

MID-EAST e-NEWS

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Welcome

e-NEWS is too short, this week, to accommodate all the material that you will be interested in. Go to the web site to download a summary of the Israeli-Hezbollah Conflict, including war maps, illustrations and the complete text of UN Resolution 1701. All available on your favorite ('favourite') web page.

Your comments are always welcome, and have been known to inspire a number of the articles that have appeared in *e-NEWS*.

Email your responses to pkclark@pmbx.net & check the web for back issues.

Lebanon's Crusader Castles

During the period of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, most of the Lebanon was incorporated into the County of Tripoli. Within this territory can be seen a number of castles, surviving from the days when the Crusaders were vainly attempting to maintain Western control of the eastern Mediterranean coast.



Krak Des Chevaliers is probably the quintessential medieval castle, towering over the countryside with its imposing walls and defiant impregnability. It is located east of Tripoli, on a 650m ridge on the Homs gap, the only route through the mountains to Antioch. An earlier fort at this location had been captured in 1099, but the present structure dates from 1144, when it was given to the Hospitallers, who enlarged it so that it could withstand a 5-month siege if necessary. It may have held as many as 50-60 knights and 2,000 foot soldiers. While on the 9th Crusade (1272) Edward I saw the castle and later modeled his English and Welsh castles on it.



Beaufort Castle stands almost 1,000m above the Litani valley in southern Lebanon. It was completed in by the Crusaders in 1139, though an earlier fort may have stood in this position.

It was in this castle that Reynald resisted Saladin after the massacre of the Crusader army at Hittin in 1187. Saladin camped at Marj Ayuun in 1189, ready to besiege the castle, but Reynald negotiated a 3-month grace period. The castle finally fell in 1190



Sidon is an ancient port in southern Lebanon. The **Sea Castle** is located on a small island about 100m offshore. The small castle was built in 1227-28 as the Crusaders were awaiting the arrival of Frederic II, the Holy Roman Emperor. It is connected to the town by a fortified bridge (replaced since by a more recent construction) During the 12th Century the castle of St Louis was located in the town, on the mainland, but was probably totally destroyed after the Arab conquest of 1187.



Byblos is a coastal city in the north of Lebanon. The local name for the city is *Jbail*. (Bint Jbail, the scene of recent fighting, is said to have been founded by residents from Phoenician Byblos. Its name means 'daughter of Jbail.') The castle here was erected in 1203 by the Knights of the Cross. As with many other ancient buildings of the area, severe earthquakes in the 12th Century caused major damage to the castle.

Christian Zionism - b) Not Which, but When...

In the previous article we discussed some of the questions that are considered in relation to the state of Israel. We presented the table with a series of questions, and a sequence of alternatives that present themselves. In this issue we shall present further questions, in a format which might help us recognize some of the issues and positions involved.

The shaded areas were first presented in the previous article - issue 69. (Because the author did not prepare very far ahead, the numbering and wording has changed slightly to accommodate the additional points.)

I the current state is unrelated to that addressed in prophecy	II the present state of Israel is a clear fulfillment of prophecy					
	A Israel's presence means nothing more is required for their possession of the land	B Prophecy indicates that to truly belong in the land Israel must recognize that it has certain responsibilities before God				
		1 Israel's presence as the fulfillment of prophecy places them in a stream of events over which they have no influence or control	2 Israel's presence in the land may depend upon their conduct		b The present unstable situation (dwelling in the midst of enemies) will continue until Israel has a change of heart	
		a Israel may again be expelled from the land if they do not maintain OT standards of morality & justice	i The present (secular) Israel will return to its biblical (Jewish) roots		ii The Jews will accept Jesus as their Messiah	iii A general acceptance of Jesus (or 144,000, etc.) will occur prior to his coming
				iv Jesus will return before the Jews have accepted Him		

If it is accepted that the Israel of today is a fulfillment of prophecy (II), the most generous view (the one that requires the least responsibility from Israelis, or believers interested in Israel) is that once fulfilled, nothing more is necessary (A). To assert that prophecy expects more (B) is to open to question the role and responsibilities of the present state. It does not necessarily follow that Israel might lose its privileged position if it failed to respond to any such expectations; that is only one of the possible alternatives (2a).

Note: Readers of articles such as this one must remind themselves that, in asking questions in a certain way, the author is directing the discussion. The very phrasing of the questions serves to press the reader towards certain alternatives, which may not necessarily be the only choices. Positions **i** and **ii**, for example, lead to questions that address a particular view of eschatology (a & b), where an alternative route may first choose to consider, for example, the relationship of Israel with the surrounding nations.

In a way, the issue of future events is not totally relevant for the points we are currently discussing - though the topic would necessarily arise later. However, taking our alternatives to this level does serve to point out an important factor: discussion of the role of the present state of Israel often revolves around a person's *eschatology* (study of the coming final events in the history of the world).

To a large extent, Christian Zionism depends upon a particular view of eschatology - though with some variations. We cannot really discuss the presence of Israel as a modern state without considering the interpretations of prophecy that include a role for a resurgent Israel. It is upon these interpretations of Scripture that the various Christian Zionist positions depend, and which we shall consider in the next issue.

And, to the valid question 'Why is this not being considered from a Jewish point of view?' the answer really is 'Well, it is *Christian Zionism* that we are examining.'

Note:

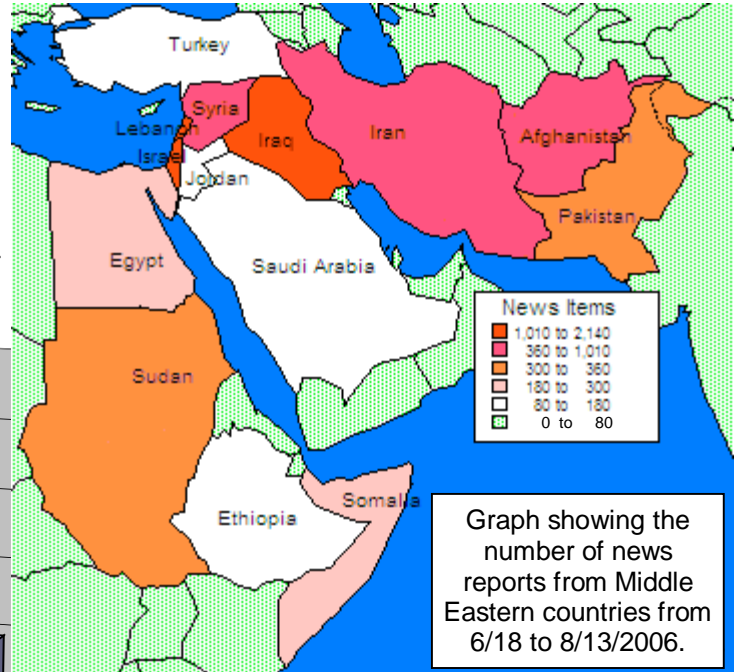
As we pursue this complex and sensitive topic, the author sincerely hopes to attract your comments. Presentation of the issues involved is instructive, at least as much for the author as for those who have not seriously considered the subject of Christian Zionism. The purpose of this series is not to promote an opinion - the author is a teacher, after all, not a politician! - but to encourage those who have questions about the topic to look further into the various themes and positions involved. It is much better to have thought through one's opinions - an experience which the author is aware of in each article he writes - than to either reject or accept them without proper consideration.

Counting on the News

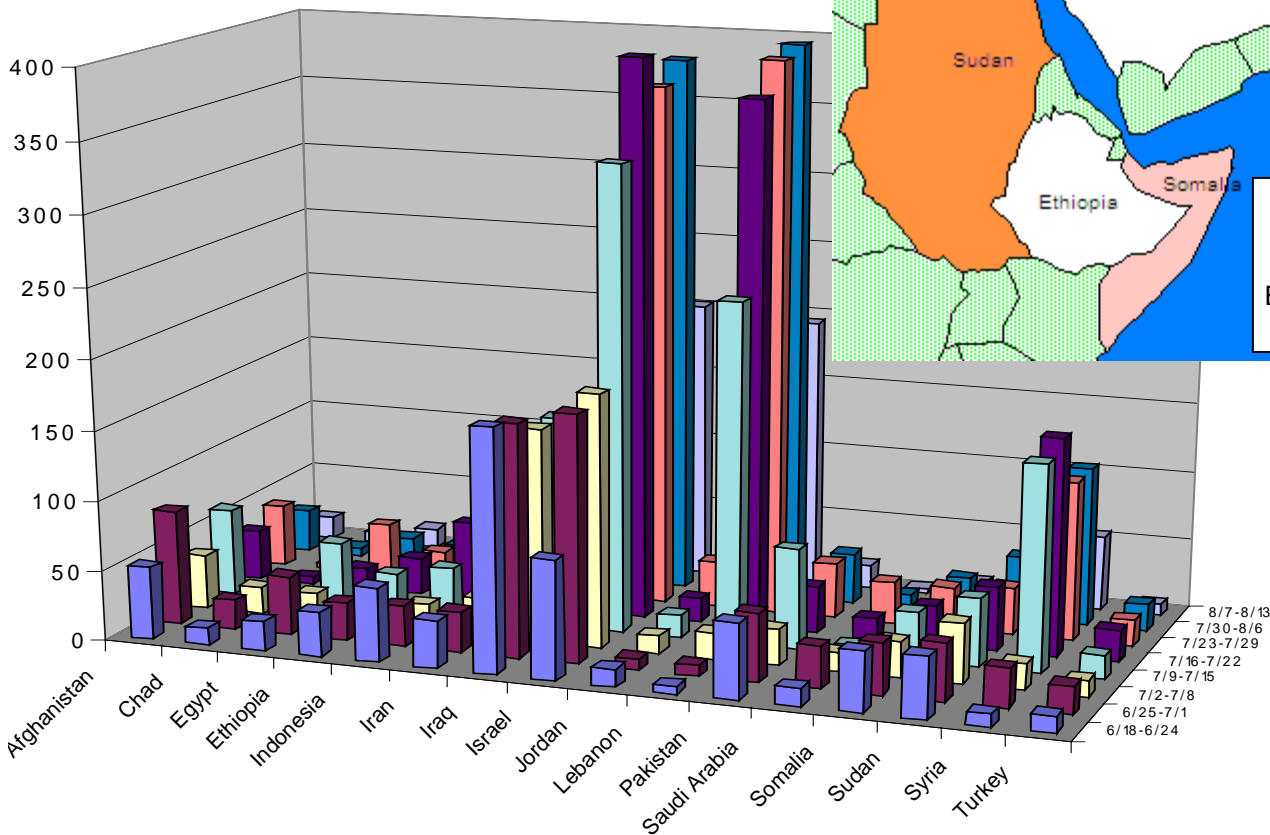
Having experimented with one view of the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict (see e-NEWS 70), the two graphs below show alternative representations.

The map shows the Middle-Eastern & Islamic countries that had the most news reports from June 18 through August 13th. These are color coded to indicate the range of values.

The bar graph shows how the news reports varied between each country, and by week. Each column represents the number of news reports from that country for that week.



Graph showing the number of news reports from Middle Eastern countries from 6/18 to 8/13/2006.



OBTAIN YOUR FREE BOOKLET DETAILING THE EVENTS OF THE ISRAELI-HEZBOLLAH CONFLICT

The Israeli-Hezbollah conflict began on June 12th and was interrupted by the ceasefire put together largely by the United States and France (as the two countries with the most divergent opinions on the issues) through the United Nations. In the last days of the turbulent process of deciding on the wording of the document both Israel and Lebanon had significant points to make that contributed to the document. On Friday, August 12th, the two countries agreed to the revised document, and it was unanimously accepted by the 15-member Security Council late on Friday (in New York - it was already Saturday in the Levant) as UN Security Council Resolution 1701. (Security Council Resolutions carry more weight than those produced by the General Assembly, since any one of the 5 permanent members - USA, Britain, France, Russia, China - can veto a resolution).

The conduct of the war (if consensus agrees that it was a war, even though it was being fought against Hezbollah guerillas and not between states) is summarized in a booklet available from www.morethantourists.com. UNSC Resolution 1701 is included in the document “**Israel in Lebanon**” as are some illustrations and maps helping readers to understand the flow of events.

To obtain the 15-page booklet, go to www.morethantourists.com, click on e-NEWS, and scroll down to find the document.

This Month

July	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Aug 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14							
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M							
Africa			Somali government boycotts talks with Islamist movement									Ethiopian troops threaten Somali Islamist rebels					Somali Govt. minister shot dead	Darfur: UN wants 24,000 peacekeepers				More aid workers killed in Darfur						Rebels shoot down military plane			Cholera increases in Darfur					
Pakistan						200 Taliban arrested in Quetta raids				Mudslides kill 40+ earthquake refugees				Many (120+) killed by monsoon floods					Arrests made in British bomb plots					Tribal Jirgas discuss peace in Waziristan				Bomb hits troops convoy-1 dead			4 Indian police killed in Kashmir					
Afghan.			Heavy fighting in Uruzgan			Twin suicide bombs kill 8					Drought & violence cause villagers to flee Helmand					5.5 quake hits NE Afghanistan		Afghan forces kill 18 Taliban			UK troops control remote valley, 1 killed					Suicide bomb kill 20 in Kandahar prov.				8 police ambushed, troops battle Taliban, kill 12						
Arabia																	Shiites protest Israeli attacks		Road accident kills 21 nr Jeddah					2,000+ Shia protest in Qatif - 7 arrested												
Iraq	Gunmen free 13 prisoners from Baquba hospital, 4 killed							Kirkuk courthouse car bomb kills 20					Japanese troops return home				Roadside bomb kills 20 soldiers nr Tikrit			5 killed in Baghdad bank robbery				Bomb/rocket assault in Baghdad kills 57												
US Deaths: 3/30: 2,317 5/31: 2,459 7/24: 2,565 7/31: 2,578	Mehdi army leader arrested in Basra, 1 UK soldier killed			Suicide bomb in café kills 13			Mortar attack on UK Basra base			17 kidnapped in Baghdad			6 insurgents killed, 27 held on Haifa St, Baghdad			4 US marines killed in Anbar			US soldiers charged with murder in Iraq court			3 US killed in Anbar			UN mission to Iraq extended 1 year			Roadside bombs kill 3 daylaborers			Bomb kills 10 in Baghdad market			90 arrested protesting public services in Suleymaniyah		
	Gunmen kill 15 in Mahmudiya market			Suicide bomb kills 59 day laborers			Series of militant leaders arrested across Iraq			19 Sunni mosque workers abducted			US/Iraqi forces raid Al Qaeda towns nr Kirkuk			Iran accused of shelling Kurds in N Iraq			US marine killed in Anbar prov.			Home bombed by US, killing 2 insurgents, 2 women, child			25 kidnapped from office			Clashes w/ insurgents in Mosul			Troops search Dora to reduce murder rate			Violence increases over land claims in Kirkuk		
UN estimates 6,000 civilians killed in 2 months - Baghdad morgue received 1,815 bodies in July. PM Maliki attempts reconciliation, dialogue with insurgent groups	Gunmen kill 15 in Mahmudiya market			Suicide bomb kills 59 day laborers			Series of militant leaders arrested across Iraq			19 Sunni mosque workers abducted			US/Iraqi forces raid Al Qaeda towns nr Kirkuk			Iran accused of shelling Kurds in N Iraq			US marine killed in Anbar prov.			Home bombed by US, killing 2 insurgents, 2 women, child			25 kidnapped from office			Clashes w/ insurgents in Mosul			Troops search Dora to reduce murder rate			Violence increases over land claims in Kirkuk		
	Iran FM visits Syria for talks												Iran prevents students joining Hezbollah			UN sets Nuclear deadline for Aug. 31												Iran presses Shia to attack US in Iraq								
Turkey	PKK rebels kill 7 soldiers in SE			2 PKK killed in military raid									PKK mine kills soldier, injures 2			Explosion at barracks in Van prov.																				
Jordan								Islamists on trial for visiting Zarqawi family			Jordan to crack down on those supporting Iraq insurgency			2 MPs jailed for visiting Zarqawi family			Death penalty dropped for some crimes (drugs, weapons possession)																			
Israel			IDF raid on Palestinian security in Nablus kills 5 militants, 2 PNA buildings demolished, 12 arrested			Nurse shot dead while treating wounded in Nablus			2 on suicide mission detained in Tel Aviv			Sharon condition worsens			Settler killed by militant (hitch-hiker dressed as religious Jew)			Tourist killed in Jerusalem			Attempted shoe bomb at PM office			Opposition challenges Olmert on war plans			Ariel Sharon condition worsens									
WB & Gaza	Israel arrests Cabinet ministers, as members of Hamas. Rockets continue from Gaza, incursions also			Workers receive partial (\$330, 1/2 of Aprils') wages			EU pays some health workers salaries directly			Helicopter strike kills 2 in Jenin			PM Haniya doubts ability of PNA to function with so many MPs in jail			Collaborator publicly executed in Jenin			Rafah crossing closed after only 3 hours-same on 8/11			Gunmen hold 2 journalists			Cabinet minister Barghouti released from jail											