

MID-EAST e-NEWS

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

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Amman

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This month

Nov.		
14	F	Isr Israeli security chiefs criticize government approach to conflict
15	S	Irq 2 US helicopters crash killing 17
16	S	Tur Istanbul synagogues bombs kill 23
17	M	
18	T	Irq Assyrian politician killed in Basra
		Isr 25 tanks in Gaza pre-dawn raid
19	W	Irq Bomb against Ramadi tribal leader
		Isr Bush criticizes Israel's fence
20	T	Irq Gunmen kill security guard at Jordan's new embassy
		Tur Consulate & HSCB hit by bombs in Istanbul - 27 die
21	F	Pal Hamas condemns Geneva Accord
		Irq Donkey cart rockets - hotel, ministry
22	S	Isr Sharon offers to remove some Gaza settlements
		Irq DHL plane damaged by rocket
		Irq Suicide bombs hit police stations-18 die
23	S	Isr Israelis & Palestinians demonstrate against wall
		Pal 2 US soldiers killed in Mosul
24	M	Last day of Ramadan
25	T	
26	W	
27	T	Pres. Bush visits troops in Baghdad
		Sistani promotes full elections
28	F	UN Fence will cut of 16% of WB land
		Mortars kill soldier in Mosul base
29	S	Irq Attack kills 7 Spanish agents
		Pal PM Qureia meets US rep. Burns in Jordan to discuss roadmap
30	S	Irq 14 internationals die in
		Syr Syria extradites Turkey suspects
1	M	Isr Geneva Accord published
		Syr Assad calls for talks with Israel
2	T	Pal Factions begin cease-fire talks
		Irq near Tikrit captures 27
3	W	Irq Shiites demand rapid elections
4	T	Isr Sharon advisor "US should stay out of Israeli politics"
		Irq 80 militants rounded up in Mosul
5	F	
6	S	
7	S	Isr factions fail to agree on truce
8	M	Isr Sharon dismisses Syria peace offer
9	T	Irq Japan to contribute troops
		Irq 61,000 in Baghdad said to have been killed by Saddam

Welcome

For reasons of space and topicality *How Far Back Does It Go?* has been postponed in this issue. Instead you will find a discussion of the recently-released Geneva Accord. Is it just another forlorn attempt at peace, or should we take it seriously?

On December 1st the **Geneva Accord** was published. It had been released unofficially in previous weeks, and has already been the subject of much discussion.

The Accord is the work of Palestinian and Israeli officials over a period of more than two years. The content of the Accord has raised

the hackles of many in the Israeli government, and caused the Palestinian street to

denounce the parties involved; but what increases their concern is that those who cooperated in the Accord have been in government themselves, and what they address in this document are solutions to key conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis.

Participants include Israeli and Palestinian representatives at the Taba peace talks with President Clinton in 2001. They had felt then that with just a few more weeks they could have come to an agreement.

The article on *Heart Surgery* was planned for just after Christmas but as a result of news just received this evening, I have decided to make a second modification to the layout of this issue. As a consequence, on page 4 you can read about life-saving heart surgery that has been made available to infants around Asia and Africa, and now in Iraq. Read about baby

Bayan, and the news just received about her condition.

You can check out more of the story about Heart Surgery on the CBN website at this address: <http://cbn.com/CBNNews/News/031205b.asp>

We're always interested in your feedback.



Byzantine Church at Tell Hisban, near Amman. The tell is probably not the site of the Biblical Hesbon



Aqaba is a busy place these days, with many imports heading through to Iraq. This was taken on a quiet morning on the beach near the harbor.

The Ancient Church - Orthodox

The Orthodox Church (often known as *Greek Orthodox*) has a major presence in the Middle East. The head bishops of the independent churches are called Patriarchs, Metropolitans or Archbishops. Since there is no order of precedence for the patriarchates, each prelate has equal standing with his colleagues. The historic position which the seat of the Roman empire held in the past does give the Patriarch of Constantinople (now Istanbul) some greater honor, along with those from Alexandria (Egypt), Damascus (Syria) and Jerusalem.

Russia has the largest Patriarchate, with others not yet mentioned being in Georgia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria. The Orthodox Churches in Cyprus, Athens and Albania are organized as Archbishoprics, with Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia being Metropolitans.

Many Slavic nations, including Bulgaria and Russia, benefited from the Bible translation made by Methodius and Cyril in c.864. The *Cyrillic* alphabet derives from Cyril's development of an alphabet text for the illiterate peoples.

The *schism* between the western (Catholic) and eastern churches grew out of doctrinal differences (the "*filioque*" clause in the creed, ordination of married men, use of unleavened bread) but it was demonstrated with finality in the sack of Constantinople by the (western) Crusaders in 1204.



Coptic church in Abdali, Amman, the capital of Jordan

described Christ as being "*one in two natures*". Thinking that this was teaching the separate existence of a divine and a human Christ, they rejected the Council's conclusions. As it grew, this *Coptic Church* (*Qubt* comes from the Greek name for Egypt, *Aegyptios*) was in opposition to the Byzantine Empire. In the 7th Century, as they faced the Arab invasion, the Egyptian Copts therefore lacked military support from Constantinople.

The Coptic church has about 7 million adherents in Egypt, a significant minority, and is led by their own Patriarch of Alexandria (distinct from the Greek Orthodox's Patriarch of Alexandria).

The Jacobite church (also known as Syrian Orthodox) is named after an early Bishop, appointed by Empress Theodora in 543 AD. They number about 100,000 in Syria, Lebanon and Turkey. Jacobites also differ with the Council of Chalcedon over their belief in the "*one divine-human nature of Christ*".



Orthodox Church in Abdali, Amman

During the early centuries of the Church a series of Councils met to establish and agree upon the central tenets of the Christian faith. Having just dealt with the question of Nestorianism some Egyptian Christians were in conflict with the wording of the Council of Chalcedon (in 451 AD) when it

Monophysites declared that Christ had only one nature, divine, and no human nature. This was the main reason for the calling of the Council of Chalcedon.

Not in Texas...

Jordanians, Arabs generally, have a tradition of hospitality. You will be expected to sit down with a shopkeeper for a glass of tea (with mint) while his son slips out to get change for the 10 JD you gave him. While out hiking you greet the Iraqi gardener tending the olives (for the owner who lives in town) and you can expect to be invited to sit down and drink tea with him, and may be fortunate that he has more than one glass. One time I came upon a couple of shepherds on the hillside. I had detoured to avoid their sheep, but came right upon them just as tea was ready, and was able to sit with them and practice my Arabic. Didn't take long. Mostly I just drank tea.

In the city the tradition of hospitality continues. You can expect your neighbor to drop in with a plate of cookies, cake, or some other dessert, and you'll be glad you remembered that you're supposed to return their favor, and not just bring their plate back empty.

When you do return the plate, it may not be a good time to visit, what with them about to go out visiting themselves – the kids have shoes on, and the car is loaded, but they won't tell you that. They'll invite you to sit down, and you might miss the hint – they're wearing outdoor shoes, something they say – unless you're looking for it. Since you are alert, you can say that you were just dropping by to return the plate, and that you yourself don't have much time but want to be able to visit when they have more time.

When you do visit for a meal, they may expect you to sit and chat for a while afterwards, but look – just as you do at home – for hints that this might be a good time to leave. Them bringing out a large bowl of fruit is not such a hint, nor the cake or cookies that accompany the tea. But when you are offered coffee, you can be sure that it's about time to be on your way.

The chart below illustrates some of the issues covered by recent treaties, conferences and summits.

'93	<p>Oslo, Sept. '93 - The Oslo Declaration of Principles established PNA, which was to administer increasing portions of territory, beginning in 1994 with 13% of the West Bank. There was also an expectation that Palestinian activists would be restrained. Since 2000 the agreement has been widely criticized, but it was an attempt to allow the Palestinians self-rule in a contiguous territory.</p>	
'98 '01	<p>Taba, Jan. '01 - During the last part of 2000 Pres. Clinton was attempting to advance the peace process. Ehud Barak (who had succeeded Netanyahu) and Arafat met at Camp David and far-reaching proposals were discussed, but right-wing and religious segments of the Israeli population were against the whole process. Even as the meetings progressed a military contingent escorted Ariel Sharon through the Haram Al Sharif. Riots began which developed into the current <i>Al Aqsa</i> Intifada. By the time of Taba in January '01, Barak had been weakened, and Arafat had promised more than his people would accept. Palestinians had despaired of failed promises since Oslo, and doubted the willingness of a new Israeli government to adhere to Barak's offers.</p>	<p>Wye Plantation, Oct. '98 - Many of the agreements of Oslo had been delayed, and the whole process seemed to be falling apart, so Pres. Clinton and Madeleine Albright brought Yasser Arafat and Benjamin Netanyahu together in Maryland. Some of the meetings were attended by King Hussein, who was undergoing cancer treatment at the time.</p>
	<p>Sharm El Sheikh, Apr. 2001 - In late 2000, Senator George Mitchell headed a delegation to inquire into the causes of the Intifada. His report continues to be the most thorough summary of the various expectations and perspectives of the two sides. Oslo was intended to build confidence and trust by incremental steps towards a <i>permanent status</i>. The more complex issues would be dealt with at a late stage, when sufficient confidence had been built up between the parties. <i>"To achieve this, each part would have to implement agreed upon commitments and abstain from actions that would be seen by the other as attempts to abuse the process in order to predetermine the shape of the final outcome.... today, each side blames the other for having ignored this fundamental aspect, resulting in a crisis of confidence."</i> In June, George Tenet, head of the CIA, visited the region with a cease-fire plan to begin the process recommended by Mitchell.</p>	 <p>The Wye Accord allowed for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Israel release 3,000 Palestinian prisoners ▪ PNA detain terrorists, confiscate weapons ▪ Israel withdraw from another 13% of W.B. ▪ Approval for Palestinian airport in Gaza ▪ PLO amend their charter calling for the destruction of the state of Israel
'02	<p>Roadmap, March, 2003 - Seeking to resolve the conflict, the Quartet comprised representatives of the US, Russia, Europe and the UN. Completed in late 2002 their document was delayed until the PNA appointed an independent Prime Minister. The document, the roadmap, was issued in March of 2003 upon the appointment of Abu Mazen, Mahmoud Abbas. It gives a list of reciprocal steps to be taken by the PNA and Israel, which will culminate in the establishment of a Palestinian state by 2005. Israel said that it accepted the roadmap, but had a list of 12 changes. The Roadmap is in three phases.</p> <p>Phase I (to May '03): Ending terror, normalizing Palestinian life, building institutions. Israel withdraw from areas occupied since 9/28/00, freeze settlement activity, dismantle posts erected since 3/2001; PNA draft a constitution with free & fair elections, appoint PM, Interior Minister control all PNA security organizations.</p> <p>Phase II: Transition (Jun.-Dec. '03) International Conference to encourage revival of trade, security cooperation, regional water resources.</p> <p>Phase III: Permanent status agreement, end of conflict ('04-'05) Conference in 2004 to endorse independent Palestinian state with provisional borders and begin process of finalizing status of borders, Jerusalem, refugees and settlements.</p>	<p>Crown Prince Abdullah, Feb. '02 - At the Beirut Arab Summit in February of 2002, Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia proposed a settlement that would grant recognition of Israel by all Arab countries.</p> 
'03	<p>Geneva Accord, Dec. 2003 - Oslo, Wye, the Roadmap, all give a schedule for implementation, and all postpone <i>final status talks</i> until a later date. The Accord deals with these issues - status of Jerusalem, settlements, refugees' right of return - up front.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Jerusalem will be the capital of both states ◆ Limited numbers of refugees be able to return ◆ Most settlements will have to be removed, and land exchange will be arranged in compensation. <p>Israel's position on Jerusalem has been an <i>undivided capital</i>, and that of the PNA on refugees is that they would never give up the right of return. In this document, both groups would have to compromise on key positions. Initially we will expect to see (we do already) outbursts of anger that anyone would even consider such a suggestion. Eventually, perhaps, parties may recognize that for a political peace these sacrifices are necessary. For a more permanent, true peace, another sacrifice has already been made. Oh that the region would accept the one, so that the trust and humility necessary to permit the other would be possible.</p>	
'04		

Heart Surgery

Save A Child's Heart is an organization working in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, committed to searching out children with heart defects and enabling them to obtain the best medical treatment for their condition. Since their founding in 1995 they have provided care for more than 900 children. Many of these have been taken to Wolfson Medical Center, one of the best equipped hospitals in Israel, near Tel Aviv. 300 of the children being helped have been Palestinian, and a major part of the work of Save A Child's Heart is obtaining the necessary permits to allow the children and their parents to travel.

One of the most recent cases, and the first from Iraq, is a baby girl named Bayan. I have a friend who works with the organization. He recently traveled to Iraq for the first time to establish contacts and identify children in need. (His son took the pictures on page 1 of the last issue.) Within hours of his arrival a US Army doctor had provided a list of 40 such patients, but one in particular required immediate attention. Lt. Col. John Scott discovered that the arteries to Bayan's heart were reversed, a deformity that would have been fatal within two weeks of birth.

But let Jonathan continue the story in his own words: *When I last wrote you on Thursday, the Kurdish Iraqi baby Bayan had just made it off the operating room table in Israel. She'd been there a marathon 21 hours due to bleeding which developed following her emergency heart surgery. Her condition was critical and doctors were clearly worried.*

Bayan's father and I were sharing a room at the children's home near the



hospital, and that night just before midnight I felt compelled to pray with him for his daughter's life. (He had already been open to and powerfully affected by prayers of believers we met while waiting for a visa in Amman, and had seen that our e-mail reports were rallying prayer for his daughter from around the world.) I shook him awake and prayed simply with him from Romans 8:11, that the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead would come into Bayan's body and raise her up.

The next morning I received a call from the head of the pediatric ICU, Dr. Sion Houry. He said Bayan's condition was better and spoke of a turning point during the last 24 hours. I felt at peace then to leave and return to my family in the U.S. But on my way out of town I stopped by Dr. Houry's home to question him more closely about what had happened during the night. He said the surgeon, Dr. Lior Sasson, had decided to go back in at around 10:00 p.m. and look again

for the sources of unexplained bleeding. A few minor-looking sites were found and closed, and almost immediately Bayan's vital signs began to improve. I confess that I pressed him on the time that this took place. He thought about it, and replied, "About midnight."

I know that I understand little of how God has been at work in the rescue of Bayan, but I am firmly convinced that he has been, and that hers is a story of his grace. Today (Tuesday) I spoke again with Dr. Khoury for the first time since meeting at his home. "We're exactly where I'd like us to be," he said. Bayan was successfully weaned more than 24 hours ago from a device that was doing most of the work of her heart, and doctors are reducing her ventilatory support. Still her chest remains open, and doctors are waiting for one more vital sign, that Bayan will resume urinating on her own within the next 24 hours.

Bless you for continuing in prayer with us that Bayan will be delivered from the evil one, and from death into new life.

Bayan's father:
"In the days of Saddam I could have been killed for this, but now it's natural, no problem," he said. "Iraq is free now. We weren't afraid to come. They treat us here with respect."



An urgent note just received from Jonathan:

Dear friends,
 I've just gotten off the phone with Dr. Sion Houry, the head of the ICU in Israel that is treating the Iraqi baby girl Bayan after her emergency heart surgery. He said the last 24 hours have been difficult. Bayan's blood pressure is falling for reasons the doctors cannot explain. They have searched for an infection but all cultures are coming back negative. She is now two weeks after the surgery and doctors have still not felt ready to close her chest. As you know, this has been completely the Lord's work in Bayan's life from the beginning. Please would you join us now in asking God's spirit to teach us how to pray for her at this critical time, and pass along to me any insights you might receive.

Jonathan