

A Practice of Compassion

Contributed by [Muslim-Jewish Solidarity Committee](#)

Source:

Jewish tradition teaches us to rejoice at our liberation *and* to recognize that our liberation caused the pain and suffering of others. The rabbis taught that when the children of Israel sang songs of praise to God as the Egyptians drowned in the sea, the angels wished to join in these songs and were stopped by God: "These are my creatures who are drowning in the sea! For this you would sing songs of praise?". Thus we too **lessen** our joy at Passover time at the mention of these plagues, for there can be no rejoicing at the death or suffering of human beings, even our enemies.

We pour out a drop of wine (Grape juice) with a finger for each of the plagues as we recite them:

Blood | dam | דָּם

Frogs | tzfardeiya | צְפַרְדֵּיָא

Lice | kinim | כִּנִּים

Beasts | arov | עֲרוֹב

Cattle disease | dever | דְּבַר

Boils | sh'chin | שְׁחִין

Hail | barad | בָּרָד

Locusts | arbeh | אֲרֵבָה

Darkness | choshech | חֹשֶׁךְ

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

We consider: What are the plagues we face today? What is the suffering that at this moment we want to hold as we recognize both the joy and sorrow of the unfolding process of liberation?