Lulav: Hold, Bless, Shake

To fulfill the commandment of <u>lulay</u> and <u>etrog</u>, you must hold them together the way they grow: stems down. But since you fulfill the commandment as soon as you hold the <u>Four Species</u> together this way, you must first pick up the <u>etrog</u> inverted (stem up) and then say the blessing, as follows:

- Hold the <u>lulay</u> with the spine facing you and the myrtle on the right, willows on the left, and the <u>etrog</u> with the <u>pitom</u> (opposite the stem) down;
- Say the blessings for the *lulav*;
- Turn the etrog right side up (stem-side down) and hold the lulav and etrog together; and
- Shake the Four Species together.
- NOTE Waving (or shaking) the <u>lulav</u> is a universally accepted custom with the force of <u>halacha</u>. We show that God is present in all directions by waving the <u>lulav</u> in the four compass directions, plus up and down. There are various customs of the sequence in which to wave the <u>lulav</u>. One common sequence is east; south; west; north; up; down. Wave the <u>Four Species</u> three times in each direction.
- NOTE Although the <u>lulav</u>'s spine should face you as you hold it, you have still fulfilled the requirement of <u>lulav</u> if the spine was facing away or if the willows and myrtles are on the incorrect sides of the <u>lulav</u>.