

Reflections from Rabbi . . .

Our friends and family in Israel are under attack. I hear from friends in Israel what it is like to walk the streets today or how they have changed their approach to many of their daily routines. It pains me to hear them discuss how they describe to their children what is taking place, and why they cannot go outside on their own, or why they need to practice running for safety. The terrorism they face now is different than anything else in the past. Just as they have done in the past, I am confident that Israelis will figure out how to deal with this round of terrorism.

I wish I could be as optimistic about the news media, but the recent round of Palestinian terrorism has once again been followed by very biased and inappropriate journalism. Many of the facts in the media are being manipulated and distorted. There are news sources which are blaming Israelis for the spike in attacks. Too often the reporting is inaccurate. It is very worrisome to read the newspaper or watch the nightly news. For too many people around the world, what they view or read is their understanding of Israel. We must ensure that people know the truth about Israel.

How do we respond to these articles? Do we write the editor? Do we post it on social media and tell our friends the inaccuracies of the articles? While these are important steps, one of the most important things we can do is equip ourselves with as much knowledge of Israel

and the Middle East as possible. When we are informed, we are able to share that knowledge with others. It is up to each and every one of us to inform ourselves and teach others. We cannot allow the media to continue to spread news stories that are not based in fact. We must prepare ourselves with the tools and resources to speak about Israel in an informed and effective manner.

Anshai Torah is fortunate to welcome Dr. Kenneth Stein, one of the foremost experts of Israel and the Middle East, to our congregation on December 4-5. Dr. Stein will speak throughout our Shabbat services as well as at our annual Israel Advocacy dinner. He is a brilliant speaker and we all will gain important insight to Israel and the volatile Middle East. At a time when Israel is under attack both by terrorists and the media, it is imperative for us as Jews in America to be able to effectively advocate for Israel. We must ensure that neighbors and co-workers understand the facts about Israel. In order to do this, we must first educate ourselves. I hope you will join us on December 4 and 5 as we deepen our connection with Israel and encourage anyone interested to join Rabbi Weinberg and myself in Washington DC, from March 20-22, 2016 at AIPAC's Policy Conference.

We continue to pray for peace in Israel and throughout the Middle East.

Rabbi Michael Kushnick