



Global Watch Daily – January 1, 2026

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A concise summary of significant developments in Israel and the world through a grounded Christian worldview.

Israel & Jerusalem

Tensions within Israel’s political landscape remain high as the coalition, Haredi communities, and judiciary face a significant collision course, reflecting deep societal divisions ([Times of Israel](#)). The Israeli court has mandated the state to justify a law permitting the dismissal of teachers who support terrorism, underscoring the ongoing struggle to balance security and civil rights ([Times of Israel](#)). Meanwhile, Israel’s military has accelerated war preparations amid widespread protests in Iran, signaling heightened regional alertness ([JNS](#)). The IDF has issued evacuation orders for Tehran ahead of potential strikes, indicating the seriousness of these preparations ([Jerusalem Post](#)).

Culturally, Israel is expanding its media landscape, with HBO Max launching in the country this month, reflecting growing entertainment options ([Times of Israel](#)). In a compassionate response to recent terror attacks, a new Chabad center has opened at the site of the Bondi terror attack, offering acts of kindness to the community ([Times of Israel](#)).

Political developments include the Knesset’s approval of a law commemorating the immigration story of Moroccan Jews, highlighting Israel’s diverse heritage ([JNS](#)). Additionally, Prime Minister Netanyahu has pledged support for global Christian communities facing threats under Islamic regimes, emphasizing Israel’s role in religious solidarity ([JNS](#)).

The Hostages Forum has closed its Tel Aviv offices amid calls to return the body of Ran Gvili, reflecting ongoing tensions related to hostage issues ([JNS](#)). Israel’s decision to bar 37 aid groups has drawn warnings from the UK and EU about severe impacts in Gaza, highlighting the complex humanitarian challenges in the region ([BBC](#)).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

Regional security remains volatile as Jordan conducted airstrikes in Syria targeting drug smugglers, demonstrating ongoing efforts to combat illicit activities along its borders ([Long War Journal](#)). The United Arab Emirates has announced plans to withdraw forces



from Yemen following Saudi demands and recent strikes, signaling shifts in regional military engagements ([Long War Journal](#)).

Israeli operations against Hezbollah in Lebanon continued through late December, reflecting ongoing security concerns along the northern border ([Long War Journal](#)). In Gaza, Israel has rotated military units as a new phase of a ceasefire deal approaches, indicating cautious steps toward stability ([Long War Journal](#)).

Beyond the Levant, the US conducted strikes against Islamic State targets in Nigeria, demonstrating continued global counterterrorism efforts ([Long War Journal](#)). Meanwhile, sectarian violence has reemerged along Syria's coast, underscoring the fragile security situation there ([FDD](#)).

Iran's protests have entered their fourth day, fueled by a currency collapse and widespread dissatisfaction, with calls for Washington to heed the unrest ([FDD](#)). These protests have resulted in casualties, including the death of a member of Iran's security forces, highlighting the regime's internal challenges ([BBC](#)).

Global Macro & Geopolitics

A tragic fire at a Swiss ski resort bar on New Year's Eve has resulted in dozens of presumed deaths, marking a somber start to 2026 and prompting international attention and emergency responses ([BBC](#) ; [France24](#)). The fire has also affected celebrations in Amsterdam, where a historic church was engulfed in flames on New Year's Eve ([BBC](#)).

In geopolitical developments, Kyiv has accused Russia of staging a false-flag operation regarding an alleged attack on President Putin's home, reflecting ongoing information warfare between the two nations ([France24](#)). Finland has seized a ship from Russia, indicating heightened tensions in the Baltic region ([France24](#)).

Central Asia faces mounting debt burdens, with significant risks and policy implications that could affect regional stability and economic development ([The Diplomat](#)). In Japan, the trial of former Prime Minister Abe's assassin is seen as a test of political reform appetite under new leadership ([The Diplomat](#)).

India is reshaping regional security partnerships, adopting a 'respectful responder' approach that may influence the broader Indo-Pacific security environment ([The Diplomat](#)). Meanwhile, Taiwan is exploring how to move its population from awareness to action amid ongoing cross-strait tensions ([The Diplomat](#)).



Pestilence & Global Health

Recent scientific studies have shed light on the causes of heart inflammation triggered by mRNA COVID vaccines, providing valuable insights for vaccine safety and public health ([ScienceDaily](#)). Researchers have also identified viral suspects that may be fueling long COVID symptoms, advancing understanding of this complex condition ([ScienceDaily](#)).

In dental health, a novel method to prevent gum disease has been developed that preserves beneficial bacteria, representing a breakthrough in oral care ([ScienceDaily](#)). Additionally, children's anxiety and depression rates have dropped rapidly following COVID-related school reopenings, highlighting the importance of in-person education for mental health ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Artificial intelligence has identified a surprising weak spot in monkeypox, which could lead to the development of more effective vaccines against the disease ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

Several earthquakes have been recorded recently, including a magnitude 3.7 event north of Yakutat, Alaska, and a 4.6 magnitude quake near La Concepción, Venezuela, reminding us of the earth's dynamic nature ([USGS](#) ; [USGS](#)). Additional minor tremors have been noted in Alaska's Skwentna and Anchor Point areas, underscoring ongoing seismic activity in the region ([USGS](#) ; [USGS](#)).

In space exploration, NASA's Curiosity rover sent a holiday postcard from Mars, symbolizing human curiosity and the quest for knowledge beyond Earth ([NASA](#)). The Chandra X-ray Observatory marked the New Year by observing the Champagne Cluster, a spectacular cosmic structure that reminds us of the vastness of God's creation ([NASA](#)).

The 2026 American Astronomical Society (AAS) Town Hall and Hyperwall schedules have been announced, promising new scientific discussions and discoveries in the coming year ([NASA](#) ; [NASA](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

The City of David continues to reveal new antiquities, enriching our understanding of Jerusalem's ancient heritage and biblical history ([City of David](#)). These discoveries provide tangible connections to the biblical narrative and to God's enduring covenant with His people.



Reflection

As we observe the unfolding events in Israel and the broader Middle East, we are reminded of the persistent challenges faced by God's chosen people amid political strife and regional instability. The acceleration of military preparations and the ongoing protests in Iran highlight the fragile peace in the region and the urgent need for divine intervention. At the same time, cultural and humanitarian efforts within Israel demonstrate the resilience and compassion that can shine even in difficult times.

Globally, tragedies such as the Swiss ski resort fire and rising geopolitical tensions call us to pray for comfort and wisdom for leaders and communities alike. Scientific advances in health and space exploration reveal the intricate design of God's creation and the hope that knowledge brings to humanity. In all these developments, we are called to remain steadfast in faith, seeking God's guidance and peace.

- Pray for peace and protection over Israel and Jerusalem amid political and security challenges.
- Ask God to comfort those affected by natural disasters and tragic events worldwide.
- Seek wisdom and guidance for global leaders as they navigate complex geopolitical and humanitarian issues.