

# Bloody Eschatology: Israel and the Next Big War

By [Dr. Binoy Kampmark](#)

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*The push towards an all-out war in the Middle East is moving out of its sleepwalking phase to that of conscious eschatological reckoning. A blood filled, fiery Armageddon will reveal the forces of virtue, linking the evangelicals of the United States with the right-wing Jewish nationalists in Israel. That appalling prospect is certainly not one to discount: the messianic are always a frightful bunch, thinking history and selectively pruned religions texts to be on their side.*

Each week now comes with some measure of sabotage, mutilation and disruption to prospects of peace. In his [July 24 address](#) to the US Congress, Israeli **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** outlined his crude Manichean vision in routine barking fashion. In doing so, his intention, as Noa Landau pithily [put it](#), was not to end the war in Gaza so much as prolong it.

For Netanyahu, the strained chords of civilisational rhetoric are never far away. He would like other powers to muck in, battling the fiends he calls an “axis of terror”. Impediments to the Jewish state’s war efforts had to be rejected. To impose them would see other countries of similar kidney shackled. “If Israel’s hands are tied, America is next. I’ll tell you what else is next: the ability of all democracies to fight terrorism will be imperilled.”

Room was reserved to attack the International Criminal Court, whose chief prosecutor has sought warrants of arrest against himself and **Defence Minister Yoav Gallant**, and the presidents of notable US universities. As for protesting students, they had chosen to “stand with evil. They stand with Hamas. They stand with rapists and murderers.” With daring outrage, he blotted out any notion that Palestinian civilians were being butchered, despite a death toll in the densely populated strip hovering near 40,000. Indeed, civilian deaths had been “practically none,” with Israel scrupulous in “getting civilians out of harm’s way, something people said we could never do”.

With this blood crusted Weltanschauung, acts of destabilising mayhem are automatic. Showing an utter contempt for Israeli hostages, let alone any humanity for the Palestinians they regard with expansive condescension, the Netanyahu government thought it wise to carry out two assassinations: that of Hamas’ political chief and chief negotiator **Ismail Haniyeh**, and Hezbollah’s top military chief **Fuad Shukr**, both killed within twenty-four hours in Beirut and Tehran respectively.

The response to the assassinations in Israel was one of relish – at least for those of the Itamar Ben-Gvir school of thought. As David Issacharoff, writing in Haaretz, [described](#) it, “Israel has become a Matryoshka doll of pyromaniacs.” From his skewed vantage point as National Security Minister, assassinations are staple food for the state. The killing of

Hezbollah's second in command, ostensibly for his alleged role in an attack on a Druze village in the Golan Heights, drew the gleeful response that "Every god has his day".

Despite certain Israeli media reports [claiming](#) an order from Netanyahu that ministers were to stay silent over Haniyeh's killing, the enthusiasts were voluble in rapture. **Heritage Minister Amichay Eliyahu**, also of Ben-Gvir's Otzma Yehudit party, [expressed his glee](#) on social media, claiming that "this is the right way to clean the world of this filth." There were to be "No more imaginary 'peace'/surrender agreements, no more mercy for these sons of death."

Other cabinet ministers also joined the gloating chorus. "Careful What You Wish For," [wrote Minister for the Diaspora Amichai Chikli](#) over a video of Haniyeh in a conference hall while people chanted "Death to Israel." **Communications Minister Shlomo Karhi** resorted to biblical verse: "So may all your enemies perish, O Lord."

Despite no official confirmation of Israel's role in the killing of the senior Hamas official, the Government Press Office [posted](#), if only briefly, an image of Haniyeh which left no room for nuance: "Eliminated: Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas highest-ranking leader, was killed in a precise strike in Tehran, Iran."

The richly violent musings of Ben-Gvir and his circle of sanctified terror have even proven indigestible for some members of the war cabinet. Defence Minister Gallant, not immune from the urge to dehumanise the residents of Gaza, [accused](#) his national security counterpart of being a "pyromaniac". On the X platform, he [declared](#) his opposition against "any negotiations to bring him into the war cabinet - it would allow him to implement his plans." The same Gallant, however, was also in celebratory mood about the assassinations.

Even outside the war cabinet, the views of Ben-Gvir, not to mention his overall influence, travel with toxic rapture. In the background, incandescently inspiring, is Rabbi Dov Lior, a figure of glowing nationalist fury. It was he who incited members of the Jewish Underground to conduct various terrorist attacks in the 1980s against Palestinians. (The same group also unsuccessfully plotted to blow up the Dome on the Rock.)

This, as former UK diplomat Alastair Crooke observes, is the State of Judea doing battle against the State of Israel. He [quotes Moshe "Bogie" Ya'alon](#), former Chief of Staff of the IDF, who sees such bloody eschatology as resting on a fundamental concept: "Jewish supremacy" or "Mein Kampf in reverse". For Rabbi Lior, the next big war cannot come soon enough, one, he anticipates, that is bound to feature Gog and Magog.

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**Dr. Binoy Kampmark** was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He currently lectures at RMIT University. He is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG). Email: [bkampmark@gmail.com](mailto:bkampmark@gmail.com)

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Kampmark](#)

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