



5784 Divrei Torah on Jerusalem by Rabbi Reuven Schreier Parashat Ki Tisa/פרשת כי תשא

Uniting the Sun and Moon Over Jerusalem

Even a casual perusal through *Torah* and our liturgy reveals deeply rooted connections between *David HaMelekh* and the moon. Not surprisingly, when we sanctify the new moon monthly, we make reference to *David's* immortal reign over the destiny of *Klal Yisrael*, as promised by *Hashem* on so many occasions. דוד מלך ישראל חי וקיים. Just as the moon wanes and disappears, only to renew itself, so too *David's* legacy will always return and renew itself even after centuries of exile.

But interestingly, *David HaMelekh* is also linked to the sun as well. In *Tehillim* 89 (37-38), the immortality of *David's* dynasty is linked to both the sun and the moon: זרעו לעולם יהיה וכסאו נשמש נגדי, His seed will endure forever, and his throne shall be like the sun before me. בירח יכול לעולם, Like the moon, it shall be established forever. There are many levels of depth to this dual comparison, but the *Malbim* (ibid) offers a beautiful interpretation. The moon symbolizes the vicissitudes of exile that *Malkhut David* undergoes. It waxes and wanes, constantly experiencing periods of explosive growth and then severe setback, God forbid. However, while this painful process continually unfolds from our mortal perspective, from the *Ribbono Shel Olam's* perspective, *David's* throne always shines brightly like the sun. It is true that we cannot always see the sun, but it is continuously aflame with a fire that never dies. So too, *David's malkhut* is truly חי וקיים, alive and enduring, even when we are cast in darkness and cannot see it.

David's monarchy is also inextricably linked with the renewal of Jerusalem. In *Birkat HaMazon*, when beseeching *Hashem* to shower mercy upon His holy city and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, we also ask for *David's* kingship to be restored. In fact, if one only mentions Jerusalem and omits any reference to *David's malkhut*, he does not fulfill his obligation and must return to this blessing (*Shulhan Arukh* 187:4). The rebuilding of Jerusalem goes hand in hand with the restoration of *David's* descendant as the king of *Klal Yisrael*. In our *Shemona Esrei* prayer, we unite the blessing over the building of Jerusalem with a plea for the establishment of *David's* throne. By natural extension, the moon's monthly renewal and the sun's constant light serve as a perfect expression of Jerusalem's cosmic process of destruction and restoration.

We currently find ourselves in the first month of *Adar*. In our beautifully mysterious calendar, designed by *HaKadosh Barukh Hu* and implemented for millennia by the greatest of our sages in Jerusalem, the monthly cycle is determined by the moon. However, in certain years such as this one, an extra month of *Adar* is added to the calendar in order to realign our lunar calendar with the solar year. This powerful reunification of the moon with the sun (a process conspicuously missing from



5784 Divrei Torah on Jerusalem by Rabbi Reuven Schreier Parashat Ki Tisa/פרשת כי תשא