

The Passover Afikoman in light of its Hebrew origin

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Abstract

This paper shows the word ‘Afikoman’ as a compound Hebrew term, not a Greek one. The way to discover it was to analyze both *The Hebrew Bible* and *The Tractate Pesachim X.8* in *The Mishnah*. Lexical and structural literary analyses of these Hebrew texts show Afikoman as the unleavened bread eaten not as a dessert at the end of the official supper in the second part of the Passover Seder, but as the central liturgical element of the third part. The Passover Seder has four parts, each of them connected with one of the four cups of wine.

Afikoman appears not as a symbol of the lamb-Passover. Consumption of it is not a fulfillment of the Lord’s order to eat the lamb-Passover with unleavened bread. Afikoman is an unleavened bread commanded by God to commemorate this time of Exodus which followed the consumption of the lamb-Passover, namely, the time of bringing the people out of Egypt by the Lord.

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Summary

Introduction

In this article¹, we discuss fundamental questions connected with the Passover Afikoman. Lexical analysis of Hebrew texts, mainly that of *The Hebrew Bible* and *The Passover Haggadah*, will show an understanding of ‘Afikoman’ as Hebrew compound word².

In the text of *The Haggadah*, in the fragment with the wise son’s question, one can read a particularly valuable explanation, taken from *Mishnah*, from *Tractate Pesachim* X.8, namely:

וְאָף אֶתָּה אָמַר לוֹ כִּהְלָכוֹת הַפֶּסַח: אֵין מִפְטִירִין אַחַר הַפֶּסַח אֶפִיקוֹמָן

The widely accepted contemporary understanding of this answer connects it with the custom of not-eating after consumption of Afikoman during the Passover Seder. How ancient are the sources of this conviction?

It was during the first two centuries after Christ when so-called Tannaim as the authors of the *Mishnah* laid the foundations for the Jewish tradition that was to become an unquestionable source of interpretation of *The Hebrew Bible* for the later generations of eminent commentators until the present day. About two/four centuries later, so-called Amoraim, belonging to two Jewish scholar centers, compiled two versions of *Gemarah* to establish an interpretation of *Mishnah* and to form *The Talmud* with it.

It seems to many contemporary commentators that this whole tradition claims an understanding of Afikoman as a dessert and the ban associated with it in *Pesachim* X.8 as a prohibition to consume any more after that part of the Passover Seder when its participants eat the dessert named Afikoman.

The scientists representing this interpretation understand the word ‘Afikoman’ as a Greek term, probably ἐπίκωμον, only written in Hebrew letters as אֶפִיקוֹמָן.

In this situation, we have to answer several essential questions. They are as follows: Does this text certainly relate to not-eating after Afikoman? Are we not mistaken assuming that this is about opening the mouths and, as a result, about eating? Is the word ‘Afikoman’ really a Greek term? Moreover, the last question, a key one: is there no earlier, more ancient and more reliable interpretation source than *The Gemarah* for correct reading of *The Tractate Pesachim* X.8 in *The Mishnah*?

The general answer for the last question is: *The Hebrew Bible* is the most authoritative source of interpretation – the Hebrew text, but read with great attention and with the help of the computer program as a modern analysis tool!

¹ It is mainly a translation of the part of the doctoral dissertation: W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy w świetle schematu literackiego Księgi Wyjścia 1-18*, Kraków 2008, p. 322-357. Some new remarks are present here, also.

² Cf. K. HAGEN, *Hebrews commenting from Erasmus to Bze, 1516-1598*, Eugene, Oregon 2011, p. 74. Cf. also S. LAWSON, M. ANDERS (general editor), *Holman Old Testament Commentary – Psalms 1-75*, Nashville, Tennessee 2003, p. 130: the author writes about Psa 23:4, “the phrase ‘shadow of death’ (Heb. *salmawet*) is a Hebrew compound word that joins together the two Hebrew words for *shade* or shadow and for *death*.” Cf. also lexicon available in electronic form in BibleWorks 6.0, described as follows: *BDB-GESENIUS Hebrew-Aramaic and English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Complete and unabridged*. By FRANCIS BROWN, S.R. DRIVER, and CHARLES BRIGGS (all D.D., D.Litt.), finished in 1906 and based upon several works of WILHELM GESENIUS (and editors), dated 1833, 1854, 1858, and 1895. Significant Hebrew formatting modifications and improvements made by MICHAEL S. BUSHHELL, 2001, to conform to lemma and inflected Hebrew forms and typeface, p. 853:

צְלִמּוֹת = צֶל + מוֹת.

The ancient origin of the Passover Haggadah text

As the previous researches proved³, the Passover has four parts and has the logic of the four-part rite of the renewal of the covenant. It concerns the covenant made between God and Israel at the time of Exodus, and especially during their passage between the divided waters of the Sea of Reeds.

God and Israel made this covenant following an ancient four-stage scheme from around the 16th century BC. God has led Israel out of Egypt in four primary stages in order to meet the requirements of this covenant scheme at the same time.

In the third of these stages, God and Israel performed the fundamental act of entering into the covenant (so-called the act of cutting the covenant)⁴ during their passage between the divided (cut) waters of the Sea of Reeds, in strict analogy to the passage between the halves of animals (cf. Gen 15:17). Prophet Isaiah described the act of dividing the waters of the Sea of Reeds as the act of dividing the animal: Rahab (Isa 51,9).

In turn, the first of these stages required the showing of the magnificence of God as a sovereign, so ten miraculous signs (plagues) paid the required role during the first step of the four-stage Exodus. Therefore, in the rite of the Passover, this first stage is represented, among other things, by the telling of the story of liberation and the recitation of the 14 miraculous interventions of God for Israel as the one being under His protectorate.

One should know, it was the ancient principle of the renewal of the covenant to recall all the works of a sovereign, which he performed for the benefit of the vassal until the day of that liturgical renewal and not just those before that special day of their covenant making.

As one looks at the first part of the “Paschal Haggadah,” one can easily understand that it is from Solomon’s time, since it yet mentions the Lord’s grace to build a temple in Solomon’s time, but does not mention His intervention to bring the Israelites out of Babylonian captivity!

Thus Solomon in his compilation of the “Paschal Haggadah” led the listing of God’s merits up to the grace associated with the building of a temple (cf. 1Kings 6). Successive generations up to the present seemingly did not dare to change this significant 14-point list of the Lord’s most notable works, which Solomon drew up taking into account, of course, only all that the Lord has done up to his time, not later.

It proves *The Haggadah* is from the time of Salomon, not from the second century after Christ, when the venerable authors of Talmud lived and tried to comment the text they have received in the legacy of Tradition from previous generations, beginning with the time of Solomon.

The in-deep analysis of *The Haggadah* and *The Book of Exodus* proves that it was somebody who knew political treaties and their literary structures that he wrote this text based on the ancient logic of thinking.

This man is Moses – God’s man, the adopted son of the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt around XVI century BC, wise and educated in the law of international relations.

Moses, on God’s command, recorded in the book what God did during the Exodus (cf. Ex 17:14). His record was to be a part of the Hebrew Bible in the distant future, including the Book of Exodus – it contains a hidden record of the four-stage Paschal ceremony as a reflection of the historical four stages of leaving Egypt and concluding a four-stage covenant between God and Israel.

Thus the Bible is the basis for the understanding of *The Passover Haggadah* and the celebration of Passover.

³ W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy w świetle schematu literackiego Księgi Wyjścia 1-18*, op.cit., passim.

⁴ Cf. Gen 15:8: בְּיוֹם הַהוּא כָּרַת יְהוָה אֶת־אֲבְרָם בְּרִית.

The plan of the research

As the first step in our research, we will perform lexical analysis in *The Hebrew Bible* to check if the term אֶפִיקוֹמָן or any part of it is present here. Furthermore, the meaning of Afikoman as an unleavened bread of Passover – the feast commemorating the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt – can be investigated by analyzing very significant fragment of *The Book of Exodus* in *The Hebrew Bible*. This six-pericope whole is the place where the structure of the Passover ritual hides and where it appears as the liturgical realization of the six-stage Exodus and the six-stage ritual of the covenant-making between God and Israel at the same time⁵.

As the second step, we must analyze the whole original sentence in *Pesachim* X.8, where the word מִפְטִירִין is. A biblical and structural study of the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) will be the base for this task. Why? Because it will show the strict connection between two structures – that of Seder and that of this pericope – and, in consequence, the place and the role of each of the laws of this pericope in a strictly defined order in the annual Passover. It will turn out that the last of these laws links with the word מִפְטִירִין.

מִפְטִירִין in *Pesachim* X.8 is an important word and the reason for the mistakes. Why? Because the root of this term (פטר) means 'to open,' so the translators and commentators understand it as 'an act of eating' for the reason that such an activity connects with an opening of the mouth. Lexical analysis of this sentence will explain it as a prohibition valid during the celebration of the Passover ritual to offer 'these opening the womb' (פְּטֹרֵי־רֵחַם) to the Lord, in the exceptional opposition to the order contained in the law pericope.

An essential element in proving this thesis is the observation that the fourth part of the law pericope, Ex 13:1-16, contains two orders: to eat unleavened bread and to offer 'these opening the womb' to the Lord. However, the fourth part of the Passover Seder contains the first of these acts – the eating of the Afikoman – but not the second one. The prohibition expressed in *Pesachim* X.8 is the reason for this. Instead of that offering, there is the singing for the Lord – according to Ex 15:1-21 as the fourth part of the structure of the Ex 6:1-15:21.

The identification of analogies and differences between the commandments of the law pericope and their fulfillment in the Passover Seder is necessary not only for an understanding of the origin of the Passover rite but also for the proving the thesis of this article that Afikoman is a combined Hebrew word with a strictly defined meaning.

1. Afikoman as 'unleavened bread commemorating the liberation of Israelites from Egypt by the Lord.'

1.1. Introduction.

The discovery of the logic of the Passover and its basic structure is so crucial that it is impossible to overestimate them to understand the Passover Seder. One knows from earlier studies that traditionally we divide Seder into 14 (sometimes 15) points. At the same time, one knows that drinking four cups of wine belongs to those activities of the Passover liturgy, which constitute its structure.

Therefore, it is necessary to appropriately divide 14 points of Seder and put each of them into one of four sets of ritual acts, each group connected with one of four cups. In this way, we divide the whole ritual into four main parts I, II, III, IV, each of them with a specific theme, different from any other.

Such an attempt I undertook in my earlier studies. Parts I and II were noted to be not strictly separable – probably the content at their boundary belongs to them both. The same

⁵ Cf. W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy w świetle schematu literackiego Księgi Wyjścia 1-18*, op.cit., passim.

applies to the boundary content of parts II and III. That is at least what the analyses carried out to that point allow us to state.

Earlier research has also shown the importance of understanding the Afikoman, consumed after the end of the official supper of the second part. We have found that it is not a symbol of the lamb-Passover. Consumption of Afikoman does not belong to the second part of the seder; it does not connect with the Lord's order to eat the lamb-Passover. Afikoman is an unleavened bread ordered by God to commemorate this time of Exodus which followed the consumption of the lamb-Passover, namely, the time of bringing the people out by the Lord.

This conclusion is so important that two analytical issues – the analysis of Hebrew words associated with Afikoman and the analysis of the literary structure of the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) – will serve to its full verification. The first issue will systematically present what has only been included briefly in the previous research into the information of the individual fourteen points of the Seder. The second one will show the description of taking out unleavened dough by the Israelites (Ex 12:34-39) in two distinct but complementary dimensions: the place of this description in the structure of the law pericope, and its legislative function.

1.2. Hebrew words related to Afikoman.

Afikoman appears in the Passover Seder three times: the first one in the 4th point, the second one in the 5th point with the father's answer for the wise son, the third time in the 11th point.

1.2.1. אָפִיקוֹמָן – the dividing of the unleavened bread.

The 4th point has the Hebrew name אָפִיקוֹמָן. The word being here is an *apocopied* (abbreviated) form of both the *imperfect qal* and the *iussivus* of the word אָפִיקוֹמָן; the meaning of this form is *divide*⁶: at this point, the leader of the Seder is to divide the middle unleavened bread (matzah) into two unequal parts, the larger of which is to be hidden – it is Afikoman.

In Scripture, the word אָפִיקוֹמָן appears almost always⁷ in the meaning *separate*: Gen 32:8;33:1; Ex 21:35; Num 31:27.42; Judg 7:16;9:43; 2Kings 2:8.14; Job 40:30; Ezek 37:22; Dan 11:4.

Of particular interest are two⁸ of these places, contained in the history of Elijah and Elisha in the second chapter of the Second Book of Kings:

⁸ Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up and struck the water (אָפִיקוֹמָן), which divided (אָפִיקוֹמָן), and both crossed over (אָפִיקוֹמָן) on dry ground (אָפִיקוֹמָן).

¹⁴ Wielding the mantle which had fallen from Elijah, he beat the water in his turn and said, 'Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?' When Elisha struck the water (אָפִיקוֹמָן), it divided (אָפִיקוֹמָן), and he crossed over (אָפִיקוֹמָן).

It is necessary to notice that separation of waters (אָפִיקוֹמָן) identically in Ex 14:21 and

⁶ Cf. P. BRIKS, *Podręczny słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu*, third edition, Warszawa 2000, p. 124: אָפִיקוֹמָן; G. DEIANA, A. SPREAFICO (original version), S. BAZYLIŃSKI (Polish version), *Wprowadzenie do hebrajszczyzny biblijnej*, Warszawa 2001, p. 120: verbs אָפִיקוֹמָן – forms with apocope.

⁷ In Psa 55:24 and Isa 30:28 has a different meaning.

⁸ The form of the word אָפִיקוֹמָן, identical with the name of the 4th point of Seder (אָפִיקוֹמָן), occurs in several other places: אָפִיקוֹמָן in Gen 32:8;33:1; Judg 7:16. The term אָפִיקוֹמָן consists of two words: אָפִיקוֹמָן consecutivum and אָפִיקוֹמָן. For the analysis, however, it is significant first of all that the correlation is between the exit out of Egypt (celebrated in the Passover Seder) and one of the texts containing the Hebrew word אָפִיקוֹמָן, not necessarily in the same form.

2Kings 2:8.14) of the Jordan River in both directions so that it was possible to pass through it on the dry ground (הַרְבָּה) identically in Ex 14:21 and 2 Kings 2:8) has its analog. Such an event took place for the first time in the history of Israel's exit from Egypt: the Sea of Reeds was so divided that the Lord's people passed through on the dry ground with the water wall on their right and left sides. To describe the very act of passing between divided waters, Ex 14:21 uses a word different than 2Kings 2:8.14, however, in the hymn that praises the work of the Lord carrying Israel between waters, it uses it twice (see Ex 15:16: יַעֲבֹר!).

The noticed word identities are not the result of chance. On this basis, and because within the 4th point the leader of the Seder divides (רִחַץ) unleavened bread to obtain Afikoman, one can conclude that the Hebrew word רִחַץ as the name of the 4th point of the Passover Seder designates some connection between the separation of the waters of the Sea of Reeds and the Afikoman. It is because within the 4th point the leader of the Seder divides unleavened bread to obtain Afikoman.

It is, therefore, necessary to analyze still other words to see if they also indicate such a connection.

1.2.2. אַפִּיקוֹמָן as a Hebrew compound word.

Within the 5th point of Seder, the leader should present all the laws and commandments related to the rite which they celebrate. He is to end this presentation of regulations with a ban on eating anything after eating the Passover Afikoman. The Hebrew word *Afikoman*, given without those vowel signs that were added to the Hebrew texts by the Masoretes about the 6th century after Christ⁹, has the following form: אַפִּיקוֹמָן.

Since the word with such vowels is not in the Hebrew dictionaries¹⁰, one can assume that it is an artificially created word as a combination of two or more known Hebrew words. The Hebrew language scholars know that Hebrews commonly give names composed of two or more parts thus the sum of particular meanings yields the meaning of the obtained word; sometimes it is difficult to find all the original parts and their meaning. For example:

Absalom	אַבְיִשָׁלוֹם = אַבִּי + שָׁלוֹם	= my father is the peace
Adonijah	אַדְנִיָּהוּ = אֲדֹנָי + יְהוָה	= Yahweh is my Lord
Michael	מִיכָאֵל = מִי + כָּ + אֵל	= who is like God?
Jahdiel	יְהִדִּיֵּאל = יְהוָה + יְחִידָאֵל	= God is my unity
Azriel	אַזְרִיֵּאל = אֵל + עֲזָרָאֵל	= God is my help

To discover the content of the Hebrew word אַפִּיקוֹמָן, we implement a simple method: when one inserts the above 'word' into the Command Centre for WTM in BibleWorks 6.0

⁹ Cf. T. JELONEK, *Od Zoharu do Chasydów polskich*. Monographic lecture in the second semester of the academic year 2001/2002. The script for students of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków (typescript), Kraków 2002, p. 18; B. S. CHILDS, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, London 1983, p. 98; G. DEIANA, A. SPREAFICO (original version), S. BAZYLIŃSKI (Polish version), *Wprowadzenie do hebrajszczyzny biblijnej*, op.cit., p. 10: the Hebrew alphabet did not contain special characters to denote vowels. However, to avoid ambiguity, there were many words in which א, ה, ו, י (i.e., the same signs which denote consonants) were used to express vowels. In the analyzed 'word' it is necessary to discover whether א, ו means vowels or consonants.

¹⁰ Cf. G. H. DALMAN, *Aramäisch-Neuhebräisches Wörterbuch zu Targum, Talmud und Midrasch mit Lexikon der Abbrüviaturen von G. H. Händler*, Frankfurt A. M., 1901, p. 32: the dictionary does not give any words other than similar to it: אַפִּיק – 1. Bach, Kanal; 2. Gewaltiger (1. stream, channel; 2. powerful).

and press **Enter**, you get the message that there is no such word in the Bible. We should, therefore, remove the character at the left end of the word and press **Enter** again. While we repeat shortening and pressing **Enter** key, finally we get the word that appears in the Bible¹¹.

The application of this procedure gave a successful result: אַפִּיק – bed (of river/stream); bottom (of the sea); pipe, canal¹². This word appears in 19 places in the Bible: 2Sam 22:16; Job 6:15; 12:21; 40:18; 41:7; Psa 18:16; 42:2; 126:4; Song 5:12; Is 8:7; Ezek 6:3; 31:12; 32:6; 34:13; 35:8; 36:4.6; Joel 1:20; 4:18.

One should pay particular attention to the verse:

וַיֵּרְאוּ אַפִּיקֵי יָם וַיִּגְלוּ מִסְדּוֹת תְּבֵל בְּגַעַרְתָּ יְהוָה מִנְּשֵׁמַת רוּחַ אַפּוֹ 2Sam 22:16

Then **the beds of the sea** appeared, the foundations of the earth were uncovered at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of the wind of his wrath.

וַיֵּרְאוּ אַפִּיקֵי מַיִם וַיִּגְלוּ מוֹסְדוֹת תְּבֵל מִגַּעַרְתְּךָ יְהוָה מִנְּשֵׁמַת רוּחַ אַפְּךָ Ps 18:16

Then **the bed of the waters** appeared, the foundations of the earth were uncovered at Your rebuke, o Lord, at the blast of the wind of Your wrath.

Both very similar fragments refer to the separation of the waters of the Sea of Reeds, made by the Lord through the wind sent by Him, described as ‘the breath of His/Thy nostrils’ (רוּחַ אַפּוֹ) here and in the hymn sung by Israel after the passage of the sea (Ex 15:8). What is separated by the wind is expressed either by the word מַיִם (waters: Ex 15:8; Psa 18:16) or יָם (sea: 2Sam 22:16).

The analyzed term, therefore, has the appearance אַפִּיקוֹמָן, where we underlined the word אַפִּיק (bottom) as that already found. The last two letters constitute the word מָן (manna), so the analyzed word may have a form אַפִּיקוֹמָן, which can be read as ‘bottom and manna’ because the middle ן means *and*. So אַפִּיקוֹמָן means **unleavened bread** consumed by the Israelites on their way through the desert, **sea bottom**, and desert, i.e. on the way from the place of the Passover celebration in Egypt to the place where God began giving them **manna** (what happened exactly one month after they had started going from slavery – cf. Ex 16:1-15.35).

However, one can still read אַפִּיקוֹמָן in another way: if one assumes that instead of ן it should be ך, which is quite often mistake in the Bible¹³, then the analyzed word has a form אַפִּיקימָן. Now, comparing the parallel texts 2Sam 22:16 and Psa 18:16, we can see:

In both cases, the word *bottom* is a singular noun in *status constructus*, but once written as אַפִּיקֵי and the second time as אַפִּיקֵי; the difference is in the vowel *I*, which in the first case is short (.) and in the second a long one (ֵ). Hebrew lexicons¹⁴ state that *status constructus* of this noun may take the third form אַפִּיקֵי which in relation to the second form has no final long vowel *E* – ך (cf. Job 6:15); this form is identical with the one hidden in the original word

¹¹ We can apply the same procedure to all ‘words’ derived from the above ‘word’ by first cutting off one character from its right end, then cutting off the next ones until there are no characters.

¹² Cf. P. BRIKS, *Podręczny słownik*, op.cit., p. 40: אַפִּיק.

¹³ Cf. G. DEIANA, A. SPREAFICO (original version), S. BAZYLIŃSKI (Polish version), *Wprowadzenie do hebrajszczyzny biblijnej*, op.cit., p. 22: in the Pentateuch, one can often find the word written as הֵיאָ (she), but read as הָיאָ.

¹⁴ Cf. *BDB-GESENIUS Hebrew-Aramaic and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, op.cit.

Afikoman (אַפִּיקוֹמָן) in *Tractate Pesachim* X.8, also in the form with ך replaced by ך: אַפִּיקוֹמָן.

In this form, one can see something more: אַפִּיקוֹמָן – **bottom** (אַפִּיק) of **the sea** (מָן), with the word-forming ך added at the end¹⁵.

Finally, one can conclude that ‘Afikoman’ in *Pesachim* X.8. can mean:

its bottom, manna ¹⁶ manna is its bottom ¹⁷ .	אַפִּיקוֹמָן	אַפִּיקוֹמָן	consonants and vowels are unchanged
bottom and manna	אַפִּיקוֹמָן	אַפִּיקוֹמָן	here ך is replaced by ך
seabed + ך	אַפִּיקוֹמָן	אַפִּיקוֹמָן	here ך is replaced by ך, ך is moved under ך

The morphological analysis does not cover the scope of research in this section. It is still necessary to outline the exegesis of 2Sam 22 and the parallel fragment of Psa 18 because of the commonly known comments¹⁸ to both places do not mention the Sea of Reeds.

Therefore, in addition to the above argument (Ex 15:8, 2Sam 22:16 and Psa 18:16 reveal the same factor which caused the separation of waters: אַפִּיקוֹמָן), it is worth noting other reasons for the correctness of understanding these fragments as referring to the exit from Egypt:

◆ 2Sam 22 and Psa 18 is a song (הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת) – 2Sam 22:1; Psa 18:1) sung by David on the very day when the Lord gave him victory over all his enemies, which is analogous to the song (הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת) – Ex 15:1) sung by Moses and all Israel on the very day when the Lord threw Egyptians, their oppressors, into the abyss of the sea (cf. Ex 15:1-22)¹⁹.

◆ Ex 15:11 and Psa 18:32 are a confession of the faith²⁰ of the People (and not only of David, as in most of Psa 18); in both cases, this confession has the form of a twice-repeated

¹⁵ Cf. for example, the noun זְכָרוֹן (memorial, reminder), derived from the verb זָכַר (remember); in Ex 28:12 it occurs in a reduced form: זְכָרֹן, consisting of ך added to the stem זָכַר.

¹⁶ Because the analysis of the word אַפִּיקוֹמָן has shown that it can be not only *status absolutus*, but also *status constructus*, therefore ך at the end of אַפִּיקוֹמָן is a suffix expressing the possessive pronoun of the third person singular: see G. DEIANA, A. SPREAFICO (original version), S. BAZYLIŃSKI (Polish version), *Wprowadzenie do hebrajszczyzny biblijnej*, op.cit., p. 47.

¹⁷ Cf. in Ex 16:31 מָן – ‘**its name** is **manna**’ – where מָן is the word מָן in *status constructus* with the third masculine singular suffix.

¹⁸ Cf. *Biblia Poznańska*³, *Biblia Tysiąclecia*⁴; J. ŁACH, *Księgi Samuela. Wstęp – przekład z oryginału – komentarz – ekskursy*, Poznań – Warszawa 1973, p. 481-491; A. CAMPBELL, M. O’BRIEN, *Pierwsza i Druga Księga Samuela*, [in:] W. R. FARMER (ed.); S. MCEVENUE, A. J. LEVORATTI, D. L. DUNGAN (co-editors); W. CHROSTOWSKI (scientific editor of Polish edition), T. MIESZKOWSKI, P. PACHCIAREK (co-editors), *Międzynarodowy komentarz do Pisma Świętego: komentarz katolicki i ekumeniczny na XXI wiek*, Warszawa 2000, s. 512; H.-W. JÜNLING, *Księga Pierwsza (Ps 1-41). Psalm 18*, [in:] *Ibid.*, p. 690-691; W. BOROWSKI, *Psalmy. Komentarz biblijno-ascetyczny*, Kraków 1983, p. 94-100.

¹⁹ The very term שִׁירָה – song – is absent in the headlines of psalms (songs after all!) with one exception – Psa 18. J. ŁACH draws attention to this peculiarity, indicating at the same time other places: Ex 15:1; Num 21:17; Deut 31:19. 21f. 30; 32:44; Isa 5:1; 23:15; Am 8:3; cf. J. ŁACH, *Księgi Samuela. Wstęp – przekład z oryginału – komentarz – ekskursy*, Poznań – Warszawa 1973, p. 482. It should be added, however, that another term of the song – שִׁיר – appears in 33 psalms.

²⁰ Cf. H.-W. JÜNLING, *Księga Pierwsza (Ps 1-41)...*, op.cit., p. 690.

question²¹.

◆ The Lord defeated **all** enemies (2Sam 22:1), hurled **all** Egyptians (Ex 14:28): כָּל.

◆ The Lord saved (יִשְׁע) His People: Ex 14:30; 2Sam 22:28.

◆ In David's life history, there was no such event in which the Lord exposed the bottom of the water. One can conclude from this observation that in his song in honor of the God-Saviour, David while thanking the Lord for His intervention on his behalf does it in a poetic form. Through the image of the Sea of Reed's division, known to all Israelites, he exposes his situation, really very difficult, from which the Lord saved him equally magnificently.

◆ In 2Sam 22:17 the psalmist confesses that the Lord stretches out His hand from above and grabs him and draws him out of the mighty waters. This image is a poetic metaphor, not a fact in the life of David. It refers to the intervention of the Lord who, guiding His People on the dry bottom of the sea, looked at the Egyptian army **from the height of the pillar of fire and cloud** and forced them to flee. He finally threw them into the sea waters, at His command returning to the bare bottom; and Israel went to the other side before the waters managed to reach her (cf. Ex 14:24-30). The Hebrew text of 2Sam 22:17 refers to Moses: the verb מָצָה (draw) has the same root as the name מֹשֶׁה (Moses), **drawn out of the water**. Biblical etymology of his name refers to this argument²² – cf. Ex 2:10.

◆ In the description of the Lord's action there are two signs of His presence: fire and smoke (cf. 2Sam 22:9; Psa 18:9), expressed identically as in the Lord's passage between the halves of animals divided by Abram (cf. Gen 15:17: עָשָׁן – smoke; אֵשׁ – fire). Although in Exodus 14:24 – in the description of the Lord's passage between the halves of the divided sea – the hagiographer used the same word to describe the fire, while the other – עָנָן: the cloud – to designate the second sign, but the pillar of the cloud is the sign similar to the smoke going upward. So in 2Sam 22:9, Psa 18:9 and Ex 14:24 the Lord shows his presence identically through two signs, one of which is fire and the other is the smoke/pillar of the cloud.

◆ 2Sam 22:11 shows the Lord:

וַיֵּרֶכֶב עַל־כְּרוּב וַיַּעֲף וַיֵּרָא עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ^{2Sam 22:11}

And He rode upon a cherub and flew, and He appeared on the wings of the wind.

The verb *rode* (וַיֵּרֶכֶב) has the same root רכב as the word *chariot* (רֶכֶב), appearing in the Book of Exodus 12 times²³ to present the power of Pharaoh's army. In a poetical interpretation of the description contained in the Book of Exodus, David praises in 2Sam 22:11 the Lord, whose chariot triumphed over the chariots of the Pharaoh, plunging them into the sea abyss.

The term 'the wings of the wind' (כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ) refers to two texts. First of them is the description of the passage through the Sea of Reeds, divided by the wind sent by the Lord (cf. Ex 14:21; 15:8.10). The second one contains God's words spoken to Moses already at the beginning of his stay at Mount Sinai, to summarize this stage of Israelites' process of liberation from captivity that has just ended.

"You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I bore you up on eagle wings (עַל־כַּנְפֵי) and brought you here to myself" (Ex 19:4).

²¹ Psa 18:32:

כִּי מִי אֱלוֹהִים מִבְּלַעֲדֵי יְהוָה וּמִי צוּר זֹלָתִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ

Ex 15:11:

מִי־כַמְכָה בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה מִי כַמְכָה נְאֻדָּר בְּקִדְשׁ נֹרָא תְהִלַּת עֲשֵׂה פִלָּא

²² Contemporary researchers suggest other sources of Moses' name: cf. J. WARZECHA, *Dawny Izrael od Abrahama do Salomona*, Warszawa 1995, p. 74. Biblical etymology, therefore, has significant theological importance, since it seems to differ from the historical origins of this name.

²³ Ex 14:6.7ab.9.17.18.23.26.28; 15:1.19.21.

◆ Fidelity to God, and in particular to His Law, was the reason why He saved Israelites and David. Because of the great importance of this aspect, the discussion about it will be in the next section of the article, where we will show the prohibition against offering ‘these opening the womb.’ However, we will perform earlier an essential supporting analysis.

1.2.3. **בַּעַל צִפּוֹן – the hidden Afikoman – and צִפּוֹן.**

Point 11. of the Seder is named צִפּוֹן which means *hidden*. Traditionally one explains that Afikoman, hidden in the first part of the Passover Seder, has now been found and is, therefore, eaten. Although the time for fulfillment of this point is short, in reality, it is a highly important part of the Passover Seder. Its significance one discovers by the fact one point of Seder is to prepare and hide Afikoman (point 4 in part I), and different point (belonging to part III) is to find it and eat it. At the same time, the importance of Afikoman is emphasized: by a requirement to recline on the left side (or to lean oneself on the left arm or lie on the left side at the table). The same ritual posture applies when eating matzah and bitter herbs prescribed by the Law, in part I.

In the Hebrew Bible, there is no word צִפּוֹן. However, in Num 33:7 is an expression בַּעַל צִפּוֹן that secretly contains this word. This one, in the slightly modified spelling, appears in Ex 14:2.9 as בַּעַל צִפּוֹן – The Lord of the North. It is the name of the place near the Sea of Reeds; the Israelites camped opposite it immediately before entering the uncovered bottom of the sea.

Since בַּעַל צִפּוֹן contains the word צִפּוֹן which differs from this Seder point name – צִפּוֹן – only with the first vowel and the position of the dot over the second vowel – signs added only six centuries after Christ by the Masoretes – this is not accidental.

Just as the Israelites in the place ‘The Lord of the North’ or ‘The Lord of the Hidden’ ate Afikoman, which is a piece of unleavened bread, not sour, like manna, so at the time of Passover their sons eat Afikoman now, at the point which name is ‘The hidden.’

1.3. **The literary structure of the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) versus the issue of Afikoman.**

The purpose of this point of the work is above all to show that the custom of eating the unleavened Afikoman in the Passover Seder does not belong to part II. It belongs to part III because it is a sign of the presence not of the feast preceding the departure from Egypt, but a sign of the exit of the Israelites with an unleavened dough from captivity.

The method of proof here will be the analysis of the literary structure of the law pericope, in the framework of which the hagiographer included a description of taking out of Egypt of the unleavened dough by the Israelites (Ex 12:34-39). The aim now is to show: To the text representing the law (some rules of preparing and eating the lamb-Passover), this description is in a parallel position in the structure of the pericope. Its legislative function, not only factual, will be shown as the result of these analyses.

At the beginning of these researches, it is especially important to distinguish between:

- the Passover feast celebrated in Egypt by Israel at night of 15 Abib
- every later Passover feast celebrated in memory of the Lord’s leading Israel out of Egypt

The first Passover feast had no structure; it was just the eating of the lamb-Passover. Each next feast celebrated in memory of the exodus had a specific structure.

This point of the paper presents the analysis of the law pericope. The law pericope was formed not in Egypt but later and received its final shape probably around the 6th century before Christ. Therefore, the structure of this pericope – as the analyses will show – hides not the structure of the Passover feast in Egypt (it had no structure: it was just the eating of the

Lamb-Passover!) but the structure of the Passover feast-memorial of the whole exodus described in Ex 1-18; the wording ‘feast-memorial’ means that this feast makes this exodus present.

In the below-presented text, the analyses always refer not to the structure of the feast of the Israelites in Egypt, but to the structure of the annual celebration which makes the participation in the historical six-stage Exodus is a real fact.

1.3.1. The structure of the law pericope and the ‘chronological sequence’ relation between its elements.

Using the analyses carried out in the first chapter of the paper, one can see four fragments in the law pericope, beginning with the phrase *Somebody said*:

- the first, third and fourth fragment: *The Lord said*
- the second fragment: *Moses said*

Leaving aside the details in the text, one can see that each of these fragments is composed of three essential elements, distinguished in Table 1:

	1 The time before eating the lamb	2 The time of eating the lamb and after eating the lamb	3 The time of eating the lamb and after eating the lamb	4 The time after eating the lamb
	God gives the law of Passover, presents His plan, gives the law of unleavened bread (12:1-20)	Moses communicates the law of Passover; Israel fulfills the law of Passover; the plan is fulfilled (12:21-42)	God gives the law of Passover (12:43-51)	God gives the law of firstborns; Moses communicates the law of unleavened bread and the law of firstborns (13:1-16)
1	law: Lamb-Passover (12:3-11)	law: Lamb-Passover (12:21-28)	law: circumcision of those who want to eat the lamb (12:43-45)	law: consecration of firstborns to the Lord (13:1-2)
2	plan: killing of firstborns (12:12-14)	plan fulfillment: killing of firstborns (12:29-33)	law: Lamb-Passover (12:46)	law: <i>unleavened bread of departure</i> (13:3-11)
3	law: <i>unleavened bread of departure</i> (12:15-20)	plan fulfillment: <i>Israel comes out with unleavened dough: unleavened bread of departure</i> (12:34-39)	law: circumcision of those who want to eat the lamb (12:47-49)	law: consecration of firstborns to the Lord (13:12-16)

‘Description of the carrying out of the unleavened dough by the Israelites’ (Ex 12:34-39), which is of particular interest in this point of the research, is at the bottom of column 2.

The table shows that:

- **three times** occurs each of the following issues: lamb, unleavened bread; six times in total
- **two times** occurs each of the following issues: the killing of firstborns, the order to circumcise those who want to eat lamb, the offering of firstborn; also six times in total

The first group is food products, ordered for the feast preceding the exit (lamb) and for the time of going out (unleavened bread).

The second division also exists:

- **three times** there is the problem of unleavened bread of departure
- **four times** there is the problem of firstborns
- **five times** there is the problem of the lamb (including two issues with the law of circumcision of those who want to eat the lamb)

The second group connects with the outpouring of blood: of firstborn and of circumcised.

Looking at the biblical text represented by four columns of Table 1, one can see that only the first two columns are in the relation of the chronological sequence, that is:

In the history of Exodus, the events described in the biblical text of column 1 took place first and after them that depicted in the biblical passage of column 2:

- column 1: it was the first that God spoke to Moses and Aaron showing them the law and plan of events
- column 2: then Moses spoke to the Israelites, then the Israelites did everything according to the law; then God realized the foretold killing of the firstborns; then the Israelites left Egypt with the unleavened dough and were led by God

The order of subjects in the first section corresponds to the history of leaving Egypt. The same is valid for the second section:

When the Israelites had started the feast and were eating the lamb-Passover, the Lord killed the firstborns of Egypt. After it, they came out with unleavened dough and were baking unleavened bread during the way.

It was God Himself who designed this ‘chronological’ literary arrangement because in His speech (section 1), being only a foreshadowing of events and of the act of granting the law, it is also preserved, as in section 2, which is the story of the realization of God’s foreshadowing. **Table 2** shows this:

Section 1: Ex 12:1-20	Section 2: Ex 12:21-42
God gave the law concerning the lamb .	Moses gave the Israelites the law concerning the lamb ; they fulfilled it.
God foretold the killing of the firstborns of Egypt.	God killed the firstborns at the time when the Israelites were eating the lamb-Passover.
God gave the law concerning unleavened bread .	The Israelites hurriedly brought forth only the unleavened dough out of Egypt. They were baking unleavened bread from it during the first days of their way.

An identical arrangement of both sections became possible due to the fact the hagiographer divided Moses’ presentation of the issues from the first speech of God (12:1-20) into two separate stages! In his first speech (12:21-28), Moses describes only the issues concerning the lamb; the laws of the unleavened bread of departure he undertakes solely in the second talk (13:3-11) which is in the fourth (the last one) section of the law pericope!

Thanks to this division, the hagiographer achieved the fundamental goal to merge the law pericope into a literary whole: this pericope closes at this Moses' speech (the second) which completes communication to the Israelis the whole of the law given by God at the beginning of it. Simultaneously the hagiographer obtained also this 'chronological' literary arrangement of the first two parts of this pericope.

The reader of the analyzed pericope should understand the perceiving of its 'chronological sequence' structure is necessary for its correct interpretation. Looking at Table 1 and Table 2 it is easy to notice this sequence. But not only it.

As a result of the research carried out here,
we can formulate the following important rule:
The hagiographer always separated
the text concerning the **lamb-Passover**
from
the text concerning **unleavened bread**.

The hagiographer, therefore, highlighted two aspects of chronology:

- **the order:** the eating of lamb-Passover is earlier than that of unleavened bread
- **the separateness:** the consumption of unleavened bread with lamb-Passover and bitter herbs cannot be confused with that of unleavened bread of departure

The unleavened bread of departure represents a new stage of the history of Exodus – not the feast preceding leaving, but the very beginning of going out (and the whole way to the opposite side of the Sea of Reeds).

1.3.2. The structure of the law pericope and the 'parallel arrangement' relationship between its elements.

In the law pericope, four passages are beginning with the phrase 'somebody said.' There is, however, another structure in this pericope. One can see this structure only if one takes into account the meaning of **the three characters of structure**, omitted in Table 1.

Currently, during the analysis, it is necessary to notice the existence of:

- differences between speeches and deeds recorded in this pericope
- similarities and differences between the key summaries

Legislative God's speech, then Moses' speech.	Israel fulfills the law which God gave her through Moses.	Israel fulfills the law which God gave her through Moses.	Legislative God's speech, then Moses' speech.
1.	2.	3.	4.
12:1-27a	12:27b-42	12:43-51	13:1-16
Legitimation of the law is not homogeneous. These speeches play the role of an introductory explanation to the rules, before their fulfillment.	Worship as an acceptance of the law (12:27b) Left point of inclusion: Israel has fulfilled the law (12:28=12:50): וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן כִּן עָשׂוּ		Legitimation of the law is homogeneous: with gratitude remember the God who led Israel out of Egypt

	<p>At midnight the Lord struck all the firstborns (12:29-33). The Lord <u>divided</u> the time for the fulfillment of the law into two separate, substantially different parts!</p> <p>What law did Israel fulfill after it? The law of unleavened bread! Israel was eating unleavened bread of Exodus (12:34-39).</p>	<p>What law did Israel fulfill first? Passover law! Israel consumed the lamb-Passover. Only the circumcised are allowed to do it (12:43-49)!</p> <p>Right point of inclusion: Israel has fulfilled the law (12:50=12:28): וַיַּעֲשׂוּ כָּל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מִנְשֵׁה וְאֶת-אַהֲרֹן כִּן עָשׂוּ</p>	
	<p>Summary: Israel set off from Egypt 12:40 is parallel to 12:41: וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁלֹשִׁים שָׁנָה וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה בְּעֶצְם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יָצְאוּ כָּל-צְבָאוֹת יְהוָה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם</p> <p>12:42: Summary of columns 2 and 3, which enables us to precisely determine</p>	<p>Summary: The Lord has led Israel out of Egypt (12:51 ≡ 12:41): וַיְהִי הוֹצִיא יְהוָה אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַל-צְבָאוֹתָם</p>	

	<p>does Israel obey the law which God has given through Moses.</p> <p>This was a night of vigil for the Lord, as he led them out of the land of Egypt; so on this same night all the Israelites must keep a vigil for the Lord throughout their generations.</p>	
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The time before eating and leaving bondage	The same night is the time to eat: – first the lamb – then the unleavened bread of Exodus The same night is the time of departure	The time after eating and leaving bondage
<p>The analogy to part I of the Passover Seder:</p> <p>preparation: the telling of the story about the way out, the explaining of the customs, laws, orders of the Passover.</p>	<p>The analogy to part II + III of the Passover Seder: the eating of Lamb-Passover, then of Afikoman (unleavened bread of Exodus)</p>	<p>The analogy to part IV of the Passover Seder: Israel sings Hallel, remembers the Lord who with a mighty hand brought her out of Egyptian bondage.</p>

Table 3.

First of all, table 3 shows the fundamental role of signs of structure, namely:

♦ **The meaning of verses 12:28 = 12:50**, which are **the inclusion** for the text contained within them; the meaning of these sentences is clear: Ex 12:28-50 reports the realization of the law because the same statement is at the beginning and the end of it: “and [all] the sons of Israel **did as the Lord commanded** Moses and Aaron, **they did so**” (12:28=12:50).

♦ **The meaning of verses²⁴ 12:41 and 12:51**, which **are summaries** of two fragments (columns 2 and 3 in the table) and have the same sense. The first text represents the law of eating the lamb-Passover; the second one – the realization of the law of the unleavened bread of departure. This summary is as follows:

And it came to pass [at the end of the four hundred and thirty years – additionally at 12:41a], even the selfsame day it came to pass, that

all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt .	12:42b
the Lord brought the children of Israel out from the land of Egypt by their hosts .	12:51b

The similarity of summaries makes us read both fragments parallelly. It is synthetic parallelism: the content of the first text (in the left column) supplements that of the second one (in the right column) so they both form the whole undertaking the issue of food-symbols obligatory at the time of the annual Passover.

Thanks to this parallel reading, it is not disturbing that the order of events presented in the Bible is not entirely historical: the text about the law of the lamb-Passover is not in the first position but at the last one.

²⁴ In the table, verse 12:41 is, in fact, a representation of verses 12:40-41, because they both speak about 430 years of Israel’s stay in Egypt.

♦ **The meaning of verse 12:42** as a summary of not only column 2 but both columns 2 and 3, which is the result of the parallel reading of the meaning of the previous two groups. The literal translation of the text shows its remarkable emphasis:

“This was a night of vigil for the Lord, as he led them out of the land of Egypt; so **on this night, the same night, just the same**, all the Israelites must keep a vigil for the Lord throughout their generations.”

♦ **The meaning of the description (12:29-33)** of the Lord’s killing of the firstborns of Egypt also as ‘characters of the structure.’ It seems that its role in the law pericope is only to point to the legal difference between the time before and after this most significant event. However, is it just that? For now, we will not analyze the meaning of this description. At present, we should notice that it does not contain any prescriptions of law. Therefore, one can suppose none of the events included in this description has its representation in the Passover Seder. However, it is a false supposition!²⁵

Table 3 shows also:

• **In column 1 at the top**, only the headword is: the speech of God and the speech of Moses are marked (Ex 12:1-27a: the God here proclaims the law of Passover, presents the plan of events and gives the rules of the unleavened bread; Moses communicates God’s Passover requirements to Israel).

The legitimation of the whole law of this column is not uniform. God gave one part of them so that He could kill the firstborns of Egypt while Israelites are eating the lamb-Passover; the next part is for Israel to remember the Lord led her out of Egypt. According to chronology, however, the whole of these speeches of God belongs to the time before the people fulfilled the lamb-Passover laws.

• **In column 1 at the bottom**, such information is: in the first part of the Passover Seder, there is an analogous preparation for the second part in which participants eat food-symbols. In the first part, the leader presents the Passover Law (answering the question of the wise son) and the history of events (the Haggadah). In the fragment common for the first and second part, he explains the meaning of three dishes: lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Finally, all sing Psa 113 (and possibly 114).

• **In column 4 at the top**, only the headword is used to mark the speech of God and that of Moses (Ex 13:1-16: God imposes here the law of the firstborns; Moses presents the law of the unleavened bread and that of the firstborns).

The legitimation of the whole law of this column is uniform: it is the need to remember with gratitude the God who led Israel out of Egypt. According to chronology, these speeches belong to the time following the People’s fulfillment of the laws of the lamb-Passover (from the first column).

• **In column 4 at the bottom**, it is indicated an analogy between the speeches of this column and the main subject of the fourth part of the Passover where the participants **sing**, with gratitude to God who led Israel out of Egypt, so-called Hallel, i.e., Psa 114 (or 115) – 118 and Psa 136, and after it various songs.

One should notice, however, that the analogy does not include the way of worship to God: in the Seder, there is no custom to offer ‘these opening the womb’ to the Lord.

One can see then, that the pattern for the structure of the seder is the arrangement not

²⁵ No symbolic killing is carried out. In the seder, however, the rule is observed that the lamb-Passover should be eaten only before midnight: cf. *Pesachim* X.9: “After midnight the paschal lamb renders the hands unclean. [Also] the remains and remnants make the hands unclean.” Cf. R. MARCINKOWSKI, *Miszna – Seder Moed. Skrypt dla studentów hebraistyki. Uniwersytet Warszawski*, Warszawa 1995, p. 177. This custom is significant for analyses which were carried out in point 3.3.7 of the doctoral thesis: [W. KOSEK, *Pierwotny ryt Paschy w świetle schematu literackiego Księgi Wyjścia 1-18*](#), op.cit. (the eating of the unleavened bread of departure connects with the passage of the Lord through the middle of Egypt-Rahab to punish).

only of the law pericope but also of Ex 6:2-15:21 (composed of four central elements of the structure of Ex 1-18), where the fourth element is **the singing** of the hymn (15:1-21).

The structure of the law pericope serves above all to indicate the meaning of two inner parts of Seder, and consequently the sense of meals characteristic for each of them separately, namely:

In part II:	the sense of the lamb-Passover eaten as part of the banquet before start-up of the departure from captivity
In part III:	the sense of the unleavened bread of the departure, eaten as the food of start-up and of the way

Although the question of consumption occurs in each of the four parts of this pericope, only the middle ones (which are the whole enclosed by verses 12:28 = 12:50 as the literary inclusion) express the fact that the participants put the command to eat into action. Moreover, these two parts strongly emphasize the fact that all of them are strictly now leaving the captivity in Egypt.

Although the structure of the law pericope serves above all to indicate the meaning of the two inner parts of the seder, nevertheless, in this structure we can also see the features characteristic for all four parts of it²⁶:

One should notice first of all that as in Table 1 the law pericope consists of four parts, the same as the Passover Seder.

The inner parts (2 and 3) differ from the outer (1 and 4) in terms of their logic. They vary in what they focus on, namely:

- part 1: preparation for eating and exit
- part 2: food and exit
- part 3: food and exit
- part 4: thanksgiving²⁷ for eating and exit

Therefore, there is a fundamental difference between the middle and outer parts:

- the middle ones relate to consumption,
- the outer ones associate with a proclamation (speaking or singing).

The same rule is in the Passover Seder!

What conclusion can we draw from the relations between the four parts of the law pericope presented here? It is significant to understand the role of the description of taking away an unleavened dough by the Israelites from Egypt (Ex 12:34-39).

Looking at Table 3 one can see this description is one of the two inner parts of the law pericope, framed only by the verses of the structure.

Everything that has been written above about the inner parts applies to this description and the promulgation of the lamb-Passover law, parallel to it. On this basis, we can see the 'description of taking out the unleavened dough by the Israelites' (Ex 12:34-39) has a legislative function in the law pericope. It has the same rank as the legal orders concerning the eating of the lamb-Passover.

²⁶ However one should mention that the understanding of the outer parts of the law pericope, a significant instrument for correct reading of Seder, would be impossible without the structure of Ex 1-18 as the interpretation key.

²⁷ This dimension is consistent with what is communicated in Table 3, column 4. The rationale for this law is homogeneous: it is the need to remember with gratitude the God who led Israel out of Egypt.

‘Description of taking out unleavened dough by the Israelites’ (Ex 12:34-39) is a law that requires to eat the unleavened Afikoman in the third part of the Passover Seder. It is a law of the same rank as the order to consume a lamb-Passover with unleavened bread and bitter herbs in the second part of the seder.

1.4. Conclusions.

The linguistic analyses carried out, and the understanding of the Passover Seder allows us to notice that:

a.	Because Afikoman, according to semantic analysis, contains words:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘bottom of the sea’ (implicitly: the Sea of Reeds, since the name of the seder point where it is consumed sounds צָפוֹן – hidden – which relates to the name בְּעַל צָפוֹן, the place where the Israelites crossed the very sea),
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘manna’ (which is a sweet, and therefore non-acid food, analogous to flour or unleavened dough),
	that is why Afikoman is ‘unleavened bread of departure’ – departure towards the Sea of Reeds and through it to its opposite side – the side of freedom.
b.	One eats Afikoman in the Passover Seder in remembrance and honor of the Lord who did the act of killing the firstborns of Egypt, led His People out of the place of the lamb-Passover eating and then led caringly towards freedom along the road that led through the Sea of Reeds divided by His power. One eats Afikoman with gratitude for <i>the grace of food</i> which the Fathers had enough for the whole way and especially for the most dangerous part of it – when the Egyptians pursued them to the other side of the Sea of Reeds, near בְּעַל צָפוֹן ;
	One eats Afikoman in remembrance of the march of Israel with a dough not yet acidified from the place of eating the lamb-Passover in Egypt. Along with the prayers of thanksgiving and supplication addressed to the Lord, Afikoman is a sign of the presence of the miracle of Exodus in each year. At the same time, it is an announcement of the arrival of Elijah and Messiah, expected each year; under their guidance, the Lord will lead His People into eternal life.

The same meaning of Afikoman is ‘recorded’ in two interpenetrating structures of the law pericope, as well as in two, related to them, basic types of relations that exist between their elements.

Having noticed the relation of ‘the chronological sequence,’ we discovered the existence of the following literary rule: the issue of the lamb-Passover is always isolated from that of unleavened bread and in every situation is before it.

By this consequent separation, the hagiographer emphasized that the eating of the lamb-Passover is earlier than the consumption of unleavened bread of departure. The eating of unleavened bread with the lamb-Passover and bitter herbs cannot be confused with that of the unleavened bread of departure. The last one represents a new stage in the history of Exodus – not the meal preceding the exit, but just the going out (and the whole way that began with it). The unleavened bread of departure represents a different part of the Passover Seder than the unleavened bread eaten with bitter herbs.

On the other hand, having noticed the relation of ‘parallelism,’ connecting only the inner fragments of the law pericope, we discovered their exceptional importance, distinguished on the background of the other two parts. As a result, we could understand the meaning of the meals characteristic for each one of them individually:

In part II:	lamb-Passover, eaten as part of the banquet of waiting for the departure
In part III:	unleavened bread, consumed as the food of going out and of the way to freedom

One can see how the results of analyses of both types of relations are consistent in this respect.

Moreover, in both discovered structures of the law pericope, the similarity to the Passover Seder is evident: **the number of fundamental structural elements is 4 in each of them.**

Having discovered the literary structure of the law pericope, we must conclude that it is the literary pattern for the Passover Seder, and especially for its two central parts. The outer segments of this Passover model we must interpret with the help of another, more significant literary structure – the one of Ex 1-18.

The reading of the law pericope as a model for the inner parts of Seder indicates that the liturgical participants are to obey God’s command to eat the lamb-Passover with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, and after it, in the next part, the unleavened bread of departure.

Because nowadays there is not the sanctuary in Jerusalem, so one can not offer the lamb for Passover; in consequence, in Seder, we can observe an alternative form of fulfilling the first of these God’s laws:

– In part II of Seder²⁸, all participants eat in sequence the following: the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, the sandwich²⁹ prepared from the unleavened bread and bitter herbs. After it, they can consume any other meals. This part we can name banquet.

– After the end of the banquet of part II, part III begins, where all of them eat Afikoman, which is the unleavened bread of departure.

In commonly available commentaries to the Passover Seder, one does not notice that eating of Afikoman is in commemoration of Israelites’ departure from Egypt, with unleavened dough. Therefore, one considers this important rite as the last act of part II of Seder. At first glance, this explanation is correct – both Afikoman and the whole part II connect with consumption. However, as we have seen above, it is not the correct explanation.

Eating of Afikoman is at the beginning of part III of the seder. The principal goal of this part is to thank the Lord for His love shown to Israel during the way from the place of the lamb consumption to that on the opposite side of Sea of Reeds – where Israel sang the hymn in His honor (cf. Ex 15:1-21). The manifestation and liturgical sign of Lord’s love is the unleavened bread with which He fed His people during this, peculiarly heavy, passage.

Part III of the Passover Seder is, therefore, a liturgical making present of the way from the place of lamb consumption to that of hymn singing.

Part IV makes present the Israelites’ singing of hymn for the gratitude to the Lord and His power; it is the hymn of fully liberated Israelites who are just on the opposite side of the Sea of Reeds!

This rite, belonging to the final part of the Passover Seder, has no source in the literary structure of the law pericope, but in that of Ex 1-18. We will talk about it in the next subsection. Earlier, however, we will address the problem that supplements the analyzes discussed now.

²⁸ This part we can call ‘eating’ = ‘feast,’ as long as we do not confuse this name with that of the whole seder – also ‘feast’ – the Passover one.

²⁹ It replaced a sandwich with unleavened bread, the meat of lamb-Passover and bitter herbs, eaten during the existence of the temple in Jerusalem.

2. The prohibition against offering ‘these opening the womb’ to the Lord during the Passover.

2.1. Introduction.

The theme of 2Sam 22 and Psa 18 is the salvation of the psalmist from mortal enemies, especially from Death and Abyss (cf. Ps 18:4-6.17), the salvation made by God because the psalmist is faithful to Him, keeps His laws (טִפְשָׁמֶ) and commandments (הִקְלָה) (cf. 2Sam 22:23), and above all because God loves him³⁰.

Similar difficult situations and deliverance from them are in the history of Exodus.

God brought Israel out of captivity because He loves her, but also because Israel showed Him full obedience, fulfilling everything that He commanded her through Moses and Aaron, and what the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) describes³¹.

Bearing in mind so amazing fruits of that original obedience of the Fathers, today’s Israel scrupulously tries to preserve all laws, regulations, traditions of the Passover so that the Lord may now lead her through the Abyss to freedom of life and His service in His Jerusalem and temple, so far lying in ruins. The Passover singing appeals to the love of the Lord, to the faithfulness of the Covenant, and begs Him to rebuild His temple and priestly sacrificial service in it as soon as possible.

To meet the task of fulfilling all the prescriptions of Passover, Israelites perform its celebration according to *The Passover Haggadah*, which mainly bases on the Holy Tradition, and in particular on *Tractate Pesachim* of *Mishnah*, and numerous references to the Hebrew Bible.

Tractate Pesachim, taken from Tradition, requires the fulfillment of all the laws of Passover contained in the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16), but states in sentence X.8 that the offering to the Lord of the firstborns (‘these opening the womb’: מִפְטִירֵי) does not belong to the Passover Seder.

To correctly read this key sentence of the Treaty is difficult. Hence one can find many translations. Now we are ready to discover a new understanding, based on the previous analysis and precise lexical reading of the very text.

The prohibition of offering ‘these opening the womb’ during Seder is a highly important part of the Tradition of Israel. It testifies to the exceptional role played by the law pericope for those her saint representatives to whom God has commissioned in the ancient history of Israel to formulate the points of the Passover Seder (i.e., the order of its liturgy).

This prohibition stands as an authoritative statement that during the Passover Seder one of its rules written in the law pericope should be omitted. We are to understand that placing this prohibition among the set of authoritative interpretations of Tradition serves as proof that this pericope played a fundamental role for those who constructed the Passover Seder.

In this subsection, the analysis of the sentence with *Pesachim* X.8 serves to confirm the significance of pericope of law for the structure of Passover Seder. It is, therefore, a

³⁰ Cf. H.-W. JÜNGLING, *Księga Pierwsza (Ps 1-41)*..., op.cit., pp. 690-691; A. F. CAMPBELL, J. W. FLANAGAN, *Pierwsza i Druga Księga Samuela*, [in:] R. E. BROWN, J. A. FITZMYER, R. E. MURPHY (ed.) and others, *Katolicki komentarz biblijny*, Warszawa 2001, p. 263.

³¹ Legislative words: הִקְלָה, הִקְלָה, תִּוְרָה occur seven times in this pericope. Moreover, twice, for a summary of the subsequent parts of this pericope (see Ex 12:28.50), the hagiographer emphasized that the People did accurately what the Lord commanded them (צִוָּה) through Moses and Aaron. Compare the meaning of these almost identical verses, analyzed above. Cf. also J. Warzecha, *Dawny Izrael od Abrahama do Salomona*, op.cit., p. 76: the religion of Israel is to be a factor in awakening people’s response of faith to God’s word, and not merely a passive acceptance of the benefits He gives them.

complementary aim to what we achieved in the previous subsection about the relationship between the structure of Seder and the law pericope. It is an essential task because it confirms those studies in a different method.

We will analyze this significant sentence *Pesachim* X.8, but only after summarizing all rules from the law pericope and indicating – at each of them – whether it applies in the seder or not.

2.2. Comparison of orders and bans in the law pericope (Ex 12:1-13:16) with their fulfillment in the Passover Seder.

In the law pericope the following regulations are included, grouped here thematically:

- the order for prior circumcision of male – if they want to be Passover participants
- the order to hold a sacred assembly and celebration in honor of the Lord on the night of 15 Abib and day of 21 Abib
- the ban on leaving the house at the night of 15 Abib
- the ban on performing any work except the preparation of food on days of 15 and 21 Abib
- * the order to separate the lamb intended for Passover from the flock and to guard it since the day of 10. Abib
- * the order to kill the lamb-Passover by the whole assembly of Israel in the evening of 14 / 15 Abib
- * the ban on breaking the bones of the lamb
- * the order to anoint the door with the blood of the lamb
- * the order to roast the lamb in its entirety and to eat it with matzah and bitter herbs
- * the order to hastily consume the lamb-Passover, standing up, in sandals on legs, with a walking stick in hand, with loins girded (which may mean: ready to go)
- * the ban on taking the lamb meat out of the house
- * the ban on eating the lamb-Passover after dawn
- * the order to burn after sunrise anything that remains of the lamb³²
- the order to eat unleavened bread from the evening of 14 Abib until the evening of 21 Abib
- the order to remove leaven out of the house just before the feast of unleavened bread
- the ban on the presence of any leaven in the house from the evening of 14 Abib until the evening of 21 Abib
- the ban on consuming any leaven from the evening of 14 Abib until the evening of 21 Abib
- * the order to tell the son about the significance of celebration and customs associated with it
- the order to eat unleavened bread for the memory of the Lord who brought Israel out of captivity³³

³² Cf. Ex 12:10f. Polish *Biblia Tysiąclecia*⁴ translates the word בִּקְרָא (dawn) only generally as *the next day*. God, however, ordered to stop eating before dawn – before sunrise. Contemporary Jews, on the other hand, interpret this precept as *before midnight*, that is, before the beginning of a new day, as it is now understood. At the time of Exodus, the Jews began the new day (or, precisely speaking, the twenty-four-hour time) from the moment when the sun fell behind the horizon. Midnight did not begin a new day.

³³ The law to eat unleavened bread for seven days (cf. Ex 12:15-20; 13:3-11), verbalized in the law pericope, is not the command we here refer. The order to eat unleavened bread (Afikoman) in the third part of Seder does not exist in the verbalized form in the law pericope! One can only read it due to the discovery of a parallel system of internal fragments of this pericope – see the analyses carried out in the previous subsection. However, this command is ‘written’ in the law pericope (although in a manner that is difficult to read)! One can assume, however, that the Israelites in their tradition could interpret Ex 13:3.8-9 as a verbalization of this order. It is

* the order to offer all the animals ‘opening the womb’ to the Lord; the order to ransom the sons ‘opening the womb’ with a lamb; the order which concerns every firstborn of an ass: one shall redeem it with a sheep; if one does not do it, one shall break its neck. One must ransom every son opening the womb

Are all these orders and bans implemented in the Passover Seder?

◆ The orders: to make circumcision, to hold a sacred assembly on the night of 15 Abib, to refrain from work – are scrupulously obeyed. The ban on leaving home on the night of 15 Abib was mainly imposed on the Fathers when God was punishing firstborns of Egypt. However, a trace of that prohibition is the custom of opening the door (until then closed!) within the third part of the seder, which makes present the departure from Egypt.

◆ The laws related to the lamb one must fulfill in a specific way:

The lamb itself is not present during the Passover, so one eats instead of it the food items one was obligated to eat with it. Thus one eats **bitter herbs and unleavened bread**. It is because nowadays is no temple in Jerusalem, so the Jews, citing Deut 16:1-8, rightly believe that they cannot comply with the commandment to offer the lamb-Passover to the Lord.

It is why the lamb is not present in Passover. It is represented by a small bone on a seder plate and by the custom of eating unleavened bread and bitter herbs in points 7, 8 and 9 of Seder – at the beginning of its second part (the feast / the covenant law).

One eats first solely the unleavened bread (usually the upper one with the half of the middle one; the other half is set aside as Afikoman), then bitter herbs only (customarily it is Maror dipped into Charoset), and finally the ‘sandwich’ made of unleavened bread and bitter herbs. It is usually the lower unleavened bread, while bitter herbs – Chazeret, a different kind of herbs than before. *The Haggadah* points out that Hillel in the temple’s time consumed the lamb with matzah and bitter herbs to fulfill in such a way the command from Ex 12:8.

◆ Anointing the door with blood, hasty eating – these are elements of orders concerning only the situation of the Fathers who were to be banished by the Pharaoh after the Lord’s dramatic action against the firstborns of Egypt.

Israelites now take quite a different posture to show their situation does not require such behavior because the Lord truly made them free. Therefore, during the consumption of food-symbols (four cups of wine, matzah, and in some traditions also Afikoman) **they not only do not stand but either lie on the left side or recline on the left side or rest on the left arm on soft pillows – in the royal style.**

because the phrase “You shall tell your son in that day” was interpreted as the order to explain in the first part of seder the meaning of the unleavened pieces of bread, lying before the person telling the story. In justifying this custom, *The Haggadah* refers to Ex 13:8. Cf. פסח של הגדה *Hagada. Opowiadanie o wyjściu Izraelitów z Egiptu na pierwsze dwa wieczory święta Pesach*. M. Zalcman Bookshop Publishing House, Vienna 1927, p. 14-15. *Hagada* is currently available in ‘Bibliofilka Edycja Reprintów’ as reprint made from a private collection at Interdruck GmbH Printing House in Leipzig, Warszawa 1991. Hereafter we quote it as *Hagada, reprint*. *The Haggadah* in its presently known form does not precisely distinguish between two ideas connected with bread. The first is ‘the bread of humiliating slavery’ (regular bread with acid, for which they worked in the humiliating conditions of slavery); the second is ‘the bread of humiliation’ (humiliation connected with the necessity of a hasty exit, according to Deut 13:8) ordered for seven days, from the evening of 14 Abib to the evening of 21 Abib. One can suppose a similar phenomenon occurs in *The Haggadah* regarding the ‘unleavened bread of departure’ eaten **within the seder**, which was not differentiated terminologically from the ‘unleavened bread commemorating the departure’ eaten for seven days, **regardless of the seder**.

That is why the question of one of the four sons is: “Why do we rest this night and recline on soft pillows as if we were kings?”³⁴

◆ The laws regarding the absence of acid at home during the feast³⁵ and the consumption of only unleavened bread and other acid-less dishes – one strictly observe.

◆ The command to tell the son about the significance of celebrating at night of 15 Abib and about the customs associated with it – one fulfills very clearly in the first part of the seder. At the beginning of the second part³⁶, the leader explains the meaning of the lamb and of eating unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

◆ The commandment to eat ‘unleavened bread of departure’ in memory of the Lord who led Israel out of captivity one accurately fulfills as a custom beginning the third part of the seder³⁷.

◆ **However, within the Passover Seder, no one offers to God animals that opened the womb nor redeems sons who opened the womb.** The shift of the fulfillment of this law to a different point of time is in agreement with Num 18:15f, but for a reader of the law pericope it may be worrying not to obey strictly all the orders and prohibitions of this pericope and the sequence suggested by it. **It required an explanation because the composition of this pericope seems to indicate the necessity of placing in the Passover Seder, after eating Afikoman, the point with offering to God those who opened the womb.** One can easily see it when looking at Table 1:

In column 4, which represents the fourth part of the seder – the one that follows the eating of Afikoman in the third part – there are three more elements:

• the duty to consecrate the firstborns (those who opened the womb) to the Lord	13:1-2
• the law concerning ‘the unleavened bread of departure’	13:3-11
• the duty to consecrate the firstborns (those who opened the womb) to the Lord	13:12-16

Since one eats ‘the unleavened bread of departure’ in the third part, then in the next, fourth part, one would expect to fulfill the law of offering the firstborns to the Lord, or, more precisely, those who opened the womb.

This view also seems to be confirmed by an insightful look at the Bible text Ex 13:1-16:

Ex 13:1 The Lord spoke to Moses and said, ² ‘Consecrate to me every first-born (פְּכוֹרִים) that opens the womb (פֶּתַח־רֶחֶם) among the Israelites, both of man and beast, for it belongs to me.’

³ Moses said to the people, ‘Remember this day on which you came out of Egypt, that place of slavery. **It was with a strong hand that the Lord brought you away.** Nothing made with leaven (חֶמֶץ) must be eaten. ⁴ This day of your departure is in the month of Abib. ⁵ Therefore, it is in this month that you must celebrate this rite, after the Lord, your God, has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which he swore to your fathers he would give you, a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁶ For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread (מַצֹּת), and the seventh day shall also be a festival to the

³⁴ J. KANOFKY, *Przewodnik Pesachowy Fundacji Ronalda S. Laudera. Pesach 5763 / 2003*, Warszawa 2003, p. 16-17, 19.

³⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-12; 23-26.

³⁶ Contemporary commentaries to Seder place these explanations at the end of the first part, but according to our analyses carried out above one should perceive them as the beginning of the second part, where the explained food-symbols are consumed according to the command of the Lord immediately afterward.

³⁷ The comments perceive Afikoman as a symbol of the lamb-Passover, consumed as the last bite of the banquet in the second part of Seder. According to the analyses carried out, Afikoman is, in fact, the unleavened bread of departure instead of a lamb’s symbol. Afikoman belongs to a different part of Seder than the lamb-Passover does.

Lord. ⁷ Only unleavened bread (מִצּוֹת) may be eaten during the seven days; no leaven (חֶמֶץ) and nothing leavened (שֵׂאֵר) may be found in all your territory. ⁸ **On this day you shall explain to your son,** ‘This is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.’ ⁹ It shall be as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead; thus the law of the Lord will ever be on your lips, because **with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt.** ¹⁰ Therefore, you shall keep this prescribed rite at its appointed time from year to year. ¹¹ ‘When the Lord, your God, has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, which he swore to you and your fathers he would give you, ¹² you shall dedicate to the Lord every son that opens the womb (כָּל־פֶּטֶר־רַחֵם), and all the male firstlings of your animals (וְכָל־פֶּטֶר זָגָר בְּהֵמָה) shall belong to the Lord. ¹³ Every first-born (וְכָל־פֶּטֶר) of an ass you shall redeem with a sheep. If you do not redeem it, you shall break its neck. Every first-born (וְכָל בְּכוֹר) son you must redeem. ¹⁴ **If your son should ask you later on, ‘What does this mean?’** you shall tell him, **‘With a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt,** that place of slavery. ¹⁵ When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the Lord killed every first-born (כָּל־בְּכוֹר) in the land of Egypt, every first-born (מִבְּכוֹר) of man and first-born (בְּכוֹר) of a beast. That is why I sacrifice to the Lord everything of the male sex that opens the womb (כָּל־פֶּטֶר רַחֵם הַזָּכָרִים), and why I redeem every first-born (וְכָל־בְּכוֹר) of my sons.’ ¹⁶ Let this, then, be as a sign on your hand and as a pendant on your forehead: **with a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt.**’

Listing in one speech, one after another, the obligation to consume only unleavened bread (13:3ff) on the 15th day of Abib (and then during seven days of the feast of Unleavened Bread) and the obligation to offer to the Lord ‘those who opened the womb’ (13:12ff) is very remarkable here. What is more, God included it in His other speech also – on the Mount Sinai, while renewing the covenant with Israel! It is described in Ex 34:18-27, where the specific words and phrases are underlined:

Ex 34:18 You shall keep the feast of Unleavened Bread (הַמִּצּוֹת). For seven days at the prescribed time in the month of Abib you are to eat unleavened bread (מִצּוֹת), as I commanded you; for in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt. ¹⁹ To me belongs every first-born male that opens the womb (כָּל־פֶּטֶר רַחֵם) among all your livestock, the firstlings (פֶּטֶר) of cow and sheep. ²⁰ The firstling (וּפֶטֶר) of an ass you shall redeem with one of the flock; if you do not redeem it, you must break its neck. The first-born (כָּל בְּכוֹר) among your sons you shall redeem. No one shall appear before me empty-handed. [...] ²⁵ You shall not offer me the blood of sacrifice with leavened bread (חֶמֶץ), **nor shall the sacrifice of the Passover feast be kept overnight for the next day.** [...] ²⁷ Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write down these words, for in accordance with them I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.’

In the texts, essential words and phrases have been marked out.

In the Book of Exodus, God ordered that every year the fathers must tell and explain to the son the relationship between the Passover ritual and the Lord’s intervention for bringing Israel out of Egypt. One should notice two fragments enclose this command:

- the one describing the custom of eating unleavened bread by seven days
- moreover, the other which institutes the offering to the Lord of those who opened the womb.

At the same time, in each of these verses are words, though in a different order, derived

from roots: יְהוָה, יָצָא, יָד, יָזַק – *the Lord, to bring out, a hand, a power*. In effect, the phrase ‘with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt’ (Ex 13:3.9.14.16) occurs twice in each of the two fragments. Finally, in Ex 13:1-16, the fourth part of the law pericope, this gives **the number 4 in total**, so distinguished in the Passover Seder.

Seder, among the questions of **the four sons**, also contains that of the wise one. It is why the solution to the problem of omission in its frame the offering of those who opened the womb had to be there. The father should have answered on the grounds of the Israeli Tradition. There must have been a very serious justification for this omission as consistent with God’s will!³⁸

It turns out that such an explanation indeed is in the Tradition of Israel, in *Pesachim* X. 8, and *The Haggadah* quotes it. However, the next point of this work will tell about it.

One should understand this Tradition is just as much of God’s will as the final redaction of the Book of Exodus and all other books of the Bible. It is, however, possible not only to accept this decision but also to understand it. For this purpose, we performed the penetrating analysis of the literary structure both of the law pericope and Ex 1-18. Thanks to them, we can conclude that:

- In the fourth part of the Passover Seder, there is no custom of offering those who opened the womb, although the law pericope (Ex 13:2.12-16) commands it; in place of it, the Hallel is, about which this pericope does not mention at all.
- It is understandable only if one notices that Seder is a composition build of two structures superimposed on each other: that of Ex 1-18 and that of the pericope of law Ex 12:1-13:16.
- The singing of Hallel in the fourth part of Seder is the last element of the four-part Ex 1-18 structure (which is the result of the reduction of the six-part Ex 1-18 structure).
- On the other hand, from the law pericope, the aim of its fourth fragment is present here – the fulfillment of the obligation to commemorate the works of the Lord.

The singing of Hallel is the realization of the goal to commemorate the work of the Lord, and to do it in the form written in the structure of Exodus 1-18.

2.3. The prohibition in *The Tractate Pesachim* X.8 in light of standard interpretations.

In the text of *The Haggadah*³⁹, in the fragment with the question of the wise son, one can read a particularly valuable explanation, taken from *Mishnah*, from *Tractate Pesachim* X.8, namely⁴⁰:

וְאַף אַתָּה אָמַר לוֹ כְּהִלְכוֹת הַפֶּסַח: אֵין מִפְטִירִין אַחַר הַפֶּסַח אֶפְיָקוֹמָן

The wise one, what does he say? “**What are the testimonies, the statutes and the laws which the Lord, our God, has commanded you?**”⁴¹ You, in turn, shall instruct him in the laws of Pesach, [up to] ‘one is not to eat any dessert after the Pesach-lamb.’

³⁸ Cf. also B. S. CHILDS, *The Book of Exodus. A Critical Theological Commentary*, Philadelphia 1974, p. 203. The author notes biblical parallelism between Ex 13:3-10 and 13:11-16, built in the following points: verses 5 and 11 refer to the commitment to enter the Promised Land; verses 8 and 14 focus on the answer given by father to the son; verses 9 and 16 contain the precept of visible sign on hands and of the memory of being led out of Egypt. This deep connection between the two texts, discovered by the modern biblical scholar, also had to be seen by the Israelites who live in biblical culture day-to-day.

³⁹ Cf. *The Passover Haggadah* – published by the Kehot Publication Society and made available in electronic form by Chabad Lubavitch: www.sacred-texts.com/jud/hagada.txt – chapter: Order of The Pesach Seder, point: Maggid. Cf. also *Hagada, reprint...*, op.cit., p. 13.

⁴⁰ The Hebrew text of *The Haggadah* is from [https://he.wikisource.org/wiki/מגיד_\(אשכנזי_מנוקד\)#הגדה_של_פסח_\(אשכנזי_מנוקד\)](https://he.wikisource.org/wiki/מגיד_(אשכנזי_מנוקד)#הגדה_של_פסח_(אשכנזי_מנוקד))

(I have only corrected one error: אָמַר must be אָמַר).

⁴¹ The question of the wise son in the text of *The Haggadah* is from Deut 6:20: “When your son asks you what these ordinances, statutes, and decrees mean which the Lord, our God, has enjoined on you?”

How should we understand the above sentence from the third line? We can find different answers:

“You, in turn, shall instruct him in the laws of Pesach, [up to] ‘one is not to eat **any dessert after the Pesach-lamb**’”⁴²,

which was also expressed in the Polish text from 1927 in a similar way:

“Ty tedy objaśnisz mu obrządku Paschy, aż do zdania: ‘**Nie należy kończyć ofiary Paschy wetami**’”⁴³ – “Then you will explain to him the rites of the Passover, to the sentence: ‘One should not end the sacrifice of the Passover with *wety*.’” *Wety* – it is the old Polish word for **dessert**⁴⁴.

The translation of a sentence that is important for analysis may also be such:

“One does not break up the Passover ceremony by announcing, ‘To **the after-meal entertainment**.’”⁴⁵

Similarly in Jastrow’s dictionary⁴⁶:

“after the Passover meal, one must not wind up by saying, ‘Now to **the after-meal entertainment**.’”

Similarly also in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*⁴⁷:

“The Jewish form of it occurs in Mishnah Pes. x. 8, which says: ‘One should not break off **the communion meal of the paschal lamb** by starting **another entertainment**, called either ἐπικώμιον [festal song] or, according to others, ἐπίκωμα [an after-meal dessert or pastime].’”

According to the translation of the Treaty *Pesachim* X.8 from *Mishnah* into French:

“On ne termine pas la pâque par un **aphikom én (dessert?)**”⁴⁸

i.e., “You do not end the Passover with an **Afikomen (dessert?)**.”

In turn, according to the Polish translation of the Treaty *Pesachim* X.8⁴⁹:

“It does not end with an **Afikoman after a paschal sacrifice**.”

In Danby’s translation of *Pesachim* X.8 into English⁵⁰:

“**After the Passover meal**, they should not disperse to join in the **revelry**.”

In the footnote, Danby explains: “The joy of the Passover meal with its solemn symbolism must not degenerate into an ordinary convivial gathering. The traditional interpretation, however, is: ‘they may not finish with **dessert**.’”

Translated into German⁵¹:

“Man läßt nach dem Passahmahl kein (weltliches) Jubellied אֶפִיקוֹמֵן (= ἐπικώμιον) folgen (wie es sonst nach Gastmählern üblich ist)...”

⁴² *The Passover Haggadah*, op.cit., chapter: Order Of The Pesach Seder. Maggid.

⁴³ *Hagada, reprint...*, op.cit., p. 13.

⁴⁴ Cf. S. RECZEK, *Podręczny słownik dawnej polszczyzny*, Wrocław - Warszawa - Kraków 1968, p. 547: wet.1.

⁴⁵ פסח של הגדה *The Passover Haggadah. A faithful English rendering* by A. Regelson, illustrated by Z. Kleinman, New York 1965, p. 12.

⁴⁶ Cf. M. JASTROW, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, New York 1950, vol. 1, p. 104: אֶפִיקוֹמֵן.

⁴⁷ Cf. C. ADLER (ed.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (vol. I-XII), New York - London, 1901-1906, vol. I, p. 224: Afikomen: cf. on Internet: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/881-afiko>

⁴⁸ Cf. J. BONSIRVEN, *Textes rabbiniques des deux premiers siècles chrétiens pour servir à l'intelligence du Nouveau Testament*, Roma 1955, p. 215.

⁴⁹ *Miszna-Pesachim*, translated by R. MARCINKOWSKI, op.cit., p. 177.

⁵⁰ H. DANBY, *The Mishnah. Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes*, Peabody, Massachusetts 2016, p. 151. The book includes the *Treaty Pesachim*, pp. 136-151.

⁵¹ H. L. STRACK, P. BILLERBECK, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch. Exkurse zu Einzelnen Stellen des Neuen Testaments Abhandlungen zur Neutestamentlichen Theologie und Archäologie in zwei Teilen*, München 1956² I-IV (1-2), vol. IV, Part 1, p. 73.

i.e., “No (secular) song of joy אֶפִיקוֹמִין (= ἐπικώμιον) is allowed to take place after the Passover meal (as it is usually the case after an ordinary feast)...”

Explaining his translation, the author presents various ways of understanding this Hebrew word. First, he states that according to Rabbi Simon from the third century after Christ, it is a kind of song (all kinds of singing)⁵².

Then, according to this explanation, he clarifies: “The translation of *Tractate Pesachim* X.8 of *Mishnah* according to Strack, *Pesachim* 34:

“**After the paschal meal**, one does not dissolve the community, but there is *Epikómion*, **a song of joy (with a solemn procession)**” – becomes the literal meaning of the text:

אֵין מִפְטִירִין אַחַר הַפֶּסַח אֶפִיקוֹמִין.⁵³

Then the author points out that the proper meaning of the word *Afikoman* was forgotten very quickly – *Tosefta* already understood it as *dessert*. This false explanation then became common throughout Jewish antiquity⁵⁴. TP^es 10:11 (173): “**After the consumption of Passover**, no dessert, like nuts and dates and parched corn, is permitted. After finishing the Passover meal, one should pray according to *Passover Halacha*, either alone or with his son or with a disciple.”

Conclusion: The collated translations of all authors are divergent, but they have a common thought: **after eating the Passover lamb (or the Passover meal as a whole) it is not allowed to organize fun / to sing secular songs / to eat dessert.**

According to many commentators⁵⁵, the word אֶפִיקוֹמִין, contained in *Mishnah* in *Tractate Pesachim* X.8, comes from the Greek language:

⁵² Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 73: pP^es 10:37^d,46: „Was ist אֶפִיקוֹמִין? R. Simon (um 280) hat im Namen des R. Jojani b. Sisai (Sissai, um 250) gesagt: Eine Liedart (allerlei Gesänge).”

⁵³ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 73. An explanation of the indicated Hebrew text, based on biblical analyses, radically different from that of Strack-Billerbeck, please see in this paper below.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

⁵⁵ Cf. C. ADLER (ed.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, op.cit., vol. 1, p. 224. Cf. also פֶּסַח הַגְדָּה שֶׁל פֶּסַח Passover Haggadah with a new translation by Chaim Raphael, New York 1972, p. 55: Afikoman – from Greek ἐπικώμιον, which means: dessert or appetizer; it is a particular remnant of the paschal sacrifice; everyone must eat a piece of Afikoman; p. 24: ἐπικώμιον – procession (festival procession). The word had different meanings in Talmudic times, including dessert and savory. The author of the term ‘Afikoman’ in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* explains on page 224: “The Jewish form of it occurs in *Mishnah* Pes. X.8, which says: ‘One should not break off the communion meal of the paschal lamb by starting another entertainment, called either ἐπικώμιον [festal song] or, according to others, ἐπίκωμιον [an after-meal dessert or pastime].’ This rule of making the paschal lamb the last thing to be partaken of in company was applied at a later time (see Rab and Samuel in Pes. 119b) to the Passover bread; and the piece, eaten at the end of the meal received the name *Afikomen*. In order to awaken the curiosity of the children, the Afikomen was broken off the mazzah at the beginning of the seder; the custom arising perhaps from a misunderstanding of the passage in Pes. 109a, ‘They hasten [the eating of] the mazzah in order to keep the children awake,’ which may also be translated, ‘They snatch away the mazzah’; and so it became customary to allow the children to abstract the Afikomen from under the pillow of the master of the house, and to keep it until redeemed by him with presents.” Cf. also available on the Internet (http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/t03/psc14.htm#page_210) by J.B. HARE (ed.), *Scanned at Sacred-Texts.com*, September 2002: Talmud text in English, published by The Talmud Society: *New Edition of The Babylonian Talmud. Original Text, Edited, Corrected, Formulated and Translated into English By Michael L. Rodkinson*, Volume V.: Section Moed (Festivals), *Tractate Pesachim (Passover)*, Boston 1918. This text seems to be the best to analyze *Afikoman* issues as *The Jewish Encyclopedia* states; it helps to solve the uncertainties introduced by other publishers into it. On the page 256: *Mishnah*: ‘It is unlawful to conclude the eating of **the paschal sacrifice** with **a dessert**’ (which is the different translation, but concerning the same sentence of the Talmud, given above in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*: ‘One should not break off the communion meal of the paschal lamb by starting another entertainment’). After it is Gemara, and there is a discussion on the subject: ‘What is meant by this *dessert*?’ and whether this ban still has to apply now, when you do not eat lamb meat as a paschal sacrifice, but

- either from the expression ἐπὶ κῶμος, meaning *entertainment after a meal* (κῶμος – fun; ἐπὶκῶμον – dessert or entertainment after a meal)
- or from ἐπικώμιον (festive/joyful song, fun with singing).

Is this a proper understanding of this Hebrew term?

It seems necessary to discover the original meaning of the Hebrew text *Pesachim* X.8 based on biblical parallels. It is important to note that this is the case:

Afikoman (אֶפִיקוֹמָן) is a piece of the middle matzah (called Levi) broken off by the leader of the Passover Seder at the beginning of the celebration and hidden by him so that it is only eaten almost at the very end of the Passover liturgy.

We should supplement the above-quoted translations of the sentence *Pesachim* X.8 with an analysis of its original text in *Mishnah*. It will be first presented in an analytical table, in which one is to read Hebrew sentence from right to left column but the English words inside the column from left to right.

The introductory phrase:

אָמַרְלוּ	אֵתָהּ	וְאַף
tell him	you	And also

The main sentence to be analyzed:

אֶפִיקוֹמָן	הַפֶּסַח	אַחַר	מִפְּטִירֵין	אֵין	הַפֶּסַח	בְּהַלְכוֹת
Afikoman	Passover	after	opening*	there are no	Passover	In the time of ⁵⁶

* because consumption connects with an opening of mouths, so interpreters add ‘mouths’: ‘opening of mouths.’

It is important to note that further analysis will show the need for verification of such interpretation!

Such interpretation is the result of associating this sentence with a custom existing in the Passover Seder, which prohibits eating anything after consuming Afikoman⁵⁷. Therefore,

Afikoman (unleavened bread). The text of the dispute stretches to page 258. And here, the next sentence of *Mishnah* is, the one which Danby, Bonsirven and many others quote as X.8: ‘If any of the company fall asleep during the meal, they may eat of the paschal sacrifice afterwards; but if the whole company have fallen asleep, they must not again eat thereof [upon awakening]...’ Then there is an opinion: R. Jose said: ‘If they are only drowsy, they may eat it, but if they fall fast asleep, they must not eat of it afterwards.’

⁵⁶ It is the participle of the verb הָלַךְ (go), feminine plural in *status constructus*, preceded by the prefix בְּ. Generally, the form of this participle in the Hebrew Bible is הַלְכוֹת, not הִלְכוֹת, so there may be a change of the first vowel in the presence of the prefix בְּ. One must remember the analyzed text is in Aramaic or Hebrew non-biblical language, hence, there may be differences in vowels relative to the Bible despite the quite substantial similarities between these two languages. One knows that the prefix בְּ in conjunction with an infinitive has meaning *when, in time*: cf. R. L. HARRIS, G. L. ARCHER, B. K. WALTKE, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Chicago, Illinois 1980, an electronic version in BibleWorks 6.0, point 937 (בְּ). Since participles often appear in the same role as an infinitive, the translation is: *when the Passover lasts – during the Passover*. The same result one can obtain from different reasoning: because participles often are in a noun role, this participle can mean *standing*. Cf. The electronic version in BibleWorks 6.0.: *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar As Edited And Enlarged By The Late E. Kautzsch. Second English Edition. Revised In Accordance With The Twenty-Eighth German Edition (1909) By A. E. Cowley. With A Facsimile Of The Siloam Inscription By J. Euting And A Table Of Alphabets By M. Lidzbarski, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1910: §116 The Participles; §113. The Infinitive Absolute*. From now, it will be in footnotes as W. GESENIUS, *The Hebrew Grammar*.

⁵⁷ The participants are to consume nothing but the wine they drink from the third and then from the fourth cup – the cups essential for the structure of the seder. The wine of these Passover cups is not as an ordinary food product, but as a product prescribed by law, in analogy to the matzo and the maror.

according to a suggestion taken from practice, we can present the main sentence as follows:

In the time of the Passover,	בְּהִלְכוֹת הַפֶּסַח
there is no consuming	אֵין מִפְטִירִין
after the Passover Afikoman.	אַחַר הַפֶּסַח אֶפִיקוֹמָן

Finally, this sentence would have the following content, consistent with the practice:

“When celebrating Passover, one should not eat anything after the Passover Afikoman.”⁵⁸

We must put a fundamental question: does *Pesachim* X.8 indeed talk about not-eating after Afikoman? Are we not mistaken assuming that this is about opening our mouths and, as a result, about eating? We will look for an answer by analyzing the word מִפְטִירִין, translated as ‘the opening’ [by default: the opening of the mouths], that is, ‘the eating.’

2.4. מִפְטִירִין – ‘these opening the womb,’ i.e., the firstborns.

What is מִפְטִירִין? The analysis of the form of the word itself leads us to understand it as a masculine plural participle in hiphil in *status absolutus*, derived from the verb פִּטַר⁵⁹. Here are the arguments for this:

1. According to Gesenius⁶⁰, ׀ is the **Aramaic ending** of all parts of speech for the plural number; it appears sporadically in later books of the Old Testament and poetic fragments, even the oldest. A typical Hebrew form is ׀.

2. In the Bible, there are 1792 masculine plural participles in *status absolutus*, of which 1790 ends with ׀, but two ends with ׀, both in qal (and therefore none of them in hiphil)⁶¹:

שׁוֹמְמִין	they being deserted	Lam 1:4
הֲרָצִין	runners	2Kings 11:13

3. The masculine plural participle in hiphil having identical vowels as מִפְטִירִין and differing only in respect to the form of the ending ׀, appears in the Hebrew Bible 18 times⁶² but four times in sentence represents not the action, but the doer of an act:

לְמִשְׁמִיעִים	for those sounding	1Chr 16:42
מִשְׂחִיקִים	those laughing	2Chr 30:10
הַמְגַדִּילִים	those magnifying themselves over somebody	Psa 35:26
הַמְשַׁכְּלִים	those understanding	Dan 11:35

⁵⁸ Close to this translation is the English text of the Talmud, which one can find in an electronic version on the following website: www.sacred-texts.com/jud/t03/psc14.htm. It includes the text *Pesachim* X.8 from *Mishnah* as well as comments to it (*Gemara*): “It is unlawful to conclude the eating of the paschal sacrifice with a dessert.”

⁵⁹ Cf. G. DEIANA, A. SPREAFICO (original version), S. BAZYLIŃSKI (Polish version), *Wprowadzenie do Hebrajszczyzny biblijnej*, op.cit., p. 83.

⁶⁰ Cf. W. GESENIUS, *The Hebrew Grammar*, op.cit.: § 87. *Of the Plural*. Point e. The author adds in the footnote No 2: “So also always in the Mēša inscription, e. g. line 2 שלשן thirty; line 4 מלכן kings; line 5 מן רבן many days, &c.”

⁶¹ The search in BibleWorks 6.0 for WTM, where Command Center: .*@v?Pmpa+Sxxx*

⁶² The search in BibleWorks 6.0 for WTT for a version with vowels, where Command Center: ׀??׀??׀*

4. מְפַטְרִין can also be a correctly written word of an extra-biblical version of the Hebrew language. For example, in *The Passover Haggadah*,⁶³ there is the expression עָרוּב תְּבַשְׁלִין (eruw **tawszilin** – allowing **the cooking**), where, in the second word, there are the same vowels as in מְפַטְרִין.

בָּשַׁל – to cook, bake, fry; תְּבַשְׁלִין – cooking, baking, frying.

תְּבַשְׁלִין – it is a verbal noun.

Similarly, in the same *Passover Haggadah*⁶⁴, there is another expression:

וְכַכֵּה מַגְעִיגִין אֶת הַכֵּלִים, what one should translate: “and this is **the purification** of the vessels,” where מַגְעִיגִין is a verbal noun, derived from גָּעַל – remove, discard.

5. Finally, one should state: מְפַטְרִין – it is a correctly written masculine plural participle in hiphil in *status absolutus*, derived from the verb פָּטַר.

The word מְפַטְרִין is a verbal noun which means: those making the opening [by default: of the womb], i.e., **the firstborn sons of their mothers** (a father in a polygamous system could have a different firstborn son), the firstborn males of their mothers.

We must emphasize that in the description of Exodus in Ex 1:1-18:31, the word of the root פָּטַר is present no more than in Ex 13:2.12.13.15, i.e., only in the 4th part of the law pericope. This word is essential, so we presented it during the analysis of the structure of this pericope.

2.5. Conclusions.

The analysis allows us to understand the prohibition contained in *Pesachim* X:8:

the main analyzed sentence:

אֶפִּיקוֹמָן	הַפֶּסַח	אַחַר	מְפַטְרִין	אֵין	הַפֶּסַח	פְּהֶלְכוֹת
Afikoman	Passover	after	opening*	there are no	Passover	In the time of

* ‘These opening the womb’ instead of ‘these opening the mouth,’ therefore it is not about eating!

So we understand this sentence as follows: “During the Passover, there are no ‘these opening the womb’ after the Passover Afikoman.

Finally, this sentence has the following content:

“At the time of the Passover, there is no offering of ‘these opening the womb’ after the consumption of the Passover Afikoman.”

One can see that if not only the structure of Ex 1-18 but also the law pericope was the model for the celebration of the Passover, such a sentence had to be in *The Haggadah*.

This sentence is to remind the leader of the Passover Seder to answer the question regarding the rules contained in this pericope: why is it that during the celebration one follows all that regulations except for one – to offer to the Lord ‘these opening the womb.’

⁶³ Cf. J. KANOFKY, *Przewodnik Pesachowy Fundacji Ronalda S. Laudera. Pesach 5763 / 2003*, op.cit., p. 2; הגדה של פסח, Tel-Aviv 1958, op.cit., p. 8.

⁶⁴ Cf. Ibid., p. 9: the caption under the drawing which shows the way of koshering the dishes for the Passover. See also *BDB-GESENIUS Hebrew-Aramaic and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, op.cit., p. 171: גָּעַל Hiphil *rinse out* with hot water.

The significance of this prohibition is essential not only for the annual Passover but also for biblical exegesis because it shows the law pericope as a model, whose orders and prohibitions the God-appointed authors of Haggadah were to write into the subsequent parts of Seder. They were inspired by God to understand that at the end of the Passover Seder there must be no offering of those who opened the womb, even though it would be the finalization of the fulfillment of all the precepts of this pericope.

At the end of Seder, at the moment where the reader of the pericope of law could expect such an offering, there is not an act of offering; instead of it, there is the singing of hymns of Hallel, magnificent psalms and songs commemorating the greatness of the work of the Lord who led Israel out of Egypt. Thanks to this visible exchange, it is possible today to see the significance of the literary structure of Ex 1-18 for the Passover Seder.

Summary

This paper has shown the word *Afikoman* as a compound Hebrew term, not a Greek one.

On the one hand, the way to discover it was to analyze *The Hebrew Bible*.

As the first step, we searched for the word אַפִּיקוֹמָן or some part of it in the Hebrew text. We found that the word *Afikoman* – אַפִּיקוֹמָן – contains three words related to the way of Israel on the bottom of the Sea of Reeds during Exodus. They are אַפִּיק (bottom; אַפִּיק is its *status constructus*), מָן (manna), יָם (sea). One can see the importance of it when one understands the eating of Afikoman by Passover Seder participants as a liturgical sign which makes them really with the Fathers who are marching on the dry bottom of the sea.

As the second step, we discovered a close relationship between the Passover rite and the literary structure of the law pericope Ex 13:16-14:31.

On the other hand, we analyzed the original sentences of *The Tractate Pesachim X.8*, where the word אַפִּיקוֹמָן appears; they connect with the task of the Passover leader, who must explain all the rules of Seder in an answer for the wise son's question. The last of these laws forbid them to eat something after the eating of Afikoman.

וְאִם אָמַר לֹא כִּהְלָכֹת הַפֶּסַח: אֵין מִפְּטִירִין אַחַר הַפֶּסַח אַפִּיקוֹמָן

In this case, we showed the traditional Jewish explanations of this prohibition – the need to abstain from eating after consumption of the Afikoman – do not have as strong a rational argument as the one proved in this article, namely:

מִפְּטִירִין in Pesachim X.8 is an important word and the reason for the mistakes. Why? Because the root of this term (פטר) means 'to open,' so the translators and commentators understand it as 'an act of eating' for the reason that such an activity connects with an opening of the mouth. Lexical analysis of this sentence explained it as a prohibition valid during the celebration of the Passover ritual to offer 'these opening the womb' (פְּטִירֵי הַבֶּטֶן) to the Lord, in the exceptional opposition to the order contained in the law pericope.

An essential element in proving this thesis is the observation that the fourth part of the law pericope, Ex 13:1-16, contains two orders: to eat unleavened bread and to offer 'these opening the womb' to the Lord. However, the fourth part of the Passover Seder contains the first of these acts – the eating of the Afikoman – but not the second one. The prohibition

expressed in Pesachim X.8 is the reason for this. Instead of that offering, there is the singing for the Lord – according to Ex 15:1-21 as the fourth part of the structure of the Ex 6:1-15:21.

The identification of analogies and differences between the commandments of the law pericope and their fulfillment in the Passover Seder is necessary not only for an understanding of the origin of the Passover rite but also for the proving the thesis of this article that Afikoman is a combined Hebrew word with a strictly defined meaning.

The eating of Afikoman during the 3rd part of the Passover Seder means that the participants of the sacral liturgy are now with their Fathers on the dry bottom of the Sea of Reeds. They are passing between divided waters of the sea and participating in the very act of the covenant-making between God and His People.

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May God be glorified!

אֶפִּיקוֹמָן

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