

## Dam va'eish v'timrot ashan – The Haggadah's Blueprint for Redemption By Natalie Gerber

Contributed by [Wexner LA15](#)

Source:



In this section of the Haggadah, the Rabbis have taken the verses Deuteronomy 26:5-11 and through interpolation have delved further into the meaning of the text itself. Most of the proof-texts that the Rabbis used to better understand these verses in Deuteronomy and expound upon the Exodus story come from the Book of Exodus itself. However, at the end of the last verse, when it comes to the word "*u'vimoftim*" (and with wonders) the Book of Joel is used as its proof text. Let's quickly look at the last verse from Deuteronomy in its entirety. The verse says "The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and outstretched arm, with great awe, miraculous signs and with wonders (*u'vimoftim*)." The verse in Deuteronomy 26:8 is clearly referring to the miraculous way that God took the Jewish people out of Israel. If you look at the proof-texts that the Rabbis used to further explain what is meant by God taking the Jewish people out with a mighty hand, etc. they draw from the Book of Exodus. And yet, for the last word "*u'vimoftim*" (and with wonders) they turn to the Book of Joel. In the quoted text, Joel is describing the end of the days just before the Messiah will arrive. "Before the great and terrible day of the Lords comes, I will set **wonders** in the sky and on the earth...blood, fire and pillars of smoke." (Joel 3:3).

At my father's seder table he always speaks about how the Haggadah and the seder night is a blueprint for what we need to do to bring the next redemption, the next Exodus from Egypt. He always tells the children that for generations we have been reading the Haggadah and trying to understand its every word so that we can try and figure out what we need to do to experience the same redemption that the Jews of Egypt did. The Rabbis quoting from Joel as he speaks about a future redemption seems to be yet another place in the Haggadah where the Rabbis are saying to us – "Pay attention!" This is not just about the story in Egypt. We aren't just quoting from the Book of Exodus about the specific exodus story that happened then. We are looking toward the future as well. The Haggadah that we use today was compiled after the Second Temple was destroyed and the focus of Pesach was not around the Pascal offering in the Temple, but rather, it was to be used in personal homes as a guide for the night. The Rabbis were making a distinctly important statement in the texts they chose to include. Yes, we may not have the Temple right now, and it may be easy to become despondent thinking that the Exodus happened a long time ago. But do not lose faith. This is as much our own personal story. If we can figure out the "secret sauce" then we too will be able to experience the wonders of God and see redemption in our lifetime. One need to just think about the Redemption with a capital R that Joel is speaking about. Each of us in our lifetime may have our own Egypt moments, our own moments when we seem trapped in our own suffering. It is in those moments when we each have to make a choice: will we lose hope or will we continue to plow forward and do everything in our control to get to the point of redemption. The path may not be easy, it may not be linear, and it may take tremendous time, but we can focus on the verse "The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and outstretched arm, with great awe, miraculous signs and with wonders." As the

Rabbis hinted in their choice of words from Joel, we too will be able to come out of our own Egypt moments.