

# MID-EAST e-NEWS

An electronic journal of the Middle East, for those who want to be informed.

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Amman

## Contexts

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## This month

Oct.			
12	S	Irq	Baghdad bomb kills 8
13	M	Pal	Geneva Accord – ME peace plan
14	T	Irq	Turkish Emb. bomb
		Isr	15 expelled to Gaza
15	W	Isr	Gaza bomb kills 3 Americans
		Irq	New money in Iraq
16	T	Irq	Unanimous UN SCR on Iraq
17	F	Irq	10 die in fight w/ Shiites, inc. 3 US
18	S	Isr	Rafah raids continue
		Irq	Turkey reconsiders on Iraq troops
19	S	Isr	Rockets fired from N. Gaza
		Isr	3 Israeli soldiers killed in ambush
20	M	Jor	New Government in Jordan
		ME	Arab Human Development report
21	T	Isr	UN calls Israel to stop security wall
22	W	Su	Sudan peace deal expected
23	T	Isr	Israel plans new settlements
		SA	Saudi arrests 70 protesters
24	F	Isr	Wall to seal access to Jordan valley
		Irq	\$13bn pledged at UN donor conf.
25	S	Afg	20 Al-Qaeda killed in fighting
26	S		Ramadan begins
		Isr	Gaza: 3 large buildings destroyed
		Irq	Wolfowitz' hotel attacked by rockets
		Pk	Pakistan arrests 230 Al Qaeda
27	M	Irq	5 suicide car-bombs in Baghdad kill 34, injure more than 200
28	T	Irq	6 Iraqis die in Falluja car bomb
29	W		
30	T	Isr	General criticizes Gov't tactics
31	F	Irq	Pro-Saddam riots in Abu Ghraib
		Afg	US soldier dies in Taleban attack
1	S		
2	S	Isr	~100,000 at Rabin peace rally
		Irq	US Helicopter shot down: 16 die
3	M	Irq	Karbala: Blast near shrine, 3 die
		Irq	Anti-Baath Judge assassinated
		SA	2 shot by security in Mecca
4	T	Irq	Mortar attacks on US compound
		Pal	Ashrawi nominated for peace prize
5	W	Irq	2 Iraqi generals captured in Fallujah
6	T	Irq	3 die (2 US, Pole) near Syria border
		SA	US warns-attacks possible in Saudi
7	F		
8	S	SA	Saudi apartment bomb – 17 die
		Isr	Israelis, Arabs protest security wall.
		Isr	Hizbollah prisoner swap approved
9	S	Irq	Sistani faction quits Karbala council
10	M	Afg	US opens major assault on Taleban
		Irn	IAEA reports violations, cooperation
11			

## Welcome

So, have you been paying attention? In my high school classes I like to give students a Pop Quiz now and then, to keep them on their toes. All questions are taken from issues 1 to 4 of **e-News**.

**A - First, some True or False, to get you limbered up. (T or F)**

- \_\_\_ In the Middle East, 'Christians' are those who have accepted Jesus as Savior.  
 \_\_\_ King Abdullah I annexed the West Bank into Jordan in 1950.  
 \_\_\_ The Shi'ites trace their spiritual ancestry to Ali, son-in-law of Mohammed.  
 \_\_\_ The new Iraqi dinar replaces two others, the *print* dinar and the *Dutch* dinar.  
 \_\_\_ After WW1 Britain was given the administration of Palestine

**B - And some multiple choice, to get you up to speed. (Circle)**

Monarch assassinated in 1951	Hussein	Abdullah I	Faisal	Farouk	
The year Israel occupied the West Bank	1920	1939	1946	1948	1967
Arabic name for Hebron	Ramallah	Al-Quds	Al-Khalil	Shechem	
Acronym for the ruling authority of Iraq	UAE	UAR	PGC	CPA	CIA
In what year was the Hebron massacre?	1920	1939	1946	1948	1967
The British administration of Palestine	Coalition	Mandate	Occupation		
In what year was the state of Israel formed	1920	1939	1946	1948	1967

**C - One-word answers will suffice here (or maybe two-)**

- Kurmanji and Sourani are languages of which group? \_\_\_\_\_  
 By what name is the Saudi branch of Islam known? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Which group of people lost much of their land in 1948? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What are the two branches of the Ancient Church? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Who was the first Israeli Prime Minister? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What term meaning 'sunrise' identifies the MidEast? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What village experienced a 1948 massacre of Palestinians? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What is the family name of the Jordan Royal family? \_\_\_\_\_

**D - And now, some longer, paragraph responses, to check your endurance.**

- What three documents promised portions of 'greater Syria' to three different groups?  
 What significance does the year 1204 for the 'Ancient Church'?  
 Why is Karbala an important city for some Muslims?

(Answers on page 4)

## The Ancient Church – Roman Catholic

In the Eastern, Orthodox, Church the Emperor had practical control over the church – to the point of calling and dominating Church Councils. In the Catholic west the roles were reversed. The Pope's control was such that he had, or proceeded to establish, a superiority over secular rulers. Henry IV of the Holy Roman Empire found this out to his cost in 1077 at Canossa (though that particular conflict was not yet concluded) and King John himself had to apologize to the Pope in 1209. The superiority that the Pope assumed during the coronation of Charlemagne in 800 AD continued to play itself out in the Catholic Church's secular role. During the Great Schism the papacy removed to Avignon, France, and there were two or even three claimants competing for the title of pope. Though this reduced the respect held for the papacy, and heralded the immorality and corruption of the Renaissance Popes, even after the Reformation the papacy still had some influence over the secular affairs of Europe.

Though Luther was the tool used by God to initiate the Protestant Reformation, reformers in previous centuries had made their own impact too. Wycliffe, Hus and others had condemned the laxity of the church, but the *fiery monk* surfaced at a time when other changes in society were favorable for the dramatic events that would follow.

The Council Of Trent affirmed the basic beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church, in reaction to the Protestant Reformation. These primarily covered education, the liturgy, and administration, but neglected to address one of Luther's prime concerns, the issue of the papacy itself. Though the medieval *inquisition* had been all but abandoned by then, the Inquisition as an institution was revived in the 1550s to maintain orthodoxy. In Spain, where it was controlled more by the monarchy than by the church, it was particularly brutal.



The town of Salt, Jordan's first capital, was originally a Christian town. This view from the old hospital shows the roofs of a Protestant (Jordanian Episcopal) and an Orthodox church.

The Roman Catholic Church has about 2400 *Dioceses*, ruled by Bishops. Of these, somewhat more than 500 are *Archdioceses*, though they no longer exert control over smaller *sees*, as they once did. The Bishop's seat is the *Cathedral* (*cathedra* is 'throne' in Latin). Within each diocese are *parishes*, to which the Bishop assigns *priests*, as he chooses. The long history of the Catholic Church has

given rise to distinctive groups with it. The *Monastic Orders* provide religious clergy to the Church, serving within parishes as priests or in other capacities. These include the Benedictines (founded during the 6<sup>th</sup> century), Franciscans (1208) and Dominicans (1205/14). A *religious* (term for a member of a monastic order) from these communities will be found serving in various capacities (health care, education, etc.) within the diocese or parish.

Cardinals, who eventually will select the next pope, are primarily Bishops with their own diocese. There are more than 160 of them today, with a large proportion of them being appointed by Pope John Paul II.

In the next issue of e-NEWS we will discuss the *Eastern Rite* churches found throughout the Middle East.

## The Mandaean of Iraq

In the south of Iraq, for many centuries, has dwelt a religious sect that owes allegiance to John the Baptist, considering Jesus as a false prophet. They are also known as Sabaeans from their practice of baptizing frequently as a purification ritual.

The Qur'an refers to a *people of the book*



A Sabaean baptism ritual in the Tigris.

called Sabaeans, and the toleration of the Madaeans by Muslims is due to this link (though it is not established as fact that the two groups are the same).

Their holy

book is the *Ginza Riba* ("Great Treasure"), the original being written in Aramaic, and dating from 1291.

Sabaeans believe that their religion predates John the Baptist (Yahya bin Zakariya) and suggest that Akhnaten, the monotheistic Egyptian Pharaoh, was an early believer.

When they migrated from Palestine they settled in areas of southern Iraq. Since the draining of the marshes, however, many of them have moved into urban areas such as Baghdad where they had more reliable access to running water for their baptism rites.

Sabaeans number as many as 80,000 in Iraq. Since Abbasid times they have been active in medical fields, and more recently some of their number have achieved other fame. One well-known Sabaean is Abdel Razzaq Abdel Wahed, a famous Arabic poet, though he has been castigated for praising Saddam Hussein in his poems – perhaps too enthusiastically.

Besides the *Ginza Riba*, their religious writings include the *Six-Fold Books*, and various scrolls with historical texts and special prayers (for protection from *djinn*, against the *evil eye*).

The six-fold books include:

**Edrasha ad-Yahya** (*Yahya's teachings*)

**Qolesta** (*laws*)

**Enyani** (*prayers*, which priests learn by heart)

**Sidra ed-Neshmatha** (*book of souls*, praising famous Madaeans)

**Esfar Malvashi** (*astrological* in theme)

**Sidra ed-Masvetta** (*baptism, ordinances*)

## Not in Texas...

From a distance (like, 2 or 3 weeks) things can seem so normal, almost western, that you begin to forget that you are in a ~~third world~~ (sorry) **developing** country. Kellogg's cereal on the supermarket shelves (750g Cornflakes, \$6.02, £4.30), baked beans (\$1.10, 85p, per can) and taco shells all available. Fresh milk is available from some stores (\$1.00, 70p per liter, equivalent to \$3.75 per US gallon) but doesn't keep fresh so long in cartons, so you try to find the plastic containers. And it's not delivered on Fridays, so you have to buy double (plastic, definitely!) the day before, if you remember. Even a marmalade that tastes like marmalade used to taste back home (in England). No, you're not in Texas any more.

Then you go to buy bread. Pita bread (\$0.40, 25p per kilo) is most commonly available, and fresh from the baker it tastes great. Then you start looking for sliced bread. You know, to fit in that toaster that you bought for \$45.00! - before an old hand showed you where to get a similar one for \$25. Safeway, the supermarket that is most appealing to western consumers, has the driest sliced bread, you try to remember never to buy it from there again. In fact, when you realize that C-Town's bread (\$0.50, 35p a ½ kilo loaf) tastes good toasted, you're glad you've decided to make that *your* store.

Until they run out. Frequently there just isn't any. And then you realize what you've always dreaded. Not only is your favorite loaf of bread out of stock, the cat food you've been depending on (\$6.50, £4.60 per ½ kilo bag - is it really worth it?) is also missing, from all three branches of C-Town! Then you retreat to the next aisle, hoping upon hope that they have your ketchup (yes!), apples (plenty, did I tell you that a kilo will only set you back \$2.25, £1.50 per kilo, but that you could always go to the downtown market and get them for about half the price, though that means competing for space to walk between the other shoppers, and resisting offers to have someone carry your purchases to your car, which, because of the lack of space for parking downtown is not exactly convenient), and meat.

Meat. It's then that you realize that you still haven't remembered the word for finely ground ground beef, though you do know (you're pretty much an old hand yourself by now) that you go to the 'imported' section of the meat stand, because it's much cheaper (JD 3.50 per kilo for *any* cut, including bones). Fortunately, they have ground beef in the refrigerated display, and you are able to point to this and ask him for a kilo. After that, getting him to make it small (*zghair*) will achieve the desired effect - though it comes slightly flavored with the parsley and onions used to prepare *kiftah* for the last customer (all other customers).

Oh, and when I do find the one bakery in town that makes white sliced bread that tastes good with butter and marmalade at breakfast, I'll let you know!

Incidentally, the correct word for finely ground ground beef is *Naama*, (fine) not *Na'ama* (grace), but you'll realize you pronounced it wrongly when you see the smile on his face.

## Praying for the Middle East?

The Bible exhorts us to pray. Jesus said "ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete" (John 16:24) and Paul emphasized "pray continually" (1 Timothy 2:8).

We are elsewhere reminded of conditions of prayer - "Therefore confess your sins...The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16), "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you." (John 15:7) and "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (Isaiah 58:9)

When people start discussing politics (or other issues close to their hearts, such as moral concerns of the day, abortion, AIDS, global warming, the US presence in Iraq) it seems that we are frequently unable to agree together as Christians. We find ourselves at opposite sides of the fence on some issues, and possibly even praying for opposite results at times.

Matthew records Jesus as saying "if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." (Matthew 18:19). Surely His words are intended to remind us that mutual prayer, in fellowship, in partnership, is a valuable goal. For myself, I do not go many days without having to remind myself of the verse already quoted: that I should humble myself before I pray, that I have taken a proud position and am praying for what *I* consider to be the right path, rather than allowing that I may be wrong.

In **e-NEWS**, we have been looking at events in the Middle East, and are likely to have formed our own opinions on the right and wrong of an issue. (This on whether it was *right* to go to war on Iraq, whether the Palestinians deserve a state, whether we should be tolerant with Korea, Iran, Saudi Arabia). When we pray are we coming to God with that attitude, unconsciously trying to convince Him of positions we have taken, and recommend appropriate actions that He might consider taking?

Daniel's prayer (Daniel 9) is enough to remind us that God is concerned for nations (*especially* Israel, but not exclusively) as well as individuals, and that our prayers are effective in this realm. But how can we pray effectively if we forget the humility He calls for, if we fail to seek agreement with our fellow-believers, if we do not *remain in Him*?

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## Pop Answers

A - F, T, T, F, T

B - Abdullah I, 1967, Al-Khalil, CPA, 1939, Mandate, 1948

C - the Kurds, Wahhabis, Palestinian, Roman Catholic & Orthodox, David Ben Gurion, Levant, Deir Yassin, Hashemite

D - (1) Hussein-McMahon correspondence - Arabs will have a unified state of their own; Sykes-Picot Agreement - France will control much of Syria & present-day Lebanon; Balfour Declaration - the British support a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. (2) The Western (Roman) Crusaders attacked Orthodox Constantinople. (3) It houses the tomb of Hussein, son of Ali, both prophets honored by the Shi'ites.

## Attempts at Peace

<b>1920</b>	King-Crane Commission (Commissioned by President Wilson)	Warned of problems of Jewish immigration, recommended that the USA take over the British Mandate of Palestine. President Wilson was too sick to receive it, so it was ignored.
<b>1923</b>	White Paper	<i>maintain the current balance between Arab and Jew</i>
<b>1930</b>	White Paper	<i>propose restricting Jewish immigration</i>
<b>1937</b>	Peel Commission	<i>recommends Partition of Palestine</i>
<b>1947</b>	UN Partition recommendation	UN Resolution 181 (See e-News Issue 1 for maps)
<b>1948</b>	<b>1st Arab-Israeli War</b> ("Catastrophe")	Zionist forces fight for control of key cities, and especially Jerusalem. Arab forces (esp. Jordanian) defend West Bank area and Gaza.
<b>1956</b>	<b>2nd Arab-Israeli War</b> ("Suez Crisis")	Britain, France and Israel go to war against Egypt when Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal. After international condemnation all forces are pulled out, strengthening Nasser's support.
<b>1967</b>	<b>3rd Arab-Israeli War</b> ("Six-Day War")	UN Security Council Resolution 242 calls for Israel to withdraw to June 1967 lines.
<b>1973</b>	<b>4th Arab-Israeli War</b> ("Yom Kippur") Arafat addresses UN General Assembly	Egypt/Syria have initial success, but Israel re-equips and advances to within 20km of Damascus <i>"I have come bearing an olive branch and a gun..."</i>
<b>1974</b>	Arab Summit at Rabat	PLO recognized as <i>only</i> legitimate representative of the Palestinians
<b>1977</b>	President Carter leads peace talks (Nov 19) Sadat at Israeli Knesset	Concern for the <i>"legitimate rights of the Palestinians"</i> ...but unwillingness to deal with the PLO Anwar Sadat addresses the Israeli Knesset
<b>'78/'79</b>	President Carter & Camp David	Carter, Sadat and Begin, (5/26/79) Treaty of Washington - Egypt and Israel, peace after 31 yrs
<b>1981</b>		(Oct.) President Sadat assassinated by army activists against the Peace Treaty
<b>1987</b>	<i>Intifada</i> begins	Sparked by a traffic accident where a Palestinian child is killed by an Israeli military vehicle
<b>1988</b>	Jordan renounces West Bank claims. PLO accepts UN Resolution 242	To allow Palestinians to determine their own future, Jordan renounces claims outstanding since its 1967 loss of the West Bank
<b>1990</b>	UN Resolution	Refers to lands occupied since 1967 as "Palestinian territory".
<b>1991</b>	(Oct 30 to 1993) Madrid Conference	Bilateral discussions: Israel - Syria, Israel - Lebanon, Israel - Jordan/Palestinians. These talks prepared the ground for 1993 Oslo Summit.
<b>1993</b>	(Sept 13) Oslo <i>Declaration of Principles</i> (Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas)	PLO is recognized by Israel. Israel's right to exist as a nation is recognized by the PLO. Signed in Washington DC. Limited Palestinian control over Gaza and Jericho region for an interim period of 5 years (from Dec.13, 1993). Arafat and Rabin shake hands on it.
<b>1994</b>	(Oct 26) Israel/Jordan Peace Agreement. Palestinian National Authority created	Plans to share water from the Yarmouk, end boycott of Israeli goods, develop the Jordan valley. In territory handed over by Israel will control Education, Health, Tourism, Welfare and Taxation.
<b>1995</b>	(Sept 28) Oslo II Peace Agreement.  (Nov 4) Yitzhak Rabin assassinated	Troops pulled from areas of West Bank & Gaza, including 500 towns & villages. 30% of West Bank to come under PNA. Orthodox Jews are hostile to it. PNA negotiates ceasefire with Hamas. By an Israeli activist against the peace process, at a peace rally in Tel Aviv.
<b>1996</b>	Netanyahu elected PM of Israel.	(PNA controls 3% of West Bank)
<b>1998</b>	(Oct 15-26) Wye Summit (Maryland, USA)	Arafat/Netanyahu - Madeleine Albright discuss land (13%) to be returned to PNA control.
<b>1999</b>	(Feb) King Hussein dies	Succeeded by King Abdullah II
<b>2000</b>	(June) Israel pulls out of Lebanon (July) Pres. Clinton pushes for peace (Dec) Mitchell commission	Also - Hafez al-Assad dies, succeeded by Bashar (Sept.) Sharon visits Al-Aqsa Mosque, Intifada II begins, (Oct) Israeli soldiers killed by mob Begins investigation into causes of Intifada, Barak resigns Election for PM necessary in Israel
<b>2001</b>	(Jan) Barak/Arafat, Taba peace talks (Feb) Ariel Sharon elected PM (Mar) (Apr) Mitchell commission reports (Jun) Tenet ceasefire plan (Sept) (Nov) Peres peace push	Neither of them is supported by their people in what they propose Sharon repudiates Barak's peace offer Settlement construction increases, targeted assassinations arouse Palestinians Quartet (UN, US, EU, Russia) suggest settlement based on land for peace (Aug) Israel uses missiles, air force, occupation of towns Terrorist attacks on USA, (Oct) Tourism minister assassinated Blair & Bush call for Palestinian state, Zinni peace mission, (Dec) Arafat under siege in Ramallah
<b>2002</b>	(Mar) Emir Abdullah offers to recognize Israel (Apr) (May) Palestinians demand PNA reform Bush: 3-year goal for boundaries (Sept) (Dec) Quartet discuss 3-yr timetable	(Jan) Ship carrying arms caught heading for Gaza (Mar) Arafat's HQ besieged (April) Jenin raided & destroyed, Siege of Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (May) Sharon visit to US cut short by suicide bomb, (June) Israel begins fencing off PNA areas (Aug) USA changes focus to Iraq (Sept) PNA cabinet resigns, Arafat's HQ demolished by Israel Publication delayed until after Israeli elections - and then until PNA elect PM
<b>2003</b>	(Apr) (30) Abbas becomes PM of PNA (30) Road Map released  (Jun) (4) Peace Summit in Aqaba (29) Ceasefire begins  (Jul) (Aug)  (Oct) Geneva Accord	(Jan) Israel elections for PM, Sharon (Likud) defeats Mitznah (Labor) A condition of the implementation of the Quartet peace plan, the <b>Road Map</b> PNA accepts, but Abbas wants to <u>persuade</u> activist groups to disarm, rather than act against them Israel wants changes, does accept, but unwilling to accept <i>right of return</i> , or abandon settlements. President Bush meets with Sharon & Arafat to discuss Road Map Negotiated by Marwan Barghouti (2) Israel withdraws from Bethlehem, Palestinian police take their place (12) 2 Suicide bombs (1 in Ariel), (19) Handover of 2 cities planned, but Bus bomb kills 20 (21) A Hamas leader killed, ceasefire cancelled Israeli & Palestinian political representatives make proposals for peace negotiations