

A Brief History: Israel and the Israel/Hamas/Hezbollah War

Jews are indigenous to what is now Israel and the West Bank

- “Israel is the very embodiment of Jewish continuity: It is the only nation on earth that inhabits the same land, bears the same name, speaks the same language, and worships the same God that it did 3,000 years ago. You dig the soil and you find pottery from Davidic times, coins from Bar Kokhba, and 2,000-year-old scrolls written in a script remarkably like the one that today advertises ice cream at the corner candy store.”
Charles Krauthammer 1998
- The Jewish presence in Israel has a three-thousand-year-old continuous history. It began in the 2nd millennium BCE when Israelites emerged as an outgrowth of southern Canaanites.
- Biblically: Jews were in Israel prior to the building of the First Temple. The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE
- There has been an unbroken presence of Jews in the Land of Israel since the destruction of Jewish sovereignty and the sack of Jerusalem and destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in the first century C.E. (70 CE)
- The Arch of Titus in Rome was erected as a tribute to the Roman General who led the victorious Romans. It is decorated with Jewish symbols and shows Jewish slaves being brought to Rome.
- The Temple Mount, Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary) is also known as the al-Asqa a Mosque and the Dome of the Rock was built between 637 ce (Al-Asqa) 692 ce (The Dome of the Rock. Both are built on top of the location of the Second Temple, of which only the Western Wall (Kotel) remains.
- The current land of Israel has had many rulers, i.e., but there has always been a Jewish presence (see appendix)

Jews are not “colonial settlers”

- The modern State of Israel was established through indigeneity, the end of colonial British rule, and having been the victor in a war of independence after being attacked by Egypt, Transjordan (Jordan), Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon.
- Following the war, Israel welcomed refugees from Europe, who were barred from entering the British Mandate prior to 1948.
- Less than half of Israeli Jews are white Ashkenazi Jews. 20% of the population is Arab with full citizenship rights, and well over 50% of the Jews are Mizrahi or Sephardic Jews, from MENA (Middle East, North Africa) nations, such as Iran, Iraq, Yemen, India, Pakistan, Ethiopia, and other countries in Central Asia. According to “modern” definitions, more than 60% of Israelis are “non-white, non-European”.
- Israel, like many countries, was “created” and recognized by the WWI and WWII victors and then, in Israel’s case, by the United Nations. The following countries were similarly formed including Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and the Kingdom of the Hejaz (Saudi Arabia) and Yemen. Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar became protectorates (like the British mandate in Palestine) prior to becoming independent countries.
- After WWI, Europe formed the new nations of Yugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia), Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic and Slovakia), Romania and released Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia from Russian hegemony.

“Refugees”

- The majority of Palestinian refugees occurred during and just after the Israeli War of Independence
- Between 300,000 (CIA estimate) and 650,000 (estimating from the Census of 1945, 1947, and 1949) were displaced from or left Israel due to the war.
- While highly debated and politicized around the numbers, many of those who left did so voluntarily, heeding the recommendation of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.

- An estimated 200,000-250,000 Palestinians received Jordanian citizenship. This program ended in 1988. (Australian Country Advice on Jordan – 2010).
- The vast majority of **Jewish refugees** from North Africa and Middle Eastern were either forcibly driven out or were made so uncomfortable that they decided to relocate.
- Following the 1948 war 900,000 Jews left Arab/Muslim countries.
- The population of Jews in Arab nations is now believed to be less than 10,000 in 2023
- Of the 900,000 original refugees, 650,000 relocated and received citizenship in Israel.

Wars

- Israel has been “at war” for its entire existence and its numerous attempts at negotiating a peaceful coexistence have been rejected by the Palestinian leadership
- 1948 - 1967 - Jerusalem split - East Jerusalem under Jordanian control; West Jerusalem under Israel Control. Frequent battles across the border (which was a wall following street routes)
- 1956 Suez Crisis - Egypt tries to nationalize the Suez Canal; Israel invades to stop the action. The US and Russia brokered a ceasefire.
- The 1967 Arab League meeting in Khartoum introduced the “three no’s.”
 - no peace with Israel
 - no recognition of Israel
 - no negotiations with Israel
- The Hamas founding charter includes the following:
 - “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.” (Preamble)
 - “Nothing in nationalism is more significant or deeper than in the case when an enemy should tread Moslem land” (article 12)
 - “The Day of Judgment will not come about until Muslims fight Jews and kill them. Then, the Jews will hide behind rocks and trees, and the rocks and trees will cry out: ‘O Moslem, there is a

Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him.” (Hadith; sayings attributed to Mohammed by not contained in the Quran)

- With the Iranian revolution of 1979 installing a Shiite theocracy in Iran, Israel gained a virulent enemy committed to its destruction.
 - Iran promised to destroy Israel.
 - Iran embarked on the path to develop nuclear weapons.
 - Iran encouraged, funded, and armed terrorists and terrorist attacks.
 - Hezbollah was created by Iran and is Iran’s proxy in Lebanon and has and continues to fire rockets at civilians and civilian infrastructure.
 - Hamas (founded in 1987) is an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood and Intifada uprisings and is committed to the destruction of Israel.
 - Others encouraged and funded by Iran include the Houthis in Yemen and Islamic Jihad, among others.
- Hamas gained power and authority after the election in 2006.
 - Under Ariel Sharon Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005, forcibly removed any Israeli (legal or illegal) infrastructure and turned governing authority over to the Palestinian Authority
 - In the 2006 election, Hamas won with a plurality of 44% and that was the first and only election held in Gaza.
 - Hamas subsequently fought a “war” with Fatah (PLO) and forcibly removed or killed Fatah operatives in Gaza.
 - Hamas has received billions of dollars from the UN, Iran, European Union, and Qatar.
 - Most of that funding has been spent on weaponry, including rockets, and the building of tunnels from Gaza into Israel at the expense of building civilian infrastructure.
 - The leaders of Hamas are reported to be billionaires living in Qatar.
- The October 7 massacre was well planned and likely supported by Qatar to short-circuit the Abraham Accords and Israel-Saudi Arabia relationship building.
- October 7 was the largest loss of Jewish lives since the Holocaust.

- 1200-1300 people were murdered.
- Many burned.
- Many were tortured or mutilated.
- Many women raped (View documentary “Screams Before Silence”)
- 251 Hostages taken as of November 15, 2024;
 - 117 returned to Israel alive
 - 105 through the Nov 2023 ceasefire
 - 8 rescued in summer 2024
 - 4 released by Hamas
 - 37 bodies returned to Israel and bodies of 34 rescued by IDF
 - 101 hostages remain, only 60 believed still alive.
- Israel’s response has as its objective eliminating Hamas’s ability to function and restrain Hezbollah’s desire to support Hamas.
 - 17,000 Hamas and other terrorist operatives killed, including 1,000 inside Israel (Source: IDF, Times of Israel October 7, 2024)
 - 26,000 rockets fired into Israel, most at civilian targets.
 - Civilian-to-Military deaths ratio among the lowest in wartime approaching 1:1 (according to Israel)
 - Using Israel’s estimate of 17,000 Hamas fighters killed and Hamas’ estimate of total deaths at 42,000 would imply a 1:1.5 ratio – while tragic, this indicates that Israel is trying to minimize civilian casualties (in comparison with other wartime experience in the world)
- Aid is getting into Gaza (Source: COGAT: Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories)
 - Aid began in October 2023
 - Since then to November 15, 2024, averaging 141 trucks of aid per day. Over 1.1 million tons of aid
 - Israel pauses military activity when aid is being distributed.
 - Some aid has been hijacked by criminals and/or Hamas
 - Current water resources in Gaza (November 15, 2024)
 - 112 Liters per person per day in northern Gaza

- 39 Liters per person per day in central Gaza
- 24 liters per person per day

Bottom Line: There continues to be an organized effort to refute Israel's right to exist.

- Funded and supported by Iran, Qatar, and others.
- Aimed at accomplishing the “three D’s.”
 - Delegitimizing Israel
 - Demonization of Israel
 - Double Standards applied to Israel.
- The United Nations has been unwilling or unable to curb these activities.
 - In 1975, passed a resolution equating Zionism (the belief that Jews were entitled to a state of their own) with racism. This was later rescinded.
 - Many UNRWA (UN Refugee and Work Agency for Palestine) is dedicated ONLY to Palestine (Gaza and West bank) and many UNRWA employees have been found to be Hamas operatives and some participated in the October 7 Massacre
 - UNRWA runs Gaza schools whose curriculum demonizes Jews and Israelis and teaches hate.
 - From 2015 through 2022, the UN General Assembly (via the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) has passed 141 resolutions condemning Israel – more than twice the number for all other countries.
 - As a whole, the UN General Assembly is hostile to the State of Israel

Since October 7 Massacre, antisemitic incidents have risen globally

- Definition of Antisemitism
 - The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) has a working definition of anti-Semitism. The definition states that “Antisemitism is a certain perception

of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

- The definition ranges from stereotypes about Jews to incitement of violence to Holocaust denial.
- Increased Antisemitic activity worldwide
 - Just recently, a gang (or gangs) in Amsterdam attacked Israeli fans outside the stadium and threatened them in their hotel rooms. This has been compared to the Eastern European attacks on Jewish Communities referred to as “pogroms”
 - World wide, including the United States, there have been acts of violence against people wearing traditional Jewish symbols (Star of David, Kippah headcovering) and there have been significant acts of vandalism and threats of violence against Jewish institutions
 - In the United States, active antisemitic and exclusionary acts are being tolerated when such acts against any other minority group would be illegal and/or condemned
 - In 2023, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) recorded a record high number of antisemitic incidents in the US. Similar, if not higher numbers of antisemitic acts were recorded in Great Britain, Canada, Europe, and Australia.
 - Jews have been denied access to medical associations
 - Jewish authors are deemed “Zionists” and been excluded or disinvited from literary conferences,
 - Jews invited to give speeches on college campus have been disinvited
 - On college campuses, Jews have been subjected to “litmus tests” (of supporting Israel) to determine whether they can serve in student government.
 - At Columbia, the Pro-Hamas movement has called for the dismantling of Hillel - Hillel provides a place of connection

for Jewish college students in over 500 chapters on college campuses in North America.

- Personal: In my adult life, I have never attended a religious service or Jewish themed event where there have not been armed security.
 - This is just plain wrong. This kind of racism is un-American. It must stop.
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- You can help in the battle against antisemitism.
 - Stand up and speak out in the face of antisemitism. Please do not be silent. Our society would not accept racist comments about BPeople of Color, women, Asians, or Native Americans (for example O so do not let antisemitic rhetoric and acts become normalized.
 - Seek out and learn the facts about Israel's fight with Hamas/Hezbollah/Iran.
 - This is about an existential threat to Israel's existence; The effort is antisemitic as the objective is to cause Israel and its Jewish population to cease to exist. This is not a case where white colonialists are oppressing people of color.
 - It is about holding all Jews responsible for a government regardless of what they think about that government.
 - It is denying Jews the right to their homeland.
 - This fight is about more than Israel. It is about a not-so-subtle war on the Western Civilization. Extremist Jihadis seek to destroy liberal (small L) democracy and replace it with a religious autocracy (example: Iran)
 - Every once in a while, reach out to your Jewish friends and colleagues to see how they are doing. Do not underestimate the isolation that many Jews are feeling.
 - Do not let jingoism confuse reality.

- “From the river to the sea” is not a benign concept – it is the calling for the destruction of Israel and the killing of all the Jews.
 - “By any means necessary” is an attempt to justify the murder, torture, rape, and kidnapping of civilians
 - “Globalize the Intifada” means start killing Jews wherever they are regardless of anything other than that they are Jews.
- It has never been completely easy to be Jewish. We are always a minority. But the last year plus has been particularly hard. We could use, and would welcome, some support.
- A few interesting facts:
 - There is only one Jewish state in this world.
 - There are approximately 50 Islamic states.
 - Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Mauritania, and Yemen are governed by Sharia law.
 - Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Algeria, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Somalia, and Brunei are considered Islamic states.
 - Majority Muslim states include Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Northern Cyprus, Nigeria, Senegal, Syria, Lebanon, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan.

Timeline – Land of Israel, Judea, Samaria

- i. The people of Israel (also called the "Jewish People") trace their origin to Abraham, who established the belief that there is only one God, the creator of the universe. Together with Issac (Abraham’s son) and Jacob (Israel) are referred to as the patriarchs of the Israelites. All three

patriarchs lived in the Land of Canaan, which later came to be known as the Land of Israel. They and their wives are buried in the Ma'arat HaMachpela, the Tomb of the Patriarchs, in Hebron (Genesis Chapter 23).

- ii. The descendants of Abraham crystallized into a nation at about 1300 BCE after their Exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses (Moshe in Hebrew). After 40 years in the Sinai desert, Moses led them to the Land of Israel, which is cited in The Bible as the land promised by G-d to the descendants of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 17:8).
- iii. The period from 1000-587 BCE is known as the "Period of the Kings". The most noteworthy kings were King David (1010-970 BCE), who made Jerusalem the Capital of Israel, and his son Solomon (Shlomo, 970-931 BCE), who built the first Temple in Jerusalem .
- iv. In 587 BCE, Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar's army captured Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and exiled the Jews to Babylon (modern day Iraq).
- v. 587 BCE Babylonian Destruction of the first Temple.
- vi. Construction of the second Temple (520-515 BCE). 538-333 BCE Persian Return of the exiled Jews from Babylon
- vii. 333-63 BCE Hellenistic Conquest of the region by the army of Alexander the Great (333 BCE).
- viii. 167 BCE - 37 BCE Hasmoneans (Maccabees)
- ix. 63 BCE-313 CE Roman Empire. The Romans renamed Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina and Judea as Palaestina to obliterate Jewish identification with the Land of Israel (the word Palestine, and the Arabic word Filastin originate from this Latin name).
- xi. 313-636 Byzantine Empire
- xii. 636-1099 Arab Dome of the Rock was built by Caliph Abd el-Malik on the grounds of the destroyed Jewish Temple.
- xiii. 1099-1291 Crusaders The crusaders came from Europe to capture the Holy Land following an appeal by Pope Urban. Later Jewish community in Jerusalem expanded by immigration of Jews from Europe.

- xiv. 1291-1516 Mamluk Dynasty
- xv. 1516-1918 Ottoman Empire
- xvi. 1918 British Mandate
- xvii. 1947 UN Resolution 181. The United Nations Special Commission on Palestine recommended the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. On November 29, 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181 (also known as the Partition Resolution) that would divide Great Britain's former Palestinian mandate into Jewish and Arab states in May 1948 when the British mandate was scheduled to end.
- viii. 1948 – Israel declares Statehood.
- xix. 1948-1949 War of Independence/Arab refusal to adopt UN Resolution
- xx. 1949 Armistice signed creating the Green Line

Wars and other conflicts

Israel has been involved in a number of wars and large-scale military operations, including:

1948 Arab Israeli War (November 1947 – July 1949) – Started as 6 months of civil war between Jewish and Arab militias when the mandate period in Palestine was ending and turned into a regular war after the establishment of Israel and the intervention of several Arab armies. In its conclusion, a set of agreements were signed between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, called the 1949 Armistice Agreements, which established the armistice lines between Israel and its neighbors, also known as the Green Line.

Palestinian Fedayeen insurgency (1950s–1960s) – Palestinian attacks and reprisal operations carried out by the Israel Defense Forces during the 1950s and 1960s. These actions were in response to constant fedayeen incursions during which Arab guerrillas infiltrated from Syria, Egypt, and Jordan into Israel to carry out attacks against Israeli civilians and soldiers. The policy of the reprisal operations was exceptional due to Israel's declared aim of getting a high 'blood cost' among the enemy side which was believed to be necessary in order to deter them from committing future attacks.

Suez Crisis (October 1956) – A military attack on Egypt by Britain, France, and Israel, beginning on 29 October 1956, with the intention to occupy the Sinai Peninsula and to take over the Suez Canal. The attack followed Egypt's decision of 26 July 1956 to nationalize the Suez Canal after the withdrawal of an offer by Britain and the United States to fund the building of the Aswan Dam. Although the Israeli invasion of the Sinai was successful, the United States and USSR forced it to retreat. Even so, Israel managed to re-open the Straits of Tiran and pacified its southern border.

Six-Day War (June 1967) – Fought between Israel and Arab neighbors Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The nations of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Algeria, and others also contributed troops and arms to the Arab forces. Following the war, the territory held by Israel expanded significantly ("The Purple Line") : The West Bank (including East Jerusalem) from Jordan, Golan Heights from Syria, Sinai and Gaza from Egypt.

War of Attrition (1967–1970) – A limited war fought between the Israeli military and forces of the Egyptian Republic, the USSR, Jordan, Syria, and the Palestine Liberation Organization from 1967 to 1970. It was initiated by the Egyptians as a way of recapturing the Sinai from the Israelis, who had been in control of the territory since the mid-1967 Six-Day War. The hostilities ended with a ceasefire signed between the countries in 1970 with frontiers remaining in the same place as when the war began.

Yom Kippur War (October 1973) – Fought from 6 to 26 October 1973 by a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria against Israel as a way of recapturing part of the territories which they lost to the Israelis back in the Six-Day War. The war began with a surprise joint attack by Egypt and Syria on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur. Egypt and Syria crossed the cease-fire lines in the Sinai and Golan Heights, respectively. Eventually Arab forces were defeated by Israel and there were no significant territorial changes.

Palestinian insurgency in South Lebanon (1971–1982) – The PLO relocated to South Lebanon from Jordan, staged attacks on the Galilee, and used South Lebanon as a base for international operations. In 1978, Israel launched Operation Litani – the first Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which was carried out by the Israel Defense Forces in order to expel PLO forces from the territory. Continuing ground and rocket attacks, and Israeli retaliations, eventually escalated into the 1982 War.

1982 Lebanon War (1982) – Began on 6 June 1982, when the Israel Defense Forces invaded southern Lebanon to expel the PLO from the territory. The Government of Israel ordered the invasion as a response to the assassination attempt against Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom, Shlomo Argov, by the Abu Nidal Organization and due to the constant terror attacks on northern Israel made by the Palestinian guerrilla organizations which resided in Lebanon. The war resulted in the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon and created an Israeli Security Zone in southern Lebanon.

South Lebanon conflict (1982–2000) – Nearly 18 years of warfare between the Israel Defense Forces and its Lebanese Christian proxy militias against Lebanese Muslim guerrilla, led by Iranian-backed Hezbollah, within what was defined by Israelis as the "Security Zone" in South Lebanon.

First Intifada (1987–1993) – First large-scale Palestinian uprising against Israel in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Second Intifada (2000–2005) – Second Palestinian uprising, a period of intensified violence, which began in late September 2000.

Israel–Hezbollah War (2006) – Began as a military operation in response to the abduction of two Israeli reserve soldiers by Hezbollah. The operation gradually strengthened, to become a wider confrontation. The principal participants were Hezbollah paramilitary forces and the Israeli military. The conflict started on 12 July 2006 and continued until a United Nations-brokered ceasefire went into effect on 14 August 2006, though it formally ended on 8 September 2006, when Israel lifted its naval blockade of Lebanon. The war resulted in a stalemate.

First Gaza War or Operation Cast Lead (December 2008 – January 2009) – Three-week armed conflict between Israel and Hamas during the winter of 2008–2009. In an escalation of the ongoing Israeli Palestinian conflict, Israel responded to ongoing rocket fire from the Gaza Strip with military force in an action titled "Operation Cast Lead". Israel opened the attack with a surprise airstrike on 27 December 2008. Israel's stated aim was to stop such rocket fire from and the import of arms into Gaza. Israeli forces attacked military and civilian targets, police stations, and government buildings in the opening assault. Israel declared an end to the conflict on 18 January and completed its withdrawal on 21 January 2009.

2012 Gaza War or Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012) – Military offensive on the Gaza Strip.[1]

2014 Gaza War or Operation Protective Edge (July–August 2014) – Military offensive on the Gaza Strip as a response to the collapse of American-sponsored peace talks, attempts by rival Palestinian factions to form a coalition government, the kidnapping and murder of three Israeli teenagers, the subsequent kidnapping and murder of a Palestinian teenager, and increased rocket attacks on Israel by Hamas militants.[2]

Syrian Civil War and the Iran–Israel conflict during the Syrian civil war.

2021 Israel–Palestine crisis or Operation Guardian of the Walls (May 2021) – Riots between Jews and Arabs in Israeli cities. Hamas fired rockets into Israel, with Iron Dome intercepting the most dangerous projectiles. Israel began airstrikes in Gaza.

Israel–Hamas war or Operation Iron Swords (October 2023–present) – After a Palestinian incursion from the Gaza Strip into Southern Israel on 7 October 2023, Israel responded with a devastating bombing campaign and invaded the Strip. The war has created a humanitarian crisis in the Strip, including an ongoing famine.

2024 Israel–Hezbollah war or Operation Northern Arrows (September 2024–present)