



What Kind of Revelation?

⁴ *"But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and **seal up** the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase." — Daniel 12:4*

¹⁰ *And he said to me, "**Do not seal up** the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. — Revelation 22:10*

In most English translations of the Bible the very last book is named "Revelation" based on the opening verse, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ". (Rev. 1:1) The underlying Greek word is "apokalupsis" might be more accurately rendered "unveiling" because in the original language it does not merely include something that is shown or revealed, but includes the interpretation as to what it means. As applied overall, an unveiling takes place in the character of a sheer curtain going up so that what was at one time difficult to make out from a distance becomes clearer and clearer the closer we get. What the Prophet Daniel was originally told to "seal up...until the end of time", the Apostle John is told, "Do not seal up...for the time is near". But even with the briefest of surveys of sermons, books and websites, it doesn't take long for one to wonder what kind of revelation—that is, unveiling—Christians think is taking place? The instructions to Daniel and John have to do with the canon of Scripture—"seal up the book" and "seal up...the prophecy of this book". Are we pursuing the unveiling of Scripture, or are we claiming a revelation of something not actually originally contained in the pages of God's Word, or at best, ancillary to it?

It's easy to understand why the unsaved are deceived as they are still fallen to sin and under the influence of the evil one. Daniel articulated their situation best when it comes to knowledge of the End Times when he stated, "None of the wicked will understand". (Dan. 12:10) But among those claiming some kind of Christian heritage or connection, there are significant barriers to overcome. Assuming someone is authentically saved, they could find themselves in one of the major movements which de-emphasize if not outright ridicule the pursuit of understanding God's prophetic Word. The major personalities associated with the Church Growth Movement outright teach it is a waste

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of time, many within the Emergent Church Movement spiritualize it away so as to say it has no literal meaning, and quite an alarming number of others in other major movements actually make fun of the Rapture itself and those who believe in it. This narrows down the number of those still maintaining interest in the Last Days to the very definition of a much smaller numerical remnant, and it is this group for whom I have a particular burden.

When it comes to understanding God's prophetic Word, nothing can be "unveiled" to the unsaved until they first choose to become born again believers in Christ; salvation is the only thing which will address their spiritual blindness. For those deceived by the major movements within the Church such as Purpose Driven, the Emergent Church, New Age, Ecumenism, the Signs and Wonders Movement, Charismania, or any of the "isms" leading to such things as Dominionism, Kingdom Now Theology, or Replacementism, there is no "cure" except for authentic repentance from those errors and a return to the authority of God's Word alone. Both are lost, and although in slightly different situations, united in their need for a true return to the blood and Word of Christ. Satan has systematically rendered them not just deceived, but spiritually ineffective, so there is the final group he works overtime to seduce: the regenerate remnant who are actively *"looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus"*. (Titus 2:13)

To these is the promise of unsealing what was sealed, of unveiling what was concealed, but what kind of "revelation" are we pursuing? Are we actually seeing clearer and clearer what has already been given within the closed canon of God's Word, or are we sometimes pursuing what is gift wrapped as a "revelation" which was never actually in God's Word to begin with?

One only needs go back less than 200 years in history to discover a time when most of the Church and its theological elite for many hundreds of years leading up to that point were not confident of the literalness of God's Word overall. Up until the mid-1800s, there was no such thing as archaeology, and the manuscripts from antiquity of God's Word were very limited in what had been preserved to that point. It is not unusual to find commentators from the Reformation forward who thought that the Hittites were a spiritual representation of something rather than a real, historical people because time (and earth) had erased all traces of them. So much of the history and places associated with the Bible were lost that it was a popular assumption that they belonged to parables

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or spiritual stories until archaeology began to uncover these things. It was shocking to many to find out that not only was Nineveh an actual city, but that it was approximately the size of London.

And over the next 150 years, not only did archaeology serve to confirm the historical literalness and accuracy of nearly every person, place and thing in Scripture, we stumbled into treasure troves of manuscripts and ancient documents not just expanding our understanding of the ancient languages in which God's Word is written, but confirming and reaffirming time and again its authenticity and the accuracy with which it has been preserved and handed down to us. Like others, I believe *The Dead Sea Scrolls* was a divine revelation to our generation shedding God's light ever more brightly on existing His Word. There is no generation since the passing of the 1st century Apostolic Church which has been given more light on God's Word both textually and in the unfolding of current events than ours.

But my greater point here is that all of this "revelation"—this "unveiling", if you will, is concentrated exclusively on the closed canon of God's Word as it has **already** been given. We haven't discovered "new" things which were never revealed before or concealed from past generations; instead, what our spiritual forbearers earnestly sought to understand from God's given Word was designated as one of the most important signs of the nearness of the *Parousia*—the Return of Christ. And yet it does not even take 60 seconds at a local Christian bookstore or website to see how many of the "revelations" being presented are anything **but** the true unveiling of God's already given Word, but something that is actually claimed to be some kind of "mystery" or, up until present, "concealed" from every believer from every generation of the Church and only now miraculously revealed.

The list is almost too long to even attempt because it's difficult to just mention each one in passing without giving each their due rebuttal, but the worst at this time, in my opinion, would have been *The Harbinger* by Jonathan Cahn until his recent follow up book, *The Mystery of the Shemitah*, which sets a new record for how low deception can go. Sure, he and his supporters will claim that this is a "revelation" of God's Word, but what *The Harbinger* effectively does is to puff up the pride of being born American, of well-intentioned Christians desiring a path back to "one nation under God", of creating the illusion of a special covenant relationship between God and America in the exact character of Old Testament Israel. Even if every (false) assertion Cahn makes concerning

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his interpretation of history and American historical figures was true, Scripture is exact and unforgiving: “I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Jer. 31:30)—and **no one else**. Paul explains exactly how this applies to us individually and the Church corporately in Romans 9-11. Scripture is clear that God does make covenants with nations, but Cahn wants to embrace Jewishness over New Testament Christianity, and plenteous are the members of the authentic remnant who are distracted by this.

The Mystery of the Shemitah came out of a smaller section of *The Harbinger*, and on one hand Cahn claims this as a revelation from God, but when he originally appeared on the Jim Bakker Show to announce the new book, attributed it at that time to the urging of his publisher and emails from readers. (I missed that part in my Bible where Isaiah says, “Thus says my publisher”.)

“*Shemitah*” is the underlying Hebrew describing the Old Testament Mosaic commandment to give the land rest every seven years and is also connected to a cycle of debt forgiveness. For each of the seven years preceding Israel’s ultimate banishment to Babylon, they did not observe this Sabbath rest of the land and debt, so the 70 year sentence of their captivity was calculated based on missing each “*shemitah*” over that 490 year period. (2 Ch. 2:20-21; Jer. 29:10; Dan. 9:2; Zech. 7:5) Cahn wants us to believe that what applied exclusively to literal Israel **prophetically** applies to the United States and attempts to use this to explain not only all the past financial calamities in U. S. history, but to project it going forward. This lends itself to date setting, a version of the false faith-prosperity gospel, not to mention a very weird form of what I’ll term, “Reverse Replacementism”. It’s aberrational on many different yet simultaneous levels.

Amazingly, by his own hand in this very book, Cahn attempts to show how at least all the major and more recent financial calamities experienced in America all fulfill what he claims to be the stated requirements for a *shemitah*, and **fails to do so!** He documents that, at best, his “prophetic sign” only lines up 70% of the time, and that he has to limit it to applying to only two specific events to get a perfect 100% match—that is, if you take his faulty assertions as to what applies from Scripture to begin with. I guess I also missed the class explaining that prophecy only needs to be correct **most** of the time.

²² **“When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has**

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*spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. —
Deuteronomy 18:22*

(Please don't email me saying, "Well, Cahn is not a prophet". For the last few years he has been repeatedly introduced as such and I have yet to see and hear him refute the notion. Nonetheless 2 Peter 2:1 explains that "false prophets" and "false teachers" are one and the same. And don't think I haven't notice his insistence of being addressed as "Rabbi" in spite of the direct command of Christ in Matthew 23:8 **not** to.)

In Acts 15, the Apostles settled the issue once and for all as to what narrowly carries over from the Old Testament to Gentile believers and their nations; nowhere among the short list of four specific things can be found making a covenant on behalf of a nation in parallel with that of Israel, nor is there any requirement, literal or prophetic, of the *shemitah*. But otherwise regenerate brothers and sisters in Christ are spending their Last Days' attention span on extra-biblical "revelations" such as these rather than the legitimate ones still before us in God's Word. The attention of the faithful remnant is daily challenged by "new" revelations such as *The Harbinger*, *The Mystery of the Shemitah*, *The Blood Moons*, the so-called "Psalm 83 War" and so on when this is the time when it's truly necessary to seek the unveiling of what has **already** been given in God's Word and about to come into fulfillment.

This past Sunday morning a guest speaker at church—a very nice guy with the sincerest of intentions—instructed that the definition of "prophecy" is "to understand current events and the fulfillment of future events". Contrast this to the Apostle Paul's definition:

³ But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. — 1 Corinthians 14:3

Do you see the difference? This brother, like many before him, gave a good report of which current events he thought might be relevant and even suggested a couple of things which should indicate the impending fulfillment of God's prophetic Word, but it was saddening to see how few things were an "unveiling" of God's existing Word and frequent those things which in reality stood apart.

We have many website authors, radio and podcast hosts, speakers, authors and entire conferences which are actually working in the character of David Copperfield or any good stage illusionist. They get us to "look over here" so as to ignore what is really going on "over there". And I believe that although well-intentioned, so many of them operate

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this way simply because they have never really been committed to the full-time teaching of God's Word, not just as a pastor, but even for a Sunday School class or small group Bible study. They've been allowed to "specialize" and present themselves as subject matter experts without having the foundation of the whole Word of God in the first place.

In the Olivet Discourse, Matthew records what might be the most important direct teaching from Christ for this last generation, *The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins*. (Mt. 25:1-13) Do you get that **both** of groups are "virgins"? **Both** of them have lamps? (The biblical illustration of God's Word.) But that when only one group is found to have the oil (the anointing of the Holy Spirit) in combination with God's Word, so that the other "virgins" are left behind! To which group do you think the promise to unseal God's prophetic Word in the Last Days is going to be realized?

Normally at this point is when we would close with the admonition that we need to drop the pursuit of those things which are not actually a biblically qualified "revelation" and seek only those things which are, but that is simply not enough. In order to fulfill that requirement, it is necessary that we actually and daily commit to God's Word, most likely in a manner and to a degree like we have never before carried out.

*² in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. ³ **So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.** — Daniel 9:2-3*

When Daniel understood the time was near for the literal fulfillment of God's prophetic Word, he provided the right spiritual example of what we should do. In fact, I would argue that what was true for Daniel's time for the return of Israel to the land is **even more true** and a **bigger** requirement for us in the shadow of Christ's Return. I'm not saying we simply need to read and study Scripture, I'm actually saying we need to "*seek Him by prayer and supplication, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes*".

We need to give up some of the nonsense in our daily life to make a true, personal commitment to Christ in prayerful meditation of His Word. We need to give up some of our extra-curricular activities and go to more Bible studies and fellowship gatherings. We need to sacrifice television time for prayer time. We need to seek the biblical

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fulfillment of prophecy that truly results in *“edification, and exhortation and consolation”*. We need to become practicing Wise Virgins who, like Daniel, are hyper-focused on seeking the unveiling of what has **already** been provided in God’s Word and discerning to the point of being able to instantly recognize and avoid that which is not.

In Him,

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