



## HAFTORAH INSIGHTS

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# Machar Chodesh

## SHMUEL I: 20: 18-42

This Shabbat we read a special Haftorah, 'Machar Chodesh,' *tomorrow is Rosh Chodesh*, as Sunday is the first day of Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan. The directive to read this portion on the day before Rosh Chodesh is mentioned in the Talmud (Megilah 31a), suggesting a deep-rooted practice rather than a more recent custom.

While the words, machar chodesh, *tomorrow is Rosh Chodesh*, are in the opening verses of the Haftorah, the message of the haftorah itself does not seem in any obvious way related to erev Rosh Chodesh. The story unfolds with the description of the strained dynamic between Shaul and David and the deep friendship of Yonatan and David.

When one faces an upcoming month, there are mixed feelings. How do we garner this new opportunity, a new beginning? We bring into our new month the ups and downs of the last month, our accomplishments and also our failings. Once the month starts, we may feel that it is too late to evaluate and reflect, to process and to plan. It is on the day before Rosh Chodesh that we are given the chance to utilize these tools and tap into our narratives to learn from our past to impact our future.

The challenges of the Shaul and David relationship highlight that life is complicated and

complex while the friendship of David and Yonason demonstrates that loyalty and bonds can serve as a buoy in difficult times. **Each upcoming month gives us a new chance to forge forward, along with the day before which was given to highlight this message.** May we be able to fill this upcoming month of Cheshvan with meaningful moments of growth and achievement. ■

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