

MID-EAST e-NEWS

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Welcome

It is difficult to be optimistic in the week when the Palestinians seem to have imposed a Two-State Solution on themselves, through their factional infighting. Brief though it was, the consequence of the Great Schism is that there are now two defacto governments operating in the territories. The words spoken 2000 years ago, by a Man who was about to be arrested and executed on trumped-up charges by the religious leaders of his day, with connivance of the secular rulers, ring ever true: *"Put your sword back in its place, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."* (Matt.26:52)

Write me at pkclark@pmbx.net & let me know what you think.

Another view - Gaza

Dear Friends

Greetings to you from Gaza in Jesus Name. ... The last several days were very difficult & dangerous. Last Sunday night I wasn't not able to finish my sermon because there were heavy shooting close to the church building while I am preaching & the people become very nervous & afraid, so we stopped the meeting. From Sunday night the situation become more dangerous one member from our church his apartment bombed, he slightly injured & his family is ok. Another family from the Christian community bombed but no one injured. We never thought the fight between the two groups will finish in several days we thought this fight will continue for long time & many many people will be killed, but we thank God it finished faster than we thought & not too many people have been killed (every person who died precious in the eyes of God).

In the last few days the PA Police took our church building as watching point but this time they asked us to use the church hall & when we said no, they broke in & when I went today to check the place I found out they stole, the computer, Two wireless speakers & the head phones we used for translation (\$ it is worth about 4,000).

Most of the people in Gaza are watching & waiting what will happen, nothing is clear, All the boarders are closed & we are in the biggest prison in the world.

We are ok, our Trust in Him & God still in control. We continue to experience the power of God's presence, His peace & love at this time.

Please Pray that God will continue to use us to reflect His love in Gaza. ... Please pray for our children & God help us to help them to over come this Trauma. Please pray for stability in the region.

Your brother in Christ & your friend

Another view - Helmand

British and U.S. forces offered lavish promises of aid -- but also remarkably blunt threats of more violence -- to Afghan elders on Thursday at their first meeting since a battle to clear Taliban guerrillas from a mountain valley that could be a key to controlling southern Afghanistan.

More than 100 bearded elders assembled, sitting shoeless and cross-legged behind sandbag fortifications in the portico of the Sangin district centre.

The town is now largely quiet after NATO operations to flush Taliban fighters out of the valley to the north, which culminated with a combined U.S.-British assault, Operation Axe Handle, last week.

The operation's British commander, Lieutenant Colonel Stewart Carver, told the elders it had been a success. The Taliban were gone, some having fled, others killed. "Clearing them out in the first place was the easy part. The more difficult part is making sure they do not come back," he said.

A U.S. official promised that Afghanistan's biggest aid project, the reconstruction of the Kajaki Dam at the head of the valley, could soon begin, with work starting within weeks on a new road up the valley to reach the dam. The road project will create 2,500 thousand new jobs, the project's head, Stu Willcuts of USAID, told the elders. It will link their villages to market year round. "We need your help. We need the wisdom of those of you who worked on this project before. We need the strength of the arms of the young people." There were polite speeches of gratitude from the elders, and carefully worded requests for faster aid.

But then a U.S. Special Forces commander sprang to his feet, silencing the gathering. "My job is to assist the district chief with security by killing as many Taliban as I can. Period," he said. "All these gentlemen here want to bring aid to Sangin district. They can bring millions of dollars to assist you," said the bearded American commander, who wore a uniform with no insignia and identified himself as Major Gill.

"Honestly, what I have seen is you don't actually want that assistance. Because you continue to allow the Taliban to enter your villages," he said. "I have seen you allow the Taliban to use your women and children as human shields. I have seen you allow Taliban to use your women and children to resupply ambush sites." When the Special Forces commander fell silent, the elders erupted in murmurs and shouts. Several leapt to their feet. "The troops have taken over my land! They are using my land to make a checkpoint!" shouted one. "I have just two acres of land and 20 people to feed. I have to grow poppies. Otherwise, I cannot feed my family!" yelled another.

Afterwards, sitting on a carpet in an outbuilding with a small group of neighbours eating chicken and rice, one of the elders, Haji Mohammed Yaqub, said he believed the valley was indeed now quiet enough for the road work to begin. "Many places have been cleared of Taliban, so they can start reconstruction," he said.

But he added, it was probably too late for the NATO forces to be welcomed by most residents.

"They have destroyed people's houses and their lives," he said. "So, what do they expect?"

Christian Zionism: 6. Support

In one period of its existence, Israel seems to have been given carte blanche to invade and destroy nations resident in the land of Canaan. This was limited in both geography and chronology: in the first case the Israelites were not to destroy Edom (since they were closely related) but to detour around them; but later, when the Amorites refused them passage, they were defeated and their territory captured; later still, Jericho and Ai were captured and totally destroyed.

that celebrates the prophetic voice which has animated our people for centuries, and which has given such vitality to the Zionist movement.

"This vision is articulated in the Declaration of Independence when it describes the state as one that "will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel." In the spirit of this vision, Israel must protect minority rights, and cherish and listen to its critics, to those who stand with the poor and powerless.

As I began to prepare this article, at the end of May

6. Support (R)	If the modern state of Israel is part of the prophesied return...				
<i>What freedom of action does Israel's position in prophecy allow it, and how should believers (and the nations whose behavior they influence) respond?</i>	they should be treated as any other modern nation	Christians should not participate in political action regarding modern Israel	Christians should criticize immoral conduct but take no measures to 'discipline' it	Christians should support or withdraw support depending upon Israel's conduct	Israel should be supported in any defensive or offensive action it wants to take

In the week when we see Gaza imploding, to be discussing the variety of positions on Israel's scope of action, seems somewhat surrealistic. But perhaps it may now be easier, given the circumstances, to step back and consider what the Christian view is of Israel's options in the territory it controls.

David Stern, a Messianic Jew who has written much on God's plan for Israel, has this to say:

"Joshua had a clear and direct commandment from God both to conquer and to kill the inhabitants of the seven Canaanite nations. It was a very specific ad hoc commandment, and it did not extend to all living in the Land, only to certain nations that had had 400 years in which to repent of their evil ways (Genesis 15)."

Stern believes that justice, integrity and humility are compatible with an expectation of God's intention to work through an Israel restored to the land of Promise. He practices his belief. In May 2006 he was a signatory, with the Rabbis For Human Rights organization, of an open letter to PM Ariel Sharon, calling for the Israeli authorities to put a halt to their practice of demolition of the homes of Palestinian families. Some excerpts follow:

"We Rabbis, leaders of our communities, long-time Zionists and supporters of Israel, are writing to express our concern and our support for our colleague, Rabbi Arik Ascherman, who is on trial in Jerusalem for trying to prevent the demolition of two Palestinian homes."

"Since 1987, 2,500 Palestinian houses on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem have been demolished for administrative reasons leaving more than 16,000 Palestinians homeless," while, in comparison, "since 1987, literally thousands of homes have been built for Jews in these same areas, many receiving permits retroactively."

(From http://www.rhr-na.org/homedemolitions/forward_ad.pdf)

"The home demolition policy contradicts the kind of Israel envisioned by the founders of a Jewish state, one

(though delayed by the events in Gaza & Lebanon) I was also notified of the comments of the former Chief Rabbi of the Sephardic Jewish Community.

This excerpt is from the Jerusalem Post of May 30, 2007. Readers who have been following our series on Rabbinic Judaism will not be surprised at the references to earlier sages, in this case Maimonides:



Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu

"All civilians living in Gaza are collectively guilty for Kassam attacks on Sderot", former Sephardi chief rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu has written in a letter to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

Eliyahu ruled that there was absolutely no moral prohibition against the indiscriminate killing of civilians during a potential massive military offensive on Gaza aimed at stopping the rocket launchings.

The letter, published in Olam Katan [Small World], a weekly pamphlet to be distributed in synagogues nationwide this Friday, cited the biblical story of the Shechem massacre (Genesis 34) and Maimonides' commentary (Laws of Kings 9, 14) on the story as proof texts for his legal decision.

According to Jewish war ethics, wrote Eliyahu, an entire city holds collective responsibility for the immoral behavior of individuals. In Gaza, the entire populace is responsible because they do nothing to stop the firing of Kassam rockets.

The former chief rabbi also said it was forbidden to risk the lives of Jews in Sderot or the lives of IDF soldiers for fear of injuring or killing Palestinian noncombatants living in Gaza.

Knowing God's Will: In Gaza today we hear Hamas militants claiming God's mandate for the killing of those who oppose them; this statement from Rabbi Eliyahu echoes a similar attitude; in Western Protestant Churches we hesitate to state such claims; but our inaction, at least, may be because we believe that those who have lived as refugees since 1948 are universally under God's condemnation, be they Muslim or Christian, militant or civilian.

This topic will be continued in the next issue of e-News.

Cyclone Gonu

Tourists pictures of Muscat do not normally show the scenes that Oman experienced earlier this month. Perched on the southeastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, with Indian Ocean waters lapping its southern coast, Oman is primarily a desert country, with the town of Muscat, Oman's capital, perched where the waters of the ocean and the Gulf meet at the Straits of Hormuz.

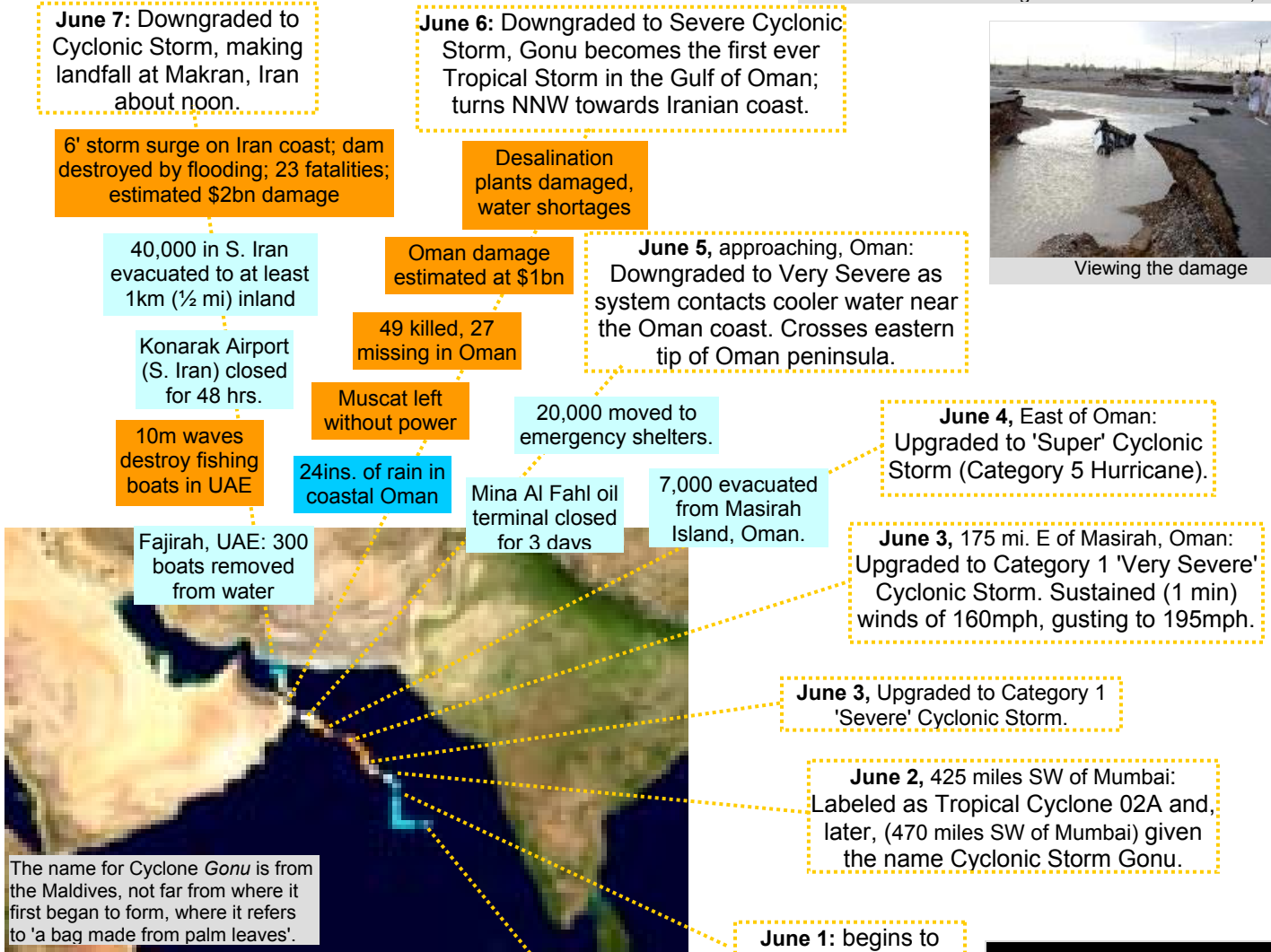
Follow the track of the Arabian Sea's strongest cyclone on record, starting from the bottom of this page.



One of the two forts that guard the harbor at Muscat, Oman



Viewing the damage



The name for Cyclone *Gonu* is from the Maldives, not far from where it first began to form, where it refers to 'a bag made from palm leaves'.



Floodwaters raging through a Muscat, Oman, street



Stormy weather over the Gulf - "We're not in Muscat any longer..."

This Month

May	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Jun	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15																																																																																	
	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F																																																																																		
Far East	6.1 earthquake in Laos																Thai Muslim rebels kill laborers, plant 2 ☹️s										Thai: 7 ☹️s injure 9; bike ☹️ kills 4; R-S☹️ kills 8										Pastor & family attacked in Java										Indonesia: Islamist leader captured																																																																	
Sudan	Darfur situation deteriorates, esp. security																Robbers kill UN official in Darfur										South Sudan militia integrates into SPLA, S Sudan's army										Aid agencies unable to reach Darfur refugees																																																																											
	Govt. troops attack Darfur villages																UN approves force of 23,000										54 die in tribal fighting in south																																																																																					
N Africa	Bomb in Constantine, Algeria, kills policeman																Morocco Islamist news conference prohibited										Tunisia navy rescues 26 Libyans																																																																																					
																	Western Sahara activists arrested in Morocco																																																																																															
Somalia	2 ships hijacked																Mogadishu bomb kills 2, misses mayor										Attack on Ethiopian base, 2 civilians killed										US air strikes in Puntland target Al Qaeda										2 Kenyan police abducted into Somalia																																																																	
Refugees begin return. Puntland assists US in targeting Al Qaeda	Militant shot after landmine explodes																Pirates take Indian dhow										Pirates release ship for \$100k										Danish cargo ship seized																																																																											
																	R-S☹️ hits Ethiopian convoy										S☹️ at PM's home kills 7																																																																																					
Pakistan	Islamists hold 4 police																Christians in NWFP told to convert or die										S☹️ kills 2 soldiers in town of Tank										Sacked judge greeted by cheering supporters										Bomb in Baluchistan kills 3																																																																	
Violence increases in Kashmir	40 Islamists arrested																Army raids Qaeda camp										R-S☹️ kills 2 soldiers										Clash w/ Baluch rebels, 4 killed																																																																											
	Govt. workers held in Waziristan																Demo in support of fired Chief Justice										3 police, 12 militants killed in Kashmir violence																																																																																					
Afghan.	11 Afghan troops killed by bombs																Suicide ☹️ kills 10 in Paktia										UN soldiers killed: Finland, Canada, UK										Helicopter downed, 7 killed										Hostage killed by Taliban										UK, Canadian soldiers killed																																																							
Iran is supplying arms																	R-S☹️ kills 10 police										R-S☹️ kills 6 police										Taliban kill 16 police										Woman journalist shot dead										US troop fire kills 7 police																																																							
Iran																	US/Iran dual nationals arrested										Iran/US officials meet, agree on Iraq										4 US/Iranians charged w/ spying										Cyclone Gonu kills 23 (p3)										Russia delivers nuclear fuel to Iran																																																							
Arabia	Locust emergency in Yemen																Yemen accuses Iran of financing rebels										Iran police battle rebels on Azer border										Cyclone Gonu hits Oman (p3)										Saudi detains 11 militants after Feb. attack on oil terminal																																																																	
	Yemen bomb kills child																										Yemen buys back illegal arms																																																																																					
Iraq	200 insurgents attack pol. stn. in Mosul. kill 4 police																US troops rescue 5 (inc boy) from torturers										Mehdiarmy chief killed in Basra										3 US soldiers killed										Car S☹️ kills 19 in Fallujah										Truck ☹️ nr Tikrit kills 14 police										Sunni mosque nr Basra attacked & destroyed																																													
US Deaths: 3/30/06: 2,317 12/31: 3,000 3/31/07: 3,237 4/30: 3,337 5/15: 3,387 5/31: 3,473 6/15: 3,509	S☹️ destroys bridge N of Mosul																8 students killed in Baghdad										Militias attack UK troops in Basra										Baghdadis help troops in 2-day assault on insurgents										2 Baghdad car ☹️s kill 5										Bridge bombed in Diyala prov.																																																							
	8 US killed in ambush on chopper crash																Car☹️ kills 25 in Amil, Baghdad										US raid Qaeda camp, free 41										S☹️ nr Kirkuk kills 5										Sistani aide killed outside home										Mosul bank director killed																																																							
	2 car☹️s kill 38 in Baghdad																9 insurgents killed, 12 hostages freed										Ramadi car☹️ kills 7										Mortars kill 10 in SW Baghdad										Priest, 5 believers kidnapped in Baghdad										Ramadi S☹️ kills 3 police																																																							
	R-S☹️ kills 3 US in Baghdad																US troops find Iran currency hoard in Sadr City raid										Sniper kills uni. student										☹️ destroys bridge in N Iraq										US/Iraq raid kills 19 insurgents										24 insurgents held in Baghdad, 15 in Mosul																																																							
Iraq Civilians Feb: 1,645 Mar: 1,861 Apr: 1,506 May: 1,944	2 ABC journalists killed																Samarra R-S☹️ kills 6 police										2 ☹️s kills 41 in Baghdad										Car S☹️ kills 5 in Shirqat										S☹️ kills 9 (5 UK) nr Syria border										Car S☹️ kills 3 US										S☹️ kills 4 Ramadi police																																													
	R-S☹️ kills 3 US in Diyala																5 US die in 4 incidents										Body of missing US soldier found										8 US soldiers killed										Mortars kill 10 in Baghdad										Qaeda leader held w/ 4 others										☹️ destroys Kirkuk-Tikrit bridge																																													
	13 Kurds killed in Diyala																Raid on insurgents, 8 dead, 34 captured										S☹️ at Fallujah funeral kills 27										Chopper downed (2 US die), rescue crew ambushed (6 killed)										US raid truck bomb factory, kill 7, 8 held										Police official home attacked, 14 killed										Mortars hit Green Zone																																													
Anbar tribes & Baghdad districts begin to fight back against Al Qaeda.	R-S☹️ kills 6 US																5 US soldiers killed										As Sadr returns (from Iran?)										10 die in arrest raid in Khalis										☹️ in ambulance kills 1										Mortars kill 6 prisoners in S Iraq										R-S☹️ kills 4 police in Mussayib																																													
	Chlorine truck☹️ kills 1																																																																																																															
Turkey																	Ankara bomb kills 6 & 2 caught with explosives in Adana										11 Al Qaeda arrested										Turkey shells PKK in N Iraq										Istanbul bomb injures 14																																																																	
																	PKK bomb kills 6 soldiers in SE Turkey										Troop buildup on Iraq border										PKK attack kills 8 police in Tunceli										14 soldiers die in 3 days of campaign against PKK																																																																	
Syria	3 Islamist activists arrested																UN sets up court for Hariri inquiry																Syria & Iran confer on military topics																																																																															
Lebanon	Struggle against Fateh Al Islam. See web site																Militants attack army patrol. See web site																Car drives through checkpoint, 2 shot																9 arrested entering from Syria																Beirut bomb kills 10, inc Walid Eido																																															
																																																	3 Qaeda held smuggling arms in east Lebanon																Quartet to meet in Cairo June 26																																															
Egypt																																																	Explosives seized in Sinai																																																															
Israel																	EU approves continuing monitoring of Gaza/Egypt crossing																Troops deploy near Lebanon/Syria border																Israeli general resigns after Hezbollah war																Israel offers land for peace to Syria																Perez elected president by Knesset																															
Behind-the-scenes communications with Syria are begun																	Gunmen killed after attack on police in E Jerusalem																Fateh politician arrested for 2002 bombing																IDF destroy Nablus barricades																1 killed in Nablus arrest raid																New Ofek 7 spy satellite launched																															
																																	IDF kill 2 Al Aqsa militants in WB																Militant killed by IDF in Jenin camp																Jewish worshipers desecrate Muslim graves in Nablus																Olmert calls for international force on Gaza/Egypt border																															
																																																	3 Hamas politicians held																Anniversary of 1967 war																Barak wins Labour party poll, sworn in as defense minister																															
WB & Gaza	US permits EU funds to PNA finance minster																Official claims Alan Johnstone alive																Car bomb in Nablus, 2 killed																Hamas chooses own Interior Minister																616 killed in factional fighting since Hamas govt. formed in 2006; 659 killed by Israeli action																IDF kill gunman in Qalqilya																3 Hamas shot at Ramallah mosque															
	Calendar of factional conflict - See web site.																																																																																																															