
ISRAELI-ARAB WARS

Zechariah 12:6 *In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.*

Zechariah 12:3 *And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden them selves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.*

ARAB ISRAELI WAR OF 1948

¹ Against 40 Million

As soon as Israel proclaimed its independence, it was attacked by Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Roughly half a million Jews in Israel were surrounded by over 40 million Arabs who were determined to drive the Jews into the sea.

Between February 24 to July 20, 1949, several unsuccessful Arab invasions of Israel occurred. All Arab forces were defeated. Ceasefire agreements were signed with each Arab state—although no peace agreement or guarantee of peace was included.

More Territory

By this victory at the dawn of its birth, Israel acquired two-thirds more territory than it was granted by UN resolution of November 29, 1947. East Jerusalem however remained under Jordan control.

6-DAY WAR OF 1967

Secret Weapon

Mrs. Golda Meir, former Prime Minister of Israel, said: “We Jews have a secret weapon in our struggle with the Arabs—we have no place to go.”

The Threats

Several weeks before the war of 1967, Egypt issued a postage stamp showing Nasser with a map of Israel in flames at his right hand.

On May 18, 1967, Nasser demanded the withdrawal of UN forces from the Sinai. The UN readily complied. And the Arab nations began massing troops on the borders of Israel. Egypt lined up 80,000 men; Syria 40,000; Jordan 40,000; Saudi Arabia 20,000. Iraq sent 5,000 troops to help Syria.

On May 22nd, Nasser announced that the Gulf of Aqaba would be closed to Israeli shipping. Since Egypt had denied Israel’s use of the Suez Canal, the Port of Elath was Israel’s only port to the Red Sea, and the closing of Aqaba threatened its survival.

Before fighting started, the radio in Cairo announced: “Our people have been waiting 20 years for this battle. Now they will teach Israel the lesson of death!” Nasser went on the radio to say that any war with Israel “will be total, and the objective will be to destroy Israel.” A Syrian army commander predicted Israel’s destruction in 4 days. Israel was hedged in on 3 sides by Arab forces, and outnumbered 20-to-1.

Arming Egypt

According to *Newsweek*, the most important new factor in the start of the 1967 war was “the installation of an estimated 60 new missile sites. All told, the Egyptians now have some 180 Soviet-installed SAM-2 ground-to-air missiles and 240 of the more advanced SAM-3s. Egypt’s air defense has been further bolstered by a Soviet radar system along the Mediterranean coast and by the addition of 50 new MIG-21s, giving Cairo an air force of 450 Soviet jets.

“Beneath this air umbrella, the Russians have armed the 100,000 Egyptian troops along the canal with a vast array of modern weapons. This includes 750 Soviet-built tanks, 350 Czechoslovakian amphibious craft and perhaps as many as 1,000 artillery pieces. (Three dozen of these are the mighty Russian 203-millimeter howitzers, which can lob a 200-pound warhead on to Israel’s Bar Lev line from 18 miles inside Egyptian lines.) There are also reports that the Egyptians have received Russian “Frog” ground-to-ground missiles which can fire 800-pound warheads 30 to 40 miles. And stiffening the Egyptian ranks, there are some 12,000 Russians—half of them operational troops manning SAM-3 sites and the MIG-21s. ...”

The War

When Israeli radar picked up flights of enemy bombers, they launched a preemptive strike simultaneously against Egypt, Jordan and Syria, attacking 25 Arab air bases. When the air war cleared, 400 Arab war planes were gone.

With Israel in control of the air, it was no problem for its army to drive the Egyptians from Sinai and gain control of the Gulf of Aqaba.

Disregarding UN cease-fire orders, Israeli troops went on to within 30 miles of Damascus.

The hardest fighting however took place in Jordan against Jordan’s cracked Arab Legion. On the second day of the war, the Israelis took the Old City of Jerusalem. Then the Jordanians were driven east of the river Jordan, and the Israelis also advanced to the Dead Sea.

The Arabs now called for a ceasefire. Jerusalem, for the first time in nearly 2,600 years, came under Jewish control. In one week’s time, Israel’s land increased from 8,000 to 34,000 square miles, or four times its original territory.

30 Other Nations

While the war was in progress, the Pentagon reported that 30 nations in all were giving military or financial support to the Arab combatants. Soviet advisers were active in both Syria and Egypt, and 30 North Korean pilots were flying in combat in the Egyptian Air Force.

President Nixon on October 19th asked Congress to provide 2.2 billion dollars in emergency military aid for Israel.

Shortest War In History

Between June 5 to 10, 1967, Israel won the “shortest war in history.” All three “confrontation states” of Egypt, Syria and Jordan were defeated. Israeli troops captured over \$1 billion worth of Soviet-supplied armaments. Israeli army seized most of the Sinai Peninsula, the Jordanian sector of Jerusalem and all the West Bank region, plus the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip.

Its war booty are tabulated below:

Ten thousand trucks and other vehicles, some brand-new, straight from Russia; 100 immediately usable Russian T-54 tanks, and perhaps 200 others; hundreds of field guns and more than 70,000 tons of ammunition; a complete missile base with Soviet surface-to-air rockets.

Add to that the supplies and food of seven shattered Egyptian divisions. Add also arms and stores at a half-dozen abandoned military bases. The result is that Israel emerges by far the best armed country in the Mideast, with an arsenal so large it will take months to sort out.

YOM KIPPUR WAR OF 1973

Background

In the Scripture, the Lord provided for His people a day to repent of their sins. This most sacred command is found in Leviticus 23:6–7, “And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord ... In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.”

This was calculated to be yearly, on 10 Tishrei in the Jewish calendar, and called Day of Atonement or “Yom Kippur.” That day happened to be October 6, 1973.

In accord with Scripture, all Israel was virtually closed down. No work was being done, no broadcasting and no newspaper. The people were fasting. Because sacrifice by fire is not possible without a temple, and the temple had been lost since AD 66, the modern Jews afflict their souls by fasting for the full 24-hour period.

And so, Israel was quiet in national prayer, and the people were weakened with hunger by the time of the attack at 2 PM—some 20 hours into the fast period.

The War

On the Jewish Day of Atonement in 1973, Israel was attacked by the combined forces of Egypt and Syria, assisted by armed forces from Iraq, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia—a ratio of 12 to 1.

At first, there were serious setbacks for Israel. But when the Israeli forces were fully mobilized, the enemy forces were driven back. Israel first defeated Syria and then counter-attacked Egypt which had crossed the Suez Canal. In a little more than two weeks, the Israelis were on the march toward both Cairo and Damascus.

In a bold move, Israel armor forces cut between the Egyptian 2nd Army in the north and the 3rd Army in the south of Great Bitter Lake, crossed the Suez, and swept both north and south. By October 22, Israel had seized almost 500 square miles of Egypt west of the canal. The UN ordered a ceasefire.

Ceasefire

When the USSR was observed trying to ship nuclear arms to Alexandria, the United States put its armed forces worldwide on alert and moved units of the 6th Fleet closer to Egypt. Russia also alerted its forces. The world came one step closer to nuclear war.

Under mutual agreement, the UN ceasefire was put into effect. Seven thousand UN troops were placed into a narrow strip of no-man’s land between Egyptian and Israeli forces. Later, the no-man’s land was moved further west in the Sinai peninsula. Israel controlled 6 times more territory that it did in 1948.

The Armaments

The Arab forces outnumbered the Israelis in the field by 12 to 1, and their arsenal for this war was simply unbelievable. The Syrians alone fielded more tanks than are under the command of the whole NATO forces!

Altogether, Russia delivered 15,000 tons of equipment to Egypt and Syria on 934 flights—through Eastern Europe to Cairo or Damascus. The United States delivered 22,400 tons on 566 flights—over a route four times as long.

The Yom Kippur War, although victorious for Israel, was a horror story. Of the 3 million Jews in Israel, she lost 2,500 in 18 days. This would be equivalent to the loss of about one million American soldiers at once.

The Oil Weapon

The Arab nations cut off all oil shipments to the United States and most Western European nations to pressure Israel to withdraw. Their use of the “oil weapon” proved extremely convincing and potent.

After the ceasefire went into effect, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger negotiated for and obtained a peace agreement between the belligerents. The Egyptian-Israeli agreement signed in September 1975 was the first actual peace agreement ever signed between Israel and any Arab state since 1948.

¹Tan, P. L. (1996, c1979). *Encyclopedia of 7700 illustrations : A treasury of illustrations, anecdotes, facts and quotations for pastors, teachers and Christian workers*. Garland TX: Bible Communications