

# 10 Plagues

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Source: Jewish Voice for Peace Haggadah 2015

**The Ten Plagues** (Adapted from *Jewish Voice For Peace Haggadah 2015* and *Love+ Justice In Times of War Haggadah*)

The idea of justice embodied in our story is direct and unquestioned—suffering for suffering. The people of Mitzrayim suffered because of their own leader, who is in part set-up by an angry G-d eager to demonstrate his own superiority. In our story, all of this was necessary for freedom.

Jews have been troubled by this for generations, and so, before we drink to our liberation, we mark how the suffering diminishes our joy by taking a drop of wine out of our cup of joy for each of the ten plagues visited on the people of Mitzrayim. We are about to recite the ten plagues. As we call out the words, we remove ten drops from our overflowing cups with our fingers.

We will not partake of our seder feast until we undergo this symbolic purification, because our freedom was bought with the suffering of others. As we packed our bags that last night in Egypt, the darkness was pierced with screams. May the next sea-opening not also be a drowning; may our singing never again be their wailing. We shall all be free, or none of us shall be free because our liberations are intertwined.

*For each plague, flick a drop of wine onto the plate with your finger as we recite the following together:*

Dam...Blood

Tzfardeyah...Frogs

Kinim...Lice

Arov...Wild Beasts

Dever...Blight

Shichin...Boils

Barad...Hail

Arbeh...Locusts

Choshech...Endless Night

Makat B'chorot...Slaying of the First-Born

The Pharaoh of the Passover story is not just a cruel king who happened to live in a certain country. The Pharaoh that our ancestors pictured, each and every year, for century after century was for them every tyrant, every cruel and heartless ruler who ever enslaved the people of his or another country. And this is why Passover means the emancipation of all people in the world from the tyranny of kings, oppressors and tyrants. The first emancipation was only a foreshadowing of all the emancipations to follow, and a reminder that the time will come when right will conquer might, and all people will live in trust and peace.

Now, we commemorate some of the plagues that ravage our present-day societies. Everyone may call out current plagues and spill drops.

