



## SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

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### PESACH SHENI

This coming Monday we commemorate *Pesach Sheni*, literally the second *Pesach*. In *Parshat Beha'alo-cha*, we are instructed regarding this second opportunity for those who were unable to offer the *Korban Pesach* at its proper time to be able to participate and fulfill this *mitzva*.

*Since there were some men who were unclean, having come in contact with a corpse and could not offer the Korban Pesach on that day. Appearing that same day before Moshe and Ahron, those men said to them, "Unclean though we are by reason of a corpse, why must we be prevented from presenting Hashem with an offering at its set time with the rest of the Jewish People?" Moshe said to them, "Imdu- Stand by, and let me hear what instructions Hashem gives for you." Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: Speak to the Jewish people, and say: When any of you or of your posterity who are defiled by a corpse or are on a long journey would offer the Korban Pesach to Hashem, 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, 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 Korban Pesach..."*

*Teshuva, the opportunity for growth and change, the opportunity to move forward... is a great gift from Hashem!*

The *Chidushei HaRim*, the first *Gerer Rebbe zy'a*, explains that the word **Imdu** does not mean to stand by and wait, rather it means **Imdu** stand up, even though you may have been unable to perform the *mitzva* initially, don't fall into despair. **Imdu- stand up-Hashem** gives us the opportunity for a second chance!

So too in our days, in the absence of the

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*Korban Pesach*, there is an eternal message of *chizuk*, inherent in these verses, and represented by this sacred day of *Pesach Sheni*. **Imdu-** Stand up! Each of us can stand upright once again before *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* through *teshuva and tefila*. It is never too late!

This important idea is similarly reflected and developed even further in a powerful teaching from *Rebbe Naftali Tzvi of Ropschitz, zy'a*. *The Ropschitzer* taught that a person might think that as a result of their many mistakes or flaws, that there is no hope for them, that it is impossible for them to turn their lives around, to improve their circumstances. Giving up, selling oneself short, explains the *Ropschitzer*, is not only counterproductive, but is also an act of great heresy! *Teshuva*, the opportunity for growth and change, the opportunity to move forward, and leave our mistakes or missed opportunities in the past, is a great gift from *Hashem!* One who feels that they are not capable of *teshuva*, explains the *Rebbe*, is not simply selling himself short, but rather denying the endless kindness, compassion and love that the *Ribono Shel Olam* has for each and every member of *Klal Yisrael*.

The message of *Pesach Sheni*, is precisely this idea, to leave behind those past mistakes or missed opportunities, and move forward and embrace the potential for growth and success, to embrace the gift of *teshuva*, to tap into our innate strength that *Hashem* has endowed each of us with, and in so doing transform ourselves and the entire world. ■

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