Pesach Sheni: the Second Pesach

Today is the 14th day of Iyar, 29 days of Omer (4 weeks, 1 day)

Thirty days after Pesach we commemorate Pesach Sheni or The Second Pesach. Pesach Sheni is not a formal holiday. No resting from melakha (work, etc) or Kiddush , etc is commanded today.

Pesach Sheni is mentioned in the Torah in Bamidbar 9:1-14 when Moshe announced that the Korban Pesach (Pesach sacrifice, a lamb) may only be offered by people who are ritually pure. Some men came to Moses, claiming that there were people, who came into contact with a dead body and became ritually unclean, unfit to participate in the Korban Pesach. God then indicated Moshe that anyone who was unable to offer the Korban Pesach on its due time, the 14th of Nisan, due to defilement or inability to journey to the place of sacrifice in time, should perform the sacrifice on the 14th of Iyar, a full month later.

In modern times, there is no practical observance of Pesach Sheni because, after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem we are unable to perform the original Pesach sacrifice anyway.

We remember Pesach Sheni by:

1. Eating Matza, which symbolizes the Korban Pesach, sometime during the day. The Sephardic custom is saying mezonot not hamotzi for Matza. There is no minimum requirement of Matza to eat and we can also eat Chametz regularly.

2. Saying yehi shem instead of the regular viduy (or confession, a prayer which is suspended on joyous occasions)

from Mincha of the previous day.