



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

News Articles for Episode 365

Israel Plans Iran Attack Even if Trump Reaches Nuclear Deal: Report - Newsweek

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #iran, #trump, #attack

May 28, 2025

Israeli Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) is threatening to launch a strike on Iran's nuclear sites even if the United States secures a diplomatic agreement with Tehran—escalating fears inside President [Donald Trump](#)'s administration that a surprise Israeli attack could derail ongoing nuclear negotiations, according to a *New York Times* report.

U.S. intelligence agencies assess that Israel could execute a strike within seven hours of Netanyahu's order, giving Washington little or no time to intervene. The growing rift between Trump and Netanyahu is now prompting urgent, high-level talks between senior officials from both countries, the report said.

Newsweek has reached out the State Department and the foreign ministries of Iran and Israel for comment.

Why It Matters

The prospect of an Israeli military strike on Iran's [nuclear facilities](#)—without coordination or regard for a negotiated U.S. deal—would mark a serious fracture in the longstanding alliance between the United States and Israel. For Trump, the risk is twofold: the collapse of diplomatic efforts to curb Iran's nuclear capabilities and the outbreak of a wider regional conflict triggered by an Israeli operation.

What to Know

According to the *New York Times* report, Netanyahu has directed Israeli defense officials to continue [planning a strike](#) on Iran's nuclear infrastructure, regardless of whether a U.S.-Iran agreement is finalized.

Options under review range from limited, targeted strikes to broader multi-day operations, some of which could take place in densely populated areas.

U.S. Warning

The [Trump administration](#) has issued firm warnings to Israel not to disrupt the ongoing talks with Tehran. But concerns are mounting in Washington that Netanyahu may proceed with a strike, viewing any deal that allows Iran to retain enrichment capabilities as unacceptable. According to Israel's *Channel 12*, Trump and Netanyahu engaged in a heated phone call last week, during which Trump reportedly insisted, "I

want a diplomatic solution with the Iranians. I believe in my ability to make a good deal," underscoring his desire to avoid a military confrontation.

Tehran Ready to Retaliate

Meanwhile on Wednesday, The head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Hossein Salami, said that Tehran is ready to respond decisively to any [Israeli military action](#). "Our hands are on the trigger. We are waiting — if they make a mistake, they will face responses that will make them forget their past," Salami said, according to Iranian state media. He also addressed the U.S., stating, "We are prepared for every scenario."

What People Are Saying

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: "Whatever happens, we have to make sure that Iran does not have nuclear weapons."

U.S. President [Donald Trump](#): "We've had some very, very good talks with Iran...I think we could have some good news on the Iran front."

IRGC Commander Hossein Salami: "If they [Israel] make a mistake, they will face responses that will make them forget their past."

What Happens Next

With Netanyahu pressing ahead and U.S.-Iran talks at a tipping point, the coming days may determine whether diplomacy can avert war—or if there is an even wider confrontation.

Germany signals shift on Israel as arms policy faces scrutiny amid mounting Gaza civilian death toll | All Israel News

#bibleprophecy, #germany, #israel, #gaza, #civilians

May 26, 2025

Germany has long been an ally of Israel especially since the Hamas-led massacre of southern Israeli communities on Oct. 7, 2023, which resulted in the deaths of 1,200 people – Israelis and foreign nationals – and 251 kidnapped into Gaza. However, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz stated on Monday that Israel's recent strikes on Gaza have inflicted a humanitarian toll on civilians that can no longer be justified under the pretext of combating terrorism.

"Harming the civilian population to such an extent, as has increasingly been the case in recent days, can no longer be justified as a fight against Hamas terrorism," he told broadcaster WDR in a televised interview.

With global pressure on Israel intensifying over allegations that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is deteriorating, Merz has come forth with his own warnings for Israel.

According to Ynet News, he also said he intended to speak with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu this week to urge him "to not overdo it," noting that, for "historical reasons," Germany would be more restrained in its criticism than some other European nations.

Speaking to Stern Magazine in an interview published on Monday, SPD Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Adis Ahmetovic stated, "German weapons must not contribute to humanitarian disasters or violations of international law. We're demanding that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government agree to a ceasefire and return to the negotiating table."

While Germany agrees that Israel has a right to defend itself, a concern of several officials is where it may cross international lines morally. SPD lawmaker Isabel Cademartori cautioned that ongoing arms deliveries might leave Germany vulnerable to legal repercussions.

"Germany could be held accountable before international courts," she said, urging the government to suspend shipments of tank shells and spare parts specifically.

Ynet reported that, according to a report from Die Welt, arms exports to Israel were down. In the first quarter of 2025, Berlin approved a total of €1.18 billion (\$US1.28 billion) in global arms exports, with just €28 million (\$US30.3 million) designated for Israel – placing the country 10th among recipients.

While a complete halt to arms shipments to Israel remains unlikely – since it would require unanimous approval from all 27 EU member states – European Union Foreign Minister Kaja Kallas announced that the review process will, nonetheless, move forward, potentially affecting the types of military supplies Israel may receive.

[President Herzog's Global Survey Reveals Jews Fear Antisemitism | JewishPress.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #jews, #anti-semitism, #survey

May 28, 2025

Voice of the People, a global initiative led by President Isaac Herzog to unite and empower Jewish communities worldwide, on Wednesday released its 2025 Jewish Landscape Report. The report reveals that antisemitism is the top concern among Jewish communities everywhere, cutting across age, geography, and denomination.

Drawing on responses from over 10,000 Jews worldwide, the findings show that the rise in antisemitism has surpassed all other issues in both urgency and emotional impact.

The findings—collected over several months through a survey conducted in partnership with the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and leading philanthropic groups—will form the basis for Voice of the People's Global Jewish Council. This council, composed of 150 leaders from Israel, North America, and Jewish communities worldwide, is charged with developing strategic responses to the issues identified.

Perhaps the 150 honorable leaders should first consult the opinion of first- and second-century sage Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, who taught (Midrash Sifri): “Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai said, the law is, it is known that Esau hates Jacob.”

Esau in this context represents all the gentiles, and Jacob is all the Jews, and the normative state of affairs is, according to Rabbi Shimon, that the gentiles hate Jews. Hatred of Jews is part of nature, the default choice of the universe, like rain and sun, winter and summer, the fruits of the trees, the birds and the bees, life, and especially death. And just as we cannot change the weather, no matter how much we talk about it, so we cannot do anything about antisemitism because it is also a force of nature.

DEFEAT ANTISEMITISM, UNITE THE JEWS, RINSE, REPEAT

To ensure broad reach and representation, Voice of the People employed a non-traditional data collection approach, combining partner organization networks with extensive digital campaigns and targeted social media outreach. This innovative method enabled diverse participation, capturing authentic voices from across the global Jewish community.

Across generations and regions, a clear throughline emerges: Jewish communities are facing increased vulnerability, yet there is also a strong, renewed commitment to identity, unity, and collective action.

The survey results highlight five key challenges shaping Jewish life today, underscoring a renewed call for collective resilience, identity, and action. Here are the issues identified and the percentage of respondents expressing concern:

Rising Antisemitism (76%)

Antisemitism, which has surged to unprecedented levels since October 7, was the top concern by a wide margin. Respondents shared personal experiences of hate speech, exclusion, and discrimination—especially in schools, universities, and on social media. Many reported feeling compelled to hide their Jewish identity in public out of fear. This concern cuts across all ages, regions, and levels of observance.

Israel–Diaspora Relations (56%)

Tensions between Israel and Jewish communities abroad emerged as a major worry. Many respondents noted a growing ideological and emotional divide, particularly among younger Jews. Still, a strong connection to Israel remains, with many viewing it as a refuge and a symbol of collective strength.

Jewish–Non-Jewish Relations (49%)

Nearly half of the participants expressed anxiety about worsening relations with non-Jewish communities. Many described feeling alienated, especially within progressive spaces where they previously felt welcomed. Misinformation, anti-Israel rhetoric, and ignorance of Jewish history were cited as key factors driving mistrust and social isolation.

Polarization Within the Jewish World (49%)

Internal divisions—political, ideological, and generational—are increasingly seen as obstacles to unity. Respondents emphasized the importance of fostering respectful dialogue across diverse Jewish communities and denominations. Many called for a renewed focus on shared values and collective responsibility, particularly during times of crisis.

Preserving Jewish Culture and Heritage (46%)

Concerns about cultural continuity were especially strong among older respondents. Many highlighted the urgent need for enhanced Jewish education, storytelling, and communal engagement to ensure that future generations remain connected to their heritage.

[A fungus that can ‘eat you from the inside out’ could spread as the world heats up | CNN](#)

#bibleprophecy, #disease, #fungus, #infections

May 26, 2025

Infection-causing fungi responsible for millions of deaths a year will spread significantly to new regions as the planet heats up, new [research](#) predicts — and the world is not prepared.

Fungi are absolutely everywhere. A vast kingdom of organisms, from mold to mushrooms, they grow in environments such as soil, compost and water. They play an important role in ecosystems but can have a devastating impact on human health: Fungal infections kill an [estimated 2.5 million people](#) a year, and a lack of data means that number could be far higher.

Yet we are still very far from understanding them, especially how these incredibly adaptable organisms will respond [to a warming climate](#).

A team of scientists from Manchester University used computer simulations and forecasts to map the potential future spread of Aspergillus, a common group of fungi found all over the world that can cause aspergillosis, a life-threatening disease primarily affecting the lungs.

They found certain Aspergillus species will expand their range as the climate crisis intensifies, pushing into new parts of North America, Europe, China and Russia. The study, published this month, is currently being peer reviewed.

“Fungi are relatively under-researched compared to viruses and parasites, but these maps show that fungal pathogens will likely impact most areas of the world in the future,” said Norman van Rijn, one of the study’s authors and a climate change and infectious diseases researcher at the University of Manchester.

The field has seen new attention thanks to the popular HBO television drama “[The Last of Us](#),” which follows people trying to survive in a world where an infectious mutant fungus has turned most of the population into violent monsters. (HBO and CNN share the same parent company, Warner Bros. Discovery.)

It’s fiction, van Rijn said, but he hopes it will raise the profile of fungal infections that are killing millions in reality.

Aspergillus fungi grow like small filaments in soils all over the world. Like almost all fungi, they release huge numbers of tiny spores that spread through the air.

Humans inhale spores every day but most people won't experience any health issues; their immune system clears them.

It's a different story for those with lung conditions including asthma, cystic fibrosis and COPD, as well as people with compromised immune systems, such as cancer and organ transplant patients, and those who have had severe flu or Covid-19.

If the body's immune system fails to clear the spores, the fungus "starts to grow and basically kind of eat you from the inside out, saying it really bluntly," van Rijn said.

Aspergillosis has very high mortality rates at around 20% to 40%, he said. It's also very difficult to diagnose, as doctors don't always have it on their radar and patients often present with fevers and coughs, symptoms common to many illnesses.

Fungal pathogens are also becoming increasingly resistant to treatment, van Rijn added. There are only four classes of antifungal medicines available.

This all spells bad news as the climate shifts open up new areas for *Aspergillus* to colonize.

Aspergillus flavus, a species that tends to prefer hotter, tropical climates, could increase its spread by 16% if humans continue burning large amounts of fossil fuels, the study found. It's predicted to push into parts of northern America, northern China and Russia.

This species can cause severe infections in humans and is resistant to many antifungal medications. It also infects a range of food crops, posing a potential threat to food security. The [World Health Organization](#) added *Aspergillus flavus* to its critical group of fungal pathogens in 2022 because of its public health impact and antifungal resistance risk.

Aspergillus fumigatus, which prefers more temperate climates, is predicted to spread northwards toward the North Pole as global temperatures rise. Its spread could increase by 77.5% by 2100, the study found, potentially exposing 9 million people in Europe.

Conversely, temperatures in some regions, including sub-Saharan Africa, could become so hot they are no longer hospitable to *Aspergillus* fungi. This could bring its own problems, as fungi play an important role in ecosystems, including healthy soils.

As well as expanding their growing range, a warming world could also be increasing fungi's temperature tolerance, allowing them to better survive inside human bodies.

Extreme weather events such as drought, floods and heatwaves can affect fungi, too, helping to spread spores over long distances. There have been spikes in fungal disease following natural disasters, such [as the outbreak](#) after the 2011 tornado in Joplin, Missouri.

The new Aspergillus study “rightfully shines a light on the threat of fungi that dwell in our natural environment and how under-prepared we are to cope with shifts in their prevalence,” said Elaine Bignell, co-director of the MRC Centre for Medical Mycology at the University of Exeter, who was not involved in the research.

Many uncertainties remain, however, and there is still a huge amount of research to be done, she told CNN.

Despite the deadly nature of aspergillosis, there is a real lack of data on where the pathogen is in the environment and who gets infected, said Justin Remais, a professor of environmental health sciences at UC Berkeley, who was not involved in the research.

He is leading a study of more than 100 million patients across the United States, which identified more than 20,000 aspergillosis cases between 2013 and 2023. The number of cases is increasing about 5% each year, he said.

“Fungal pathogens are becoming increasingly common and resistant to treatment, and we are only beginning to understand how climate change is contributing,” he told CNN.

People are used to hearing about diseases caused by bacteria, viruses and parasites, but much less so fungal diseases, said Bignell. “There is a desperate need to reverse this trend given the lethality,” she said.

“Any of us in the future might be affected.”

Hawaii's Kīlauea volcano shoots lava fountains 1,000 feet into the sky | Fox News

#bibleprophecy, #hawaii, #volcano, #kilauea, #eruption

May 26, 2025

Kīlauea's north vent reached heights of 1K feet while south vent extended 230 feet during latest eruption episode

[Kīlauea Volcano](#) – located along the southeastern shore of Hawaii Island – experienced "lava fountaining" that reached at least 1,000 feet high over the weekend.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) describes Kīlauea as one of the world's most active volcanoes. It has been erupting intermittently since Dec. 23, 2024, within the summit caldera in Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park.

The 23rd episode of precursory activity began late last week with "low-level spattering and flames." According to Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park, small lava fountains and [lava overflows](#) from the north vent started around 11:30 a.m. Saturday.

"Sustained fountaining expected any time through the weekend," Hawai‘i Volcanoes National Park Service wrote.

The USGS reports that Kīlauea "is in a unique phase of activity in Halema‘uma‘u, with numerous episodes of dual lava fountains since the eruption began."

"Two eruptive vents are located in the southwest part of the caldera, referred to as the north and south vent, and they have been intermittently active, producing [new lava flows](#) over parts of Halema‘uma‘u crater surface," according to the USGS.

As of 5:20 p.m. local time on Sunday, the south vent had lava fountains 230 feet high, while the north vent had lava fountains 1,000 feet high, according to [Hawaii News Now](#).

USGS livestreams of the eruption site showed the lava fountains dropping in height and later stopping. The vents were still glowing and lava was still visible on the crater floor.

The volcano's last "fountaining phase" extended for about 10 hours on May 16, according to the USGS.

Kīlauea experienced other recent fountaining phases this month on May 11, May 6 and May 2, lasting eight hours, 4.5 hours and eight hours, respectively.

During the ongoing eruption, the USGS reported that pressure building beneath the surface caused an inflationary tilt prior to a lava fountaining episode.

As pressure within the magma is released when lava fountaining begins, a switch to a deflationary tilt occurs. That pattern of inflation and deflation with every recent lava fountain episode "creates a saw-tooth pattern in ground tilt records over the past several months," according to the USGS, though the government agency reports that the summit has shown little net change in pressurization since the eruption began on Dec. 23, 2024.

As new Covid strain from China hits the US... some experts are calling for FACE MASKS to return | MSN.com

#bibleprophecy, #china, #covid, #disease, #face masks

May 27, 2025

Some experts are urging people to mask up amid rising alarm over a new Covid variant — and fears of a summer wave of infections.

The NB.1.8.1 strain is already thought to be driving a wave of infections across [China](#), [Hong Kong](#) and [Thailand](#) — along with upticks in hospitalizations.

In the US, there have been fewer than 20 cases detected to date. But the strain has been detected in travelers arriving in [California](#), [Washington state](#), [Virginia](#) and [New York City](#), raising fears it may be spreading quickly.

Lab tests suggest the variant is [more infectious](#) than currently circulating strains, which means it could lead to a spike in infections and potentially hospital admissions.

In Hong Kong, officials are already urging people to mask up, particularly while on public transport or in crowded places.

And in the US, chatter about masks is beginning to creep in. Dr Amy Edwards, a pediatrician at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, [Ohio](#), told [CBS News](#) today that anyone who feels a 'little under the weather' should 'wear a mask'.

Another expert calling for masks is Dr Melanie Matheu, an immunologist from California who previously studied at the University of California, San Francisco.

She told her 336,000 TikTok followers the US should brace for a 'summer wave' worse than that from the previous year.

NB.1.8.1 was declared a variant under monitoring by the World Health Organization on Friday.

Patients sickened with the strain are suffering from similar symptoms to those infected with other variants, scientists say, including a fever, cough, sore throat and fatigue.

It is not clear how many deaths due to the variant have been recorded.

In China, data shows the proportion of severely ill respiratory patients with Covid has jumped from 3.3 to 6.3 percent over the last month, while the proportion of Chinese ER patients testing positive for the disease has jumped from 7.5 to 16.2 percent.

Officials in Taiwan are also reporting a surge in Covid ER admissions, with numbers rising 78 percent in a week over the seven days to May 3, the latest data shows.

And in Hong Kong, the proportion of swabs testing positive for the virus has now hit a 12-month high — at 13.66 percent of samples used.

Dr Edwards said: 'If you're a little under the weather, but well enough to be out and about, wear a mask.'

Advising on other strategies to control the virus, she said: 'Good cough and sneezing hygiene, good hand washing, staying home if you're not feeling well to keep other people from catching what you've got.'

Dr Matheu added: 'My advice would be the same around these variants.

'Make sure you get your updated booster, wear a mask — especially if you are vulnerable, high risk, live or work with anyone who is vulnerable or high risk — and make sure there is good air circulation in your indoors and areas where you work.'

Authorities in Hong Kong have already urged people to start wearing face masks again amid concern over the new variant.

In a statement posted to the Hong Kong Department of Health's website, officials said: 'High-risk persons (e.g. persons with underlying medical conditions or persons who are immunocompromised) should wear surgical masks when visiting public places.

'The general public should also wear a surgical mask when traveling on public transport or staying in crowded places.

'When respiratory symptoms appear, one should wear a surgical mask, consider avoiding going to work or school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.'

A spokeswoman for the CDC said the agency was 'aware' of the new variant, but said few cases had been detected to date.

NB.1.8.1 was first detected in January this year and is thought to have originated somewhere in Asia.

To date, it has now spread to 22 countries and a total of 518 cases have been detected. There is no data on hospitalizations or deaths.

Scientists say, however, that the infection figures are likely a huge underestimate — pointing out that many now do not test for Covid and that government's have majorly scaled back their Covid variant monitoring programs.

The proportion of cases caused by the variant is spiking globally, and is up four-fold in the latest month with data available. It was behind 2.5 percent of all Covid cases globally at the start of April, but by the end of the month, this had surged to 10.7 percent.

Travelers arriving in the US infected with the variant arrived between April 22 and May 12 from the following countries: China, Japan, Vietnam, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, France, the Netherlands and Spain.

The variant has also been detected in Hawaii, Rhode Island and Ohio.

[Mysterious sphere in Colombia sparks UFO debate among scientists and experts | Fox News](#)

#bibleprophecy, #ufo, #columbia, #sphere, #experts

May 25, 2025

Mysterious metal sphere discovered in Buga, Colombia, sparks UFO rumors

Scientists have made a remarkable discovery of a sphere that some believe to be an [unidentified flying object](#) (UFO).

The sphere, according to social media page [@Truthpolex](#), was spotted March 2 flying over the town of Buga, Colombia, before it landed. Jose Luis Velazquez, one of the researchers studying the three-layered sphere, noted that it shows "no welds or joints," characteristics normally indicative of human manufacture, which further bolstered his belief in its extraterrestrial origin.

Julia Mossbridge, the executive director of the Institute for Love and Time (TILT), and a member of the University of San Diego Department of Physics and Biophysics, told Fox News Digital she remains skeptical of its extraterrestrial origins.

"It looks to me like a really cool art project," she said, urging caution in drawing immediate conclusions.

[UFO FOOTAGE CAPTURED BY US NAVY SHOWS MYSTERIOUS AIRCRAFT LAUNCHING FROM SEA, EXPERT SAYS](#)

Mossbridge framed the mysterious object as part of a "bigger picture" in which humanity must confront its own limitations.

"We are entering a time when we don't have the control that we thought we had," she said, noting that prior "grandiose" beliefs in total mastery blind us when "something shows up that doesn't fit our model of the world.

"If an artist is doing this, why is that? Well, I think it's partly the same reason. It's because we're learning that we don't understand [what's in our skies](#), what's in our waters. And there's something going on that's essentially bigger than us," she said.

[FORMER DEFENSE OFFICIAL MAKES EARTH-SHATTERING UFO REVELATION AS UNEXPLAINED DRONES LEAVE MILLIONS ON EDGE](#)

She says sightings of unexplained objects have been [around for decades](#).

"Frankly, we've been looking at UAPs (unidentified anomalous phenomena) for decades, and the federal government has admitted that there are things that we don't understand, but we are investigating them," she said.

Mossbridge said the coalition of individuals working to find answers, such as the Scientific Coalition for UAP Studies, the UAP Disclosure Fund and the Galileo Project, are made of people of "all political persuasions."

"They are all trying to get rigorous information themselves, not necessarily waiting on the federal government, about what's going on in our skies, what's going on in our waters and actually trying to get international cooperation around these things," she said. "Because, for instance, the sphere in Colombia is in a different country. So, what are the rules about how we deal with something that's interesting that's found there?"

PENTAGON SOLVES ONE OF ITS HIGHEST-PROFILE UFO MYSTERIES

Mossbridge urged thorough vetting before declaring anomalies in mysterious discoveries.

"Before you decide something's anomalous or a UFO, bring the object to a group like [the Galileo Project](#)," she said.

She said experts can determine if the material is "clearly non-human-made."

Despite her misgivings about the discovery in Buga, she said it doesn't "discount all the other objects that are of extraterrestrial origin."

[Texas Gov. Greg Abbott plans to sign Ten Commandments bill after Senate approval | NBC News.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #texas, #ten commandments, #schools, #law

May 28, 2025

A Texas bill that would order the Ten Commandments to be displayed in all public school classrooms was advanced by the state Senate on Wednesday, sending the legislation to Gov. Greg Abbott's desk after the [House of Representatives passed an amended version Sunday](#).

The Senate passed the GOP-drafted [Senate Bill 10](#) in March along party lines. Despite debate and attempts to delay the bill's progress in the House in recent days, a Democratic lawmaker's [amendment](#) that requires the state, rather than school districts, to defend any legal challenges to the law was approved on Sunday. Such a change forced the bill back to the Senate for approval with only days left in the current legislative session.

With that approval in place, Abbott, a Republican, is expected to sign the bill. His spokesman referred a request for comment to what Abbott [posted on X](#) earlier this month: "Let's get this bill to my desk. I'll make it law."

Texas, the second-largest state with more than [5 million students enrolled](#) in public schools, would follow Louisiana and [most recently Arkansas in passing legislation](#) requiring that the Ten Commandments be displayed in classrooms.

But like Louisiana, Texas could face a barrage of legal challenges over the law's constitutionality.

Louisiana has not fully implemented its legislation after a coalition of parents of different faiths filed a federal lawsuit just days after the bill was signed by Gov. Jeff Landry, a Republican. A [judge in November sided with those parents when he concluded that](#) the state had not offered "any constitutional way to display the Ten Commandments."

Louisiana officials appealed, but a ruling has not been issued.

Now, with other states passing their own laws, the arguments could eventually wind up again before the U.S. Supreme Court, which in 1980 ruled that classroom displays of the Ten Commandments were unconstitutional.

But a [wave of new laws](#) and [mandates in states](#), particularly in the South, having begun to test the bounds of what may be legally permissible when it comes to religion in public schools.

Under Texas' bill, all public elementary or secondary schools would have to "display in a conspicuous place in each classroom of the school a durable poster or framed copy of the Ten Commandments." The displays would have to be at least 16 inches by 20 inches and include the text of the Ten Commandments as written in the bill.

Once the bill is signed into law, schools "must accept any offer of privately donated" displays or may use district funds, starting in the 2025-26 school year.

The legislation does not have an enforcement mechanism, and it's unclear what might happen to schools or individual teachers who refuse to comply.

State Sen. Phil King, the lead author of the bill, has said he believes the legislation stands up to scrutiny following a [2022 Supreme Court ruling](#) that found a former Washington state high school football coach had a right to pray on the field immediately after games. The ruling by the conservative-majority court took a different approach by examining "historical practices and understandings" to interpret whether the First Amendment was being violated.

"Now that the U.S. Supreme Court has reversed a previous erroneous decision, what was taken from our students can now be rightfully restored," King said in a statement Wednesday. "I look forward to having the Ten Commandments, a historical document foundational to our nation's history and character, back in schools across Texas."

In arguments against the bill during debate, state Rep. James Talarico, a Democrat and a Christian, said the specific posting of the Ten Commandments would give the appearance that the state is favoring one religion over others to the detriment of non-Christian students. He also questioned if state lawmakers had ever broken any of the commandments themselves.

Other Democrats and critics asked why parents and school districts could not have a choice in whether to allow the Ten Commandments in classrooms, when some Republicans have been vocal about wanting parents to decide [what books and topics](#) are permissible in schools.

"Families across Texas believe deeply in faith, but they also believe in freedom," Rocío Fierro-Pérez, the political director of the Texas Freedom Network, which has opposed the Ten Commandments legislation, said in a statement. "Freedom to raise their kids according to their own values. Freedom from government interference in personal beliefs. That's what's really under attack here."

But the bill isn't the only religious-based one to win approval this legislative session, after Texas lawmakers passed a bill that would permit school districts to adopt

policies [allowing for a period of prayer](#) in schools and the reading of the Bible or "other religious text" with parental consent. Abbott is also expected to sign it into law.

[Valedictorian resists censorship attempts, touts Christ in speech | ChristianPost.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #valedictorian, #speech, #schools, #law

May 28, 2025

A North Carolina high school valedictorian thanked God and proclaimed his faith in Christ during his speech last weekend, according to a legal firm that urged him to push back against attempts by his school district to scrub or amend references to Christianity.

In a [statement](#) Tuesday, the religious liberty legal group Liberty Counsel announced that a valedictorian gave an "unaltered" graduation speech at an unnamed North Carolina high school that included multiple references to his Christian faith despite the district's attempts to remove them.

In one portion of his address, the valedictorian declared, "I want to thank my Lord Jesus Christ for getting me through because if it weren't for Him, I don't know how I would've gotten through life."

"Jesus Christ has always loved me," the valedictorian added.

A redacted [letter](#) the legal group sent the student, published Thursday, advised him of his constitutional rights and provided additional information about school administrators' concerns about the "separation of church and state."

The letter included screenshots outlining alleged changes school administrators wanted the valedictorian to make to the speech. The administrators wanted to replace the sentence giving thanks to Jesus Christ with a statement proclaiming, "Without my faith, I don't know how I would've gotten through life." The student was also advised to say, "He has always loved me" instead of "Jesus Christ loved me."

The student had previously decided not to make the requested changes to his speech after engaging in discussions with Liberty Counsel, and the school district allowed him to include all references to his faith in the address.

"Liberty Counsel appreciates your respectful approach to correcting the administrators' errors, and we are pleased that the administrators have at this time relented and have stated they will allow your uncensored Speech," the letter stated.

Liberty Counsel Founder and Chairman Mat Staver said in a statement that the "valedictorian's respectful approach" resulted in an "uncensored, faith-filled graduation speech."

"Voluntary references to God or Jesus Christ in a graduation speech are all protected by the First Amendment and may not be censored by school officials," Staver wrote.

Liberty Counsel refuted the premise that students referring to their Christian faith in a high school graduation speech violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which prohibits a government establishment of religion.

The group contends that U.S. Supreme Court cases in recent years "have conclusively held that the Establishment Clause does not permit censorship of private religious speech. Such attempts are improper and violate the First Amendment."

Among the cases cited were the Supreme Court's 2022 [ruling](#) in favor of a group that wanted to fly a Christian flag at Boston City Hall and the court's 2022 ruling in favor of a Washington state high school coach [punished for praying on the field](#) after football games.

"The U.S. Supreme Court has held that private speech is protected; it is only government speech endorsing religion that is prohibited by the Establishment Clause," the letter insisted. "Private religious speech is not a 'First Amendment orphan' but is 'as fully protected under the Free Speech Clause as secular private expression.'"

Liberty Counsel elaborated on additional aspects of the speech, noting how "the valedictorian spoke about the adversity he had faced due to several medical conditions, one of them life threatening" and "the speech also gave appropriate credit to his parents, teachers, as well as challenged his classmates to be a good influence in the lives of other people."