

## Should We Listen to the Dragon's Prophecy?

Isaiah 26:20–27:1; Revelation 12:9, 20:2

The other day I talked to a friend who told me that he had been reading a new book, Jonathan Cahn's *The Dragon's Prophecy*, about the book of Revelation. It was well written, compelling, and kept his attention. While he knew that it did not have the authority of Scripture, he hoped it would give him insights into the meaning of Revelation, and to understand what we are seeing in the Middle East today.

I listened patiently and then our conversation went on to other things. Later, I began to do a little digging. For one, I found out that this book is getting a lot of attention. A Charismatic website breathlessly exclaims: “No. 1 New York Times Bestseller! Jonathan Cahn's explosive new global blockbuster, ‘The Dragon's Prophecy,’ rockets to top of charts.”<sup>1</sup> Lots of people—maybe people you know—are going to hear that and buy the book. Perhaps friends of yours are going to ask you about it.

I found the publisher's description. Here is what it claimed: *The Dragon's Prophecy* will reveal . . .

- The Long-Hidden Secret of the Last Days
- The Dark Resurrection
- The Colors of the Apocalypse
- The Return of the Sea Peoples
- The Day of the Dragon
- The Black Sabbath
- The Inverted Angel
- The Revenge of the Three Thousand
- The 18,263rd Day (another iteration had the 2,315th Day)
- The Secret on the Mount
- The Invaders
- The Beast
- The whole thing<sup>2</sup>

Note particularly the words the “long-hidden secret of the last days.” The book of Revelation was written almost 1,950 years ago. Hundreds—perhaps thousands—of books and commentaries have been written about it. Many of them have been wrong. Now, 1,950 years later, a book comes along that purports to reveal its “long-hidden secret.” On this point its best to be skeptical. Revelation, while written in simple Greek, is perhaps the most difficult book in the Bible to interpret. It has certainly spawned a wide variety of interpretations. That seemingly

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<sup>1</sup> <https://charismanews.com/culture/no-1-new-york-times-bestseller-jonathan-cahns-explosive-new-global-blockbuster-the-dragons-prophecy-rockets-to-top-of-charts/> accessed 1-4-24

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.amazon.com/Audible-The-Dragons-Prophecy/dp/B0DB6D3NWZ/ref=sr\\_1\\_1](https://www.amazon.com/Audible-The-Dragons-Prophecy/dp/B0DB6D3NWZ/ref=sr_1_1) accessed 1-2-24

irreconcilable variety has convinced some people that they will never be able to understand the book. Some Christians have stopped reading it altogether. That is odd, considering that this is a book that specifically promises a blessing to those who *read* it. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy” (Rev. 1:3). A friend of mine told me that his minister says that he never reads the book of Revelation; his church’s liturgy specifically does not use anything from Revelation. Now here comes bestselling author Jonathan Cahn and claims to be able to reveal the long-hidden secret of Revelation, that is, to do what no man in history has ever been able to do. That’s quite a claim.

The book’s title, *The Dragon’s Prophecy*, implies that the *dragon* gives an important prophecy that people that wish to understand the message of the book need to consider. That gets people’s attention. But in the book of Revelation, who is the dragon? Why he’s the devil himself (I’ll show that in a minute)! Now stop and think about that in a minute. The book of Revelation is inspired Scripture. It is specifically called “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” Those are the opening words of the book. Jesus Christ is not just any man; he is the eternal Son of God the Father, the Savior of the world. Now, setting aside all the hype for a moment, what kind of a God would allow the *dragon*—the devil of hell—to reveal an important prophecy about Jesus Christ? The devil is “a liar and the father of lies.”<sup>3</sup> Those are the words of Christ himself. What does it say about the holiness and integrity of God, for him to urge his people to go to the devil of hell to learn the truth about his Son? Readers ought to be extremely wary of this book. The author and publisher of *The Dragon’s Prophecy* are making a fortune selling this book. The God of heaven sent his eternal Son to be born into this world to a very poor family. The Lord Jesus did not earn the accolades of the kings of the earth. He didn’t schmooze with the great people of his day. He did not live in an expensive house. In fact, he had no place to lay his head. At his crucifixion his only possession, a seamless robe, woven in one piece from top to bottom, was taken from him. His forerunner, John the Baptist (or John the baptizer), lived out in the desert, wore a robe of camel’s hair—not a very comfortable fabric—and ate locusts and wild honey. Now here comes a bestselling author, who has written novels (fiction). He writes a book that makes him a lot of money. It is not a painstaking, scholarly, verse-by-verse commentary on the Revelation, but a book written to grab the reader’s attention and allegedly uncover a never-before-seen insight that the world urgently needs to know after almost 1,950 years. Has God ever revealed anything else about himself this way? To ask the question is to answer it. The reader should be very skeptical.

Consider something else. One of the things the publisher alleges about this book is something the author calls “the dark resurrection.” What is that? Does the dragon

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<sup>3</sup> John 8:44 ESV

die and come back to life—some kind of parody of the death and resurrection of the holy Son of God? We read in Revelation 13 of the dragon that gave the beast his power, his seat, and great authority. We read that one of the beast’s heads was “as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast” (Rev. 13:2–3). Is the healing of a wounded head a resurrection? One must be wary.

Furthermore, what is “the 18,263rd Day” (another iteration had “the 2,315th Day”). Is there some sort of numerical code written in the text of Revelation that must be deciphered in order to understand the book? Why the discrepancy in numbering? The difference between 18,263 and 2,315 is 15,950; that’s a difference of about 87%. That’s quite a difference! To base a conclusion on a calculation with a margin of error of 87% is risky business.

The Millerites—forerunners of the Seventh-day Adventists—believed, on the basis of their interpretation of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:44, that Christ was going to return in 1843. Many of them quit their jobs and sold their possessions to await Christ’s return. The year 1843 came and went. Then they decided their calculation was off by a year. So they waited some more. The year 1844 came and went. Then they decided that they had the year right but got the meaning wrong. In the “Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists” they explain that “in 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, Christ entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry . . . a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin.” For the last 181 years (since 1844), Christ has been carrying out this investigative judgment; when he gets through with that, then he will return. Clear as mud? That’s based on zero Scripture, just a humanly-concocted, fallible interpretation, but it’s one of the “Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists,” and a lot of people swallow it.

Now let’s get to the Word of God. The word *dragon* occurs only in the New Testament—not in the Old—and only in the book of Revelation. It is essentially a transliteration of the Greek word, δράκων. In Greek mythology it is used of the “description of the frightful δράκων that guards the golden fleece.” Also of the Hydra.<sup>4</sup> Δράκων means *dragon*, a great serpent, a name for Satan. Everybody understands that. The δράκων is a monster.

Our Old Testament text speaks of monster, the Leviathan, an enemy of God’s people, whom the Lord will slay: “In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; and He will slay the reptile that is in the sea” (Isa 27:1).

Twice in the book of Revelation the δράκων (dragon) is identified as “the serpent of old . . . the Devil and Satan. Consider them again:

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<sup>4</sup> Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, δράκων (Logos Bible Software)

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great *dragon* was cast out, that *serpent* of old, called the *Devil* and *Satan*, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev. 12:7–9).

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the *dragon*, that *serpent* of old, who is the *Devil* and *Satan*, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while” (Rev. 20:1–3).

In these texts Satan, the great enemy of the church, is judged.

We first learn of the serpent in Genesis 3:1, “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, “You shall not eat of every tree of the garden”?’”

The Bible says, “Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4). The Lord God omnipotent is well able to judge so formidable a foe as Satan.

Revelation reveals that the δράκων (dragon) is identical with “the serpent of old . . . the Devil and Satan—four different scriptural terms for the devil of hell, “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2).

Should we be afraid of the devil? Yes and no. He is a powerful foe, but he falls before the power of the living God. When we take our membership vows we promise to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, to “forsake the world, *resist the devil*, put to death [our] sinful deeds and desires, and lead a godly life.” With the Holy Spirit’s power we can resist him, “steadfast in the faith” (1 Pet. 5:7).

I have three points of application this afternoon: (1) Hear the church! (2) Hear Christ! (3) Hear the holy Scriptures! First,

### **1. Hear the church!**

I told my friend: “I do not recommend this book. Three reasons: Jonathan Cahn does not identify as a Christian, but as a Messianic Jew. He is not part of the church of Jesus Christ. In the Bible, Jews who came to faith in Christ became part of the church. Jonathan Cahn is not part of the church. He was not ordained in the Christian church. This is a problem.

The Lord Jesus Christ said that if a person will not “*hear the church*, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican” (Matt. 18:17). How significant that the Son of God, the prophet greater than Moses, instructed his people not only to hear the Word of God, but to hear the *church*! The Bible was given, not to libraries

or scholars, but *to the church*. Christians are to read the Word of God, not as though it has never been read before, but *with the church*. Christians must read the Word of God *with the church*. If something occurs to you that no one in the almost-2,000 year history since the close of the Canon has ever seen, you should be extremely cautious.

O saint of God, hear the church!

## **2. Hear Christ!**

Christians don't need the dragon's prophecy. The dragon is Satan (Isa. 27:1; Rev. 12:9, 20:2). The Lord Jesus Christ alone is our prophet, priest and king, and he is sufficient. "Hear ye him!"

"This is my beloved Son. Hear him."

O saint of God, hear Christ!

## **3. Hear the Holy Scriptures!**

The whole business about the 18,263<sup>rd</sup> (or 2,315<sup>th</sup>) day is spooky. It is not mentioned in Revelation, and is certainly not an emphasis in the book. The whole purpose of Revelation (as of all Scripture) is to reveal CHRIST and his saving work. Anything else is a distraction.

Remember Christ's dictum: "Thy Word is truth." Stick with the Scriptures.

O saint of God, hear the Holy Scriptures!

Yet people have insatiable appetites for sensationalistic prophetic speculations.

I happened the other day on a charismatic website. A woman releases an "urgent prophetic word for 2025." It is entitled "Aligning with Israel." The woman writes:

"History has shown that nations suffer when they turn against Israel. Every time in history that we have gone against Israel, the nation has plummeted. . . . People are blessed when they bless Israel, and they're cursed when they curse it." She then issues a simple plea to pray that the U.S. maintains its alliance with Israel. "We don't want to come against God; we want to do what is right."<sup>5</sup>

An "urgent prophetic word" from a woman who is not a lawfully-ordained minister in the church of Jesus Christ,<sup>6</sup> who cites no Scripture for her assertion, is to be rejected. It is rubbish!—a distraction from the gospel. The main point of Scripture is the coming of Christ to save us his people from their sins. That's it!

There is no Scripture where God instructs twenty-first century nation-states to enter into alliances with each other, or that requires the U.S. to maintain an alliance with Israel. NONE! Jesus is the Prince of peace who calls us to live in peace with each other.

Now that very biblical statement may not get peoples' attention the way an "urgent prophetic word" does. But people don't need urgent prophetic words, they need the inspired, infallible Word of God.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://charismanews.com/culture/cindy-jacobs-releases-urgent-prophetic-word-for-2025/>

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim. 2:11–14, 1 Cor. 14:34

Jonathan Cahn is the “Hal Lindsey” of our generation. Hal Lindsey, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, was a four-times-married writer on the subject of biblical prophecy. Wikipedia calls him “an evangelist,” but gives no documentation of any faithful church calling and ordaining him to that biblical office.

According to Wikipedia, Lindsey “suggested that Matthew 24:32–34 indicated that Jesus’ return might be within ‘one generation’ of the rebirth of the state of Israel, and the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple, and Lindsey asserted that ‘in the Bible’ one generation is forty years. Some readers accepted this as an indication that the Tribulation or the Rapture would occur no later than 1988. In his 1980 work *The 1980s: Countdown to Armageddon*, Lindsey predicted that ‘the decade of the 1980s could very well be the last decade of history as we know it.’”<sup>7</sup>

Many evangelical Christians, not content to stick with the Bible and its account of what OP minister Ryan McGraw calls “God’s promise to undo the ruin that Satan brought through sin” which is like “a seamless thread that ties together all the pages of Scripture,”<sup>8</sup> are hungry to read sensationalist pop literature that promises to unlock hidden secrets in the Bible. Far better to stick with the ordinary means of grace—the Word, the sacraments and prayer. This is the spiritual diet that our great King sets out for us in the church’s regular worship.

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<sup>7</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Late\\_Great\\_Planet\\_Earth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Late_Great_Planet_Earth) accessed 1-4-25

<sup>8</sup> Ryan M. McGraw, *What Is Covenant Theology*, 4