



Global Watch Daily – December 19, 2025

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

Israel & Jerusalem

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) revealed that a Hezbollah operative apprehended last year played a crucial role in managing the group's secret maritime operations, highlighting ongoing security challenges posed by Hezbollah's covert activities ([Times of Israel](#)). Four more victims of the recent Bondi attack were laid to rest, including a courageous couple who tackled the terrorist, underscoring the human cost of ongoing violence in the region ([Times of Israel](#)).

France's human rights envoy declared that the chant "From the river to the sea" is antisemitic, reflecting the heightened sensitivity and international attention to language used in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ([Times of Israel](#)). Meanwhile, the film "David" has offered a behind-the-scenes look at the biblical king's story, revealing aspects it could not portray, enriching cultural engagement with Israel's biblical heritage ([Israel365 News](#)).

Israel continues to assert its strength as it and its allies confront rising antisemitism, lawfare, and shifting regional power dynamics, emphasizing the nation's resilience in a complex geopolitical environment ([Israel365 News](#)). The revival of Christmas celebrations in Israel is seen as significant beyond tourism, marking a cultural and religious rejuvenation in the Holy Land ([Israel365 News](#)).

In political developments, an appointee for the Mamdani administration resigned after just one day on the job, indicating possible instability or internal challenges within the administration ([JNS](#)). Additionally, investigations have uncovered an Iranian network behind terror activities in Australia, highlighting the global reach of regional conflicts ([JNS](#)).

The group Palestine Action has been characterized as seeking martyrdom through its actions, reflecting ongoing tensions and radicalization within the conflict ([JNS](#)). On the economic front, shipping companies are preparing plans for the return to the Suez Canal, a vital artery for global trade that affects Israel and the region's economy ([Al-Monitor](#)).



Diplomatic efforts continue with Lebanon-Israel truce committee talks expanding as the deadline for Hezbollah's disarmament approaches, signaling cautious hope for regional stability ([Al-Monitor](#)). Meanwhile, a global hunger monitor reports that Gaza no longer faces famine, though UN-backed experts warn that 100,000 people remain in catastrophic conditions, and heavy rains are worsening the plight of displaced Gazans ([Al-Monitor](#))([BBC](#))([BBC](#)).

In U.S. policy, former President Trump expanded the travel ban to include Syria and Palestinian passport holders, reflecting ongoing security concerns ([BBC](#)). The IDF has issued an evacuation order for Tehran ahead of planned strikes, indicating heightened military readiness ([Jerusalem Post](#)). The Israeli Defense Ministry will conduct a military exercise on Highway 35, and a Ukrainian drone attack on Moscow has forced the closure of an airport, underscoring the broader regional and international security tensions ([Jerusalem Post](#))([Jerusalem Post](#)).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

A recent U.S.-led meeting on the Gaza International Stabilization Force ended inconclusively, while the IDF reported 12 ceasefire violations by Gaza from December 4 to 18, highlighting the fragile nature of the ceasefire and ongoing hostilities ([Long War Journal](#)). Israeli military operations against Hezbollah in Lebanon continued between December 8 and 14, reflecting persistent security challenges on Israel's northern border ([Long War Journal](#)).

Hamas has publicly acknowledged the killing of its senior commander, Raed Saad, a significant development in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinian militant groups ([Long War Journal](#)). Meanwhile, European Union leaders gathered in Brussels to discuss the management of Russian assets amid ongoing geopolitical tensions ([Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#)).

Analyses and discussions continue on the complexities of combating terror, with some experts describing current efforts as "fighting terror with terror," and highlighting the challenges of misinformation and diplomatic maneuvering, including a so-called "Gaslighting Masterclass" taking place in Doha ([Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#))([Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#)).

Apostasy & Religious Developments



Reflecting on two decades of God's faithfulness, Christian leaders and communities continue to emphasize the importance of steadfastness in faith amid cultural shifts ([The Gospel Coalition](#)). Young men are being called to seek more than pragmatic advice, with renewed focus on spiritual formation and biblical manhood ([The Gospel Coalition](#)).

The year's best Christian music has been highlighted as a source of encouragement and worship, while the UniteUS movement is gaining momentum on college campuses, with thousands of students reportedly encountering Jesus through Elevation Rhythm's ministry ([The Gospel Coalition](#))([Crosswalk](#)).

Kirk Cameron has announced plans for a roundtable discussion on the doctrine of hell following recent criticism, demonstrating ongoing theological engagement within evangelical circles ([Crosswalk](#)). Meanwhile, Albert Mohler warns of a growing clash between Western civilization and the Islamic worldview, underscoring cultural and religious tensions ([Crosswalk](#)).

Persecution.org highlights stories of believers rising through faith amid trials, while Nicaragua has banned Bibles at border crossings, signaling increasingly restrictive measures on Christian expression ([Persecution.org](#)). A stable Christian community in Lebanon is deemed vital to the Middle East's future, underscoring the importance of religious minorities to regional peace ([Persecution.org](#)).

Biotechnology & Genetic Engineering

Scientists have discovered a novel method to slow aging at the cellular level, offering potential breakthroughs in longevity research ([Science Daily](#)). In a remarkable development, certain neurons, previously thought incapable of regrowth, have been shown to regenerate, restoring vision in experimental models ([Science Daily](#)).

Research has also revealed hidden dangers in the protective gear used by firefighters, prompting calls for improved safety standards ([Science Daily](#)). Studies on Moringa extracts demonstrate antifungal activity targeting *Candida auris*, a drug-resistant pathogen, opening new avenues for natural treatments ([Nature](#)).

Further research explores lipid metabolism in health and disease, while optimized extraction techniques for saponins from *Panax zingiberensis* show promise for medicinal applications ([Nature](#))([Nature](#)). In the biotech industry, BioMarin announced plans to acquire Amicus Therapeutics for \$4.8 billion, consolidating rare disease research efforts ([STAT News](#)).



Controversy surrounds gender-affirming care for transgender youth, with recent policy changes by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ending support for such treatments ([STAT News](#)). Lessons from the AIDS crisis continue to inform current research funding priorities in the United States ([STAT News](#)).

Pestilence & Global Health

A new approach to preventing gum disease has been developed that preserves beneficial bacteria, representing a shift from traditional treatments that indiscriminately kill oral microbes ([Science Daily](#)). Researchers have identified viral agents that may contribute to the persistence of long COVID symptoms, advancing understanding of this complex condition ([Science Daily](#)).

Studies show that children's anxiety and depression rates dropped rapidly following the reopening of schools after the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the importance of in-person education for mental health ([Science Daily](#)). The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) released its communicable disease threats report for week 51 of 2025, providing updates on current public health risks ([ECDC](#)).

Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic have prompted calls for enhanced crisis preparedness in Europe's public health laboratories, particularly for respiratory infectious diseases ([ECDC](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

Volcanic activity remains notable with eruptions or alerts at several volcanoes, including Fuego, Popocatépetl, Soputan, Talang, Merapi, Bromo, Semeru, and Lokon-Empung, reminding us of the earth's dynamic and sometimes destructive forces ([Volcano Discovery](#)). Earthquake activity was reported globally on December 19, 2025, including minor tremors near Pāhala, Hawaii, and in Alaska, underscoring ongoing seismic activity ([Volcano Discovery](#))([USGS](#))([USGS](#))([USGS](#)).

The Reventador volcano issued a volcanic ash advisory with frequent emissions reaching 15,000 feet, posing potential hazards to aviation and nearby populations ([Volcano Discovery](#)).

In space news, the Hubble Space Telescope captured images of galactic gas escaping from a galaxy, providing insights into cosmic processes ([NASA](#)). Observations of Betelgeuse and the Crab Nebula highlight stellar death and rebirth, reminding us of the Creator's ongoing



work in the universe ([NASA](#)).

Research conducted aboard the International Space Station has supported the development of a new FDA-approved cancer therapy, demonstrating the intersection of space exploration and medical advancement ([NASA](#)).

Global Macro & Geopolitics

Russian President Vladimir Putin taunted NATO's Prime Minister Mark Rutte by asserting that the United States does not view Russia as an enemy, reflecting ongoing diplomatic tensions and strategic posturing ([Politico](#)). Ukraine struck a Russian shadow fleet tanker in the Mediterranean for the first time, marking a significant escalation in the conflict between the two nations ([Politico](#)).

Putin criticized the European Union's attempt to seize Russian assets, calling it an attempted "robbery," underscoring the deepening rift between Russia and Western institutions ([Politico](#)). In Syria, a trial is underway addressing post-Assad era violence, while the U.S. Congress has ended sanctions imposed during Assad's regime, potentially opening the door to new investments ([France24](#))([France24](#)).

Iran has been described as experiencing a "blood rain" in the Persian Gulf, a metaphor highlighting ongoing regional tensions and conflict ([France24](#)). In Switzerland, citizens are revamping fallout shelters and turning to bunkers amid growing security concerns ([France24](#)).

Putin stated that it is up to Ukraine and its allies to end hostilities, placing responsibility on the opposing side for the continuation of the conflict ([France24](#)). The European Union agreed on a €90 billion loan package for Ukraine, though it notably excluded the use of seized Russian assets, reflecting divisions among member states ([France24](#))([BBC](#)).

South Africa remains defiant after the United States threatened consequences following a raid on a refugee center, highlighting ongoing tensions over migration and security ([BBC](#)). In Bangladesh, newspaper staff recalled "gasping for air" as their offices were set ablaze, indicating escalating violence against the press ([BBC](#)).

Analysis of the Trump 2.0 administration's National Security Strategy suggests potential shifts in the international order, while Cambodia and Thailand have expressed willingness to de-escalate border conflicts, with China's foreign minister playing a mediating role ([The Diplomat](#))([The Diplomat](#)).



The inclusion of the Rohingya people is identified as a true test of Myanmar's future democracy, emphasizing the importance of minority rights in political development ([The Diplomat](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

Archaeologists uncovered a rare 1,300-year-old lead pendant decorated with a menorah symbol north of the City of David, shedding light on Jewish heritage in the region ([City of David - News in Antiquities](#)). An Assyrian inscription dating from the First Temple period was also discovered, providing valuable historical context ([City of David - News in Antiquities](#)).

The largest dam in ancient Israel has been uncovered in the City of David, revealing advanced engineering capabilities of ancient civilizations ([City of David - News in Antiquities](#)). Additionally, a rare gold coin of Egyptian Queen Berenice II was found, highlighting the region's diverse historical connections ([City of David - News in Antiquities](#)).

Reflection

The unfolding events in Israel and the broader Middle East remind us of the persistent challenges faced by God's chosen land, where ancient history and modern conflict intersect. As believers, we are called to pray for peace and justice, trusting in God's sovereign plan amid geopolitical tensions and human frailty. The revival of faith expressions, such as the return of Christmas celebrations in Israel and the growth of campus ministries, offers hope that the light of Christ continues to shine even in difficult times.

In a world marked by rapid scientific advances and natural upheavals, we are reminded of God's creative power and sustaining grace. The discoveries in biotechnology and the wonders of the cosmos point to the intricate design of our Creator. At the same time, the ongoing struggles against disease, persecution, and conflict call us to steadfast prayer and compassionate action. May we seek wisdom and courage as we navigate these complex times, standing firm in faith and love.

- Pray for peace and protection over Israel and Jerusalem, that God's will would prevail in the land.
- Ask the Lord to strengthen and encourage persecuted Christians worldwide, especially in the Middle East and regions facing religious restrictions.



- Seek God's guidance for wisdom in scientific and medical advancements, that they would be used to heal and serve humanity according to His purposes.