

ON THE STRATA IN THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH IN THE MISHNAH

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The Haggadah found in *MPesahim* (10, 4-5) consists of three linked units in the following order: (1) the son's questions about the special foods eaten at the Seder, which according to manuscripts number three; (2) the homily ('My father was a fugitive Aramean'; 3) the explanations by Rabban Gamliel for the Paschal lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs. Since the third unit answers the questions raised in the first, the question must be raised: How did the middle unit, unconnected to the Passover foods, come to interrupt the two units bound together by their content?

The explanations for this anomaly appear insufficient. Hence, to approach a better solution, this article clarifies the source of the section 'My father was a fugitive Aramean' from the parallel source in *MBikkurim* (3, 6), which follows the view of R. Judah. Hence, the section of 'My father was a fugitive Aramean' in *Pesahim* dates from the end of the Tannaitic period and was included after the questions and answers concerning the Passover foods had been formulated during the generation of Yavneh. Placement of the homily, 'My father was a fugitive Aramean', was dictated by the principle of 'he commences with disgrace and concludes with praise'. Since Rabban Gamliel's explanations conclude with the praise of redemption as expressed in the unleavened bread, one cannot again commence with disgrace.

This arrangement of Rabban Gamliel's explanations – Paschal sacrifice, bitter herbs, unleavened bread (*pesach, merorim, matzah*) – follows the textual witnesses, but contradicts the order found at the beginning of his words, *Pesach, Matzah, Merrorim*, suggesting that Rabban Gamliel determined the essence of the explanations, but the introduction was transferred from the Haggadah to the Mishnah. The Haggadah expanded upon Rabban Gamliel's words, generating the necessity for a précis, which was arranged in natural order: Paschal lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs. However, Rabban Gamliel's explanations preceded the Hallel. Accordingly, the bitter herbs representing slavery could not be the last item explained. Rather the last point had to be the unleavened bread of redemption.

The article also elucidates the controversy between the first Tanna and Rabban Gamliel concerning what answers should be given to the son's questions.