



5783 Divrei Torah on Jerusalem by Rabbi Reuven Schreier Sukkot/סוכות

## Seeking *Tzion*: The Missing Ingredient of Our *Lulav* Experience

With the oncoming *Chag HaSukkot*, Jews around the world will be enthusiastically choosing their *daled minim* in order to fulfill the special *mitzvah* of *lulav*. With great joy, we shake our *lulavim* for the entire holiday of *Sukkot* as we sing *hallel* in delight. However, we unfortunately miss a key element of the *mitzvah* due to a fundamental misunderstanding of why we shake the *lulav* throughout *Sukkot*.

The *Mishnah* in Tractate *Sukkah* (41a) explains that the biblical command to take the *lulav* only applies to the first day of *Sukkot*, except for those present in the *Beit HaMikdash* who must take the *lulav* on every day of *Sukkot*. Given that we currently do not have our *Beit HaMikdash*, why do we still perform the *mitzvah* of *lulav* every day of *Sukkot*? The *Mishnah* explains that after the destruction of the Temple, *Rebbe Yochanan ben Zakkai* instituted that we should take up the *lulav* every day of *Sukkot* as a *zecher l'Mikdash*, a remembrance of the Temple. The *Gemara* cites a fascinating source for the concept of establishing reminders of the *Mikdash*. *Rebbe Yochanan* cites the verse in *Yirmiyahu* (30:17), כי נדחה קראו לך ציון היא דרש אין לה, “for they called you (Jerusalem) discarded, She is *Tzion*, no one seeks her out.” *Yirmiyahu* implies to us that Jerusalem needs, and deserves, those who seek her out.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (*Minchat Shlomo, Sukkah* 41a) points out that this rabbinic *mitzvah* of *lulav* is not properly fulfilled unless one is being *doreish Tzion*, thinking and seeking out Jerusalem’s rectification. Rav Auerbach notes that it is an obligation to remind the members of one’s household that we are not shaking the *lulav* to experience a spiritual high and the joy of *Sukkot*; instead, the *lulav* experience should be deeply intertwined with an intense yearning for the restoration of *Tzion* and the return of our *Beit HaMikdash*.

The connotations of the word “*doreish*” expand beyond *tefillah* and the experience of emotion. At the end of *Esther*, the *megillah* tells us that *Mordechai* was *doreish tov l'khol amo*. As the commentators note (see *Ibn Ezra* and *Maharal* in *Ohr Chadash*), *Mordechai* did not wait for Jews to come to him with their problems. Instead, he *actively pursued* their wellbeing, wholly dedicating himself and everything that he possessed to serving and protecting the Jewish people.

This year, with the first day of *Sukkot* coinciding with *Shabbat*, there will be no fulfillment of the biblical commandment of *lulav*. Instead, we will fulfill the rabbinic injunction to take up the *lulav* every other day of *Sukkot*. But to properly perform this *mitzvah*, each of us must ask ourselves: how



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am I being *doreish* Jerusalem? Am I seeking out her well-being and longing for the day in which “the City will be built upon its hill”? Do I fervently pray for and actively pursue her restoration?