

The Gaza war and the fall of Jerusalem: When Israel abandons morals for legalism

written by Col. (res.) Dr. Hanan Shai | 05.08.2025

Rigid obedience to the law without understanding its purpose may result in the failure to defeat Hamas - just as rigid legalism once led to Jerusalem's destruction.

Make sure Hamas doesn't get what it wants

written by Meir Ben Shabbat | 05.08.2025

Hamas draws encouragement from the success of the "hunger in Gaza" campaign and the responses it generated worldwide and in Israel. They are also pleased with the connection made between the Palestinian statehood recognition initiative and the war in the Strip.

Humanitarian city in Gaza is a moral, strategic imperative

written by Dr. Adi Schwartz | 05.08.2025

When Israel seeks to offer Palestinians the opportunity to access aid in a secure area, it is inexplicably met with skepticism and resistance. Why is Gaza an exception?

The solution: Trump's voluntary migration plan

written by Meir Ben Shabbat | 05.08.2025

Hamas currently believes the momentum is in its favor and is hardening its positions. Advancing a voluntary migration plan would pressure the terrorist organization and also address allegations of starvation in Gaza. On the ground, it's possible to shift the situation without increasing risk to Israeli troops.

The US-Israel Gaza aid plan is working - which is why Hamas is spreading lies about it

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 05.08.2025

This week, the world was fed another lie: that Israeli troops deliberately opened fire on Palestinians waiting for food in Gaza.

The usual chorus responded on cue — crying “massacre” and “war crime” — while much of the media once again acted as an amplifier for Hamas propaganda.

The reality couldn't be more different.

Not only was there no massacre, but the Israel Defense Forces were actively securing a humanitarian corridor to enable deliveries by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, a US-Israeli initiative designed to get aid directly to civilians.

And for the first time since Hamas started the war on Oct. 7, the terror group was losing control over the distribution of humanitarian assistance in Gaza.

The GHF was created to bypass Hamas entirely — cutting it out of the aid supply chain it has long exploited as a tool of war.

Hamas has operated like a terrorist mafia: hijacking trucks, stockpiling supplies for its fighters and then inflating prices to fund its war effort, and violently punishing any Gazan who dares to take food outside its control.

In its first full week of operation, the GHF distributed nearly 7 million meals, on average a million a day.

Tens of thousands of Gazans received food safely and without incident — no Hamas middlemen, no inflated black market and no political strings.

The GHF is now working to open more distribution sites to reach even more Gazans in need.

This is the first serious, large-scale aid operation that undermines Hamas' most powerful weapon: control over the people of Gaza.

And Hamas is panicking.

Why? Because food has long been part of its arsenal.

Hamas has used aid as leverage — diverting, distributing and denying it as a means to enforce loyalty and preserve power.

The GHF threatens to dismantle that system by delivering directly to civilians, bypassing the terror group that has used starvation as a strategy.

So Hamas has turned to a two-pronged response.

First, disruption on the ground: sending armed operatives to provoke chaos at aid sites, firing on civilians attempting to access food and deliberately manufacturing volatility.

Second, disinformation: flooding social media and compliant news outlets with false casualty counts, doctored images and fabricated narratives — all to paint Israel as the aggressor and itself as the victim.

This isn't theory. It's strategy. It's textbook Hamas. And more than 600 days into a war they began, too much of the world's media still parrots its talking points

without question. That's not journalism — it's complicity. Yes, the suffering in Gaza is real.

But its cause is not Israel's military operations or efforts to rescue the hostages Hamas still holds; it's Hamas' own strategy of exploitation and terror.

Meantime, the international community, led by UNRWA, had been the primary source of humanitarian assistance in Gaza and for years willfully turned a blind eye to Hamas' exploitation of aid — failing to enforce meaningful oversight, even employing Hamas members (many who took part in the Oct. 7 attacks) as local staff and using its facilities to hoard aid for terror operations.

Now, UNRWA would seemingly rather see the GHF fail, and the people of Gaza actually starve, so it can continue using the Jewish state as its forever-scapegoat.

Israel has taken unprecedented steps to minimize civilian harm, facing an enemy that embeds in civilian areas, hoards humanitarian aid and sacrifices its own people to gain global sympathy.

Humanitarian aid must never be a bargaining chip for terrorists.

But by insisting on a system that leaves aid in Hamas' hands, much of the international community has allowed exactly that.

Hamas would rather starve its own people than lose control over them.

Those who truly care about the welfare of Palestinian civilians must support a system that bypasses Hamas altogether.

That system is the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

The GHF is delivering what countless international actors have failed to provide: direct, accountable, large-scale humanitarian assistance that does not empower a terrorist group.

It breaks Hamas' monopoly over aid and strips it of one of its most dangerous tools — using food as a means of control.

That's why Hamas is trying to sabotage this initiative.

Supporting the GHF means more than feeding the hungry.

It means breaking Hamas' grip on Gaza's civilians.

It means dismantling the group's strategy of domination through deprivation.

And it means backing a bold US-Israeli initiative that delivers not only food — but hope.

The article was written together with John Spencer is chairman of urban-warfare studies at West Point's Modern War Institute, host of the "Urban Warfare Project Podcast" and co-author of "Understanding Urban Warfare."

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Israel should provide Gazans with the freedom to choose emigration

written by Moshe Fuzaylov | 05.08.2025

This sort of strategic maneuver would have far-reaching implications.

Why is the IDF, which defeated Hezbollah, not defeating Hamas?

written by Elie Klutstein | 05.08.2025

Many differences explain the gap between the IDF's situation in the northern theater and in the strip - geography, Israel's goal, the political situation and of course the hostage issue. But victory is still possible in Gaza too, and it depends mainly on us.

A Tragic Mistake? Yes. A War Crime? No

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 05.08.2025

On March 23, the Israel Defense Forces made a tragic error in Gaza, resulting in the deaths of nine humanitarian aid workers, along with six Hamas terrorists who were embedded among them. An investigation into the incident was immediately undertaken, and officers found to have been responsible were disciplined soon after.

But while all war is a tragedy, not all tragedies are war crimes.

What happened that night was an operational error in a combat zone—not a war crime. And the investigation that resulted in that conclusion wasn't reached in a vacuum. It came after a comprehensive, independent fact-finding process led by senior experts outside the chain of command, reviewed by the chief of the General Staff, and subject to further legal scrutiny.

Outrage—along with misleading or outright false images—has overtaken social media. A global mob mentality has formed. Fortunately, the manipulations of social media are not a substitute for international law. Calling something a war crime doesn't make it so. War crimes require specific evidence of intent—not viral videos, emotional overlays, or instant judgment by influencers or pundits acting as judge and jury.

International humanitarian law clearly defines war crimes as intentionally directing attacks against personnel, installations, material, units, or vehicles involved in humanitarian assistance, provided they retain protected civilian status.

In other words, for an act to constitute a war crime, there must be intent to commit the violation—an element entirely absent in this case.

The IDF's internal investigation concluded that the killings resulted from a series

of operational errors and professional failures. IDF elements were operating in a “hostile and dangerous combat zone” and believed there to be a “tangible threat.” Soldiers misidentified the convoy of vehicles, assessing that they were being used by Hamas insurgents—a tactic the group has systematically employed since Oct. 7, 2023.

Hamas has made a practice of blurring the lines between combatant and civilian, systematically exploiting ambulances, hospitals, and humanitarian symbols for military purposes. This tactic forces troops into impossible split-second decisions under fire—precisely the kind of dilemma that international law accounts for, but online critics ignore.

International humanitarian law also recognizes that tragic mistakes can happen during active combat, especially when insurgents like Hamas use protected facilities and vehicles to launch or shield attacks. Such conduct undermines the protections that civilians and humanitarian actors are entitled to.

No army—American, British, or Israeli—is immune to errors in war. What matters is what follows: transparency, investigation, disciplinary action, and institutional learning. That is the measure of a professional military in a democratic society.

In the IDF incident, surveillance indicated that five vehicles approached rapidly and stopped near IDF troops, with passengers quickly disembarking. The deputy battalion commander assessed the situation as a credible Hamas threat and ordered fire. Though that judgment proved incorrect, the belief was reasonable under the circumstances, including poor nighttime visibility, and which only underscored that the IDF complied with the rule of distinction under law of armed conflict.

The examination into the incident was conducted by the IDF General Staff Fact Finding Mechanism, a professional team outside the operational chain of command. Their findings were presented to the chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir, and included operational breaches, failures to follow orders, and reporting deficiencies. As a result, the deputy commander of the Golani Brigade was dismissed, and the commander of the 14th Brigade was severely reprimanded. The case is also being reviewed by the IDF Military Advocate General’s Office for potential legal proceedings.

The IDF expressed deep regret for the civilian harm and emphasized that the

investigation is part of an ongoing commitment to learn from operational failures and reduce the risk of recurrence.

In short, the IDF acted exactly as a military in a democracy should: it investigated, acknowledged fault, and held individuals accountable.

There must also be a clear distinction between errors made in the course of legitimate military operations and intentionally directing attacks against civilians, which is Hamas' standard practice and a blatant war crime.

Israel mourns every innocent life lost. Hamas counts every innocent death as a victory. That is not just a moral difference—it is the difference between law and lawlessness, between a tragedy and a crime.

The article was written by Arsen Ostrovsky in collaboration with John Spencer, and Brian Cox.

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Why Israel's war against Hamas is necessary

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 05.08.2025

A war can be both morally justified and legally constrained. Israel's campaign against Hamas is exactly that. It was not launched lightly or recklessly—it was waged in defense of life, sovereignty and the rule of law.

IDF paves way for major ground operation

written by Meir Ben Shabbat | 05.08.2025

Israel faces incomparably better conditions for achieving its goals than at the beginning of the war.