgment or as blessing?

Jonathan Cahn, a messianic rabbi-pastor from New Jersey, has searched the scriptures and found some provocative answers hiding in plain view. Now he is blowing a trumpet of warning to the American church. His trumpet blasts echo from the pages of his best-selling book *The Mystery of the Shemitah*, and he hopes they will reach the ears that need to hear.

At first glance the law of the "Shemitah," as given by God in Leviticus 25:1–10, appears to be all about good farming practices: Let the land rest every seventh year. Don't sow or reap. Don't prune your vineyard. It's easy to see why Christians have glossed over this passage for hundreds of years.

But here comes Cahn in this new book digging deep into the bowels of the Old Testament, the Torah, to bring a message he

believes is urgent for twenty-first-century America. He sees a pattern that has taken shape since World War II that has America on a downward slope, gradual at first, and few noticed.

Since 1973, that pattern has accelerated with lost wars, stock market collapses, and an unthinkable attack on the homeland that hit a symbol of American strength and pride. It was America's response to that 9/11 attack that could determine its future. But more on that later.

While some believe history unfolds randomly, Cahn sees a pattern that has repeated itself with nations and empires, starting with ancient Israel and continuing today. And for those willing to hear him out, he makes a convincing case.

WHAT IS THE SHEMITAH?

God's instructions about the Shemitah year, also called the year of "release," are first mentioned in Exodus 23:10–11 and repeated in Leviticus 25, Deuteronomy 31:10–13, Jeremiah 34:13–14, Nehemiah 10:31, 2 Chronicles 36:20–21, and 2 Kings 19:20–30.

In Deuteronomy we find that the rules about the seventh-year sabbatical not only applied to farming the land but also to debt and commercial activity.

"At the end of every seven years, you shall grant a release of debts. And this is the form of the release: Every creditor who has lent anything to his neighbor shall release it; he shall not require it of his neighbor or his brother, because it is called the Lord's release. Of a foreigner you may require it; but your hand shall release what is owed by your brother." (Deuteronomy 15:1–3)

So the Shemitah year was marked by letting the land lie fallow and by the forgiveness of debts. The financial slate was to be wiped clean. Even personal friendships and entanglements that were not of God were to be released. If the people observed these "once every seven year" sabbaticals they would be blessed. But if they ignored God's law of provision, the source of their blessing, and relied on

their own efforts, failing to honor the Sabbath year, then God would remove his hedge of protection, his hand of blessing, from their land.

Orthodox Jews in Israel still observe the Shemitah, symbolically canceling debts every seventh year and starting over with a clean slate. The Israeli government has acknowledged that Orthodox farmers who let their land rest every seventh year have reaped harvests above and beyond those of their secular colleagues who don't observe the ancient biblical practice.

These special sabbatical years run in accordance with [the Hebrew calendar](#), not the Gregorian calendar with which Westerners are familiar. A new Shemitah was ushered in at sundown on September 24, 2014, with the start of the Jewish New Year or Rosh Hashanah (also called the Feast of Trumpets), and runs through September 13, 2015.

As Cahn documents, Shemitah years tend to bring tumultuous changes in the established world order, resulting in wars won and lost, stock markets collapsing, even the rise and fall of empires, which has led to the redrawing of maps.

During the last Shemitah year of 2007–2008, the world saw the financial collapse of September 2008 that led to the Great Recession. In the previous Shemitah year, 2000–2001, America was attacked by Muslim terrorists who brought down the World Trade Center towers and killed three thousand people on September 11.

So as the next Shemitah year unfolds in 2014–2015, Cahn expects to see more tremors, if not full-on earthquakes, in the financial world and perhaps more geopolitical upheaval. The first few days of the Hebrew New Year brought a 263-point dip in the Dow Jones Industrials, the first Ebola case diagnosed on American soil, and the resignation of US Attorney General Eric Holder. Could these be the first fruits of more profound changes to come? Keep reading.

“ALL THAT CAN BE SHAKEN WILL BE SHAKEN”

Behind the word *Shemitah* is the verb “to shake,” according to Cahn’s

research, and this is linked to the verb for “to let fall,” “to cast down,” and “to collapse” (*The Mystery of the Shemitah*, 192).

This is what happened with the ancient land of Israel. The nation’s southern borders were breached with an attack by the Assyrians, but its leaders did not get the message. They defiantly vowed to rebuild their city walls stronger than ever, as described in Isaiah 9:10.

“The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will replace them with cedars.”

It wasn’t the rebuilding that was wrong, Cahn points out, but the intent behind it.

“They would not listen to God’s warning but would defy it. And that which they would erect would stand as a monument, not of their resurgence, but of their defiance – a defiance that would ultimately lead to their destruction,” Cahn writes.

It wasn’t long before they were again invaded, and this time with more dire consequences. In 586 BC Israel was destroyed and its people were hauled off to captivity in Babylon. They spent seventy years in exile during which their land back home was left untended, a sort of forced Shemitah, which lasted for the exact number of Shemitah years they had ignored while living in freedom. Seventy years without observing a single Sabbath year resulted in seventy years of captivity in Babylon. A coincidence, right? Not according to scripture.

“And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to **Babylon**; and they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of **Persia**; to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of **Jeremiah**, until the land had been paid her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years.” (2 Chronicles 36:20–21)

But what does this have to do with America?

Plenty, Cahn says.

He believes the Shemitah cycle, while designed for ancient Israel, can apply to any nation at various times throughout history. And

those nations established on a foundation of Judeo-Christian values may carry an extra burden, as we shall see.

Cahn chronicles the rise and fall of the German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, Russian, Japanese, and British empires. Amazingly, all of these empires ended in accordance with the Shemitah cycle.

Now it is America's turn in the spotlight and Cahn believes the Shemitah principle is already playing out with precision, based on what happened in September 2001 and September 2008.

But before God delivers the ultimate judgment on a nation, he sends warning signs. Cahn applies the principle of "to whom much is given, much will be required."

In his first book, *The Harbinger*, Cahn revealed a slice of American history, no longer taught in public schools, that explains how the nation was dedicated to God at George Washington's inauguration in 1789, the first day when all three branches of the US government were in place. Washington himself then left the inauguration, not for a fancy ball or party, but instead to go straight to a little stone church in New York City, the first capital of the fledgling union of thirteen states, to pray for the newly formed nation.

The result was tremendous blessing – wars were won, economies boomed, prosperity spread throughout the land at a rate that was unheard of throughout the world. Immigrants flocked to the new nation from Europe and Asia during the California Gold Rush of 1848–1855.

After a brief period of judgment that resulted in a bloody civil war, America returned to its upward trajectory. The nation's budding economic, cultural, and political power was symbolized by the construction of the world's tallest noncathedral building in 1870. It stood at 120 Broadway in New York City and was believed by many to be the world's first skyscraper. Cahn believes tall buildings are significant throughout history dating back to the ancient Tower of Babel because they represent human achievement, human strength, and the pride of man.

By the end of World War II America stood alone as the world's

uncontested superpower. And in 1945 the plans were laid for yet another tower – the World Trade Center – which would take many years to complete and continue the trend of America constructing the world’s tallest buildings. Average Americans also went on a building binge as the “American dream” burst forth in the form of a postwar housing boom, the likes of which had never been seen. The burgeoning middle class started sending their children to college for the first time as wealth churned out more wealth.

And America shared its wealth with the world. Great technological advances in industry and food production emanated from America’s heartland and spread to other nations. The United States protected a large segment of the world from godless communism during the Cold War and it provided military protection to the state of Israel.

But by the 1960s prayer was removed from American schools and secularism was gaining strength.

By 1973, a Shemitah year, more problems began to surface. Abortion was legalized with the *Roe v. Wade* decision at the Supreme Court. The nation would also become the world’s leading exporter of pornography. In April 1973 President Richard Nixon withdrew the last remaining US troops from Vietnam. America had lost its first war.

Cahn explains that the Shemitah wields a two-edged sword.

“To a nation that by and large upholds the ways of God, it comes as a blessing,” he writes. “But to a nation that has once known the ways of God but now rejects and defies them, the Shemitah comes not as a blessing but a judgment – and brings not a rising but a fall.”

Cahn sees a pattern of four successive Shemitahs, which amounts to twenty-eight years, in which America’s recent history has been playing out, starting in 1917.

America’s rise to global superpower status began in 1917, a Shemitah year, with its entrance into World War I. By the end of that war, four empires were cast down – the Islamic Ottomans, the Austro-Hungarian Hapsburg dynasty, the Russian Czarist Empire, and the German Reich founded by Otto von Bismarck. This led to

a redrawing of national boundaries across Europe and the Middle East while the Balfour Declaration was issued in England, setting the stage for the creation of a Jewish state.

Race forward four more Shemitahs or twenty-eight years and you land at 1945, which marked the end of World War II and America replacing Britain as the uncontested financial leader of the world. A victory parade for Allied forces took place in Berlin on September 7, 1945, which was Elul 29, the last day of the Jewish year and the climax of the Shemitah year. It is this day, Elul 29, which often brings the most dramatic changes in world history.

Elul 29, known as the Day of Nullification, was appointed from ancient times to mark the end of the biblical cycle of seven years. All debts and credits had to be canceled by sundown on Elul 29 and then the trumpet would be sounded to bring in the New Year. Cahn advises that his readers make a special note of this day on their calendars heading into 2015.

1973: THE TURNING POINT

Fast-forward another four Shemitahs, twenty-eight years, and you land at 1973, that pivotal year which started the transition from blessing to judgment. Yet, something else significant happened that year, Cahn notes. The World Trade Center towers, the plans for which had been announced twenty-eight years earlier in 1945, were finally completed, making America once again home to the world's tallest building.

“It was the year of the soaring towers that testified of the nation’s ascendancy. But, it was also the year that America began legally killing its unborn children,” Cahn writes. “It was a monument to a nation’s glory on one hand and a testament to its sin and shame on the other. It was a memorial of a nation’s fall, marking the year America began killing its most defenseless. The towers would bear witness to two glaringly different realities, each in deep conflict with the other. And the days of their coexistence would be numbered.”

Another twenty-eight years later, again on the fourth Shemitah, came the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, taking down the towers. When the stock market reopened on September 17, which was Elul 29 on the [Hebrew calendar](#), the Dow Jones Industrials fell 684 points, a record one-day point loss. Exactly seven years later on the [Hebrew calendar](#), again on Elul 29, came the next collapse of September 29, 2008, when the Dow fell 777.7 points, breaking the record set in 2001 for the single largest one-day point drop.

“The ancient mystery determines that this mass nullification of financial accounts take place exactly seven biblical years apart,” Cahn writes. “The two greatest crashes not only took place on Elul 29, but on Elul 29 exactly seven biblical years apart, down to the day.”

As investors’ accounts were being literally wiped out on Wall Street, the Orthodox rabbis in Israel were symbolically wiping clean their accounts in Israel on the biblical Day of Release.

“It happens on the exact same biblical day that God gives, Elul 29, to wipe away the accounts of a nation,” Cahn explained in a recent interview with CBN News. “The two greatest crashes in American history happened, seven years apart, down to the day, the hour, the minute, and the second. I mean it’s so precise, and we’re heading to another one.”

But it’s not just accounts that can be wiped out. As seen throughout history, whole nations can cease to exist and empires can be humbled.

Cahn sees the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the last two economic recessions, including the Great Recession touched off by the stock market collapse of September 29, 2008, as prophetic warnings or “shakings” that will continue in the absence of repentance and a turning back to God.

He believes the nation can avoid the ultimate judgment – its destruction – and he is careful not to set dates or proclaim that time will have run out at the end of the current Shemitah. Nobody knows how long God will keep the window open for repentance, he says.

In a radio interview with conservative theologian Dr. Michael

Brown on September 24, the eve of Rosh Hashanah 2014, Cahn said he was not predicting the pattern of judgment every seventh year will necessarily continue on cue with another stock market crash or cataclysmic event in September 2015. He said nobody can predict the hand of God, “but it is something we need to be aware of.”

“I’m not saying it has to continue, but I would take note of it,” he said.

Cahn is adamant that God still holds nations accountable today, just like in biblical times. This is the theme of *The Harbinger* and *The Isaiah 9:10 Judgment* and it is carried through in *The Mystery of the Shemitah*.

Instead of being humbled by the attacks of 9/11, on two occasions national leaders have issued vows to rebuild stronger than ever, fulfilling the harbingers spoken of in Isaiah 9:10 “almost word for word,” says Cahn.

The very next day after the attacks, on September 12, then Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle presented America’s response to the world. While standing at the Capitol, Daschle said: “America will emerge from this tragedy as we have emerged from all adversity – united and strong.”

He then went on to read Isaiah 9:10. “The bricks have fallen down. But we will rebuild with hewn stones,” the words of the ancient Israelites being repeated as a vow of defiance.

Daschle most likely intended his scripture reading as some small measure of comfort for the victims but did not realize the prophetic impact of his words.

The vow of defiance was repeated by President Barack Obama on June 14, 2012. Obama went to Ground Zero to see the new tower that was under construction. He was given a beam, which now constitutes the tower’s final and highest beam. On the beam, the president wrote eight words – which were, in effect, a summation of the ancient vow of judgment from Isaiah 9:10: “We remember, we rebuild, we come back stronger!”

“So now the tower will be crowned and finished with words

paralleling Isaiah 9:10, the ancient vow of national judgment,” Cahn said. “The tower was begun with the laying down of a hewn stone, the very same object mentioned in Isaiah 9:10 which begins the rebuilding.”

As he takes his readers for a journey through American history, Cahn shows that the judgment has in fact already begun. God in his mercy has sent and will continue to send warnings as a sign to those who have ears to hear and eyes to see, that the time is growing short and that larger judgments lie ahead for a nation that not only ignores God’s laws but arrogantly vows to come back bigger and better than ever.

As one superpower falls, another inevitably rises to take its place. A quick scan of the globe today reveals many potential heirs apparent, one more ominous than the next. Many students of Bible prophecy, not just Cahn, have noted the conspicuous absence of any nation resembling America in the Old Testament prophetic books. Who will fill the vacuum? Will it be Russia or China? Perhaps Europe? And what about the rise of radical Islam and the fate of Israel? Turkey and Iran have been gaining influence in the Middle East and possess the most powerful armies in that region, held in check, for the time being, by a strong America.

FOUR BLOOD MOONS

The Bible also points to signs that will appear in the heavens in the last days. One description that is repeated several times in both the Old and New Testaments is an astrological alignment in which the sun will be darkened and the moon turned blood red, an obvious reference to solar and lunar eclipses.

“The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved,” according to Joel 2:31–32. The same description is repeated in Revelation 6:12.

An extremely rare appearance of four consecutive blood-moon eclipses will occur between autumn 2014 and autumn 2015, two of which fall within the *Shemitah* year.

As pastor and author *Mark Biltz* first noted several years ago, all four of the *blood moons* will occur on Hebrew high holidays. There won't be any more for the rest of the twenty-first century.

The second of the four blood moon eclipses occurred the evening of October 8, 2014, coinciding with the first day of the biblical Feast of Tabernacles, also known as Sukkot. A partial solar eclipse took place two weeks later. Two more blood moons will follow: on Passover in the spring of 2015 and on the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall of 2015, respectively.

Biltz, a teaching pastor at El Shaddai Ministries in Washington State, points out that previous blood-moon tetrads, or series of four eclipses, in history have come on or around significant developments for Jews and the state of Israel.

Likewise, a key discovery in Cahn's *The Harbinger* and *The Isaiah 9:10 Judgment* is the pattern of biblical *Shemitah* years and their relevance to economic calamities in the United States.

While Cahn is not making any predictions about what is to come, many of those familiar with his work are eyeing the date September 13, 2015, which is Elul 29, with interest, if not dread.

All of this is laid out in detail in easy-to-understand documentary form in *The Isaiah 9:10 Judgment*, the leading faith video in the nation in 2012 and 2013, produced by Joseph Farah and WND Films.

Farah believes the date September 13, 2015, bears close watching—though he is quick to admit he has no idea what, if anything, will happen in America.

“A clear pattern has been established,” he says. “I don't believe it's a coincidence what happened in America on Elul 29 in 2001 and 2008. It would be foolish to ignore the possibility that a greater judgment might be in the works—especially if America continues to move away from God and His Word.”

It's also worth noting that Elul 29, 2015, represents the eve of

the Feast of Trumpets or Rosh Hashanah at sundown. A blood-red moon is expected to occur that evening, according to NASA. The Feast of Trumpets begins a period known by Jews as “the days of awe” that lasts through Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) a week later.

If the pattern of seven-year cycles continues, the end of the Shemitah year on September 13, 2015, will bring some form of climactic shaking or shift in world history.

“That’s how it happened with the last two, it happens on the last day of the year (on the Hebrew calendar),” Cahn told CBN News. “That is September 13, 2015. But I believe, regardless of when it happens, a great shaking is coming to America. I believe it will affect the economy; it will affect the financial realm.

“I believe it will even be greater than those realms. Just like 9/11 was. So I believe we need to be ready. I believe a shaking is coming. Because without a shaking America is not coming back to God. I believe this has to be. It doesn’t have to happen this time, but I would be aware of it. We need to get ready.”

HOW DOES ONE GET READY?

Cahn says he is not a financial analyst, but most people tell him that their number-one goal in financial planning, especially for those who may be near the end of their working careers, is to seek safety. The same philosophy should apply to one’s spiritual life as we draw near to the end of days.

The word in Hebrew for safety or salvation is *Yeshua*, and Yeshua is Jesus.

“Financially, I would play it safe. I would go with safety,” Cahn said. “But the most important thing for safety is you get your life right with God. In times of judgment, anything that is not in God, get it out. Anything that needs to be in your life, get it in.”

This is the time for a fresh start. This is the Shemitah year.

The exactness of the pattern seems too mind-boggling for many investors to get their heads around, but more and more are getting

interested in the principle of the Shemitah.

Cahn said he did not plan to write another book so soon after *The Harbinger*. When his publisher contacted him in the spring of 2014 about writing a follow-up book centering on the Shemitah, he initially thought it would be just a pamphlet. “I said I would be happy to help, and they didn’t even have to put my name on it,” he said.

But it grew from there in a very short period of time.

“When this started coming, and most of it is all new, I did not expect to write this but it’s so big,” Cahn told CBN. “I was amazed it has not been seen before, but it is there. And you would expect it. I mean, God is in charge of everything. And the patterns He gives are true even to this day. And they are affecting every one of our lives from the day we were born until now.

“So we need to be ready. Because everything that can be shaken will be shaken.”

So Cahn will go on blowing his trumpet. Those who hear, and respond, could help save a great nation from judgment.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leo Hohmann is a news editor for WND. He has been a reporter and editor at several suburban newspapers in the Atlanta and the Charlotte, North Carolina, areas and also served as managing editor of Triangle Business Journal in Raleigh, North Carolina.

ABOUT WND

WND is an independent news company dedicated to uncompromising journalism, seeking truth and justice and revitalizing the role of the free press as a guardian of liberty. A top 500 website and the No. 1 independent news site, WND remains faithful to the traditional and central role of a free press in a free society – as a light exposing wrongdoing, corruption, and abuse of power. Visit us at www.WND.com.

