President Abbas has once again declared that any future Palestinian unity government would recognize Israel's right to exist, and once again Hamas has categorically stated they will not take part in any government that does so. Abbas had previously claimed that any Palestinian Authority government is a result of negotiations with the Palestinian Liberation Organization - which he heads, and as a result would be bound by previous agreement with Israel. But Prime Minister Ismael Haniyeh has reaffirmed that Hamas will never recognize Israel's right to exist. So much for Hamas moderating after coming into power, as some politicians had hoped. One of Haniyeh's political advisors, Ahmed Yousef, has stated Hamas would be willing to sign a 5 to10 year truce at the most, but would not recognize Israel's right to exist.

Quote: *"Yousef said instead of recognizing Israel, Hamas was prepared to agree to a "long-term truce for five or 10 years, until the occupation withdraws." He was unclear on what Hamas would do if coalition talks break down.*

It seems Hamas has stuck to its original plan, seeing any agreement with Israel as only a staging post towards their ultimate goal , the destruction of the Zionist regime.

Quote: *""Hamas has announced that it accepts a Palestinian independent state within the 1967 borders with a long-term truce," Sheikh Hassan Yousef, the top Hamas leader in the West Bank, told The Associated Press, referring to lands Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war. Yousef said the Hamas position was new and called it a "stage." In the past, Hamas has said it would accept a state in the 1967 borders as a first step to taking over Israel. Yousef did not spell out the conditions for the renewable cease-fire nor did he say how long it would last. "* ***For us a truce means that two warring parties live side by side in peace and security for a certain period and this period is eligible for renewal,*** *" Yousef said. "That means Hamas accepts that the other party will live in security and peace."*

Of course a truce is better than no truce, and the world would rather Israel would make some sort of agreement with their enemies, rather than have the prospect of more violence in the Middle East. But as Christians, we know that any agreement Israel signs with its neighbours will ultimately fail. We're not dealing with land, or with the fallout from the Holocaust. We're dealing with a religious spirit who is bent on the destruction of God's people according to the flesh. Some sort of agreement will eventually be signed, but it won't be worth the paper it's written on. If a truce was in place by the end of the year, this could mean Israel

would be at rest, as prophesied in Ezekiel 38, ready for the coming invasion of Gog and his Islamic hoards.

Ezekiel 38:9-12

Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, [that] at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest (idle, lax), that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places [that are now] inhabited, and upon the people [that are] gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.

Source NPR , Israel News Agency