

***The literary structure
of Ex 1-18 and pericope of law 12:1-13:16,
and the anticipatory nature of the Passover supper***

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Abstract.

The present paper is a translation of the third part of the third chapter of the dissertation; it shows three main questions.

The first part crowns the research effort leading to understanding the literary structure of Passover Seder deeply. Namely, Seder, just like the Book of Exodus, has the literary structure of ancient treaties; they both document the fact that God and Israel made the covenant between the halves of the split waters of the Sea of Reeds. What is more, the Passover Seder makes that four-step liturgical and historical process present for the liturgical participants – it means they participate in those past events with their Fathers.

The second part of this paper presents the meaning of the pericope of law to understand the liturgical possibility to make present the events which were or which will be in the time of Israel's history. Especially, one shows here in-depth biblical analyses to explain the anticipatory nature of the Passover supper. Moreover, one explained in this manner the aim of the complexity of the literary arrangement of particular elements of the law pericope. Namely, what seemed to many biblical scholars as a primitive, unnecessary duplication of the events description, turned out to be the fulfillment of the requirements of Hebrew rhetorical rules, especially of parallelism. Then the parallelism occurred to be the means of communicating the reader the anticipatory possibilities of the Passover liturgy.

The third part of the present paper states as a summary of the whole research process of the third chapter. It serves to point out key elements of the Passover ceremony and underline their proper understanding. Especially noteworthy is the biblical writer's expectation not to confuse the meaning of the lamb-Passover with the meaning of the bread of going out, i.e., Afikoman. The lamb is the main food of part II of Seder, and its eating serves to fulfill and accept the law of the covenant by the Israelites. Afikoman is the main food-symbol of part III of Seder; it serves as the bread of making the covenant between the divided waters of the Sea of Reeds.

The article summarizes the discovery of the four cups/parts of Seder as subsequent elements of the covenant-making ceremony, which God and Israel performed to enter into the relation of spousal love.

This paper is the translation of the third part of the third chapter of the doctoral dissertation:

W. Kosek, Pierwotny ryt Paschy w świetle schematu literackiego Księgi Wyjścia 1-18

(The original rite of the Passover in the light of the literary scheme of the Book of Exodus 1-18),

Kraków 2008, p. 357-378.

See also on Academia.edu:

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| • Introduction | • Chapter II, part II |
| • Chapter I | • Chapter III, part I |
| • Chapter II, part I | • Chapter III, part II |

See also:

- https://www.adoracja.bielsko.opoka.org.pl/Kosek_mainWeb_UK.html

Table of contents:

3.6. Comparison of the structure of Ex 1-18 and the structure of Passover Seder.

3.7. The structure of the law pericope and the anticipatory nature of the Passover supper.

3.7.1. Introduction.

3.7.2. Lexical analysis.

3.7.3. Conclusions.

3.8. Summary of the third chapter of the dissertation.

3.6. Comparison of the structure of Ex 1-18 and the structure of Passover Seder.

Based on the comprehensive research carried out, it is now possible to make a list to compare the two literary structures, one of the Book of Exodus 1-18 and the second of the Passover Seder. This list is a fundamental issue for this work. It is for its responsible realization that all the analyses to date have been undertaken.

The Book of Exodus 1-18 in light of the literary structure of the treaties documenting the conclusion of the Hittite covenant of the 16th-12th centuries before Christ	The Passover Seder according to <i>The Passover Haggadah</i> (around the 2nd century after Christ)
Historical introduction to the ceremony of the covenant-making (1:1-6:1): presenting the blessings of God to Israel in their situation of bitterness in Egyptian bondage.	The drinking of the first cup: the decision to start Seder, i.e., the first part of it: the story. Tasting of the bitterness of the Fathers: eating the maror, showing unleavened bread as the bread of humiliation. Explaining the laws of Seder.
The beginning of the ceremony of the covenant-making (6:2-11:10): presentation of the covenant contractors, God and Israel. God, as a sovereign, makes the covenant promises: to deliver Israel from Egypt, to give them the land. Moses and Aaron accept the promises on behalf of the people. Ten signs of God as a revelation of greatness and majesty of God, the King of Israel.	The story (haggadah) presenting the magnificence of God throughout the history of Israel, especially in the work of liberation of them from Egypt: ten signs-plagues, the leading through the divided sea, the leading through the desert to the Promised Land, building the temple in which God forgives the sins of His people; the listing of fifteen of many graces of God, given to His people.
Bestowing the law of the covenant (12:1-13:16): God gives the laws: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the law about the supper before going out:• the date of the feast: 15th day of Abib• the law about the eating of the Passover lamb• the law about the anointing the door with the blood of the lamb,	Explaining the feast laws: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• about 'Passover lamb'• about 'unleavened bread of the way out'• about bitter herbs• about the singing of psalm in honor of God who saves the oppressed, who brought Israel out of bondage.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the law about the circumcision of the participants of the Passover, • the law about the telling to the son about the miracle of Israel's liberation by the Lord from Egypt; • the law about the 7-day Feast of the Unleavened Bread, • the law about the offering of 'these opening the womb.' <p>Acceptance and fulfillment of the law of the Passover feast by the people.</p>	<p>The drinking of the second cup: the decision to begin now</p> <p>fulfilling the law of eating the food of the supper preceding the departure.</p> <p>The eating of unleavened bread, bitter herbs, unleavened bread with bitter herbs, in order to fulfill now the law of eating the Passover lamb.</p> <p>The eating of any festal dishes.</p>
<p>The covenant-making (13:17-14:31):</p> <p>The Lord leads His people out of the place where they ate the Passover lamb.</p> <p>The Lord leads His people through the desert and between the halves of the cut Rahab – on the bare bed of the Sea of Reeds. The Lord saves His people.</p> <p>The blessings of the covenant are illustrated in the salvation of Israel, the people following the Lord.</p> <p>The curses of the covenant are illustrated in the death of the Egyptians, the people going against the Lord.</p>	<p>The eating of Afikoman as an unleavened bread of the way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • out from the place of eating Passover lamb • and passing on the exposed bed of the sea. <p>Thanksgiving prayer for food and salvation Supplicatory prayer for food and salvation, for the miracle of a new departure under the leadership of Elijah and/or the Messiah.</p> <p>The drinking of the third cup: The decision to make signs of going out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the opening of the door • the asking for God to outpour His wrath on the nations, hostile to God and His people, the people now starting to go out <p>Closing of the door.</p>
<p>Recording of the fact that the covenant has been made now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record in memory of the people • record in hymn remembered by them. <p>God and His people fulfill the promises of the covenant (15:1-21):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the people fully accept the Lord as their God • the people glorify the Lord • the Lord gives Israel full freedom • the Lord gives Israel the promised land; it is so-called anticipation of the fact which will be later in the history. 	<p>The drinking of the fourth cup: the decision to fully accept</p> <p>the Lord as the God of Israel:</p> <p>the beginning of a great song of praise: Psa 114-118 and Psa 136.</p> <p>Closing of Seder with words: "Next year in Jerusalem!"</p>
<p>The strengthening of the laws of the covenant (15:22-18:27):</p> <p>The way of the people to assimilate the laws given by God as their ruler, the sovereign of the covenant.</p>	<p>Post-Seder: the singing of varied praise and educational songs, occupying almost half of the text of <i>The Passover Haggadah</i>.</p>

Table 1

The Passover participants drink each of the four consecutive cups as a sign of taking the next of the four consecutive steps in the realization of the Passover Seder. Each of these cups corresponds to **one of the four consecutive decisions**¹ of the Lord and His people in the four-stage process of Israel's liberation from captivity. At the same time, each of them corresponds to the appropriate stage in the ritual of the covenant-making.

Four important liturgical acts, expressing the content of four consecutive decisions / cups / parts of Seder, are listed below:

The first cup is responsible for the part that can be titled: the story.

The eating of bitter herbs at the beginning has no feeding meaning (herbs have no meaning to satisfy hunger), nor is it the fulfillment of God's order (God did not order eating of bitter herbs dipped in salty water). The taste of bitter herbs is to help in listening and understanding the story about the bitter enslavement of Fathers in captivity. What is more, it is to help everybody to understand himself as being now with Fathers there.

The next points in this section are as follows: four questions from the sons, the explanation of the laws of Seder, a haggadah that shows God, lovingly involved in the history of Israel, the listing of fifteen of the many graces that God has granted to His people, liberating them from slavery and bringing them into the land of Canaan.

The second cup is responsible for the part that can be titled: the eating of lamb as an announcement of the law of the covenant.

The primary purpose of consumption during the second part of Seder is not to satisfy hunger but to fulfill the law which God gave to the Israelites in Egypt, just before the night of Passover. This law is written in the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) as the law of the covenant concluded in the next stage of the exodus. What is more, this liturgical consumption is not only a fulfillment of the law but also an **announcement of the law of the covenant**. Such meaning is according to Ex 13:9: "It shall be to you as a sign on your hand and as a reminder between your eyes **so that the law of the Lord may be in your mouth**; for with a mighty hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt."

This law does not regulate the daily relationships of contractors, nor does it contain moral requirements such as the Decalogue. It aims to safeguard the memory of the facts fundamental for other laws: about the covenant-making, about the date of its making and about the obligation connected with it to have an annual holiday, about Israel's acceptance of the obligations of submission to God – thus it has the nature of legal clauses of the Hittite

¹ Cf. *Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu w przekładzie z języków oryginalnych*. Opracował zespół biblistów polskich z inicjatywy benedyktynów tynieckich [*Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testament, translated from the original languages*. It has been worked out by a team of Polish biblical scholars on the initiative of Benedictine of Tyniec], the 4th edition, Poznań 1996, usually cited as *Biblia Tysiąclecia* ⁴, footnote to Ps 16:5. The cup (כּוֹס) often occurs in the Bible as a vessel of God's judgments: (a) A cup of staggering (Isa 51:17,22; cf. also Ps 11:6: he cup of burning wind; Ps 75:9: they must to drink the cup of wine to the dregs; Jer 25:15ff: a cup of the wine of wrath; Jer 49:12; Lam 4:21; Ezek 23:31-33: the cup of horror and desolation; Hab 2:16), the drinking of which is a punishment imposed on a sinful person or nation, (b) A cup full of the best wine, giving joy; God gives it to the righteous man (cf. Ps 16:5; 23:5). The cup of judgments of God-judge – it is, in other words, the cup of the decision of God, what will be the future of the person whom He is judging: bad or good. Ps 116:13, sung during the Passover Seder, shows an image of a ceremonial raising of the cup of salvation as a sign of fulfilling vows made to the Lord in gratitude for the change of psalmist's situation – for the salvation which the Lord gave him. Cf. also Jer 16:7: a cup of consolation, which one drinks after the death of loved ones. The biblical images associated with the drinking of the cup filled with specific content, therefore, indicate a change in the situation of the chalice's drinker. This radical change can be a result of a decision either of a person who just made it while holding a cup or of God, who just now gives a cup of His judgments. The drinking of the cup in the Passover Seder is analogous – each successive cup indicates a radical novelty of 'its contents,' that is, a radical change in the situation.

ancient treaties². In light of this requirement, it becomes understandable why the number of the word **צָא** (to go out) in this law pericope is equal to 15 – it confirms in the memory of Israelites the date of their going out of Egypt on the 15th day of Abib = the date of the covenant-making.

The third cup is responsible for the part that can be titled: the eating of Afikoman as the ‘bread of the covenant’ – as a sign that now God and Israel are making their covenant.

The essential content here is the consumption of Afikoman and thanksgiving for it as the bread of the passage between the halves of the divided Rahab – the Sea of Reeds. Also essential is the raising of the request for the salvific exodus and finally the decision to open the door as a completion of the liturgical signs of this whole part: Israel, having opened the door, set out on the way to the Sea of Reeds, and she was not eating anything else during this passage except unleavened bread – the liturgical sign of this is the eaten Afikoman.

Just as the passage between halves of divided Rahab was an act of making a covenant between God and His people, accompanied by the covenant blessing (represented by the salvation of Israel) and the covenant curse (represented by the death of Egyptians, swallowed by the Abyss of waters of the sea), so the act of covenant-making is the eating of Afikoman completed by the prayers of thanksgiving and requests to pour out wrath upon hostile nations and the act of opening the door.

The fourth cup is responsible for the part that can be titled: singing a hymn in honor of the Lord, God of Israel, the Savior.

Extensive praise and didactic songs serve to strengthen the love of God in the hearts of the participants of the ritual of the Passover/Exodus/covenant that has just been fulfilled.

Finally, based on the structure of law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16), one should note:

- **inner parts II and III** are responsible for **eating** of legally prescribed food-symbols
- **outer parts III and IV** are not related to eating, but to **proclaiming**: the telling about the greatness of God and His promises is in part I; the singing about the glory of God and realization of His promises is in part IV.

The structure of the Book of Exodus 1-18 and, complementarily, the structure of law pericope are therefore a model for Passover Seder, celebrated by all of Israel on the night of 15th Abib each year in honor of the Lord as sovereign of Israel. The celebration of the Passover is each time the making present of the covenant which the Lord made with Israel in the whole exodus, recorded in Ex 1-18, and especially in the four pericopes: 6:2-11:10; 12:1-13:16; 13:17-14:31; 15:1-21.

The first essential step in the covenant procedure is **the presenting of both contractors**, but especially that stronger one. So in the first pericope (**6:2-11:10**) and the first part of Passover Seder, one shows the majesty of Lord, whose greatness is revealed by miraculous ten signs, made by Him through Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, and now proclaimed by the leader of Passover Seder in every place of celebration of the liturgy of that holy night.

The covenant law, which in ancient covenant treaties is the next element after the presentation of its parties, is represented in the Book of Exodus by the law pericope (**12:1-13:16**), and in the Passover Seder by **the eating of the lamb-Passover**, prescribed by the law. Because of the present impossibility of offering the lamb to the Lord in the temple of Jerusalem, Seder contains substitute liturgical acts, the most meaningful of which is the eating of the sandwich made of matzah and bitter herbs. This act makes-present the eating of the lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, as the Lord ordered in Egypt (cf. Ex 12:8).

² Cf. R. JASNOS, *Teologia prawa w Deuteronomium* [Theology of Law in Deuteronomy], Kraków 2001, p. 192.

The very act of irrevocable making (cutting) of the covenant, recorded in the third pericope (13:17-14:31), is made present in the third part of the Passover Seder. Namely, **the eating of unleavened Afikoman** and prayer for the salvific exodus, the opening of door and prayer for pouring out of wrath upon enemies of the outgoing people are signs that now it is made present the passage of the Lord and His people through the desert and between halves of divided Rahab, Sea of Reeds. The act of the covenant-making is done according to the same form as the covenant of the Lord with Abram (cf. Gen 15:17f).

Just as Israel sang **a hymn of praise** in honor of God the Savior after they made the covenant through the passage between the halves of the Sea of Reeds, so **in part IV** of Seder Israel raises the mighty Hallel, with Psalms 114-118; 136 and the songs praising Him who is God above all gods, and whose grace for Israel is unfathomable. This hymn also plays the role of recording in memory of Israel, vassal of the Lord, the fact of making a covenant, and fulfilling its obligations. The most important commitment of the Lord is to give Israel the freedom and land of Canaan; the essential commitment of the people is to worship the Lord, which must be expressed in obedience to His law, especially the law of Passover. The fulfillment of these obligations is already anticipated in the verses of the song. Israel, full of joy, inspired by the Spirit of God, already has a share in the goods that God – the King and Spouse who loves her – will give her in the framework of human history in the future!

One should emphasize that the Passover Seder as the liturgical reality making present the Passover/Exodus covenant has a very important feature. Namely, **it is not built on the model of a drama** in which the tiniest subsequent elements represent the course of successive³ events in the history of salvation, which God has made towards Israel in Egypt; **it is built on the model of an ancient treatise**, in which each of the four subsequent fundamental elements has its theme, different than the other fundamental elements have.

These four elements express the four main elements of the ritual of the conclusion / renewal of the covenant:

1. Presentation of the contracting parties and especially the stronger of them, and all the goods He has given to the weaker, His promises of the covenant
2. Presentation of the covenant law which the weaker party commits itself to fulfill
3. Already irrevocable act of making (cutting) covenant
4. Recording of the fact that the covenant was made and its regulations

Thanks to this in-depth deliberated construction, the realization of each of the four elements could take place in a different way (form), provided that the main purpose of every element is maintained. However, the Passover Seder determines that the primary form of the 1st and 4th elements are the word (spoken or sung), while the 2nd and 3rd elements are the eating of food-symbols.

³ One should add that the text of Ex 19-24 is to some extent similar: according to commentators, it reflects not so much the chronological order of events in Sinai as the theological order, which is intended to promulgate the Decalogue: cf. J. LEMAŃSKI, *Mojżesz – pośrednik Słowa Bożego (Wj 20,18-21)* [*Moses – mediator of the Word of God (Ex 20:18-21)*], "Verbum Vitae" 7 (2005), pp. 15-29. 19. The author refers to the famous medieval Jewish biblical commentator, Ramban (Moses ben Nahman).

3.7. The structure of the law pericope and the anticipatory nature of the Passover supper.

3.7.1. Introduction.

The law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) has an extremely complex structure. One previously pointed out⁴ the existence of two structures in it, mutually permeating each other, each of which consisting of four elements.

Analyses of the key signs of the structure allowed us to discover the necessity of parallel reading of two different, equally important laws, from which **the law of unleavened bread of departure** (12:34-39) was mentioned first, followed by **the law of the Passover lamb** (12:43-49).

Thanks to this parallel reading, one is not disturbed by the order of presented events.

The law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) presents that historically there was first the realization of the lamb-Passover law and then the law of unleavened bread of departure.

Simultaneously, there are in the middle of this pericope two subsequent texts, the first of which is about the killing of firstborns by the Lord and eating of unleavened bread by Israelites coming out of captivity, and the second one is about the lamb-Passover law, summed up strictly similarly, in essence identical, in a parallel way.

At present, one should pay attention to what, due to the need to complete the comparison of the structure of the Passover Seder and the structure of Ex 1-18, has been omitted:

The text about the killing of firstborns by the Lord and about eating unleavened bread by the Israelites who were coming out from captivity is a whole composed of two parallel parts:

- text about the killing of firstborns of Egypt by the Lord (12:29-33),
- text about the eating of unleavened bread by the Israelites coming out of captivity (12:34-39).

The second text is represented evidently in Seder by the custom of eating the unleavened bread of departure – Afikoman. This custom belongs to part III of Seder, which makes present the passage of the Lord and His people, carrying a dough not yet acidified.

The passage of the covenant partners through the middle of the Rahab – Sea of Reeds – cut in half, is made present here. The very word ‘Afikoman’ (etymologically: bed/bottom + manna) hides a connection with the divided, drained sea, at the bottom of which the Israelites passed under the leadership of the Lord, carrying unleavened (similar in taste to manna) bread.

However, the first text (12:29-33) also speaks about the passage of the Lord and Israel! In what manner? Here is the explanation:

⁴ Cf. point 3.4.3.2 of this dissertation – it is published as point 1.3.2. of the article on [Academia.edu](#) – [click, please!](#)

3.7.2. Lexical analysis.

a/. Egypt is also Rahab, Tannin.

The picture of the Israelites' departure and passage through the Sea of Reeds, presented in the Book of Exodus, is completed by various verses related to the word **רַהַב** and **תַּנִּין**.⁵ We already discussed some of them in the second chapter of this dissertation. We showed there that the cutting of the waters of the Sea of Reeds is equivalent to the cutting of an animal, Rahab (**רַהַב**), between whose halves the Lord and Israel passed, thus making a covenant. In those analyses, one omitted the following important fragments:

Isa 30:7

וּמִצְרַיִם הֶבֶל וְרִיק יַעֲזֹרוּ לָכֵן קָרָאתִי לָזֹאת רַהַב הֵם שָׁבֶת

Egypt unsuccessfully and vainly promises help, which is why I call it this way: 'Rahab – idle'

So not only the Sea of Reeds but also Egypt can be represented by Rahab in the Bible texts!

Likewise, in the speeches against Egypt, God, through the prophet Ezekiel, calls him Tannin – the dragon dwelling in the waters of the sea: Ezek 29:3; 32:2.

It follows from this observation that the interpretation of the prophecy of Isa 51:9-10, speaking about the splitting of Rahab or Tannin as the splitting of the Sea of Reeds, can be extended to an earlier act: the Lord split Egypt first, then He split the sea. The consequences of this extension of the interpretation require a few more comments.

b/. The text Ex 12:29 begins in the following way:

וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיְהִי הָהֵכָה כָּל־בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם

And it happened **in the middle of that night**: the Lord killed all firstborns in the land of Egypt.

The word *half* (**חֲצִי**) refers here to the night, but it brings to mind the halves of the Sea of Reeds and (we will discuss it below, in c/.) the middle of Egypt and the middle of the Sea of Reeds.

To get the halves, one has to cut something. In the Bible, there are two verbs connected with the noun **חֲצִי**: **גָזַר** – 1Kings 3:25; **בָּקַע** – Zech 14:4. The first of these verbs is contained in the description of the covenant of God with Abram (Gen 15:17: **גָּזַר** – half), the second in the description of the halving of the Sea of Reeds (Ex 14:16.21).

c/. Ex 12:31 contains a long-awaited pharaoh's command, given in the following words: "Rise, get out **from among my people**,"

where **מִתּוֹךְ עַמִּי** contains the word **תָּוֶךְ** – center. It occurs again in the description of the covenant of God with Abram (Gen 15:10) – Abram split the animals down the middle.

However, the word **תָּוֶךְ** is present exceptionally often in the description of the exodus: it appears 14 times in Ex 1-18.

⁵ They appear in: **first**: Job 9:13; 26:12; Psa 40:5; 87:4; 89:11; 90:10; 138:3; Prov 6:3; Song 6:5; Isa 3:5; 30:7; 51:9; **second**: Gen 1:21; Ex 7:9n, 12; Deut 32:33; Job 7:12; Psa 74:13; 91:13; 148:7; Isa 27:1; 51:9; Jer 51:34; Ezek 29:3; 32:2.

The presence of the word **תָּוֶךְ** is particularly important in verses:

- Ex 7:5: The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel **from their midst**.

This verse is equivalent to the verse 12:29, which begins the description of killing the firstborns (12:29-33), analyzed in this point of this dissertation

- Ex 11:4

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה כְּחֹצֶת הַלַּיְלָה אֲנִי יוֹצֵא בְּתוֹךְ מִצְרַיִם

“Thus says the Lord, ‘About **midnight** I am going out **into the midst** of Egypt,’” where the word ‘**midnight**’ means strictly ‘the half of the night’ – **כְּחֹצֶת הַלַּיְלָה**.

- Ex 14:16. 22. 23. 27. 29; 15:19 – these verses refer to the middle of the Sea of Reeds (**תוֹךְ הַיָּם**), between halves of which the Israelites passed, but the Egyptians died.

d/ Ex 12:30 and 12:33 versus Ex 14:30:

Ex 12:30 And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone **dead** (**מָת**).

Ex 12:33 The Egyptians urged the people on to hasten their departure from the land, for they said, ‘We will all **be dead** (**מָתִים**).’

The verb **מוֹת** (put somebody to death / be killed / to die) ends both verses. It also occurs in the description of the passage through the divided sea, especially in Ex 14:30 regarding killed Egyptians:

Ex 14:30 The Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw **the Egyptians dead** on the shore of the sea.

אֶת־מִצְרַיִם מָת עַל־שְׂפַת הַיָּם

e/ However, there is also another connection between putting Egyptian to death in the middle of the night of 15th Abib and putting Egyptian to death in the middle of the sea:

In the Bible, the sea is often synonymous with the Abyss, Sheol, the place of death.

However, we must first note that the word **תְּהוֹם** – depths, deep places, abyss – appears twice in Moses’ hymn:

- Ex 15:5 The deeps cover them; they went down into the depths like a stone.
- Ex 15:8 At a breath of your anger the waters piled up, the flowing waters stood like a mound,
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

The ‘**sea – Abyss**’ parallelism is significant to Israelite’s thinking⁶; it is also in the text Isa 51:9-10, analyzed in the second chapter of this dissertation; it describes the cutting of the Sea of Reeds as the cutting of Rahab/Tannin by the arm of the Lord:

Isa 51:10

Are not You who was drying up **a sea**
waters of **a great deep**
making depths **of a sea**
a way for the passing of **the redeemed**?

הֲלוֹא אַתָּה־הִיא הַמַּחְרֶבֶת יָם
מִי תְהוֹם רַבָּה
הַשָּׂמָה מַעֲמֻקִּי־יָם
דֶּרֶךְ לַעֲבֹר גְּאוּלָּיִם:

⁶ Cf. also Job 28:14 and 38:16.

In the places mentioned above, תְּהוֹם (**Abyss**) is a synonym for **the sea** (יָם). However, תְּהוֹם is also a synonym for **Sheol**, the land of death!

A particularly compelling illustration of the Lord's people's conviction that there is somewhere under the sea, **at the base of mountains and lands**, the posthumous land of the deads, Sheol, is the following passage from Chapter 2 of the Book of Prophet Jonah:

³ And he said, "I called out of my distress to the Lord, and He answered me. I cried for help from **the depth of Sheol** (שְׁאוֹל); You heard my voice.

⁴ For You had cast me into the deep, Into **the heart of the sea** (יָם), and the current engulfed me. All Your breakers and billows passed over me.

⁶ **The waters** (מַיִם) compassed me about even to the soul. **Abyss** (תְּהוֹם) engulfed me; seaweed (סוּרִי⁷) clung about my head.

⁷ I descended to the roots of the mountains. The earth with its bars was around me forever. But You have brought up (וַתַּעֲלֵךְ⁸) my life from the grave, O Lord my God.

Based on this connection between **sea and Sheol**, one should understand Israel's passage at the bottom of the Sea of Reeds as a passage through the Land of Death – the Abyss, Sheol. Israelites had to go into the deep pit that is the seabed, and then **climb up** to the other side. The Israelites, led by the Lord, went through the Abyss!

However, this 'climbing up' of Israel from the Abyss was not only when they were leaving the split sea. The Israelites also had to 'climb up' (cf. Ex 12:38) at the beginning of the way – at the moment of leaving captivity on the 15th Abib. They were coming out of Egypt, from the 'iron-smelting furnace,'⁹ i.e., from the land of fire and death, from Abyss.

f/. To observations presented here, it is worth adding what has already been discussed in point 2.2.1: among many acts of God leading to Israelites' liberation from Egypt, the author of Psalm 136, which is sung in the fourth part of the Passover Seder, mentioned only two:

- α. the killing of the firstborns of Egypt,
- β. the leading of the people between the divided waters of the Sea of Reeds, while **sinking the Pharaoh's troops**.

The biblical writer showed in this way how important it is to see the connection between these two events and their theological significance.

g/. In some Jewish traditions, one recites *Prayer for the dew*¹⁰ on the first day of Passover. It is a combination of thought about **Abyss** with celebrated Passover, with participation (through liturgy) in **the salvation** of Israelites by the Lord, in the act of leading them through the divided waters of the sea.

For example: "Dew gladdens the valley and its grass. [...] **You, Lord, are the eternal mighty one, who resurrects the dead; in your power is to save.** The greatest depths of the abyss are thirsty for her drops; all the green pastures yearn for her".

⁷ This word is also contained in the name of the Sea of Reeds: יַם־סוּף – Cf. Ex 13:18; 15:4.22.

⁸ The form of the verb – עָלָה, also found in Ex 1:10; 3:8.17; 12:38; 13:18; 17:3 to describe the Israelites' departure from Egypt.

⁹ Cf. Deut 4:20; Jer 11:4: מִכּוּר הַבְּרִזָּל; 1Kings 8:51: מִתּוֹךְ כּוּר הַבְּרִזָּל

¹⁰ Cf. M. TOMAL (elaboration), *Jak modlił się Żydzi. Antologia modlitw [How the Jews Pray. Anthology of Prayers]*, Warszawa 2000, p. 173-174. The author has previously included, on pages 151-172, *The Haggadah*.

3.7.3. Conclusions.

♦ **Just as** cutting of waters of the Sea of Reeds is equivalent to cutting of Rahab/Tannin so that Israelites could enter into its center and then also exit from it – exit from the center of Rahab/Tannin (cf. Isa 51:9-10),

so, similarly, the exit of Israel from the center of Egypt (cf. Ex 7:5; 12:31) at night 15th Abib is also exit from the center of Rahab/Tannin (Egypt-Rahab: Isa 30:7; Egypt-Tannin: Ezek 29:3; 32:2).

Just as the Lord **split** the Sea of Reeds like Rahab/Tannin **and passed through** its interior (עבר – cf. Ex 15:16; Num 33:8¹¹) – He and Israel led by Him –

in the same way three days earlier, on the 15th day of Abib, the Lord, at night, **split** Egypt-Rahab/Tannin, **passed** (עבר – cf. Ex 12:12.23) **through** its center and led up (עבר – cf. Ex 12:38) Israel from within it.

Moreover, already on the night of 15th Abib, the Lord passed (עבר) through the middle of Egypt as He formerly passed (עבר) through the middle of cut-up animals, thus making a covenant with Abram (cf. Gen 15:17).

Already on the night of 15th Abib, the Lord split Rahab/Egypt/Abyss (Egypt as an ‘iron-smelting furnace’: Deut 4:20; Jer 11:4; 1Kings 8:51) to bring out His people, the contractor of the covenant, from within it!

♦ Can we say, then, that already while Israelites being obedient to the Lord remained at the Passover Vigil in His honor, the Lord made ‘the covenant between the halves’¹² with them? So did the Passover Vigil of Israel in Egypt, therefore, already contain an act of covenant-making?

It seems not. After all, we must remember that from **the chronological sequence relation** (cf. point 3.4.3.1. – published as point 1.3.1. of the article on [Academia.edu](https://www.academia.edu) – click, please!) it yields that the biblical writer strongly emphasizes the fact that **the eating of lamb preceded the act of the Lord’s passing through the middle of Egypt and the related departure of the sons of Israel from captivity**.

Moreover, it yields that **the unleavened bread consumed with the Passover lamb cannot be confused with the unleavened bread of departure**. The time when Israelites were fulfilling the order to eat the Passover lamb was **closed in the half of the night**. This closure of the time of eating the lamb read from the chronological sequence relation in the law pericope agrees with the indications of **the Talmud**, prohibiting the consumption of the Passover lamb after midnight: “The paschal offering does, after the hour of midnight,

¹¹ The Book of Numbers (33:8) states: “They set out from Pi-Hahiroth, passed through the midst of the sea (בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם) into the wilderness, and went three days’ journey in the wilderness of Etham, and encamped in Marah.” Cf. also Josh 4:23; Neh 9:11; Psa 66:6; 78:13; Isa 51:10; Zech 10:11.

¹² Using the expression taken from *The Passover Haggadah*: cf. an English-language text of *The Passover Haggadah*, published by Kehot Publication Society, issued by Chabad Lubavitch in electronic form on the Internet: <https://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/hagada.txt>, chapter: MAGGID: *Covenant between the Portions*. Cf. also פסח הגדה של פסח *Hagada. Opowiadania o wyjściu Izraelitów z Egiptu na pierwsze dwa wieczory święta Pesach* [Haggadah. Stories About the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt on the First Two Evenings of Pesach]. Wydawnictwo Księgarni M. Zalcmana, Wiedeń 1927, p. 16: the Hebrew phrase in *Haggadah*: בְּכֵרִית בֵּין הַבְּתָרִים. *Hagada* is currently available in the “Bibliofilska Edycja Reprintów” as a reprint, made from a copy from private collections at the Interdruck GmbH printing house in Leipzig, Warszawa 1991.

render the hands unclean. Sacrifices which are rejected or that have remained beyond their prescribed time, also render the hands unclean.” (*Pesachim* X. 9.)¹³. The Talmud forbids this, although directly from the words of God, written in the law pericope, one cannot prove the existence of such a prohibition!

However, the parallel arrangement of the texts **12:29-39** and **12:43-49** (cf. Table 1 and Table 3 in point 3.4.3.1 of this dissertation – published as point 1.3.1. of the article on [Academia.edu – click, please!](#)), contained within the inclusion of verses 12:28 and 12:50, indicates that **the text 12:29-39 is a whole** (parallel to the second whole, i.e., **to 12:43-49**); therefore there is a close connection between the verses of this whole, i.e., 29-33 and 34-39, and thus also between the passage of the Lord through the midst of Egypt (12:29-33) and the departure of Israel with the unleavened dough (12:34-39). Similarly, the whole text Ex 13:1-16 shows this very connection between (1) the passage of the Lord and leading the Israelites out of Egypt, and (2) the eating of the unleavened bread of the way out.

From both texts, therefore, it follows that when it took place the historical **passage** of the Lord through the middle of Egypt as Rahab/Tannin and **leading of Israel carrying unleavened bread** out of there, at the same time it took place by anticipation the passage of the Lord and Israel following Him and carrying unleavened bread through the middle of the Sea as Rahab/Tannin. It means that simultaneously it took place the passage of the Lord through the cut Egypt and **the making of the covenant** of Passover/Exodus between the cut sea.

Until Israel was taken out of Egypt, the covenant was not made. Therefore, the eating of Passover lamb is not an act of making a covenant.
The act of eating of Afikoman, closely related to the passage of the Lord (through the middle of Egypt as Rahab/Tannin and sea as Rahab/Tannin), who leads Israelites out of the middle of Egypt – is an act of making the Passover/Exodus covenant.

♦ However, we must make one more observation: the biblical writer composed the law pericope (12:1-13:16) and the pericope of going out (13:17-14:31) in such a way that the description of this – crucial for the anticipation – Israel’s exit from the middle of Egypt-Rahab is **inside** the law pericope, and not only at the beginning of the pericope of going out. Since **the whole pericope of law** in the scheme of the six stages of Israel’s exodus from Egypt **represents the whole Passover supper** preceding the march out of captivity, thus we can state that:

In this literary record, both the departure of Israel following the Lord and the passage through the midst of the split Rahab took place not only at the time of the historic departure (represented by 13:17-14:31) but also at the time when Israel kept the vigil for the Lord in the Passover night (represented by 12:1-13:16).

¹³ *Miszna – Pesachim*, translated by R. MARCINKOWSKI, [in:] M. DZIWIŚ (ed.), W. JAWORSKI, A. KOMOROWSKI (choice of texts), *Judaizm [Judaism]*, Kraków 1989, p. 177. Cf. on the Internet: <https://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/t03/psc14.htm> – p. 258.

It seems that some extraordinary theological significance must have been the source of such a complicated literary composition of the pericope of law and the pericope of going out. However, this meaning is not fully available in light of the Holy Scriptures of the First Covenant. After all, we can notice about the biblical writer:

- on the one hand, he emphasizes the separation of the time of eating the lamb from the time of eating the unleavened bread of the way out,
- on the other hand, he seems to combine the time of the Passover supper with the time of departure and the covenant associated with it.

One should conclude that theological meaning, here discussed, of the fact that the biblical writer-editor put *the description of the passage through the split Abyss* into the framework of the description of the Passover supper will become understandable in light of the new departure and new supper of the new covenant, announced by prophets.

♦ The research shows that the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) consists of four structural elements, each of which corresponds to one element of the structure of Ex 6:2-15:21, provided that **the internal elements, mutually parallel**, should be read in reverse order: the third element (12:43-49) corresponds to the second element of Exodus (12:1-13:16) and the second (12:29-39) corresponds to its third element (13:17-14:31).

Division of time when supper and departure are at the center of description	Description of the whole Exodus Ex 1-18	The pericope of law / Passover supper Ex 12:1-13:16	A Hittite scheme of covenant-making
the time before supper and departure	1:1-11:10 = 1:1-6:1 + 6:2-11:10	12:1-27a	historical prologue + beginning of the covenant-making ceremony
the time of supper and departure	12:1-13:16	12:43-49 the eating of lamb-Passover the main food of supper	the bestowing of the covenant law
	13:17-14:31	12:29-39 the eating of Afikoman unleavened bread of departure	the covenant-making
the time after supper and departure	15:1-18:27 = 15:1-21 + 15:22-18:27	13:1-16	commemoration of the fact that the covenant was made

Table 2

What the four-element description of the entire exodus/covenant-making between the halves of the split Rahab presents, is contained **in the appropriate order in the pericope of law / Passover supper.**

Although historically Israel did not celebrate the four-element Passover liturgy in Egypt, the biblical editor-writer in such a way composed the entire description of the exodus and the pericope representing the Passover supper within it as to show an unusual thought:

1. The time which includes (a) the Passover supper of Israel in Egypt and (b) the departure of Israel with unleavened bread from Egypt – contains an element of the glorious passage of the Lord and His people between the halves of the split Sea-Rahab/Tannin.
If the Passover supper in Egypt had a 4-element structure like the annual supper-commemoration it would anticipate the conclusion of the covenant of the Lord and Israel.
2. To make the covenant, the Lord passed through the Abyss (Sea of Reeds) and led Israel through it.
3. The eating of the Passover Afikoman in part III of Seder of the annual Passover – is the eating of food of covenant, food of resurrection, food of exit from Abyss to new life.

3.8. Summary of the third chapter of the dissertation.

This chapter described the course of the annual Passover of Israel. Based on *The Passover Haggadah*, one presented liturgical words and acts of 14 points into which the Passover Seder is traditionally divided; Seder bestows the order according to which these points are realized successively.

This presentation pointed out the need for a new understanding of the meaning and role of the unleavened Afikoman as the essential liturgical food-symbol of part III of Seder.

By analyzing the Hebrew word ‘Afikoman’ (אַפִּיקוֹמָן = its bottom [אַפִּיקוֹן], **manna** [מָן]), we have documented its connection with the passage – on the bare bottom of the Sea of Reeds – of the Lord and Israel, carrying **an unleavened dough**, thus similar to sweet **manna**. We pointed out the complementary meaning of two other Hebrew words: אֶתֶּן and צִפּוֹן.

The Hebrew name of the 4th point of the Passover Seder – אֶתֶּן (an apocopated form of imperfect qal and jussive of the word הִצַּח) – within which the leader of Seder divides (הִצַּח) the unleavened bread (matzah) to obtain Afikoman, points out the connection between Afikoman and the division of the waters of the Sea of Reeds. It also points out the prophet Elijah, who, by the power of God, made a similar division (הִצַּח) of waters of Jordan (cf. 2Kings 2:8.14). Indeed: in part III, after eating of Afikoman, Passover participants recite numerous psalms and prayers in which they express the request for the salvation of Israel, for the descent of Elijah, and for the making present of a new exodus which brings the People of God into the time of Messiah.

The 11th point of Seder was named צִפּוֹן, which means *hidden*. Taking into account that the vowels were added to the Bible text only six centuries after Christ, one can find in the Hebrew Bible a term hiding this word: בַּעַל צִפּוֹן – Num 33:7, which, in a slightly different spelling, is in Ex 14:2.9 בַּעַל צִפּוֹן – *Lord of the north* or *Lord of the hiding*. It is the name of the place near the Sea of Reeds, opposite which the Israelites set up the camp immediately before entering its bare bottom!

It is within the framework of the 11th point that one eats Afikoman: as the Israelites coming out of the Egyptian captivity were eating 'Afikoman' – unleavened bread, not acidified, like sweet manna – in the place 'The Lord of the north' or 'The Lord of the hiding,' their sons the same way eat Afikoman now, at Passover time, at the point 'The hidden.'

Then analyses of the literary structure of the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) have shown that the unleavened Afikoman is a food-symbol of the same rank as the lamb-Passover, eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

The law pericope consists of four parts, the first two of which are linked by **the chronological sequence relation**; employing this relation, the biblical writer emphasized two aspects of chronology:

- a. **The sequence:** the eating of the lamb-Passover is before the eating of the unleavened bread of departure;
- b. **The separateness:** the eating of unleavened bread with the lamb-Passover and bitter herbs cannot be confused with the eating of unleavened bread of departure.

The unleavened bread of departure represents a different part of the Passover Seder than the unleavened bread eaten with bitter herbs. The unleavened bread of departure represents a new stage in the history of Exodus – not the supper preceding the departure, but the departure itself and the whole way which began with it.

Taking into account the meaning of the key verses of the structure (12:28 = 12:50; 12:41 ≡ 12:51; text 12:29-33) has allowed us to discover a relation of parallelism, connecting 'the description of the Israelites carrying unleavened dough out of Egypt' (Ex 12:34-39) and 'the legal orders concerning the eating of lamb-Passover' (12:43-49 as a supplement to 12:3-11). Based on this, we could conclude that the description 12:34-39 has a legislative function in the pericope of law and is of equal rank to that of 'the orders concerning the eating of lamb-Passover'.

One has shown that the structure of the law pericope in the intention of biblical writer serves above all to indicate the meaning of the two inner parts of Seder and, consequently, the meaning of the food, characteristic for each of them individually:

- in part II: **the lamb-Passover**, which they were eating within the framework of the supper of waiting to leave captivity.
- in part III: **the unleavened bread of departure**, which they were eating as the food of their departure and way to freedom.

The lexical analysis of a sentence from the treatise *Pesachim* X.8., performed in the third chapter of the dissertation, confirmed the role of the literary structure of the law pericope as a model for authors of the Passover Seder. We have shown that this sentence prohibits to offer to the Lord 'these opening the womb' (Ex 13:11-16) within the Passover Seder. Thus, contrary to the common interpretation, this sentence is not a ban for eating after eating Afikoman nor a ban for playing after the end of Passover liturgy.

The formulation of this prohibition in the Tradition of Israel indicates that it is the answer to the question arising in the analysis of the structure of the pericope of law (Ex 12:1-13:16). The question is: whether fulfillment of the command about offering to the Lord 'these opening the womb' is to follow consumption of Afikoman, i.e., is it to be the next liturgical act within the Passover Seder?

Next to the literary structure of the law pericope, the Ex 1-18 structure plays a fundamental role in the Passover Seder. It consists of six pericopes, of which the four middle ones (Ex 6:2-15:21) are essential for the conducted research. It is because the fourth of them (15:1-21) represents the singing of a hymn in honor of the Lord, initiated by Moses on the other side of the Sea of Reeds and undertaken by all Israel. Therefore, it is evident that

this fourth pericope has its counterpart in the fourth part of Seder, where Israel sings Hallel – Psa 114-118; 136, the songs of praise. This similarity (correspondence) of the forth part of the biblical text and forth part of Seder text raises the immediate question: do the other pericopes have a counterpart in the subsequent parts of Seder?

Research conducted in this chapter has shown that this is the case.

I. The first pericope (6:2-11:10), together with the outer pericope 1:1-6:1, shows the greatness of God, who initiates a procedure of making the covenant with Israel. It makes it through:

- a commitment to be their God and to accept them as His People
- a commitment to free Israel from cruel slavery and to give them the land of Canaan
- showing the majesty of God through the miraculous ten signs made before the eyes of Egyptians and thus fulfilling the first of four fundamental stages of Israel's liberation

The role of pericope 1:1-6:1 is to present the entire history of the mutual relations between the two covenant partners to date, with particular emphasis on showing the goodness of God to Israel, including His grace in a situation of oppression in Egyptian captivity.

The two pericopes together have a double role: in the history of Exodus, **they represent the time before the Passover supper;** in the rite of the covenant-making, they represent **the historical prologue (1:1-6:1) and the presentation of both covenant partners,** especially the stronger of them and His promises to the weaker one (6:2-11:10).

Part I of the Passover Seder has the aim similar to the message of both pericopes. Namely, it orders first to eat bitter herbs dipped in salty water, thus allowing the participants of the Passover to taste the bitterness of their Fathers in captivity. Then the leader of Passover liturgy makes all of them experiencing the history of Exodus, which reveals the love of God for His people. The answer of the Passover community to such experienced goodness of God is the recitation of fifteen of the many graces that the Lord showed to Israel by liberating them from Egypt, leading them as far as Canaan, giving them the temple and the grace of forgiving their sins in it.

The narrator presents the blessings of God throughout Israel's history up to the time of the erection of the temple, and not just those which, described in Ex 1:1-11:10, preceded the Passover supper of the Fathers before their departure from Egypt. In the Passover Seder, as in Ex 1-18, there is a rule according to which people used to write ancient covenant treaties. Namely, the historical prologue (like Ex 1:1-6:1) is to show the entire history of mutual relations between both covenant partners, the history until the day the covenant is made (as it was in Egypt) or renewed (as it is in the annual Passover, celebrated according to *The Haggadah* probably written already in the time of Solomon, since history is only up to his times and not further).

II. The second pericope (12:1-13:16) also plays a dual role: as part of the covenant-making rite, it represents the text of **the covenant law**, while in the history of Exodus, it represents **the Passover supper** preceding the release from slavery.

To find out that this is the case, it was first necessary to notice that according to the biblical writer-editor of the canonical text of the Book of Exodus, **the text 12:1-13:16 is a literary whole (pericope).** This research task was challenging to perform because he gave this pericope a very complicated structure that makes it difficult to discover its beginning and end.

This intention is notably demonstrated by the fact¹⁴ that **the biblical writer divided** the Moses' conveying of the commands of God's first speech (12:1-20: the theme of **the lamb** and immediately after it the theme of **the unleavened bread** of departure) to Israelites into two distinct stages. In his first speech (12:21-28), Moses only conveys the theme of **the lamb**, while he passes on the theme of **the unleavened bread** of departure only in his second speech (13:3-16), that is, in the final, fourth part of the law pericope.

The research carried out in the first chapter of the work has also shown that the word **אכל** (eat) occurs **precisely 22 times** in this whole pericope, which in numerical terms equals to the covenant's legal deadline for ending the consumption of only unleavened, non-acidified food.

It is important to note that **the date**, so mathematically related to the canonical text of the 12:1-13:16 pericope, is determined by the law of the Passover/Exodus covenant, the law given verbally in this pericope and nowhere else in the Ex 1-18 text!

At the same time, one should strongly emphasize that the total number of 22 occurrences of the word **אכל** in the law pericope consists not only of laws concerning the eating of unleavened food, but also laws concerning the lamb – Passover. Thanks to this, this pericope is a literary whole, contrary to the fact that the laws contained in it are grouped in separate thematic units, concerning either lamb or unleavened bread, and nowhere these two entities together. These occurrences concern successively:

the lamb-Passover: 12:4. 7. 8ab. 9. 11ab – 7 times

unleavened food: 12:15ab. 16. 18. 19. 20ab – 7 times

the lamb-Passover: 12:43. 44. 45. 46. 48

unleavened food: 13:3. 6. 7

אכל (eat), which occurs in the Passover laws written in Ex 12:1-13:16, **binds this text together as the law pericope**. At the same time, **אכל** (eat) gives this whole also a second dimension, closely related to food. Namely, this pericope represents **the Passover supper**, which is **the second essential stage of Exodus** in Israel's history (1. the 'plagues,' 2. **the Passover supper**, 3. the crossing through the desert and the Sea of Reeds, 4. the hymn in honor of God at the shore of freedom). The law pericope itself is the second element of the structure of Ex 6:2-15:21.

In this way, the community **eating food prescribed by Passover law** realizes Seder's part II, the aim of which is to incorporate participants of annual Passover into **Passover supper of Fathers** before they depart from captivity and, at the same time, into **the acceptance of the law** of the Passover/Exodus covenant by them.

Pericope Ex 12:1-13:16 shows that God, as a sovereign, gives Israel-vassal the covenant law, the primary purpose of which is to ensure the vassal's remembrance about the commitment of submission, the date of the covenant-making and the circumstances of its making.

This purpose is served by:

- a. The Passover law: one is to celebrate the Passover annually on the **15th day** of the month Abib so that Israel would remember that God brought them out of Egypt that day (hence the verb **יצא** (to lead) occurs **15 times** in this pericope);
- b. The Law of Unleavened Bread: one must celebrate this holiday for seven consecutive days, from the 14th day in the evening to the end of the 21st day, i.e., when the **22nd day** begins (hence **22 times** there is the verb **אכל** – to eat – in this pericope) because the Fathers during

¹⁴ For other proofs, see [Chapter I – click, please!](#) – of this dissertation.

the time of the exodus from Egypt were eating only unleavened bread. One should note that 7 days is the time from the day of the departure to the day of stopping in Mara. Precisely in the middle of the time of these seven days is the night of crossing the sea, the night of making (as it appears from the next pericope and the whole scheme) of the covenant.

- c. The law about the offering to the Lord ‘these opening the womb’. Its goal is to make Israel remembering about the Lord-Sovereign, who saved firstborn Israelites and their firstborn animals during the Passover Night.

III. The third pericope (13:17-14:31) shows the Lord and the people He leads during their way out of captivity. From the history of Exodus, one knows that Israelites during this way were carrying dough, which had not yet been acidified, and they were baking from it and consume unleavened bread. With unleavened dough/bread, the people passed on the bare bottom of the Sea of Reeds.

The cutting of the sea waters caused by the Lord’s power, and the passage of Him – **in the signs of fire and cloud** – and His People between the halves of the split Rahab – Sea of Reeds (cf. Isa 51: 9-10) was a historically once-off act of making the covenant between God and Israel. It was an act analogous to the passage of the Lord **in signs of fire and smoke** between halves of animals cut by Abram (cf. Gen 15: 17-18).

The third pericope, therefore, plays a double role also: as part of the covenant rite, it represents **the act of covenant-making (cutting)**, while in the history of Exodus it represents the release from captivity and the passage as far as the other side of the cut Sea of Reeds.

This act of going out of captivity / making a covenant is present each year in part III of the celebrated Passover feast. After the Passover participants eat the lamb-Passover and other festive dishes in part II, they pass to part III of Seder **to eat unleavened Afikoman**, whose name means ‘bottom and manna.’

The essential liturgical acts here are as follows. The first is the requests to God for sending the prophet Elijah now. Then they pour an exceptional cup of wine for him. Next, they open the door in the hope that now he is entering and, after he drinks the cup of wine, he will take them into the way for leading them into the Messiah’s time. Finally, they raise the request for God to pour out now His wrath upon nations hostile to the Lord and them as His people, who now are coming out with Fathers from Egypt. The whole of these acts is the liturgical making-present of making the covenant between the Lord and Israel, the covenant which took place during their passing under God’s command from the place where they were eating lamb to the place of their finally passing the bare seabed between halves of the sea – Rahab.

IV. The fourth pericope (15:1-21) with the significant supplement included in outer pericope 15:22-18:27 are, in the framework of the covenant-making scheme, a record of the fact that the covenant was concluded and firmly noted in the memory of weaker contractor. In the history of Exodus, this pericope conveys the hymn of Israel, sung in honor of the Lord. This hymn also plays an important role in recording the fact of covenant-making on the tablets of Israelites’ hearts. Their way to Horeb, described in 15:22-18:27, has the same role of inculcating in Israel, the vassal of the Lord, the law of the covenant, and strengthening her in its faithful observance.

It is analogously in the Passover Seder: in part IV, they sing Hallel and songs of praise and edification (they occupy almost half of the text of *The Haggadah*!), shaping the hearts of the Passover participants in the spirit of gratitude to the Lord and thankfulness for the fact that He is their God and they are His people, free from submission to strangers.

The structure of the Passover Seder is identical to the literary structure of Ex 1-18, and especially Ex 6:2-15:21, the literary structure of the law pericope Ex 12:1-13:16 (if one swaps the parallel elements 2nd and 3rd), as well as the literary structure of the Hittite treaties, documenting the fact that two contractors made the covenant and that they did it through the celebration of the appropriate ancient rite.

Seder (**order**, rite) of Passover is the making-present of **successive** stages of Exodus, described in Ex 1-18.

Seder (**order**, rite) of Passover is the making-present of the **successive** stages of an ancient ceremony (rite) of covenant-making, accomplished by God and Israel.

The rite of the covenant-making between God and Israel, hidden in the successive stages of the work of the Lord, leading Israel out of Egypt, is made present each year in the celebrated Passover feast. In the framework of this feast liturgy, **one first predicts** magnificence and benevolence of God, sovereign of the covenant, **then eats**, prescribed by the covenant law, lamb-Passover with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, **then eats** Afikoman as the bread of covenant-making (bread of passage between halves of divided Rahab – Sea of Reeds), **and finally sings** hymns praising the Lord as God of Israel, her King, magnificent Lord and Benefactor, sovereign of the covenant.

The Passover Seder is the process that **sequentially makes-present** the four **successive stages** of Exodus / covenant-making. Each of these stages connects itself with one of the four cups of wine that structuralize the Passover rite.

An important complementary element of analyses focused on bringing out the dimension of making-presence in the Passover Seder was the understanding of the structure of the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) as a record not only of the making present of what happened in the history of Exodus but also as an anticipation of what is to happen. Namely, if Israel celebrating the Passover supper in honor of the Lord in Egypt were doing it according to the four-element scheme of the annual feast-commemorative, then she would participate in the passage through the cut Abyss already at the time of that supper, she would already then have become a covenant partner.

It seems that the understanding of the purpose for which the biblical writer-editor of the Book of Exodus composed the law pericope in such a complicated way is rather not fully possible on the ground of the writings of the First Covenant. It seems to indicate the necessity of referring to the new exodus, the new covenant, and the new Passover feast of that covenant, which the prophets of the First Covenant have announced.