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## Celebrating Purim after a Terrorist Attack

[A letter written by Rav Aviner in Adar 5762 to high school girls in Ulpanat Lehava in Kedumim who asked how to celebrate Purim following a terrorist attack in the shopping center in Karnei Shomrom. To our great distress, the message is needed once again following the horrible murder of the Fogel Family (May Hashem avenge their blood) last week in Itamar.]

Dear young women of Ulpanat Lehava,

May Hashem comfort you

for the loss of your friend

and may it be His will that He sends a speedy

recovery to the wounded girls.

We truly are experiencing great pain

and our souls are wounded and crying.

How is it possible not to cry? And how is it possible to be comforted?

Nonetheless, we are all commanded to fulfill

"When Adar enters we increase in happiness."

It is not because we want to rejoice,

but because we are obligated to rejoice.

In every generation we are obligated to rejoice,

and all the more so in the generation of  
"When Hashem returns us to Zion, we will rejoice."  
This is our weapon against the end of life.  
These evil dregs of humanity  
do not have the power to destroy our holy State.  
But they do have the power to cause pain, sadness and despair  
which can lead to withdrawal, G-d forbid.  
It is therefore forbidden to be distressed or to despair.  
Rather we must always hold on to the weapon of joy,  
as the words of the Admor Ha-Zaken, Ba'al Ha-Tanya say:  
with the help of joy, it is possible to defeat the evil inclination.  
And it is also possible to defeat the enemy – the evil Haman.  
We must wipe away the tears and rejoice  
for the Nation of Israel, for the Master of the Universe  
and for your friend, may the memory of the holy one be a blessing,  
who looks down upon you from on high  
and says to you: Continue on, do not become weak.  
We will certainly also cry and say Tehillim,  
and remove some of the frivolity from the celebration,  
and take some of the money for the party and donate it to perform  
kindnesses,  
but we will continue to rejoice,  
And to serve Hashem in joy  
even under difficult conditions.  
Dear young women, be strong and courageous.  
You are students of Queen Ester,  
who displayed self-sacrifice for the Nation of Israel,  
and who knew, even at the most difficult moments,  
how to bear royalty and nobility.

May Hashem send you comfort from the source of comfort  
and dry your tears  
and give you good, pleasant and happy days.

With blessing,  
Shlomo Aviner

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