

# Navigating Anti-Israel Claims with Honesty and Clarity: A Comprehensive Guide

This is a short guide for learning about and for talking to your friends, family, and colleagues about Israel. Designed for anyone who is curious about the history and present moment of the Israeli Palestinian conflict, it is rigorous, informative, and truthful.

About the author: Born and raised in a liberal city in America, they earned a B.A. in Middle East History from a well-known American university. They went on to serve in the International Cooperation Unit in the Israeli Army, a unit dedicated to fostering peace with countries in the Arab world and beyond. They now have lived in Israel for 5+ years and work in the private sector in cybersecurity at a company that uncovers disinformation campaigns on social media.

**This link will continuously be updated with new questions and answers.  
Latest update: Nov 7th**

# The Basics

- **Claim: I feel like the term “antisemitic” is thrown around a lot. Jews say everything is antisemitic these days.**
- Truth: Yes, the word “antisemitism” gets thrown around with very little context. At its core, it is simply anti-Jewish bigotry—a form of bias against the Jewish people. There are statements and actions that are *overtly antisemitic* (such as chanting “start the Jewish genocide,” as students and educators alike did at UPenn in late October), and then there are statements and actions that are *covertly antisemitic*. Some important examples:
  - “Privileged white people:” In the Western world, the far right attacks Jews for perverting the white race, while the far left ironically attacks Jews for being privileged, white oppressors. While many Jews in America present as white, racializing Jews as white erases our lived experience as victims of white supremacist persecution all over the world. People who try to categorize all Jews as “white” reinforce white supremacy, which at its core is antisemitic. Such people also ignore the rich histories of Jews of color—in fact, half the world’s Jews are from Middle Eastern countries.
  - “Zionist Oppressors:” By perverting the term “Zionism” and libelously associating it with oppression, apartheid, and/or colonialism, some have found a “politically correct” way to attack Jews as “Zionists.” Around 95% of Jews are Zionists— a term that simply describes those who support national self-determination for Jews while upholding the democratic principle of citizenship rights for all. So saying “I don’t hate Jews; I just hate Zionists” is like saying “I don’t hate Tibetans; I just hate Tibet.”
- **Claim: I simply criticized Israel’s policies and now people are calling me antisemitic. WTF?**
- Truth: Criticizing specific policies of any government, from a place of knowledge, is always appropriate. By the way, Israelis love to do it in Israel just like we do in North America. However, demonizing Israel, subjecting the state to disproportionate scrutiny in comparison to other countries worldwide, or questioning its legitimacy or right to exist is explicitly antisemitic. Why?
  - 1) Holding Israel to a different standard than the rest of the world is a cover for antisemitism – one that is more and more widely accepted, and less and less perceived for what it is: antisemitism.
  - 2) Making baseless claims such as Israel not being a democracy indicates a serious lack of engagement with Israeli policies and the values in its Declaration of Independence. Arab Israelis serve at the highest levels of government and even the military in Israel.
- **Claim: Zionism is Racism/Colonialism. Therefore, the October 7<sup>th</sup> Attacks were justified because of Israeli colonialism.**
- Truth: Instead of delving into a historical timeline of changing rulers, it's crucial to note that this region has NEVER enjoyed modern-era independence. During WWI, the British took control of Palestine from the Ottomans in 1922 and, in a classic arbitrary and colonial manner, drew boundaries in the North, neglecting local populations. It was during British rule that tensions between Arabs and Jews escalated, eventually leading to a civil war as the Arabs rejected the UN Partition Plan – the precursor to the two-state solution – while the Jews accepted it and declared the State of Israel's independence in May 1948. Five surrounding Arab nations launched invasions, and Israel emerged victorious, capturing more territory than initially outlined in the partition – a common outcome in postcolonial conflicts worldwide, albeit one that draws exceptional scrutiny in the case of Israel. Examples of this:
  - Turkey/Greece War in Cyprus - Post-British colonial withdrawal - five decades of war and bloody conflict
  - India/Pakistan War in Kashmir - Post-British colonial withdrawal - seven decades of war, thousands displaced, violent cycle of ceasefires broken
- Thus, Zionism is actually ANTI-colonialism, NOT colonialism – it is the removal of the British colonial powers and the return of the land to indigenous people, the Jewish people, in the same

geographic location of the original Jewish civilization thousands of years ago. Zionism as a concept does NOT specify specific borders (there's room for 2 states!), and it simply is the idea that Jews as a people have the right to self-determination. This movement must be contextualized within the postcolonial context in which nations across the globe demanded and achieved independence from broader empires.

## The History

- **Claim: Jews use the Holocaust as a justification for everything. That was 75 years ago and isn't relevant anymore.**
- Truth: So the Holocaust is the most well known Jewish genocide which is why it's mentioned more, but there is a disgustingly long list of Jewish genocides from the past 2000 years, and the Holocaust isn't even the most recent. To help you understand, Hitler's proposed Jew-hatred caught on so quickly because he was recycling ancient tropes about Jews; nothing he said was new or novel. Here's a highlight reel of why Jews are so insistent on needing their own state:
  - *Hadrianic Genocide (132)*: The Romans demolished 985 Jewish villages, and Jews were enslaved and transported to Egypt.
  - *Rhineland Massacres (1096)*: During the Crusades, mobs of French and German Christians committed a series of mass murders of Jews.
  - *Blood Libels & Inquisition (1200-1400)*: This era was characterized by the persistence of blood libels (accusations that Jews killed Christians and drank their blood.) These accusations, combined with the Black Plague, led to widespread targeting and killing of Jews across Europe. The Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions forced the exile of Jews and led to the mass execution of approximately 33,000 Jews, even those who had converted to Christianity, as the notion of "dirty Jewish blood" took hold.
  - *Russian Partition of Poland (1770-1881)*: Roughly three million Jews were forcibly relocated in modern-day Poland and Lithuania.
  - *Eastern European Pogroms*: An estimated 100,000 Jewish people were killed, maimed, or tortured in government-sanctioned attacks and massacres against Jewish communities.
  - *The Holocaust*: Prior to the Holocaust, the global Jewish population numbered 16.6 million, with six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust. Even today, the worldwide Jewish population has not yet fully recovered to pre-Holocaust levels.
  - *Middle Eastern Pogroms*: After World War II, nationalist movements emerged in the Middle East, promoting the concept of one nation, one state. These concepts often excluded Jews, leading to pogroms, coordinated violent persecutions. As a result, a significant portion of Jewish populations from various Middle Eastern countries, including Morocco, Iraq, Algeria, Iran, Egypt, Yemen, and Syria, fled to Israel to escape violence and persecution.
- **Claim: Israel doesn't want peace with the Palestinians. In fact, Israel is a war-mongering regime that hates Arabs.**
- Truth about Arab peace: Israel achieved a peace agreement with Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994. In recent years, Israel has also achieved peace with four other Arab nations: the UAE, Morocco, Bahrain, and Sudan. Prior to Oct 7th, Israel and Saudi Arabia were on the cusp of a historic peace treaty. In contrast, Gaza is still under the governance of Hamas, which flagrantly disregards its own civilians' lives and calls for the complete destruction of Israel.
- Truth about Palestinian peace: Palestinians haven't made peace with anyone (including themselves) but instead have rejected peace offers almost 20 times. Here are the highlights:
  - 1936: Peel Partition Plan (via British Commission) - proposes 20% of land to Jews, 80% to Arabs - Jews accept the plan, Arabs rejected.
  - 1947: UN Partition Plan - proposes 55% of land to Jews, 42% to Arabs, Jerusalem international - Jews accept the plan, Arabs rejected.

- 1967: Khartoum Resolution - Israel proposes return of conquered land from 6-Day War - Arabs have "Three Nos" - no to peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel.
  - 2000: Camp David Summit (via Bill Clinton) - 96% of West Bank, half of Jerusalem, full control of Gaza, removal of all settlements - Jews accept the plan, Arabs rejected.
  - 2005: Withdraw from Gaza - Israel fully withdraws from Gaza and removes all Jews from Gaza. Israel forfeits land, and Hamas is still fighting to take over the rest of Israel.
  - 2018: U.S.-Brokered Negotiations - Palestinians are offered \$50B to recognize the borders of Israel post-1967 and land swaps of settlements. Jews accept the plan, Arabs rejected.
- **Claim: Why is there so much focus on Israel always?**
  - Truth: The disturbing and clear explanations for the extra focus on Israel are multi-pronged:
    - Mask for antisemitism:
      - Anti-Zionism is just a mask for a deeply rooted antisemitism. Focusing on the state of Israel allows people to become emboldened in their anti-Jewish biases and to “other” Jews.
    - Supporting the “underdog” to be popular:
      - People want to be liked. Keep the peace. Say the right things. By supporting the ostensible “underdog” – the “Palestinians” - people can achieve these goals, seeming to be good people supportive of causes abroad.
      - Ironically, the most supportive thing people can do abroad for Palestinians is to promote internal Palestinian peace, get Hamas out of the region, and work toward a two-state solution. With the reality of a terrorist organization like Hamas, this is not an option.
    - Lack of context and historical education:
      - Most everyday North Americans do not understand the historical context of colonization before they claim that Israel is a “colonial” state that must be fought. Our universities are crumbling at the seams because they ignore (at best) and condone (at worst) this kind of intellectual laziness. In order to support a “cause,” it should be a precondition that people actually understand the factors at play in that issue.
    - Misunderstanding about what “Palestine” means to Muslim people:
      - Firstly, Palestine is a term originally coined by the Romans. Several hundred years later, Islam was created. The Quran doesn't mention Palestine at all. Second of all, let's consider a unique aspect of Israel: Israel, having conquered territory, still facilitates open worship and diverse rights. Jews and Muslims can worship together publicly in Israel, exemplifying religious freedom. The Al-Aqsa mosque, significant for both faiths, has minimal worship restrictions. Israel welcomes a variety of worship styles across the country in stark contrast to neighboring nations marked by sectarianism and the oppression of religious minorities.
  - **Claim: There are millions of Palestinian refugees left stateless because of displacement at the hands of Israel**
  - Truth: The Arabs in Palestine under the British Mandate opposed the peace treaty and land partition into Jewish and Arab states, leading to an unnecessary war. They chose an "all or nothing" approach, thereby effectively forfeiting their own state to prevent a Jewish one. War and fear caused Arab displacement, but those who stayed within the Jewish state are still there as fully functioning citizens of Israeli society. Think of the modern city of Jaffa adjacent to Tel Aviv; Haifa; and countless others. Many brutal wars in the 20th century saw refugees who resettled in foreign lands and eventually forwent their refugee status, but Palestinians maintain their refugee status to perpetuate the 1948 conflict and resist the existence of a Jewish state in any part of the land.

- The cherry on top: Palestinians are the only people whose refugee status is automatically passed down to their descendants. The reported number of Palestinian “refugees” is 20x what it should be because of this. And PS, the UN should fix this.
- **Claim: Israel stole the land from the Palestinians**
- Truth: It is widely thought that the term Palestine refers only to the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Countless books and maps say that Israel, in conquering the West Bank and Gaza in the 1967 Six-Day War, took control of “all of Palestine.” But that is not correct. The term “Palestine” was used for millennia without a precise geographic definition. (Think of how Americans refer to the Midwest!) No precise definition existed for Palestine because none was required. Since the Roman era, the name lacked political significance. No nation ever had that name. The term was meaningful to Christians as synonymous with the Holy Land. It was meaningful to Jews as synonymous with Eretz Yisrael, which is Hebrew for the Land of Israel. Arabic speakers sometimes used the Arabic words for “Holy Land,” but never coined a uniquely Arabic name for the territory.
- Now that we know the terminology here, please refer to other answers on this sheet below in order to understand the concept of Palestinian nationalism and how modern/contemporary it is! Palestinian nationalism was formed only in the face of Israeli sovereignty, and not until the 1960s.
- **Claim: Does the “Nakba-Catastrophe” of 1948, in which 700,000 Palestinians fled territories that Israel was given by the British and much of the international community, justify attacks on Israel?**
- Truth: When offered 42% of the land in modern-day Israel (including the major population centers), the Arabs rejected this plan, wanted 100% of the land, and waged war on Israel. Despite being one-day-old and attacked on all sides, Israel won the war. The term “Nakba-Catastrophe” is used describe the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who fled the new Israeli state at wartime; it describes what many saw as the humiliating Arab failure (described as “impotence” by Zuraiq who coined the term “Nakba”) to defeat the Jews. The perpetuation and near-constant reinvention of the modern “Nakba” narrative seeks to erase any memory of Arabs waging an unnecessary war and to turn Palestinians into innocent bystanders rather than people who pursued a clear objective of denying another people a state, fought a war, and failed. (IDK where this started but apparently I have to say this: Any narratives about Israelis raping Palestinians or beheading babies then is false disinformation today.)
- **Claim: The Jewish “Right to Return” is colonization as Israel continues to settle Palestinian land**
- Truth: Jews like myself can make Aliyah and go to Israel and get citizenship. This is called the “Right to Return.” Palestinians indeed do not have a “Right of Return” to Israel under any kind of international law. However, there is no precedent of a country being forced to accept a group of people against its will, and Palestinians, despite wanting this specific chunk of land, cannot make up laws that give them something that does not exist anywhere in the world. Furthermore, since Gaza was controlled by Egypt and the West Bank by Jordan in the postcolonial period after British rule ended, “right of return” might allow people in those territories to return to the home countries that then ruled the areas. Unfortunately, Egypt and Jordan have shown no interest in allowing such a thing.

## The Oct 7th War, in Israel

- **Claim: Israel should respond in a “proportionate” manner and not “indiscriminately” bomb Gaza**

- Truth: This claim tries to simplify something that is not simple because people like quick and easy stories. This is not one of them. So let's unpack and explain the factors at play. *Proportionality is not measured by the number of civilians actually killed, but rather by the risk posed.* When a Hamas rocket hits a kindergarten in Israel, even if the students are hiding in a bomb shelter and no one is hurt, under international law, Israel is not required to allow Hamas to play Russian roulette with its children's lives. Moreover:
  - First, Israel has one of the lowest, if not the lowest, civilian casualty rates in the history of human warfare. Israel goes above and beyond to warn Gaza residents of pending attacks, evacuate civilians before striking Hamas targets, and publicize safe zones where civilians can get to safety.
  - Second, *Israel is targeting terrorists and their weapons.* Israel goes to great lengths to prevent civilian casualties. However, Hamas intentionally places weapons stockpiles and strategic headquarters under civilian centers (such as hospitals) because they want more civilians to die just so that YOU will make this argument. Hamas prevents civilians from fleeing after an IDF warning. The concept of "human shields" is not covered widely by the media, so people just assume civilian casualties are civilian casualties at the hands of the IDF. This is simply a falsehood perpetuated by news cycles that favor simplistic, sometimes one-sided, even untruthful narratives. It's intellectual laziness once again – the kind that our nation's universities need to condemn.
  - Third, there is *no legal equivalence* between the deliberate killing of innocent civilians and the deliberate killings of Hamas combatants, who have as their charter a mission to kill Jews. Under the laws of war, any number of combatants can be killed to prevent the killing of even one innocent civilian.
  - My short take: Hamas has fired 8500+ rockets the past 4 weeks (as of Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>). If Iron Dome didn't work, tens of thousands of people would've died by now in this war. So should Israel disable Iron Dome to let more Israelis die so that the numbers are more even?
- **Claim: Regardless of how horrific Hamas is, and how terrible the Oct 7<sup>th</sup> attack was, or that Jews are a minority in the Middle East, or whose land it originally was—the Israeli response and ensuing conditions in Gaza are inhumane and unjustifiable.**
- Truth: This is hands down the most common question I get. I think reading the answer directly above this one is a prerequisite for understanding the answer I have below. And I think this very question is filled with antisemitic tropes and a dangerous, undisguised neglect of history. But even with that, I'll answer this question.
  - First and foremost, the question asker is completely, 100% right in pointing out that war is horrible: bloody, violent, and filled with tragedy. Every genuine civilian and young child that is killed is a tragedy in itself - but these tragedies are entirely the fault and responsibility of Hamas. When Hamas decided to invade Israel and murder and kidnap its civilians, it knew that Israel would have to respond militarily and that Palestinian civilians would inevitably, and unfortunately, become collateral victims.
  - Not only did Hamas know its attack would lead to the death of Palestinians; Hamas intended this outcome as part of its "dead baby" playbook. Hamas knows that Israel never deliberately targets innocent babies. Why would it? It loses every time a dead Palestinian is displayed on TV cameras, as it is losing now in public opinion. Hamas also knows that despite Israel's extensive efforts to avoid and reduce civilian casualties, some will occur, mostly because Hamas uses civilians as human shields to protect its terrorists.
  - Many people think that Israel is so advanced that they have other ways to target specific Hamas leadership without these bombings. I would bet the person asking this question hasn't served in the IDF and isn't an expert in global military strategy. But you can take my word for it, this is the best Israel can do.
  - But more than that, Israel has a responsibility to protect its own citizens. By bombing targets first instead of a massive ground invasion, Israel is learning from its mistakes in

2014 and saving thousands of Israeli soldiers' lives. Israel is at war. Its first priority is protecting its own citizens.

- But above all, let us not forget Hamas is holding over 240 Israeli citizens--men, women, children, babies, and the elderly-- hostage right now. If Hamas cared about the humanitarian problem, they would release the hostages so that its citizens could be taken care of. But it won't. So no, Israel cannot pursue a "humanitarian ceasefire" and prioritize the citizens of Gaza at this very moment over its own citizens, whose brothers and wives and daughters are held captive in tunnels by a deadly terrorist organization.
  - My short answer: We are lucky in life to often not face a situation where we are caught between a bad decision and a horrible decision. But that is what Israel is facing right now. Any notion that Israel is doing this intentionally, or could do better, is both naive and also probably antisemitic.

- **Claim: Israel is an Apartheid state**

- Truth: The comparison between Israel and apartheid-era South Africa, used by everyday unrigorous storytellers and antisemites alike, is unjust and offensive. In South Africa, an official policy enforced racial segregation and discrimination against non-whites in various aspects of life. In contrast, Israel's non-Jewish minority, including Arabs, Christians, Bedouin, Druze, Baha'i, etc., enjoys full citizenship, voting rights, and representation in government. Israeli law prohibits racial discrimination (just as in America). Arabs participate in various sectors, including diplomacy, government, and the judiciary. Israel is committed to equal citizenship and representation for its Arab minority.

- My short answer: google the Israeli senate. 11% of it is Arab. Because Arabs voted for them. Because they can vote! (Also, my commander in the army was an Arab Muslim from Syria. And he's an Israeli citizen!)

- In the West Bank, 94% of Palestinians are governed by their own government, the Palestinian Authority. In Gaza, there is no Israeli governance at all. And by the way, the degree of independence awarded to Gaza is how terrorists in the region planned and carried out a large-scale surprise attack on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

- **Claim: "Free Palestine" / Gaza is an "open-air prison"**

- Truth: It is a prison. But it's not Israel's fault. Hamas is the prison warden. Israel left the Gaza Strip entirely in 2005 (while forcibly removing 9,000 Israelis that were living there), and turned it over to the Palestinian Authority, which was subsequently overthrown by Hamas in a bloody coup. Israel has provided Gaza with food, electricity, and money for the past 18 years, even though Hamas, the governing body, states that they want to annihilate every Jew in Israel and around the world. (Can you tell me any other country that does that?) Gaza receives billions of dollars in aid each year. I'm sure you've seen the infographics that say the leader of Hamas lives in Qatar. It's true. And it's because Hamas leadership siphons the money for themselves, leaving the Palestinians in squalor, and Hamas doesn't use the money to build infrastructure or schools or parks, but instead it builds an underground network of tunnels for purchasing and smuggling weapons. Gaza could've been the Singapore of the Middle East if the Palestinians put in place a government that wants to create instead of destroy. A government that cared about its own people more than they hated its neighbors.

- **Claim: Israel is committing genocide in Gaza**

- Truth for 2005-2023: The population of Gaza on Oct 6th, 2023 was 2.1 million. When Israel fully withdrew from Gaza in 2005, the population in Gaza then was 1.3 million. The population grew 61% in the past 18 years. Doesn't seem like a genocide to me...

- Truth for Oct 7th 2023-present: I'll also answer with a story. During the Nuremberg Trials (trials of Nazi leadership post WW2) some Nazi officials claimed that what they did to Jews was no different than what the US did to Dresden (intense carpet-bombing of the city). AKA a defense of "I shouldn't be punished because they did it too." The Nuremberg judges ruled: *A city is bombed for tactical purposes... It inevitably happens that nonmilitary persons are killed. This is an*

*incident, a grave incident to be sure, but an unavoidable corollary of battle action. The civilians are not individualized. The bomb falls, it is aimed at the railroad yards, houses along the tracks are hit and many of their occupants killed. But that is entirely different, both in fact and in law, from an armed force marching up to these same railroad tracks, entering those houses abutting thereon, dragging out the men, women and children and shooting them.”*

- My short answer: the Nuremberg trials emphasized a crucial distinction (both legally and ethically): all civilian lives hold equal value, but there is a difference between deliberate killings of civilians, considered a crime, and unintentional deaths. Mistakes made by a bomber squadron can't be equated with murders by a death squad. This distinction is only exacerbated when civilians suffer torture, rape, and mutilation before being killed, as Hamas did on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>.
- A clarification on the use of the word genocide: Genocide is defined as the deliberate killing of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group. The word was invented after WW2 to describe what Hitler did to the Jews. It's also Hamas' openly stated purpose towards Israel – genocide! Annihilation of the Jewish people! On the other hand, you'd be hard pressed to find any Jewish person or organization in Israel that wants, or has any intention to, destroy the Palestinian people as a whole. Israeli policymakers have never celebrated civilian deaths as Hamas, a now-policymaker, has celebrated the murders of civilians in Israel in this post-October 7<sup>th</sup> season.
- **Claim: I know the Gaza Health Ministry is corrupt, but I get my numbers from an independently verified source.**
- Truth: Many “independently verified” sources are simply regurgitating the reports and statistics from the Gaza propaganda war machine. There is no free speech in Gaza and there is no organization that can operate independently within Gaza on their own fact-finding missions. The UK Prime Minister this month said, *“If we don't treat what comes out of the Kremlin as the gospel truth, we should not do the same with Hamas.”*
  - A former AP journalist wrote, *“Intimidation is real, and I saw it in action myself as an editor on the AP news desk. During the 2008-2009 Gaza fighting I personally erased a key detail—that Hamas fighters were dressed as civilians and being counted as civilians in the death toll—because of a threat to our reporter in Gaza. Reporters [in Gaza] are often at risk, and many don't speak the language and have only the most tenuous grip on what is going on. They are dependent on Palestinian colleagues and fixers who either fear Hamas, support Hamas, or both.”*
- **Claim: By bombing Gaza, Israel is perpetuating the cycle of violence and further radicalizing Palestinians in Gaza**
- Truth: Israel has been in lengthy wars with both Egypt and Jordan. Now, Israel has deep, lasting peace treaties with both countries that have been in effect for over 20+ years. Just because you bomb someone, does not mean they will be your enemy forever. The US dropped two nuclear bombs on Japan, and now Japan is one of the US's strongest allies. The pivotal point here is not how many bombs are dropped, but how Israel (and the US and the world) will help to fill the power vacuum that is left in Gaza after the war.
  - My short answer: Hamas states in its charter that it aims to destroy Israel and any form of its existence. Completely. It is Israel's mere existence, not Israel's actions, that provokes Hamas's violence.
- **Claim: Israel says it will destroy Hamas. Can it calm down? Why “destroy?” What about just rescuing the hostages and GTF0?**
- Truth: Tactically speaking, it is virtually impossible to rescue 240 hostages without almost entirely dismantling Hamas. Any notion that the IDF can do otherwise is naive and probably antisemitic. Hamas has been a problem in the region for almost 20 years now, and other Arab countries in the region have not joined the war yet because they want Hamas gone too. But



more importantly, Israel's civilians were just brutally and barbarically targeted and murdered. Israel has to assure its citizens that Hamas can never again carry out these atrocities against Israeli families; otherwise, Israeli life as we know it will have evaporated. This isn't a war of Israel's choosing, but a war Hamas and Iran made necessary. This is an unprecedented Hamas attack on Israel and consequently requires an unprecedented response.

- My short answer: Everyone's a pacifist until someone walks up to you in a bar and then punches your mom in the face, in front of everyone.

- **Claim: Israel says it will destroy Hamas. What's the difference between Hamas and Palestinians? Isn't Israel basically saying it wants to kill all Palestinians?**
- Truth: *Hamas states in its charter that it aims to destroy Israel and any form of existence. Completely. In any form. It is Israel's existence, not Israel's actions, that provokes Hamas's violence.* Hamas is not the Palestinian Liberation Organization (est. 1964). Hamas is not the Palestinian Authority (est. 1994) either. Hamas is a terrorist organization aiming to destroy Israel, not revitalize the Palestinian people. Hamas uses Palestinians as human shields and is prepared to offer up civilians to be killed in the name of destroying the state of Israel at any time. So, what is the difference between Palestinians and Hamas? Palestinians are students at Hebrew University. They are doctors, lawyers, students, my neighbors, and recipients of aid when Hamas does not intercept it. They are my military commander. Many of them are pro-peace and want nothing more than to escape Hamas's rule.
- **Claim: I want peace. These bombings in Gaza are horrible. Both sides should stop and have a ceasefire.**
- Truth: There was a ceasefire on October 6th. How did that hold up?
  - Calling for a ceasefire now is to deny Israel's right to defend its citizens from terrorism. It also keeps the status quo allowing Hamas to continue to use Gaza as a launching pad for terrorism against Israel. Hamas is still launching rockets at Israel and holding over 240 Israelis and foreign nationals hostage. Israel has every right to wage a defensive war and there will never be peace while Hamas is in control of Gaza.
- **Claim: Israel's war tactics are inhumane.**
- Truth: As mentioned before, this is Hamas's fault. Hamas steals billions of dollars from international aid to fund terrorism, and then builds its military offices and weapons stockpiles intentionally under schools and hospitals.
- Israel goes out of its way to safeguard Gaza residents, including advance warnings of impending attacks, evacuating civilians prior to targeting Hamas sites, and publicizing safe zones. The U.S. and Israel jointly created a secure area in southern Gaza supplying essential items like food, water, and medical resources through Egypt. However, on October 16th, Hamas seized humanitarian fuel and medical equipment, stole from civilians, and instead used them for terror. Under international law, a military is not required to provide resources to its enemy. Other countries (& the US) must ensure that aid reaches civilians as intended and isn't misappropriated by Hamas for terrorism.
- **Claim: Israel bombed the al-Ahli hospital in Gaza City**
- Truth: there is an overwhelming abundance of proof that it was not an Israeli bomb and instead was a misfired rocket from the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (another terrorist group that operates in Gaza). A conversation between two Hamas terrorists, intercepted by the IDF, shows them realizing it was a misfired rocket by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and explicitly not Israel, that hit the hospital. Moreover, it was a parking lot next to a hospital, and not the hospital itself.
- But more importantly, the lack of due diligence from reputable publications and the unprecedented speed at which the world accepted Hamas's lie was shocking and heartbreaking for me. Within hours of the al-Ahli bombing, Israel and the US revealed the truth behind it, but still, almost no one in the media apologized. Bots on social media pushed the blame on Israel further (in the first 24 hours after the attack 1 in 3 accounts claiming it was Israel's fault were

fake bot accounts. The NYT published my report on Nov 3rd about this). Again, this is blatant and egregious antisemitism.

- My short take: how did it take Israel 3 weeks to compile 1400+ names of the dead from Oct 7th (and many are still missing), yet Hamas can confirm 500 names and IDs only 30 minutes after the hospital ‘missile strike’?

## The Oct 7th War, Internationally

- **Claim: Why do the neighboring Arab countries not help and take the Palestinians in? Why do they hate the Palestinians so much?**
- Truth: I’ll answer with two examples as to why the Palestinians aren’t the most popular:
  - Palestinians that sought refuge 50 years ago in Lebanon went to “refugee” camps. These camps were taken over by armed organizations, from the PLO to ISIS, including Hamas, the Popular Front, and Salafist jihadist organizations. These groups acted viciously toward the surrounding Lebanese citizens, and in 1975 brought on a civil war that lasted for 14 long years of bloodshed and destruction.
  - In Jordan in the 1970s, Palestinian terror groups sought to establish autonomous regions in northern Jordan, setting up roadblocks and challenging the monarchy with armed Palestinian Arabs. In September of that year, a conflict known as “Black September” erupted as King Hussein decided to assert his authority in Jordan. The resulting war claimed thousands of lives on both Jordanian and Palestinian sides.
- **Claim: How did October 7th even happen? Where was the IDF? And how does the terror still continue to happen 3 weeks later?**
- Truth: 94% of Hamas’s budget comes from Iran, the remaining 6% from Qatar. Iran wants to build covert nuclear weapons. On October 7<sup>th</sup>, Israel was on the cusp of signing a historic peace treaty with Saudi Arabia, a sworn enemy of Iran. To prevent their two enemies from becoming friends, Iran activated their proxy army, Hamas, to enact a violent attack that would force Israel to respond aggressively and effectively derail the peace treaty with Saudi Arabia.
- As a former IDF soldier, I can attest that the attack on October 7th was truly unimaginable. While I have some insights into what transpired (which I won’t disclose for intelligence reasons), the success of the attack underscores the extensive training and funding provided by Iran to Hamas to carry out an unprecedented operation on a global military power like Israel. In other words, the success of the attack shows how desperately Iran and Hamas don’t want peace in the region.
- **Claim: The news keeps reporting an increase in antisemitism, and we’re seeing pictures of swastikas being painted on doors. Is this truly a rise in antisemitism, or could it just be a reaction to anti-Israel policies stemming from the recent conflict?**
- Truth: In this specific case, anti-Zionism IS necessarily antisemitism because of the exceptional standards applied to Israel’s military strategy and tactics relative to the massacre it just experienced. In the United States, since so many University presidents are issuing statements about attacks on innocent Gazans, I am curious: where are all the University statements about the 1.7M Afghans getting kicked out of Pakistan this week? Where are the infographics on the 15,000 Palestinians killed by the Assad regime in Syria? (PS, they are nowhere. It’s all just about Israel, always.)
- **Claim: I’m a Jew in America. Israel’s controversial military tactics are causing a rise in antisemitism and I feel unsafe. That’s why I want Israel to stop the violence, so the world quiets down and stops criticizing it.**
- Truth: 150K Jews were kicked out of Iraq in the ‘50s; 250K Jews were kicked out of Morocco in the ‘60s; 1.2M Jews fled the USSR in the ‘90s. The list goes on with Ethiopians, French, and now

Ukrainians today. Israel views itself as a refuge and safe haven for Jews everywhere. Israel's central and most important task is protecting Jews that reside within its borders.

- This is actually part and parcel of a broader mission to safeguard Jewish cultural life in all lands. By undergoing a horrible military battle where tons of Israeli soldiers will die, Israel is ensuring that Jews around the world will continue to have a safe haven within its borders. For Jews from Morocco, Yemen, Syria, and more, Israel's existence has not only ensured their physical safety but also protected and perpetuated their traditions and cultures, allowing them to continue to thrive.
- **Claim: I don't want to be Jewish or support Israel. The whole world is against it and I will never feel safe.**
- **Truth:** Let's toast to the continued existence of the State of Israel, which stands as a diverse, democratic country in the Middle East. It serves as a safe haven for Jews worldwide, offering a sanctuary and homeland for those escaping persecution, seeking refuge, and connection to their heritage. Despite what TikTok says, Israel plays a crucial role as a peacekeeper in a region fraught with conflict, contributing to stability and diplomacy which is why the US consistently supports it. Like any nation, Israel is not without its imperfections, striving to uphold principles of justice, equality, and democracy, much like the United States and the broader Western world. It is renowned for its innovation and entrepreneurial spirit, and continues to strive to be better. Beyond its regional significance, Israel stands as a leader among other countries, navigating the challenges of rebuilding and self-determination and democracy.