Yom Kippur War

The Yom Kippur War was fought between Israel and the Arab states of Egypt and Syria. It took place between October 6th and October 25th in 1973 with the first attack (התקפה) taking place on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur.

The Leaders

The Prime Minister of Israel was Golda Meir. Other Israeli leaders at the time included Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan and General David Elazar. The President of Egypt was Anwar Sadat and the President of Syria

What Other Countries Were Involved

The United States was on the side of Israel. They helped to supply Israel with weapons (נשק) and put pressure on the attacking states to stop fighting. Egypt and Syria were supported directly with soldiers from Iraq and Jordan. They were also supported by the Soviet Union and other Arab states including Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. In response to the US support for Israel, the Arab oil states (מדינות הנפט) stopped sending oil (נפט) to the United States.

How the War Began

The Egyptians and the Syrians started the attack on Yom Kippur. They thought that the Israeli Army would be less alert (ערני) on their holy day. The initial (ראשוני) attack worked very well. The Egyptians crossed the Suez Canal and took control of the Sinai. At the same time the Syrians attacked in the north and took control of the Golan Heights.

Israel Hits Back

A few days after the initial attack, the Israelis counterattacked (ערכה התקפת-בגד). They quickly took back the Golan Heights and the Sinai. They continued to push back both the Egyptians and the Syrians. Soon the Israeli Army was only 56 kilometers from Damascus, the capital of Syria, and only 105 kilometers from Cairo, the capital of Egypt.

How it Ended

On October 22, the United Nations negotiated a cease-fire (תיווך לחתימה של הפסקת אש), however, the fighting soon broke out again (פרץ שוב). Soon Israel had the Egyptian Army nearly surrounded (מוקף, מכותר). As the war continued, tensions (מתחים) between the United States and the Soviet Union increased. Many people felt the world was very close to World War III. On October 25, 1973 another cease fire was negotiated. This time, it was successful and the war came to an end.

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Yom Kippur War - Quiz

1) What two countries attacked Israel in the Yom Kippur War?

a) Soviet Union and Iraq
b) Egypt and Syria
c) Lebanon and Syria
d) Egypt and Sudan
e) Iran and Iraq

2) Who was Anwar Sadat?

a) The leader of Syria
b) The President of Saudi Arabia
c) The Prime Minister of Israel
d) The President of Egypt
e) The King of Sudan

3) What two major superpowers (מעצמות) were on opposite sides (צדדים יריבים) in the Yom Kippur War?

a) Great Britain and France
b) Germany and Austria
c) China and Japan
d) India and Pakistan
e) Soviet Union and United States

4) What area of land (שטח ארץ) did the Egyptians take over at the start of the war?

a) Sinai Peninsula
b) West Bank
c) Jerusalem
d) Gaza Strip
e) Golan Heights

5) Who was the Prime Minister of Israel at the time of the Yom Kippur war?

a) Golda Meir
b) David Ben-Gurion
c) Menachem Begin
d) Shimon Peres
e) Ariel Sharon

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6) What did the Israelis do after the initial attack?

a) They retreated (נסוגו) far within their borders hoping the attacks would stop
b) They asked the United Nations for help
c) They counterattacked pushing back the Egyptians and the Syrians
d) They used nuclear weapons to get the attacks to stop
e) None of the above

7) What year did the Yom Kippur war take place?

a) 1950
b) 1963
c) 1967
d) 1973
e) 1982

8) The Arab states did not mind that the United States assisted Israel during the war. TRUE / FALSE

9) What area of land did the Syrians take control of when they first attacked Israel?

a) Jerusalem
b) Sinai Peninsula
c) Gaza Strip
d) West Bank
e) Golan Heights

10) What is Yom Kippur?

a) A city in Egypt
b) A Jewish holy day
c) A river in Israel
d) A Syrian leader
e) It means “holy war” in Hebrew

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