



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

News Articles for Episode 246

[Saudi Leaders Say They Are Ready to Normalize Relations With Israel, US | Newsmax.com](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #peace, #saudis

Jan 10, 2023

Could 2023 be a year for a dramatic breakthrough that could effectively bring the Arab-Israeli conflict to an end and open up a new era of peace and prosperity in the Middle East?

As Israel heads into the 75th anniversary of its miraculous and prophetic rebirth, I'm increasingly optimistic and urge the world's 600 million Evangelical Christians to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem" like you've never prayed before.

Here is why I believe a major breakthrough is increasingly close at hand.

Two years after the signing of the Abraham Accords – and for the first time in history – the senior leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia say they are, in fact, now ready to normalize relations with the State of Israel.

But first, the Saudis say, they need to normalize relations with Washington which are more strained and tense than any time in the eight decades since the U.S.-Saudi alliance began.

The Saudis insist they cannot take the risk of making peace with Israel – especially in the face of grave and growing threats from the Iranian regime – without strong and dependable security and economic ties with Washington.

This is no small development.

The Saudis' willingness to negotiate a full peace treaty with Israel is extraordinary.

Even more extraordinary is that senior Saudi leaders expressed these comments to a Jewish delegation that recently visited Riyadh.

Who was on the Jewish delegation and what Saudi leaders did they meet?

Leading the delegation in November was John Hannah, who served as former-Vice President Dick Cheney's national security adviser.

Today, Hannah is a senior fellow at the Jewish Institute for National Security of America, known as JINSA.

Last week, he published a column in the Jerusalem Post about his trip.

This week, in his first exclusive interview about the trip, Hannah told ALL ISRAEL NEWS that he and his colleagues met with the absolute top tier of Saudi leaders.

"We met with the crown prince," he said via Zoom from his office in Washington. "We met with the defense minister. With the foreign minister. We met with the head of the Navy. The commander of the Air Force. The people in charge of their defense transformation at the Ministry of Defense. The person in charge of their military industries. We saw somebody I know that you probably know well – we had a lovely day at the Muslim World League with Sheikh Mohammed Al-Issa. We went, of course, to Etidal, the Countering Extremism Center."

Joining the delegation, Hannah said, were "eight retired U.S. flag officers – four four-stars [and] four three-stars, all with deep experience in the Middle East, including the former commander at CENTCOM and former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia under President Trump, General John Abizaid; the former director of the National Security Agency, Admiral Mike Rogers; the former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Lieutenant General Bob Ashley; and others."

It was a very impressive group, he said, adding: "And we saw, essentially, without giving away too much, the people you would need to see – authoritatively – at a political and national security level."

Though the ground rules of the meetings prohibit Hannah and his colleagues from directly quoting specific Saudi leaders they met with, he said he is at liberty to express his impressions of what they saw and heard.

The Saudis are ready to "cross the rubicon"

"I came away with a stronger impression than I've ever had that ... the top political and national security leadership in that country has made the decision that they are, in fact, prepared to make peace with Israel, to normalize relations," Hannah told me.

"They see it very much in their strategic interest to do so," he added. "They told us we have the same threats as Israel, the same allies, and the same enemies – most importantly, specifically, the Islamic Republic of Iran."

"I have a sense that they have now really thought through the requirements that they need to be able to cross that Rubicon and make a decision like the UAE, like Bahrain and Morocco have done, to actually normalize relations with Israel officially.

What is the key obstacle to a Saudi-Israel peace agreement?

However, there is a very serious obstacle to peace, Hannah told me.

It's not Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his right-wing government.

Nor is it the refusal of the Palestinian leadership in Ramallah to agree to any form of direct negotiations with Israel, much less actually make peace.

The obstacle, the Saudis told Hannah, is the badly broken relationship between Riyadh and Washington.

Biden's visit to the kingdom last summer was a step in the right direction, but it was not nearly enough.

Bad blood remains.

After all, President Joe Biden has called Saudi Crown Prince and de facto ruler Mohammed bin Salman (also known by his initial, "MBS") a murderer, despite the fact that he's never released proof that MBS ordered the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi or knew about the murder in advance.

Biden has called Saudi Arabia a "pariah" state and said there is "very little social redeeming value in the present government in Saudi Arabia."

What's more, since taking office, Biden has denied various arms sales to the Saudis, withdrawn some U.S. missile defense systems from the kingdom, and removed the Houthi rebels in Yemen – which have been continually attacking the kingdom – from the U.S. list of terrorist organizations.

"We came away with an almost unequivocal message that the problem from the Saudi perspective is not Israel," Hannah told me. "It's not the Palestinian issue. It is their lack of faith in the current state of the strategic relationship bilaterally between the United States and Saudi Arabia."

"They have looked around. They have been attacked in the past few years directly by Iranian drones and cruise missiles at their most critical oil infrastructure facility at Abqaiq. They say, 'We were attacked. The United States did not respond.'"

"Over the course of the last several years on arms sales, the United States has become a much less reliable and predictable supplier of the weapons that we feel are critical for our own defense."

For the Saudis, Hannah said, their bottom line was essentially this: "Before we can normalize with Israel, which is what we want to do, we need much greater confidence that we've got a normal strategic partnership with the United States."

Tomorrow, I'll share with you the part of the conversation that Hannah and I had about the possible role that Netanyahu could play in bringing Biden and MBS together.

For now, I want to underscore what a big story this is.

The Saudis are signaling for the first time – and to a Jewish-American delegation, no less – that they are ready to make peace with Israel.

What they want is a far better, stronger, and deeper security and economic alliance with the U.S. overall and a significantly improved relationship with both Republicans and Democrats in Washington.

We should all want that.

That's why we should pray that this badly broken relationship between Washington and Riyadh can be reset and put on the road to healing.

I strongly believe that would be in the best interest of America, Israel, and Saudi Arabia.

[Israeli settlement building must continue, Edelstein tells US envoy - Israel News - The Jerusalem Post \(jpost.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #settlements

Jan 11, 2023

The Knesset's foreign affairs and defense committee chief also defended Itamar Ben-Gvir's visit to Temple Mount last week.

[Israeli settlement building](#) must continue, Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Chairman Yuli Edelstein told US Ambassador Tom Nides when the two men met on Wednesday.

"I presented to Ambassador Nides my clear position about the necessity in the territory of the settlements in Judea and Samaria," Edelstein wrote in a post he placed on his Facebook page after the visit.

He also spoke about the Temple Mount and defended [National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir](#)'s visit to al-Aqsa Mosque compound on that site last week.

It was a move that was globally condemned as a violation of the status quo, in which visitors of all faiths can visit but only Muslims can pray there.

Israel has insisted that Ben-Gvir's visit was in keeping with those restrictions and Edelstein explained this to Nides.

"I clarified that the status quo is upheld and precisely because of that there is a need to deal with the Palestinian conduct that incites with all things relating to the Temple Mount," he said.

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Yuli Edelstein

Yuli Edelstein: A strong supporter of the Israeli settlement movement

Edelstein, who is a former Knesset speaker, lives in the Gush Etzion region of the West Bank and is a strong supporter of Israel's religious and historic right to that region.

As the head of the FADC, he will also be one of the new government's faces to the International community. Nides met with him in advance of two high-profile visits this

month first by National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and then by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Edelstein wrote that he and Nides discussed the importance of strengthening the relationship of the two countries based on shared values and interests.

But the Biden administration is at odds with Israel when it comes to settlement activity, which it opposes.

On Tuesday Nides told Israel's KAN News that "we want to keep a vision of a [two-state solution](#) alive and .. massive settlement growth will not accomplish that goal.. in which case we will oppose it and we will be very clear about our opposition."

British Minister of State for the Middle East Lord Tariq Ahmad who is in Israel and the Palestinian territories this week also voiced his opposition to Israeli West Bank settlement activity and to Ben-Gvir's Temple Mount visit.

After his meeting with [Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen](#), Ahmad said that in their conversation "I also encouraged all efforts to avoid provocative unilateral actions in Jerusalem and the occupied Palestinian territories, which only serve to undermine prospects for a lasting and peaceful solution."

Ahmad also met with Palestinian Authority officials, including PA Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki.

"I stressed our commitment to the Palestinian people [and] the bilateral relationship, [and] emphasized our concern at recent violence in the [occupied Palestinian territories] that fuels instability," he tweeted.

During his conversation with PA Religious Affairs Minister Mahmoud al-Habbash, Ahmad pledged the UK's support for a peace process with Israel and said that "faith leaders can play in bringing about peace."

In tweeting about the meeting, he said, "I emphasized that the UK is ready to support any dialogue between the Palestinians and Israelis."

[A third of Americans have stopped attending church: survey | Church & Ministries News \(christianpost.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #americans, #church, #apostasy

Jan 8, 2023

A new study on how the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns impacted church attendance in the United States has found that roughly one in three Americans now say they've stopped attending religious services.

The pandemic lockdowns disrupted religious participation for millions of Americans, notes the study, titled "[Faith After the Pandemic: How COVID-19 Changed American Religion](#)," conducted by the Survey on American Life, a project of the American Enterprise Institute.

In the summer of 2020, only 13% of Americans reported attending in-person worship services, which increased to 27% by the spring of 2022, but the rates of worship attendance were still lower than they were before the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, it adds.

In the spring of 2022, 33% of Americans reported they never attend religious services, compared to 25% who reported this before the pandemic, as per the survey, which clarifies that only a few among the most religiously engaged Americans are part of that group.

The largest declines in attendance were seen among adults younger than 50, adults with a college degree or less, Hispanic Catholics, black Protestants, and white mainline Protestants, it explains.

However, the largest increases in attendance during these two periods were seen among adults aged 30–49, adults with less than a college degree, and black Protestants.

Conservatives, adults age 50 and older, women, married adults, and those with a college degree were more likely to attend than were other groups in both periods.

"Much of this decline in attendance was due to people completely abstaining from worship," the survey says.

Nationally, religious identity among American adults stayed largely consistent during the pandemic, with minimal evidence of religious switching during this period, the study adds.

While 19% of adults changed their religious identification during the pandemic, including 6% who were unaffiliated pre-pandemic but reported a religious identity in

spring 2022, 5% who reported a religion pre-pandemic were unaffiliated in spring 2022.

Last August's [edition](#) of the "State of the Bible: USA 2022" report from the American Bible Society found that 40% of Generation Z adults ages 18 and older attended church "primarily online." They were followed closely by 36% of churchgoers ages 77 and older.

However, the report suggested that among Gen Z and millennials who had made a meaningful commitment to Jesus, about 66% did not attend church either in person or online at least once a month.

Last November, Lifeway Research released the [results](#) of a phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors conducted from Sept. 6 through Sept. 30, 2022, which showed while churches were resuming the majority of their in-person services, on average, attendance at their churches in August 2022 was 85% of their Sunday attendance levels in January 2020.

Still, those attendance levels marked the highest in over two years.

The average church reported 63% of its pre-pandemic in-person attendance in September 2020. By August 2021, that number climbed to 73% and jumped another 12 points in 2022, according to the study.

"While there are a handful of exceptions, we can definitively say that churches in the U.S. have reopened," Lifeway Research Executive Director Scott McConnell said in a statement at the time. "While masks began to rapidly disappear in many settings in 2022, churchgoers have not reappeared quite as fast."

Last March, Pew Research Center [released a report](#) showing that the percentage of Americans who said they had attended religious services in the previous month had leveled off as more churches and houses of worship had lifted various COVID-19 meeting restrictions and safety precautions.

Sam Rainer, president of [Church Answers](#) and pastor at [West Bradenton Baptist Church](#) in Florida, told [The Christian Post](#) at the time that he believed "there are times and there are seasons in the life of the church where a plateau is not a bad place to be."

"If you are holding your own with attendance right now, if you are stable in attendance, I view that as a victory because it's been harder to draw new people in during this season," Rainer said.

[WEF Prepares Robust Globalist Agenda for Davos 2023 \(breitbart.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #wef, #economy, #greatreset

Jan 8, 2023

Banking, finance, cryptocurrencies, climate, racism, artificial intelligence, workplace robotics, global governance, and cybercrime. Are there any issues the unelected, private club that is the World Economic Forum (WEF) can't tackle on behalf of the serfs?

Clearly not.

When the preening elites fly in to Davos, Switzerland, a week tomorrow expect to see – and hear – about all those topics and more as the WEF [seeks](#) to “address the state of the world and discuss priorities for the year ahead.”

Following its foundation in 1971 by German engineer and academic [Klaus Schwab](#), the WEF has met annually to tackle what it sees as the issues of the day and deliver guidance to invited members and guests, and through them influence the world at large.

John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate of the United States of America (@ClimateEnvoy), will join the @wef's Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland. <https://t.co/pmGTXzEOU5> #wef23 pic.twitter.com/VoNcmXcoDW

– *World Economic Forum (@wef) [January 4, 2023](#)*

In 1973, the annual meeting endorsed the Davos Manifesto, a “code of ethics for business leaders” which was updated in 2020 to set out the purpose of business in the Fourth Industrial Revolution – itself a concept coined by Schwab in his 2016 book.

This year's meeting will be no different. It is headlined “[Cooperation in a Fragmented World](#)” and will follow on from [the Great Reset](#) as declared at the Davos summit of 2021.

In the run-up to the 2023 event, Schwab announced last November that Communist China will likely serve as a “role model” for many countries as the global community embarks upon a “systemic transformation of the world,” as Breitbart News [reported](#).

In an interview with the Chinese state-run television network CGTN, Schwab heaped praise on the Communist government in Beijing for being a leading figure in his vision of the aforementioned Great Reset of capitalism to usher in the “world of tomorrow.”

A visit to the WEF's own [previews](#) shows just what is going to be tackled at the luxurious ski resort in a few weeks time, what command and control mechanisms are possible to align the world with WEF objectives, and what has come before.

Green Social Credit: 'Individual Carbon Footprint Tracker' Pushed by China's Alibaba At World Economic Forum <https://t.co/4wUZ5TEskT>

— *Breitbart London (@BreitbartLondon)* [May 24, 2022](#)

“Global rules to crack down on cybercrime” is one issue already [addressed](#) by the WEF. It has published a paper with that title, looking at how criminals use the online world to fleece innocents of their money.

A “major structural change to the internet” is just one simple solution the WEF points to, adding “We urgently need international rules that are enforced as well as a more expansive approach that fosters cyber resilience.”

Ditto the inherent racism the WEF sees in healthcare, [declaring](#) it “can cause avoidable disease and premature death among groups of already disadvantaged people.”

The future course of business is also addressed against a background of Schwab’s previous praise of WEF members as representing the very best of humanity, endowed with the collective means “to change the world.”:

A new WEF paper enthuses that online “bots” can take many of the jobs humans undertake in the workplace today while working alongside them.

It [sets out](#) we will all be happier working with robots, alleging:

- Digital workers are intelligent software bots that automate everyday business processes like data entry, invoicing, or system queries.
- They will take over many repetitive and mundane tasks, creating new opportunities for businesses and workers.
- People aren’t just more productive when they work with digital workers; they are also happier.

Just what the future holds for cryptocurrencies is another issue that consumes the WEF.

The organization has a [paper](#) on that, announcing “We could now see the handover of crypto technology and blockchain infrastructure to more regulated and established institutions.”

It concludes: “Cryptography and blockchains will continue to be integral parts of the modern economic toolkit, despite the great harm these tools may have caused when wielded by the wrong people.”

The paper does not set out just who “the wrong people” are, although the WEF has previously known just who to groom to help disseminate its message:

[@AlexMarlow](#): Klaus Schwab "Groomed Trudeau, "Infiltrated" Canadian Gov't pic.twitter.com/Z5kXFJh5up

— *Breitbart News (@BreitbartNews)* [September 20, 2022](#)

The WEF Annual Meeting for 2023 runs from January 16 to January 20 in the luxury ski resort town of Davos, Switzerland. Some 2,500 representatives of national governments, businesses and civil society will fly in from around the world to attend.

Read more [here](#)

[ADL: Number of Americans believing antisemitic stereotypes nearly doubled since 2019 | The Times of Israel](#)

#bibleprophecy, #jews, #america, #anti-semitism

Jan 12, 2023

Poll finds that 85% of people in US agree with at least one racist trope about Jews, while 20% believe at last six; 20% think Jews have ‘too much power’

The number of Americans who believe antisemitic stereotypes has doubled since 2019 to the highest level in decades, the Anti-Defamation League said Thursday, calling the findings “stunning and sobering.”

A [poll](#) carried out by the organization surveyed the extent to which Americans agreed with various anti-Jewish tropes used since 1964, the year the ADL began monitoring opinions on the matter.

It found that 20% of Americans agreed with six or more of the 11 anti-Jewish statements, a rate not seen since 1992, and 9 percentage points higher than in 2019.

The ADL said agreeing with at least six antisemitic tropes amounts to having “deeply held antisemitic views,” and the survey indicates 52 million Americans fall into that category.

Meanwhile, 85% of Americans believe at least one anti-Jewish trope, compared to 61% in 2019.

“Those of us on the front lines have expected such results for a while now – and yet the data are still stunning and sobering: there is an alarming increase in antisemitic views and hatred across nearly every metric – at levels unseen for decades,” said ADL CEO Jonathan A. Greenblatt.

“From Pittsburgh to Charlottesville to the near-daily harassment of Jews in our greatest cities, antisemitic beliefs lead to violence. I hope this survey is a wake-up call to the entire country,” he said.

Among the findings was that 39% of respondents believe Jews are more loyal to Israel than the United States.

Also, 20% believe that Jews have “too much power” in the US, 26% say Jews have “too much power in the business world, and 21% agree that Jews “don’t care about anyone other than themselves.”

Over half, 53%, say that Jews will go out of their way to hire other Jews, the ADL found.

The findings indicate antisemitic beliefs that “Jews are too powerful, selfish, foreign, and clannish,” the ADL said.

Results indicated that 3% of the US population — amounting to 8 million people — believes every one of the 11 tropes respondents were quizzed about. That figure indicates that there are “more hardcore antisemites than Jews in the US,” Greenblatt said.

The survey shows “antisemitism in its classical fascist form is emerging again in American society, where Jews are too secretive and powerful, working against interests of others, not sharing values, exploiting — the classic conspiratorial tropes,” Matt Williams, vice president of the ADL’s year-old Center for Antisemitism Research, told The Washington Post.

Among younger adults, 18% believe six or more tropes, compared to 20% of respondents over age 30.

A greater belief in anti-Jewish tropes was also detected among below-30 adults than in previous research.

“While younger adults have modestly lower rates of believing in tropes than older Americans, this difference is far less than previously observed,” the ADL said.

The poll also examined how its respondents view Israel. It found that 23% believe Israel gets away with anything and controls the media, while 18% say they are uncomfortable spending time with a pro-Israel person.

There was “significantly more negative sentiment toward Israel and its supporters” among adults below the age of 30 than those who are older, according to the poll report.

The ADL said there was a nearly 40% correlation between belief in anti-Jewish tropes and anti-Israel belief, “meaning that a substantial number of people who believe anti-Jewish tropes also have negative attitudes toward Israel.”

“These anti-Israel beliefs are not commentary on Israeli government policies,” Greenblatt said. “They are antisemitism in another form.”

“This survey should serve as a wake-up call,” Greenblatt said. “It will require a multi-faceted, whole-of-society strategy to tackle this complex and ancient form of intolerance.”

The results correspond to an increase in anti-Jewish acts in the US. The ADL recorded 2,717 antisemitic incidents across the country in 2021, a 34% increase from the previous year, and the highest since it began tracking in 1979.

The online survey released Thursday was conducted among a representative sample of more than 4,000 US adults between September and October 2022, and has a margin of error of 2.06%. It employed new methods developed with the National Opinion

Research Center at the University of Chicago (NORC) and the One8 Foundation. The number of Jewish respondents was not statistically significant.

The ADL is planning further research into the data and will release reports in the coming months analyzing how antisemitism manifests in different parts of the population.

[Abortion Is the Leading Cause of Death Globally for 4th Year in a Row - Milton Quintanilla \(christianheadlines.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #abortions, #death

Jan 5, 2023

Online health statistics found that abortion was the leading cause of death worldwide in 2022, making it the fourth consecutive year abortion topped the list.

According to a [snapshot](#) captured by the internet archiving tool The Wayback Machine on Dec. 31, Worldometer reported that approximately 44 million abortions took place in 2022.

Meanwhile, a [fact sheet](#) from the World Health Organization states that “around 73 million induced abortions take place worldwide each year.”

Worldometer also found that communicable diseases were the second leading cause of death last year, with nearly 13 million casualties. Other health-related deaths included cancer (more than 8 million people), smoking-related complications (5 million), alcohol-related complications (2.5 million) and AIDS (nearly 2 million).

Worldometer also found that road traffic accident fatalities (more than 1 million people) and suicides (more than 1 million people) were among the leading causes of death in 2022.

According to [The Christian Post](#), over 800,000 people died from water-related diseases, half a million died from the seasonal flu, nearly 400,000 from malaria and about 300,000 women died during childbirth.

Further, Worldometer compiled a separate [set of statistics](#) which found that there were about 6,698,745 people who died last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The total death toll in 2022 was over 67 million people. The number of abortions conducted in 2022 was not included in this figure. The world’s population came in at around 8 billion last year, according to Worldometer.

Last year marked the fourth consecutive year that abortions were the leading cause of death worldwide. The figure was a slight increase over 2021, in which there were approximately 44 million abortions performed. Meanwhile, 2020 saw nearly 44 million abortions, while 42.4 million were performed in 2019.

California reels from 'endless' storm onslaught, 14 dead - Breitbart

#bibleprophecy, #flooding, #california, #storms

Jan 10, 2023

Relentless storms were ravaging California again Tuesday, the latest bout of extreme weather that has left 14 people dead and prompted evacuation of a star-studded town home to Britain's Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle.

Fierce storms caused flash flooding, closed key highways, toppled trees and swept away drivers and passengers — reportedly including a five-year-old-boy who remains missing in central California — and authorities were bracing for more rain and snow to batter America's most populous state.

More than 230,000 California homes and businesses were without power as of early Tuesday, according to tracking site Poweroutage.us.

A fresh storm is set to pound the state with as much as seven inches (18 centimeters) of new rain in northern California by Wednesday and "several more feet of snow" in the Sierra Nevada mountains, the National Weather Service said in a Tuesday forecast.

The NWS described an "endless onslaught of atmospheric river events" that is the most powerful storm system since 2005.

The town of Montecito, a favorite of American entertainment royalty such as Oprah Winfrey and Jennifer Aniston, was expected to get up to eight inches of rain in 24 hours — threatening dangerous mudslides on hills already sodden by weeks of downpours.

Emergency authorities in the town 90 minutes from Los Angeles said anyone in the area should get out.

"LEAVE NOW! This is a rapidly evolving situation. Please pay close attention to emergency alerts," a fire department website said.

An AFP reporter saw police roadblocks set up to prevent people from getting into the town, where several roads were flooded.

The town, whose multi-million dollar properties are perched in breathtaking California countryside, is particularly vulnerable to mudslides because it sits at the foot of a mountain range that was ravaged by fire five years ago.

Hundreds of square miles (kilometers) of land were scorched in 2017 and 2018, denuding the hillsides of the vegetation that normally keeps soil in place.

Devastating January 2018 mudslides in Montecito killed 23 people.

“Over the last 30 days, Montecito has received 12-20+ inches of rain across the community, exceeding our yearly average of 17 inches,” Montecito Fire said on Twitter.

“This cumulative, saturating rain puts the community at greater risk of flooding and debris flow.”

It was not clear how many of the town’s residents, who also include Ellen DeGeneres, Gwyneth Paltrow, Katy Perry and Rob Lowe, had heeded the call to flee.

Boy swept away

The Montecito evacuation order came as California was being lashed by the latest in a parade of storms that have already killed 14 people — a toll which Governor Gavin Newsom’s office said is already “more lives than wildfires in the past two years combined.”

In San Luis Obispo County authorities called off a search for a five-year-old boy as rushing waters were too dangerous for divers, Fox News reported, quoting a county official.

The child, who fled with his mother from their car as it was inundated by flood waters, has not been declared dead. The mother was rescued.

In Ventura County northwest of Los Angeles, the fire department said it rescued 18 people Monday from an island in the flooded Ventura River.

Swathes of the Golden State were under flood warnings as it struggled to cope with yet more rain on top of near-record downpours in recent weeks — with even more forecast over the coming days.

“Two major episodes of heavy rain and heavy mountain snow are expected to impact California in quick succession during the next couple of days in association with two of the more energetic and moisture-laden parade of cyclones that are aiming directly” for the state, the NWS said.

Last week Newsom declared a state of emergency and on Monday the White House greenlighted the use of federal funds for emergency operations in California.

“We expect to see the worst of it still ahead of us,” Newsom told reporters.

Downpours in drought

While heavy rain is not unusual for California during winter, these downpours are testing the state.

They come as much of the western US is more than two decades into a punishing drought that has seen major increases in the frequency and intensity of wildfires.

Scientists say human-caused climate change, brought about by the unchecked burning of fossil fuels, has supercharged these wild swings in weather.

Storms last week around San Francisco caused flooding, on the heels of a ferocious New Year's Eve downpour which left the ground sodden and waterlogged.

But even the recent heavy rains are not enough to comprehensively reverse the drought.

Scientists say several years of above-average rainfall are needed to get reservoirs back to healthy levels.

[Animal sacrifice 'should be a thing of the past': PETA spokesperson criticizes Michigan city's ruling | Fox News](#)

#bibleprophecy, #animals, #sacrifice, #peta

Jan 13, 2023

A PETA official is speaking out after Hamtramck, Michigan, approved the religious sacrifice of animals at home for residents of the community.

PETA spokesperson Ashley Byrne joined "[Jesse Watters Primetime](#)" to argue why Tuesday's ruling is a "violation" of cruelty and health codes.

"At PETA, we don't believe in harming animals for any reason, and we encourage anyone who's bothered by this to take a look at what goes on in any slaughterhouse," she said.

[DEAD GOATS, CHICKENS PART OF SUSPECTED 'ANIMAL SACRIFICE' RITUAL LEADIN TO ARRESTS, POLICE SAY](#)

The issue had been voted on in December, but the council did not pass it and the ban on religious sacrifice remained. After a [revisit of the ruling](#), the council passed the practice 3-2. The ruling was 4-2 when Mayor Amer Ghalib submitted his vote.

Byrne highlighted the concern for children witnessing these sacrifices.

"We have to think about the fact that children are often exposed to these religious rituals," she said. "These animals' throats are slashed and their heads are manually torn from their bodies."

Even with the right to [religious freedom](#) in the United States, Byrne suggested there is no reason for animal sacrifice in modern times.

"[The Constitution] does [protect religious freedom], but animal sacrifice should be a thing of the past because it's cruelty to animals, plain and simple."

Byrne said many Muslims — Hamtramck has a large Muslim community — are adverse to the practice of sacrifice because it is "cruel and unnecessary."

"We see ritual slaughter in many different places in the country, but we also see people working to find alternate traditions, like some Santería priests use red wine instead of animal blood now," she said. "There are rabbis who encourage their orthodox followers to use money [instead of chickens](#) in Kaporos rituals."

Despite the legality of the ruling, Byrne encouraged benevolent alternatives to the religious practice.

"The point is that there is always a humane alternative, and we encourage people to find those, because whether or not it's legal, it's wrong."

'Glory to God': Buffalo Bills Coach Credits God's 'Healing Powers' for Damar Hamlin's Progress - Michael Foust (christianheadlines.com)

#bibleprophecy, #hamlin, #buffalobills, #healing

Jan 6, 2023

On Thursday, Buffalo Bills head coach Sean McDermott credited God's "healing powers" for the progress of Bills' defensive back Damar Hamlin, who experienced a cardiac arrest during Monday night's game but has improved each day since.

Hamlin's life was spared when medical professionals performed CPR when he collapsed moments after he made a tackle in the nationally televised game against the Cincinnati Bengals.

On Friday, the Bills said Hamlin's breathing tube was removed overnight. [He also spoke to the team Friday](#), telling them, "Love you, boys."

Damar Hamlin FaceTimed into our team meeting today to talk to players and coaches.

What he said to the team: "Love you boys." ❤️ pic.twitter.com/8dorrWNxt

— Buffalo Bills (@BuffaloBills) [January 6, 2023](#)

"The amount of faith, hope and love that we saw on display over the last three days has been nothing short of amazing," [McDermott said Thursday](#) during a news conference.

McDermott thanked doctors, the Cincinnati organization and the officiating crew, saying: "handled that situation with extreme poise and compassion." He also thanked the NFL and then the media for their "privacy and compassion."

"Finally, and just as important as anything, is glory to God for His keeping Damar and his family in the palm of His hand over the last couple of days – and His healing powers," McDermott said.

"Glory to God for his keeping Damar and his family in the palm of his hand over the last couple of days."

Powerful words from Bills head coach Sean McDermott on Damar Hamlin pic.twitter.com/G4D8CGeQkZ

— Sports Spectrum (@Sports_Spectrum) [January 5, 2023](#)

News on Hamlin "has been very encouraging," McDermott added.

[The Bills released a statement](#) Friday saying Hamlin "continues to progress remarkably in his recovery."

Per the physicians at UCMC, Damar's breathing tube was removed overnight. He continues to progress remarkably in his recovery.

His neurologic function remains intact and he has been able to talk to his family and care team.

— *Buffalo Bills (@BuffaloBills)* [January 6, 2023](#)

"His neurologic function remains intact, and he has been able to talk to his family and care team," the Bills' statement said.

When Hamlin woke up this week, his first words were, "Did we win?" (The game was suspended. On Thursday, the NFL said it would not be completed.)

"I don't think people really understand the bond and the relationship and the brotherhood that you have as an NFL team, especially this one here," Buffalo quarterback Josh Allen said Thursday. "Guys love each other. We really do. And for ... Damar to go through that and to come out on the other side and ... just think about his teammates, that's Damar. That's who he is."