

The Prophetic Road to Revelation - Part 2

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The Arab-Israeli War

In Part II we will look at the history of the Arab-Israeli military conflict from 1947 to the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

War in the British Mandate of Palestine

Most historical references to the war that commenced on 30 Nov 1947 between the Jews and Arabs in British Mandatory Palestine identify it as a “civil war.” In my view this is an incorrect naming convention. Civil wars occur between members of the same society and ethnic community such as has occurred in the American, French, Russian, and Spanish civil wars. The war of the Jews and Arabs is between two groups of distinct ethnic, societal and religious origins and whose long history has been, and quite literally will be, of Biblical proportions. These key items set this war distinctly apart from most other intra-national conflicts in history.

This first phase of the current Arab-Israel war was essentially a series of combat operations which effectively delineated Jewish and Arab controlled areas within British Mandatory Palestine prior to the termination of the Mandate on May 14 1948. In most areas the offensive operations of the Jewish forces closely matched the artificial lines drawn up by the United Nations partition plan. These artificial boundaries followed the precedent set by the European re-drawing of the borders on former Ottoman territory between Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. “Palestine” has been proven to be no exception.

For all intents and purposes, the six month duration of this war constituted only

the initial phase of the ongoing Arab-Israeli War. The Arab-Israeli War is the Psalm 83 War. The initial 1947-49 phase of this war was the bedrock basis of all future Arab-Israel wars through to the present. It is a war which will not be decisively concluded until the final phase as described by the prophet Asaph is fulfilled in the near future.

Primary Arab Forces 30 Nov 1947 to 14 May 1948

Army of the Jihad (Jaysh al-Jihad al-Muqaddas): This is the private militia of Abd al-Qadr al-Husayni family, and was the size of about normal battalion of 1,000 irregular Transjordanian militiamen. It was established by the Arab High Committee (AHC).

Arab Liberation Army (ALA) (Jaysh al-Inqadh al-Arabi): Was established on 5 February 1948 and was largely a Syrian creation. The ALA originally consisted of approximately 6,100 irregular volunteer troops recruited from Arab League nations via the Arab League Military Committee. Most secular histories state that the purpose behind the establishment of the ALA was as a counter-weight to the AHC's Army of the Jihad. This is pretty much an irrelevancy due to the fact that the military objectives of both Arab armies were to seize territory and preempt the establishment of the State of Israel prior to the termination of the British Mandate.

The creation of this army was the direct result of the neighboring Arab governments consulting with each other and their plotting to ensure that no part of Palestine would become an independent Jewish state. The Syrian Prime Minister in November 1947, Jamil Mardam Bey, wrote of this plotting among the Arab leaders:

“So long as the position of the Kings and Amirs is one of caution and plots, this is the only sound policy.”

How does this square with the opening verses of Psalm 83:

1”Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. 2For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. 3They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. 4They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.”

Obviously, the ultimate policy objective of the Arabs nations has not changed one iota since the day they decided to enter into crafty counsel and consultations among one another.

Nationalities represented in this army were Syrians, Lebanese (including Lebanese Druze and Circassians) Iraqis, Transjordanian Arabs (includes “Palestinian” Arabs), Egyptians and several hundred Bosnian Muslims, Germans, Turks and British army deserters who were recruited to fight on the Arab side.

The organizational command center for this army was located in Damascus, Syria and major organizational offices were located within the Syrian Ministry of Defense. The Commander-In-Chief of the army was Iraqi General Ismail Safwat and his staff was composed of Iraqi, Syrian, Transjordanian and Lebanese military officers.

Finance of this army was borne by Egypt (42%), Syria and Lebanon (23%), Saudi Arabia (20%), and Iraq (15%). This army’s field commander was Fawzi al-Din al-Qawuqji, a former Captain in the army of the Ottoman Empire during WWI, later in the Iraqi Army in the 1930s and then an officer in the Nazi Germany’s

Wehrmacht during WWII.

There was virtually no planning or combat operations coordination between the Arab Liberation Army and the Army of the Jihad. Their total number is reported to have been about 50,000 irregulars throughout this period of warfare.

Primary Jewish Forces

Haganah (The Defense): was founded in 1920. This Jewish irregular paramilitary militia was a successor to the Jewish defense forces known as the Bar-Giora, founded in 1907 (named after the Idumean Simon Bar Giora, ruler of Jerusalem and General of the Jewish revolt against the Romans in 69-70 AD), and the Hashomer founded in 1909 (The Guild of Watchmen). Haganah was succeeded on May 28, 1948 by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) when the provisional government of the nascent Israeli state created the new national army, navy and air force. Its strength on 14 May 1948 was 35,000 troops.

Pamlach (Strike Force): Was founded on 15 May 1941. The Pamlach was essentially three brigades (approximately 15,000 troops) of Jewish regular infantry soldiers of the Haganah, with components of Naval (Palyam), Air Force (Palavir), and Special Operations Commandos (Ha-Machlaka Ha-Germanit and Ha-Machlaka Ha-Aravit).

Intense offensive operations by the Jewish forces in the approximately six weeks from the beginning of April to 14 May 1948 crushed the opposing Arab Liberation Army and al-Muqaddas militia into military insignificance. By October 1948 the ALA had ceased to exist as a coherent fighting force, but remnants remain which continue operations after 14 May. The totality of this defeat became the vacuum, the impetus, for the next phase of the war which involved the regular military forces of all neighboring Arab states as well as some others within the region.

1948: Israel's War of Independence

On 14 May 1948 Israel declared itself into existence gaining almost immediate international recognition. The Israel leadership made their declaration knowing full well that the surrounding Arab nations had mobilized their armies for a full-scale invasion, the military objective of which was to crush the nascent Jewish state and replace it with something the Arab League declared to the U.N. would be a "United State of Palestine."

Tens of thousands of troops of the armed forces from Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iraq immediately invaded Israel. Once again the core of the Psalm 83 nations are present and at war with Israel.

Initially outnumbered the Israeli forces primary mission objective was to hold off the invading Arab armies until they could field a fighting force capable of driving the invaders out. This increase in Israel forces occurred rapidly and their approximately 30,000-strong military had mobilized and doubled in size by July, and had more than tripled by early 1949 and was ultimately twice the size of the Arab armies committed to the war. Complete and total victory by Israeli forces and the securing of Israeli borders was achieved by July 1949.

Subsequent to the war of 1947-1949 a series of short-duration wars have occurred, and include:

- A 100-hour war of 1956 which primarily was a demonstration of modern armored maneuver warfare tactics in the Sinai.
- The Six Day War of 1967 which began with a dogfight over Syria and quickly escalated to full-scale warfare for which Israel was completely mobilized to wage and resulted in another massive defeat over the same

combined “inner circle” Arab enemy nations. Recent information indicates the former-Soviet Union had been deliberately feeding false military intelligence information to its Arab allies in Syria and Egypt. This bogus intelligence likely precipitated this war and only exacerbated the defeat the Arabs suffered. There’s a lesson here for the enemies of Israel to learn, yet consistent with Solomon’s wisdom it will ultimately be forgotten or ignored.

- The Yom Kippur War which began on October 6, 1973, the holiest day in the Jewish year, caught the IDF quite unprepared. Egypt had been threatening war since 1971, but those threats never materialized. Over those years the Arab threats of renewed war just 6 years after their defeat in the Six day War were not taken seriously. Egypt and Syria suddenly attacked with overwhelming military force. In the Sinai 80,000 Egyptian soldiers attacked less than 500 Israeli soldiers across a broad front. On the Golan 1,400 Syrian tanks crashed into less than 200 Israeli tanks and Israel immediately began to yeild territory to the Egyptian and Syrian invaders.

Supporting the Arab effort was a substantial force from Iraq's military: a full-strength infantry division of 18,000 soldiers, hundreds of tanks and MiG fighter-bombers. Saudi' Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Sudan also sent troops, armor, fighter aircraft in support of Egypt and otherwise underwrote or financed the Arab war effort.

Lebanon and Palestinians attacked Israel from Lebanese territory, and the Jordanians supported Syrian operations in the north. For a time it looked as if World War III had begun. The United States was sending in supplies by air and by sea as fast as the IDF could put them into combat; the Soviet Union was doing the same for the Arabs. Thermo-Nuclear war seemed a very real possibility if not the possibility of direct intervention by both

Russian and American troops in the war.

In sum, against a massive Arab military force which was as large as all of NATO forces in Europe at the time, Israel was miraculously able to recover from the initial onslaught, quick halt and then completely reverse the Arab advances, and then go fully into an offensive which took the IDF deep into both Egyptian and Syrian territory, and the entire Egyptian army was surrounded and nearly annihilated by the Israeli's.

The IDF soldiers certainly bore the brunt of combat operations against incredible odds, but there is no question that YHWH God was the source and the true power behind Israeli amazing victory. As with the result of the Six Day War, the same lesson was taught once again.