

Why an Esrog and Not a Lemon?

The Mitzvah of the Four Kinds

Leviticus 23:40

וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן פְּרֵי עֵץ הָדָר כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים וְעֵנָף עֵץ עֵבֶת וְעַרְבֵי נָחַל

And you shall take for yourselves on the first day, the fruit of the *hadar* tree, date palm fronds, a branch of a braided tree, and willows of the brook

Maimonides: Positive Commandment #169

The 169th *mitzvah* is that we are commanded to hold a *lulav* [palm branch, together with the other three species, *esrog*, myrtle, willow] and to rejoice before G-d for seven days [i.e. the holiday of *Sukkos*].

The source of this commandment is G-d's statement, "And you shall take for yourselves."

The details of this *mitzvah* are explained in tractate *Sukkah*. There it is explained that only in the Holy Temple is this *mitzvah* obligatory for seven days. Elsewhere, the Biblical obligation is only on the first day.

The Four Species

1. Esrog - פְּרֵי עֵץ הָדָר
2. Lulav - כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים
3. Hadasim - וְעֵנָף עֵץ עֵבֶת
4. Aravot - וְעַרְבֵי נָחַל