



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

News Articles for Episode 415

[Netanyahu calls for US financial support to Israel to be drawn down to zero | Foxnews.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #united states, #finances, #military

May 11, 2026

Israeli Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) said he hopes to draw U.S. financial support to his country "down to zero" during an interview on Sunday.

CBS News' Major Garrett asked Netanyahu if he believed it was time for [Israel](#) to reset its financial relationship with the United States and the prime minister agreed, saying he even raised the issue with President [Donald Trump](#).

"Absolutely. And I've said this to President Trump," Netanyahu said. "I've said it in — to our own people."

He told CBS it was time for his country to wean itself off both the financial and [military](#) support from the U.S.

"I want to draw down to zero the American financial support, the [financial component of the military](#) cooperation that we have," Netanyahu said. "Because we receive \$3.8 billion a year. And I think that it's time that we weaned ourselves from the remaining military support."

When pressed about a timeline for when this could occur, he said over the next decade.

"I said, let's start now and do it over the next decade, over the next 10 years, but I want to start now," the Israeli leader said. "I don't want to wait for the next [Congress](#). I want to start now."

Netanyahu argued that the dramatic shift in public opinion in his country could be traced to the rise in social media.

"Israel has gone to unbelievable lengths to get innocent civilians out of harm's way," he said. "We text message millions of text messages to them—make millions of phone calls to them, pamphlets, leaflets, you name it, OK? We have seen the deterioration of the support for Israel in the United States almost — I would say, it [correlates almost 100% with](#) the geometric rise of social media."

"And that, by itself, is not what caused it," Netanyahu continued. "And I don't believe in, you know, in censoring them or anything. But I'll tell you what happened. We have several countries that basically manipulated social media. And they do it in a clever way. And that's something that has hurt us badly."

When asked about the [war in Iran](#), he told "60 Minutes" that a lot had been accomplished, but said there was a lot more to be done.

"I think it accomplished a great deal, but it's not over, because there's still nuclear material, enriched uranium that has to be taken out of Iran," Netanyahu said. "There are still enrichment sites that have to be dismantled. There are still proxies that Iran supports. There are ballistic missiles that they still want to produce."

"Now, we've degraded a lot of it, but all that is still there, and there's work to be done," he added.

[Iran regime power players may eye Russia in Assad-style escape as US talks falter: expert | Foxnews.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #iran, #russia, #moscow, #leadership

May 11, 2026

The apparent collapse of high-stakes U.S.-Iran negotiations has intensified fears that senior figures inside Tehran's leadership could flee to Russia, seeking refuge to "continue their insurgency and undermine any new regime," an analyst warns.

The breakdown in talks comes as Israeli Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) also told CBS' "60 Minutes" that toppling Iran's regime could now even be a realistic outcome.

Netanyahu noted that any collapse would dismantle the "scaffolding" of Tehran's global terror proxy network, also potentially ending Hezbollah's influence in the region.

"The whole scaffolding of the terrorist proxy network that Iran built collapses if the regime in Iran collapses," Netanyahu said.

"I think you can't predict when that will happen. Is it possible? Yes. Is it guaranteed? No," he warned.

With diplomatic options perhaps exhausted and the [regime's stability in question](#), an expert suggests the exit strategy any leadership may be eyeing might be similar to that of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who fled Syria in 2024.

"If the situation deteriorates further, some senior figures could potentially follow a path like Bashar al-Assad's inner circle and seek refuge in Russia," Middle East expert [Saeid Golkar](#) told Fox News Digital.

[IRANIAN REGIME ELITES ALLEGEDLY MOVE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OUT OF COUNTRY AMID SANCTIONS](#)

Golkar, a senior adviser at [United Against Nuclear Iran](#), noted that flight destinations would likely depend on rank.

While top commanders like Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf might head to Moscow, lower-ranking figures would more likely seek shelter in [Iraq](#) or Afghanistan, where the IRGC maintains operational connections, he clarified.

"For the most senior figures, Russia would probably be the most likely destination, again as we saw with Bashar al-Assad," Golkar said, noting many officials have already moved wealth into "financial networks outside Iran."

The current crisis started following the death of Ayatollah [Ali Khamenei](#) earlier in 2026 during the onset of Operation Epic Fury.

While his son, [Mojtaba Khamenei](#), was named successor, reports continue to indicate he was severely injured in the strikes and has been absent from recent negotiations.

Golkar explained that the "invisible state," or [Bayt-e Rahbari, was designed](#) to survive decapitation, while the ideological cost of fleeing for leaders would be high.

"Inside the regime's ideological culture, leaving the country during the collapse would look like desertion," Golkar noted.

However, as military fractures deepen and [succession remains uncertain](#), the "Assad model" of seeking Russian protection appears increasingly attractive to those at the top.

Mojtaba, however, is "either dead or in bad condition that he cannot send any video or voice message," Golkar added.

"If he had died from his injuries, there was no clear natural successor. He was the continuation of the regime."

"Still, the system was designed for continuity during a crisis," Golkar said, adding that the goal is to "make sure the regime could survive even if formal institutions were damaged, leaders were killed, or civilian government stopped functioning."

"I would describe it as a regime designed not just to govern, but always to try and survive decapitation," Golkar added.

[Spain calls for EU army | MSN.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #spain, #army, #european union, #government

May 11, 2026

Spain has called for the creation of a European Union army to replace the protections offered by Nato.

José Manuel Albares, its foreign minister, suggested the bloc may not be able to count on the US-led military alliance to provide security guarantees.

Mr Albares said that if the EU did not rely on Nato, Donald Trump could not hold its security to ransom.

Madrid is on the front line of the transatlantic spat between Mr Trump and his [European allies](#).

The US president has threatened to impose extra trade tariffs on Spain over its refusal to increase defence spending to 5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Mr Trump has also suggested he could withdraw American troops from bases there or suspend the country from Nato over the refusal by Pedro Sanchez, the Spanish prime minister, [to support his war in Iran](#).

“We cannot be waking up every morning wondering what the US will do next... our citizens deserve better,” Mr Albares told the Politico news website.

“This is the moment of the sovereignty and independence of Europe. The Americans are inviting us to that,” he added.

“We have to be free of dependence. Free of dependence means to be free of coercion, whether it comes to tariffs or the use of military threat. And free of the consequences of someone else’s decisions.”

Brussels is gripped by numerous discussions about how to handle [Mr Trump’s perceived lack of interest in Nato](#).

Many of those discussions have focused on what more the EU can do for security because 24 of its member states are also part of the military alliance.

Mr Albares believes the bloc should have its own version of Nato’s Article 5, the mutual defence clause which states an attack on one ally is an attack on them all.

“The magic of Nato is that you are in Nato and nothing happens because no one dares to try to check if Article 5 really works or not,” he said.

“That’s what we have to recreate – the deterrence. That if you want to mess with me, go somewhere else. Because we will stand together.”

The EU has its own mutual defence clause – Article 42.7 – which claims if one member state is the victim of an armed attack, the others have an obligation to support it.

But most insiders understand that Brussels does not have the military capabilities to make the clause a meaningful deterrent to would-be attackers.

A majority of European leaders believe it is better to strengthen their militaries inside [Nato’s current structures](#), rather than forging a separate path through the EU.

For this, they have agreed to boost spending and invest in critical systems, such as air defence, long-range missiles and satellite intelligence, to make themselves more independent from the US.

Both EU foreign and defence ministers are set to discuss military independence at separate meetings in Brussels this week.

[British conservative leader says antisemitism in UK a 'national emergency' | All Israel News.com](#)

#bibleprophecy. #anti-semitism, #united kingdom, #hatred, #jews

May 5, 2026

The leader of the Conservative Party in Great Britain, Kemi Badenoch, has been taking a strong stand against antisemitism in the United Kingdom, saying the normalization of hatred towards Jews was comparable to the 1930s and describing it as a “national emergency.”

In an interview on the BBC’s “Today” program, Nick Robinson questioned Badenoch's choice of words, saying: “You said it was stark – we don’t want to see the 1930s repeated. To people who hear that and say it’s a massive overstatement about where we are, why do you think they’re wrong?”

Badenoch **insisted**: “They are wrong. □ I’m actually calling this a national emergency. What we saw in the 1930s was a climate of intimidation, starting with misinformation, blood libels, it’s the Jews that are causing all these problems and legitimising Jewish hatred. I’m talking about the normalisation of hatred towards Jews.”

“It's coming from two particular groups, Islamic extremists, but also a very particularly nasty strand of hard left ideology,” the 46-year-old leader of the opposition elaborated, decrying the conspiracies and accusations that have flourished particularly since Oct. 7, 2023. “We see it most prevalent in these marches, which I call now a ‘festival of hatred.’ They've gone on for very long,” she added.

When asked why she would ban pro-Palestinian marches but not those organized by anti-Islamic activist Tommy Robinson, Badenoch **replied**, “It's not even the same. Criticism of religion is allowed in this country. We mustn't mix the two things. I am talking about the attacks on Jews; it’s not the faith that's being attacked. It's the people,” **referring** to the **stabblings in Golders Green** last Wednesday, the firebombing of **Hatzolah ambulances** the week before and the terror **attack** at a Manchester synagogue on Yom Kippur.

The MP for North West Essex expressed her frustration with the “Whataboutery” of introducing the subject of Islamophobia into discussions about antisemitism.

“Why is it that whenever we're talking about Jewish hatred, we always have a what about? What about? □ When something happens to black people, when there are atrocities, no one does the whataboutery. When something does happen to Muslims, we don't say what about antisemitism. Why do we have this double standard that

whenever there's an issue with antisemitism and Jews being attacked, we have to broaden it out all the time?"

Badenoch first [suggested](#) that the situation constituted a national emergency in her response to the attack in Golders Green last week. "As a black woman in this country, I have never seen the level of racism, discrimination, intimidation, and attacks that have been directed at the Jewish community."

She added, "I think that if people were firebombing black churches... the way that synagogues have been attacked, people killed, being firebombed, the ambulance services being firebombed, I think there'd be a national emergency. I think we're getting to that stage."

Badenoch has been vocal in defending the Jewish community and Israel's military activity in Gaza, and has received considerable opposition for her statements. However, she has made it clear that she refuses to back down from her position.

In a strong rebuttal to a protester who came to harangue her yesterday, she [said](#).

"I go to Jewish primary schools that have security guards outside. I don't see that outside any other primary school in this country. I go to supermarkets that has security guards. I go to businesses, Jewish businesses, that are having their windows smashed in. Gale's Bakery, having graffiti sprayed all over it. We need to stop pretending that this isn't happening. We do not want the 1930s repeated again. And what we see are people making excuses for this; you will never get excuses for me. We need to protect Jewish people."

She warned, "This is how the 1930s started, with people pretending not to see what was happening in front of them," insisting, "What I'm doing is supporting our Jewish people from this sort of ignorance people like you put out there. And I will never be intimidated by it."

[ADL: Antisemitic Assaults in U.S. Hit Record High in 2025 Even as Overall Incidents Fell by a Third | Breitbart.com](#)

#bibleprophecy. #anti-semitism, #united states, #violence, #jews

May 6, 2026

Antisemitic assaults in the United States reached a record high in 2025 even as overall incidents fell by a third, according to a new Anti-Defamation League audit showing violence against Jews continued to escalate even as broader incidents declined nationwide.

The ADL's annual audit, [released](#) Wednesday, recorded 203 antisemitic assaults in 2025 — a four percent increase from 196 in 2024 and the highest number since the organization began tracking incidents in 1979.

Assaults involving a deadly weapon surged 39 percent, rising from 23 in 2024 to 32 in 2025, while at least 300 people were victimized in violent attacks, according to the report.

Three people were murdered in antisemitic attacks in 2025 — the first year since 2019 in which Jewish people were killed in antisemitic attacks in the United States.

The killings included two Jewish victims shot to death [outside](#) the Capital Jewish Museum in Washington, DC, last May, and another victim who later died from injuries sustained in the Boulder, Colorado, firebombing [attack](#) targeting a “Run for Their Lives” event in support of Israeli hostages.

Other major antisemitic attacks included the firebombing of Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro's (D) residence and the stabbing of an Orthodox Jewish man leaving synagogue in Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

“Our 2025 Audit, which shows it was one of the most violent years for American Jews on record, is a reminder of how dramatically the threat landscape has shifted,” Greenblatt said. “Numbers that would have shocked us five years ago are now our floor.”

“People are being murdered because of antisemitism on American soil, and thousands more are threatened,” he added.

Overall, the ADL recorded 6,274 antisemitic incidents of assault, harassment, and vandalism in 2025 — down 33 percent from the record 9,354 incidents reported in 2024, but still the third-highest total since the organization began its audit.

The figure amounts to an average of 17 antisemitic incidents per day across the country.

The report counted 4,003 incidents of harassment, a 39 percent decrease from 2024, and 2,068 incidents of vandalism, a 21 percent decrease.

New York recorded the highest number of antisemitic incidents in the country, with 1,160, followed by California with 817, New Jersey with 687, Florida with 319, and Pennsylvania with 281.

New York also accounted for a disproportionate share of violent attacks, with 90 assaults, while Orthodox Jews were targeted in 38 percent of antisemitic assaults nationally, according to the audit.

The ADL attributed much of the overall decline to a steep drop in campus-related incidents, which fell 66 percent from 1,694 in 2024 to 583 in 2025, as the anti-Israel encampment movement that fueled the prior year's spike faded and universities came under mounting pressure to address antisemitism.

Incidents tied to anti-Israel protests on college campuses fell 83 percent, while incidents related to Israel or Zionism made up 45 percent of all antisemitic incidents in 2025, down from 58 percent in 2024.

The decline follows increased pressure on universities from President Donald Trump's administration, which moved aggressively against schools accused of failing to protect Jewish students.

In May of last year, World Jewish Congress [President](#) Ronald Lauder praised President Donald Trump for slashing federal funding to universities accused of tolerating antisemitism, declaring Trump was "the only president with the courage to do this."

Months later, in August of last year, Greenblatt himself [said](#) the Trump administration had "leaned in in ways that have been constructive," arguing federal pressure had helped force universities that previously resisted change to begin addressing antisemitism more seriously.

The Trump administration has continued pressing schools and universities over antisemitism allegations, with the Department of Education late last month [opening](#) an investigation into New York City schools over allegations of discrimination against Jewish students and the activities of "NYC Educators for Palestine."

"No child should be taught by his or her teachers to hate their peers," Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Kimberly Richey said, adding that the Trump administration would not "turn a blind eye to antisemitic harassment."

The new ADL audit comes one day after Trump, in a Jewish American Heritage Month proclamation issued Tuesday, [said](#) his administration is "aggressively fighting the

violence against Jewish Americans,” including by “working to end the scourge of antisemitism throughout our institutions, especially on college campuses.”

Oren Segal, ADL senior vice president for counter-extremism and intelligence, warned that the drop in overall incidents should not obscure the growing threat posed by violent antisemitism.

“Behind every one of these incidents is a real person: a family threatened at their synagogue, a rabbi attacked on the street, a student harassed on campus,” Segal said.

“2025 brought some of the most violent antisemitic attacks in recent memory,” he added. “Even as overall incidents declined, the surge in physical assaults is a stark reminder that a historically high level of antisemitism puts Jewish lives at risk.”

[Denmark records third straight year of historically high antisemitism | The Times of Israel.com](#)

#bibleprophecy. #anti-semitism, #denmark, #jews

May 8, 2026

Antisemitism 'normalized to an unprecedented level'

Jewish community of some 6,000 reports 199 antisemitic incidents – prior to Oct. 7 there were around 7 per year; 24 incidents recorded against Jewish kids and teens, 3 of them violent

Antisemitic incidents in Denmark remained at historically high levels for the third consecutive year in 2025, according to [a report](#) released Thursday by the Jewish Community in Denmark.

There were 199 documented antisemitic incidents last year, the second-highest total since records began in 2012 and only slightly below the 207 recorded in 2024, according to AKVAH, the Danish Jewish Community's Department for Mapping and Registering Antisemitic Incidents.

Before Hamas launched its war with Israel on October 7, 2023, the country averaged just nine incidents a year. The country has about 6,000 Jews, according to estimates.

“Unfortunately, antisemitism in Denmark is not on the decline,” said Ina Rosen, chairperson of the country's Jewish Community. “It has been normalized to an unprecedented level.”

The vast majority of incidents – 70 percent – were targeted against individuals or institutions that were visibly Jewish.

Some 69% of anti-Jewish attacks were linked to Israel, the war in Gaza, or other Middle East developments, Thursday's report said. About 55% of the incidents occurred online.

There were 24 incidents against Jewish children and youth, three of which involved outright violence.

According to a [2025 study](#) by the Danish Institute for Human Rights, about 83% of Jewish Danes regulate their behavior in public because they are Jewish, and 62% hide Jewish symbols.

In 2024, [Henri Goldstein](#), head of the Danish Jewish community, told The Associated Press that the number of antisemitic incidents registered in Denmark since the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel had reached levels not seen since World War II.

Last year, Denmark's government [unveiled](#) an \$18 million plan to fight rising antisemitism through 2030.

The measures were set to increase security funding for Jewish institutions, strengthen efforts against online hate and introduce new programs for children and young people, the country's Justice Ministry said at the time.

A coordinator on antisemitism would be appointed for schools, and a new association would be created to combat antisemitic hate crimes.

[EU country ‘punishing’ the elderly with crazy meat restriction of just 2.8 ounces per day — because they ‘screwed up’ the climate | NY Post.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #climate change, #denmark, #food, #guidelines

May 6, 2026

An eco-warrior politician has sparked outrage in Denmark after she defended guidelines limiting residents of government-run nursing homes to just 2.8 ounces of beef a week — which is less than one Big Mac.

Birgitte Kehler Holst of the left-wing green Danish party The Alternative was also accused of saying old people in nursing homes should be “punished” by restricting their meat intake in comments made in a [meeting of Copenhagen’s City Council](#) on April 30.

She was speaking against plans to exclude nursing home residents from guidelines in the Danish capital that restrict meals at government-run sites to just 2.8 ounces (80 grams) of beef, lamb, or veal per week.

That is less than the amount of beef in a standard McDonald’s Big Mac, which contains two 1.6-ounce beef patties — for a total of 3.2 ounces.

“Everyone, including the elderly, must contribute to achieving our climate goals,” Holst said at the city council meeting, adding, “It is precisely the generation that has screwed up the most.”

Her comments sparked outrage among commentators in Denmark and elsewhere, with many accusing her of trying to punish the elderly and force through a vegetarian agenda.

One politician shared a picture of the daily beef ration in his hand to show just how little it was.

“11.4 grams of beef. That’s how much nursing home residents in Copenhagen Municipality are allowed to eat per day, to avoid exceeding the weekly limit of 80 grams,” wrote Malte Larsen of the right-wing populist Danish People’s Party [on X](#).

“According to a politician from The Alternative, it’s because our elderly have been the biggest climate sinners throughout their lives. And therefore, they must be punished,” he added.

Larsen also ripped the rhetoric of “self-righteous climate fanatics” as “grotesque,” adding that it was a pointless gesture.

“No, we’re not saving the entire world by having our elderly eat only 11.4 grams of beef per day. Denmark emits 0.1% of the world’s human-caused CO₂,” he added, taking aim at the hypocrisy of many climate activists.

“Many of these climate fanatics who implement this kind of draconian climate measure have no problem flying back and forth to attend irrelevant climate conferences,” he said.

Mona Juul of the center-right Conservative People’s Party also slammed the measure for punishing old people.

“[Holst] apparently believes that nursing home residents should not be given meat because they have been ‘pigs’ their whole lives. Therefore, they should have lentils instead of meat,” she [wrote on Facebook](#).

Holst subsequently apologized for speaking rashly, although she doubled down on her insistence that people eat less meat.

“I made a slightly too hasty comment from the podium, and I’m sorry about that,” she [told Danish newspaper BT](#).

“But I find it fundamentally unproblematic that our elderly citizens — like the rest of Copenhageners — are served healthy, tasty and organic food that follows the Danish dietary guidelines,” she added.

The average American eats between 59 and 83 pounds of beef annually, or between 1 and 1.6 pounds a week.

That works out to more than six times the guidelines in Danish nursing homes.

[Hantavirus case in Switzerland spurs race to trace contacts | MSN.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #hantavirus, #switzerland, #tourists

May 7, 2026

Swiss officials are rushing to trace the contacts of a man who has been hospitalized in Zurich with a strain of the hantavirus that is capable of human-to-human transmission.

The patient became ill in Switzerland after returning from a three-week April cruise that took him and his wife from the tip of South America to the South Atlantic island of St. Helena, officials said Wednesday. The man [traveled on the cruise ship](#) where several cases of hantavirus, a disease typically carried by rodents, have killed at least three people, Switzerland's Health Ministry added.

The new case—in which a patient fell ill after his return to the mainland—raises the [specter of human-to-human transmission](#) outside the Dutch-flagged MV Hondius cruise ship, which is currently anchored near Cape Verde.

Swiss officials said they are investigating whether the Zurich patient came into contact with other people during his infectious period. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says symptoms of a hantavirus infection usually take one to two weeks to emerge, but in some cases can take as long as eight weeks.

Viruses in the [hantavirus family](#) usually spread to humans through contact with infected rodent urine, droppings or saliva. But one strain of the virus found primarily in Chile and Argentina, known as the Andes virus, has shown limited evidence of human-to-human transmission. The World Health Organization said Tuesday that it is possible that there was human-to-human transmission aboard the MV Hondius.

The current theory is that some passengers were exposed to the Andes virus while in Argentina, and then spread the virus to others onboard the MV Hondius, according to a report Wednesday from the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control.

The new hantavirus case emerged when the Zurich patient started to feel ill after his South American trip and phoned his physician. He then went to a hospital, where he tested positive for the Andes virus. The patient's wife hasn't shown symptoms but is "self-isolating as a precaution," the Swiss Health Ministry said.

Oceanwide Expeditions, the vessel's operator, said three individuals on the boat were evacuated Wednesday. Two of the people show acute symptoms while the third is closely associated with a German passenger who died onboard on May 2.

The first person to die in the hantavirus outbreak was a Dutch man who died on board the MV Hondius on April 11. His wife disembarked with his body at St. Helena on April

24 and the next day briefly boarded a KLM flight from South Africa to the Netherlands but was removed by airline staff because of her medical condition, the airline said Wednesday. She later died as well.

A British passenger who was infected by the Andes virus was also evacuated to South Africa in late April.

Health officials in Europe have said they estimate the risk of a wider set of infections to be low both because human-to-human transmission occurs through close contact and because of efforts to identify and isolate close contacts.

Switzerland's health ministry said that it "considers the occurrence of further cases in Switzerland unlikely."

'This is a turning point': Iranian Christians using time of war to share the Gospel | Christian Post.com

#bibleprophecy, #iran, #christians, #gospel, #persecution

May 3, 2026

While the [war in Iran](#) has brought significant hardships, it has also created openings for ministry for the country's underground Church, according to a prominent ministry leader who advocates for persecuted Christians worldwide.

“The Lord works in mysterious ways,” Todd Nettleton, vice president of Voice of the Martyrs–USA (VOM), told The Christian Post in an interview.

“At the same time, with the Iranian government and the authorities there paying attention to the war, they're not paying as much attention to house churches. They're not paying as much attention to keeping Bibles out of the country or from being distributed within the country.”

VOM, an organization that supports persecuted Christians worldwide, partners with Iranian church networks, training field workers to proclaim the Gospel in regions hostile to Christians. The organization also distributes Bibles to believers facing persecution.

Even though the current conflict has also made it harder for VOM staff to travel in and out of the region, Nettleton said the organization distributed several thousand Bibles in Iran after the conflict began earlier this year.

An underground fellowship in Iran that VOM has been in contact with was forced to flee its city as it came under attack, Nettleton said. The group of believers decided that if they had to leave, they should stay together, he added.

“They turned it into a church camp,” the ministry leader explained. “They spent time out of town, studying God’s Word, worshiping together, encouraging each other, and really growing as a body of believers.”

While Nettleton could not provide more details about the group, he highlighted reports from field workers describing how believers in Iran are using the moment “for good and eternal purposes.”

“They are proactively talking to people about Jesus in a time when everything is in chaos, in a time when people are dying, and so people are thinking about eternity. They're thinking about, ‘Hey, what happens after I die?’” Nettleton said.

Despite challenges posed by communication blackouts, Christians in Iran were likely already prepared to handle such conditions, Nettleton believes.

During the [anti-government protests](#) in [Iran](#) that began in December and continued into January and February, Iranian authorities restricted internet access to prevent people from organizing demonstrations.

“In that sense, I guess the believers and other Iranians were used to or prepared for that,” Nettleton said. “Because of that, many of these conversations are happening in one-on-one contexts in cafés or in a home.”

Iran ranks as the 10th worst country in the world for Christian persecution, according to watchdog [Open Doors 2026 World Watch List](#) report. In addition to raids on house churches, Christians in the region face long-term imprisonment, interrogations and hostility from families and local communities.

Converts from Islam to Christianity face the most danger. Despite those risks, Nettleton said reports from field workers point to a surprising sense of hope among Iranian Christians.

“One of the things that I heard from our Middle East team after the war started was that they were consistently hearing a sense of optimism from the believers they were talking to,” he said.

None of the Christians VOM has been in contact with have asked for help fleeing to Europe or the United States amid the conflict, Nettleton said.

“Not a single Christian had reached out to us and asked that. They were saying, ‘This is a turning point; this is a spiritual turning point for Iran. We want to be here. We want to be here to see the fruit of that and see the harvest of that,’” he said.

“So there is a sense of optimism and a sense of excitement about what Iran is going to look like after this and what could change in the midst of all this,” he continued.

Regarding how Christians and churches outside Iran can support persecuted believers, Nettleton urged continued prayer.

“I think, particularly right now, our Iranian brothers and sisters would appreciate our prayers. Obviously, prayers for protection, prayers for provision, as the economy and the effects of the war begin to impact grocery store shelves, gas supplies, and more,” he said.

“But also, I know they would ask us to pray for opportunities to be a witness. As the war goes on, as they have conversations and interactions with the people around them, pray that they’ll have opportunities to faithfully share the Gospel and to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ in those situations,” Nettleton added.

[Open heart surgery: How an Israeli non-profit changed the heart of Muslim influencer, Mustapha Ezzarghani | All Israel News.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #muslim, #compassion, #heart surgery

May 10, 2026

A Christian nonprofit that brings children from countries considered adversaries to Israeli hospitals for life-saving heart surgery has not only helped heal physical hearts, but also, in some cases, fostered lasting personal transformations, including that of a Muslim man from Morocco who has become a prominent advocate for Israel and the Jewish people.

Writer and photographer Mustapha Ezzarghani told ALL ISRAEL NEWS how his encounter with a young girl named Hiba, who received medical treatment in Israel, changed his life.

“In 2010, I had a friend from a small village called Amizmiz, tucked into the mountains not far from Marrakesh,” Ezzarghani explained. “One day, he invited me to visit, to share a meal with a local family. There was nothing unusual about it. In Morocco, being invited into someone’s home, especially in a village, is one of the most natural things in the world.”

“We sat together, shared food, spoke about ordinary things, life, family, the rhythm of the village. And then, at some point, my attention was drawn to their daughter, Hiba.”

Ezzarghani continued, “There was something about her that made you pause. A certain fragility in her presence, something that told you she had been through more than a child should. Her mother began to speak about her, not in a dramatic way, but with the quiet honesty of a mother who has carried fear and relief in the same breath. She told me that Hiba had suffered from a serious heart condition, that her life had once been hanging by a thread.”

“And then came the sentence that, in that moment, felt almost impossible to process. She told me that Hiba had undergone heart surgery... in Israel.”

The non-profit behind this narrative-breaking moment is [Shevet Achim](#), named after the first verse in Psalm 133: “How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together [*shevet achim*] in unity.” The Psalm promises blessing wherever there is this brotherhood, which is something the staff hangs onto as they extend love and brotherhood to Israel’s “enemies” through medical care.

Shevet Achim began bringing children from the Gaza Strip in 1994, but over time expanded its operations to include countries across the Middle East, including Ezzarghani's home country of Morocco. The Israeli government covers part of the costs, while Shevet Achim raises the remainder through donations.

"I remember the stillness that followed inside me," Ezzarghani recalled. "Not the kind of silence that brings peace, but the kind that comes when something you believed to be solid begins to crack. Because everything I had been taught, everything I had absorbed about Israel and about Jews, had prepared me to expect something entirely different."

"But this woman, this Amazigh mother from a remote village, had no reason to shape her story for me. She had no political agenda, no ideology to defend. She was simply telling me what had happened to her child. And what she described was not hostility, not rejection, but care."

"She spoke about doctors who treated her daughter with dedication, about a system that received them, about moments where she felt respected, even as a Muslim woman wearing her hijab in a place I had always imagined would reject her," he continued.

"There was no bitterness in her voice. Only gratitude. A kind of quiet, grounded gratitude that comes from having seen your child survive. And that is when something shifted inside me," Ezzarghani said.

Sixteen years later, Ezzarghani made a [video](#) describing how this encounter resulted in a paradigm shift that would change his life. Without mentioning Hiba's name, he described the events surrounding her surgery and how it impacted him deeply, saying it was "one human moment" that undid "a lifetime of assumptions."

Although he had grown up hearing negative narratives about Israel and the Jewish people, Ezzarghani also recalled family stories of a time when his relatives lived in close-knit communities alongside Jewish neighbors.

"My parents and grandparents would speak about a time when Moroccan Jews were not 'others,' but simply neighbors, friends, part of the same rhythm of life. My grandmother, in particular, had a way of remembering that felt almost sacred. She would speak of Jewish families who lived side by side with Muslims, doors open, food shared, joys and sorrows carried together," he said, adding, "Without realizing it, I carried both legacies inside me."

Reflecting on the seminal incident in 2010, Ezzarghani explains that it was the beginning of his journey rather than a tidy conclusion. "It was not a loud transformation. It was not immediately clear. It was something more unsettling, the beginning of doubt. Because when a lived experience stands in direct contradiction to everything you think you know, you are left with a choice. You can dismiss it, or you can follow it."

“That day in Amizmiz, sitting in that humble home, listening to a mother speak about the people who saved her daughter’s life, I realized that the story I had inherited was incomplete. And once you see that, even for a moment, you cannot fully return to what you believed before. That was how it began. Not with an argument, not with a book, but with a human story. And sometimes, that is all it takes to change the direction of a life,” he said.

Shevet Achim was greatly encouraged when they saw Ezzarghani’s video and joined the dots. Jonathan Miles, one of the founding members of the organization, [wrote](#) in their newsletter:

“Since October 7, the conventional wisdom in wartime Israel is that it is foolish to save Gaza children, since they’ll just grow up to become terrorists. Evidence that hearts truly can be changed could help protect the Jewish people from this hardening of their own hearts,” he contended. “We want our visiting families to know that we’re motivated by God’s free and unconditional love, which he first of all poured out on us through Messiah. There are no strings attached to our help, and these precious children are not pawns in a public relations battle,” he added.

Both Miles and Ezzarghani emphasize that this story is not a clear-cut or binary one.

“The truth is often more complex than the narratives we inherit, and that identity is not something we simply receive; it is something we must examine, question, and sometimes rebuild,” Ezzarghani emphasized.

“That afternoon in the mountains did not suddenly replace one belief with another; it planted a question that refused to leave me. And questions, when they are honest, are not gentle. They disturb. They linger. They ask you to look again at things you once accepted without hesitation.”

Ezzarghani spent years reading and researching, first on Jewish history in Morocco and later more broadly. He describes a gradual process of moving away from antagonism toward a more nuanced understanding and appreciation of the Jewish state, with all its complexities, which he now draws on when speaking to those still influenced by anti-Israel narratives.

“At first, I tried to hold on to what I had always believed. It is easier that way. There is a kind of comfort in certainty, even when that certainty is built on incomplete truths. But the story of Hiba’s family kept returning to me. Not as an argument, but as a presence. A simple, undeniable contradiction. And slowly, I realized that if I was serious about understanding the world, I could not ignore it.”

Ezzarghani is now president of the Moroccan-Israeli Friendship Association, with a social media presence reaching tens of thousands of people. He has visited Israel twice; the first time as part of the Muslim Leaders Initiative, and later on a trip organized by the Israeli Consulate in Atlanta, part of the "Southeast Influential Visit."

“This experience added another layer, not just intellectual, but relational,” he said. “It allowed me to see how Israel engages with the world beyond its borders, and how dialogue can exist even in the presence of deep disagreement. Israel, for me, stopped being an idea. It became a place filled with people – diverse, passionate, flawed, resilient.”

“There were moments that stayed with me, not because they were dramatic, but because they were disarming. Conversations where I expected distance, but found familiarity. Encounters where I expected tension, but found curiosity,” Ezzarghani said. “It was not that I suddenly agreed with everything I saw or heard, but something more important happened: I could no longer deny their humanity. And once that door opens, it never fully closes again.”

Speaking on behalf of Shevet Achim, Miles told ALL ISRAEL NEWS, “Let's all be encouraged that seeds we plant may bear fruit only after long periods, and in unexpected ways.