

Pesach Sheni - Second Chances

The basics: What is Pesach Sheni?

Numbers 9:10-13

(10) Speak to the Israelite people, saying: **When any of you or of your posterity who are defiled by a corpse or are on a long journey would offer a passover sacrifice to the LORD, (11) they shall offer it in the second month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, (12) and they shall not leave any of it over until morning. They shall not break a bone of it. They shall offer it in strict accord with the law of the passover sacrifice.** (13) But if a man who is clean and not on a journey refrains from offering the passover sacrifice, that person shall be cut off from his kin, for he did not present the LORD's offering at its set time; that man shall bear his guilt.

במדבר ט:י-ט'ו

(י) דֹבֵר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אִישׁ אִישׁ כִּי-יִתְּמַא אֲלֹנֶב אֲלֹנֶב רְחִקָּה לְבָם אֲזֶן לְדָרְתֵּיכֶם וְעַשֵּׂה פֶּסֶח לִיהְוָה: (יא) בְּחִקָּשְׁנִי בְּאַרְבָּעָה עַשְׂרֵה יוֹם בַּיּוֹם קָרְבָּנִים יַעֲשֶׂו אָתָנוּ עַל-מִזְבֵּחַ וּמְרֻרִים יַאֲכִלוּ: (יב) לְאַדְשָׁאִירֹ מִמְּנוּ עַד-בָּקָר וְעַזְבָּם לֹא יַשְׁבֹּר-בָּבוֹ כְּכָל-חֲקַת הַפֶּסֶח יַעֲשֶׂו אָתָנוּ: (יג) וְהַאֲשָׁר-רְחִקָּה וְחַדֵּל לְעַשְׂוֹת הַפֶּסֶח וּנְכַרְתָּה בְּנֶפֶש הַהוּא מַעֲמִיקָה כִּי יָרְפֹּן יְלָא הַקְרִיב בְּמַעַדוֹ חֶטְאוֹ יַשְׂא הָאִישׁ הַהוּא:

Why did the people demand it?

Sforno on Numbers 9:7

"We are tamei by reason of a corpse; why should we be restrained by not being allowed to bring near the sacrifice in its appointed time?": seeing that the ritual impurity we have incurred was incurred in the process of our fulfilling a positive commandment, why should the result of this be that it causes another transgression? (i.e., missing the Pesach offering window)

ספרנו על במדבר ט:ז:א'

אנחנו טמאים לנפש אדם למה נגרע מאחר שהיתה טומאתנו לדבר מצוה למה תהיה גוררת עבירה:

How is it different from / similar to Pesach?

Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Paschal Offering 8:3

...Similarly, partaking of the second Paschal sacrifice on the fifteenth of the month of Iyar is a positive commandment, as stated: "Eat it with matzot and bitter herbs."

וכו אכילת בשר פסח שני בלילה חמשה עשר לחודש איר מצות עשרה. שונא אמר בו (במדבר ט יא) "על מצות ומררים יאכלו":

Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Paschal Offering 10:15

What are the differences between the first Paschal sacrifice and the second Paschal sacrifice? At the time of the first, *chametz* is forbidden to be seen or possessed in one's domain. It may not be slaughtered while one is in possession of *chametz*. Its meat may not be removed from the company in which it was designated to be eaten. The *Hallel* must be recited when it is eaten. A festive offering is brought with it. It may be brought in a state of impurity if the majority of the people are impure because of contact with a human corpse, as we explained.

With regard to the second Paschal sacrifice, by contrast, both *chametz* and *matzah* may be possessed by the person at home. *Hallel* is not recited while partaking of it. It may be taken out of the company in which it was designated to be eaten. A festive offering is not brought with it and it may not be brought in a state of impurity.