

The Ten Plagues

Contributed by [Jewish Guy](#)

Source: Velveteen Rabbi

Midrash teaches that, while watching the Egyptians succumb to the ten plagues, the angels broke into songs of jubilation. God rebuked them, saying "My creatures are perishing, and you sing praises?"

As we recite each plague, we spill a drop of wine—symbol of joy—from our cups. Our joy in our liberation will always be tarnished by the pain visited upon the Egyptians.

דַּם. Dam Blood

צַפְרֵדִּיָּם. Tzfarde'ah Frogs

כִּנִּים. Kinim Lice

עֲרוּב. Arov Insect swarms

דֶּבֶר. Dever Cattle plague

שִׁחִין. Sh'chin Boils

בָּרָד. Barad Hail

אַרְבֵּה. Arbeh Locusts

חֹשֶׁךְ. Choshech Darkness

מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת: Makat B'chorot Death of the First-Born

Today's plagues may be less obvious or dramatic, but are no less insidious...and responsibility for their existence lies on our shoulders. They include:

Apathy in the face of evil

Brutal torture of the helpless

Cruel mockery of the old and the weak

Despair of human goodness

Envy of the joy of others

Falsehood and deception corroding our faith

Greedy theft of earth's resources

Hatred of learning and culture

Instigation of war and aggression

Justice delayed, justice denied, justice mocked...

Shekhinah, soften our hearts and the hearts of our enemies. Help us to dream new paths to freedom, so that the next sea-opening is not also a drowning; so that our singing is never again their wailing. So that our freedom leaves no one orphaned, childless, gasping for air.