This is the story of a tragic confrontation between two national movements contesting the same small piece of land, a clash that has become one of the most intractable issues in modern times. From the establishment of the first Zionist colonies in the 1880s, tensions have run high between the indigenous Arab population of Palestine and Jews who have sought to create an independent state on land they consider their ancient home. Clashes, both internal and external, have become increasingly violent. Since the first full-scale Palestinian Revolt in 1936, relations have, except for a few brief periods of peace, been characterized by continuous and escalating degrees of bloodshed. Twelve major clashes can be identified from that first three-year struggle to the current Intifada al Aqsa. Here, 12 Israeli historians and writers present reflections on the incidents, along with up-to-date analysis and historical assessment.

After a detailed introduction designed to help readers place the conflicts into a historical context, experts discuss events ranging from the first organized revolt to the current conflagration. As a result of the initial weakness of the Palestinians and the defeats they suffered at the hands of the better-organized Israelis, the entire Arab world stepped into the breach. Wars between May 1948 and October 1973 involved Arab regular armies, but the Palestinian comeback began in 1965, as a result of guerrilla insurgency. It gathered momentum with the popular uprising of the first Intifada (1987-1990) and more so with the start of the second and more lethal Intifada in 2000. The situation is, these experts argue, not without hope of a resolution, but an end to the violence is unlikely to come easily or quickly.