



DON EMMERT/AFP/GETTY IMAGE

The Islamic State Attacks New York

What does the Islamic State's loss of territory in the Middle East mean for the rest of the world?

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The deadly tactic of terrorists murdering pedestrians by running them over with vehicles has now struck in the United States. On the afternoon of October 31, a terrorist driving a rented pickup truck turned onto a bike path in Manhattan and mowed down pedestrians, runners and cyclists, killing eight of them and injuring 12 more. Inside the vehicle, authorities found handwritten notes [pledging loyalty](#) to the Islamic State along with an image of an Islamic State flag.

Islamic State forces have been losing ground in the Middle East, and its leaders have encouraged terrorists to strike Europe and the United States. The group has even published a manual full of terrorist tactics that includes instructions to would-be terrorists on the logistics of using a [rental truck](#) to kill pedestrians. Last year, a single terrorist driving a cargo truck in Nice, France, murdered 86 people and injured more than 400, all within about five minutes. This year, dozens more have been injured or killed by radical Islamic truck drivers in Canada, England, Israel, Sweden and now the United States.

Police say the driver was 29-year-old [Sayfullo Habibullaevic Saipov](#), who migrated from Uzbekistan to the United States in 2010 and worked as an Uber driver in New Jersey. After running over 23 people on Tuesday, Saipov and his rental truck came to a stop when he drove into a school bus, injuring students inside. Police sources say he exited the vehicle shouting "Allahu Akbar" and waving a paintball gun in one hand and a pellet gun in the other. A New York City police officer ended the attack by shooting Saipov in the stomach. Saipov is now recovering from surgery, while the police wait for him to be well enough for questioning.

Since the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, at least [158 people](#) have been killed on American soil by radical Islamists. Yet even this tragic statistic pales in comparison to the [more than 2,000 people](#) killed by terrorists in Europe and the tens of thousands killed across Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

According to the [Institute for Economics and Peace](#), Sunni Muslim groups like the Islamic State, Boko Haram, the Taliban and al Qaeda commit the majority of terrorist murders. But Iran, which is Shiite, remains the world's number one [state sponsor of terrorism](#).

According to a [2015 Congressional Research Service report](#), Iran spends about \$100 to \$200 million per year financing Hezbollah, \$12 to \$26 million per year financing Shiite militias inside Syria and Iraq, and \$10 to \$20 million per year financing Houthi rebels in Yemen.

In addition to financing more than [100 Shiite extremist organizations and militias](#), Iran also finances many Sunni terror groups. The same Congressional Research Service report notes that Iran gives tens of millions of dollars each year to Hamas, a Sunni terrorist organization in the Gaza Strip with links to the Muslim Brotherhood. In turn, Hamas pays [tens of thousands](#) of dollars each month to the Islamic State's Sinai branch, in exchange for help smuggling weapons into the Gaza Strip.

"The Islamic State surely is a threat, but it doesn't even have an air force," *Trompet* editor in chief Gerald Flurry wrote in his October 2015 article "[A Sudden Whirlwind](#)." "Essentially, it is a distraction from the true power in the region: Iran. The Bible

tells us that Iran is the 'king' of the Middle East. Compared to the Iranian tiger, the Islamic State is merely a mouse!"

Westerners accustomed to viewing the world through the lens of the nation-state may find it ironic that Iran is partnering with the Islamic State's Sinai branch while fighting against the Islamic State in Syria and Afghanistan. Yet Iran's strategy for dominating the Middle East is one of destabilizing enemies and propping up allies.

Clandestine aid to the Islamic State's Sinai branch helps Iran destabilize Egypt and Israel, both of which Iran currently considers enemies. Meanwhile, covert aid to the Taliban keeps the Islamic State from growing too powerful in Afghanistan.

This [complicated network of terror](#) is now killing tens of thousands of people every year. As the Islamic State loses ground in the Middle East, it is sending more terrorists to America and Europe. But it will be Iran that benefits the most in terms of influence across the Middle East. Only after the Iranian regime is removed from power will the whole course of the Middle East change for the better. Only after radical Islam is defeated will terror strikes on Western nations cease.

Bible prophecy reveals that will not happen until after the Messiah returns. Once human beings are humbled to the point where they actively seek God's instruction, the Prophet Isaiah writes that "my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (Isaiah 32:18).

May God speed that day. ■