

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 3, 2025 (Sh'vat 5, 5785)

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Israel-Hamas War 486 Days - Israel-Hamas Cease-fire Day 16, Netanyahu Extends Washington Visit to Saturday Due to 'Numerous Meeting Requests,'

- **ISRAEL:** Netanyahu departs to Washington ahead of meeting with Trump; Herzog, Lapid call for full hostage release-deal
- **WEST BANK:** Mahmoud Abbas spokesman: IDF's West Bank operation is 'ethnic cleansing,' must be stopped; Seventy killed since start of 2025
 - **GAZA:** IDF says it targeted vehicle that didn't pass through inspection point, breached cease-fire agreement in central Gaza
 - **ISRAEL:** Netanyahu departs to Washington ahead of meeting with Trump
 - **WEST BANK:** IDF says it struck buildings used as terrorist infrastructure in Jenin
- **GAZA:** IDF says it targeted vehicle that didn't pass through inspection point, breached cease-fire agreement in central Gaza

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Netanyahu Furious About Chaotic Handover of Israeli Hostages from Hamas; Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dropped the hammer in response to what he described as “shocking scenes” when terrorists released hostages on Thursday, January 30. Hamas released the Israeli and Thai hostages on Thursday. Still, Israeli President Isaac Herzog noted in a post on X that “the scenes of abuse and terror towards the hostages as they were transferred to the Red Cross were horrifying ...” Netanyahu also indicated there were “shocking scenes” when the hostages were released. The prime minister responded to this ordeal by ordering a delay in the planned release of terrorists, demanding assurance regarding the release of hostages, but his office later indicated that the demand had been satisfied. “Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, together with Defense Minister Israel Katz, has ordered that the release of the terrorists slated to be released today be delayed until the safe exit of our hostages in the next phases is assured. Israel demands that the mediators see to this,” the office noted on X. “Pursuant to Netanyahu’s demand, the mediators conveyed a commitment, according to which the safe exit of our hostages who are due to be released in the next phases has been assured.” It added, “Israel insists that the lessons be learned and that strict care be taken in the next phases regarding the safe return of our hostages.” Hamas released eight hostages on Thursday, three Israelis – Agam Berger, Gadi Moses, Arbel Yehud - and five Thais. (FN/VFI News)

Medical Concerns for the Released Hostages, Arbel Yehud Was Mostly in Isolation for 482 Days; The prolonged captivity of hostages in Gaza, lasting approximately 18 months, has raised significant concerns about their health. Reports indicate that their diet consisted mainly of bread, and limited portions of rice, and there have even been suspicions of them being forced to drink seawater in place of potable water. Hostages endured harsh hygienic conditions, a complete lack of sunlight, and insufficient basic nutrition. These conditions fail to meet the human body’s fundamental needs, especially over such an extended period, leading to multi-system damage and severe health deterioration. A lack of sunlight over an extended period results in severe vitamin D deficiency. This essential vitamin helps maintain bone health by regulating calcium and phosphorus levels. Prolonged deficiency causes bone mass loss, an increased risk of fractures, impairs immune function, increased susceptibility to infections, and has been linked to autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis. Furthermore, released hostage Arbel Yehud, was held captive in solitary confinement for 482 days, and she described the harsh conditions of her captivity with very little food and being held mostly underground, Israeli media reported. According to the report, she suffers from malnutrition and the terrorists treated her cruelly. The first thing she said to those who met her was, “I was mostly alone.” Arbel was exposed to very little media during her captivity, but what little she was exposed to include the fact that her brother Dolev was murdered in the Hamas attack on her community. (JPost/VFI News)

Terrorist Who Planned to Assassinate Ben Gvir Released; Terrorist Rashid Al-Rashq, who planned to assassinate former minister Itamar Ben Gvir, was released on Thursday, January 30, from prison, as part of the hostage deal between Israel and Hamas. Ben Gvir said in response, “The release of the terrorist Rashid Al-Rashq, who planned to assassinate me and carry out additional attacks in the Old City of Jerusalem, along with the disturbing list of terrorists who were released with him as part of the shameful deal – including the murderer from Jenin Zakaria Zubeidi, who returns to the center of terror, and Attallah, the rapist who is released a short drive from the home of the prison guard he raped, alongside a long list of murderers and rapists - is a badge of shame of surrender and of a reckless agreement.” Zakaria Zubeidi, the former commander of Fatah’s Al Aqsa Martyr's Brigade in the Jenin area, was once on Israel’s most wanted list and confessed to a terrorist attack that killed six people in 2002. In 2007, he accepted a 2007 Israeli offer of amnesty in exchange for renouncing terrorism. However, he was arrested in 2019 for committing and planning multiple shooting attacks. A total of 110 terrorists were released on Thursday, in exchange for the three Israeli hostages, IDF soldier Agam Berger, and civilians Arbel Yehud and Gadi Mozes. 33 of them were sentenced to life imprisonment, 47 terrorists were sentenced to various prison terms, and 30 young and female terrorists were set to be released. Some of the terrorists will be deported to foreign countries or the Gaza Strip and will not enter the territories of Israel or Judea and Samaria. (INN/VFI News)

Shocking: Gaza Child Recites ISIS Founder's Vow to Destroy Israel; A Qatari-based news outlet published a video of a child in northern Gaza reciting by heart a speech given by former ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi vowing to destroy Israel and the Jewish people. “We are getting closer to you day by day. Do not think that we have forgotten about you. God caused the Jews of the world to gather in Israel, and the war against them has become easy. It is the obligation of every Muslim to carry out Jihad, Jews, you will not enjoy in Palestine. God has gathered you in Palestine so that the Mujahadeen can reach you soon and you will hide by the rock and the tree. Palestine will be your graveyard,” the boy said, reciting word for word a speech given by al-Baghdadi in 2015. The IDF stated on Tuesday, January 28, that tens of thousands of Gazans have returned to northern Gaza so far this week under the ceasefire agreement, a fraction of the 300,000 people the Hamas terrorist organization has claimed relocated north. Israel delayed the beginning of the return of Gazans to the northern part of the enclave after the Hamas terrorist organization violated the ceasefire agreement by failing to release civilian hostage Arbel Yehud last week. The return of residents to northern Gaza was approved after Hamas agreed to release Arbel and two other hostages this Thursday. (INN/VFI News)

Report: Trump to Sign Executive Order for Deportation of Anti-Semites; US President Donald Trump was expected to sign an executive order on Wednesday, January 29, instructing federal authorities to act to combat antisemitism, including by deporting anti-Semites who commit criminal acts, renowned American media reported. According to the report, the order will give federal agencies 60 days to present plans to deal with antisemitism in places such as college campuses. It also calls for the deportation of non-citizens who commit illegal acts while protesting against Israel in the aftermath of the Hamas massacre of October 7, even if they have student visas. Trump did sign the order which directed several agencies, including the State and Education Departments, to guide colleges to “report activities by alien students and staff” that could be considered anti-Semitic or supportive of terrorism so that those students or staff members could be investigated and/or deported. “To all the resident aliens who joined in the pro-jihadist protests, we put you on notice: come 2025, we will find you, and we will deport you,” Trump stated in a fact sheet on the executive order. “I will also quickly cancel the student visas of all Hamas sympathizers on college campuses, which have been infested with radicalism like never before.” (INN/VFI News)

New Zealand Activists Open Hotline to 'Track Down' Visiting IDF Soldiers; New Zealand anti-Israel activists opened a hotline to track down IDF soldiers and reservists visiting the country, Palestine

Solidarity Network Aotearoa (PSNA) announced, causing outrage this week among politicians and Jewish community groups. Activists can call a phone number if they come across Israeli soldiers or reservists holidaying in the country, according to a PSNA newsletter. “Israeli soldiers should not enjoy rest and recreation from genocide in New Zealand,” PSNA said in the newsletter. “We need your help to track them down so we can let them know they are not welcome here.” PSNA National Chair John Minto said on Facebook that the “genocide hotline” was part of holding Israel and the New Zealand government to account for “the most horrendous war crimes [of] the 21st century.” The announcement hotline was met by enthused supporters, Minto said on social media on Tuesday, January 28, asserting that it would save Palestinian lives by sending a message to Israel that the Western world does not accept its alleged war crimes. (*JPost/VFI News*)

Saudi-Israel Talks Nearing Breakthrough, Says New Israeli Ambassador to US; Israel is “closer than ever” to normalization with Saudi Arabia, Israel’s newly appointed ambassador to the US revealed in an exclusive interview with Israeli media. The development will be a “game changer for the region and beyond,” Yechiel Leiter predicted. Leiter, who officially began his role on Friday, January 24, described normalization with Riyadh as part of a broader strategic realignment in the Middle East following the decline of Hamas, Hezbollah, and other Iranian proxies. “We’re closer to Saudi Arabia because we’ve degraded Hamas,” he said. “The fall of [Syrian leader Bashar al-]Assad and the weakening of Iran’s influence have brought us to a moment of opportunity.” The ambassador linked the potential agreement to Israel’s recent military successes. “There are few countries in the world, aside from Israel, that want to see Hamas degraded more than Saudi Arabia,” Leiter explained. “Wherever the Muslim Brotherhood is compromised, moderation can rise. We’ve seen this in Egypt, Sudan, and Turkey. Saudi Arabia recognizes that defeating these elements is crucial to its own modernization.” (*JPost/VFI News*)

Dutch Seismologist Warns of Potential Earthquake in Middle East; Dutch seismologist Frank Hoogerbeets, who “predicted” an earthquake in Turkey in February 2023, warned of a major earthquake expected in the Middle East in a YouTube video posted on Friday, January 17. According to Hoogerbeets, a planetary alignment involving Mercury, Earth, Mars, and other planets on February 24 could bring significant seismic activity, possibly resulting in an earthquake that could reach a magnitude of 7.8 or higher. “It is not unthinkable that it could happen in the coming time frame. I’m not saying that it will happen, but there is the potential. And these atmospheric anomalies are pretty close,” he stated, emphasizing heightened risks in regions such as eastern Turkey and Iran, where earthquakes of 6 to 7 magnitude are possible. “It does not happen often, but if you are in Iran, be on extra alert as well,” he added. Israeli earthquake experts, however, emphasized that preparations for a major earthquake should rely on established geological data rather than speculative methods, Israeli media reported. (*JPost/VFI News*)

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Robert I. Solomon: Messianic Rabbi

Jeffery Blalock: Ministries Coordinator, jeffery@yachad.com

Yachad Ministries, 950 Pine Grove Road, Roswell, Georgia 30075

E-mail: info@yachad.com, Web Page: <https://www.yachad.com>

Phone: 770-641-3000 (ext. 6)

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