

Israel News Desk

With David Hoyle
July 2014

The ever changing situation in Israel & the surrounding nations means, as always, that by the time you read this much of it will be out of date.

The fallout from the murder of 3 Jewish boys from a settlement in Judea and Samaria continues & grows in intensity. The revenge attack on a Palestinian youth is tragic & has exacerbated the situation. It should however be noted that Israel has already arrested the culprits, who have confessed, whereas the Palestinian Authority have done nothing to bring the kidnapers & murderers of the Jewish student to justice. Indeed the Hamas spokesman, speaking on Sky TV said it was all Mr Netanyahu's fault for building settlements in the "West Bank". Another Hamas spokesman said "they got what they deserved."

The great tragedy of the revenge attack on a Palestinian youth is that Israel loses the moral high ground.

Please note: Due to postal delays this update is very late going out (so see "Breaking News")

Over 2 days this week 28 Hamas rockets hit Israel, one of which struck the outskirts of Beersheba. Mr Netanyahu's cabinet is split over how to deal with this with the right wing wanting a major incursion into Gaza, even a ground offensive to reoccupy the strip. Others, in consideration of world opinion prefer to make a measured response.

A Times editorial praised Mr Netanyahu for his "careful management" of the crisis and suggested he should exercise restraint.

However Avigdor Lieberman, Israel's Foreign Minister is calling for a wide offensive in Gaza against Hamas. Whilst I am writing comes news that Mr Lieberman has ended his party Yisrael Beiteinu's alliance with Mr Netanyahu's Likud bloc because of his refusal to take a tougher line on Hamas following the increase in cross border rocket attacks & the abduction & murder of the 3 teenagers.

Mr Lieberman said that a situation where a terrorist group (Hamas) has hundreds of rockets it can decide to use at any moment is intolerable. He went on; by the end of 2015 they will have 1000's!

The withdrawal of Mr Lieberman's party from the Likud alliance leaves the Prime Minister's block at 20 seats, reduced from 32. Mr Lieberman however, will not be leaving the ruling coalition or resigning his cabinet role, meaning an early election will not be needed.

Mr Netanyahu & the Likud Party now have a majority of 1 seat in the government!

Meanwhile Israel has escalated its aerial attacks on Gaza, taking out Hamas members & rocket launch sites. Hamas said its rocket attacks were a response to Israel's aggression – what hypocrisy. It may be that a 3rd intifada is imminent! We must pray for Israel's leaders for wisdom in this difficult situation, with the world almost entirely against her.

Jerusalem A large fire erupted near Ein Kerem last week. Firemen battled to control the flames in the Ein Kerem area as Yad Vashem, the holocaust memorial is in the area, as is the Hadassah hospital. The fire was extinguished by nightfall on Wednesday.

Jonathan Pollard Hopes for Jonathan's release rose on Wednesday last as a result of Shimon Peres visit to Barrack Obama. The American leader promised that Attorney General Eric Holder would look into the possibility of commuting Pollard's life sentence. He has now been in prison for 29 years – a sad commentary on American "justice".

Syria Israel bombed & executed a direct hit on targets inside Syria in response to a cross border missile attack that killed an Israeli teenager. An Israeli civilian vehicle was struck as it drove in the Golan Heights on the Israel side of the border. Two other people were wounded. Mr Netanyahu said, "We will take strong action against those who try to harm us!"

Israel's Defence Minister warned both Syria's President & opposition forces against attempts to harm Israeli citizens.

Ben Gurion Airport thousands of passengers were stranded at the airport on Sunday last after the airport's computer system failed, including the X-ray machines that check luggage.

Kiev The Ukrainian Leader Oleksander Feldman has been threatened by uniformed men who hurled anti-Semitic insults at him. They surrounded his car near parliament, where he is an M.P. There have been a number of anti-Semitic incidents since the commencement of the revolution that forced President Yanukovich to flee to Russia.

Israeli Doctors Absolutely refuse on ethical grounds to force feed hunger strikers striking Palestinian prisoners. The head of the country's medical association said, *"It's a kind of torture"*.

France It is reported that increasing numbers of Jews are leaving for Israel. One headline in a Jewish paper said, "French Jews are leaving in droves." Those leaving cite anti-Semitism and say they feel caught between the increasingly influential far right and militant Islam. 5'000 are on track to leave this year. A survey showed that $\frac{3}{4}$ of French Jews are thinking of leaving for a new life in Israel. France has the world's 3rd largest Jewish population after Israel and the USA, about half a million. One man leaving shortly said, "There is a rise in anti-Semitism and people are hostile to Jews for completely divergent reasons", One lady who recently made aliyah said, *"Here in Israel you work, you go to the beach, you see friends, you are not afraid. I am concerned for my relations in France, they are not concerned about me."* How ironical!

Lithuania is to recognise holocaust-era rescuers of Jews as freedom fighters and pay their families special state pensions.

Red Heifer The elusive cow has not been seen in Israel for 2,000 years but one has been born in America. There are plans to ship it to Israel. The Bible states that the ashes of the red heifer were used for the purification of an ancient Israelite who had been in contact with a corpse. Jewish tradition holds that a red heifer heralds the coming of the Messianic Era.

British Press Our prejudiced press has been heavily criticised for its biased reporting of the murder of the 3 Jewish teenagers. Obviously the Guardian was at the top of the list along with the Independent and the Financial Times. All tended to focus on what they chose to refer to as Israel's "disproportionate response". The Guardian warned Israel against "lashing out". The Economist managed to speak of "the unjustified suffering" likely to be inflicted on innocent Palestinians. Most papers focus on the Israeli military response rather than the boys and their families. The worst example in, of all papers, the Daily Mail was 16 photos depicting military operations near Hebron.

ISIS Israel is keeping quiet on the subject of what is happening in Iraq but is concerned at America's failure in Mesopotamia and what it means for the Jewish state.

Israel is consistently being asked to relinquish territory, notably recently the Jordan Valley, which would then have a US trained pan-Arab security force. The Israeli argument that if US trained Sunni soldiers in Iraq are unwilling to fight ISIS they would be unlikely to stand against Muslims threatening Israel!

Hamas also easily took over the Gaza Strip in 2007 from the US trained Palestinian Authority forces!

Precursor to Armageddon The Turkish government intervened in the Syrian crisis by cutting completely the water supply at the Euphrates River. Waters in the Assad Lake, a man made reservoir, have dropped by 6 metres!

This is an emerging situation which if not resolved could be catastrophic. Mr Mubarak said years ago, "The next war in the Middle East may be fought over water." Study Revelation 16 v 12 to 16, Ezekiel 38 & 39 and see how things are heading up. Jesus is coming soon, first for His church. *"Maranatha, even so come Lord Jesus."* – The sooner the better for this sin sick world.

Breaking News Overnight on July 8/9th the situation in Gaza/Israel has escalated and where the situation will go is anybody's guess – probably a major ground offensive or a reoccupation of Gaza. There have been 200 rockets from Gaza since yesterday and sirens are going off in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem, also 160 raids to Gaza by Israel targeting Hamas. Several rockets have been intercepted fired at Jerusalem! All we can do is pray. The Lord knows.

(Since David wrote this the situation has escalated – As on Monday 14th July over 1000 rockets have been fired from Gaza and thousands of Palestinians are fleeing from northern Gaza after an Israeli warning to leave, presumably ahead of a ground offensive).