

The Ten Plagues

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Source:



As we recite each plague, we dip a finger in our wineglass and spill out one drop of wine, thereby acknowledging that our own joy is diminished by the memory of Egyptian suffering.

When Moses first approached Pharaoh to request that the Israelites be set free, Pharaoh refused, saying that he did not recognize the God of the Jewish people. God responded by sending a series of ten plagues. After each of these, Moses again asked

Pharaoh to free the people, and each time Pharaoh refused—or agreed, only for God to

harden his heart. Finally, after the tenth and worst plague - the killing of the first-born

sons of Egypt- Pharaoh let the Israelites go.

Even as we are grateful for our freedom, we are pained by the knowledge that our freedom came from the suffering of the Egyptian people. The tradition reminds us that

whenever people are oppressed, the oppressors suffer as well.

Frogs | tzfardeiya | צַפְרָדַיָּע

Lice | kinim | כִּנִּים

Beasts | arov | עֲרוֹב

Cattle disease | dever | דְּבַר

Boils | sh'chin | שְׁחִין

Hail | barad | בָּרָד

Locusts | arbeh | אַרְבֶּה

Darkness | choshech | חֹשֶׁךְ

Death of the Firstborn | makat b'chorot | מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת

Contemporary Plagues

Please take this time to think of a modern plague with the people at your table. There are note cards on the table to write it down and each table's will be read aloud.

We remember the suffering of the Egyptians during each of the ten plagues. At this time we acknowledge the modern issues that continue to plague our society and cause suffering. As we remember these plagues, we remember those who continue to suffer.