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God's order, as communicated through his beloved prophet, Moses, is placed in Exodus 13:8. Moses says, "You shall tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.'"

Given the clear mandate in the Torah to tell the story of the Exodus, the structure of the book that enables us to do so should be clear enough. The story of the Exodus— about how the Jews were enslaved in Egypt for two hundred years before God, working with Moses, liberated us— is described in the biblical book of Exodus. One would presume, then, that the obligation to tell the story of the Exodus would be best discharged through a synopsis of Exodus. And, sure, the Haggadah does draw from Exodus. But it also draws from Genesis, Deuteronomy, Ezekiel, Joshua, Chronicles, Joel, Psalms, stories from a Seder held by five rabbis, songs from throughout Jewish history, Jewish prayer— and an invitation to use all those subjects as the basis to interpret and discuss contemporary concerns and questions.

We tell the story of the Exodus, therefore, through a book that essentially curates the Greatest Hits of Jewish Thought with sources long before and after the great event itself. This alone constitutes a radical interpretation of the Exodus. Constructing it this way, the authors of the Haggadah were saying that the Exodus was not an event that began and ended but one that previous Jewish experience was spent preparing for and all subsequent Jewish experience is still living.