



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

News Articles for Episode 326

Unprecedented surge in aliyah: 29,000 Jews immigrate to Israel amid Gaza war and global antisemitism | All Israel News

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #jews, #immigration

Aug 27, 2024

Over 29,000 new immigrants have arrived in Israel since the Oct. 7 Hamas invasion and massacre, according to a recent report from the World Zionist Organization (WZO) in Tel Aviv.

The surge in aliyah (immigration to Israel), despite Israel's war against the Hamas terror organization in Gaza in the south and the conflict with Hezbollah terror attacks in the north, comes amid rising antisemitism worldwide.

The report indicated a 355% increase in immigration from France alone, with over 5,500 files opened since the war began last October, compared to just 1,200 during the same period in 2023.

In the United States, the number of open immigration files rose by 62%, totaling over 6,000 people.

Canada also experienced an 87% increase, with over 800 Jews initiating a move to Israel.

Yaakov Hagoel, chairman of the **World Zionist Organization**, welcomed over 150 additional new French *olim* (immigrants) at Ben-Gurion International Airport on Tuesday during this remarkable wave of aliyah.

Hagoel highlighted the new immigrants' strong determination and deep love for Israel.

“It is incredible that since the massacre of October 7, Israel has seen a dramatic increase in olim. The arrival of over 29,000 new olim during this time of crisis demonstrates that the Jewish people are determined to continue building their future in our homeland, the land of Israel. This unprecedented aliyah is a testament to the recognition of the global Jewish community that Israel is not just a refuge, but a beacon of hope and faith.”

Hagoel noted that **global antisemitism** has caused Jews to feel unsafe everywhere.

"On October 7, a war erupted not against the state of Israel, but against the Jewish people. Today, in many countries around the world, it is hard to be a Jew, whether at school, at work, or at prayer," he said.

"The war we face is not just a battle for Israel's security but for the survival and future of the Jewish people. The strong response we are witnessing through this wave of aliyah is a powerful affirmation of our collective resolve to stand with Israel, now more than ever."

Hagoel vowed: "We will make sure that Jews everywhere feel safe, supported, and encouraged to make aliyah."

[Jordan Condemns Israeli Guided Tours on Temple Mount, Wants UN to Subdue Jewish Freedom of Worship - Jewishpress.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #jordan, #temple mount, #tours

Aug 27, 2024

Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Ayman Safadi, has called for immediate action from the UN Security Council and global community to halt Israel's actions that he deems illegal and disruptive to the historical and legal status quo at Jerusalem's sacred sites.

What were Israel's actions that so perturbed the Jordanian official? The Heritage Ministry announced on Monday that, for the first time since the summer of 1967, it "intends to launch guided tours of the Temple Mount, which will allow thousands of Jews, and hundreds of thousands of tourists who ascend the Mount every year, to hear for the first time about the Jewish heritage of the Mount in accurate historical terms, free of alternative facts and false narratives written to promote an antisemitic agenda."

Two million shekels (\$543 thousand) will be allocated to the project by Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu (Otzma Yehudit). The tours are expected to start right after the high holidays ([Otzma Yehudit Scores Win in Battle with Enraged UTJ & Leftists over Temple Mount](#)).

עוד ועוד יהודים לא מוותרים על מצוות ארבעת המינים בהר הבית
בכל העולם המצווה מדרבנן רק בהר הבית המצווה מהתורה
למרות כל הכללים האנטישמיים והבידוק המפלה והמשפיל בכניסה להר יהודים קדושים לא מוותרים ומצלחים להכניס
להר ארבעת המינים
pic.twitter.com/fIs8dSMDve כל הכבוד לגיבורי ישראל האלה

— עולי הר הבית (@minheletharhaba) [October 5, 2023](#)

The Jordan Times on Tuesday ran the above-the-fold headline: "[Jordan 'strongly' condemns Israeli minister's decision to fund storming of Aqsa Mosque.](#)"

Minister Safadi took to Twitter on Wednesday to emphasize Israel's obligations as the occupying power. He stressed their responsibility to maintain the established historical and legal conditions at these revered locations.

Those established, historical, and legal conditions were established by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan in the summer of 1967, when he realized Chief Military Rabbi Shlomo Goren was planning to establish a synagogue in a corner of the Temple Mount.

Dayan wrote in his diary at the time that he refused to allow the religious in Israel to erect their own Vatican in the heart of Jerusalem.

This is when Dayan kicked the chief military rabbi off the sacred compound and contacted the Jordanian charity Wakf to hand them the keys to the Temple Mount.

Mind you, for 19 years, until 1967, the Jordanians barred Jews not only from the Temple Mount but also from the Kotel and many other precious sites in the Old City of Jerusalem. They also paved roads with Jewish tombstones from the Mount Olives cemetery, they were an example of religious tolerance.

Arabs celebrating on the Temple Mount the October 7 atrocities in Gaza:

[@elchangr!](#) ושוב חשיפה מטורפת של

הגאונים שהלכו לישון על האף בבוקר שמחת תורה נשכבו על הגדר כדי "למנוע הסלמה" ולפתוח את הר הבית למוסלמים.

אלו הקריאות מההר הלילה: "יא קסאם יא חביב אודרוב אודרוב תל אביב.

"שימו חרב מול חרב – אנחנו אנשי מוחמד דף"

רונן בר בטוח שכך נראית רגיעה. pic.twitter.com/O4fb75LpbT

— [igal_malka \(@igal_malka_5G\)](#) [March 29, 2024](#)

The Jordanian minister urged the Security Council to pass a binding resolution to prevent further Israeli violations and escalation at Al Aqsa Mosque/The Haram Al Sharif. Safadi underscored the critical need for swift intervention to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

In other words, the UN security Council should proclaim that Jews must not enjoy their right to freedom of worship on the most sacred Jewish site in the world!

Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu wrote in 2022 on the [Srugim news website](#) that the Arabs are afraid of Jews who pray. They know that the prayer of the Jews is more accepted in heaven than the prayer of the many Muslims on the Temple Mount.

They know that the day will come and we will sit on the Temple Mount, in the place of the Temple, and from this place, we will issue an abundance of light for all mankind. Great faith and joy for the whole world. An abundance of blessings for all the inhabitants of the world. Peace and brotherhood among all people. Justice and fairness. They know that it is also written in their Koran. They know God has not broken His promises and will never break them. God will bring all this abundance through his beloved children, "My firstborn Israel."

Instead of being humble and accepting God's will, they try to violate and replace it. They don't realize how stupid and hopeless their actions are. They will never defeat God or make him break His word. Just as God has kept his promises since the establishment of the Jewish state and before, so will He continue to keep his promises

and bring redemption to the world through the people of Israel, through Jerusalem, and through the mountain of God's house.

This is why the Jordanians are calling innocent tour guides on the Temple Mount "storming," just as they call every Jew who visits the Temple Mount a "storming settler."

Redemption is near, and its signs are harsh and bitter:

Rabbi Eliezer the Great says (Mishna Sota 9): In the times of the approach of the Messiah, impudence will increase and high costs will pile up. Although the vine shall bring forth its fruit, wine will nevertheless be expensive. And the monarchy shall turn to heresy, and there will be no one to give reproof about this. The meeting place of the Sages will become a place of promiscuity, and the Galilee shall be destroyed, and the Golan will be desolate, and the men of the border shall go round from city to city to seek charity, but they will find no mercy.

And the wisdom of scribes will putrefy, and people who fear sin will be held in disgust, and the truth will be absent. The youth will shame the face of elders, elders will stand before minors. Normal family relations will be ruined: A son will disgrace a father; a daughter will rise up against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies will be the members of his household. The face of the generation will be like the face of a dog; a son will no longer be ashamed before his father.

And on what can rely? Only on our Father in heaven.

[Bill presented to protect Temple Mount complex from Muslim destruction of Jewish history - Israel365 News](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #temple mount, #protection

Aug 27, 2024

Bill presented to protect Temple Mount complex from Muslim destruction of Jewish history

Knesset member Ariel Kellner and the “Beyadenu” organization are promoting a comprehensive and first-of-its-kind bill to protect the Temple Mount complex. According to the bill, the Temple Mount complex will be protected from desecration, damage due to excavations, and works that may damage or harm the complex and its historical remains.

The bill also states that whoever desecrates the Temple Mount complex or damages the antiquities inside the complex inadvertently or on purpose, who does something that may desecrate the Temple Mount complex, or carries out excavations inside the Temple Mount without the permission of the Antiquities Authority, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of between three and ten years, according to the severity of his actions, along with a fine.

MK Kellner quoted the words of Yigal Alon, according to which “a nation that does not know its past, its present is poor and its future is clouded” and added that “what was clear to our ancestors for 2000 years and was clear to the founders of Zionism and the state, our enemies understand this clearly and use it against us.”

“They understand that the struggle for our physical displacement goes through the displacement of the indisputable connection to the land. The Temple Mount, being the holiest place for the Jewish people, is a central goal for the displacement of the Jewish identity through the destruction of antiquity and the proven connection of the Jewish people to the place.”

“The bill comes to give special weight to the damage to the antiquities in the holy place, which are part of the enemy’s war to uproot us from our land. Let us return to Zion to renew our days as before out of a commitment to our ancient heritage. We must preserve it at all costs.”

Tom Nisani, CEO of Beyadenu, said: “I thank MK Kellner for promoting the law and believe that with God’s help, we will be able to pass it in the winter Knesset session. The Temple Mount complex is created and damaged daily by excavation, unauthorized

construction, and vandalism. The purpose of this law is to protect the most significant heritage site of the Jewish people for generations.”

The destruction of the Temple Mount and its antiquities have been documented throughout the years. Last year, the Knesset’s Research and Information Center reported that Islamic authorities clandestinely removed 400 truckloads of dirt from a pit in 1999, ostensibly to create an emergency opening for an underground mosque. Archaeologists continue to sift through the excavated dirt even now. Many other damages, such as digging a deep electrical trench at the temple site in 2007, have occurred without prompting any ministerial committee meeting.

The Committee for the Prevention of Destruction of Antiquities on the Temple Mount by archaeologists Eilat Mazar of Hebrew University, Gabriel Barkay, and other prominent individuals. The committee has alleged that the Jerusalem Waqf attempted to remove archaeological evidence that a Jewish temple ever stood at the Temple Mount by opening a mosque at Solomon’s Stables in 1999. To monitor the Waqf’s construction at the site in the early 2000s, the committee hired aircraft to take aerial photos and monitor the construction progress. The committee filed a petition to the Israel Supreme Court in 2004 to prevent the Israeli government and Jerusalem Waqf from removing 3,000 tons of dirt from the Temple Mount site. Justice Jacob Turkel granted the group’s petition. In 2005, the group publicly criticized the Israeli government for not stopping Waqf construction on the Temple Mount.

[Pro-Palestinian Activists Target Jewish Student Center with Violent Threats in New York \(breitbart.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #new york, #anti-semitism, #pro-palestinian, #colleges

Aug 28, 2024

A group of pro-Palestinian students targeted the Hillel, the Jewish student center, in a rally at New York City's Baruch College on Saturday — the latest sign that antisemitism is returning to college campuses this fall with a vengeance.

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency [reported](#):

A small group of protesters gathered outside Baruch College in New York called for “war” in the United States and targeted the college’s Hillel Jewish student club, a further sign of escalating rhetoric on campus just ahead of the semester beginning on Wednesday.

On Saturday, the demonstrators held a banner that said “Bring the war home” alongside an image of an assault rifle, and a sign that said, “Let the intifada pave the way for people’s war.”

According to images the protesters posted on social media, the demonstrators carried a sign that said, “Hillel go to hell,” with an [inverted red triangle, a symbol the Hamas terror group uses to identify targets](#) in propaganda videos. In the images, the activists wear keffiyehs and their faces are blurred. It was unclear how many of them were Baruch students.

Protests have already erupted at Cornell University and the University of Michigan as students return to class.

The Biden-Harris administration has done very little about campus antisemitism. Former President Donald Trump, who extended civil rights protections to Jews on college campuses during his first term, has [promised](#) to remove the accreditation and federal funding from any college or university that allows antisemitic protests to continue.

[Pro-Palestinian Students Take Over U. Michigan Student Gov't, Suspend Funds to Groups Until Divestment \(breitbart.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #anti-semitism, #pro-palestinian, #colleges

Aug 28, 2024

Pro-Palestinian students have assumed control of student government at the University of Michigan with the return to fall classes, suspending funding for student groups until the administration agrees to divest from, and boycott, Israel.

The *New York Times* [reported](#) Tuesday:

At the University of Michigan, many student activities are usually funded or subsidized by the Central Student Government, known as C.S.G., an elected undergraduate and graduate council that decides how to dole out roughly \$1.3 million annually to about 400 groups.

But last spring, pro-Palestinian activists, running under the Shut It Down party, won control over the student government. They immediately moved to withhold funding for all activities, until the university committed to divest from companies that profit from Israel's war in Gaza.

Some of the almost two dozen groups that endorsed Shut It Down were also at risk of losing funding, including Students Organize for Syria, the Muslim Students Association and United Students Against Sweatshops.

The student government's stance has added to a tense atmosphere on campus. On Wednesday, four pro-Palestinian activists were arrested during a protest on the campus's main quad, known as the Diag.

The *Detroit Free Press* [reported](#):

Police arrested four pro-Palestinian protesters Wednesday at the University of Michigan after a group tried to disrupt a university event, a school official said.

During a [Festifall](#) event being held Wednesday afternoon, some protesters who oppose Israel showed up at the Diag and started demonstrating. The group of about 50 protesters were asked to disperse, Colleen Mastony, assistant vice president for public affairs, told the Free Press. None of the four arrested were students, Mastony said.

The university has refused to divest, as students vow to continue their protests.

'Nature is punishing us': Drought imperils farmers and bees in Mexico's north (msn.com)

#bibleprophecy, #mexico, #drought, #farmers

Aug 28, 2024

BUENAVENTURA, Mexico (Reuters) - In the northern Mexican state of Chihuahua, residents and farmers have anxiously watched and waited for clouds to bring rain to refill dried-out dams, water wells and lagoons. They've waited so far in vain.

The largest state of Mexico has a dry or semi-dry climate at the best of times, but has faced unusually low rainfall levels in recent years. Near the town of Buenaventura, the Las Lajas dam is near empty and the little water left is infested with dead fish.

"The situation is bleak," said Rogelio Pacheco Flores, the municipal president of Buenaventura. "This dam is practically without water. We see total devastation, the truth is that nature is punishing us."

Cattle from nearby farms have come to cool off in the little wet mud that remains, but the depleted dam has meant many farmers have suffered, unable to irrigate their crops.

In previous planting seasons, the wells helped water the land, but amid the drought farmers have decided to leave land unplanted or use the scarce water to keep long-standing groves of walnut trees from dying.

"The levels of our farming wells are dwindling," said local farmer Angel Rueda Solorio. "We are no longer able to sow our crops due to the lack of water. We have already had several years, two consecutive years without rain."

Local beekeepers have also been hit. Bees are dying in huge numbers because the lack of rain has drastically reduced wild flower blooms, causing the bees to go looking for pollen in the crop fields, where herbicides kill them as well as pests.

"There is almost no vegetation in the landscape right now, due to the drought," said Adan Rascon Ramos, a beekeeper in the area for around 30 years.

As water levels have fallen, the local tourist trade has dried up, along with fishing, leaving producers hoping that conditions will improve in the months ahead.

"I have been working here for a year now at the dam and I have seen how the number of people who come to walk around the dam has decreased since last year," said Daniel Alberto Rubi, a fisherman who gives boat tours to visitors.

"This year things are very dry. The dam is at like 20% capacity and it keeps going down."

Parenting Is Hazardous to Your Health, the Surgeon General Warns - WSJ

#bibleprophecy, #parenting, #families, #health, #stress

Aug 28, 2024

The nation's doctor says parents are lonely. Maybe it's really the powerlessness of parenthood that's gotten us down.

There's a new U.S. surgeon general's warning: Parenting can be harmful to your mental health.

An advisory issued Wednesday by Dr. Vivek Murthy, the nation's doctor, said parents in particular are under dangerous levels of stress.

The report cites the American Psychological Association, saying nearly half of parents report [overwhelming stress](#) most days, compared with 26% of other adults. [They're lonelier, too](#), according to cited data from health insurer [Cigna](#). In a 2021 survey, 65% of parents said they were lonely, compared with 55% of those without kids.

I think I speak for a lot of parents when I say I feel seen. As a working mom of three, I feel the stress.

But who isn't feeling that way? [Elderly people](#) are lonely and stressed. [Single men](#) are lonely and stressed. [College students](#) are lonely and stressed. [Gen X moms](#) are lonely and stressed. There's an epidemic of loneliness and stress in this country and it's bad for our mental and physical health, which Murthy pointed out in a [previous advisory](#).

His stark warning doesn't necessarily help with the real problem. [Fewer people are having children](#), some because they can't—or can't see a way to attain professional ambitions along with family ones. Politicians like JD Vance are outspoken on the primacy of parenthood, and lots of people feel the job is so sacred that it's wrong to even talk about this.

Murthy, recently dubbed America's "[first chief wellness officer](#)," has made mental health a priority of his office. But cures are often less concrete than, say, quitting smoking or getting on blood-pressure medication. And his laundry list of proposed solutions might just put even more burden on parents and parents-to-be.

Helpless and alone

Murthy describes parents' loneliness as a unique kind that comes from being fully and solely responsible for another human being. Maybe powerless is a better way to describe it.

Murthy, age 47, described to me how he and his wife have felt that powerlessness firsthand.

Years ago, when they first relocated from Boston to Washington, D.C., their infant son had a bad cold and difficulty breathing. He knew what to do—suction the baby’s nose, turn on all the showers for humidity. But sitting there with his wife, holding a sick baby in a new town with no friends or family around, he felt helpless. And alone.

“Being a parent has really opened my eyes not only to how challenging it is, but to how uncertain it is,” Murthy says.

So this is where we are? The very act of propagating the human race is bad for...the human race?

Murthy isn’t suggesting people quit having children. “There are so many joys and benefits that can come with parenting,” he says. “They can coexist with the stress parents feel.”

Instead, he’s issuing a call to action for anyone—especially lawmakers and bosses—with the power to lessen the load on parents. That load has grown heavier with the rising cost of child care, longer working hours and new threats, from school shootings to social media.

Murthy prescribes a mix of institutional actions such as child income-tax credits and workplace management training on one hand, and individual action such as seeking more mindfulness and self-care on the other.

Parenting as a solo sport

Almost everyone who signs up to have kids knows it’s a hard job, even if they don’t fully grasp that until they’re in it. Still, how did parenting become so tough that the surgeon general felt compelled to issue an advisory?

“Somehow, over time, we came to see parenting as an individual sport, not as a team sport,” Murthy told me. “Parents need the support of family members, friends and neighbors.”

While previous generations have also faced worries and financial stressors, parents now have new things to worry about, he says.

“Struggles like how to manage the harms of social media, how to deal with gun violence in communities and the youth mental-health crisis are newer issues that the current generation of parents are dealing with and they need to be a priority,” Murthy says.

Digital-age dangers

With kids spending so much time online, parental duties extend beyond any physical boundary. It isn't enough to have grandparents nearby to babysit or neighbors to keep an eye on kids as they [ride around on bikes](#) (if they ever do).

Even the most vigilant parents can't keep up with everything kids see and do online. Tech companies need to make their platforms safer, because we all know by now that [parental controls don't work](#). And that's before we get to the [sexortion scams](#) and [AI-generated nudes](#). Legislators have [proposed laws](#) to protect teens from online harm.

Unrestricted internet access and online bullying have contributed to a spike in [adolescent anxiety](#). Murthy has described the [youth mental-health crisis](#) as the defining public-health challenge of our time, last year [issuing an advisory](#) on social media's effects on adolescents.

In his latest advisory, he cites Pew Research data showing that [parents of adolescents are worried](#) about social media's harms and feel ill equipped to manage it.

Again, powerlessness. We don't know how to help our kids navigate an online world in which we ourselves didn't grow up.

Stress is contagious

When parents aren't OK, kids suffer. Murthy mentioned studies showing that children of parents with poor mental health are [more likely to have depression and anxiety](#) as well as behavioral and academic problems.

So now what?

Murthy lists things government agencies, employers and healthcare professionals can do to support parents. He wants a national paid family and medical leave program. He recommends expanded programs to support parents in the workplace—such as training employers to recognize signs of stress. He wants pediatricians to provide more mental-health screenings for parents when they bring in their kids.

And while we wait for those institutions to do their part—if they ever do—he says parents need to build and nurture their own support network of friends, neighbors and relatives.

Honestly, that sounds like more stress.

[Church of England appears to stop using the word 'church' to sound more 'relevant': study \(msn.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #england, #church, #relevant

Aug 16, 2024

[The Church of England](#) is apparently dropping the word "church" in the hopes of drawing in more crowds, according to a recent study.

The study, called "New Things: A theological investigation into the work of starting new churches across 11 dioceses in the Church of England," was conducted by the Centre for Church Planting Theology and Research in Durham.

The qualitative study inspected language used by 11 Church of England dioceses to describe their new churches.

[CATHOLIC BISHOP AND ORTHODOX ARTIST DISCUSS MATERIALISM, SCIENTIFIC ARGUMENTS FOR CHRIST, REUNIFICATION](#)

Traditionally, new churches are referred to as "church plants." In this study, the Centre for Church Planting Theology discovered that even though more than 900 new churches were established by 11 dioceses in the past 10 years, none of them used the word "church plant" or "church."

"Not one diocese used the term 'church' in their main descriptor. 'Church plant' is not used by any of the 11 dioceses. Only one diocese used 'fresh expressions' of 'pioneering' in its descriptor," reads the study's conclusion.

The study refers to these not-quite-church-plants as "new things," as there was no specificity offered as to what these "things" are.

"That the term 'church' is not used, in favour of other terms (community, congregation etc.) is worthy of [theological reflection](#). We explore whether the question, 'what is church?' is worth asking."

[NY TIMES HYPES OLD SAN FRAN CATHEDRAL CONVERTED INTO YOGA STUDIO, DRAG SHOW PARLOR AS 'PLACE TO BE'](#)

Six of the 11 dioceses preferred the language of "worship" as their main descriptor for new church projects. Seven used "community," and only two used "congregation," according to the Reverend Dr. Will Foulger.

Foulger is the main author of the report as well as the vicar of St. Nicholas' Church in [Durham, England](#).

The vicar of St. Anne's in Kew, Dr. Giles Fraser, expressed to the Telegraph that the sudden drop of the word "church" shows "a misplaced desire to be relevant and modern-sounding".

Dr. Foulger admitted in his study that these new language changes are "forcing us to redefine what we think a church is in the Church of England".

[Pope Francis says refusing aid to migrants a 'grave sin' \(usatoday.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #pope, #church, #migrants, #sin

Aug 29, 2024

VATICAN CITY, Aug 28 (Reuters) - Pope Francis on Wednesday strongly decried the treatment of migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea to enter Europe, saying it was a "grave sin" not to offer aid to migrant vessels.

"There are those who work systematically and with every means to reject migrants," the pontiff said during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square.

"And this, when done with conscience and responsibility, is a grave sin," he said.

The pope has [spoken frequently](#) about the treatment of migrants over his 11-year papacy. But his words on Wednesday, invoking Catholic terminology for one of the worst kinds of sin, were especially strong.

Migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea in simple crafts or home-made dinghies from northern Africa and the Middle East have been the subject of [intense debate](#) across Europe over the past decade.

The International Organization for Migration estimates that more than 30,000 migrants crossing the Mediterranean have gone missing since 2014.

In Italy, a rescue ship operated by the Doctors Without Borders charity was issued a 60-day detention order on Monday. Authorities said the vessel, which had conducted several rescue operations on Aug. 23, failed to properly communicate its movements.

Doctors Without Borders refuted those claims. "We have been sanctioned for simply fulfilling our legal duty to save lives," it said in a statement.

Francis on Wednesday called for expanding access routes for migrants and a "global governance of migration based on justice, brotherhood and solidarity."

The pope said the issue would not be resolved through the "militarization of borders".

In recent weeks, the pope had been offering a series of reflections about Catholic spiritual matters in his weekly audiences.

At the beginning of Wednesday's remarks, the pope said he was postponing that series this week, to consider "people who are crossing seas and deserts to find a place where they can live in peace and security".

Wednesday's audience was the last before Francis, aged 87, embarks next week for an ambitious four-country visit across Southeast Asia from Sept. 2-13. It is the [longest trip](#) yet by the pontiff, who now regularly uses a wheelchair due to knee and back pain

Good News

Scriptures(s):

[3 - 1 Million Muslims in Iran Have Turned to Christ as 50,000 Mosques Closed - Michael Foust \(crosswalk.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #iran, #muslims, #salvation, #mosques

Aug 22, 2024

A million Muslims have accepted Christ in Iran as tens of thousands of mosques in the Islamic country have closed, according to reports on the ground and multiple ministries in the region. In February, Mohammad Abolghassem Doulabi, a senior cleric in Iran, revealed that 50,000 of the nation's 75,000 mosques had [closed](#) because of a substantial drop in attendance.

At the same time, Muslims are finding [Jesus](#), with approximately 1 million Muslims in Iran coming to Christ, according to the international radio ministry [The Tide](#) and a new report from [CBN](#).

Todd Nettleton, vice president of message for The Voice of the Martyrs, said many Iranians are searching for hope.

"You have a country with one of the highest drug addiction rates in the world. You have a country where corruption runs rampant. You have a country where more than half the people live below the poverty line," Nettleton told CBN. "And the people of Iran are looking at this, and they are saying, 'Wait a minute. If this is what Islam has brought us in the last 45 years, we're not interested. We want to know what the other options are.'"

A December [survey](#) of Iranians from the Netherlands-based Gamaan Institute found that 80 percent reject the Islamic Republic and want a democratic government.

The potential of a "Jesus revolution" within Iran has sparked pushback from the Islamic government, Nettleton said. Conversion from Islam to Christianity is illegal in Iran.

"This is not something that is making the regime happy. And, really, in many ways, they are seeking to solidify their power and to crush any kind of dissent," Nettleton told CBN. "We have heard multiple stories this year of Bible study, a home church being raided. Everyone there is photographed, everyone there is questioned. But then

the leader of the meeting is held onto. They are arrested. They are detained, they're put in prison."

Don Shenk, executive director of The Tide ministry, said Muslims are responding to gospel-centered messages that are broadcast into Iran.

"We get responses from listeners who say, 'Now I understand that God loves me. I always thought that God wanted to punish me,'" Shenk told CBN. "And I think there's an awakening that is taking place across the Muslim world, not just in Iran."

The international ministry Open Doors [said](#) Christianity in Iran is only tolerated if "you're part of a traditional Christian community, for instance, Armenian or Assyrian Christian."

But for "Christians who convert from Islam," Open Doors said, "not even the veneer of tolerance is present."

"The government views conversion as an attempt by the West to undermine Islam and the Islamic government of Iran," Open Doors reported. "This means that anyone who is discovered to be a member of a house church can be charged with a crime against national security, which can lead to long prison sentences. Anyone arrested or detained can be tortured and abused while in jail. Some Christians are released and monitored -- and know a second arrest would mean a long prison sentence."

Shenk's ministry, The Tide, [reported](#) that "what is happening in Iran is just the tip of the iceberg, as similar movements to Christ are happening across the Muslim world." The ministry said it is not uncommon for Muslims to dream about Christ.

"There is one common thread across these testimonies of Jesus appearing to Muslims in dreams: the dreams by themselves do not immediately result in conversion," a blog on The Tide website said. "Rather, they are a step in the spiritual journey, where the Lord breaks down some of the barriers which were the result of growing up in the Islamic [faith](#). After receiving these dreams, these Muslims are often led to believers who engage them relationally."

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