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THE PASSOVER SEDER: A STUDY OF ITS DEVELOPMENT FROM THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD TO THE MIDDLE AGES

by

ROBERT REINER

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Hebrew Letters and Ordination

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION

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Referee: Professor Joseph Gutmann

Digest of Contents

The Passover Haggadah provides a panoramic view of the wide spectrum of Jewish history. It demonstrates the dynamic nature of Judaism's response to history, to the challenges which it faced. Judaism created its own *modus operandi* out of the fiery furnace of challenge, response, and synthesis. The interaction between Judaism and the dominant environment in which it found itself served as the catalyst by which Judaism smelted and refined.

This thesis analyzes the historical development of the Passover Seder ritual in terms of Judaism's involvement with the dominant culture. Each new involvment of Judaism with a major civilization has brought changes in the nature and character of Judaism. Some of these changes are illustrated by nature and development of the Passover celebration. This analysis begins with a summary of the origins of the Passover celebration as two distinct spring fertility rites which insure either the fecundity of the flock or the fertility of the soil. They represent two stages in the history of the Jewish people, the nomadic and the agricultural sedentary phases.

The origins of the Passover home seder ceremony are the products of the Pharisaic reaction to the Graeco-Roman world. It is therefore natural to find that the seder banquet and Haggadah ritual reflect both Greek and Roman influences in banquet customs and literary style. Thus many of the customs and ceremonies associated with the seder meal reflect either a borrowing or adapt ation from or reaction

against the practices of the dominant culture. The Pharisees transformed the non-Jewish and pagan elements into a religious ceremonial banquet which was distinquished by its unique Jewish character. The Graeco-Roman banquets were characterized by their concern for wine, women, and song. The rabbis were able to prevent the seder from turning into a drunken brawl and orgy by prohibiting the degenerate aspects of these banquets. They prohibited any after dinner revelry or entertainment which involved women or wine. Through these means the rabbis insured that the essential spiritual and religious message would remain imprinted upon the minds of the Seder participants.

The laws and customs of the seder ritual found in the Mishnah reflect in part the rabbinic reaction to the Christian re-interpretation of the Passover seder as a memorial to their Lord Jesus Christ. The ordinance of Rabban Gamaliel concerning the meaning of the three Passover symbols: Pesah, Matzah, and Maror, the omission of Moses from the Passover ritual, the transposition of the recitation of the Haggadah, and the midrashic interpretation and emphasis on God's personal intervention in redeeming the Jews, all these serve as polemics against Christianity.

In the Middle Ages the additions to the Haggadah are mainly of a midrashic nature and serve to console the persecuted Jews. They emphasize the promise of God's future redemption of the Jewish people. This theme characterizes the Elijah ceremony, the poetry and the songs which were added.

Preface

I want to express my appreciation to both Dr. Eugene Mihaly and Dr. Ellis Rivkin for their aid and interest in this thesis andt the personal encouragement which they gave me. It was in Dr. Mihaly's courses that I was first exposed to the fascinating subject which the study of the Passover Haggadah provides. He made me aware of some of the basic problems of scholarship which are involved in the study of the Passover Haggadah. Dr. Rivkin is largely responsible for the analysis of the Pharisaic background of the Passover celebration which is presented in this thesis.

I especially want to express my appreciation to Dr. Joseph Gutmann whose assistance as my thesis referee has been most helpful and valuable. Dr. Gutmann's love and enthusaism for Judaism which he manifested in those courses which I was privileged to participate have been a constant source of inspiration to me. Both his meticulous scholarship and his personal qualities as a patient, kind, and devoted teacher have served as inspiring models. They have motivated me to continue my studies in the field of Jewish customs and ceremonies.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Rabbi David M. Zielonka and Mrs. Harold N. Hermann for their assistance in the correction of the manuscript. Finally I wish to express my sincerest thanks and deepest appreciation to Mrs. Betty Finkelstein for the personal interest she has manifested in the prepartion of this manuscript.

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Introduction

Purpose of Thesis and Methodological Considerations

A study of the Passover Seder can be approached from many directions, all of which may be valid and productive from the point of view of scholarship. It is not the intent of this paper to repeat the traditional views and interpretations of the various Passover symbols and ritual objects, involved in the Seder ritual. These are readily available in most editions of the Haggadah. This study will not include a detailed analysis of either the Midrashic exegesis of Bibilical verses nor the Rabbinic sources of various midrashim except to the degree they contribute to an overall understanding of the historical development of the Seder. Excellent detailed studies of this type have been done by such noted scholars as E. Daniel Goldschmidt and Rabbi M. Kasher who are most competent in both the rabbinic sources and the classic German studies of nineteenth century scientific Judaism. (References to these studies will often be found in the footnotes.) Nor is the analysis of the various editions of the Haggadah as a separate book or as a Jewish art form, i.e. illuminated Haggadah manuscripts, of primary interest to this study. These aspects of the Haggadah, while important and interesting, are not the primary concern of this paper. They, however, will be included to the degree that they serve to sharpen the historical perspective of the development of the Haggadah. Each of these areas is important enough to warrant a separate thesis or study in itself. Each one in itself provides a fertile field of scholarship to the specialist who wishes to concentrate in one of these areas.

The goal of this study is to approach the Passover Haggadah on a broader perspective. The purpose of this thesis is to present an analysis of the historical development of the Passover Seder from the Hellenistic period to the Middle Ages.

Chapter I

The Passover in the Biblical Period

The holiday of Passover as celebrated in the Bible is believed by many scholars to have its origins in two separate and distinct festivals, the feast of the Passover and the feast of the Unleavened Bread, which were eventually combined into one holiday.[1] According to their theories the Passover is the older holiday and was practiced by the Israelites when they were still semi-nomads. The Feast of Matzah, or Unleavened Bread, was celebrated by the Israelites only after they settled in Canaan. It was probably borrowed from the Canaanites or from other agricultural peoples with whom the Israelites came in contact.

These two festivals have become incorporated into one holiday. Originally both of them were springtime nature festivals commemorating the rebirth of life. There were similar rites and celebrations held throughout the ancient world at this time of the year. The Israelite celebration was characteristic of the primitive seasonal rituals held at the spring vernal equinox.

This characteristic provides the basis for and gives us a clue to the manner and reason, the how and the why, which led to the amalgamation of these two distinct festivals into one holiday. The following discussion will be a brief summary of their background as distinct festivals and the history of their synthesis. There are three phases leading to the merger of the two feasts.

1. The nomadic, which is characterized by the sacrifice of one of the flock to insure an increase in the flock.

2. The agricultural phase, characterized by the offering of the barley harvest to insure fertility, and by the abstention from the eating of leaven.

3. The centralization of the cult and creation of a national holy day and piltrimage festival.

At some point either during the evolution of these two holidays or afterwards it became identified with the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. It is not known when or at what stage in the proposed three-phase development this association occurred. There are many theories about the process of historization, but it is not pertinent to our purpose to enter into them.

The origin of the Passover festival was essentially a feast celebrated by nomads or shepherds. They would offer a sacrifice of a young animal in order to secure fecundity and prosperity for the flock. This sacrifice is similar to that of the ancient Arab nomads and is like the old Arab feast which fell in the month of Rajab, the first month of spring. Both the Arab sacrifices and the Passover sacrifice and ritual are characterized by no priest, no altar, and to the prominent role the use of blood plays. The sprinkling of blood on the doorposts, orginally on tent poles of nomads, were part of magical procedures designed to avert evil and misfortune by driving away the evil powers or demons. The sacrifice in both Jewish and Arab circles was roasted over a fire and eaten with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. The Bedouin to this day regularly eat unleavened bread and use bitter herbs which they find among the wild desert plants to season their food.

Father DeVaux emphasizes that this pastoral feast was not an offering of the 'firstborn' of the flock. He claims this is nowhere stated, even in the most detailed texts about the choice of the sacrifice or about the rites to be followed at the feast.[2] In Exodus, Chapter 12, which is the most detailed and basic account of the Passover celebration, it requires only that the lamb or sheep or goat be without blemish and of the first year and not that it be the firstborn.[3]

All the members of the family would participate and make a hasty meal in the middle of the night. The ceremony would be conducted by the head of the family. H. Schauss, author of Guide to Jewish Holy Days, bases his claim that Pesach was merely a tribal group festival on Exodus 12:43-46,

where it is prescribed that no alien, sojourner, or hired servant is to take part in the Pesach. A purchased slave could participate only after he was circumcized and thus become a member of the family.[4]

This festival of the shepherds or nomads was celebrated on the fourteenth-fifteenth of the first month, Nisan, at the full moon. Thus Passover became the Israelite version of the spring time feast which all the Semetic nomads observed.

When the Israelites settled in Canaan they brought with them their nomadic traditions and continued to practice them. They were naturally affected and influenced by the rites of their Canaanite neighbors. They adopted some of their customs and practiced them along with their own traditional nomadic customs. The environmental influence and changed living conditions caused the agricultural rites to predominate. There was a snycretism taking place which transformed the character of the original nomadic rites. No longer was the tent the place of sacrifice. The focus of attention shifted to the local bamot, or high place which were holy sites. The Canaanites served their gods, the baalim, in these high places. They held religious feasts at which they offered sacrificial animals, sang holy songs and danced religious dances. The Israelites used these same hills to sacrifice and worship their god.[5] The prime function of Israelite sacrifice, was to insure the fertility of the flock. The offering of the omer, the first sheaf of barley, served to insure fertility of the soil.

The feast of Unleavened Bread was an agricultural-spring nature festival observed by farmers who lived by tilling the soil. It was related to the cutting of the grain. The grain harvest began in the spring with the cutting of barley and ended with the reaping of wheat. This season was

introduced by the [illegible] rites, of the Feast of Matzah, Unleavened Bread, and seven weeks later was ended with the celebration of the Feast of Weeks, Shavout, which marked the end of the cereal harvests.

The characteristic features of this holiday were the removal of the leaven products, the eating of the matzah, the unleavened bread, and the ceremony of the Omer, the offering of the barley. The first sheaf of the newly cut barley was offered to the priest at the local high place, or holy sanctuary on the first day of the harvest as a sacrifice, as a fit to God. The origin of the removing of the hametz the sour fermented dough, and the leaven of the last year's crop is uncertain. There are many theories the most likely of which according to H. Schauss relates to the procedure being a safeguard against crop failure and an unproductive year.[6] Roland de Vaux claims the removal of the old leaven and the eating of bread made only with the new leaven represents a new beginning.[7]

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was one of a triad of nature festivals celebrated by Jewish agriculturalists in Palestine. They also observed the "Feast of Harvest" (Shavout) and the "Feast of Ingathering" (Sukkot). These three occasions were the greatest and most festive holidays of the year and were always observed in a sanctuary. Entire villages of farmers would make their way to the hill tops where they would make their offerings to the priest.

The distinguishing and uniquely Jewish characteristic of the celebration of this festival was its relationship to the Sabbath and the emphasis upon a seven day celebration occurring between the Sabbaths.

> "The Feast of Unleavened Bread was always bound up with the week: the feast lasted seven days (Ex. 23:15;34:18), from one sabbath to the next (Ex. 12:16, Dt. 16:8; Lv 23;6-8).... The feast of Unleavened Bread may have been adopted by the Israelites from the Canaanites; but since the week and the Sabbath are not found outside Israel, this feast must have taken on, apparently from the moment of its adoption, a strictly Israelite character."[8]

In comparing the Feast of Matzah with the Feast of Passover as two distinct and separate holidays we see that in addition to their different origins, functions, and specific ceremonies, they differ in their dates and the fact that the Feast of Matzah was already a pilgrim festival i.e., one of the three major feasts of Israel where each family and village would appear at the local sanctuary. The Feast of Matzah since it was an agricultural feast depended upon the condition of the crops and could not be dated more precisely than in "the month of the ears of corn," the month of Aviv according to the Hebrew calendar. Roland de Vaux notes that this is the only regulation in the calendars of Exodus 23 and 34 and in Deuteronomy.[9] It would last seven days after the first barley appeared. The Passover on the other hand had a fixed date, that of the 14th-15th of the first month, i.e., at the full moon and would start at night. The night of the full moon was chosen because it was the brightest night of the month, and not necessarily because it was connected with the cult of the stars. In the evening when it was cool was the only appropriate time when every one could participate and have the time to make for an elaborate celebration. The Passover Feast only became a feast of pilgrimage to Jerusalem with the implementation of the Josianic reform.[10]

The Josianic reform laid the groundwork which led to the amalgamation of the two festivals into one celebration incorporating their key characteristics.

> "And this is precisely where the innovation of Deuteronomy and of Josias lay: they made the Passover a pilgrimage, for which men came to the one central sanctuary. It was a consequence of the centralization of worship. The Passover had previously been a family feast kept in each town and in in each home (cf. Ex. 12:21-35 and Deut. 16:5); it was quite distinct from the pilgrimage of the massoth. The two feasts, however, fell at the same time and had several features in common; hence they were eventually combined. But they were not combined in the time of Josias, and the first mention of them as one feast is to be found in Ez. 45;21 and in the Priests' traditions."[11]

Jerusalem became the center for both feasts after the Josianic reforms made it an obligation to celebrate the Passover (alone) at Jerudalem. The obvious move according to De Vaux was to combine the two feasts.[12]

> "The old rubric about eating unleavened bread at the Passover (a rubric which had nothing to do with the feast of Unleavened Bread since it was customary for Bedouins to eat unleavened bread) favoured the combination, and so perhaps did local usages, like that followed in the sanctuary at Gilgal (Jos. 5;10-12). The date of the Passover was already fixed for the full moon, and this was left unchanged; the Feast of the Unleavened Bread was attached to it and ordered to be kept during the following seven days. This is the rule laid down in Lv. 23:5-8."[12]

Before the reign of Josiah and the institution of the Deuteronomic reforms in 621 B.C.E. the festival of Passover was still bound up with the family, or at most, the village community; Passover had not yet become a national holiday observed by all Jews in one place, in one great sanctuary. However, with the centralization of cult and sanctuaries in Jerusalem, the celebration of the festivals lost their local character and became national observances that united all Jews in the one holy place, the Temple in Jerusalem. Through this reform the Pesach ceremonial took on a rather a new and different character. The blood of the sacrificial lamb was no longer smeared upon the doorposts of the houses. In short the observance lost its ancient [illegible] character, the local variations and simple ceremonies with their parochial tint gave way to an elaborate cultic ritual which became the priestly prerogative and monopoly.

The new priestly character no doubt served the political purposes of King Josiah. It reinforced the new national character which the Pesach pilgrim festival came to represent. If the identification of the Exodus with the Passover celebration had taken place earlier, as is most probable in this writer's opinion, this theme was no doubt reemphasized and expanded in the time of Josiah. The story of a people's national origins would

naturally become an important theme at a spring nature festival emphasing the origins of new life. The idea of human freedom would seem to fit very well together with a spring-time festival which celebrated the liberation of nature from its winter death or long sleep. Pesach thus became the festival of the freedom of the Jewish people characterized by its deliverance from Egyptian slavery and its awakening to a new life. In the course of time all the customs and ceremonies which were connected with the Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were reinterpreted and became associated with the deliverance from Egypt.

Roland De Vaux's analysis of the history of the amalgamation of the two festivals is based on a careful analysis of the Biblical texts dealing with the Passover. A close study of these texts shows both the separate character of each of the festivals and the Biblical redactors' attempt to combine these separate strata and traditions into one festival identified with the Exodus from Egypt.[13]

In summary we can say that The Feast of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were originally two distinct festivals, observed at the same time. Passover was the older festival which the Jews carried over from their period of nomadic travels as shepherds throughout the desert. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was newer, a product of the sedentary society, which developed after the Jews had become farmers in the land of Canaan. Both were nature festivals celebrated in the spring, but the Feast of Unleavened Bread was observed by the entire community gathered in a holy place, usually a high place, while the Pesach originally was celebrated in a tent or the home as a family festival. The amalgamation of the two was made possible by the fact they were both cultivated in the same month and by the Josianic reforms which made Jerusalem the center for both feasts

and enabled their later amalgamation into one festival combining the key characteristics of both. God's intervention in history, his redemptive act bringing Israel out of Egypt marked the beginning of Israel's history as a people, as God's Chosen People. This period of liberation reached its consummation when they settled in the Promised Land. The feasts of the Passover and Unleavened Bread marked the beginning and the end of the Exodus. They commemorated this event which has dominated the history of Jewish salvation and become its example par excellence.

There is very little known about the celebration of Passover from the time of Josiah until its celebration during the Roman occupation other than the brief descriptions found in Ezra 45:21-24, Esdras 6:19-22, the Elephantine papyrus, and Josephus' works. The Book of Jubilees and the works of Philo give more detailed descriptions of the Passover which follow closely the description depicted and regulations stipulated in the Pentateuchal sources.[14] However, during the days of the Roman occupation we have records indicating that the Passover sacrificial offerings at the Temple consisted of elaborate rites following very detailed regulations. The focus of the Passover celebration was the Temple ceremonies with its myriad of cultic rites and ritual laws which were meticulously observed. During the second Temple the Passover rites were fulfilled in accordance with all the legal prescriptions, e.g. Numbers 28:16-25, many of which were seldom observed during the preexilic period.[15] In short, there was a definite ritual for the celebration of the Paschal offering in addition to the regulations prescribed by the Law.

The following is a brief summary of the laws and the rituals which show the importance of the priests and cultic rituals. The sacrifice itself not only had to meet certain specifications, it also had to offer at

a stipulated hour in the proper place, and by the proper persons following a prescribed ritual in accordance with the Biblical prescriptions and the Temple ordinances. These four ceremonies; the killing of the paschal lamb, the sprinkling of the blood on the altar, the removing and cleansing of the entrails, and the offering of the fat on the altar were considered so important that they were exempt from the prohibition against working on the Sabbath.[16] While the ritual of offering and killing the paschal lamb was being performed, the Levites would accompany them with the recitation of the Hallel, Psalms 113-118, and with the playing of instruments of brass. Thousands of priests and Levites were involved in these ceremonies in the Temple because there were so many pilgrims in Jerusalem and so many animals had to be sacrificed. Usually only one division of the twenty-four divisions of the priests and Levites was on duty in Jerusalem, but during the festivals all the divisions came to Jerusalem.[17]

The reforms of Josiah centralizing the observances of worship at the central sanctuary and making the Feast of Passover a national pilgrimage festival had enabled the priests to assume a dominant role in the celebration of Passover. By the time of the Roman occupation, the priests and the Paschal sacrifices at the Temple with their elaborate rites and laws were the central features of the celebration. The character of the clan or group celebration of the Passover had changed since Biblical times.

> "The meal which followed the sacrifices was consumed by companies,...but the significance of the association (haburah) at the Pesah began, not with the meal, but with the actual sacrifice of the victim which was the central feature of the whole Pesah."[18]

The Passover came to assume a new purpose and function as it became more closely identified with Jerusalem and its priesthood and the ruling powers. Beginning with the time of Josiah the original purpose of Passover as a

spring nature festival characterized by propitiatory rites to God insuring the fecundity of the flock or the fertility of the soil, and the modification of these rites by a clan, group, or village offering sacrifices at local holy places; all these features became secondary to the new emphasis on the national cult, the single sanctuary, and the identification of Passover with the birth of the nation.

Chapter II

Pharisaic Judaism and the Passover Home Ceremony

The manner of the celebration of the Passover radically changed with the emergence of Pharisaic Judaism. The institution and widespread celebration of the Passover as a ritual home ceremonial doesn't appear until the first century C.E. One cannot fully appreciate its significance, nor why it was instituted, or the reason for its popularity without first understanding the historical setting and the conditions which led to its creation. The following will be a brief summary of the background which led to its institution by the Pharisees. It isn't the purpose of this paper to present detailed or complete analysis of the origins and development of the Pharisees. This summary will only deal with the broad outlines of the development of Pharisaic Judaism as it relates to the Passover.[1]

The transformation of the social, economic, political, and cultural milieu of Palestine and the Jewish people necessitated changes in the Jewish religion, its concepts, beliefs, practices, and institutions. By the first century C.E. the shape and character of both Judaism and the ancient near eastern world had changed radically from the agricultural oriented religion of the time of Josiah and his predecessors. The creation of a large urban population in the Greek oriented polis-cities revolutionized the outlook of Judaism.[2] The existence of large cities throughout the Mediterranean world offered economic opportunities which led to the creation of a number of large Jewish diaspora communities. With masses of Jews living in cities, the needs of Jews changed; urban rather than agricultural interests and problems became the focus of their attention. Jews living in large cities with many gentiles around them were influenced by their neighbors' beliefs, religious practices, social habits and cultural customs.

The introduction of the polis-cities by Alexander the Great and the

Ptolemics, and the Seleucids was a means by which to control the conquered peoples. It transformed the living habits of Jews and gentiles alike; in short it revolutionized life in Palestine and the Fertile Crescent. The conquerors built new cities and restructured the older urban centers to fit their mold of rule. Greeks and Macedonians were brought into the Fertile Crescent. They were given polis rights which gave them a high degree of autonomy and the right to organize a self governing polis along Greek lines. New political classes with special rights were created to serve the foreign masters. New social and economic classes developed in the cities. They were comprised of artisans, craftsman, merchants and shopkeepers, many of whom were Jews.

The Jews of Palestine were victims of circumstance and were forced to accommodate themselves to the new world in which they found themselves. They felt the impact of the polis revolution not only because of the new mushrooming of polis cities in their midst and nearby, but also because they were caught in the middle of the alternating spheres of influence and rule of the great Hellenizing monarchs of Syria and Egypt. Jewish life was transformed by the economical, political and cultural changes which were forced upon them by outsiders. Farmers were uprooted from the soil and forced to live in cities, either by necessity or by choice, in order to make a living. The countryside was pillaged and devastated by invading armies. Thousands of Jews either left the farms for the cities in Palestine or went abroad. Large numbers of Jews either voluntarily or by force were attracted to the world of the poleis; to Alexandria, to Antioch, to Thessalonica, to Athens and to Rome. The polis revolution refashioned the Jewish world: it transformed Palestine and expanded the Jewish diaspora.

The creation of large urban population raised new problems. The old Pentateuchal system did not adequately serve the needs of new urban populations. It failed to cope fully with the need of the individual to find identity.

> "The polis revolution uprooted the peoples, intermixed the cultures, blended the religions, and stripped the individual of his former identity. It confronted the merchant, the artisan, the craftsman, the peasant, the sage, and the priest with a question never posed on so cosmic a scale: what is the individual, the separate person, the one severed from the many, the isolated, lonely soul? Who is to be mindful of him, and take him into account?"[3]

The Pentateuch offerred only partial answers: it proclaimed on a cosmic God who would protect the Jew and offerred a cult and a priesthood which served as intermediaries performing rites of expiation. Promises of agricultural plent meant little to a mass of urban population struggling to find a new sense of worth and dignity to overcome their feelings of uprootedness, and lonliness. The prophets, while calling on the individual to repent, are more concerned with the fate of the group, the people of Israel and their land, than the individual. The wisdom literature gives good advice, but it promises the individual only a long honored life for doing good and being upright and God-fearing. The psalms express the yearnings of the individual but offer only the rewards and punishments of an agriculturally oriented Pentateuch. In short the perspective of a pre-polis agricultural age was not adequate for the new polis urban age.

In order to survive, Judaism was forced either to adjust to new conditions and create new forms of expression or else to abandon its Pentateuch-based system and adopt polytheistic Hellenism. Pharisaic Judaism provided the polis Jew with an improved and new outlook. It offerred a philosophy which gave meaning to his search for identity and yet enabled him to remain rooted in his traditional faith and heritage. The old faith whose frame of reference focused upon an agricultural outlook tied to a land,

to a group of people, the Israelities, was inadequate for his new situation and lack of personal identity. Pharisaic Judaism provided an answer to the questiohs of the individual: "What am I? Why am I?"

The achievement of the Pharisees was the establishment of the cantrality of theindividual as the focus of Judaism. It was their purpose to make the individual the ultimate concern of Judaism; to elevate his sense of worth by providing a direct relationship to the one cosmic, father God. Pharisaic Judaism removed the intermediaries between man and God. It abolished the primacy of priestly, cultic mediation. It enabled the individual to have an uplifting feeling of exaltation which came from a sense of cosmic significance. He was given an exalted place of infinite worth in the totality of the divine plan.

Not only was the individual's status elevated, but even more important was the fact that Judaism addressed itself to his personal needs and destiny. The fate of the individual became the focal point of Judaism. The Pharisaic interpretation of Judaism presented a personal salvation as the central doctrine of Judaism. The group, the people of Israel, became secondary to the individual and his personal redemption. But what was even more important was the fact that Pharisaic Judaism included a plan by which salvation could be achieved. It instituted the halakah system as means within the power of every person to achieve salvation. By fulfilling the mitzvot, or commandment, of the law a reward could be earned and salvation achieved.

Pharasic Judaism emphasized the redemption and salvation of the individual not only in its institution of the mitzvah system and by its concern for individual worth and dignity in both this and the next world. It also

introduced other new institutions which were based on this principle of the enhancement of human dignity.[4] The institution of the Home celebration of Passover appears to be a product of the general Pharisaic program to make the individual the ultimate concern of Judaism. The leit motif of the home Seder is redemption and salvation achieved by God's intervention in history and his redemption of the Jews from the flesh pots of Egypt. The Haggadah recitation is the highlight of the home Seder. The story of the Exodus according to Pharisees not only focuses upon the message of God's past redemption, it also includes the hope and promise of future redemption. It tenders salvation for the individual Jew as well as the Jewish people. While the medium of redemption is the group, the Jewish people, the primary emphasis is upon the theme of individual salvation and redemption. The fate of one is intimately linked to the fate of the other. Thus Pharisaic Judaism is basically a salvation oriented religion and the Passover is one important manifestation of this theme.

The celebration of Passover as expressed in the home ceremony is completely devoid of any connection with its original agricultural fertility origins. The Seder celebration has become a ceremonial acting out of the role which God plays in history. The Exodus story is recounted to impress and emphasize God's active role and His providence in the world.

The Pharisaic celebration of the Passover as a home ceremony is the last major stage in the development of the Passover. It originated as a spring nature festival centered about the fecundity of the flock or fertility of the soil. It later involved propitiatory rites to the God offered by a clan, or village to a priest at one of the nearby sites atop a hill, and finally

developed into a highly stylized elaborate cultic rite in the hands of priests at a central sanctuary to which everyone brought offerings.

The celebration of Passover as a national pilgrimage festival by the time of the first century C.E. had lost much of its relevance and meaning. Many Jews found that they need not or could not make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. For the large number of them who lived in Jerusalem a pilgrimage was not necessary. For the many Jews living in the polis cities of the diaspora, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was almost an impossibility due to economic hardships and the problem of travel. In otherwords the celebration of Passover as a pilgrim-festival centered around a sacrifice made under priestly supervision in Jerusalem was meaningless to a great number of Jews.

The Pharisaic reinterpretation and shift of emphasis from the Temple to the home revitalized the celebration of the festival. It made it possible for Jews everywhere to observe the Passover. It emphasis upon redemption made it appealing to the individual Jew seeking to find his identity and salvation. It strengthened his faith in and commitment to Judaism.

The Pharisaic institution of the Passover home ceremony should be viewed as a part of the general Pharisaic program to adapt an agriculturally oriented Judaism to the needs of a new age. Just as the polis revolution had transformed the Mediterranean and ancient near eastern world, so also the Pharisees transformed the character of Judaism.

> "They fashioned a radically new form of Judaism in the very process of attempting to make the old Pentateuchal form of Judaism fit novel conditions. They took the revelation meant for peasants and elaborated it into a revelation for every human soul....
>
> According to Pharisaic law, Rosh Hashonah, The New Year, commemorated the creation of the world and the day of judging all who come into it. Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, became day for each individual to pray that God forgive his personal sins, whether sacrifices be offerred or not. Pharisaism

> took the concept of the One and only God of the Pentateuch and daringly elaborated His scope, His functions, and His realm of concern."[5]

They adapted and recast Judaism's pre-polis, parochial, agricultural, Pentateuchal, perspective to include the whole world and all the inhabitants thereof. They redirected its focus of attention from the particular to the universal -- from a particular privileged people who were tied to a special land and to a national sanctuary and priesthood to a cosmic universal God. While this God was committed to a single people and a single land, he became a loving, protecting, and law giving father of each and every individual. Thus Pharisaic Judaism both broadened the horizon of Judaism to include the cosmic father God who cared for the individual and also provided him with a system of laws by which he could achieve salvation.

The Jew could feel proud and take pride in the fact that he was a member of a group which had a covenant with God; a group in which God is so vitally concerned that he has promised to protect them and to redeem and restore them to their former glory. These ideas and beliefs served to strengthen the bonds of group feeling, solidarity, and loyalties. But even more important they contributed to the alleviation of the most pressing problem to Jewish urban dwellers; the search for identity. They strengthened their sense of personal identity and security.

After the destruction of the second Temple in 70 C.E. the Passover celebration was held exclusively in the home. As a result of the destruction of the Temple, the failure of the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 C.E. and the dispersion of the Jews by the Romans, the Passover assumed greater importance. Passover became the symbol of hope par excellance. It became the festival of Redemption.

> "Let us note, that, from the first, the liberation from Egypt meant much more than a liberation from physical sufferings. From the first, the Exodus included Mount Sinai. It meant therefore, salvation both in the physical and spiritual sense."[6]

It celebrated the anniversary of the deliverance from bondage and became the model for future redemption. Jews kept the Passover not just as a memorial of a great past event-the Exodus; it also included the promise of future redemption. It involved more than mere wishful thinking, namely, the mere expectancy of possible redemption. It was based upon a vision of an ultimate reality which will surely be realized. God would fulfill His promise to redeem his people.

The Destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. permitted the Pharisaic interpretation of Judaism to become the dominant force in Jewish life. The focus of attention was shifted from the Temple to the home and the synagogue. The destruction of the Temple removed the last major obstacle which prevented Judaism from completely directing its attention to the needs of the individual. It was the last step in the transformation of Judaism into a personal salvation oriented religion. While the Temple existed the celebration of the Passover centered upon it. The Pharisees never sought to destroy the Temple or to challenge the efficacy of sacrifices, but in developing new institutions and religious concepts and practices such as the synagogue and the home Passover ceremony based on the Haggadah, they made both irrelevant.

There is no empirical evidence to show that a family home Seder celebration existed prior to its institution by the Pharisees. Many scholars have made the mistake of reading back established customs of their own day into earlier periods of history. This is especially true with the home Passover celebration and the recitation of the Haggadah, the story of the Exodus. One must be careful to avoid the pitfall of presupposing

later practices were always observed in earlier periods. There is no reason to believe that what eventually became widespread and accepted Jewish observances were necessarily practiced earlier even if Tradition often tries to present such justification for certain rites. Just because the Pharisees of the first century C.E. observed a home Seder ritual which included the recitation of the Haggadah doesn't mean that such a ceremony existed prior to that time.

The mere fact that Passover pilgrims ate their paschal sacrifice in havurot, groups, after making their offering at the Temple doesn't necessarily imply that they had a set ritual to follow, such as the one found practiced after the destruction of the Temple. S. Stein correctly observes that there is certainly no allusion in any of the Biblical passages to the duty of telling the story of deliverance at night.[7]

The development of an elaborate Seder service with a long involved explanation of the Exodus story lasting late into the night is a result of a later age.

The Mishnah provides the first written record of the existence of any evening ceremony which included a ritual recitation of the story of the Exodus. In fact there is no literary proof that the home ceremony with a fixed Seder ritual existed prior to the completion of the Mishnah, circa 200 C.E.

> "Had there been any pre-Christian literary history of the Haggadah, the Hellenistic Jewish writers would have given a detailed account of its educational and 'philosophical' importance to their Greek neighbors. Finkelstein's dating of the greater part of the Haggadah text in the second or third century B.C.E., is thus unconvincing. Neither the Elephantine Papyrus of 446 B.C.E., which deals with some of the laws of Passover, nor the Pesah passage in Sirah, chapter 50, mention anything about the Seder Service."[8]

The wording and tenor of the Mishnah gives the impression that the

celebration of the Passover in the home with a Haggadah ritual was a long established custom. Its terminus a quo, however, could have been no earlier than approximately 165 B.C.E. "The Pharisees did not exist prior to the Hasmonean period."[9] Its terminus ad quem could be no later than the compilation of the Mishnah, circa 200 C.E. It was however, probably instituted by the Pharisees during the first century C.E. prior to the destruction of the Temple.

There is ample evidence that it was practiced after the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. To cite only one example will be sufficient: The Pharisaic takanah, ordinance of Rabban Gamaliel II of Yavneh would be meaningless if a home Passover celebration with the recitation of the Haggadah did not exist. Rabban Gamaliel who was nasi, president, of the Sanhedrin, 80-117 C.E., emphasized the importance of reciting the Jewish interpretation of the significance of the Passover symbols, Pesah, the Paschal offering, Matzah, the unleavened bread, and Marror, the bitter herbs.[10]

The Pharisaic institution of the Passover home ceremony with the recitation of the Haggadah ritual contributed greatly to the survival and enhancement of Judaism. It was consonant with the new needs of a polis directed world. The Passover home Seder celebration played an integral role in the fulfillment of a Pharisaic salvation oriented religion which focused upon the needs of the individual. It fulfilled the new needs of the Jews who lived in Palestinian cities and those living in the newly created diaspora community of the polis cities. The Pharisees infused the celebration of the Passover with a new spirit and relevance for their age. Passover as a cultic rite had very little meaning in the new polis age. The Pharisaic institution of the home Passover celebration

with its recitation of the Haggadah transformed the nature and function of the cultic Passover celebration. The shift of emphasis from the cultic rituals of the Temple to the home Passover celebration helped strengthen Jewish religious life as well as cement the ties of family loyalty. The home Seder celebration helped the individual find his identity and assured a future redemption for both himself and his people.

The Pharisees lived in a world of polis cities dominated by Graeco-Roman culture. They were naturally influenced by their Hellenistic environment. The Passover home Seder ceremony is a product of Pharisaic law. It is therefore natural to find that the Seder banquet and the Haggadah ritual reflects both Greek and Roman influence in banquet customs and literary style. The next chapter will discuss these influences.

Origins of Seder Meal

Introduction

Just as the Jewish prayer book has been recognized to be a product of many ages and minds, so also is the Jewish Seder, a composite of many centuries of development. The Seder has its roots in the environment from which it developed, and the later additions to the ceremonies described in the Mishnah represent both the creative religious genius of the Jews and their involvement with and response to the civilizations round about them. Many of the customs and ceremonies associated with the Seder meal reflect a borrowing, a cultural interchange, a process of acculturation, adaptation and often assimilation.

The Seder meal and ceremonies viewed in its most basic terms is an elaborate meal which serves as a vehicle which both preserves and transmits a fundamental religious message. It uses a number of devices by which it seeks to transmit this message. They include: ceremonial objects, pictures, stories, parables, blessings, questions, hyperboles, analogies, witticisms, puzzles, legends and foods which are replete with symbolic meanings. While all these devices appear in a wholly religious setting in the Seder ritual, they in themselves are common elements found in the dominant cultures in which the Jews lived. Indeed the framework in which they appear is itself, if not borrowed directly, at least greatly influenced by and adapted from the customs of the Graeco-Roman world. While banquets in themselves are not unique to any one culture, the procedures and ceremonies followed do differ from culture to culture. Yet, in the case of the Jewish Seder meal, we find many similarities between it, and the Roman banquet and Greek symposium. The Seder both in literary form and in dining habits illustrates the influences of the Graeco-Roman world upon Judaism.

The discussion which follows will show that these influences are of

both a general and a particular nature. While there are many similarities between the Greek Symposia, the Roman banquet, and the Seder, one must also recognize the differences and unique character distinguishing each. This will involve recognizing the reactions of the rabbis to the non-Jewish aspects, and the means by which they sought to Judaize the pagan elements. These topics are reserved for a later discussion in the next chapter entitled: The Unique Jewish Character of the Seder.

The discussion of the influence of the Graeco-Roman world upon the development of the Seder meal and ceremonies will begin with a general discussion of the dining habits of the Graeco-Roman world. These can best be described under the headings of the Symposia Banquet and the Roman Banquet, which will serve as the two major divisions to this chapter.

The Greek Symposia Banquets

The Seder with its Haggadah recitation, as described in the Mishnah, finds parallels among the Symposia banquets of the Greeks both in terms of a comparable ceremonial banquet meal and the literary form and approach which accompanied them. The Greeks, since the time of Plato commonly held banquets where learned men would meet at a friend's house to discuss scientific, philosophical, ethical, aesthetical, grammatical, dietetic, and religious themes over wine after they had dined together. Plutarch, one of the most famous contributors to sympotic literature, and a younger first century contemporary of some of the rabbis recorded in the Haggadah described and defined a symposia in these words:

> "Koinonia gar esti kai spoudes kai paidas kai logon kai praxeon to symposion." "A symposium is a communion of serious and mirthful entertainment, discourse, and actions.[1] Its purpose is to further a deeper insight into those points that were debated at the table, for the remembrance of those pleasures which arise from meat and drink is ungenteel and short lived... but the subjects of philosophical queries and discussions remain always fresh after they have been imparted..."[2]

These symposia were prompted by the ordinary desire for pleasant company to birthday, victory, or religious celebrations. While the main topic discussed at these symposia were usually of a secular nature they were characterized by religious overtones.

In ancient Greece, men felt a close relationship to their gods. and believed that good and evil spirits hovered in the air. Therefore purification and the averting of harm were important for the Greeks and were not neglected at the dinner table. In a study of the banquet-libations of the Greeks Dr. D. Tolles has made the following pertinent observation concerning the religious character of symposia banquets:

> "Although the banquet was an occasion for fun and frivolity its more solemn aspect was never entirely ignored. The banquet itself had religious value as a necessary part of various domestic ceremonies, and separate incidents of its program resembled sacrificial ritual. Most of these incidents,[3] which were part of the procedure at any formal meal, were associated with the symposium and can be interpreted as apotropaic and purificatory in purpose."[4]

The Greek sources themselves describe the religious aspects of these banquets. Athenaeus, who lived in Rome at the end of the second and beginning of the third century C.E., characterizes the Symposium in this manner:

> "Every gathering among the ancients to celebrate a Symposium acknowledged the god as the cause for it, and made use of chaplets appropriate to the Gods as well as hymn and songs."[5]

Athenaeous also cites Xenophon's description of a symposium in the Anabasis (vi:1,5):

> "After they had poured libations and sang the paen, the Thracians rose up to begin the programme dancing in armour to a flute accompaniment...Vulgar dances sometimes went together with hymns to Aphrodite and Dionysus."[6]

The religious overtones which accompanied these banquets were a characteristic and standard part of Greek dining customs.

> "The libations poured at banquets were offerings made by people who had gathered primarily for their own pleasure but who did not ignore the gods of traditional theology. A need was felt to conciliate familiar figures of worship by thus acknowledging their power, and to seek their indulgence on a secular occasion. In epic, lyrica, and tragedy, libations to all the gods or to particular gods are a feature of formal banquets and are a traditional custom for which there were formal rules."[7]

> "Because the banquet was inseparable from the observance of domestic ceremonies, it was a part of the homage rendered to the protectors of the household. However, except at funeral feasts the atmosphere was anything but solemn, and since any devotions connected with the ceremony had already been performed, the banquet did not constitute a direct act of worship. The customs observed at a purely secular feast cannot be distinguished from those at a ceremonial meal, and it is only natural that the same formulae should have been following at both."[8]

It is only a characteristic of the modern world where there is a sharp contrast and distinction between the holy and the profane. In the ancient Greek world a separation of church and state did not exist. There was an official state religion which all citizens respected.

As a basis for comparing the Seder with the Greek symposia banquets it is advisable to briefly summarize the order and character of events at Greek banquets. Dr. Tolles' study of Greek banquets provides an excellent summary which will adequately serve our purpose.

> "Beginning in the early evening, the dinner was followed by a symposium which often lasted as long as the revellers could drink. Besides the tables and couches for the guests, the appointments of the dining hall sometimes included a hearth or an altar. A certain degree of formality was observed in arranging the guests, usually in pairs, in order of importance. Originally, the banqueters sat on chairs and benches, but in the archaic period, the custom of reclining on a couch, with the left elbow on a pillow, was adopted, probably from Asia Minor. The number of guests was limited according to the size of the room, and women, other than entertainers, were usually excluded. Before the food was served, water was poured over the guests' hands. The meal which followed consisted, in the heroic period, of bread, meat and wine and, in later times, of meat and fish courses and a dessert of fruit, nuts, cakes, and sweetmeats. Before the second tables with the dessert were brought in, the floor was swept and water was provided for washing the hands in preparation for the symposium which was introduced by the pouring of libations and the singing of paeans. Until this point, except in meals where more than two courses were served, usually no wine was consumed. Also at this juncture wreaths were distributed to the banqueters and the other customary appurtenances, perfume and incense, were provided. The wine was consumed according to definite rules imposed by the symposiarch who had been chosen by the banqueters. Formality is also to be noted in the custom of drinking around the circle from left to right. With the symposium, various modes of entertainment were provided by musicians and dancers and by the guests who amused one another with skolia, riddles, and the game of kottabos. The intellectual discourses made familiar by the philosophical dialogues may not have been typical of symposia,[9] but serious discussions were probably not limited to the banquets of the learned. The symposium ended with the departure of the guests who sometimes went on to revel elsewhere." [10]

On the basis of these descriptions one can see that there was no clear cut distinction made between the sacred and the profane in this type of literature and in the pattern of life it depicts.

While one can find parallels between the Seder and the Symposia, one must distinguish between a general similarity of dining habits--such as food, drinks, the attendants who serve them, tables, couches, reclining at the meal--and specific affinities of literary form--such as required explanations of symbols and a set pattern and manner of exposition. There, however, is bound to be some overlapping between the two, because of their intimate relationship.

The Haggadah itself represents a type of literary form which is similar to the Symposia, in both structure and content. One can see the similarities in both general and specific terms. Each involves discussion of various themes, which follow the meal.[11] Each includes religious elements, although their purpose and function vary greatly, from the merely religious overtones and trappings of some Symposia banquets, to the central religious theme and message of the Jewish Seder. The practice of the Graeco-Roman world to have banquets where discussion of various themes would take place form the general background from which the Jews developed their own Seder. They provide the foundation and form the pattern for the framework or skeleton upon which Judaism would create its own unique ceremonial banquet focusing upon a religious theme and moral message.

The literary form of the Haggadah demonstrate several characteristics which find their parallels in Greek practices. Greek rhetoric may have provided a pattern which influenced the authors of the Haggadah. It is noteworthy that the basic overall literary approach of the Haggadah finds an earlier precedent in Greek forensic style.

The whole theme of the Haggadah elaborates the amplifies and expands the motif of praising God by listing miracles and praising God for all his miraculous deeds done on behalf of Israel. The Hallel and the other midrashim expand the basic motif of praise and exemplify the general principle of "begin with degradation and end with praise." Each reenforce a theme current in the non-Jewish world. The symposia literature and general eulogy and rhetorical practices of the Graeco-Roman world, thus to a certain degree find their counterpart in the Jewish Haggadah. Thus one sees, the truth in the analogy that the Jewish world is a microcosm reflecting the greater macrocosm of the gentile world.

The principle enunciated by the Mishna, Pesachim 10:4, that one begins with shame and concludes with praise, is employed within the Haggadah. The application of this principle is demonstrated through the midrash on Deut. 26:5. The midrash dramatizes Israel's lowly origins and God's great power, manifested through his acts of redemption. This general principle finds its parallels in the Greek practice of genus laudativum. This practice exhibits a twofold aspect of both egkomion and psygos, laus and contumelia, praise and rebuke.

A shorter, yet no less straightforward comparison to the Mishnaic principle of "begin with shame, and conclude with praise" can be found in the works of Pliny the Younger who was the teacher of Quintilian, about 100 C.E. "Quam utile est ad usum seundorum per adversa venisse."[12]

Praise can most dramatically be focused upon and best emphasized by contrasting it with its opposite quality, illustrated either by adverse environmental circumstance or some fault or dubious quality in the character of the person or people whose fame is to be lauded.

The Midrash emphasizes the adverse circumstances by which Israel was forced to go to Egypt. It also emphasizes the miserable lot of the Jews

under the Egyptians in order to make God's beneficence stand out more prominently.

The Midrash reaches a climax with the listing of the ten plagues which were instrumental in God's plan to force Pharoah to let the Israelites leave Egypt. The stubborness of Pharoah serves to heighten and emphasize God's gracious acts of redemption. It provides a sharp contrast between the hero and the villain of the Exodus story. The plagues are traditionally interpreted as manifestations of God's love for his people, but from the viewpoint of literary analysis they serve as the hero's unsuccessful attempts to save his beloved. However, in the end the hero is victorious and love triumphs. The happy ending is achieved when God the hero saves his beloved people Israel from the Egyptian villains.

The best example from the Haggadah demonstrating the connection between the principle of genus laudativum and the statutory Midrash of the Haggadah liturgy is the elaboration of the two additional supplements to the midrash which extend the number of plagues up to 50 and then 250. It was common practice among the Greeks to exaggerate in their eulogies of men or Gods. "Qunitilian claims that it is the proper function of a panegyric to amplify and embellish its themes."[13] Such auxesis, exaggeration, as the Greeks call it, applies to both the eulogy of Gods and men as well as to forensic oratory.[14] The hyperbole of Rabbi Jose Hagalili, Rabbi Eliezer, and Rabbi Akiba followed the literary style of their day. What is decisive is not so much the quantitas verborum, the quantity of words, but the qualitas structurae, the quality of the structure or format of their literary presentation.[15]

The similarities between the prayers and songs of a Greek symposium and those of the Seder banquet are of a general nature and the difference must be

recognized. The opening ceremonies are similar, the Greeks began with libations and the singing of paens, and the invoking the name of their Gods. The Seder begins with the Kiddush, a blessing said over the wine, which serves to sanctify the ceremonies in the name of God and proclaims the holiness of the festival. The singing of the Hallel, Psalms 113-118, parallels the prayers and songs of the Greek symposium. However in more specific terms S. Stein claims the Nismat eulogy prayer, which begins "The soul of every living being shall bless thy name, Lord our God," found in the Haggadah demonstrates traces of Greek rhetoric.[16]

Speeches on public occasions and at dinners praising the Gods, emperors, followed the rhetoric principle of genus laudativum. Qunintilian's Institution Oratoria, a manual of the first century C.E., prescribes the application of this formula in these words:

> "In praising the gods our first step will be to express our veneration of the majesty in general terms, next we shall procede to praise the special power of the individual god and the discoveries whereby he has benefitted the human race..."[17]

The Nismath eulogy serves as a special type of genus laudativum, known as the logos basilikos. This type of praise is characterized by a description of all the good qualities of the Emperor and a statement of the inability of the person to fully describe all the virtues of the subject of his laudatory oration. In the Nismat prayer the basileus or subject is the King of Kings rather than an earthly emperor. God is praised for his beneficent acts performed on behalf of Israel and every tongue gives thanks to the one King alone, who is more than an earthly king - a king who is master of both the heavens and earth.

The precise dating of the Nismat prayer presents problems. According to Dr. Joseph H. Hertz, the late chief rabbi of the British Empire, "the first part of the prayer, up to the words to Thee alone we give thanks" probably dates from Temple times: the remainder was known to the Talmudic teachers."[18] He further states the traditional view-point that its authorship has been attributed to the statesman-rabbi of the Maccabean dynasty, Simeon ben Shatach, first century B.C.E.[19] In the Babylonian Talmud R. Yochanan interprets and identifies the Bircat Hashir blessing e.g., "The Blessing of the Song," prescribed by the Mishnah which follows the conclusion of the Hallel, to be the Nismat prayer. Dr. Ismar Elbogen in his monumental and classic study of the liturgy makes the following observation about the Nismat prayer.

> "All rites use the hymn Nismat Kal Hai whose generally similar text and whose beautiful poetic language indicate considerable age. The beginning is already mentioned in the Talmud. R. Yochanan takes it to be the Bircat HaShir, Blessing of the Song, which is prescribed in the Mishna as conclusion of the Hallel.[20] In a prayer for rain the same R. Yochanah quotes an entire sentence which we have in the Nismat, namely, "Were our mouth filled with song as the sea"(is with water).[21] His older contemporary Bar Kappara has a prayer of thanks that contains sentences from our prayer, "You must bend every knee".[22]

The identification by R. Yochanah of Bircat HaShir, "The Blessing of the Song" with the Nismat prayer was no doubt made on the basis of a long established precedent. This was the case with most of the rabbinical rulings. If in Mishnaic times the Blessing of the Song meant the first part of the Nismat prayer then there is a good possibility that it like other parts of the liturgy and Jewish law and life, were influenced by Greek customs. The Hebrew language as reflected in the Mishnah provide numerous examples of either loan words or words from Greek derivatives.[23]

There are many examples illustrating the influence of the Greeks upon Jews. In the area of an orderly systemization of the interpretation of

legal texts the Greeks influenced the Jews.

> "Most likely general standards for the interpretation of legal texts were in vogue which dated back to high antiquity. But it was the Greeks who systematized, defined and gave definite form to the shapeless mass of interpretations."[24]

> "Although we posses no evidence that the Rabbis borrowed their rules of interpretation from the Greeks, the situation is quite different when we deal with formulation, terms, categories, and systemization of these rules. The latter were mainly created by the Greeks, and the Jews most probably did not hesitate to take them over and adapt them to their own rules and norms...
>
> Although the Rabbis cannot be definitely said to have adopted a certain method from the Greeks, they may nevertheless have learned the application of that method to a particular question."[25]

The Haggadah uses an abbreviation as a mnemonic device to remember the order of the Ten Plagues. Abbreviations of this type were common in the Graeco-Roman world. The Greek word for such an abbreviation is notarikon which has become part of the Hebrew language. The Jewish Encyclopedia indentifies the notarikon with a kind of shorthand used in the offices of lawyers.[26] The Romans used it for recording the proceedings of their law courts. S. Stein, in his article on "The Influence of the Symposia Literature on the Pesah Haggadah," relates the notarikon to the practice of the defence concluding with a summary of the main facts of the case.[27] With this background one becomes inclined to agree with Stein's conclusion that the original purpose of the notarikon in the Haggadah may have been to serve as a device to help one recall the important points previously cited in praise of God.

Both the notarikon and the hermaneutic devices involved in the paragraph beginning with the words, "Another interpretation" or another explanation before the listing of the ten plagues, and the additions to the midrash which interpret the ten plagues to mean 50 and 250 plagues are all

a product of a new age. They make their first appearance in Jewish sources at this time. They are a result of the influence of Greek thinking which was prevalent at that time. One innovation current in Greek thought which also penetrated Judaism was the notarikon, or mnemonic device which in the Haggadah was used as an abbreviation of the ten plagues.

Another similarity between the Symposia and the Seder is the custom to start with relatively simple question and then to have it develop into a more complicated philosophic or religious discussion.

A further Greek influence upon the Haggadah may be that of including riddles. At the symposia it was common to have riddles play their part in making the table talk themes more interesting for all concerned. Athenaeous and Plutarch both mention this custom.[28] Athenaeous devotes twenty-five pages in his Deipnosophists to discussion of the propriety of proposing riddles and cites many examples. Such authorities as Stein see the possibility of the interrogative word minayin as serving such a function when it introduces the amplified account of God's miracles.

The literary form or approach used in describing the episode about the observance of Passover by Rabbi Eliezer with his colleagues in B'nai B'rak is paralleled in the sympotic writings. They are careful to include every detail, its function, goal and rationale, the names of the leading participants of the banquet, its time, and place. The writings of Macrobius give this interesting parallel:

> "During the Saturnalia, distinguished members of the aristocracy and other scholars assembled at the house of Vettius Praetxtatus to celebrate the festive time solemnly by a discourse befitting freemen..The host proceeds to explain 'the origin of the cult and the cause of the festival,' thus doing homage to religion by devoting sacred study to the sacred day."[29]

A common feature of both the Seder, the Symposia banquets, and also

the Saturnalia banquet of the Romans is the fixed laws and rituals which govern their order.[30] The laws concerning the festive meal of the Saturnalia which are recorded in Lucian's Kronoslon, remind one of the laws in the Mishnah and Tosefta Pesachim.

> "As soon as the shadow of the sun dial is six feet lone one should go to the bath. Before it, one may play with nuts, one may recline everywhere, e.g., without paying attention to status, family or wealth...all should drink of the same wine, all should have the same ration of meat. Equality of all should prevail...every rich man should inscribe these laws on a pillar and take it to heart."[31]

In the ancient world, especially in Graeco-Roman times, matters concerning dietetic problems were of popular interest. They appear as topics in Hellenistic, Gnostic, Neo-Platonic and Patristic writings. In the works of Plutarch many questions are connected with dietetic problems; peculiarites of all kinds of fish, meat, vegetables, and wine.[32] Athenaeous, who lived in Rome at the end of the second and beginning of the third century C.E., gives a voluminous list of dishes and drinks in his fifteen books entitled, The Deipnosophists. Thus it is natural to find that at the symposia it was quite common to deal with topics concerning food, especially with the food being served.

The close relationship between the food and topic of conversation is illustrated by a passage from Macrobiu's Saturnalia[33] "Whilst Furius was still speaking, the dessert was brought in and gave rise to new conversation." The dish itself became the topic of conversation.

Futhermore, many of these dietetic problems which formed the themes of the symposia were introduced with questions like the following: "Are different sorts of food or one single dish eaten at one meal more easily digestible? Does the sea or land afford better food?"[34]

These interrogative questions if translated into Hebrew, could be prefaced by the Hebrew idiom, mah nistanah. The literary device of asking

questions and the interest in foods which characterize the Seder find their parallels in Graeco-Roman practices. While the Haggadah borrowed the external literary form and structure, it remained uniquely Jewish in regard to inner content. The literary form was merely the vehicle to transmit and preserve the spiritual message of the Passover.

With the shift of emphasis from the Temple to the home celebration of the Passover, the meaning of the Passover was reinterpreted. At the Temple it was mainly a cultic rite, a remembrance of a great past event symbolic of the nation's birth. In the home ceremony the Pharisaic rabbis added a new dimension by additionally emphasing the future redemption. The new emphasis focused upon a time of new national freedom, when the Jews would be free from foreign domination, a time when God's intervention would bring a new redemption for both the individual Jew and the Jewish people as a whole.

There are some indications of customs of a sympotic nature in Jewish-Hellenistic literature prior to the Haggadah. In the pseudo-epigraphic Letter of Aristeas circa 100 B.C.E., mention is made of a party in honor of the Palestinian emissaries who had come to Alexandria to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek. This festival meal seems to follow a fixed literary form having its own rites and procedures and also includes a discussion in which every one participates.

Philo describes the banquets of the Therapeutae and especially praises the character of their celebration of the Shavouth. This celebration was characterized by a sincerity and solemnity and decorum in their observance, e.g. sincerity in prayer, orderly reclining for dinner, chastity of their women who sit apart, and their contentment in all things. They even didn't permit slaves to serve upon them. In Philo's own words:

> "When the guests have laid themselves down...and the attendants have taken their stand...the President of the company discusses some question arising in the Holy Scriptures, or solves one that has been propounded by someone else. His instruction proceeds in a leisurely manner, he lingers over it and spins it out..., thus permanently imprinting the (sacred) thoughts in the souls of his hearers."[36]

The President of the company or group serves in the same capacity as the Maggid or omer ha-haggadah, he tells the story, leads the discussion, The audience participates with questions and the answers are given in a simple manner. They all partake of bread and the discussion continues to dawn. It was the custom after the meal to conclude with community singing. In Philo's description one can easily recognize the general Hellenistic background out of which the related Seder ceremony must have developed.

The previous discussion of the similarities in literary form between the Haggadah and the literature of the Greek Symposia banquests show the influence of the dominant Hellenistic culture upon Judaism. This is not to say that the Rabbis merely imitated the Greek literary style. Each have their own characteristics and are a product of their own environment, and historical conditions. There are of course differences between Greek and Jewish writings and their literary style. Each has its own classic poetry, prose, religious and cultural heritage. Both in their own right have made major contributions to world civilization, via their literature, law, ethics, religion and culture. Yet this is not to say that there has not been an influence of one upon the other. While the Rabbis cannot be definitely said to have adopted in toto a certain literary method from the Greeks, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that they have learned from them the application of that method. The literary form of the Haggadah is replete with examples of the Jewish application of prevalent Greek literary practices. The parallels in the format and order of the banquet also demonstrate the influence of Greek dining customs upon the Seder meal.

The Roman Banquet

The second major influence upon the Seder in addition to the Symposium banquet and customs of the Greeks was that of the Roman banquet. The Jews did not live in a vacuum. Their culture was always affected by the world in which they lived. It reflects their involvement with, adaptation and reaction to the dominant culture or civilization of the times. It is only natural then that the Seder demonstrates examples of affinities between the Jewish and Graeco-Roman world. Such noted scholars as I. Lewy, E. Baneth, S. Krauss, and D. Goldschmidt have all emphasized that the forms of the Seder meal presupposes a knowledge of and dependence upon Graeco-Roman table manners and dietary habits.

The noted scholar Theodore Gaster recognized the impact of the Roman banquet upon the Seder meal in these words:

> "The form of the meal, for example, with the reclining on cushions, the preliminary dipping parsley in salted water, and the customary consumption of eggs as an hors d'oeuvre, reproduces the typical pattern of a Roman banquet."[37]

The close relationship between Jewish culture, customs, and habits to those of the general environment in which they are a part, make it imperative that one have a knowledge of the larger Gentile world situation, in order to understand the particular Jewish culture. Therefore a general acquaintance with the dinner of antiquity will be helpful. In order to understand better how the Passover Seder reflects the character of the age of which it is a product, and thereby exhibits many characteristics of a Roman banquet, it is profitable and instructive first to describe a Roman banquet.

A general background one should also keep in mind the impact of Roman civilization upon the Jews. The process of acculturation will be

described in a somewhat oversimplified manner. To be fair to all the subtleties involved would necessitate a separate study.[38] When the Romans came to Palestine they brought with them their way of life. The Jews in Palestine learned from them and naturally emulated them. It was to the Jews advantage to be on good terms with their rulers and conquerors. By copying certain of their habits and eating manners they could promote better relations. By the time the Romans became to Palestine they had evolved a highly complex system of dining habits which was exhibited through their banquet and feasts. The Roman dinner usually began with wine (yayin shelifne ha-mazon) and hors d'oeuvre (gustus), which the participants on ceremonious occasions frequently took while seated (yoshevin) in the ante chamber. Then followed the actual meal which was eaten while reclining on pillows. The main course, bread with meat or fish, was usually accompanied with wine (yayin shebetok ha-mazon). A dessert of fruit or other delicacies concluded the meal; Grace was followed by a long round of drinking (yayin shelahar ha-mazon).

The Passover meal followed the same basic order. The first cup of wine, which was for the "sanctification of the day," was followed by hor d'oeuvres which usually consisted of raw vegetables; lettuce (hazeret, lactuca) being a favorite. Meat was the main dish.

The Mishnah implies that immediately after the hor d'oeuvres, and the first dipping of raw vegetables---the main dish was served. At this point, the child's curiosity would be aroused about the strange and unusual dining habits being practiced that evening and he would ask the ceremonially prescribed Questions beginning, mah nistanah. The answer, which traditionally had to begin with the story of the humiliation of the Israelites and ended with glory or praise, consisted of an exposition of Deut. 26:5-9. This

exposition begins with a low point in Jewish history and climactically concludes with the entrance into the Promised Land and the building of the Temple. The meal was followed by two cups of wine, one as usual after the Grace, the other after the chanting of Psalms 113-18, the Hallel.

From the previous description of the Roman banquet and the Seder one can see immediately the similarities in dining habits and banquet customs. However, only by examining the two meals in detail can one really see and appreciate the full significance which these similarities simply in terms to inter-cultural borrowing, exchange, and adaptation.

The Seder meal began with the mixing of a cup of wine over which a benediction was recited.[39]

The custom of drinking wine at festive meals and banquets is a very ancient practice.[40] Thus it is natural to find that in both the Seder and the Graeco-Roman banquets, the drinking of wine is a characteristic feature. The Roman banquet usually involved three cups, whereas four cups were statutory for the Seder. The times at which the first three cups of the Seder wine were drunk correspond with the three points at which wine was drunk at a Graeco-Roman banquet: with the hors d'oeuvres, with the main meal which was begun with a libation offering to the Gods and with the dessert at the conclusion of the banquet.

After the first cup of wine was mixed and served, the appetizers were then brought in. The Babylonian Mishnah reads:[41] הביאו לפניו "They brought before him" whereas the Jerusalem Mishnah is more specific and adds two words identifying what was brought as - green herbs and lettuce הביאו לפניו ירקות וחזרת.[42] The various appetizers were dipped in condiment or a sauce provided for them and eaten as the first part of the meal until the main courses were served. The Mishnah reads:[43] מטבל בחזרת עד שמגיע לאפיקומן "He would dip with the lettuce e.g. eat appetizers until the distribution

or breaking of the matzah," which marked the beginning of the meal.
אפיקומן[44] is a technical term relating to the meal. The word is a Greek derivative from a word meaning to carry around and in the context of the Seder means a course or a part of the meal.[45]

The custom of eating appetizers for the first course was also followed by the Romans. This usually consisted of something both to eat and to drink. The liquid was usually what is called muslum, a kind of mead prepared from must, or [illegible] wine with honey.[46] The hors d'oeuvres, custus promulsis, usually consisted of a number of fruits and vegetables and condiments to dip them in. There were usually two types of each, the vegetables being items such as radishes, lettuce, celery and other green garden vegetables. Fruit, dried, and fresh was also included, as were items such as salted fish and eggs. Hard boiled eggs were practically an indispensable item as an appetizer, because they served to arouse the appetite, and were also connected with the idea of fertility. The condiments into which these items were dipped to enhance or mitigate their taste often included a mixture of grated figs, dates, apples, almonds, cinnamon and mead, hardened with flour to form a paste.

One can readily see that the appetizers including the condiments which were used in the Seder were for the most part identical with those used at a Roman banquet.

The meal proper was begun when the servants brought the matzah, hazeret, bitter lettuce, fruit puree, haroset (condiment) and two cooked dishes, and when the Temple existed the body of the paschal lamb was also brought in. The next Mishnah in both the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds states that the second cup of wine is mixed and at this point the son asks the father the "mah nistanah." Nowhere after this, is eating

mentioned in the Mishnah, Chapter 10, except for the puzzling phrase "Ain Maftereen ahar hapesach afikomen." The sense of the Mishnah indicates that the meal was consumed before the relating of the Haggadah and the logical point for the meal to take place would be when the paschal lamb was brought in.

In addition to the similarities of drinking wine and the eating of appetizers, there is another characteristic of the Seder meal which parallels the Roman banquet, namely, the custom of reclining. The first Mishnah, 10:1, which lists the regulations about Passover, stipulates that even the poorest in Israel did not eat until he reclines. Among the Greeks and Romans it was customary to lie down or recline during the main course of a festive meal or banquet. Amongst the wealthy, where eating was an art, it was customary to recline everyday at the main meal in the evening. Reclining at meals was usually the prerogative and privilege only of the rich. The Biblical texts which refer to reclining do so only in connection with royal circles and the wealthy aristocracy.[47] The same is true of the Graeco-Roman banquets. Only the wealthy could afford the banquets which included expensive foods and preparation. These feasts often included many servants, much food, and expensive, ornate and exquisitely decorated and covered couches, sofas, and hassocks. However by Tannaitic times this prerogative of rich became mandatory for all Jews, even the poorest of them. Reclining came to have religious meaning and associated with the spirit of the Exodus. Reclining was a mark of distinction, the privilege of free men. The Palestinian Talmud expressed this view in the words of Rabbi Levy, who lived during the early third century G.F.

> "As it is the custom of slaves to eat standing, so here (it is the custom of Israelites) to eat reclining to make known that they have gone from servitude to freedom."[48]

Reclining, in addition to emphasizing the aspect of freedom, also helped to add to the distinctive festive and unusual character of the Seder celebration. Since the poor were required to recline, it is implied that he did not ordinarily recline for the main meal of the day. But on this special night he had to recline for his meal, thereby marking it as a festive occasion. All men were thus required to eat reclining. Reclining which originally had its origins in the secular dining habits of the Romans thus came to symbolize an important religious ideal and became an integral and important part of the Seder.

Other similarities in meal customs include the washing of hands which was done before the meals. The eating of matzah and maror together with the paschal lamb also finds its parallels. The Greeks and Romans ate a type of sandwich bread together with lettuce. Bread attached by skewers to the meat was also a common practice.[49]

From the basis of the preceding discussion one can see the influence of both the symposia banquets and discourses on the literary form of the Haggadah and the influence of Graeco-Roman dining habits upon the Seder meal itself. Many of the dining customs and dietary habits which apply to the Seder also apply to Jewish meals in general. Many other examples could be cited showing affinities between Jewish customs and those of the contemporary Graeco-Roman world of that time.

With this background in mind one can see the validity of the observation of the scholar, S. Stein:

> "The scarcity of Biblical and especially of Pentateuchal data and their setting in a relatively primitive form of society leave little doubt as to who borrowed from who, though allowances must be made for transformation from the profane to the sacred, from pagan to Jewish religiosity and for a certain natural development of each civilization within its own sphere."[50]

The Unique Jewish Character of the Seder

While many of the customs associated with the Seder meal, e.g., its general structure, component parts, and literary form reflect its dependence upon and borrowing from the Greek symposia and the contemporary Roman dining habits, it was also able to establish its own unique Jewish character. The Seder represents a remarkably balanced synthesis of Jewish and non-Jewish elements. While borrowing outward form, it breathed into it a unique living Jewish content. The rabbis filled the old bottles of Greek and Roman origin with a new sweet wine, which was the product of rabbinic distillation and taste. The non-Jewish and pagan elements became transformed into a religious ceremonial banquet which was distinguished by its unique Jewish character.

While the Greek symposi. and the Roman banquet were primarily secular in basic purposes, the Seder was characterized by its religious nature and emphasis upon its spiritual message and meaning. This is not to say that the banquets and symposia didn't have religious overtones. True, they contained the opening libations and toasts to the gods, paens of praise, prayers and songs, but these were not the focal point of importance or emphasis. Their primary goal were pleasure fun and triviality. The difference lies principally in their focus and orientation.

The difference in character of these two types of banquets can best be illustrated by pointing to the distinct differences which characterize them. In general, two totally different moods and purposes characterize these banquets. The Symposia and Roman banquets were primarily secular in outlook emphasizing good food, wine, good companionship, an interesting discussion, good entertainment, in short a good time, with wine, women and

song; whereas the Seder's primary purpose emphasized a spiritual and religious message communicated via the symbolism connected with the foods, songs and prayers. The good company, family reunions, and good food were means to tansmit the religious message, rather than ends in themselves.

Philo in his De Vita Contemplativa (48ff), gives a description of pagan banquets, and the luxury, ostentatiousness and immorality they exhibited. He describes the elaborate couches (triklina and poluklina) on which the guest used to recline, and a great variety of precious cops and goblets from which they drank. He refers contemptuously to the performances of flute-girls, dancers and jugglers as accompaniments to unrestrained merry-making.[1] He even describes the table talk as leading to effeminacy and vulgarity.

The primarily pleasure-seeking fun loving, wine, women and song character of the symposia and Roman banquets is illustrated by the nature of their after dinner activities.

The final part of a Graeco-Roman meal included food, drinks (symposium), and often singing and general merry-making.[2] The meaning of the term afikomen, which has been used to describe the last part of the Seder and other banquets, illustrates these aspects of the banquet. Dr. Ezekiel Banet's discussion of the terms is pertinent:

> "There are varied opinions in both the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds as to the connotation of the foregoing word Afikomen. Some maintain that it denotes the eating of the dessert after the meal; some claim that it refers to singing and music; others state that this word suggests movements from one group to another assembled to partake of the Paschal offerring). Actually, all these interpretations may be deemed correct, for this word derived from Greek originally denoted anything pertaining to the accompaniment of vocal and instrumental music, and the adjournment to some other group or company. This makes the prohibitions during the Seder all the more understandable. The drinking of wine between the 3rd and 4th cup

was prohibited in order to prevent the Seder from degeneration into a drinking feast."[3]

The noted scholar, Theodor H. Gaster defines epi komon, as a popular expression for "gadding around on revels' - the common nightly pastime of the "gay blades" of Hellas.[4]

The rabbis were able to prevent the Seder from turning into a drunken brawl and orgy by prohibiting the initiation of the degenerate aspects of the Graeco-Roman banquets. In the Tannaitic meal the Bircat hamazon, the Grace after meal, follows the third cup of wine and then one mixed a fourth cup as the beginning of the third division of the meal, the dessert. The dessert consisted of both appropriate foods, usually dainty pastries and drinks to go with the food. However the rabbis prohibited by Mishnaic decree both the dessert and the drinking that usually accompanied it. The Mishnah stipulates: [illegible] "They may not conclude after the Paschal lamb with dessert."[5]

The afikoman came to represent the paschal lamb, which was traditionally the last thing to be eaten during the meal, so that its taste and recollection should remain uppermost in the mind. Accordingly it became customary to drink only water after it and to eat nothing further before going to bed.[6] This custom is based on a baraitha of the Babylonian Talmud: "As it is taught in a baraitha: the festal offering which comes with the paschal lamb is eaten first in order that the paschal lamb may be eaten as that which satiates."[7]

The rabbis forbade after dinner drinking except for the required fourth cup which was drunk for religious purposes of fulfilling the ritual during the second part of the Hallel. [illegible] "Between those cups (e.g., the first to the third,) if he wishes to drink, he may drink; between the third and the fourth, he may not drink."[8]

Another rabbinic safeguard preserving the serious religious character of the Seder is described by S. Zeitlin in these words:

> "The first night of Passover was a radical change in manner of celebrating a festival. Jews in their festivals were accustomed to rejoice by visiting their friends, going from one group to another or by celebrating in the streets, as was the custom among the oriental people. However, laws connected with the paschal lamb obliged Jews to remain in one place with their family and friends."[9]

Through these means the rabbis insured that a serious, [illegible], and sober celebration would be held and that the essential spiritual and religious meaning would remain imprinted upon the minds of its participants. The redemption and release was that of the body and spirit rather than the mere release of bottled spirits. The physical release from bondage was embodied in the spiritual message of freedom and equality for all. In short, the rabbis transformed and adopted the prevailing customs of their times. They sought to have the Seder and Haggadah raise the festive banquet to a higher spiritual plane.

While many of the dietary habits, table manners, and the literary form used at the Symposium and Roman banquet were similiar to those of the Seder, there are still other significant distinctions. The Seder had a more formal and set ritual which was followed. The Mishnah not only set down the minimum requirements, it also included the basic framework and orientation. At the Symposia one could discuss any topic of interest to the group, whereas the Seder has a set prescribed ritual and a religious message to transmit. The Seder had to include the explanation of the religious significance of the symbols and their relation to the story of the Exodus. Each particular food eaten and custom observed in relation with the meal came to have its own particular rationale and served as a characteristic symbol. The rabbis recognized the pagan or secular origins of the customs and they sought to re-adapt them by attaching an acceptable Jewish rationale. They

Judaized them and transformed their character. By these means the rabbis insured that the Seder would retain its own unique Jewish character and flavor which would transmit its essential spiritual message.

Chapter V

The Seder As A Christian Festival: The New Seder

I. The Christian Reinterpretation of the Seder

A. The New Savior, Redeemer, and Redemption

The emergence of new Jewish-Christian sects changed the character and spirit of the Passover celebration. It assumed an entirely new character as a result of Christian reinterpretation. The new sects rather than denying their origins or seeking to completely destroy their connection with Judaism, used it to further their own interpretations and interests. They kept the Jewish framework and ritual ceremonials of the Passover. However, they didn't just retain the old Jewish forms, e.g., the symbols of the Passover; they went one step farther. They filled them with the fresh wine of Christian reinterpretation.

The transformation of the Jewish Passover into a Christian festival involved radical changes. They were not superficial, external changes, merely modifying the form but rather changes of a fundamental and substantive nature affecting the basic content and meaning.

> "In their paying attention to Jesus and by following in his footsteps, they also made a Seder on the first night of Passover, but it was radically different from ours, as different as east is from west; the basis was different, the spirit was different, the whole concept was foreign....everything focused upon him, he alone was the focus and pivotal point in their thinking, and the reasons for the Jewish Passover and the remembrance of our celebration were eradicated and uprooted in their entirety."[1]

The old Passover Seder became merely the background upon which an entirely new portrait was superimposed. Originally the Jewish Seder was of primary importance, but it now became secondary to the new tale,

proclamation, interpretation of the new Redemption and Redeemer.

The new Christian Passover no longer spoke merely of a past redemption via the Exodus from Egypt, nor only of a promise of future redemption; it made redemption immediately available to all who accepted Christian belief. The new Passover was permeated with the reality of the present redemption of the New Redeemer, in the person of Jesus himself.

Thus it was only natural that where Christians assembled to observe Passover eve, the new Redemption and the new Exodus were also celebrated. "As the traditional pieces referring to the old exodus were recited new ones referring to the new Exodus were added."[2] The noted rabbinic and New Testament scholar, D. David Daube of Oxford University, London, states the basis for the assertion in these words:

> It is apriori incredible that the expositions of the great event recited on this occasion in an atmosphere of gratitude and fervent hope should not have stimulated in Christian circles the growth of parallels concerning the new exodus.
>
> Imagine the Jews who adhered to Jesus celebrating the Passover in the years following the crucifixion. (We know that they went on celebrating--full, since the Temple was not yet destroyed.) As such a group--a family outside of Jerusalem, a band of pilgrims in the city--assembled in the evening to dwell on the rescue from Egypt, the pattern of divine intervention and salvation, is it conceivable that they confined themselves to the customary tales, reflections and prayers, without introducing what was for them the fulfillment of it all? Surely not....Once Jesus was believed the messiah, the new deliverance must have ranked at least equally with the old."[3]

The description of the Last Supper in the Gospels emphasizes the new character and importance of the Passover assumed in Christian tradition. Everything served as a memorial in remembrance of Jesus rather than a memorial of the Exodus from Egypt praising God for redeeming the Jews.[4]

The significance of the theme, "Do this in remembrance of Me," and the crucial role it played in Christian thinking has been emphasized by the noted Rabbinic scholar, Dr. Jakob J. Petuchowski:

> "The Seder service, commemorating the Liberation from Egypt, and anticipating the messianic redemption, must have gained additional significance for the disciples on account of the 'fulfillment.' Henceforth it would be impossible for them merely to attach the traditional meanings to the symbols and the symbolical foods of this ceremony. The complete Heilsgeschichte road, which Jewish tradition knows as Pesah Mitsraim, The Egyptian Passover, Pesah Dorot, The Passover of the later generations, and Pesah l'atid, the Future Passover, has now been traversed, so that the hope of ultimate redemption had become the reality of Redemption; and it had become that through and because of Jesus.
>
> There is, therefore, a profound psychological truth in Paul's transmission of the institution of the Lord's Supper when he adds the words, 'Do this in remembrance of Me,' to Jesus' description of the bread as his 'body' and the words, 'Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me' to Jesus' referenee to the cup as 'the new covenant in my blood.' That Paul's words are added in some versions to Luke's account of the Last Supper would indicate that even the 'unembellished' account of the Synoptics as understood in this sense."[5]

This additions and reinterpretations changed the whole tenor and meaning of the Seder ceremonies. The symbols and ceremonial foods were all reinterpreted to fit Christian-theology. Their new meanings were foreign and even more significant, totally contradictory to Judaism. Jesus came to replace God as the divine redeemer. The wine and matzah came to represent the blood and body of Jesus, the new redeemer.

> "God, as it were, was removed into the background. He became the deus absconditus surrounded by the dark and tremendous mystery. The bright light, the broad glory shines now round the Christ. His is the eternal drama, where God has only eternal existence. His are the great attributes of savior, redeemer; he is known now as the Lord."[6]

The new redemption superceded the old redemption from Egypt; the new covenant and the new Israel replaced the old covenant and the old Israel. In short, the whole Seder with all its ceremonial foods and symbolism was

reinterpreted as a memorial and remembrance of the Last Supper of the new Savior and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the overall structure and development of Christian philosophy, theology, customs, and practices, the Passover serves as pivotal point and is of crucial importance. It is important not only because it is part of the events leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus, but even more significant is the interpretation which the Christians attached to the Passover foods and symbols. The interpretations were such that they revolutionized the spiritual message of the Passover. They interpreted it in a new way which was completely contradictory to the original intent and purpose. Jesus replaced God as the hero and redeemer of the Haggadah. The Christian interpretation of the Passover celebration expresses an attitude toward Judaism which is characteristic of Christian thinking and theology. Christian treatment of the Passover is typical of their attitude toward Jewish customs and beliefs.

The Christian interpretations of Jewish customs and ceremonies generally would negate the Jewish meaning and substitute the new Christian viewpoint. The focus of attention is constantly on the new Christian interpretations. The old Jewish religion is continually being superceded by the new Christian faith. This was necessary because Christianity had to justify itself as the fulfillment of the old. The old was to reach its zenith in the new. Christianity rather than totally denying its roots, its mother religion, sought to utilize it for their own ends by using it as a proof text predicting their new message. Judaism was important to Christianity to the degree that it laid the groundwork and pointed to the New Redeemer, the New Israel and the New Covenant. It served as the proof text for a Christian pretext.

The reinterpretation of the Passover focusing the message upon Jesus may have set the pattern of reinterpretation which was more fully developed by the Gospels. In other words it may have provided the guideline which were imitated and followed by the Church fathers and later Christians. If it doesn't serve as the prototype of a new pattern, it at least represents a classic illustration of the Christian attempts to reinterpret and recast Jewish ceremonies into a Christian mold. In many cases the reconstruction serves to obliterate any Jewish vestiges and make them appear as original Christian creations. In doing this the Christians were following a good Jewish precedent. Just as Judaism Judaized pagan customs, so Christianity christianized Jewish customs. The technique which enabled Judaism to survive could also be used against it by her enemies.

From a Christian point of view and in terms of Jesus' life it is natural to call the meal recorded in the New Testament as the Last Supper.[6a] However, from a historical perspective viewing the development of the Passover celebration, and from the Jewish viewpoint, it would be more correct to call it the "New Seder" rather than the Last Supper. Jewish correctly recognizes its new Christian character by terming it, מצת אדון "The Lord's Supper."[7]

Considering the emphasis of Christianity upon the new replacing or fulfilling the old; e.g. the New Covenant, the New Israel, the New Savior and Redeemer, it is somewhat surprising they did not officially refer to it as the New Seder. However once the break with Judaism was complete it is understandable that they would not refer to it in Jewish terms and preferred to call it by a name which had more emotional and Christian overtones.

As Christianity developed its religion about Jesus, the events leading up to his crucifixion assumed more importance. It was natural that the last meal with his disciples before the crucifixion would become very significant and be known as the Last Supper rather than the New Seder of the Lord's Supper.

Christianity altered and tailored other Jewish beliefs and practices to fit their own purposes.

Implicit in the account of the Exodus is the principle of "A Change of Master." Jewish tradition viewed the Exodus as a recovery by God of His people, his property from the hands of strangers.

> "The Hebrew as a result of their redemption from thraldom by God, became his subjects--as sons or slaves--or his property:[8] 'They are my servants whom I brought forth (or we may translate; freed) out of the land of Egypt,' 'Thy people pass over, O Lord, which thou hast purchased.'"[9]

After God redeemed freed his people from being slaves of men, they became slaves of God. The Exodus thus meant a change of Master for the Jewish people. The Christians carried this idea one step farther. For them the "Change of Master" meant a new Redeemer and Savior who appeared in the form of God's only begotten son, their Lord, Jesus Christ.[10]

The Christian reinterpretation of the Passover symbols, served as the cornerstone for the new Christian religion. The observance of the Passover eve ceremonial as the Lord's Last Supper served as their Exodus and act of redemption. Through their acceptance of Jesus as the New Redeemer they effected a change of master.

The meaning and purpose of the Jewish Passover celebration was completely transformed in the newly interpreted, Christianized Passover. A radical change was involved in the complete transformation of the Jewish

Passover into a Christian festival celebrating the coming of the New Redeemer and Savior, who came to be called the Messiah and acclaimed King of the Jews.

The Rabbis naturally were concerned and reacted against these heretical acts. They sought to preserve the Jewish character of Passover and prevent Judaism from becoming contaminated or corrupted either by gnostic or heretical influences such as the dissident Christian-Jewish sects. In particular they sought to eliminate any possible opportunity for doubt or misinterpretation to arise in regard to the Jewish interpretation of the Passover. They wanted to leave no doubt that they celebrated the Passover to honor God, and not any messenger or intermediary such as; Jesus. Its purpose was both to thank the Lord God, the Holy One, Blessed be He, for the miraculous redemption from Egypt and to acknowledge that God himself, not Moses or Jesus, was ultimately responsible for redemption and salvation.

The remainder of this chapter will present an analysis of the rabbinic reaction to the Christian interpretation of the Passover. It will consist of three parts: A. Rabban Gamaliel's Ordinance concerning the three Passover symbols, Pesah, Marror, and Matzah, B. Polemical Midrashim, C. Changes the Rabbis made in the Jewish celebration of Passover.

II. Rabbinic Reaction to Christian Reinterpretation of The Seder

A. Ordinance of Rabban Gamaliel

The takanah of Rabban Gamaliel II of Yavneh is the earliest known source which we can accurately date of Jewish opposition to the Christian reinterpretation of the Passover. It is in fact the first record we have of historically conditioned additions to the Seder. It however, is only the first of many additions which were later added to the Seder celebration and ritual. The following stipulation of Rabban Gamaliel is recorded in the Mishnah, Pesachim 10:5:

רבן גמליאל היה אומר: כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח
לא יצא ידי חובתו. ואלו הן: פסח, מצה ומרור. פסח - על
שום שפסח המקום על בתי אבותינו במצרים. מצה - על שום
שנגאלו אבותינו במצרים. מרור - על שום שמררו המצריים
את חיי אבותינו במצרים.

> "Rabban Gamaliel used to say: Whosoever has not said (the verses concerning) these three things at Passover has not fulfilled his obligation. And these are they: Passover, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs; 'Passover' --because God passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt; 'unleavened bread' --because our fathers were redeemed from Egypt; 'bitter herbs' --because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt."

The reason for the institution of this takanah of Rabban Gamaliel seems to be best justified on the grounds that it was prompted by the Passover practices of the Christians and serves as an anti-Christian polemic. This writer agrees with E. D. Goldschmidt who holds this view and offers convincing evidence for this conclusion.[1].

Rabban Gamaliel II lived at a time when Judaism was being challenged by the growth of Christianity.[2] His takanah served as a means of testing one's loyalty to Judaism and helped to separate the pseudo Christian-Jews from the true believers.

> "Rabban Gamaliel, (the nasi of the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court and legislature) whose main aim was, as we have said and as is known, to preserve the unity of the assembly of Israel and to defend Jewish unity, wanted to know who was a Jew, who was a member of the covenant of Israel, and who was not; he wanted to know, 'are you for us or for our enemies?' And this was the reason for his decree, takanah."[3]

The reasons given by Rabban Gamaliel for the meaning of the three symbols stress that God is the only redeemer. One must recognize and acknowledge that these three things are done not in memory of Jesus, but in memory of the Lord, "The Holy One Blessed Be He who has brought us out of the land of Egypt." If one has not "Omar," recited and specified this to be the meaning of these symbols he has not fulfilled his obligation. The identification of the three symbols with God and the Exodus make it clear that they should be linked, identified with Judaism rather than Christianity. This conclustion is supported by the following statement by Shalom Judah Fisher:

> "And behold it is thus: It is necessary to accept the statement of the nasi, the President, the words as they are written and as they are understood, letter by letter, word by word. Everyone who does not say - explain these three things: Pesach, Matzah, and Marror, the Passover Sacrifice, the Unleavened Bread, and the Bitter Herbs, everyone who does not explain them in detail according to the language of the Mishnah: namely: 'This Passover Sacrifice' this is because The Holy One, blessed be he passed over (the houses of our fathers in Egypt). 'Matzah' this is because the dough of our fathers did not have sufficient time (to leaven). (When the King of all Kings, the Holy One, blessed be he, revealed himself to them) and He redeemed them. This 'Marror' bitter herbs, because they the Egyptians, embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt. Everyone who did not see and did not recognize and did not understand nor acknowledge (admit) that these three things are of the Exodus

> from Egypt, 'he has not fulfilled his obligation.' He who ate at the 'Last Supper,' he has not observed the Passover and by means of this act (participating in the Last Supper) he has gone forth and removed himself from the community, and he cut the golden chain which bound him to Judaism and which connected him to the congregation of Israel."[4]

Rabban Gamaliel's ordinance sought to prevent the mechanical performance of the Seder rites without an awareness of their significance. A perfunctory recitation of the Haggadah was to be avoided. Rabban Gamaliel stipulates that one fulfills his religious obligations in regard to the Seder only if he recognizes the role of God as the divine redeemer par excellance. The individual participant at the Seder becomes conscious of this by saying aloud, as part of the ritual, the significance of the three Passover symbols.

The verb "Omar," means more than merely "say or recite" in the context of Rabban Gamaliel's takanah. It must be understood in the sense of to "clarify" or to "explain." The stipulation should be understood in the following manner: Rabban Gamaliel used to say: "Whosoever does not make special mention of the Jewish interpretation i.e., explain the reasons of the following three things on Passover has not fulfilled his obligation."[5] Rabban Gamaliel by insisting upon the particular Jewish interpretation of these symbols eliminated any possibility of mistaken Christian interpretation.

In short, Rabban Gamaliel II emphasizes that each Jew only fulfills his obligation of the observance of the Passover when he actively and consciously recognizes the spiritual meaning of the Passover banquet which becomes explicit only by the "omar," by telling and emphasizing the Jewish rationale for the Passover symbols: Pesach, Matzah, and Marror.

The symbols, Pesach, Matzah and Marror, in a sense summarize the whole Exodus and epitomize the message of the Haggadah. They represent

the central themes of the Seder in capsule form. Thus it is of particular importance that their meaning and purpose be absolutely clear.[6] Rabban Gamaliel by emphasizing their particular Jewish significance accomplished this aim.[7]

Rabban Gamaliel sought to counter the feelings of frustration and futility that the Jews felt when their holy Temple had been destroyed by the Romans. He sought to give them hope by reemphasizing the promise of future redemption implicit in the miraculous acts which God performed in the past redemption from Egypt. While emphasizing the promise of future redemption he also presented a polemic against Christianity and its reinterpretation of the Passover symbols.

> "Faith in the new redemption is bound up with certainty of belief in the miracles of the past, e.g., the Mekhilta, on Exodus 13:3 (Ben Zoma and the Sages), now incorporated into the Haggadah, has also a Messianic and possibly anti-Christian implication, according to which the Exodus gains an importance which includes the days of the future Messiah."[8]

> "Nowhere but in these religions (Judaism and Christianity) was final deliverance guaranteed by undisputed historical precedent, the Exodus; of which, in a sense, it would be a repetition, though an infinitely superior one, and one that would end all history."[9]

Rabban Gamaliel's explanation for each of the three Passover symbols is related to some aspect of the Exodus from Egypt; Pesach, because God passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt; Matzah, because God redeemed our fathers from Egypt; Marror, because the Egyptains embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt. Two of these explanations emphasize God's active role as the redeemer. In a direct, forceful, and dramatic manner they served to express the basic message of the Passover Haggadah; God not Jesus is the hero and redeemer of the Exodus. The purpose of the Passover celebration is in remembrance of God, not Jesus. It commemorates God's gracious

and miraculous acts of redemption. Thus Rabban Gamaliel's ordinance served to fulfill two needs necessitated by the contemporary events of his age.

Judaism was being threatened by both external and internal forces during the lifetime of Rabban Gamaliel. A great part of his life work was directed against combating these forces which sought to weaken and destroy Judaism. Judaism faced a hostile Hellenistic environment. It was being torn aparty by conflicting Jewish groups; the schools of Hillel and Shammai, and the emerging Judeo-Christian sects. Rabban Gamaliel's primary goal was the preservation of Judaism which he believed could only be achieved if Jews remained united.

> "The guiding principle in all of Gamaliel's actions is set forth in the words which he spoke on the occasion of his quarrel with Eliezer b. Hyrcanus (B.M. 59b): 'Lord of the world it is manifest and known to Thee that I have not done it for my own honor nor for that of my house, but for thy Honor, that factions may not increase in Israel.'"[10]

Gamaliel was able to hold the divided house together by affecting a compromise between the two conflicting schools. However, once solving the Hillel Shammai dispute, Judaism was challenged by an even greater enemy and divisive force - the rise of Christianity. Gamaliel's attempts at unity and the preservation of Judaism naturally led him to oppose the heretical Christian sects.

> "The sect of believers in Jesus, which was ever separating itself more distinctly from all connection with Judaism, and which with other heretics was classed under the name of 'minim,' led Gamaliel, because of its tendencies dangerous to the unity of Judaism, to introduce a new form of prayer, which he requested Samuel ha-Katon to compose, and which was inserted in the chief daily prayer, the eighteen benedictions (Ber. 28b, Meg. 17b) This prayer itself, which together with the Shema 'forms the most important part of the Jewish prayer book likewise owes its final revision to Gamaliel.'"[11]

In light of these well known attempts of Gamaliel to promote Jewish unity and thus preserve Judaism it seems quite reasonable to assume that the takanah of Gamaliel regarding the Passover should be viewed as an anti-Christian measure. It serves as a polemic against those Christian sects which established their own observance of Passover in commemoration of their Lord's Last Supper and thereby completely reinterpreted the meaning of the Passover and its symbols.

Part II-Rabbinic Reaction
B. Polemical Midrashim

Rabban Gamaliel was not alone in his battle against Christianity. Many other Jewish leaders, scholars, and teachers were vitally concerned by the inroads Christian sects were making upon Judaism. The various schools established by the Jewish leaders produced many polemical statements both against Christianity and gnostic incursions into Judaism. The Midrashic collection of the Mekilta, which was a product of the school of of Ishmael founded at the beginning of the second century C.E., contains several polemical statements which are found in the Haggadah. The polemical midrashim which are found in the Haggadah are those on Deut. 26:5-8 and the one about the four sons. A discussion of the content of these midrashim will be found in a later part of this chapter. The first written record of a Haggadah which includes these Midrashim is the ninth century prayer book of Rab Amram. However, it is quite likely that they were included in the Seder celebration as part of the oral tradition and recitation which was practiced along with the statutory portions of the Haggadah. Since the Pharisees were strong advocates of the Oral Law, it is probable that they included these oral additions in their observance of the Passover. The oral tradition no doubt included many additions which were of an optional nature and are not included in the redacted Haggadah edition of the Rab Amram.

Rabbi Eliezer Levi, noted Israeli scholar and author, believes that an expanded version of the Haggadah existed in Tannaitic times which included a midrashic commentary on each and every detail of Deut. 26:5-8. According to the Mishnah the midrash to these verses constitute the core

of the Haggadah. Rabbi Levi states this conclusion in these words:

> "On the basis of the language of the Mishnah one can conclude that there was in their hands or possession a more expanded version of the Haggadah than this summary which is contained in the Mishnah. There in Mishnah Pesahim 10:4, it is said that 'the father expounds from A wandering Aramean was my father until he finished the entire section.' (Deut. 26:5f), that is to say that there was in their hands a 'midrash' about each and every detail that was included in this section. This detail is not found in the Mishnah but is contained in the midrash Sifre (to Deut:26:5-9) and also in the midrash Mekilta (to Exodus 12:13-14), and in the Jerusalem Talmud, (Pesahim, chapter 10). These midrashim later became part of our present Haggadah."[1]

Dr. David Daube supports the view that there was an oral tradition recited in addition to the required parts of the Passover Haggadah.

> "It would be quite wrong to infer that the Midrash (of the Four Sons) did not form part of the Palestinian liturgy in the New Testament period. There is, on the contrary, every reason to think that it did, considering its occurrence in the various sources mentioned."(Mekhilta and Palestinian Talmud) [2]

E. Daniel Goldschmidt also implies that there were a number of optional parts recited during the Seder which were not included in the statutory recitation. He also maintains that during tannaitic times the liturgy had not become fixed except for the obligatory parts required by the Mishnah.

> "Except for the midrash, 'An Aramean would have destroyed my father' or 'My father was a Wandering Aramean,' and the blessings, and the Hallel (Psalms 113-118) there was not mentioned anything in the Mishnah about the things that they were accustomed to read or recite on Passover eve, and certainly was not obligatory to say anything but these - it was only obligatory to say these things, and the remainder was optional."[3]

The opinion of E. Daniel Goldschmidt is supported by Dr. Daube who agrees that parts of the Passover Seder liturgy were in a state of flux during Mishnaic times.

> "It may be observed that neither the questions nor the recital of God's deeds, was fully stereotyped by the time of the New Testament.....But that in New Testament times, and for centuries after, there was room for variety in detail is evident, in the first place, from the fragments of ancient Passover-eve liturgies discovered in the Cairo Genizah; in the second place, from Talmudic passages which show that the traditional questions and the traditional answers were freely added to or altered; and in the third place, from the Midrash of the four sons, ... which presupposes the possibility of different types of children asking different questions and receiving different answers. But the wording of the questions and interpretation was not strictly fixed."[4]

> "One can agree that in New Testament times there was no written liturgy and not even a single authoritative oral one, without denying that certain orders of service had become traditional--identical only as to a few essentials, otherwise different in different regions and groups, with constant interchange between them and much fluidity even within each."[5]

The Mishnah allowed for quite a degree of latitude; it formulated general principles, but was not always specific in how they were to be applied. Two general principles which the Mishnah required be followed in observing the Passover Seder. The "Mah Nistanah" questions must be asked. They served to show how this night was different from all other nights. Secondly, when one recites the story of the Exodus and the redemption he must observe the principle of "begin with shame and end with praise." While the Mishnah required that these rules be followed their exact interpretation, meaning, and detailed application was left up to the individual.

The midrashim that were included in the later written version of the Haggadah and which contain polemical elements are those commenting about the four sons and Deut. 26:5-8.

> "The interpretation concerning the evil son which we mentioned does not particularly point to the sects of the deniers-heretics and evil-doers, in any case it seems that it was composed in the first or second century A.D., and that it includes some signs of a polemic against those who break off from the yoke of the commandments."[6]

The characteristics of the Midrash on Deut. 26:5 which illustrate their polemic nature are their emphasis upon the personal intervention of God in redeeming the Jews, with the corollary implication that it was not done by an agent of God such as Moses or Jesus, or via the Logos.

According to the Mishnah Pesahim, this Midrash constitutes the core of the Haggadah. It is a running commentary on a few verses which summarize the whole story and significance of the Exodus. (Its basic theme is expressed in the concluding verse which emphasizes God's personal intervention on behalf of the Jews and their rescue exodus from Egypt.) The purpose of the Midrash is to further amplify and elaborate the basic theme. It was only natural that the midrash would reemphasize the basic theme by contrasting it against the new Christian reinterpretations which introduced a new redeemer and savior. The proof texts used in the Midrash emphasize the active role of God working on behalf of his people: 1) God increasing the Jewish population, Ex.1:7; Ezek.16:7; 2) God hearing the Israelites cries of anquish, Ex.2:23,24,3:9; 3) God's actions against the Egyptians, Ex.9:3.

The biblical passages that the Midrash seeks to expound demonstrates clearly God's active role on behalf of his people. But the rabbis seek to find in the language used a basis for further Midrashic explanation which can expand and amplify God's role. They find special significane in the fact that Scripture reads: "And the Lord heard our voice, and the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched

arm and with great terribleness and with signs and with wonders." (Deut.26:7-8) The authors of the midrash see in the repetition of 'the Lord' - 'the Lord heard our voice and the Lord brought us forth' --an indication of God's personal activity. By way of comment the rabbis say: 'Not through an angel, and not through a seraph, and not through a messenger, but the Holy one in his glory and in his own person i.e., himself; as it is written: "I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and I will smite all the first born, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I the Lord." (Ex.12:12)

They they go on to explain that each of the four clauses of the supporting text is intended to announce the carrying out of these deeds by God himself: "For I will pass through Egypt--this means, I and not an angel; and I will smite all the first born, this means I, and not a seraph; and I will execute judgement--this means, I and not the messenger; I the Lord-this means, I am and no other." The usual translation of the phrase, אני ולא מלאך ולא שרף ולא שליח אני is: "I, and not a messenger." "I am the Lord: I am He, and no other." The Hebrew 'ani hu' used here according to D. Daube is atechnical term which he calls: 'The I Am' of Messianic Presence'. It is used to denote the personal presence of the redeeming God on that occasion.[7]

The basis for Dr. Daube assuming the text should read 'This means I and not the messenger,' rather than I and not a messenger becomes clear in the following observation which recognizes the significance and true force of the proof text cited above:

> "It will be noted that, whereas the first part of the Midrash has 'not through an angel, and not through a seraph, and not through a messenger,' the second speaks of 'the messenger,' not 'a messenger,' 'I and not the messenger.' This way of putting the matter may well have arisen when Christianity

had to be combated: 'the messenger' probably is Jesus. (There are versions of the Midrash with more anti-Christian or anti-gnostic interpolations, such as the addition 'and not through the Word'.)"[8]

If Dr. Daube is correct in his translation of 'ani hu' then it follows naturally that a contrast is being made. The contrast is made not between a mere messenger and God but between two "equals" 'The messenger, par excellance from the Christian view, Jesus, and God, The Holy One Blessed Be He therefore his change would be justified.

Other ancient manuscripts of the Haggadah from the Cairo Genizah and Craford Haggadah Manuscript lend support to Dr. Daube's conclusion. In a collection of manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah analyzed by Israel Abrahams one sees several examples of anti-Christian additions to the Midrash we are discussing, these include additions such as "Not the messenger," "not by means of the Word"(Logos).

Israel Abraham's footnotes are relevant to our discussion:

"The reading of המלאך "The messenger" for מלאך "a messenger" in both parts of this passage may also be noted in the Crawford manuscript of the Haggadah. Just as the phrase: לא על ידי מלאך "not by means of the Word," is directed against the Logos, so המלאך "The messenger" is a pointed antagonismy to any mediator."[9]

"After the words לא על ידי מלאך "Not by means of a messenger," the words are added: ולא על ידי הדבר ולא על ידי הקדוש ברוך הוא בכבודו Not by means of the Logos but only by The Holy Blessed Be He, Himself. Cf. the phrase מפי הדבר "forced by the mouth of the Word". One is tempted to suggest a reference here to the Logos or Memra; not only is human or semi-human intervention denied but also the intervention of the Logos. The omission of "בכבודו" "in his glory" lends strength to this suggestion, but the presence of this word in other fragments which contain the remarkable addition "לא על ידי מלאך ולא על ידי הדבר" " not by means of the Word" does not weaken the inference I suggest."[10]

There are four fragments which contain the phrase, "not by means of the Word."[11] There is one more interesting expression in

in these ancient Haggadah fragments which testify to the anti-Christian intent of the Midrash. There is frequent occurrence of המקדש "The One who actively Sanctifies for הקדוש "The Sanctified One," i.e., the Holy One. Abraham's note that these changes are hardly due to error. Cf. the phrase רוח המקדש "The Spirit of the One who Sanctifies," not רוח הקדוש "The spirit of the Sanctified Holy One," namely, Jesus who is dead by whose spirit Christians are redeemed. The use of המקדש "The one who sanctifies in this particular context may be compared with the phrase, לא על ידי המגיד "Not by means of the Logos."[12]

Another passage from the Mekhilta says about the expression, "I The Lord' which appears in Exodus: "What flesh and blood cannot possibly say."[13] This is manifestly directed against Christianity.

These anti-Christian statements which are found in the Midrash included in the Passover, and the general anti-Christian tenor of the Haggadah itself, mark the beginning of a long series of polemics which are found in later Rabbinic sources, Toldot Yeshu, "The Generations of Jews."

C. Changes Rabbis Made In The Jewish Observance of The Passover

1. The Omission of Moses from the Haggadah

The competition between Judaism and the quickly growing Christian sects, plus the increasing popularity and prominence which the Last Supper came to assume, caused revolutionary and rather startling changes in the Jewish celebration of the Passover. There is no mention in the Haggadah of the person of Moses the great Law Giver of the Jews. The rabbis went so far as to remove Moses from the Haggadah. The greatest of prophets according to Jewish tradition, the only one permitted to witness the Theophany on Mount Sinai; and most important in our context, the leader who led the Jews out of Egypt is overlooked.[14] "The absolute silence of the Haggadah on the role played by Moses is surely a reaction against the deification of the Messiah."[15] Many scholars have noted the significane of the playing down of the role of Moses and the building up of the active personal intervention of God in the Haggadah ritual. One of the most succinct observations has been that of Dr. Jakob Petuchowski:

> "It is a fact that in the traditional Haggadah (the service manual for the seder meal, largely composed of tannaitic material) there is no mention at all of the person of Moses the 'hero' of the Passover drama. This may have been accidental. But it is also possible that this omission was intentional. No person or hero was to be commemorated on this occasion. The real 'hero' of this drama, as it unfolds in the traditional account was God himself! Indeed, there is a Midrash incorporated in the Passover Haggadah which may give us a clue to this omission."
>
> "The following comments are made on Exodus 12:12: 'For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night - I, not an angel, And I will smite all the first born in the land of Egypt' - I, not a seraph, And against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment, I, not a messenger. I am Lord - I am He, and no other."[16]

Dr. Finkelstein's comment also reveals the anti-Christian Tendency of the Haggadah:

> "In the fascinating seder ceremony rabbis are quoted legends, and parables unfolded, interpretations of the event elaborated; Moses alone is mute. ...Moses was of those spiritual dimensions which in other traditions have invited worship. The Haggadah passes him over in order to refer to the Primal Source of all human greatness. Moses is forgotten in order that his teachings may be remembered. The whole of the Passover Haggadah is pervaded by this motif of God as man's sole savior and hope."[17]

There are Midrashim as Dr. Louis Finkelstein notes in his article. "The Pre-Maccabean Documents in the Passover Haggadah," where Moses rather than God is the hero.[18] He draws attention to a eulogy recounting a series of benefits bestowed upon the Jews. According to the Haggadah, they were bestowed on the Jewish people by God (Ha-Makom, the Place) but according to Midrash Sifre on Deuteronomy, they-or most of them-were conferred by Moses. The Haggadah reads: God who brought us forth from Egypt and executed judgments against them and gave us the manner to eat; The Sifre reads: Moses, the man that brought us forth from Egypt....and brought us down the man.

The Bible itself records two conceptions of the Exodus, one according to which God himself rescued the nation and another represented by the statement: "He sent a מלאך, an angel or messenger, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt." D. Daube disagrees with Finkelstein's interpretation of these passages and claims that the Sifre Midrash represent a sort of popular variety, in which "God brought us forth" would readily become "Moses brought us forth." Daube believes that it is significant that no popular version of the Midrash is preserved in the Haggadah. He claims that the Jewish Tradition made a conscious attempt to eliminate anything smacking of a God-like Messiah.

"The Midrash, Finkelstein infers, protests against the high priestly, anti-Mosaic group responsible for the Haggadah. But he himself points out, pp.4f., that the eulogy is based on biblical forerunners like Neh. 9:6ff; Psalms 135-36. As in these God is the benefactor, surely the natural conclusion is that the Haggadah simply follows them, without any political bias; and that the Midrash represents a sort of popular variety, in which 'God brought us forth' would readily become 'Moses brought us forth.' That no such of popular variety is preserved in our Haggadah is, indeed, significant; it is due to the gradual elimination of anything smacking of a god-like Messiah."[19]

2. The Change In The Order Of The Seder Meal

The measures the Jewish leaders took against the inroads of Christianity was making in the New Testament period did not seem to be sufficient. The takanah, or ordinance of Rabban Gamaliel, in approximately 100 C.E., the anti-Christian interpretations of the Midrashim, could not stop the avalanche. The rabbis were forced to take even more drastic action. Even the startling omission and conscious playing down of the role of Moses was not enough. The final last ditch attempt of the Rabbis to prevent any further Christian successes and stop further misinterpretations and Jewish-Christian abuses of the Passover celebration was to rearrange the order of the meal. The rabbis so to speak, had their backs against the wall and were forced to take drastic action. It was their last line of defense. It seems that a sense of utter desperation must have forced them to make a change which would cause the Four Questions and the whole structure of the service to lose much of their original intent and function.

> "It must be with a view to guarding against dangerous deviations in ritual and interpretation that the standard questions concerning the meaning of the Passover eve ceremonies are assigned to the illogical position prior to the performance of the ceremonies."
>
> "The change round makes nonesense of the questions and indeed the whole structure of the service." [2]

With the rearranged revised order of the meal which is still practiced to this day, what happens at a Jewish Seder is that the questions are asked before the ceremonies to which they refer are performed; for example, the child asks "Why do we eat only unleavened bread tonight?" before anything has been eaten at all. The questions are followed by the Haggadah which consists of the narrative of God's mighty deeds; His gracious and miraculous redemption via the Exodus. And then at last, the decisive ceremonies are gone through, the eating of the

unleavened bread and bitter herbs.[3]

The date of the change in the order of the meal was probably shortly before the Codification of the Mishanah by Rabbi Judah Ha-Nais (132-217A.D.).

> "From the description of the service in the Mishnah it is certain that about A.D. 200 the natural sequence, with the questions following the ceremonies, (i.e., the meal) was still prevalent."[4]

A careful reading of the Mishnah, Pesachim, Chapter 10 will that the meal was first, and the ceremonial recitation of the Haggadah followed.

> "The text of the Mishnah leaves no doubt that immediately after the hors d'oeuvres--the first dipping of raw vegetables-the main dish was served. At this point the child would express his amazement at the strange procedure and would ask the customary Questions."[5]

Other scholars including Dr. Finkelstein, M. Friedman, E. Daniel Goldschmidt, Dr. E. Mihaly, and Ismor Elbogan, believe the meal first preceded the recitation of the Haggadah.[6] This writer is in agreement with these scholars who believe that the original Mishnah can't be understood except by assuming the meal came first, then the Haggadah.

The order of the original Passover meal was the following: 1) There was the ceremonial meal distinguished by special features, the most important of which were the roasted lamb, the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs; 2) The questions whereby a person, usually the youngest member of the company - the son if it was a family was required to ask what the strange ceremonies meant; 3) Interpretation of the ceremonies: the leader of the company - the father if it was a family was required to reply to the questions by recounting the narrative of the mighty deeds which God performed for Israel. He began with shame, the slavery in Egypt, and ending with praise(the Exodus, revelation at Mount Sinai, the entrance into the Promised Land). . The nature of the questions and the

interpretation, namely, parts two and three, would therefore be largely determined by that of part one, the ceremonial meal. We have seen that the Christian Jewish circles changed part one through their reinterpretation of the symbolic foods to making them refer to Jesus. In the opinion of Dr. Daube:

> "The meal was transformed certainly in such a manner that the emphasis from the outset lay on the new deliverance; and parts " and (3), the questions and recital, would proceed along the lines thus laid down."[7]

The advantage of making the change in the order of the meal has been analyzed and described in the following by D. Daube:

> "By relegating part 1, the meal, to the end, the Rabbis took the life, or at least any undue vitality, out of it. The service opened with some formal, orthodox questions: so formal that they referred to rites which had not yet even taken place. To these questions, an orthodox narrative would be given as reply. And the meal with unleavened bread and bitter herbs came at the end, as the fulfillment of a Scriptural precept. The sequence mystifying gestures, questions - interpretation was replaced by the sequence of formal questions - reply - fulfillment of prescribed ceremonies. The danger of the service being set on a wrong course was eliminated."[8]

The traditional and widely accepted rationale for the change in order is that it was instituted to prevent drunkenness. According to Daube this argument is quite unconvincing.

> "For one thing, had drunkenness constituted a problem, the seimplest way to deal with it would have been to decree that no wine might be taken but what was required by the ritual itself. That would have made two cups (one for the blessing of the day and one to go with the meal) for the whole time from the beginning of the service to the completion of the reply: hardly an excessive amount. It is noteworthy that this method of restriction was actually adopted by the Rabbis for the part of the service coming after the meal. (Cf.Mish.Pes.10:7,Pal.Pes.37d) For another thing, on the basis of the solution under notice it becomes inexplicable why the second part of the Hallel, (Ps.113-18; the second part 114-118 or 115-118) the 'hymn' as it is called in the gospels, (Matt.26:30, Mark 14:26) was not also placed before the meal. But it was not; it is still sung afterwards, as it was in the period of the New Testament and in

> that of the Mishnah. (Pes. 10:7) Was it considered right to recite these psalms under the table? Above all, why, if it was drunkenness which rendered necessary the placing of (1) after (2) and (3) are our sources absolutely silent upon this change: It was an enormous change; we should expect plenty of discussion about it; but we hear nothing."[9]

Based on the present literary evidence available, it seems most likely to this writer that the Rabbinic reaction to the Christianization of the Passover festival followed along the general lines described in this chapter. The earliest known sources which one can date of Jewish opposition to Christianity are the following: 1) the ordinances of Rabban Gamaliel, circa 100C.E. regarding the Passover symbols, and the blessing included in the Eighteen Benedictions of the daily liturgy concern the minim, heretics, 2) the polemical Midrashim of the Mekilta. The omission of Moses from the Haggadah also seems to express rabbinic reaction to the Christianity. They sought to preclude anything connoting a god-like Messiah. God himself is the hero of the Haggadah and redeemer par excellance. These actions however, did not stop the misinterpretations made by the Christian sects nor to any great degree impede their growth. Dr. Daube's theory that the rabbis changed the order of the Seder to guard against Jewish-Christian abuses of the Passover celebration therefore seems quite probable. This argument while very convincing is however not the last word on this very controversial subject. The final answer awaits further evidence.

Chapter VI

The Seder Ritual In The Tannaitic Period

I. Introduction

The description and regulations for the Passover Seder meal are found in Chapter Ten of the Mishnah. This chapter can be divided into three parts. The first part, consists of the first Mishnah only, prescribes three rules for the Passover meal: one may not eat until it is dark, one may not eat except in a reclining position, one may not drink less than four cups of wine at the meal. The second part, consisting of Mishnat four through seven, describe the meal itself. The third and last part, comprising mishnahot, seven through nine, give further rules for the Passover meal: the first and third parts deal with the subject of the meal, whereas the second part describes the meal itself.

It is most likely that the tenth chapter of M. Pesachim is based upon minhagim customs, and halakot laws that were then observed in connection with the Passover meal. The description of the meal itself is enclosed within the framework of the halakah requiring the drinking of four cups of wine. The ritual of the four cups provide the structure to which the details of the meal are attached.

The Mishnah fixed the structure of the Seder to include the following parts: 1) The Four Questions; 2) Interpretation of sections Deut. 26:5-8, my father was a Wandering Aramean; 3) Teaching of Rabban Gamliel-Pesach, Mazot, Marror; 4) The Hallel; 5) The Geulah redemption benediction; 6) Following the Hallel; 7) The grace after meals; 8) Bircat Hasahahir - either Nismat or Yehallelucha; 9) The various blessings connected with food and drink.

Most of the stipulations concerning the Seder celebration are found in the Mishnah. Some of them like the Four Questions are taken from earlier Mishnaic sources, and others come from later Tannaitic times, e.g. the takanot ordinances of Rabban Gamaliel. In essence the rubric of the Seder celebration was the same in Tannaitic times as it is today. The basic outline has remained the same except for minor additions and the change of the place of the meal in the order of the Seder.

II. The Seder Ritual of the Mishnah

A. The Four Questions

The custom of reciting the Four Questions is a very well known feature of the Seder meal. According to the opinion of E.D. Goldschmidt the sense of the Mishnah implies that these were pro-forma type questions.[1] The son was encouraged to ask such a question in order to fulfill the Biblical injunction: "And when thy sons shall ask you on the morrow you shall tell" etc.[2] The name of the Passover ritual is derived from this Biblical verse. The word Haggadah, means the telling, the recitation, the proclamation.

The position of the Four Questions in the order of the Seder ritual is of special significance. In Mishnaic days it served as the beginning of the explanation of the story of the Exodus. At that time there had not yet been added the portion Halachma Anya which was later instituted by the Geaonim. The Four Questions served to call one's attention to the unusual character of the Passover night. Each started with the question: "How is this night distinguished from all other nights?" They emphasized its unique character and difference from all other nights. Passover eve was characterized by a difference with a specific and special purpose in mind, namely, to recount the story of the Exodus and explain its religious, spiritual, and moral message. The Haggadah ritual and foods with their symbolic meanings served as the means to convey this message.

The message of the Seder was of primary importance; the means by which it was to be communicated was secondary. Neither the person who asked the four questions nor the means by which their implications were perceived were as important as the fact that the Seder's message be

communicated. The means by which attention was drawn to the unique character of the Passover eve was originally flexible. A close reading of the Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 115b,116b, shows that the questions as formulated in the Mishnah were intended to serve as models; which could be replaced by other actions which served the same purpose.[3]

The intent of the Mishnaic formulation of "Mah Nistanah" questions was to bring the unique character of the Seder to one's attention. The questions themselves did not have to be recited if some other action focused upon the distinctive and distinquishing character of the Seder evening. The Talmud provides several examples which show that certain actions could be performed which eliminated the necessity of reciting the four questions.

The removing of the table or tray exempted the maggid, or leader of of the Haggadah ritual from reciting: "Wherefore is this night different from all other nights?" The school of R. Jannai said the reason the table was removed was so that the children may perceive (the unusual proceeding) and inquire (about its reasons). The Gemara then gives an example of the case where Abaye was sitting before Rabba and the tray was removed before they had eaten and Rabbah was exempt from reciting the questions.[4]

The pro-forma statements: מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות "How is This night distinguished (different) from all other nights?", served as the means to draw attention to the unusual and distinctive character of the Seder night regardless of the fact that they could be interpreted either as questions or as statements of explanation of the father to an uninquisitive son. Goldschmidt makes the interesting and perceptive observation and claim that it is a mistake to interpret the Mishnah to read that the son asks four questions. Rather, he claims that

the passage is an explanation by the father to the unquestioning child about the significance and unusual character of the Seder. In otherwords, if the son does not take note of the unusual character of the evening and asks why that night was different, the father then gives him an explanation of four parts pointing out the unusual character of the evening. Goldschmidt bases his view on the Gemara which he claims interprets the Mishnah in this manner. In the opinion of this writer, Goldschmidt's interpretation would seem to be the intent of the original Mishnah. The Babylonian Gemara, Pesachim 116b, seems to support this view because it emphasizes that the unusual character of the evening must be recognized and that various actions can be used to get this point across.[5]

The Mishnah itself could be interpreted either as statements of explanations or as questions depending upon how the clauses: ואם אין דעת בבן אביו מלמדו was interpreted. The Mishnah itself reads as follows and is ambiguous: מזגו לו כוס שני וכאן הבן שואל אביו ואם אין דעת בבן מלמדו מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות... ולפי דעתו של בן אביו מלמדו

If the Mishnah were interpreted as statements of explanation it would be translated thusly: "And here the son asks his father, but if the son doesn't have the intelligence to ask, the father teaches him why this night is different from all other nights."

In whatever manner the "Mah Nistanah" were employed, as statements of explanation or as questions, they served to draw attention to the unusual character of Passover night. The question of who was to recite the Mah Nistanah was not as important as the fact that they be recited. The Gemara itself makes this view most explicit: "Our Rabbis taught: if his son is intelligent he asks him, while if he is not intelligent his wife asks him; but if not, (if he has no wife) he asks himself. And even

two scholars who know the laws of Passover ask one another." Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 116a (underlining is this writer's). Further support can be deduced from the fact that Tradition requires that they be recited but allows for variation in who shall recite them.[6]

Goldschmidt notes that it is not clear why or when it became the custom to recite the four part explanation of the father to the son as a series of questions. He surmises that this error occurred because of a misreading of two consecutive passages in the Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 116a. He claims that the Rabbis interpreted the second passage as being the explanation of the first, when actually they are two separate passages. The first passages, a baraitha speaks of different people asking each other about the unique nature of the Passover. The second passage immediately following the first, begins with the pro-forma question: "How is this night different from all other nights? For on all other nights we dip once, while on this night we dip twice." The misreading assumed that the passage which followed was the question which the persons in the baraitha asked each other.

פסחים 116

גמ' ת"ר חכם בבו שואל לו ואם אינו חכם אשתו שואלתו ואם לאו הוא שואל לעצמו ואפילו שני תלמידי חכמים שיודעים בהלכות הפסח שואלים זה לזה - מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות שבכל הלילות אנו מטבלין פעם אחת הלילה הזה שתי פעמין

Gemara: Our Rabbis taught: if his son is intelligent he asks him while if he is not intelligent his wife asks him; but if he has no wife, he asks himself. And even two scholars who know the laws of Passover ask one another.

"Why is this night different from all other nights? For on all other nights we dip once, while on this night we dip twice."

The Babylonian Mishnah in its present codified form records the following four questions: 1) Why is this night different from all (other) nights? For on all (other) nights we eat leavened and unleavened bread, whereas on this night (we eat) only unleavened bread. 2) On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs, on this night only bitter herbs. 3) On all other nights we eat meat roasted, stewed, or boiled, on this night, roasted only. 4) On all other nights we dip once, but on this night we dip twice.

One will immediately observe that these questions are not the same as those which we recite today. In our present ritual the question concerning reclining has been substituted for the question about roasted meat. Nor are the present day questions the same as those recorded in the Palestinian Talmud which contains only three questions in the following order: dipping, unleavened bread, and the question dealing with roasted meat. Goldschmidt claims that under the influence of the Geonim the question concerning the roasting was omitted, and that after the Talmud was completed the question concerning reclining was added as a mandatory practice. Prior to this, it had been customary to recline, but reclining hadn't been included as one of the traditional questions.

Already in the Tannaitic period, when Judaism was influenced by Graeco-Roman customs, it was a widespread practice among Jews to recline at the Seder meal.[7]

> "They added the question about 'all of us recline' after the destruction of the Temple, when they began to sit upon chairs without reclining and when everyone would recline as a symbol of freedom only during the night of Passover."[8]

In Geonic times it was customary to sit on chairs and it no longer made sense to add a question about reclining. Yet the Geonim formalized such a question. The reason which motivated this addition is not clear. Perhaps it still served as a symbol of freedom which carried over from Roman days.when only free men reclined. It may however be as a result of the desire to preserve four questions which would still be meaningful and relevant. On the other hand, the question about reclining, since it symbolized freedom may have appeared less out of place than a question about sacrificial roasted meat.

In considering the changes which took place in the Four Questions one can trace some of the development of the Seder and its ceremonies. These changes show how the Seder both reflects and is affected by the changing times. One can see the changes produced by the destruction of the Temple, by the dispersion into the diaspora, and by the passage of time which created new conditions. After the destruction of the Temple, the question dealing with roasted meat was no longer applicable. Alfasi in commenting upon the Mishnah remarks:

והשתא לא לימא כשר צלוי דליח לן פסחא בזמן הזה אינו אומר
'הלילה הזה כולו צלי שאין לנו קרבן'.

"And now we do not say roasted meat because we do not have the paschal offering. At this time he does not say on this night all of it is roasted since we do not have a Paschal sacrifice." [8]

With the passage of time and the occurrence of new historical conditions the rabbis found it necessary to change the "Mah Nistanah." In the days of the Amoraim they changed the first question and they said in its place the following: "On all other nights we dip only one time, but on this night we dip twice." [9] In the Amoraic Period, they were not accustomed to eat appetizers (yerakot) before the meal in order to wet the

appetite.[10] They however ate them during the meal.

It would be more logical for the last question which concerns reclining to have come first. One begins to sit even before the Kiddush. But since it is an Geonic addition to the original questions it comes at the end of the list of questions.[10a]

The Four Questions fulfilled several functions. While they served to point out the unique character of the Passover, the rabbis also recognize their pedagogic value for children. The rabbis emphasized that they served both to arouse the curiosity and hold the interest of the children at the Seder. The Four Questions are the first of a series of devices which are included in the Seder primarily for the children's benefit.[11]

B. Begin With Shame and End With Praise

Immediately following the Mah Nistanah the Mishnah reads:

ולפי דעת של בן אביו מלמדו מתחיל בגנות ומסיים בשבח ודורש

מארמי אובד אבי עד שיגמור כל הפרשה כלה

> "According to the intelligence, e.g., intellectual capacity, of the son, the father teaches him. He (the father) begins with shame and concludes with praise or glory, and he expounds from 'A wandering Aramean was my father until he completes the whole section.'"[2]

The Mishnah not only specifies that the father must teach the son but also states what he should teach him. The explanation of the meaning of the Passover Seder should include two considerations: one, the principle of "begin with shame and end with praise or glory;" secondly, the recitation should include the explanation or Midrashic expounding of the passage beginning with "My father was a wandering Aramean until the end of the section." The Mishnah which includes the "Mah Nistanah" and its explanations is entirely devoted to delineating just what the father should teach his sons about Passover. It, however, does this in a general way without going into a precise explanation of all the details. While specifying some of the details it doesn't make itself totally clear and precise in meaning. The clarity that was present to the compilers of the Mishnah, has been lost to later generations and varying interpretations and traditions confuse and hide the original intent.

The principle of "beginning with shame and ending with glory-praise" is clear and to the point. As has been mentioned earlier in the discussion of the symposia and other related Greek customs, it was a common custom in the Graeco-Roman world to include both aspects of rebuke and praise in

applying the principles of Genus genus laudativum. Thus it is not strange to see that the Rabbis also used a similar practice in relating the Seder Haggadah.

It is only in the immediate application of the principle that a problem arises. The relationship of the general principle, "begin with degradation or shame, and end with praise or glory," with the clause which follows is ambiguous. It is not clear whether the explanation of the father to his son should in addition to "commencing with shame and ending with praise," include an exposition of the passage beginning with "My father was a wandering Aramean," or whether this is a separate part of the rubric of the Seder ritual and is the next part of the Seder ritual.

There is yet another alternative in understanding these passages. There is the possibility that everything which follows the general principle is subordinate to it, mere illustrating it. Thus the phrase, "And he expounds" "My father was a wandering Aramean to the end of the section," rather than being a separate item independent of the general principle which immediately precdes, serves as a dependent explanatory clause illustrating the principle of "beginning with shame or degradation, and ending with praise or glory." The Mishnah translation would then read: "According to the intellectual capacity of the son his father would teach him. Therefore, the father begins with shame and ends with praise, namely, he begins with ganoot e.g. expound-Arami avaid avie,[3] and continues until he finishes the whole section which ends in shevach "And He (God) hath brought us into this place,(e.g., The Temple in Jerusalem)and given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey."[4]

It is not clear how the rabbis of the Tannaitic period interpreted these statements of the Mishnah. There is no definite formulation as to

what portions of the ritual were precisely meant by the principle of "begin with shame and end with praise." It is only later in the time of the Babylonian Talmud that the specific passages were fixed by the Amoraim. The problem of the standardization of these passages will be discussed in a later section of this paper.

While there are problems involved in determining the precise meaning in the application of both the "Mah Nistanah" and Matcheel bganoot amsiyaim bshevach" their general intent and purpose is clear. The structure of the Mishnah with the repetition of the phrase, "and his father shall teach him" emphasizes that there are two goals in mind; one, to teach how this night is different from all other nights, and secondly, to explain the story of Exodus.

Chapter VII

The Development of the Seder in Middle Ages 1000-1600

A. Influence of the Christian Environment on the Haggadah

During the Middle Ages the additions to the Haggadah were largely influenced by the historical-socio-economic conditions of the Jews living in a Christian society. The ceremonial for the most part remained the same, with only minor additions taking place, e.g., the addition of the Elijah ceremonial section, "Pour out thy Wrath," and liturgical poems and songs. Characteristic of these additions is a note of hope and consolation which they offer to the persecuted and suffering Jews of the Middle Ages. The opening of the door for Elijah, the harbringer of the Messiah, and the cup of wine left for him in the center of the table reflect the yearning of the Jews for a better tomorrow, which would bring redemption and salvation.

The Middle Ages have often been referred to as the Dark Ages. For the Jews in particular, especially those living in Christian Europe, this is epithet is most fitting. While the ages of the Crusades stimulated piety and commerce among the Christians, it brought poverty, heroic martyrdom and self sacrifice to the Jews. The Golden Age of Spanish Jewry under the Moslems turned into an Age of Iron for the Jews living under the authority of the church. The Jews lived in an Age of Iron: the iron in the sword raised against them, iron in their determination to maintain Jewish life.

The Church's persecution of Jews, which characterized the First Crusade in 1096, was the first of a long series of unmitigated sufferings which Jews endured throughout the Middle Ages. The Crusaders murdered many "infidel" Jews on their way to Palestine. There were massacres in many of the larger European cities such as Spayer, Worms, Mayence and Cologne. The motivations for the persecutions were both religious and economic. The Jews

suffered during the Crusades as a result of the less sincere among the Crusaders: e.g., nobles and serfs or peasants who were nothing more than fortune hunters looking for lands to rule over, or were adventurers seeking an escape from a dull and servile life of the Feudal system. Generation after generation of monks and priests led by Papal example, fanned the flames of hate which led to Jewish persecutions. They were motivated either by a sincere but narrow religious zeal or because attacking the Jews proved to be a sure means of self-advancement. The Crusades, the Church's, is fear of a different opinion, the Christian merchants' greed for the control of trade, the curse of being a defenseless creditor, and the nobility's greed, these factors encouraged the Christian persecution of the Jew during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The mood of the Passover festival changed during the Middle Ages, as a result of persecutions. Previously the Passover was a time of happiness and joy, of family revelry and feasting. However these happy times soon became a time of fear for all Jews, a time of horrible visitations, a time of terror and panic. The festival of freedom became a festival of fear.

Jews feared persecutions and blood baths as a result of false accusations. Hundreds of innocent Jewish men, women, and children lost their lives as a result of false accusations of desecration of the host or blood libel. Christians accused Jews of killing Christian children in order to obtain blood for the Passover ritual, e.g., the baking of matzos. The masses were ignorant and superstitious and would believe the false charges and accusations which were made.

The story of the ritual murder of the boy william in Norwich, England in 1144 is virtually the first of a long series of such accusations. The first time the accusation of ritual murder occurred in continental Europe

was in 1171 in Blois, France, where thirty men and women were burned.[1] Persecution of the Jews increased as these accusations spread throughout the European continent.

The additions to the Haggadah in the Middle Ages reflect these changing conditions and the state of fear and insecurity which characterized Jewish life. These additions however were influenced by both internal and external factors. The external and most significant factor was the increasing persecutions, the gradual degradation and worsening lot of the Jews, e.g. social isolation, ghettoization, expulsions from various European cities and countries. The Jews were constantly insecure because their status and rights depended on the whims and capriciousness of a feudal lord or king. Secondly, the internal factor was the tradition to amplify the story of the Exodus on Passover eve. The Haggadah itself states the principle: "And who ever enlarges upon the tale of the Exodus from Egypt, that person merits praise." This principle served as the rationale for the many midrashic additions which were made to the Haggadah during the Talmudic and Gaonic periods. Throughout every age of Jewish history Jews have amplified and added to the story of the Exodus. As the conditions of the Jews became more intolerable, the nature of the additions to the Haggadah became more consolatory.

The imprecatory verses from Psalms and Lamentations recited following the Grace after the meals were added in the Middle Ages. They are first found in the Haggadah included in the Mahzor Vitry prayer book which was introduced by the French rabbis in 1208. Rashi, the noted 11th century commentator refers to the prayer in his work Pardes.[2] These verses which serve as an introduction to the second part of the Hallel, psalms of praise are known as the "Spok Hamatha," "Pour Out Thy Wrath Upon the Nations" section. Under the stress of persecution these verses served as an outlet for the frustration and bitterness which no doubt built-up within them.

The helpless and defenseless Jews called upon their only source of strength and security to help them in their time of dire straits. They had no other way of meeting their enemies than to cry out to their God "who is near to all who call upon Him in truth." In each age the participants at the Seder would no doubt interpret these verses to refer to their contemporary persecutors who in the words of an earlier portion of the Haggadah "rise up to destroy us."[3]

The original reason thatthese verses were included in the Haggadah is unknown and later commentators sometimes have a tendency to rationalize and overlook the historical conditions, the sitz im lebin, or play down any vengeful character the original intent may have included. Eliezer Ashkenazi, in his sixteenth century commentary to the Haggadah found in his Maasse Adonai notes that some earlier commentators claim they referred either to the heathen that had destroyed the Temple or to believers of non-monotheistic faiths.[4]

This section is included in the Haggadahs of all groups in Jewry, but the number of verses differs: The Italian version contains only the first verse, the Sephardic two, and the Ashkenazic version four, and in other groups even more.[5] Perhaps the persecutions and suffering of the Jews was greater among the Ashkenazic circles and therefore the expression of vengeance greater.

The original reason that this section was inserted at this point in the Haggadah is unknown. It may be that it was inserted here because of the similarity in topic: both sections refer to the nations. Or it may have been inserted to serve as an introduction to the continuation of the Hallel.

It became customary during the Middle Ages to open the door before saying these imprecatory verses about the heathen nations. It is not known when this custom originated or for what purpose this was done. However, in

time it became associated with the legendary figure of the prophet Elijah. In Jewish tradition Elijah was to be the forerunner of the Messiah.

As the persecutions increased and the lot of the Jew worsened, the need for consolation was greater. It was natural to include in the Haggadah the figure most closely associated with their highest aspirations of redemption and salvation. Elijah became, so to speak, the Jewish savior - the agent of God who would bring ultimate redemption. The Christians had their Savior in the form of Jesus and the Jews had their Elijah, the harbinger of the Messiah and peace and brotherhood. The Jews did not make Elijah into God Incarnate in flesh as the Christians had done to Jesus, but he did come to symbolize their deepest yearnings for deliverance from oppression and persecution.

The longing for The Messiah to bring salvation and an end to foreign subjugation and domination, persecution and suffering was a common theme during the Middle Ages. This was especially true during periods of severe fanaticism against the Jews. The earliest record of a false messiah in this period is the example of David Alroy who lived in Persia about 1146-47, probably during the time of the Second Crusade.[6] During the early part of the sixteenth century two more false messiahs, David Reubeni and Solomon Molko, appeared in Portugal on a "messianic" mission to drive the Turks out of Palestine with the help of Christian powers in Europe.[7] They appeared in the aftermath of sorrow and despair which enveloped the Jews who were victims of the Spanish Inquisition, and who were expelled from Spain in 1492, from Portugal in 1496, those expelled from Lithuania in 1495.

Shabbati Zvi proclaimed himself as the Messiah in 1665 in Smyrna, Turkey, He was the most famous, and widely acclaimed of the pseudo-messiahs of medieval Jewish life. He was accepted as the Messiah among hundreds of thousands of Jews, both the cultured and the less sophisticated. He, too, appeared

on the scene following a most tragic period in Jewish history. The Thirty Years' War had devastated central Europe and its Jewry; The Chmielnicki Massacres of 1648 launched a series of persecutions that literally decimated East European Jewry.

The pattern was the same throughout Jewish history, in periods of great suffering the Jewish people always looked forward to The Messiah to lead them to Palestine to a free Jewish state which would serve as a refuge and homeland.

The popularity of false Messiahs and the addition of the Elijah ceremony to the Seder were not the only manifestations of the hope for The Messiah who would bring redemption and improve the sorrowful and tragic lot of the Jew. Throughout the Middle Ages many songs were added to the Seder which express these same yearnings. The history of the Jews throughout this period was characterized by many persecutions and much suffering. Graetz's History of the Jews describes this period as one virtual and continual bloodbath. While this is a somewhat distorted picture it correctly emphasizes the dominant and decisive role which persecutions and suffering played in the life of Jews during this period. The theme of the different Seder songs follows the pattern of the Seder service in general. It expresses praise to God for past redemption and looks to the future redemption which will bring the Jews back to rebuild Israel and the Temple. These additions served as a source of hope and inspiration. They were most consoling to suffering and persecuted Jews. These songs were thus historically conditioned and reflect the mood and character of the reaction of the Jewish people to their plight.

After all the statutory blessings and portions of the formal Seder were completed it became customary to round out the Seder service with the singing of a number of hymns and liturgical poems. Jews considered it

especially meritorious to amplify and add to the tale and celebration connected with the Exodus narrative. Thus Zedekiah b. Abraham, a thirteenth century physician, remarks that the custom is to recite Piyutim[8] and poems on the eve of Passover telling of the praise and glory of God. Thus in Post-Ganoic times many poetic embellishment and songs were added to the Passover Haggadah. A number of these were not especially composed for Passover Eve. They, however, were used during the other holidays and were added to the Passover ritual. These additions were of two types: poetic blessings and poetry or rhymes that they read or sang at the end of the Haggadah in order to lengthen and to expand the story of the Exodus and to amuse the children.

These additions include the following six selections: 1) "And So It Came To Pass In The Middle of the Night," 2) "And So You Shall Say, 'It is a Sacrifice of the Passover,'" 3) "For To Him Praise Is Proper," (Ke Lo Naeh), 4) "Mighty Is He," (Adir Hu), 5) "Who Knows One," (Ehad Me Yodeya?), 6) "And Only Kid" (Had Gadya).

The poem, "And So It Came To Pass," is an alphabetical acrostic excerpted from the liturgy of Shabbat Hagadol, the Sabbath immediately preceding Passover, in the Ashkenazic ritual. It is traditionally recited on the first night of Passover. It is a didactic poem containing many allusions to the miracles which God has performed for Israel throughout its history, especially to those which occurred according to Midrashic interpretation, on Passover eve. The poem concludes with a fervant prayer for Messianic redemption which according to tradition, will begin on the Seder night.

The second hymn, "And So You Say: 'It is a Sacrifice of the Passover,'" is also an acrostic. There is a strong similarity between this and the previous poem in both form and contents. It is possible that the eighth century author of this poem, Eleazar Kalir, was influenced by his predecessor,

the Palestinian poet Yannai. The opening verse of each is customarily repeated as a refrain. Both poems are didactic and contain many allusions to a variety of miraculous deeds that, according to midrashic interpretation, were performed at Passover. It was originally used in the morning service of the second day of Passover and was later added to the Haggadah. Like the previous hymn sung on the first Seder eve, this hymn which is sung on the second Seder night concludes with a prayer for redemption which serves as a note of consolation: "Doubly will thou punish our foes on Pesah, Let thy might free us on the night of Pesach."[9]

The third song, "For To Him Praise Is Proper"(Ki Lo Naeh) is an ancient alphabetical acrostic of unknown authorship. It is mentioned in the Tashbez[10], thirteenth century work about Rabbi Meir of Rotenberg. It is a general hymn of praise which has no special connection with the Passover eve, except for the fact that it was one of the songs that was usually sung at feasts. It no doubt was added because of its praise for God. It is based on the Midrash, Genesis Rabbah 6:2 "Thine is the day, Thine also is the night; to Thee the day sings praises, to Thee the night sings praises." It is an appropriate addition to a ritual based upon the principle; "It is praiseworthy to add the glory and exaltation of God's miraculous and beneficent deeds performed on Israel's behalf."

These first three hymns appear in both the Ashkenazic and Italian rituals. Neither the above three hymns nor the last three to be described are included in the Sephardic or Yemenite rituals. The last three, however, are included in the Askenazic rituals.

The fourth hymn, (Adir Hu) "Mighty Is He," is an alphabetical acrostic which has no special connection with or reference to Passover. It was commonly sung at times of joy and at Jewish festivals; e.g., in Avignon it

served as a festival song. Its earliest known appearance is in the Darmestat Haggadah[11] which was written in the fifteenth century. It is similar to the previous hymn, Ki Lo Naeh, both in content and in form. Both have eight stanzas and have a refrain which is repeated at the end of each stanza. Both hymns partake of the spirit of the basic Passover theme, redemption or salvation which provide a note of hope and consolation. The rebuilding of the Temple which is the theme of this hymn plays an important part in the Jewish concept of redemption by a Messiah who will lead the Jews back to Palestine where they will live in freedom and reestablish their own state and Temple.

"Adir Hu" was adopted as a pendant to the hymn "Ki Lo Naeh." It logically follows "Ki Lo Naeh" which is a general hymn of praise of the Omnipotence which can alone bring redemption to Israel. "Adir Hu" is a prayer to hasten that redemption. In other words, it is proper to praise him because He will bring redemption. One is general the other specific, perhaps the latter was a consequence of the earlier. This perhaps is the reason why originally the "Ki Lo Naeh" was sung on the first night and the "Adir Hu" on the second night of Passover.

"Adir Hu" became so popular that it customarily is sung on both nights of Passover. It was easily adaptable as a family song and was often sung in translation in the vernacular to the tune of popular Germanic folk songs.

The last two songs, "Who Know One" and "An Only Kid," are the latest additions to the traditional Haggadah. Their introduction into the Haggadah appears to be no earlier than the fifteenth century. They are of a totally different character than the religious Piyutim or songs which precede them in the Haggadah. They are of primarily a secular rather religious origin and nature. They are more characteristically folk songs, popular ballads and counting songs rather than religious hymns specially composed for the Seder

service or adapted from other Jewish religious services. As such they find their parallels both in the literature and folklore of both oriental and western countries. They were most likely introduced into the Seder to amuse the children and keep them awake till the end of the service. It is not within the purview of this paper to enter into the debate whether these songs are from Jewish sources, e.g., extinct collections of Hebrew Nursery rhymes[12] or borrowed from non-Jewish folk songs and adapted to fit the Seder service.[13] Whatever their source, they were inserted into the Haggadah and transformed into religious songs reflecting the themes of the Passover celebration of redemption and freedom.

The song, "Who Knows One," is a cumulative riddle designed to amuse and thus keep the children awake till the end of the service. It is in the form of questions and answers on the numbers one through thirteen. It is typical of a medieval madrigal of numbers. It has been traced by students of comparative literature to a popular and widespread counting song or counting out rhyme of fifteenth century Germany.[14]

One striking difference between the Jewish and non-Jewish counting songs is the fact that the European parallels stop at the number twelve while the Jewish continues to thirteen. To the Christians number thirteen was an unlucky number; to the Jews this superstition had no meaning. In fact the opposite was true. Thirteen is a popular number in the Jewish tradition, e.g., the Bar Mitzvah at age thirteen, The Thirteen Attributes of God, and the Thirteen Principles of Faith of Maimonides which was popularized in the song Yigdal, which is traditionally sung at the close of the daily evening service. Perhaps even more important was the fact that the number thirteen to the Jews was holy and represented good luck. It had a certain mystical value, being the numerical equivalent of the word Ehad, which symbolized the unity of God. The numerical value of Ehad, may have determined

the number of stanzas (13) in this song which concludes with the mention of thirteen divine qualities. The song begins with the number one referring to God's unity, and appropriately concludes with the thirteen attributes of God. The hero of both the Exodus story and "Ehad Mi Yodea" is God.

This song imparts by means of questions and answers the fundamental Jewish beliefs and traditions. A special emphasis is placed upon the principle that God is One, which recurs throughout the cumulative refrain following each of the series of thirteen verses.

Of all the hymns recited at the close of the Seder, the last one, "An Only Kid," is the most familiar, the most popular, the most puzzling, and the most controversial. It consists of ten stanzas written in the form of a nursery rhyme and phrased in Aramaic. It, like "Ehad Mi Yodea" is a cumulative riddle and rhyme, and its parallels as a type of nursery rhyme are familiar to children the world over. A vast literature has been written on whether these songs are imitative or originally Jewish. This problem can't be solved here; it involves a separate study in itself. What is important to this paper is the function and purpose which these two songs serve in relation to the Passover celebration.

The content of this song ("An Only Kid") is rather childish in conception and absolutely secular in subject, and at first it would seem to be rather out of place as a conclusion of a religious service. However, the allegorical interpretation and meaning attached to this rhyme by Jewish tradition has made this a fitting conclusion to the Passover Seder. It has become a symbolic tale of the course of Jewish history. The kid was Israel, purchased by God for the price of two tablets of the covenant. The song symbolizes the destruction of one Empire after another and Israel's ultimate survival. God is pictured as the omnipotent and benevolent ruler of the

world working out his plan of divine justice. The Holy One Blessed be He smote the angel of Death and saved Israel. The song concludes with an affirmation of faith that God will assuredly come to fulfill the principles of justice on earth and to redeem His children from the oppressor. The reference to the dominance of the Spirt of God over all forms a most fitting ending to the entire Seder service. From beginning to end the Seder remains a hymn and prayer of praise to the Redeemer God who intervenes in history to save his people.

In summarizing the significance and character of the additions made to the Haggadah during the Middle Ages one can readily see that they reflect the needs of the mood and temper of Jewish life. Persecutions motivated by religious, political, and economic reasons characterized much of Jewish life at this period. It was therefore only natural that additions such as the Elijah ceremony emphasizing the hope of Messianic redemption and the wish of God's pouring out his wrath on the nations, as well as songs stressing God's compassion, via redemption, salvation, and deliverance, be highlighted and appended to the ritual.

Another characteristic of the Haggadah which is a product of historical conditions is its appearance as a separate book during the Middle Ages. Originally the Haggadah made up a section within the prayer book. It is included in the prayer books of Rav Amram, Rav Saadia Gaon, and in the Mahzor Vitry. The latest of these three is the vitry, which was issued in 1208. Maimonides (1135-1204) also includes it as part of the materials contained in his "Yad HaHazakah" as a Nusac Haggadah, a version of the Haggadah.[14] It is in this same century that illustrated Haggadahs first appear. A Haggadah manuscript in the Mocatta Library in London pictures the matzah and bitter herbs. It also has appended to the text a series of vividly colored full-page illustrations of Genesis and Exodus which has executed for illuminated

Bibles.[15] It is at this same time that in Christian circles it became popular to commission private liturgical books for individuals. Previously only the church could afford to finance them. With the rise of cities and the creation of a new class of wealthy burghers, a new era in the creation of liturgical works began. It is quite likely that the commissioning of the Haggadahs by wealthy Jews was influenced by the example of their Christian contemporaries. The choice of the Seder was an appropriate text for several reasons. It was appealing theologically, psychologically, and artistically, and economically. It presented a synopsis of Jewish history, including selections from every period of history and type of Jewish literature. It also included the Jewish view of God's relationship to the world and to Israel. The theme of redemption and salvation was both inspiring and consoling. The text or ritual itself is short and not as costly to reproduce as longer selections from Jewish literature. The wide gamut of history and Jewish experience which it includes also made it appealing for purposes of art work and illustration. Thus one again sees another example of how the historical setting and living conditions have affected the development of the Haggadah.

Conclusion

The Haggadah serves as a mirror reflecting many aspects of Jewish life. The Seder ritual of the Haggadah provides a panoramic view of the wide wide spectrum of Jewish history. The Haggadah projects a picture which portrays the dynamic nature of Judaism as a response to history, to the challenges which it faced. The Haggadah is a microcosm of the living, changing, and constantly evolving thrust of Judaism. It demonstrates that Judaism never lived in a vacuum but always was affected by the world around it and was always able to work out a synthesis with these forces.

Chapter I

The Passover In The Biblical Period

1. See H. Schauss, Guide to Jewish Holy Days, New York, 1962, pp.38-56; Roland DeVaux, Ancient Israel, New York, 1961, pp. 484-492; E. G. Hirsch, "The Passover," Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. IX, pp.553-54.

2. DeVaux, p. 489.

3. Exodus 12:5.

4. Schauss, p. 291, footnote number 49.

5. Schauss, p. 42.

6. Schauss, p. 41.

7. DeVaux, p. 490.

8. DeVaux, p. 491.

9. DeVaux, p. 491.

10. See descriptions of Josiah's celebration of the Passover, II Kings 23:1-25, II Chronicles 35:1-19, and Deuteronomy 16:1-8.

11. DeVaux, p. 486.

12. DeVaux, p. 486.

13. See p. 485 for DeVaux's analysis of Deut. 16:1-8 and Exodus 13 and 34 explaining the merger of the two festivals.

14. See J. B. Segal, The Hebrew Passover, From Earliest Times to A.D. 70, London,, 1963, pp. 19-33 for a discussion of Jubilees and Philo in relation to the Passover.

15. See II Chronicles 35:1-18.

16. Babylonian Talmud 68a.

17. Schauss, p. 52; See article, "Passover Sacrifice," Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 556, for more detailed discussion of the ceremonies involved in the Passover sacrifice.

18. Segal, p. 259.

Chapter II
Pharisaic Judaism and the Passover Home Seder Company

1. For a more detailed analysis of the origins and development of the Pharisees, see Dr. Ellis Rivkin's "Judaism, A Religion of City Dwellers: The Internal City," mimeographed lecture, Weil Institute, Cincinnati, 1963. Cf. Dr. Solomon Zeitlines, The Rise and Fall of the Judean State, Philadelphia, 1962, pp. 175-202

2. For a discussion of the full impact of polis-living upon Judaism, see Ellis Rivkin's, "Judaism, A Religion of City Dwellers," pp. 1-21.

3. E. Rivkin, Ibid., p. 6.

4. For a discussion of the origin and development of the following institutions see the noted references in either of the above two cited sources; Zeitlin: maamad, p. 179, synagogue, pp. 139, 479, Bet Din Hagadol, p. 203; Rivkin, Bet Din Hagadol, p. 10-11, synagogue, pp. 15-16.

5. Rivkin, op. cit., p. 14.

6. David Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, London, 1956, p. 271.

7. S. Stein, The Influence of Symposia Literature on the Literary Form of the Pesah Haggadah," The Journal of Jewish Studies, VIII, Nos. 1, 2, 1957, pp. 14-15.

8. Stein, Ibid., p. 15.

9. E. Rivkin, op. cit., p. 10.

10. E. D. Goldschmidt, The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and History, Jerusalem, 1960, p. 52.

Chapter III

Origins of the Seder Meal

1. Plutarch, Quaestiones Conviviales, ed. T.E. Page et. al. Loeb Classical Library, p. 708D.

2. Plutarch, 686f.

3. The incidents referred to by Dr. Tolles are the following: libations, wreaths, incense, and paens. All of these are part of Greek secular feasts as well as religious ceremonial meals.

4. Delight Tolles, The Banquet-Libations of the Greeks, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1943, p. 38.

5. Athenaeous, Loeb Classical Library, p. 192b, and Stein, p. 26.

6. Athenaeous Deipnosophists, i:15e, also Stein, p. 26.

7. Tolles, P. 38.

8. Tolles, p. 18.

9. Tolles, quoting Plato, Protag. 347 c-d, "says that at drinking parties of uneducated people the noise of flutes is heard more often than that of their voices, but that at the symposia of the cultured conversation was the chief source of entertainment."

10. Tolles, p. 19.

11. Originally the Seder meal preceded the Haggadah telling of the Exodus story. See Chapter VI of this thesis for a discussion of why the order of the Seder meal was changed.

12. Pliny the Younger, Institutio Oratoria, M. Schuster, Ed. Leipzig 1952, p. 404, paragraph 44, quoted on p. 37 by Stein.

13. Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, iii, vii, 6.

14. Stein, p. 39.

15. Stein, p. 39.

16. Stein, p. 26.

17. Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, pp. iii, vii, 6f.

18. Joseph Hertz, Authoritzed Daily Prayer Book, New York, 1957, p. 416.

19. His sister was Queen Salome Alexander, the widow of King Jannai who reigned from 76-67 B.C.E.

20. Pesahim 118a.

21. Berakot 59b.

22. Palestinian Talmud, Berakot 1:8, f.3d.

23. See Greek In Jewish Palestine and Hellenism of Jewish Palestine, both by Saul Lieberman.

24. Saul Lieberman, Hellenism In Jewish Palestine, New York, 1962, p. 62.

25. Ibid., p. 78-79.

26. Max Seligsohn, "Notarikon," Jewish Encyclopedia, IX, p. 340.

27. Stein, op.cit., p. 39.

28. Stein, op. cit., p. 41.

29. Op. cit., Stein, p. 34.

30. See earlier section of this paper concerning fixed procedure of the Symposia banquets.

31. Lucian, Kronosolon, pp. 391ff. and p. 400.

32. Plutarch, iii:79, quoted by S. Stein, p. 18.

32a Stein, op. cit., p. 19.

33. Macrobius, Saturnalia, Book III, 18:1, Loeb Classical Library, ed., T.E. Page, et.al. Loeb Classical Library, quoted by Stein,

34. Plutarch, Quaestiones Convivales, ed. T.E. Page, et. al., Loeb Classical Library, pp. iv:1, iv:4, vi:3, vii:8.

35. Stein, op. cit. p. 20.

36. Philo, F. H. Colson, translator, Loeb Classical Library, quoted by Stein, p. 21.

36a E.D. Goldschmidt, The Passover Haggadah and Its History, Jerusalem, 1960, p. 10 and N.N. Glatzer, edit. The Passover Haggadah, New York, Chapter III - Part B. The Roman Banquet, p. 14.

37. Theodore Gaster, Festivals of the Jewish Year, New York, 1953, p. 44.

38. See Gordon Bahr, "The Meal in Tannaitic Literature" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Talmud, Hebrew Union College, 1962). This thesis contains a detailed analysis and comparison between the Graeco-Roman dining customs and banquets and their Jewish counterparts.

39. Babylonian Mishnah, Pesahim 10:2.

40. Cecil Roth, The Passover Haggadah, London, 1934, p.ix. He notes that in the Orient many centuries ago, wine was as common and as necessary a beverage as tea or coffee is today.

41. Babylonian Mishnah, Pesahim 10:3.

42. Palestinian Mishnah, Pesahim 37d.

43. Babylonia Mishnah, Pesahim 10:3.

44. See Bahr, op. cit., p. 25 and Babylonian Talmud Berakot 50.

45. See Bahr, op. cit. p. 25 and Mishnah Berakot 6:5. Bahr claims that the word, parperet, is a Greek derivative which has as its root meaning: to carry about, to carry around, and then comes to mean that which is carried around, or those foods which are carried around or passed around at the table. In Mishnah Berakot 6:5 the word, parperet appears three times: first with reference to the hors d'oeuvres, then to designate the meal itself, and finally with reference to the dessert. He thus concluded that parperet in texts dealing with meals is synonymous with the English word course. Cf. Eliezer Levi, Mishnah Mfureshet, Tel Aviv, 1953, Seder Moed, p. 286.

46. Krauss, Talmudische Archaologie, Leipzig, 1910, p. 39. Quoted by both G. Bahr, op. cit., p. 33 and Walter Blumenthal, "Origins and Significance of the Seder Ceremonies," unpublished prize essay, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, 1956, p. 8.

47. Amos 2:8,6:4; Esther 1:6,7, 7:8, Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 108a.

48. Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 37b.

49. Athenaeus iv:151a, quoted by Stein op. cit., p. 17, footnote number thirteen.

50. Stein, op. cit., p. 16.

Chapter IV
The Unique Jewish Character of the Seder

1. S. Stein, "The Influence of Symposia Literature on the Literary Form of the Pesah Haggadah," The Journal of Jewish Studies, VIII, Nos. 1, 2, 1957, p. 21.

2. G. Bahr, "The Meal In Tannaitic Literature," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation Dept. of Talmud, Hebrew Union College, 1962, p. 26.

3. I. Jacobson, "Seder Night explanations," Mayanot: Jewish Teachers Companion, Jerusalem, 1956, p. 70. Quoted from Mishibud Li'geula, by Mosad Harav Kook.

4. Theodor Gaster, Festivals of the Jewish Year, New York, 1953, p. 45.

5. Babylonian Mishnah, Pesahim 10:8.

6. C. Roth, Passover Haggadah, London, 1934, p. 44.

7. Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 70a top.

8. Babylonian Mishnah, Pesahim 10:7.

9. Solomon Zeitlin, "The Liturgy of the First Night of Passover," Jewish Quarterly Review, New Series, XXXVIII, 1947-48, p. 432.

Chapter V - The Seder As A Christian Festival: The New Seder

Part I - The Christian Reinterpretation of the Passover

1. Shalom Judah Fisher, "Shloshah Dvarim," Hatsfah Lhakhmat Yisrael, IX-X, 1925-26, p. 239.

2. David Daube, "The Earliest Structure of the Gospels," New Testament Studies, V, 1958-59, p. 182.

3. Ibid., p. 174-175.

4. Cf. Matthew 26:20-29, Luke 22:14-38, I Corinthians 11:23-28. The Revised Standard Version notes in a footnote that ancient authorities add after "This is my body," the phrases: 'which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'" Cf. Luke 22:19, footnote number J The Holy Bible, R.S.V., Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1952, p. 96.

5. Jakob J. Petuchowski, "Do This In Remembrance of Me," I Chron.11;24, Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXVI, Part IV, 1957, pp. 293-294.

6. Leo Baeck, Judaism and Christianity, Philadelphia, 1958, p. 147

6a One cannot conclusively prove that the meal known as the "Last Supper" was the Passover Seder meal, but many scholars have shown parallel between the two meals. For a detailed investigation of parallels between the Gospels and the Passover Haggadah see D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism.

7. S. Fisher, op. cit., p. 240.

8. Leviticus 25:55.

9. Exodus 15:16, D. Daube, New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 273.

10. For a more detailed discussion of the concept "A Change in Master," see D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, pp. 268-285, Chapter VI: Redemption.

Chapter V
Part II - Rabbinic Reaction to the Christian Reinterpretation of the Passover.
A. The Ordinance of Rabban Gamaliel

1. Rabban Gamaliel lived during the latter half of the first century C.E. and the first quarter of the second century. Dr. Sydney Hoening claims that this ordinance was introduced by R. Gamaliel II about 100C.E. The Haggadah of Passover, New York, 1949, p. 5.

2. E.D. Goldschmidt, The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and History, Jerusalem, 1960, pp. 51-52. Rabban Gamaliel II of Yavneh, who was nasi of the Sanhedrin from 80-117 C.E., is the author of this ordinance according to Goldschmidt and other scholars whom he cites.

   See I. Weiss, Dor Dor vvDorshav, Vol. II, p. 68 and H. J. Stern "The Passover Haggadah," unpublished Hebrew Union rabbinical thesis.

3. S. J. Fisher, op. cit., p. 240.

4. Ibid., p. 240.

5. See N.N. Glatzer, editor, The Passover Haggadah: With English Translation, Introduction, and Commentary Based on the commentaries of E.D. Goldschmidt, New York, 1953, p. 47.

6. Several of the traditional commentators note the use of the term, "Omer," and attach special significance to it. "Omer" is interpreted by them to mean that one must recite in prayer, in the form of a ritual explaining the meaning of the Exodus. See CF. Maimuni, Mishnah Torah, "Hamets U Matzah," Tsemah Duran is of the same opinion with reference to the emphasis on the word "omer." In his Haggadah he interprets it to mean one must recite in prayer.

7. The importance that Jewish tradition has attached to the ordinance of Rabban Gamaliel and the two sections which follow it, is evident from the Shulcan Arukh, the Code of Jewish Law "The Shulcah Arukh advises that he who conducts the Seder should, if necessary, translate this paragraph and also the three suceeding paragraphs, which stood by those who participate in the Seder, if they do not readily understand the Hebrew." Shlomo Kahn, editor, From Twilight To Dawn: The Traditional Pesah Haggadah, New York, 1960, p. 69.

8. S. Stein, "The Influence of Symposia Literature on the Literary Form of the Pesah Haggadah," The Journal of Jewish Studies, VIII, Nos. 1, 2, 1957, p. 23.

9. D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 271.

10. W. Bacher, "Rabban Gamaliel," Jewish Encyclopedia, V, 1904, p. 560.

11. Ibid., p. 561.

Chapter V
Part II - Rabbinic Reaction to the Christian Reinterpretation of the Passover
B. Polemical Midrashim

1. Eliezer Levi, Haggadah Shel Passover: Toldoteha uParushehah, The Passover Haggadah: Its History and Its Explanation, Tel Aviv, 1950, p. 16-17.

2. D. Daube, New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 166.

3. E. D. Goldschmidt, The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and Its History, Jerusalem, 1960, p. 70.

4. D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 187-188.

5. D. Daube, "The Earliest Structure of the Gospels," p. 176.

6. E. D. Goldschmidt, The Passover Haggadah, 1960, p. 28.

7. D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 326, See pp. 325-329 for a fuller discussion of his argument for his change in translation.

8. Ibid., p. 327.

9. Israel Abrahams, "Some Egyptian Fragments of Passover Haggadah," Jewish Quarterly Review, X, 1898, p. 49.

10. Ibid., p. 51

11. Ibid., p. 41, (Fragments II,III,VI,XII)

12. Abrahams, op. cit., p. 47, Note 1.

13. D. Daube, New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 326-327.

C. Changes which the Rabbis made in the Jewish Observance of the Passover.
1. The Omission of Moses From the Haggadah

14. The rabbinic treatment of Moses emphasizes his human qualities in order to dramatize and emphasize the unique character of the Theophany at Mt. Sinai. By emphasizing Moses' weaknesses and human frailities, the rabbis helped focus the attention upon God's perfection and greatness.

15. D. Daube, "The Earliest Structure of the Gospels," p. 200.

16. J. Petuchowski, "Do This In Remembrance of Me," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXVI, Part IV, 1957, p. 259.

17. Louis Finkelstein, "Introduction," Haggadah of Passover, editor, Maurice Samuel, New York, 1942, p. ii.

18. L. Finkelstein, "The Pre-Maccabean Documents in the Passover Haggadah," Harvard Theological Review, XXXV, January 1943, p. 329 Vol. XXXVI, No. 1

Chapter V

Part II - The Rabbinic Reaction to the Christian Reinterpretation of the Passover.
C. Changes which the Rabbis made in the Jewish Observance of the Passover.
2. The Change in The Order of the Seder Meal.

1. D. Daube, "The Earliest Structure of the Gospels," p. 178.

2. D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 193.

3. Ibid., p. 192.

4. D. Daube, "The Earliest Structure of the Gospels," p. 178.

5. N. N. Glatzer, The Passover Haggadah: With English Translation, and Commentary, New York, 1953, p. 6.

6. See the summary of the discussion and bibliography concerning the change in the order of the meal which is found in E. D. Goldschmidt's Passover Haggadah: Its Source and Its History, Jerusalem, 1960, p. 10, footnote number one.

7. D. Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, p. 194.

8. Ibid., p. 194.

9. Ibid., p. 193-194.

Chapter VI

The Seder Ritual in the Tannaitic Period

1. E. D. Goldschmidt, The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and Its History,

2. Exodus 13:8

3. N. N. Glatzer, editor, The Passover Haggadah With English Translation, Introduction, and Commentary, New York, 1953, p. 22.

4. Babylonia Talmud, Pesahim 115b.

5. E. D. Goldschmidt, op. cit., p. 10-11, Notes 3-6. He gives further evidence for his view that there are Geonic sources, as well as Rashi and Rambam who record that it was the custom of the father to recite the Mah nistanah, and that there is no record in these sources of the custom of the son reciting the mah nistanah, as questions.

6. Rambam requires that the questions be recited by the master of the Seder. See Goldschmidt, 1960 Haggadah for a fuller discussion of the variations allowed by tradition, pp. 10-11, notes 3-7.

6a The earliest records of reciting the mah nistanah, as questions are found in the writings of R. Moses of Coucy and R. Eliezer b. Joel Halevi who both lived in the thirteenth century and followed the Ashkenazic ritual. The practice of having the youngest person ask the questions is primarily an Ashkenazic custom. There are, however, some Ashkenazim who do not follow this practice. See Goldschmidt, Passover Haggadah, 1960, edition p. 10-11, footnotes 7-9.

7. See Babylonian Mishnah, Berakot 6:6: "If men sit (apart) to eat, each should say the Benediction (the Blessing after themeal, the Bircat Hamazon to himself; if they reclined around (a table together) one should say the Benediction for all." Cf. Tosefta, Berakot 5:5.

8. Eliezer Levi, Haggadah Shel Pesah: Toldoteha uPerusheha, The Passover Haggadah: Its History and Its Explanation, Tel Aviv, 1950, p. 17.

8a Eliezer Levi, Mishneh Mfureshet, Tel Aviv, 1950, Seder Moed, p. 208.

9. Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 109a.

10. Talmud Yerushalmi, 37c.

10a. Eliezer Levi, Passover Haggadah, op. cit., p. 18.

11. Both the afikomen (matzah) hunt and the nursery rhymes which were sung after the meal were added primarily for the children's benefit.

Chapter VI
The Seder Ritual in the Tannaitic Period

B. "BEgin With Shame and End With Praise

1. Deut. 26:5.

2. Deut. 26: 8ff.

3. Deut. 26:5.

4. Deut. 28:9. This explanation is the traditional interpretation and is given by Eliezer Levi, in his Misneh Mfureshet, Seder Moed, p. 288.

Chapter VII
Development of the Seder in the Middle Ages 1000-1600

1. J. R. Marcus, The Jew In The Medieval World, Phildadelphia, 1961, p. 127.

2. Sydney Hoenig, The Passover Haggadah, New York, 1950, p. 11.

3. E. D. Goldschmidt, The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and History, Jerusalem, 1960, p. 63.

4. M. Kasher, Haggadah Shlemah, New York, 1961, p. 179-180.

5. E. D. Goldschmidt, op. cit., p. 64.

6. J. R. Marcus, op. cit., p. 247.

7. Ibid., p. 251.

8. L. Landshuth, Maggid Mereshith or Haggadah Vortage, Berlin, 1856, p. 18. Landshurth quotes from Sefer Shibbole Halleket. This passage is quoted by H. J. Stern, "Passover Haggadah," unpublished rabbinical theses, Hebrew Union College, 1922, p. 55.

9. Philip Birnbaum, The Passover Haggadah, New York, 1953, p. 87.

10. E. D. Goldschmidt, op. cit., p. 97, Cf. Birnbaum, Ibid., p. 87, H. J. Stern, "The Passover Haggadah," unpublished rabbinical thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1922, p. 59.

11. E. D. Goldschmidt, op. cit., p. 97.

12. Israel Abrahams, Festival Studies, Philadelphia, 1906, p. 104.

13. George A. Kohut, "Some Passover Rhymes and Their Parallels," The Jewish Exponent, April-June, 1903, pp. 1-12. Cf. G.A. Kohut, "Revue des Etudes Juives," XXXI, 1889, p. 240, this reference is quoted by H. J. Stern in thesis, p. 71.

14. T. Gaster, Festivals of the Jewish Year, New York, 1953, p. 46.

14a It appears after his "Hametz" section.

15. L. Landshuth, op. cit., p. 26, See Gotthard Deuttsch, "The Haggadah," Jewish Encylopedia, New York, 1904, VI, p. 142.

16. N. N. Glatzer, The Passover Haggadah: With English Translation, Introduction, and Commentary, New York, 1953, p. 13.

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