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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

11 Adar Sheni 5768

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One of our Rabbis stabbed at the Damascus Gate

[These were Rav Aviner's comments when contacted by the media]

1. This morning at approximately 9 a.m., Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald, who teaches at our yeshiva, was stabbed in the neck from behind by an Arab while entering Sha'ar Shechem – the Damascus Gate. The attack occurred ten meters from the police. Rav Greenwald was moderately wounded and is hospitalized at Hadassah – Ein Kerem. Please include him in your prayers. His name is Yechezkel ben Zahava.
2. The Yeshiva has security instructions which are established in conjunction with the police. Rav Greenwald was complying with these instructions when he was attacked.
3. Obviously, the problem is not Rav Greenwald or the Yeshiva, but the fact that there are murders in the Land of Israel who attack Jews everywhere. The State and the Army must deal with them in the way in which one deals with murderers. How does one deal with them? I do not know. I am not the Chief of Staff. You cannot place a soldier on every square meter. The Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim (vol. 1 #41) discusses his national philosophy and writes that the secret to security is deterrence. One must therefore strike his enemy with all his might.

Rav Aviner was asked:

Q: Does Ha-Rav feel that the Religious-Zionist community is particularly suffering now because of the last few terrorist attacks?

A: To our distress, we are not the only ones who have been attacked. Secular Jews, Charedi (ultra-Orthodox) Jews, traditional Jews, etc... have been attacked. Everyone. The saying goes: Trouble shared is trouble halved. But this is not true. Trouble shared doubles the pain. Rav Greenwald did not have a sign on this forehead which announced who he is and with whom he identifies. Like every attack, it was an attack on all of us.

Q: Does Ha-Rav think that the Yeshiva's location in the Muslim Quarter upsets the Arabs?

A: Such a statement victimizes the victim. The victim is to blame. The non-Jews have always said to us: "You Jews are to blame and we therefore kill you. If you had not been in Germany or Poland we would not have killed you." We therefore came to the Land of Israel and they still say that we are to blame. They attack us in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Dimona, etc... Perhaps we should set up a settlement on the moon. Then there would be no Jewish problem.