

[Alum living in Jerusalem discusses attack](#)

November 20, 2014 1:30 AM New Wave staff
newwave@tulane.edu



Ultra-Orthodox Jews mourn over the bodies of victims of an attack on Nov. 18 at a synagogue in the Har Nof neighborhood in Jerusalem. “I would ask [people in the West] to read about the history of the region from a holistic perspective and try to understand the complexities in a different framework,” urged Tulane alumnus Jason Naparstek, who lives nearby. (Photo by Jack Guez/AFP/Getty Images)

On Nov. 18, an attack on a synagogue in Jerusalem left five dead. Jason Naparstek, a Tulane University alumnus who lives in a nearby neighborhood, heard several ambulances pass near his home. Naparstek earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Tulane in 2003 and now works in high tech for a messaging startup called Zula. He e-mailed with *New Wave* about the attack and life in Jerusalem.

New Wave: Are you connected to the yeshiva?

Naparstek: No. However, it is important to remember that everyone in Israel is separated by one or two degrees. Every terror victim is someone's cousin or former coworker's friend, etc.

New Wave: Do you have family with you? Children?

Naparstek: Yes, I have two boys, ages 5 and 7. They were eating breakfast in the next room when I initially heard the sirens. Naturally, I thought the worst, but I wasn't expecting to hear it from them. The two of them immediately started asking each other what kind of terror attack they suspected had happened. One thought that maybe the train was attacked, another suspected that a local bus line was blown up. Not exactly a typical American morning conversation for 5- and 7-year-olds.

New Wave: What is the atmosphere in your neighborhood now?

Naparstek: I definitely notice fewer people on the streets throughout Jerusalem. The schools are on lockdown and there is heightened security everywhere. Personally, I find the looks on people's faces to be the most striking change. Whenever you wait at a bus stop or walk into a store, people seem to examine you for a few seconds before getting back to whatever they were doing.

New Wave: What is it like to live there now? Are you living with constant fear?

Naparstek: I caught myself the other day being thankful because there had not been a stabbing reported in the news for a couple of hours. I think that moment was very telling of the current atmosphere. I've noticed that I now have a very real sense of mortality. I appreciate moments much more than I did in America, and I hug friends and family a little tighter.

“I think that people in the West are unable to easily place themselves in a Middle Eastern mentality.”—Jason Naparstek, Tulane class of 2003