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5		$- \mathbf{E} \wedge \mathbf{C} \mathbf{T} \mathbf{O}_{-} \mathbf{N} \mathbf{E} \mathbf{N}$	<u>እ/</u> (
2		-EAST C -NEV	(V) (S)			
2						
Ę	An electroni	c journal of the Middle East, for those who want to be infor	med.			
5	Vol. 1, No. 8	December 26, 2003	Amman			
卢						
2	Contexts	Welcome				
C	Topical	Wishing you all the joys of Christmas, wherever you are!				
Ę	Bethlehem Today 2	Here in Jordan Christmas has been an official holiday for				
5	Historical	economy being what it is, many private businesses will be op				
5	How far back does it go? (6) 3	for us here, but in Israel and the West Bank yesterday's suice				
	Geographical Euphrates and Tigris Rivers 4	still for many. A planned visit of ours to Jerusalem and Beth to the repercussions of the bomb. For many, there is a growin				
2	Euphrales and Tights Rivers 4	but the activities of the militants continue to impede progress				
Ę		mprovement would require a deeper level of trust than the Palest				
Ę		rocal in their criticism of the approach of their government. (Perh				
5		ways in which they express their feelings that the Palestinians an				
5		NEWS reported on Bayan, we have unfortunately had to inform y	ou of her death. She is in God's			
þ	nanus now. I want to pass on to you two letter	s received recently, from those who have been involved.	The story of Bayan will be			
2	Dear friends,		broadcast on the Daystar			
2	Bayan's parents have arrived safely	back in their village in the north of Iraq, with Bayan's	television network on Dec. 24 and 26, and I want to invite those who			
Ę		ith the nurse who is traveling with them. She said, "You	were praying for Bayan to tune in.			
S	wouldn't believe what ambassadors	they are for Israel." I he asked me to thank each one who has been praying	Daystar is seen on the Dish Network and Direct TV satellite			
5	for them. J	The asked the to thank each one who has been praying	systems in the US, as well as on			
卢			local stations such as Channel 41			
卢	(And from the nurse)		(cable 19) in Denver. In Europe and the Middle East, it appears			
2	De en Eviende		on the Hotbird digital satellite.			
2	Dear Friends, Maybe most of you on this list have heard	this sad news by now but I'm sorry that I didn't manage	Those with a fast Internet connection can also view the			
Ę	to get this message to you before we left from Israel. It was a hectic day but filled with the Lord's program at www.daystar.com.					
5	peace. Do not despair, the Lord has been Lord in all.					
5	About an hour ago, T and I returned to Amman. T is an Arabic speaking friend here who was one of the team with us in Irag when we first met Baby Bayan and her family and so it was very					
卢			US Eastern 3 pm, Central 2 pm,			
2	good that he could accompany us back to their family home and help with my poor level of Constant of the support from Mountain 1pm, Western 12 noon.					
2	Amman and back and Jassem and Iman [the parents] were so glad too.				
Ę	What can I say but even though many may see this as a disaster, this was the Lord's plan and He has blessed us greatly and shown us					
5	His mighty love. Truly, seeds have been sown with many tears so I cannot imagine how joyful this harvest will be. Praise God for His wonderful love and mercies which have been new every morning over this difficult but amazing month of Bayan's life.					
5		their home and village with much joy even though there we				
눧	\square for them as they process all that they have experienced, the wonderful and the difficult. They are very, very dear people and I praise					
2		s given me for them. How much more love He has for then				
2	Praise God for all those who have and will continue to support in prayer and for those who have also helped Jassem, Iman and I in through this time in practical ways as well. THANK YOU! In His Love, A					
Ę	an ough this time in practical ways as Well.	11// WAAA 100: 111118 LOVE, A				
5	Sudan Peace process continues		Treaty unlikely before new year			
5	Libya Iran Ira	Libya admits ↓ W an signs ↓ nuclear protocol ↓ Iran/Egypt to renew ties	MD research, opens for inspection			
卢		Offensive against Al Qaeda ↓ Cleric calls for Al Qaeda militar	nts to lay down arms			
2	Pakistan	Bomb misses Musharraf \downarrow Pakistan \downarrow offers Kashmir s	olution 2^{nd} attempt \downarrow on Musharraf			
2	Afghan- Militia hand ↓ over weapons 'Ope istan (2000	ration Avalanche' New Kabul-Kandahar ↓ road opens) ↓ troops seek Taleban) ↓ Loya Jirga begins (adopts derr				
Ę	Jordan ↓ Iraqi police begin training in Jord					
S		pan to \downarrow send troops Saddam \downarrow captured Roadside	bomb ↓ kills 2 soldiers			
5		er convoy attacked Baker J promotes Iraq debt reduction				
5	Syria ↓ Assad calls for talks w/ Israel	Assad calls for \downarrow EU ties some \downarrow settlements EM welcomes Svr \downarrow overtures. Command	los ↓ 2 soldiers die in Gaza			
þ	Israel ↓ Geneva Accord Threat to close some ↓ settlements FM welcomes Syr. ↓ overtures Commandos ↓ 2 soldiers die in Gaza Syr. talks rejected Peace offer ↓ dismissed ↓ Ceding of land debated refuse to ↓ serve Tel Aviv ↓ bomb kills 2					
	Palestine Militants ↓ discuss truce in Egypt	Mortar attacks ↓ from Gaza Egypt FM as				
2	(Factions fail to agree	↓) in Al Aqsa c 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20				
Ę	Dec. M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S			

lignan-	Millitia hand \downarrow over weapons	Operation Avaianche	New Kabul-Kandanar \downarrow road op	bens
istan		(2000 \downarrow troops seek Taleba	n) \downarrow Loya Jirga begins (adopts democratic, \downarrow presidential system)
Jordan	\downarrow Iraqi police begin training in	Jordan	3 indicted for planning \downarrow te	errorism
Iraq	Shiites want \downarrow elections soon	Japan to \downarrow send troops	Saddam \downarrow captured	Roadside bomb \downarrow kills 2 soldiers
	\downarrow Bremer convoy attacked Baker \downarrow promotes Iraq debt reduction			
Syria	\downarrow Assad calls for talks w/ Israe	el Ass	ad calls for \downarrow EU ties	
Israel	↓ Geneva Accord Threat to	close some \downarrow settlements	FM welcomes Syr. \downarrow overtures	Commandos \downarrow 2 soldiers die in Gaza
	\downarrow Syr. talks rejected F	Peace offer \downarrow dismissed	\downarrow Ceding of land debated	refuse to \downarrow serve Tel Aviv \downarrow bomb kills 2

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Palestine Militants \downarrow discuss truce in Egypt Mortar attacks \downarrow from Gaza Egypt FM assaulted \downarrow \downarrow Gaza raid-9 die 2 T 3 W 1 Dec. Μ

Bethlehem Today

If it weren't the birthplace of Jesus, Bethlehem would still be remembered. For millennia it has been the site of Rachel's tomb, and a pilgrimage destination (in times when pilgrimage was practised) for devout Jews. Today the tomb is on the outskirts of the city, met as one approaches from Jerusalem on Hebron Road. Nearby is Bethlehem Bible College, located on the edge of a refugee camp

visitors makes approach to the

college difficult.

Century, under the

patronage of Queen

Helena, the mother of

Constantine the Great.

of Palestinians who left their homes in 1948. During the conflict of the last three years the college has suffered damage. Barricades have been built alongside it, bullets have gone through the windows and water tank, and a wall being built to ensure safe access to Rachel's tomb for Jewish



destroyed in the 6th century the 7th century church is what we see now. It was the only church in the city to survive the Persian invasion of the 7th Century (only a

few years before the Muslim invasion), and was somewhat

"How long will you mourn over Saul...? I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king. "(1 Sam.16:1)

David's home

restored by the Crusaders in the 11th century.

The Church of the Nativity is the focal point for Christians in Bethlehem, one of many towns in the region that have had primarily Christian residents. In the West we have largely forgotten what it is to have religion at the center

of our lives. In the Middle East religion holds the place that race or nationality hold for us in the West. The Church is Greek Orthodox but also hosts Roman Catholic (Latin) and Armenian Orthodox congregations. Adjacent to the main church building are a Greek and

an Armenian monastery, as well as the Catholic Church named for St. Catherine of Alexandria.

In April, 2002, when Palestinian militants took



refuge in the church they were simultaneously

Ruler to come

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will judge over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times." (Mic.5:2)

recognizing and violating the respect and sanctity in which the church is held by all faiths. The occupation and curfew that Bethlehem had suffered for months on end was lifted earlier this year, but it is still ringed by road blocks and checkpoints,

making life difficult for the whole community. Many in the Christian community look for opportunities to emigrate to the West, having a strong desire for a Palestinian state but little sympathy with the militant groups. From the West Bank they are emigrating at the rate of as many as 1,000 per year.

Child in a manger

So Joseph also went up from the Inside the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, church because he belonged to the house and line of David While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. (Luke 2:4,7)



that pillar marks Rachel's tomb. (Gen.35:16-20) In the center of Bethlehem. however, and the center of attention for the whole world at Christmas time, is the Church of the Nativity. It was built in the 4th

Rachel's tomb

great difficulty...

Portions of the church are the property of the different faiths: Greek: Basilica, including the nave, aisles, katholicon (choir and sanctuary), south transept, and the Altar of the Nativity in the Grotto. Armenian Orthodox: north transept and its altar. (also, on occasion, use of the Greek altar in the Grotto)

While they were still some distance from

to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). Over her tomb Jacob set up a pillar, and to this day

Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and had

So Rachel died and was buried on the way

Latins (Catholic): Altar of the Adoration of the Magi in the "Grotto of the Manger", the silver star beneath the Altar of the Nativity (it is inscribed. "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus Est.")





How far back does it go? – Part 6: 500 pieces of silver

(The first of a three-part article summarizing the Old Testament history of the land of Israel.)

The land called **Canaan**, another name for the coast of the eastern Mediterranean, is first mentioned in Genesis 11:31 (though the grandson of Noah is named in Gen.9:18). It was this geographical area that God selected to be His Promised Land; promised first to Abram (even before he had seen it) and successively to his descendants.

Each of them, though, recognized that the land was not theirs without qualification. Abram's descendants were circumcised; Moses warned the people that corruption would cause them to perish from the land; even during the time of Joshua and the Judges the Israelites were not in full control of the land, but shared it (as the dominant group) with others.

Promises and warnings are listed alongside an outline of the major events.

Tower of Babel (Nations) Abram Call (from Ur)	go to the land I"I give you this land to Your descendants wi(Gen.12:1)of the Amorites have	o shall your offspring be" (Gen.15:5) o take possession of it." (Gen.15:5) Il be enslaved, but return here later, for the sins not reached their full measure" (Gen.15:12f) s I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the					
Covenant Established	(Gen.12:2) "The whole land of Canaan I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you." (Gen.17:8) "keep my covenant circumcision" (Gen.17:9) "My covenant I will establish with Isaac" (Gen.17:21)						
Sarah's death_ Hagar & Ishmael —	deathAbraham buys a field - 400 shekels of silver. (Gen.23:15) To Hagar: "I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count"						
Isaac Jacob	this land." (Gen.28:13) "Your name will not longer be Jacob, but Israel" (Gen.32:28) Jacob bought the land where he pitched his tent - 100 pieces of silver (Gen.33:19) "A nation and a community of nations will come from you" (Gen.35:11) "The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you." (Gen.35:11) "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there." (Gen.46:3)						
("Israel")	"I have come down to rescue themand to bring them up out of that land into a good and	"Do not oppress an alien; you yourselves know how it feels to be aliens, because you					
Slavery in Egypt Exodus	spacious landthe home of the CanaanitesAmorites" (Ex.3:8) "I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the	were aliens in Egypt. (Ex.23:9) "I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon" (Deut.2:24) "In accordance with the command of the					
Conquest of Promised Land	desert to the River." (Ex.23:31) "If you violate the covenantyou will quickly perish from the good land He has given you."	Lord our God you did not encroach on any of the land of the Ammonites" (Deut.2:37) "If you then become corruptyou will quickly perish from the landThe Lord will scatter you (Deut: 4:25)					
Judges Samuel United	(Jos.23:16) "Manasseh did not drive out the people of, nor did Ephrain drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, neither did Zebulun, nor did Asher, neither did Naphtali" (Jg.1:27) "These are the nations the Lord left to test all the Israelites" (Jg.3:1)	The people of Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand on the seashore; they ate, they drank and they were happy. And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. These countries					
Kingdom		brought tribute and were Solomon's subjects all his life. (1 Ki. 4:20)					

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