



## PhiloTorah D'var Torah

# CHODESH TOV?

Let me answer that question, right up front. The answer is YES. On Rosh Chodesh Av and as the month unfolds, it is definitely in place to wish one another a CHODESH TOV.

Let's start with last Shabbat. In his sefer AVEILUT HACHURBAN, R' Yoel Schwartz writes that some communities did not "bench" Rosh Chodesh Av - probably because as the month of Av enters, we diminish our SIMCHA, and that the month is considered to have a bad MAZAL.

OTOH, most communities do bench R"Ch Av, based on the idea if there is a month that needs a blessing, it's Av.

Add to that the fact that we say Hallel (with skipping) as on all Roshei Chodesh. And the Musaf contains an upbeat longing for the future when the Beit HaMikdash will be rebuilt.

There is a strong case for benching Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av.

Foitha-more (I was born and raised in Brooklyn), the mood of a bit more than two thirds of the month is NECHAMA. AVEILUT only is with us for the first nine and a half days of the month. Even on Tish'a b'Av itself,

with almost all the restrictions of the day intact until after the fast is over (and some continuing until CHATZOT of the tenth), there are a few things that give us the sense of a brighter future for Tish'a b'Av and Klal Yisrael.

Lighting in shul is restored to full brightness, we sit on chairs, Tallit and T'filin, Birkat Kohanim - and the saying of NACHEIM at Mincha to allow us to look forward and not only dwell on the Churban.

Solid case for wishing each other a CHODESH TOV.

This was the topic of a WhatsApp conversation with my daughters.

My youngest, Ora, added the following idea.

There are two months of which it is said, MISHENICHNAS... ADAR, we increase our simcha, and Av in which we diminish simcha.

Adar is marked with the concept of V'NAHAFOCH HU - the overturning of the potential disaster of the month, to become a joyous time.

So too, may we experience a major V'NAHAFOCH HU during Av, when the evil intent and actions of our enemies to become a time of victory over them. It already happened for Adar and Purim; may it happen to Av and Tish'a b'Av as well, BIMHEIRA B'YAMEINU - AMEIN. **PTDT**