

THE PROPHECY AND HISTORY OF ISRAEL

Ok ladies we will pick it up with a review from the last time we met.

We were discussing the Six-Day War of 1967 in comparison to the 1973 Day of Atonement War.

- In the six Day War, Israel took the Arabs by surprise and won an overwhelming victory.
- Now, inexplicably, the Arabs had surprised Israel.
- Syria and Egypt launched attacks from the north and south.
- Contributing to the new offensive against Israel were nine countries that included four non-Arab Middle Eastern States.
- Israel knew eventually there would be more war for them but they did not expect it so soon.
- The Arabs had covered their movements as routine military training maneuvers, while in fact Arab troops were poised to stream into the Promised Land from both the north and the south.
- An armada of tanks and hundreds of aircraft were set to challenge Israeli armor and air strength.
- The massive assault was launched simultaneously on the Golan Heights and along the Suez Canal.
- When the Israelis realized they were in a major struggle, they asked, “How could such momentous preparations have been made by the enemy with out sending up red flags everywhere?!”
- A number of explanations have been advanced. Starting with: *(end of review)*
 - GOLDA’S CHOICE
- Golda Meir and the political leadership were fully aware the Arabs were gearing up for an attack at some date in the future.
- They were faced with whether and when to employ a first strike offensive of the type unleashed in the Six Day War.
- Israel’s preemptive strike in 1967 had been responsible for the astounding military success in *that* brief but decisive struggle.
- However, with the first strike came the adverse flood of world opinion, accusing Israel of being a land grabbing warmonger.
- In 1967 Israel decided it has to strike first because it had almost no other options available.
- Its major population centers had been threatened with almost immediate attack by adversaries in the Gaza Strip, Syrians perched on the Golan Heights and enemies positioned within minutes of the country’s heartland.
- The Six Day War had altered this precarious position.
- The entire Sanai lay open as a base of defensive maneuver between Israel and Egypt.
- To the North, the Syrians could be engaged farther away from the Israeli settlements in the valley of Jezreel.

- The Israelis had managed to stretch the warning time of invading Egyptian air attacks from four minutes to sixteen.
- All these considerations weighed heavily on Israel's attitude toward its ability to react when the Arabs decided to take up the fight again.
- Consequently, the government decided to let the enemy deliver the first blow.
- Israel would rely on its counter-attack capability to deal with the situation.
- Thus, the world would see clearly who was attacking whom.
- Even when it became clear that war was brewing, Israel resisted the temptation to launch a pre-emptive strike.
- The Israeli war cabinet was urged to authorize a deterrent strike on the morning of October 6. The request was denied.
- Later that morning Prime Minister Golda Meir met with the U.S. Ambassador and relayed her intelligence information, which indicated an attack was inevitable, then added, *"Our decision is, Israel will not open fire. Moreover, Israel is not mobilizing fully, to prevent such an act as being interpreted as provocation."* In other words, Israel is going out of their way to show the world they are not the aggressors here. It seems the world always wants to blame Israel for the trouble no matter who or how it starts. It's always Israel's fault. But *this* time the decision would prove a costly one.

- OVERCONFIDENCE

- The stunning victories of the Six Day War became like a tranquilizing opiate to Israel.
- When a high-ranking military officer was asked what lessons they learned from the Six Day War? Replied, *"We didn't learn anything from our victory but the Arabs did."*
- While Israeli Military commanders felt confident their tanks and planes could handle any future intrusion, their enemies were developing deterrents to both those weapons, under Russia's tutelage.
- A carefully constructed umbrella of surface-to-air missiles (SAM's) diffused the Israeli air force in the opening phases of the war.
- The Egyptians staged their first assault under the protection of their missile canopy.
- The success of this strategy was so effective that 114 Israeli aircraft were destroyed but only four were lost to aerial combat; the rest fell to missiles and anti-aircraft.
- The anti-tank missiles were carried in boxes like suitcases.
- Very portable and very deadly. *You can thank the Russian's I'm sure.*
- They had an effective range of one mile. These fearful devices, coupled with tidal assaults by tanks, produced enormous problems for Israel's armored units.
- According to reports, every Israeli tank on the Syrian front was hit at one time or another.
- Along the Suez Canal a series of fortifications were strung along 110 miles. These fortifications were manned at all times. But in their over confidence they didn't put enough troops in place and the whole stretch was vulnerable.
- Egyptians charged through the undefended openings, bypassing the undermanned fortifications altogether.

- The biggest factor that reveals Israel's unrealistic appraisal of the situation was its persistent failure to act decisively on the intelligence information that had projected ominous Arab intentions.
- At no time before the beginning of the war did, they link the Syrian build up in the north with the unusual Egyptian activity in the south.
- It was as if the assumption that the Arab armies could not or would not go to war caused a complete backout.

- MISINFORMATION MANEUVERS

- Prior to the Yom Kippur War, the Egyptians had successfully laid the same trap for Israel that the Israelis had sprung on them in the June war of 1967.
- For years the Egyptians had labored to lull the Israelis into a state that would allow them to set the stage for a surprise attack.
- Taking a cue from, *our good buddies, (sarcasm here)* the Russians, they launched a campaign of mis-information.
- They leaked press reports that told of their own weaknesses and unpreparedness.
- Expert sources reported low morale, waste, corruption and contention among the troops.
- Such reports, disclosed over an extended period of time, slowly sedated the enemy.
- Reports were filtered through various press sources around the world and were believed.
- Our own country did the same thing in WWII. Once we broke the enemy's codes, we sent them on wild goose chases every chance we got. That is why Normandy Beach was nearly empty of enemy troops when we landed, because the military had been leaking information about a different landing site for months.
- For three years the Egyptians drilled soldiers on canal-crossing procedures and when the opening day of the war came, they crossed perfectly, just like the Israelis had watched them do many times.
- In the spring and again in Sept. of 1973 the Egyptians held large scale maneuvers to which Israel was forced to respond by placing armed forces on alert.
- When the attacks never materialized, the Israelis became weary of mobilizing their troops unnecessarily every time the Arabs conducted training exercises.
- The enemy rightly concluded that the Israelis would be reluctant to call up their soldiers immediately prior to political elections because they would want to promote a sense of security.
- Furthermore, in October Israel would be observing its high holy days. So, officials would hesitate to disrupt the observance without certain cause to do so.
- As the fateful hour of the invasion approached, the Arabs watched and waited as Israel swallowed the bait.
- In the final analysis, no one can truly explain why Israel was surprised. It does seem there was an inexplicable, partial blindness that, when lifted after Israel's final recovery and subsequent victory-would give way to a vision with solemn dimensions.

- DEATH AT THE WATER LINE

- The fury of war pounced suddenly on Israel from both Syrian and Egyptian fronts.

- Along the Suez Canal 2,000 Arab guns spewed 3,000 tons of devastation on Israeli fortifications in the first 53 minutes of battle.
- It is estimated that in the first 60 seconds of the bombardment, 10,500 shells pounded Jewish positions.
- At the same time 70,000 troops prepared to storm the Sinai while thousands of tanks were revving their engines.
- Giant Egyptian water cannons systematically carved gaps in the 130-foot ramparts (*like a wall*) the Egyptians had constructed to hide the preparations from Israeli eyes.
- Within minutes, pontoon bridges and assault boats were in the water; and soon Egyptian Infantry and armor were pouring across the Canal Moshe Dayan had once called the best anti-tank ditch in the world.
- The Israelis were outnumbered 18 to 1. Within 24 hours, 5 Egyptian infantry and armor divisions would be in position three miles east of the Canal.
- 240 Egyptian planes flew overhead.
- The young Israelis manning the fortifications fought with the tenacity and raw courage that has so distinguished the soldiers of modern Israel.
- In spite of their valiant effort they were so badly outnumbered the only hope for them was a Herculean effort to rescue those besieged in the fortifications. Only one of 33 strongholds managed to survive. Most of the men manning those fortifications died defending their posts.
- The massive Egyptian invasion did not allow for much preparation or organization. Chaos ensued-troop and supply movements were a logistic nightmare.
- The Egyptian Army was tenacious, disciplined and well led. At the end of the first day of battle 500 were dead and 1,000 wounded. Scores were taken prisoner.
- In the Six Day War only 850 fell in the entire event.
- Here is a quote from the Book. *In less than 24 hours, Israel was transformed from a military power, even in global concepts; from a state with an army the fame of which had become a model to the world; from a country which-six short years ago-had won the most brilliant victory in the history of modern warfare; from a state with, according to her leader's declarations, "an army that had never been in a better state"-to a country fighting with clenched teeth for its very existence a country living under the shadow of extermination.*
- By October 9, Egyptian forces had reached the destination of their drive into the Sinai. There "High Water mark as it were." You know how after a flood has gone down you can see how far up the wall the damage is by the high-water mark. Well the Egyptians had made it as far into the heart of Israel as they could get.
- But by then, Israel had awakened; was fully deployed and prepared.
- On October 10th the Israelis decided to cross the Canal and on Sunday Oct 14, the Egyptians launched an attack that set-in motion one of the largest tank battles in the history of warfare.
- Some 2,000 Egyptian tanks engaged along the length of the front. They struck in orderly fashion, which allowed the Israelis, with their superior range weapons, to wreak havoc

on them. By the end of this skirmish 264 Egyptian tanks lay smoldering in the desert while only six Israeli tanks were knocked out. The tide was turning.

- In the late hours of October 16, Israeli paratroopers stood in the moonlight looking down on the waters of the Suez Canal. Ten days after Egypt had started the war, Israel was ready to launch an invasion of its own.
- The Israelis destroyed missile installations, which gave Israel air forces control over the skies.
- By October 29, Jewish troops were threatening to enter Cairo, and holding over 6,000 square miles of Egyptian territory.
- It was now clearly time for the Russians and the United Nations to save Egypt once more.

- IN THE VALE OF TEARS

- The book goes into great detail describing the events of the war. Of the tremendous advantage the enemy had over them coupled with the element of surprise it had taken Israel some time to get their act together.
- Syrian tanks rumbles towards the Golan Heights. Israel must defend this mountainous region at all costs. The land area of the Golan Heights totals some 480 square miles. Its elevation runs from 600 ft in the south to 4,000 ft in the north.
- Israel considers it imperative that it possess the area overlooking the Galilee in order to protect the Israeli villages below.
- Back in 1967, the Syrians were shelling farmers in the field from up in those hills. So, rather than cover the whole of the Yom Kippur War I chose one incident to share. Acts of individual heroism abounded. Some of you will remember the same Zvi from The Friends of Israel gospel ministry. He has gone home to be with the Lord now but this was him as a young man. *Among the most conspicuous were the exploits of a young Israeli, Zvi "Zvika" Greengold. The freckled-faced, blond lieutenant made his home on a Kibbutz in western Galilee. He was on leave when news of the fighting reached him. Hitchhiking north. He arrived at the command headquarters and asked for a command. The request was granted, and he was given four tanks. Three of which had to be repaired before they were fit for action. His group was named Zvika force and was sent in the fray. Over the next 30 hours Zvika Force would wreak havoc on the enemy. When the other tanks in his command were destroyed, he fought alone, engaging one of the main thrusts of the Syrian advance. Opposing forces outnumbered him 50 to 1. Through the night he darted in and out among the hills to destroy enemy tanks and them quickly melted into the night. At one point, Zvi's tank was hit and set on fire. Zvi flung himself to the ground, wounded and suffering burns on his face and arms. Recovering from the initial shock of his wounds, he commandeered a passing tank and, scrambling into the hatch, continued his war. When he finally dragged his battered body from the tank, he muttered an apology to his superior officer. "I can't anymore," he said. Zvi Greengold, son of Holocaust survivors, had single-handedly destroyed 60 Syrian tanks.*
- Story after story can be relayed showing the heroism of the Jewish soldiers. They were not just fighting for freedom; they were fighting for the right to exist!
- These enemies wanted them dead, gone, erased from history and from memory.

- And so, the battles, one after the other continued until the battle-drained Jewish warriors saw the columns of dust rising from the tracks of the retreating Syrians. Hundreds of men breathed their last in the graveyard of the Golan Heights.
- By wars end, the Israelis had successfully defended themselves from an attack by Jordanian and Iraqi forces and had enlarged the land they controlled on the Heights.
- So, Israel managed to hand onto the Golan Heights. When the tally was taken, it became obvious that Israel, north and south, had forged a remarkable victory. It was a triumph, however, that no one felt like celebrating.
- Their over confidence had cost them dearly.

- THE AFTERMATH

- Jewish people the world over went into mourning over the loss of lives in this latest attempt for a nation to survive.
- In spite of the victory the cost was astonishing. The Syrians, Egyptians, Iraqi's and Jordanians lost some 18,000 men. More than 2500 Israelis were killed in the fighting.
- The period following the war was a time of depression over the entire nation of Israel. Questions began to arise over the commitment of Israel's allies abroad-particularly those in Europe who had offered Israel no help.
- The mood in late 1975 was articulated by one Jewish woman who said in effect, that *we (the Jews) are only now beginning to realize that we actually won the Yom Kippur War, that it was a victory rather than a defeat.*
- Those were the days when the words of the prophet Jeremiah forced their way once again in the minds of the Jewish people. Lam 1:12 *it is nothing to you, all you who pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.*
- As Israel gathered the bodies of its young after a war its enemies callously began on the highest of Jewish Holy days, the full measure of the nation's frustration, fear, and anger burst from people's hearts.
- Depression, suspicion, and economic hardship became the lingering legacies of the Yom Kippur War, which produced three distinct results.
- **Uncertainty** – Overconfidence – not so sure of themselves
- **Futility**- Every new fight, even those they won, only presaged more battles ahead
- **Isolation**- Israel settled into the awareness of being slowly isolated, surrounded by hostile neighbors. Only the United States appreciated the significance of Israel's struggle.
- The sight of European nations cowering before Soviet blustering and Arab oil Sheiks caused justifiable concern to Israel.
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