

This Week's Developments

2024-12-29; 2025-01-11; **2025-01-18**

- Israel approves Gaza ceasefire / hostage release deal
- Ceasefire may stop the killing but won't end conflict*
- Israel mulls new security zone in Syria to protect Golan
- Putin reassures African ally after overthrow of Assad
- Trump wants a Nobel peace prize for a Ukraine deal
- Putin and Iran's president sign 20-year defense pact*
- *Additional & Supporting Articles*

Map 1

Map 2

Map 3

Israel's cabinet approves Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal

BBC, January 17, 2025



EVENT

Israel's government has approved the new Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal with Hamas, paving the way for it to take effect on Sunday. The decision came after hours of discussions that continued late into the night. Two far-right ministers voted against the deal. The security cabinet earlier recommended ratifying the agreement, saying it "supports the achievement of the objectives of the war", according to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office. **Under the deal, 33 Israeli hostages still held by Hamas in Gaza after 15 months of conflict will be exchanged for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails during the first phase lasting six weeks.** Israeli forces will also withdraw from densely populated areas of Gaza, displaced Palestinians will be allowed to begin returning to their homes. Negotiations for the second phase - which should see the remaining hostages released, and a full Israeli troop withdrawal.

COMMENT

Israel says 94 of the hostages are still being held by Hamas, of whom 34 are presumed dead. Israel's main aim now is to bring those hostages home. 33 are due to be released on the first day of the ceasefire. One thing that is certain is whatever happens Hamas will not be allowed to rule Gaza and it will be fully dismantled. Trump and Netanyahu have both made that clear. Which means this conflict is not over. The hostage release is interesting with Bible in hand. In Genesis 14 we have an allegory playing out right now. Abraham's relatives are taken captive by an Iranian king and his allies. Abraham defeats the Iranian forces and brings back all the captives. A peace deal is made between Abraham and local kings. Then he meets Melchizedek who is a type of Christ. This is all playing out right now. My recent talk on Damascus covers this. [CLICK HERE](#) to watch.

BIBLE QUOTE

When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men ...went in pursuit as far as Dan. ..**He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.** After Abram returned from defeating Chedorlaomer the Elamite and the kings allied with him, *(Genesis 14:14-17 NLT)*

Ceasefire may stop the killing but won't end the conflict

BBC, January 15, 2025



EVENT

The first big challenge is making sure that the ceasefire holds. Senior western diplomats fear that after the first phase of 42 days the war could resume. The Gaza war has had immense consequences across the Middle East. It did not, as many feared, lead to a general war in the region. Hamas is still able to fight but it is a shadow of what it was. After Hezbollah in Lebanon intervened in the war, it was, eventually, crushed by an Israeli offensive. That was a factor that led to the collapse of the Assad regime in Syria. Iran and Israel exchanged direct attacks – weakening Iran. Its network of allies and proxies that Tehran called the Axis of Resistance has been crippled. The Houthis in Yemen have halted much of the shipping between Europe and Asia that passes the Red Sea. Now reports say that they have announced their own ceasefire. But the conflict which has lasted more than a century is as bitter and intractable as ever.

COMMENT

Could this current ceasefire be the time of peace and security that we expect to happen with Bible in hand. Or is there more conflict coming between Israel and her nearby enemies. The answer to that is that there is more conflict to come. But it shows us that Israel's enemies are all on the back foot and incredibly weakened. But key events are still to happen. Firstly, Damascus will be removed from being a city and this happens before Russia comes down. Also, Jordan is yet to be drawn into the conflict. Finally, the pricking briers still exist although greatly weakened. Joel 3 explains that some in Gaza are to be deported to Yemen. This is also still to happen. So this ceasefire isn't the end. Trump's national security adviser said yesterday, " *Hamas is not going to continue as a military entity and it's certainly not going to govern Gaza.:* There is more war to come

BIBLE QUOTE

And there shall be **no more a pricking brier** unto the house of Israel, **nor any grieving thorn** of all that are round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

(Ezekiel 28:24)

Israel mulling new security zone in Syria to protect Golan

World Israel News, January 12, 2025



EVENT

Senior Israeli officials said Thursday that Israel will need to maintain an operational presence 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) wide inside Syrian territory to ensure the safety of Golan Heights residents. Moreover, they said that a full 60-km radius of influence under the control of Israeli intelligence is also required to prevent potential threats such as missile launchings from emerging from the surrounding areas. “We’re building an operational concept for this new reality,” said one official, who expressed amazement that Western countries, including the U.S., are rushing to have a relationship with the Muslim extremist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) group that felled the decades-long Ba’athist regime last month. These democracies were purposefully “choosing to be blind” when dealing with “some of the most dangerous people in the world,” who hail from ISIS and al-Qaida, groups whose stated goal is to brutally install a Muslim caliphate wherever they gain power.

COMMENT

The IDF has also bombed and destroyed much of Syria’s most dangerous weapons and air defence, its entire navy and a vital missile-producing facility, and continues operations as needed, which the new Syrian regime says should stop immediately. It is interesting how Israel is creating a new and very deep buffer zone into Syria itself around the Golan Heights. All this shows how conflict with Syria itself will still happen at some point. Israel does not trust in anyway shape or form the new Islamic leaders in Syria as they are an offshoot from ISIS! The Golan Heights is mentioned in the Bible with regards the time of the end. In Isaiah 2, speaking of the coming “day of the LORD”, it names two places it comes upon initially. Lebanon and Bashan (the Golan Heights).

BIBLE QUOTE

For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, Bashan is the Golan Heights

(Isaiah 2:12-13)

Putin reassures African ally after overthrow of Assad

The Times, January 16, 2025

Russian influence in blue



EVENT

President Putin has sought to reassure a key African ally that he can rely on the Kremlin's military assistance after Russia failed to prevent the collapse of the Assad regime in Syria. President Touadéra of the Central African Republic (CAR) has been propped up by mercenaries from Russia's Wagner Group since 2018, when they were deployed to the diamond and gold-rich African country. Touadéra visited Moscow on Thursday to discuss issues including "quite sensitive ones related to maintaining security", Dmitry Peskov, the Kremlin's spokesman, said. In 2023, Wagner forces helped Touadéra to stage and claim victory at a referendum that removed restrictions on presidential term limits. The referendum took place despite rebel forces controlling large parts of the country and a third of the population being displaced by fighting.

COMMENT

Assad's demise has damaged Moscow's "global image as a reliable ally, threatening its influence with African autocrats whom Russia seeks to support", according to a report by the Institute for the Study of War, a US think tank. Putin therefore is looking to strengthen his position in Africa. With Russian forces and bases on the back foot in Syria, Putin is looking for more influence in Libya, Sudan and the Central African Republic - which borders Sudan. Russia had a major naval base in Tartus in Syria which is seriously under threat following the fall of Assad and Russia wants to build a new base in Libya. Putin's influence in Africa is through his own private mercenary army called the Wagner Group. Putin controls this group and funds and arms it. With Bible in hand we know Russia is allied to nations in northern Africa and they also invade Israel with Russia in the future. Russia's involvement in these nations is highly significant.

BIBLE QUOTE

And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya [Sudan] with them; all of them with shield and helmet:
(Ezekiel 38:4-5)

What Trump wants from a Ukraine deal: the Nobel peace prize

The Times, January 17, 2025



EVENT

Donald Trump has abandoned talk of solving the Ukraine conflict on his first day in office in favour of finding a durable peace that would secure his own place in history and a Nobel peace prize. The incoming US president still wants a quick end to the war and is hoping to persuade both sides to agree to a ceasefire as soon as possible, but has acknowledged that it will take up to six months to forge a meaningful settlement. After he and President Macron of France held talks with President Zelensky in Paris last month, there are suggestions that a meeting between Trump and President Putin may happen within weeks. One factor fuelling Trump's more realistic approach is a belief that success will make an irrefutable case for the Nobel award he already believes he deserves from his first term for the 2020 Abraham Accords, under which the Arab nations UAE and Bahrain recognised Israel.

COMMENT

Trump wants a Nobel Peace prize. His predecessor Barack Obama was awarded one and Trump felt he should have had one for the Abraham Accords. There are three key objectives Trump has to try and secure this prize. He wants to expand the Abraham accords in his second term to include Saudi Arabia, as well as pushing for a lasting peace in Ukraine and implement a lasting truce between Israel and Gaza. Ukraine is probably top of the list. It is a war that has raged for 3 years with over 400,000 people killed or wounded. Trump holds the military keys to bring the war to an end but it still needs a negotiation with Putin. With Bible in hand we can expect a peace deal that will give Putin what he wants - the Donbass region of Ukraine. The last piece of Magog!

BIBLE QUOTE

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, **of the land of Magog**, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, **The and of Magog included the Donbass region of Ukraine. By the way – it NEVER included the anything further into central Europe.** (Ezekiel 38:1-2)

Putin and Iran's president deepen defence ties with 20-year pact

Reuters, January 17, 2025

PEZESHKIAN AND PUTIN
FORGE STRATEGIC PATH



EVENT

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian deepened military ties between their countries on Friday by signing a 20-year strategic partnership that is likely to worry the West. **Under the agreement, Russia and Iran will boost cooperation in a range of areas including their security services, military drills, warship port visits and joint officer training.** Neither will allow their territory to be used for any action that threatens the other and will provide no help to an aggressor attacking either nation, according to the text, which also said they would work together to counter military threats. Pezeshkian, on his first Kremlin visit since winning the presidency last July, hailed the treaty as an important new chapter in bilateral relations, while Putin said Moscow and Tehran shared many views on international affairs. "This (treaty) creates better conditions for bilateral cooperation in all areas," said Putin, emphasising the upside for economic ties and trade, which he said was mostly carried out in the two countries' own currencies.

COMMENT

Russia and Iran are getting ever closer and this week (on Friday) they signed a new agreement that aligns them even further militarily. Putin said Russia regularly informed Iran about what was going on in the Ukraine conflict and that they closely consulted on events in the Middle East and the South Caucasus region. Russia and Iran were the main military allies of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who fled to Moscow after being toppled last month. In Ezekiel 38 there are a list of nations that are allied to Russia. First on the list is.... IRAN! We also read that Russia acts as a "guard" to Iran. A protector. And here we have Russia protecting Iran and lining up militarily with it...

BIBLE QUOTE

Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: (Ezekiel 38:7-8)

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- 2025: Ukraine's war could reach its endgame*
- 25 years of Putin: how he turned Russia 'upside down'
- Russia will abandon its unilateral missile moratorium
- Israel prepares to rain fire and fury on the Houthis
- Syria's place in Middle East: Assad's legacy of turmoil*
- Russia is making a fragile pivot from Syria to Libya
- **Israel's Biblical Map Sparks Fresh Tension With Jordan***
- *Additional & Supporting Articles*

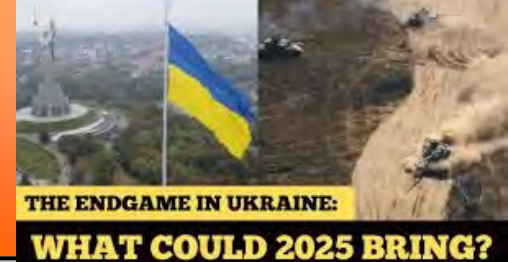
Map 1

Map 2

Map 3

2025: Ukraine's war could reach its endgame

The iPaper, December 26, 2024



EVENT

The recent tempo of Russian combat operations in Ukraine, in which its casualties have reached record levels, suggest that Moscow is trying to ensure that the front line is in the most advantageous position possible when Trump is inaugurated in January, in case he moves quickly to impose a ceasefire which would fix the front lines. In theory, Putin should want some kind of peace. Of course, he has not achieved his original goals of installing a puppet regime in Kyiv. However, **if left in control of a sizeable swathe of southern and eastern Ukraine**, including the crucial ‘land bridge’ to Crimea, and able to force humiliating terms on his enemies such as a ten-year moratorium on Nato membership, then he may be content. This is something he can spin as a victory: “saving” the Russian-speaking communities of the Donbas and staving off the threat of Nato expansion.

COMMENT

Trump comes to power in a few weeks time and has in the past claimed that he would be able to settle the war in Ukraine within 24 hours. America holds the key for how long Ukraine can continue to fight as the US supplies the majority of weaponry they are using. Trump could threaten to up military support to Ukraine if Moscow doesn't accept a ceasefire and threaten Ukraine with a reduction of support if Kyiv doesn't accept it. Putin could be looking for a ramp off. A recent survey found that 79 per cent of Russian respondents would support Putin if he decided to end the war immediately and sign a peace deal with Ukraine. Putin will almost certainly get to keep the Donbas region which we have shown over the years is the final piece of the original land of Magog. For Russia to invade Israel the Ukraine war must have reached some negotiated standoff.

BIBLE QUOTE

For **when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh** upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

(1 Thessalonians 5:3-5)

25 years of Putin: how an ex-KGB agent turned Russia 'upside down'

The Times, December 29, 2024



EVENT

Boris Yeltsin had earned a reputation for the unexpected. Yet he saved one of his biggest surprises for last. “I am leaving. I have done all I could,” President Yeltsin said, slurring his words in a televised New Year address in 1999, as the world prepared to celebrate the new millennium. **Waiting in the wings was Yeltsin’s handpicked successor, an ex-KGB officer and former FSB security service chief named Vladimir Putin.** Although Putin had been prime minister for just four months. “The freedom of speech, the freedom of conscience, the freedom of the media and property rights, these fundamental principles of a civilized society will be protected by the state,” Putin vowed, as he addressed the nation for the first time as president. It was a promise that Putin would break repeatedly over the next 25 years as **he led Russia into a spiralling stand-off with the West and engulfed his own country in a wave of political terror that has not been seen since Stalin’s purges.**

COMMENT

On the final day of the millennium Boris Yeltsin resigned as president of Russia and handed the country over to Putin. Putin had only been given the job as prime minister a few months before. He had been plucked from almost total obscurity by Yeltsin and was “crowned” as ruler of Russia just months later. Daniel 8 speaks of this exact situation. We read “a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does.” Notice that the king (latter day king of the north) will become strong but NOT by his own power. Putin had no previous power. He was handed it. Notice too that he causes astounding devastation and succeeds. Putin has done all this.

BIBLE QUOTE

a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. **He will become very strong, but not by his own power.** He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people. He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many

(Daniel 8:23-25 NIV)

Russia will abandon its unilateral missile moratorium, Lavrov says

Reuters, December 29, 2024



EVENT

Russia will scrap a proposed moratorium on the deployment of short- and medium-range missiles as the United States started to deploy such weapons, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in an interview with RIA news agency published on Sunday. "We are assessing the situation on the basis of an analysis of the destabilising actions of the United States and NATO in the strategic sphere and, accordingly, the evolution of the threats that arise from them," Lavrov said. "Today it is clear that, for example, our moratorium on the deployment of short- and medium-range missiles is no longer practically viable and will have to be abandoned. The U.S. has arrogantly ignored the warnings of Russia and China and in practice has moved on to the deployment of weapons of this class in various regions of the world." Washington withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty in 2019. Russia has since said it will not deploy such weapons provided that Washington does not.

COMMENT

The Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed by Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in 1987, marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals and eliminated a whole category of nuclear weapons. The US under former president Donald Trump formally withdrew from the INF Treaty in 2019 after saying that Moscow was violating the accord, an accusation the Kremlin repeatedly denied and dismissed as a pretext. We have seen over the last few years a number of treaties like this come to an end. These treaties have created a form of stability for decades but as they unravel so the risks of wider war increase. Russia has threatened repeatedly to use nuclear weapons. The gentile nations prepare for war....

BIBLE QUOTE

Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

(Joel 3:9-10)

Israel prepares to rain fire and fury on the Houthis

The Times, December 31, 2024



EVENT

For a brief moment as Lebanon and Israel signed a ceasefire pact a little over a month ago, the Middle East appeared to have stepped away from the abyss of all-out war. Yet now Israel is weighing its next battle against Iran's last proxy standing: the Houthi rebels of Yemen, who are in the firing line despite being more than a thousand miles from Tel Aviv. **The Iranian proxies that surrounded Israel have fallen in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and even Iraq**, where Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the leading Shia cleric, recently urged Baghdad to achieve military autonomy in a thinly veiled reproach to its Iran-backed militia. Extinguishing this ring of fire around Israel has left Iran exposed, with no air defence systems and signs of deep Israeli infiltration. **The destruction of Hezbollah, Iran's insurance policy that surrounded Israel with 150,000 rockets on their northern border, has left the regime without its most fearsome deterrent.**

COMMENT

It is amazing to read in the Times newspaper on the last day of 2024 that the *"Iranian proxies that surrounded Israel have fallen in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and even Iraq."* Who would have thought this could have happened? But with Bible in hand we have said for many years that this would happen. The inner ring war - Psalm 83 and Zechariah 12 - told us in advance that Israel would be like a burning torch that burned up the surrounding enemies of Israel left and right. It isn't over yet though. There is undoubtedly more to come which will lead to a ceasefire and a possible peace agreement. It is then that Russia decides to invade. But until then Israel appears determined to also take on the Houthis in Yemen - it may also decide to attack Iran itself. We wait to see....

BIBLE QUOTE

"On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. **They will consume all the surrounding peoples right and left**, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place.

(Zechariah 12:6 NIV)

Syria's place in Middle East: Assad's Legacy of Turmoil

The Times, January 2, 2025



EVENT

After 50 years of isolation, 13 years of civil war and brutal repression by the Assad family and with the ruined country struggling to find order, stability and reconciliation, Syria is again at a turning point. **What happens in Damascus and across the shattered mosaic of its factions will largely determine the combustible politics of the entire Middle East.** There are desperate hopes that a functioning system of government can be put in place before other extremist groups exploit the power vacuum to seize power and establish a new vicious dictatorship. There is no guarantee that any of these hopes will be fulfilled. Other factors are compounding the turmoil: the discovery of the torture cells and sadism by many of Assad's henchmen, fuelling a clamour for revenge; the awkward talks on the future of Russia's naval and air bases; and the quick occupation by Israel of the buffer zone next to the Golan Heights and the bombing of Syrian military assets.

COMMENT

The West is hoping beyond hope that Syria now enters a time of reconciliation and peace - the horrors of the last 13 years come to an end and a democratic, pro West government is installed and all the warring factions lay down their weapons ushering a time of security for the war torn country. But this is indeed a hope beyond hope. The Bible says something very different is in store for Damascus and Syria. It says that Damascus will cease to be a city. The very fact Damascus exists today is proof this prophecy has not been fulfilled. It also says Syria will end as a nation. It says that all the men of war will be killed in one day in Damascus. It also says Israel will be caught up in this and northern Israel will be greatly weakened at the same time. Syria will become a great void and it will be into this void that Russia and its allies enter and then into Israel.

BIBLE QUOTE

A prophecy against Damascus: "See, Damascus will no longer be a city but will become a heap of ruins. The cities of Aroer [in Jordan] will be deserted and left to flocks, which will lie down, with no one to make them afraid. The fortified city will disappear from Ephraim [northern Israel], and royal power from Damascus;

(Isaiah 17:1-3 NIV)

Russia is making a fragile pivot from Syria to Libya

Atlantic Council, January 2, 2025



EVENT

The fall of Damascus last month marks a shift of historic proportions. Once a centerpiece of Russia's reassertion on the global stage, Syria now starkly illustrates the fragility of alliances built on coercion and convenience. For Moscow, this collapse is not merely a setback but an opportunity to adapt—an effort already underway as its forces and equipment pivot southward in the Mediterranean. **Russia's relocation of troops and hardware to eastern Libya signals a strategic recalibration**, with Libyan National Army (LNA) Commander Khalifa Haftar waiting in Cyrenaica, hedging his bets. This shifting terrain—from the ruins of Assad's Damascus to Haftar's contested Libya—reveals a deeper logic in Russian foreign policy. It is not about replacing one proxy with another but about continuity. While Moscow's role in Syria may be evolving rather than disappearing, the shifting dynamics surrounding its use as a launchpad to Africa only underscore Libya's importance—not as a fallback, but as part of a long-standing strategy to expand Moscow's strategic foothold in the region and project power beyond it.

COMMENT

In the weeks since Bashar al-Assad was ousted as Syrian leader, Russia has launched multiple flights to an airbase in the Libyan desert. Flight-tracking data show more than one flight a day since mid-December – by Moscow's giant Antonov AN-124 transport planes, as well as Ilyushin IL-76 aircraft – from Hmeimim to al-Khadim, a base near Benghazi in eastern Libya. With Syria in turmoil (and Russian bases there uncertain) Moscow's is looking for an alternative country to retain its military presence in the Mediterranean. And that country is Libya. And this is amazing because Libya is one of the nations listed that join Russia in invading Israel in the future - along with others...

BIBLE QUOTE

And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, **and Libya with them**; all of them with shield and helmet:
(Ezekiel 38:4-5)

Israel's Biblical Map Sparks Fresh Tension With Jordan & Arab Countries

Times of Israel, January 09, 2025



EVENT

A map of the biblical land of Israel published by the official Israel Arabic account on X earlier this week has drawn condemnation from neighboring Jordan. The map, published on Monday by Israel Arabic, highlighted the boundaries of the historic kingdoms of Israel and Judah in 928 BC, which encompassed part of modern-day Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, as well as areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. "Did you know that the Kingdom of Israel existed 3,000 years ago?" read the accompanying text, which offered a summary of the divide between Israel and Judah. "This division led to political conflicts throughout the history of the people of Israel, and its effects continued for hundreds of years," Israel Arabic wrote. "However, the Jewish people in the diaspora continued to look forward to the revival of their powers and capabilities, and the rebuilding of their state, which was declared in the State of Israel in 1948 to become the only democracy in the Middle East." The Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs nevertheless a scathing response to the illustration on Tuesday. Jordan has often denied or downplayed the Jewish history of the region, and in particular, the Jewish connection to Jerusalem's Temple Mount, managed in part by Jordan.

COMMENT

The push-back on this map by Jordan and Arab states speaks volumes regarding the situation that Israel has to face every day. It is a denial of history by surrounding nations has led to the violence that is so characteristic of the region. It is remarkable that MORE than 3000 years ago the original and current title holder (Creator of the Universe) declared that the land covered by that map - and more - is HIS land; HE controls it, who lives in it and who uses it. He gave the right of occupation to the Israelites as per Lev 25:2,23 (below) Every time those terms and conditions have been violated, the result is anarchy and human suffering. Likewise about the "2 state solution", the same title holder has issued an ominous warning to any and all nations that attempt to divide it...

BIBLE QUOTE

Lev 25:2,23 (NLT) - "When you have entered the land I am giving [assigning] you, the land must never be sold on a permanent basis, **for the land belongs to me**. You are only foreigners and tenant farmers working for me."

Joel 3:2 (NLT) - "I will judge them for **harming my special possession... and for dividing (surveying) up my land**."

This Week's Developments

2024-12-29; 2025-01-11; 2025-01-18

- Syria general fears return of Islamic State
- Iran 'considers airborne supply routes for proxy forces'
- New Damascus leaders call for cordial ties with Israel*
- Israeli jets bombard Houthi rebel targets in Yemen
- Putin antisemitic accusation after 'ethnic Jews' speech*
- Russia warns Trump: Do not test nuclear weapon
- Insurance risks will be a proxy carbon tax*
- *Additional & Supporting Articles*

Map 1

Map 2

Map 3

Syria general wants unity — but fears return of Islamic State

The Times, December 24, 2024



EVENT

Islamic State is ready to rise again from the Syrian desert as it seeks to exploit the fall of Assad with a new wave of attacks, according to the leader of the country's western-backed troops. The warning from General Mazloum Abdi, head of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), comes amid fears that the jihadists could capitalise on the chaos and the growing spectre of a second civil war in the country's east. The SDF helped bring to an end Isis's so-called caliphate in 2019, but Abdi said remnants of the group were now looking to benefit from a security vacuum after Bashar Al-Assad was toppled this month. The SDF, supported by the United States, Britain and other western countries, is in a confrontation with Turkey, which backs Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the rebel group that has seized Damascus and most of Syria. As HTS and the SDF square off in eastern Syria, fears are growing that Isis will rise again.

COMMENT

Syria is a boiling pot of rebel groups all of which are Islamic and most are classed as terrorist groups. ISIS still exists as a group and in amongst the turmoil and the removal of Assad there is a growing fear that they will take advantage of the void that has been left. The US has long warned that ISIS has an "army in waiting" in prisons and camps in Syria. As well as pockets of ISIS there is the Syrian opposition led by HTS (who are in control of from Aleppo down to Damascus. Then there's Turkish backed Syrian rebels and Turkish military in the north. Then there are Kurdish forces backed by the US. Then there's the army left over from the Assad regime. There are also many other smaller groups of militants and rebels as well. It is from this maelstrom of armed rebels and terrorists the West hopes peace will reign. The Bible says Syria will fail as a nation....

BIBLE QUOTE

See, **Damascus will no longer be a city** but will become a heap of ruins. The cities of Aroer will be deserted and left to flocks, which will lie down, with no one to make them afraid. The fortified city will **disappear** from Ephraim, and **royal power from Damascus**;

(Isaiah 17:1-2 NIV)

Iran ‘considers airborne supply routes for proxy forces’

The Times, December 22, 2024



EVENT

Iran is contemplating smuggling weapons to its proxy group Hezbollah by flying them into Lebanon after the fall of the Assad government in Syria, the Times has learnt. Direct flights from Tehran’s international airport to Beirut resumed a few days ago but are no longer flying over Syrian airspace after rebels took power in Damascus. The overland routes that previously carried Iranian rockets and other arms to Hezbollah via Syria have been disrupted, which means that Iran may seek to turn Beirut into a new “hub” for deliveries, according to a regional source aware of discussions in Tehran. Such an aerial supply route would be a violation of the recently signed ceasefire deal between Israel and Lebanon, risking another outbreak of hostilities. Western countries are “concerned that Iran has lost [Damascus as] its go-to airport in the region for smuggling weapons and is now trying to turn Beirut airport into its new logistics hub, just as they did in Syria,” the source said, warning that it “could lead to the next escalation”

COMMENT

Hezbollah has been hit hard by Israel’s campaign of sabotage attacks, airstrikes and ground invasion of southern Lebanon. The fall of Assad has also weakened Iran’s influence in Syria. Israel has decapitated Hezbollah’s leadership, destroyed much of its weaponry and forced its militia away from the northern border. There is a fragile ceasefire in place between Israel and Lebanon. But Iran has not given up and is now looking to rearm Hezbollah by flying weapons into Beirut. This could cause the collapse of the peace deal. Zechariah 11 says that Lebanon’s cedar’s will be burned by fire and the cedar will fall. The cedar is the symbol of Lebanon. This collapse of Lebanon causes the “young lions” to roar. The young lions are mentioned in Ezekiel 38. US / UK / Saudi.

BIBLE QUOTE

Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down. There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled. (Zechariah 11:1-3)

New leaders in Damascus call for cordial Syria ties with a resistant Israel

NPR, December 27, 2024



EVENT

The newly appointed governor of Damascus has called on the United States to use its influence to push for cordial relations with Israel. In a wide-ranging interview with NPR, Governor Maher Marwan, 42, said that Syria's new government did not want to seek conflict with Israel, which has been striking strategic military installations in Syria since the regime of former President Bashar al-Assad fell earlier this month. "We have no fear towards Israel and our problem is not with Israel," Marwan said. **"We don't want to meddle in anything that will threaten Israel's security or any other country's security."** Sitting in a massive office in central Damascus, furnished with Syrian arabesque wooden chairs and colorfully painted walls, Marwan, wearing a suit and tie, greeted the NPR team. He only shook hands with the male members of the group. The governor said it was understandable that Israel was concerned when the new Syrian government took power, because of certain "factions."

COMMENT

Israeli officials appear unfazed by the new governor of Damascus remarks about wanting peace with them.. Sources in Jerusalem told the Jerusalem Post earlier this week, "The burden of proof is on al-Sharaa and his people. We mustn't forget their ideological foundations. The warm messages from Damascus's new leadership remain an enigma as no one knows which direction the new regime will take." The post-October 7 mood in Israel is marked by scepticism and fears of a "charm offensive" meant to deceive the West. The Bible says that the descendants of Ishmael (Arabs / Muslim) will be wild men. And their hand will be against every man and every man's hand against him. Trouble is coming for Syria not peace. Damascus will end as a city.

BIBLE QUOTE

And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And **he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him;** and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

(Genesis 16:16-17)

Israeli jets bombard Houthi rebel targets in Yemen

The Telegraph, December 26, 2024



EVENT

The Israeli military said its warplanes struck “Houthi terror regime” targets at Sana’a airport, as well as military infrastructure at the Hezyaz and Ras Kanatib power stations. The Houthis are currently the last of Iran’s proxies in the Middle East still attacking Israel in solidarity with terror groups in Gaza after the Israel Defence Forces inflicted a series of devastating blows against Hezbollah in Lebanon, killing its leader Hassan Nasrallah. The Iran and Hezbollah-backed regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria was overthrown a fortnight ago by rebels led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). The expansive strikes against key infrastructure in Yemen suggest a new push against Iran’s proxies in the region. In a video released after the attacks, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, vowed to continue attacks on the Houthi rebels “until the job is done”. He said: “We are determined to cut this branch of terrorism from the Iranian axis of evil.”

COMMENT

Israel’s fourth strike against the Houthis, carried out on Thursday, caused serious damage to Yemen’s infrastructure. Israel is debating whether to seize the detected window of opportunity and target not only the Houthis in Yemen but also Iran’s entire nuclear program. Iran is at an especially low point security-wise. It is exposed and vulnerable. Tehran’s aerial defence has been undermined by the Israeli air force. Its proxies that until now constituted a real threat to Israel are almost completely silent. In America Trump is about to enter the White House. All the stars align here perfectly to allow Israel to attack Iran. With Bible in hand we know Iran is stirred up and ends up blocking the Persian Gulf. We also know Iran survives to join Russia in invading Israel.

BIBLE QUOTE

And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet. [Persia \[Iran\] is first on the list of nations with Russia.](#) (Ezekiel 38:4-5)

Putin faces antisemitism accusations following attack on 'ethnic Jews'

Atlantic Council, December 24, 2024



EVENT

Russian President Vladimir Putin has been accused of antisemitism after claiming that “ethnic Jews” are seeking to “tear apart” the Russian Orthodox Church. The Russian leader’s controversial statements, which came during his annual end-of-year press conference in Moscow on December 19, were the latest in a series of similar outbursts since the start of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine that have either directly or indirectly targeted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who is Jewish. **“These are people without any beliefs, godless people. They’re ethnic Jews, but has anyone seen them in a synagogue? I don’t think so,”** Putin stated during the flagship event, which is broadcast live on Russian state television and traditionally runs for hours. “These are people without kin or memory, with no roots. They don’t cherish what we cherish and what the majority of the Ukrainian people cherish as well.” Putin’s comments came as the Ukrainian authorities seek to limit the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine, which is seen as closely tied to the Kremlin.

COMMENT

Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, the president of the Conference of European Rabbis, warned that Putin’s characterisation of Jews in this way could have dangerous consequences. “This is just one example of his regime’s explicit and virulent antisemitism, which has intensified following his 2022 invasion of Ukraine and the 2023 events of October 7th,” Goldschmidt said. “This is all reminiscent of Stalin’s “Fight against Cosmopolitanism” and the “Doctors’ Plot” of 1948–53, the brutal antisemitic campaign in the Soviet Union, resulting in the arrest and killing of much of the Soviet Jewish leadership in the USSR.” Putin is an anti-Semite and will one day invade Israel.

BIBLE QUOTE

In future years you will invade a land that has recovered from war, whose people were gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate. They had been brought out from the nations, and now all of them live in safety. You and all your troops and the many nations with you will go up, advancing like a storm; (Ezekiel 38:8-9 NIV)

Russia warns Trump: Do not test nuclear weapon

The Telegraph, December 27, 2024



EVENT

Moscow has warned Donald Trump against resuming the testing of nuclear weapons when he takes office, saying it would “not rule anything out” in response to US aggression. Sergei Ryabkov, Russia’s deputy foreign minister who oversees arms control, noted that Mr Trump refused to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty during his first term. Referencing this refusal, Mr Ryabkov said: “American policy in its various aspects is extremely hostile to us today.” “So the options for us to act in the interests of ensuring security and the potential measures and actions we have to do this - and to send politically appropriate signals... we do not rule anything out,” he added. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty banning nuclear test explosions was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1996, but has not come into force as some signatory nations have not ratified it. **Analysts have suggested the US is moving towards a return to testing as a way to develop new weapons and at the same time send a signal to rivals such as Russia and China.**

COMMENT

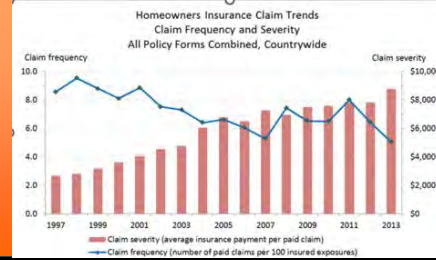
The resumption of testing by the world's two biggest nuclear powers would usher in a new and precarious era nearly 80 years since the United States tested the first nuclear bomb at Alamogordo, New Mexico in July 1945. The last time the USA tested a nuclear weapon was in 1992. The last time Russia did was 1990. 2025 might see testing resume. Putin has made many threats since his invasion of Ukraine to use nuclear weapons. With the world on the brink of the time of trouble such as never was it is highly probable these weapons will eventually be used. The Bible describes “palm trees of smoke” and also eyes and tongues melting. Both linked to nuclear weapons...

BIBLE QUOTE

And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars [palm trees] of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: NOW is the time to call on the name of the LORD (Joel 2:30-32)

Insurance risks will be a proxy carbon tax

Reuters, December 27, 2024



EVENT

In 2025 a quasi-carbon price will become increasingly apparent – but in a much more regressive way. With the world looking increasingly unlikely to restrict temperature rises to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial times, climate change is ceasing to be a hypothetical risk. Take the insurance sector. On average natural catastrophe insured losses were \$63 billion a year between 1993 and 2022, according to Swiss Re. But in the years since 2020 they have topped \$100 billion. Hurricanes, storms, floods and other natural disasters caused an estimated \$140 billion in insured losses in 2024, up from 2023 and one of the costliest years on record, Munich Re said on Thursday. 2025 has started out with up to 50 billion loss from LA fire already. The rationale behind green insurance is rooted in risk assessment. The underlying assumption is that individuals and businesses committed to sustainability will likely be more responsible and less prone to insurance claims. This correlation allows insurers to offer more competitive rates to those who demonstrate eco-friendly practices, [and vice versa for those who don't]

COMMENT

Weather related events are out of control. Insurers are becoming desperate. They are dropping policies like flies in Florida and LA. Government efforts like carbon tax have proven unpopular because humans don't like to be controlled. In Canada carbon tax is showing signs of going the way of the government that put it in place, but don't celebrate yet. Insurance companies are quickly adjusting rates to compensate for increased losses and will have the last say about the climate. Insurance rates are planned to be higher on fossil fuel companies and lower on the production of renewable fuels, likewise with houses, cars etc. Insurance companies will make it unsustainable to build, buy or live under high-risk conditions unless one elects to pay cash and opts for no insurance (bank won't give mortgages without insurance on the property). But as Bible students we should celebrate in the sense of "Look up and lift up your heads for your redemption draws nigh"! These types of events and their impact have been predicted.

BIBLE QUOTE

There will be great earthquakes, and there will be famines and plagues in many lands, and **there will be terrifying things**... fire and hail... wind and weather...there will be **greater anguish** than at any time since the world began....**so when all these things begin to happen, stand and look up, for your salvation is near!**" (*The insurance industry reaction is the intensity yardstick*)

(Luk 21 11,28 / Mat 24:21 / Psa 148:8 NLT)

2025-01-18 Trump And Xi Jinping Hold Phone Call On TikTok And Trade Issues - World News - WION - 6.09 min - YouTube

2025-01-14 Why Did Thousands Lose Insurance Cover Ahead of Los Angeles Fires - Vantage - 6.08 min - YouTube

2025-01-14 Did ChatGPT Really Cause the Los Angeles Wildfires- - Vantage - 6.11 min - YouTube

2025-01-12 Secret Russia-Iran Nuclear Deal- - GRAVITAS - 7.19 min - YouTube

2025-01-09 Trump Shares Anti-Netanyahu Video, Israeli PM Cancels US Visit - Vantage - 6.56 min - YouTube

2025-01-09 Netanyahu unlikely to attend Trump inauguration, aide tells TOL - The Times of Israel

2025-01-09 Climate change shows 'claws' with rising costs for disasters, Munich Re says - Reuters

2025-01-08 Israel's Biblical Map Sparks Fresh Tension With Arab Countries Amidst West Asia Wars - GRAVITAS - 6.41 min - YouTube

2024-12-28 Green Insurance - Lower Premiums Through Eco-Friendly Choices

2024-12-27 Insurance risks will be a proxy carbon tax - Reuters

2024-12-21 Ukrainian drones strike deep into Russian territory, hundreds of miles from the front line - AP News

2024-12-21 Russia's central bank holds off on interest rate hike (currently 21%) amid friction between inflation, war spending - AP s

2024-12-21* Russia Witnesses 9-11 Style Attack, Ukrainian Drone Hits Residential Building - 5.21 min - YouTube

2024-12-20 US Report Flags China's Massive LAC Build-up Since 2020 - Vantage with Palki Sharma - 5.63 min - YouTube

2024-12-20 Putin Condemns Israel's Actions in Syria and Threatens Netanyahu - Oneindia

2024-12-20 For thousands of Jews, Israel still doesn't feel safe after the Oct. 7 attacks. So they're leaving - AP News

2024-12-20 Behind the Curtain – Gov't shutdown fight - difference of media and reporting - Axios

2024-12-19* US- China Has More Than 600 Operational Nuclear Warheads - GRAVITAS - WION - 3.43 min - YouTube

2024-12-19 Israeli PM Netanyahu Visits Captured Territory in Syria, Says Troops Will Stay - Firstpost America - 4.01 min - YouTube

2024-12-19 Israel-Houthi Tit-for-Tat Attacks to Open New Front in War- - Vantage with Palki Sharma - 6.30 min - YouTube

2024-12-18 Russia Abandoning its Syrian Bases and Moving to Libya- - Vantage with Palki Sharma - 6.41 min - YouTube

2024-12-16 Israel Drops 'Earthquake Bomb' As Iran Arouses Fear With Secret Ship And Fighter Jet - GRAVITAS - 5.43 min - YouTube

2024-12-29

2025-01-11

2025-01-18



2024-12-29

2025-01-11

2025-01-18

2) Gog (Russia) advances on Turkey, Egypt

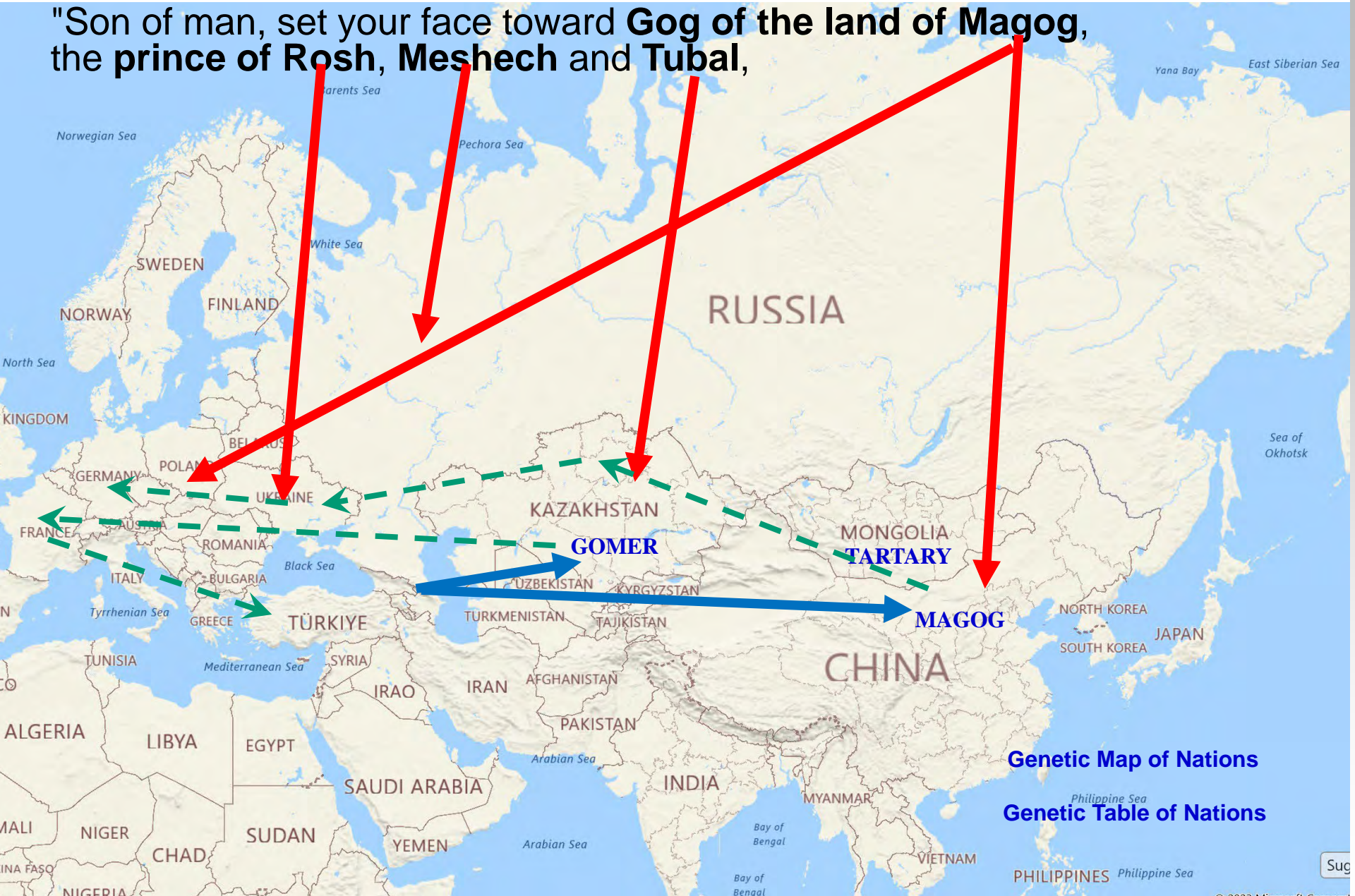


2024-12-29

2025-01-11

2025-01-18

"Son of man, set your face toward **Gog of the land of Magog,**
the prince of **Rosh, Meshech and Tubal,**



Genetic Map of Nations
Genetic Table of Nations

"Son of man, set thy face against Gog (head), of the land of Magog (China?), prince of Ros (river in Ukraine) Meshech and Tubal (rivers in Russia)"?



أرام

يربعام بن نباط

إسرائيل

السامرة

عمون

أورشليم

يهودا

مؤاب

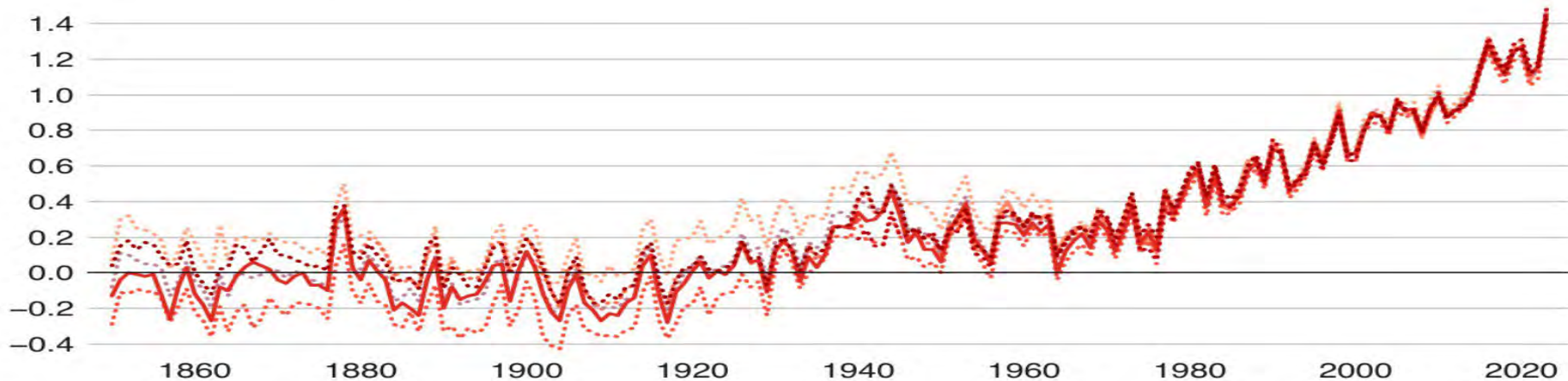
رحبعام بن سليمان

أرام

Warming world

Global temperatures have risen more than one degree since the period of 1850-1900, based on an array of measures. In Europe, the increase has been even greater.

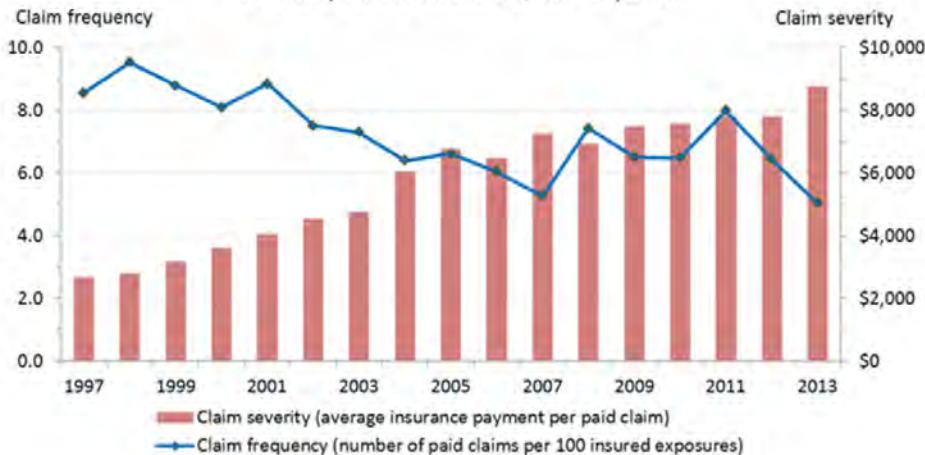
Rise in global temperatures in Celcius



Temperatures are based on multiple datasets.

• Source: European Environment Agency | Reuters, Jan. 8, 2025 | By Tom Sims

Homeowners Insurance Claim Trends Claim Frequency and Severity All Policy Forms Combined, Countrywide



Homeowners Insurance Premiums by Year

