

The Daily Portion

- Sivan Rahav Meir

5 Insights on the Month of Av

[1] Chodesh Tov – wishing all a good month of Av! The Talmud states: "When Av arrives, joy is diminished." This year, it is not difficult for us to reduce our joy. Days of mourning, together with hope for rebuilding and consolation, have become more relatable and less abstract.

[2] Rosh Chodesh Av, began the "Nine Days" mourning period. Different communities observe various customs from Rosh Chodesh and until the fast of the Ninth of Av, commemorating the destruction of both the First and Second Holy Temples.

[3] But there is also plenty of hope and consolation: The month of Av is also called "Menachem Av", signifying that our Father in Heaven will comfort us. Menachem is also one of the names of Mashiach. And after the Ninth of Av comes the Fifteenth of Av, TU b'Av, a day associated with love, weddings, relationships, and celebrations.

[4] Av is also an acronym for ELUL BA, meaning "Elul is coming." This serves as a reminder that the month of repentance, improvement, and

renewal is approaching, encouraging us to make a fresh, new start.

[5] The only yahrzeit mentioned in the Torah is that of Aharon HaKohen, which falls on the first of Av. Aharon was known for making peace between people, between husbands and wives, and between the Jewish People and God. You can light a candle in his memory and try to follow in his ways.

Amidst all the challenges may we hear only good news.

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