



Global Watch Daily – January 18, 2026

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

Israel & Jerusalem

Pakistan and Jordan have confirmed their invitations to join former President Trump’s Gaza Board of Peace, indicating a complex engagement of regional actors—including some traditionally anti-Israel countries—in efforts to achieve a lasting resolution to the Palestine issue ([Times of Israel](#)). Meanwhile, U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi has pledged to seek the death penalty against those responsible for the killing of Israeli embassy staffers, underscoring ongoing concerns about antisemitism and security threats ([JNS](#)). Additionally, the Israel Defense Forces have issued evacuation orders for Tehran ahead of planned strikes, highlighting heightened tensions in the region ([Jerusalem Post](#)). The Syrian army’s recent seizure of the country’s largest oil field from Kurdish forces further alters the balance of power in the area ([BBC News](#)).

These developments coincide with the US-backed Gaza plan advancing into its second phase, marked by the unveiling of the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza and the Board of Peace. Both bodies aim to stabilize and demilitarize the territory following the October ceasefire ([Long War Journal](#)). The evolving geopolitical landscape is further complicated by former President Trump’s tariffs on European countries, which have provoked calls for unprecedented EU countermeasures, reflecting broader tensions between the US and its European allies ([Times of Israel](#)).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

The US military conducted a targeted airstrike in Syria that eliminated Al Qaeda leader Bilal Hasan al Jasim, who was linked to a deadly attack on US personnel last December, demonstrating ongoing counterterrorism efforts despite complex affiliations among militant groups ([Long War Journal](#)). Concurrently, the White House announced appointments to the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza and the Board of Peace, signaling a transition to the second phase of the Gaza ceasefire and efforts to stabilize the region amid continued IDF responses to armed gunmen ([Long War Journal](#)).



Washington's imposition of human rights sanctions against Tehran aims to curb regime brutality but faces significant challenges in halting ongoing repression, as protests continue to shape Iran's political landscape ([FDD](#)). Meanwhile, Chatham House Director Bronwen Maddox warns that the current geopolitical climate—marked by US policy shifts under President Trump—signals a potential end to the Western alliance and a revolutionary transformation in global power dynamics ([Chatham House](#)). These analyses highlight the fragility of international cooperation and the evolving nature of conflict and diplomacy in the Middle East.

Global Macro & Geopolitics

Tragic incidents continue to impact global communities, including a shopping mall fire in Karachi that claimed six lives and avalanches in the Austrian Alps that killed eight skiers amid heavy snowfall, underscoring the persistent risks posed by natural disasters ([BBC News](#)). The Netherlands celebrated National Tulip Day, marking the arrival of spring and showcasing its status as the world's largest tulip producer, reflecting cultural resilience amid global challenges ([France24](#)).

European governments have condemned US President Trump's tariff threats over Greenland, signaling tensions within transatlantic relations as multiple countries face proposed tariffs for opposing American control ([France24](#)). Meanwhile, economic analyses reveal how Western companies inadvertently helped create Chinese competitors like Labubu through branding and advertising practices, while South Korea's welfare state struggles to support its elderly population due to pension inadequacies and systemic inequalities ([The Diplomat](#); [The Diplomat](#)).

Pestilence & Global Health

Recent scientific advances reveal that a vitamin A byproduct may enable cancer cells to evade the immune system, but new drugs targeting this pathway show promise in enhancing immune responses and slowing tumor growth ([ScienceDaily](#)). Additionally, researchers at the University of Basel have developed a novel test that distinguishes antibiotics that truly kill bacteria from those that merely inhibit growth, offering potential for more precise treatments against infections such as tuberculosis ([ScienceDaily](#)).

In a striking real-world experiment, flu patients spending days indoors with healthy volunteers did not transmit the virus, underscoring the importance of ventilation and airflow in infection control ([ScienceDaily](#)). Meanwhile, research into Long COVID links



symptoms to inflammation, micro-clots, and disrupted metabolism, with emerging treatments showing early promise despite limited large-scale trials ([ScienceDaily](#)). Scientists have also discovered “migrions,” viral structures that enhance infection by delivering viral material collectively, challenging classic infection models ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Furthermore, new findings overturn previous concerns about the flu drug Tamiflu, showing it may reduce the risk of neuropsychiatric events in children with influenza rather than cause them ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

Recent seismic activity includes a magnitude 0.8 earthquake near The Geysers, California, and a magnitude 4.5 quake southeast of Sarangani, Philippines, as recorded by the USGS, indicating ongoing tectonic movements across diverse regions ([USGS](#); [USGS](#)). Additionally, NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope has captured images of newly forming stars shrouded in dust, providing fresh insights into stellar formation processes ([NASA](#)).

NASA’s SpaceX Crew-11 mission crew will discuss their International Space Station science expedition, highlighting ongoing human spaceflight research ([NASA](#)). Weather forecasts track winter weather and frigid temperatures, emphasizing the importance of preparedness during seasonal shifts ([weather.gov](#)). A smaller magnitude 1.8 earthquake was also reported near Chenega, Alaska, further illustrating the planet’s dynamic nature ([USGS](#)).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

Recent archaeological excavations in Jerusalem’s Qiryat Moshe neighborhood and Yotvata have uncovered significant findings spanning multiple historical periods. These projects, conducted under the auspices of the Israel Antiquities Authority and funded by local development and water companies, contribute to a deeper understanding of the region’s rich cultural heritage and historical continuity ([Israel Antiquities Authority](#)).

The extensive salvage excavations at Khirbat ‘Amra in the Be’er Sheva Valley revealed architectural remains and artifacts dating from the Hellenistic through Early Islamic periods, with additional discoveries from the Chalcolithic, Iron Age II, and Ottoman eras. This multiperiod site offers valuable insights into rural life and historical transitions in the region, representing one of the largest and most comprehensive archaeological undertakings in recent decades ([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.