

London's Al-Hayyat newspaper has reported that Israel and the Palestinian Authority may be secretly negotiating [final status issues](#), which could lead to the creation of a Palestinian state. Following Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert came under intense pressure from the EU and US to do a deal with Palestinian Authority President Abbas. The US had pushed for a "shelf agreement", which would have been implemented by the two parties at a later date, once the security and terrorism issues were resolved. But it was reported that Olmert was against such a proposal, believing that President Abbas was not politically strong enough to implement a deal, even if he agreed to it. With Abbas severely weakened and Hamas consolidating its grip on the Gaza Strip today - and perhaps the West Bank tomorrow, the pressure is on Israel and Abbas to ensure progress is made and quickly.

Quote: *"According to the report, the two leaders agreed to open a secret channel to discuss the issues, which include such sticking points as refugees, Jerusalem, and final borders, during their meeting roughly two weeks ago. The report stated that the talks have yet to produce a breakthrough."*

The Scriptures seem to indicate that the European Union will be involved in a final settlement, which will see the city of Jerusalem divided and Judea and Samaria ceded to the Gentiles. Daniel's prophecy says of the Antichrist that he will strengthen an already existing agreement, and will "divide the land for gain", Daniel 11:39. The fact that these discussions are happening now, something that would have been unthinkable only a few years ago, shows us how close we may be to the return of Jesus Christ for His Church, and the beginning of the tribulation period.

Romans 13:11

And that, knowing the time, that now [it is] high time to awake out of sleep: for now [is] our salvation nearer than when we believed.

Source [Haaretz](#)