



Global Watch Daily – February 5, 2026

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

Israel & Jerusalem

Israel's rich cultural heritage is underscored by the upcoming auction of the Rothschild Vienna Mahzor, a rare 15th-century prayer book looted by the Nazis and recently returned to its heirs; it is expected to fetch between \$5 and \$7 million ([Times of Israel](#)). Meanwhile, Israel's president is preparing for a controversial visit to Australia next week, which has met opposition from Palestinian supporters ([JNS](#)).

Tensions in the region remain high as the IDF has issued evacuation orders for Tehran in anticipation of possible strikes, highlighting the fragile security environment ([Jerusalem Post](#)). At the same time, the United States and Iran have agreed to resume nuclear negotiations in Oman, reflecting a complex diplomatic engagement amid ongoing hostilities ([BBC News](#)).

Iran's Revolutionary Guards have escalated maritime tensions by seizing two oil tankers in the Gulf, accusing them of fuel smuggling, which further strains relations in the Persian Gulf ([Times of Israel](#)). Concurrently, global concerns about resource equity have surfaced as the US critical minerals summit faced criticism for imposing disproportionate costs on the Global South ([Al Jazeera](#)).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

In northeastern Syria, Syrian government forces have deployed to Al Hasakah and Qamishli following a recent agreement with the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, aiming to restore central authority and reduce clashes ([Long War Journal](#)). This development coincides with ongoing US operations targeting Islamic State militants in the region.

Meanwhile, Iran has intensified military provocations against US forces, hardening its negotiating position ahead of nuclear talks. Fears within the regime of potential US strikes have produced mixed signals regarding uranium enrichment and missile programs, while domestic unrest continues despite severe crackdowns ([Long War Journal](#)).



Turkey faces political uncertainty as speculation grows about leadership after Erdogan, with significant implications for regional stability and US-Turkey relations. The US commitment to defense spending and its partnership with Turkey remain pivotal factors in this evolving situation ([FDD](#); [FDD](#)).

On the international diplomacy front, experts from Chatham House testified before the UK Parliament on Venezuela's political repression and US policy, emphasizing the need for collective pre-emptive diplomacy to uphold international norms ([Chatham House](#)). Additionally, Chatham House Director Bronwen Maddox warned that the Western alliance is fracturing amid superpower competition and shifts in US policy ([Chatham House](#)).

Global Macro & Geopolitics

The conflict between Ukraine and Russia continues to take a heavy toll, with President Zelensky reporting 55,000 Ukrainian soldiers killed and many more missing, suggesting an even higher overall death toll ([BBC News](#)).

In Nigeria, a brutal massacre of dozens of Muslims who refused to join jihadists has been reported, with fears that the death toll could reach as high as 170, underscoring ongoing security challenges in the region ([BBC News](#)).

On the cultural front, Irish artist Ailbhe Ní Bhriain is presenting twin exhibitions in Paris, blending diverse materials to create emblematic works that reflect themes of industry and empire ([France24](#)).

France has reaffirmed its commitment to combating the Islamic State group during Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot's visit to Damascus, following Syrian government advances in northeastern Syria, where Kurdish-led forces had been guarding IS detainees ([France24](#)).

China is undergoing significant personnel changes amid speculation over Xi Jinping's successor, a development with broad implications for global power dynamics ([The Diplomat](#)). Meanwhile, shadow powers continue to influence global conflicts through illicit economies intertwined with legitimate trade, particularly in Southeast Asia ([The Diplomat](#)).

Pestilence & Global Health

Researchers have developed a new nasal spray vaccine that demonstrates strong protection against H5N1 bird flu in animal tests, potentially preventing infection at the



initial stages in the nose and lungs ([ScienceDaily](#)).

A bat-borne virus, Pteropine orthoreovirus, has been identified infecting humans in Bangladesh, raising concerns about the risk of undetected dangerous viruses circulating alongside the Nipah virus ([ScienceDaily](#)).

A global study revealed that long COVID brain fog and related mental health symptoms are reported far more frequently in the United States than in countries such as India and Nigeria, suggesting that cultural factors, stigma, and healthcare access influence symptom reporting ([ScienceDaily](#)).

In Guatemala's Western Highlands, bottled water from refillable jugs, often trusted as safe, was found to be frequently contaminated with harmful bacteria, whereas protected municipal wells were cleaner, challenging common assumptions about water safety ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Scientists have discovered that nasal cells serve as a critical first line of defense against the common cold by mounting a rapid antiviral response that can prevent symptoms, highlighting the importance of the body's reaction rather than the virus itself ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Innovative research is underway to engineer bacteriophages that target antibiotic-resistant bacteria such as *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, using advanced genetic assembly techniques to combat superbugs ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

Recent seismic activity includes a magnitude 0.6 earthquake near Anza, California, and a magnitude 2.2 quake near Petrolia, California, both recorded by the USGS, indicating ongoing tectonic movements in the region ([USGS](#); [USGS](#)).

In Alaska, a magnitude 1.6 earthquake was detected south-southwest of Skwentna, further demonstrating the seismic activity across the western United States ([USGS](#)).

NASA reports that approximately 2,900 Olympic athletes have gathered in northern Italy for the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Games, a major international sporting event drawing global attention ([NASA](#)).

The Curiosity rover on Mars has resumed operations following its solar conjunction break, with new data being collected and analyzed by scientists on Earth, marking continued



progress in planetary exploration ([NASA](#)).

Weather forecasts warn of dangerous cold and gusty winds expected over the weekend, underscoring the need for preparedness in affected regions ([weather.gov](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

Excavations on Ha-Te'uda Ha-Aduma Street in Yafo uncovered fourteen military artifacts, including cannonballs and bullets, linked to historical sieges such as those by Muhammad Beq Abu-Dahab and Napoleon, shedding light on the area's turbulent past ([Israel Antiquities Authority](#)).

The same excavation site yielded approximately fifty glass items dating from the late 19th to mid-20th centuries, including medicine and cosmetic bottles as well as bracelet fragments, reflecting daily life in early 20th-century Yafo ([Israel Antiquities Authority](#)).

At Khirbat 'Amra in the Be'er Sheva Valley, large-scale salvage excavations revealed architectural remains and artifacts spanning from the Hellenistic to Early Islamic periods, offering valuable insights into the region's historical settlement patterns and material culture ([Israel Antiquities Authority](#)).

Further research at Maresha IV uncovered subterranean complexes of the Hellenistic city, contributing to a deeper understanding of ancient urban development and historical continuity in the area ([Israel Antiquities Authority](#)).

Reflection

We should interpret these developments soberly, resisting both panic and apathy while attending to what is true. Our aim is prayerful discernment—grounding convictions in Scripture and keeping watch with steadiness and hope.