

The War of Independence

Most Arab nations surrounding Israel have been at war with her since 1948, resulting in continual fear and suffering for civilians on both sides. Immediately after David Ben-Gurion had declared the formation of the New Jewish State, it was attacked by six Arab countries, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia, leading to the War of Independence.

By July 1949 an agreement was reached between Israel and the Arabs that had invaded, but the Palestinians who had fled their homes during the war remained in the neighbouring Arab states where they had taken refuge.

In their refuge-camps, mostly in Lebanon and the area of the West Bank of the Jordan, they became the responsibility of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

The Suez War

In the year 1956 Israel fought the Suez War with Egypt. In this occasion, she joined in the Anglo-French operations to occupy the Suez Canal, and at the end they had taken control of much of the Sinai Peninsula. Later, however, Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt in an effort for peace, after the Camp David Accords signed by President Sadat of Egypt and Begin of Israel.

Birth of the PLO

In 1964 the Palestinian Liberation Organization was founded, supposedly with the aim of liberating the lands occupied by Israel and returning them to Arab control. The Palestine National Covenant called for the liberation of Palestine from the Zionist invasion by armed struggle and the elimination of Zionism in Palestine.

From the year 1969, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat, the PLO sponsored guerrilla raids on Israeli military. They were also held responsible for hijacking an aircraft and murdering members of the Israeli Olympic team in the 1972 Munich games, to name but some. But setbacks occurred when Jordan expelled PLO militants in 1970, and when Lebanon pushed them out in 1985.

The Six Day War

In the year 1967 the Six Day War occurred. Apparently, a mutual agreement between Egypt, Lebanon and Syria turned into an invasion on the land of Israel. Yet again, Israel came out the winner in this war, taking large territorial gains in the Sinai from Egypt, much of the West Bank from Jordan, including East Jerusalem, and parts of the Golan Heights from Syria.

And again, at the end of that same year, it was reported Israeli leaders offered to return some of these territories for peace and recognition of statehood by the Arab world. The response at the Khartoum Conference was clear, “No recognition, no peace, no negotiations with Israel.”

The Yom Kipper War

In 1973 Egypt and Syria tried again with the Yom Kipper War and launched an attack on Israel on Yom Kipper – Israel's most holy day, the Day of Atonement – apparently, when they knew much of the Israeli military would be practicing religious duties.

But after heavy fighting, the Israeli Defence Force repelled the invaders, and after the conflict they ended up with much more land gains in the Golan Heights. But as before, in 1979 Israeli Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, and Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat, signed the Israel / Egypt Peace Treaty, which led to the return of Sinai to Egypt.

Israel's War with Lebanon

In 1982, Israel attacked Lebanon to disarm the terrorists who were launching attacks and said to be using the country as a hideout. After a complete victory, Israeli troops withdrew from Lebanon three years later, but did not pull out all the soldiers until May 2000.

However, it soon become obvious that Israel's hope of leaving behind a democratic government was not going to be realized. After the withdrawal from Lebanon in the year 2000, the territory was quickly seized by HEZBOLLAH, Islamic militants who used it as a base for further attacks on Israel, with weapons supplied by Iran and Syria.

The First Palestinian Intifada

In 1987 the First Palestinian uprising broke out in Gaza and other Occupied Territories. This uprising ended in 1993 with the signing of the Oslo Accords, which allowed the creation of a Palestinian Authority, led by Yasser Arafat, and the Palestinians' gradual control over part of the Occupied Territories.

In spite of this concession, suicide bombers from the radical Islamic HAMAS Movement attacked Israel several times from 1993 to 1995, and in November 1995 a Jewish extremist killed the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for giving into the Palestinian leaders.

The Second Palestinian Intifada

As the 1993 Oslo Accords Agreement was being signed, the leaders discussed the City of Jerusalem. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Jerusalem would remain under Israeli sovereignty, while Arafat said that anyone who would relinquish an inch of Jerusalem is not a Muslim. Seven years later the Oslo Agreement broke down over this issue.

Once more, in July 2000, Israeli Prime Minister Barak offered Arafat more concessions, but, again, Arafat refused to compromise over the Palestinian demand for sovereignty over the whole Old City of Jerusalem.

As this would have included the sacred Jewish places, there was no way Barak could accept the proposal. This resulted in the Second Palestinian Uprising and renewed attacks against Israeli military and civilians.

And in another alleged move for peace, in August 2005 Israel handed over the Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority and took down all Jewish settlements in the area. However, in June 2007 HAMAS took over Gaza and increased the missiles fired into Israel to this day!