



Global Watch Daily – December 31, 2025

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

Israel & Jerusalem

As 2025 draws to a close, Israel faces a complex mix of challenges and milestones. The Israeli population growth rate has dropped below 1 percent for the first time, accompanied by a decline in life expectancy, signaling demographic shifts that may impact future social and economic policies ([Times of Israel](#)). Tourism remains a bright spot, with 1.3 million visitors arriving in Israel this year, reflecting continued global interest in the Holy Land despite regional tensions ([JNS](#)).

Security concerns persist, highlighted by the Israeli Defense Forces' preparation to apply lessons learned from the October 7 Gaza war in 2026, aiming to strengthen defense capabilities ([JNS](#)). The Israeli High Court has halted the State Comptroller's investigation into the October 7 events, a decision that has stirred debate over accountability and governance ([JNS](#)).

On the international front, Israel's recognition of Somaliland as an independent state has sparked controversy, reflecting the delicate balance of diplomatic relations in the Horn of Africa and the broader geopolitical landscape ([BBC](#)). Meanwhile, tensions with Iran remain high as Tehran's chief prosecutor warns of a decisive response should ongoing protests destabilize the country, underscoring the volatility in the region ([Times of Israel](#)).

In the United States, New York City's mayor has acknowledged the persistent challenge of antisemitism, describing it as a test of the city's character following a recent report on Jewish hatred ([JNS](#)). This reflects a global concern for the safety and dignity of Jewish communities amid rising hate crimes.

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

Israeli military operations continue to focus on countering Hezbollah in Lebanon, with recent actions between December 22 and 28 aimed at curbing the group's capabilities ([Long War Journal](#)). In Gaza, Israel is rotating military units as a new phase of the ceasefire deal approaches, indicating ongoing strategic adjustments to maintain security and



stability in the area ([Long War Journal](#)).

Beyond Israel, the United States has conducted strikes against Islamic State targets in Nigeria, reflecting the global reach of counterterrorism efforts ([Long War Journal](#)). In Iraq, militias remain divided over disarming and accepting government control, posing challenges to national unity and security ([Long War Journal](#)).

The Libyan parliament speaker has declared a maritime deal with Turkey invalid but remains open to renegotiation, highlighting ongoing disputes over territorial waters and influence in the Mediterranean ([Long War Journal](#)). Meanwhile, Hamas signals confidence in maintaining power despite regional pressures, underscoring the persistent complexity of Palestinian governance ([FDD](#)).

Iranian protests continue into their third day amid economic turmoil, with calls from Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu that regime change will come from within, emphasizing internal dynamics over external intervention ([JNS](#)), ([FDD](#)).

Global Macro & Geopolitics

Globally, security concerns are heightened as Sydney enforces a heavy police presence for New Year's celebrations following a recent attack at Bondi Beach, reflecting ongoing vigilance against terrorism ([BBC](#)). In South America, a train crash near Machu Picchu has resulted in one death and numerous injuries, underscoring the challenges of infrastructure safety in tourist regions ([BBC](#)).

Europe faces economic and security issues as Bulgaria prepares to adopt the euro amid inflation concerns, while Germany reports a massive theft involving 30 million euros stolen from thousands of safes, highlighting vulnerabilities in financial security ([France24](#)), ([France24](#)).

In Asia, the geopolitical landscape is shifting with significant moves such as former U.S. President Trump inviting Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to the 2026 G20 Summit, signaling renewed engagement in Central Asia ([The Diplomat](#)). China's military is reportedly planning for combat operations in Latin America, reflecting expanding global ambitions and strategic considerations ([The Diplomat](#)).

Saudi Arabia has bombed a Yemeni port city over weapons shipments from the UAE to separatists, illustrating the ongoing proxy conflicts destabilizing the Arabian Peninsula ([FDD](#)). These developments underscore the fragility of peace and security in the Middle



East and beyond.

Pestilence & Global Health

Scientific advances continue to shed light on health challenges. Stanford researchers have uncovered mechanisms explaining why mRNA COVID vaccines can trigger heart inflammation, aiding efforts to improve vaccine safety ([Science Daily](#)). Additionally, new methods to prevent gum disease without harming beneficial bacteria offer promising dental health benefits ([Science Daily](#)).

Research into long COVID has identified viral suspects potentially fueling prolonged symptoms, contributing to a better understanding and treatment options ([Science Daily](#)). Encouragingly, children's anxiety and depression rates have dropped rapidly following school reopenings after the pandemic, highlighting the importance of in-person education for mental health ([Science Daily](#)).

Artificial intelligence has identified a surprising weak spot in monkeypox, which could revolutionize vaccine development and disease control strategies ([Science Daily](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

Several minor earthquakes have been recorded worldwide, including a magnitude 2.0 quake near Susanville, California, and a 4.4 magnitude tremor north-northwest of Tobelo, Indonesia, reminding us of the earth's dynamic nature ([USGS](#)), ([USGS](#)).

NASA continues to engage the public with scientific outreach, including the 2025 American Astronomical Society Town Hall and Hyperwall schedules, and festive messages such as the Curiosity rover's holiday postcard from Mars, inspiring awe at God's creation beyond Earth ([NASA](#)), ([NASA](#)).

The Chandra X-ray Observatory marked the New Year with images of the Champagne Cluster, showcasing the vastness and majesty of the cosmos, a reminder of the Creator's handiwork and the mysteries still to be explored ([NASA](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

Recent discoveries in the City of David continue to enrich our understanding of biblical history and archaeology. The latest antiquities unearthed there provide valuable insights into ancient Jerusalem's culture and heritage, affirming the enduring significance of this



sacred site ([City of David](#)).

Reflection

As we reflect on the closing of 2025, the world stands at a crossroads marked by conflict, scientific advancement, and spiritual challenges. The ongoing unrest in the Middle East and the shifting geopolitical landscape call us to pray for peace and wisdom for leaders. Meanwhile, scientific progress offers hope for healing and understanding, reminding us of the intricate design of God's creation.

In this season, Christians are called to be peacemakers and bearers of light in a world often shadowed by fear and division. Trusting in God's sovereignty, we can seek to support those who suffer and to advocate for justice and mercy in all nations.

- Pray for peace and stability in Israel and the broader Middle East, that God's protection would be upon His people.
- Lift up the leaders of nations, that they would govern with wisdom, justice, and humility before God.
- Ask for healing and hope for those affected by disease and trauma worldwide, trusting in God's restorative power.