

Life and Times of Ariel Sharon:

A Biographical Timeline

Feb. 27, 1928: Born in Kfar Malal, a Jewish-owned agricultural community (or moshav) north of Tel Aviv where his parents, Samuel and Vera Scheinerman, settled after fleeing the Red Army in Russia.

Aug. 23-26, 1929: Arab anti-Jewish violence erupts across British Mandate Palestine. Rioters destroy several Jewish communities, but unlike in 1921, when Kfar Malal was razed by Arabs, Sharon's moshav survives.

1942: Joins the Haganah, a militia formed to defend Jewish villages against Arab attacks.

1947-49: After the United Nations votes to partition Palestine into two states (one Arab and one Jewish), Arabs renew anti-Jewish attacks; Sharon joins Israeli army.

May 1948: Takes part in battle for Latrun to break the siege of Jerusalem during Israel's War of Independence and is seriously wounded.

1953: Father of Counter-Terrorism. Heads Commando Unit 101, formed after repeated Arab infiltrations kill hundreds of Israelis. The unit specializes in counter-terror strikes behind enemy lines. Sharon invents many counter-terror methods still in use today.



Sharon plans with his commandos in 1954

October 1953: Two Arabs infiltrate Israel from Jordanian-occupied West Bank town of Kibya, murdering a woman and her two young children. In retaliation, Sharon's Unit 101 raids the town and destroys 42 houses. Although Sharon says the demolished houses appeared to have been evacuated, Jordan reports sixty-nine civilians killed in the operation.

1956: As raids against Israel from the West Bank and Gaza Strip continue, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal and blockades the Straits of Tiran to Israeli ships. This prompts a British-French-Israeli invasion of the Sinai peninsula. Sharon is criticized for disobeying orders while taking part in the invasion.

1962: Wife Margalit dies in car accident.

1967: Egypt's Nasser again blockades the Straits of Tiran, expels UN peace-keeping troops from the Sinai Peninsula and masses troops on Egypt's border with Israel. From Golan Heights, Syria bombards Israeli settlements with mortars. Israel reacts on June 5 with a pre-emptive attack against Egypt. Sharon, in command of an armored division, is pivotal in Israel's success on the Egyptian front.

October 1967: Eleven-year-old son Gur dies, accidentally shot by a friend playing with an antique rifle.



Sharon and his sons, 1967

1971: Sharon is given assignment to fight terror emanating from the Gaza Strip. Arab attacks go from 34 in June to one in December.

1973: Retires from military and helps found Likud, a new coalition of political parties. He rejoins military and is instrumental in repulsing the Egyptian-Syrian surprise attack. After the war, Sharon is elected to the Israeli Knesset.

December 1974: Resigns from Knesset

June 1975 - Feb. 1976: Serves as advisor to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

1976-1977: Forms new political party, Shlomtzion. Shlomtzion wins two Knesset seats, and merges with Menachem Begin's Likud.

1977-81: Sharon serves as Minister of Agriculture. Spurred by security and ideological considerations, he expands Israeli settlement in the West Bank.

1981-83: Serves as Defense Minister. During his term, he oversees the evacuation of Israeli settlements in the Sinai, which Israel turns over to Egypt as part of peace treaty.

1982: Oversees Israeli invasion of Lebanon, where the PLO has a multi-thousand-man army, in an attempt to halt terror attacks and to rid Beirut of Syrian troops. After Palestinian terrorists shoot and wound Israeli ambassador to Britain Shlomo Argov in June, Israel launches "Operation Peace for the Galilee" and invades Lebanon. The PLO retreats from Lebanon, and Syrian troops evacuate Beirut.



Sharon in Kfar Malal, 1941



May 1981: Sharon meets with Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat, with whom Israel negotiated peace.

August 1982: Bashir Gemayel, a Lebanese Christian, is elected president of Lebanon, but is assassinated before taking power.

September 1982: Israel assigns its ally, the Lebanese Christian Phalangist militia, the mission of rooting out remaining terrorist cells in two Palestinian refugee camps, Sabra and Shatila. Phalangists kill not just terrorists, but civilians as well.

Feb. 8, 1983: Israeli investigation into events at Sabra and Shatila, the Kahan commission report, finds that “absolutely no direct responsibility devolves upon Israel or upon those who acted in its behalf,” but says Israel is indirectly responsible because it did not consider the danger posed by the Phalangists and did not restrain them after hearing reports about a massacre. The commission concludes that Sharon had “disregarded the danger of acts of vengeance and bloodshed by the Phalangists against the population of the refugee camps” and failed to order “appropriate measures” to prevent or reduce the danger. Sharon resigns as Defense Minister on February 14.

Feb. 21, 1983: Time magazine claims a secret “Appendix B” to the Kahan commission report details a discussion between Sharon and the Gemayel family during which Sharon “discussed with the Gemayels the need for Phalangists to take revenge for the assassination of Bashir” Gemayel. Sharon denies the claim and files a libel suit against Time.

Jan. 14, 1986: A U.S. court finds that Time defamed Sharon with false information in the February 1983 article.

1990-92: Appointed Minister of Housing and Construction. Heads program to absorb thousands of Russian immigrants.

1996: Appointed National Infrastructure minister

1997: Appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs.

October 1998: Participates in negotiations with Palestinian Authority at Wye Mills, MD. Under “Wye Accords” agreement, Israel agrees to redeploy from 13 percent of “Area C” in the West Bank, and Palestinians agree to prevent terrorism, collect illegal weapons, outlaw terrorist organizations, and end incitement.

September 1999: Elected chairman of Likud party.

Aug. 3, 2000: Palestinian Media Watch raises concerns about “eve of war atmosphere” generated by official Palestinian media outlets.

Sept. 18, 2000: Israel radio reports Palestinian Authority releasing prisoners, including terrorists, for extended furloughs.

Sept. 27, 2000: Bomb explodes near Israeli convoy in Gaza Strip, killing one soldier. The following day, an Israeli patrol is ambushed.

Sept. 28, 2000: Sharon visits the Temple Mount, the most sacred site of Judaism. He does not enter any Islamic mosques. After he leaves, Palestinian stone-throwers attack Israeli police. Later in the day, Palestinian rioters clash with Israeli troops in Jerusalem and Ramallah.

Sept. 29, 2000: A Palestinian on joint patrol with an Israeli soldier in the West Bank kills the soldier. Palestinians in Jerusalem’s old city attack Jewish worshipers at Western Wall and Israeli police.

Feb. 6, 2001: Elected Prime Minister.

May 4, 2001: International commission set up to investigate cause of violence releases “Michell Report,” which concludes that “the Sharon visit did not cause the ‘Al-Aqsa Intifada.’”

March 27, 2002: A terrorist attack on a Passover Seder in Netanya kills 30, including elderly Holocaust survivors. Terrorist fatalities rose to 452 in 2002 with the number of injured reaching 2,309.

March 28, 2002: Sharon launches Operation Defensive Shield to root out terrorist bases in the West Bank.

June 16, 2002: Israel begins building security fence, since credited with helping to reduce sharply the number of terrorist attacks.

April 2003: The U.S., E.U., Russia and the U.N. propose a road map to achieve Israeli-Palestinian peace. In May, Sharon’s government accepts the road map with 14 conditions

Feb. 20, 2005: Route of security fence altered in wake of Israel Supreme Court ruling.

Aug. 14-Sept. 12, 2005: Sharon achieves disengagement from Gaza. Israeli settlers and troops evacuate Gaza Strip and four settlements in West Bank.

Nov. 21, 2005: Establishes centrist Kadima party after quitting Likud. In the weeks that follow, politicians from across the political spectrum join Kadima, and polls predict the party will win in upcoming elections.

Dec. 18, 2005: Suffers mild stroke, returns to work few days later.

Jan. 4, 2005: Suffers massive stroke.



Sharon visits the temple Mount, Judaism’s holiest site



Sep. 2005: Sharon addresses the United Nations, reiterating Israel’s desire for peace

Produced by StandWithUs.

Data compiled by CAMERA - Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America