



FOR THOUSANDS OF JEWISH ELDERS IN UKRAINE, THE WILDERNESS IS NOT A DISTANT STORY. IT IS THE DAILY REALITY OF A WAR NOW ENTERING ITS FOURTH YEAR.

THE TEN PLAGUES FACING ELDERS IN UKRAINE TODAY

At the Passover Seder, we remove drops of wine as we name the Ten Plagues, reminding ourselves that suffering anywhere diminishes us all.

Today, many elders in Ukraine face their own set of “plagues” brought by war:

DARKNESS – Long blackouts leave homes without light for hours or days.

COLD – Heating systems fail during infrastructure attacks, leaving apartments freezing in winter.

UNSAFE WATER – Bombed infrastructure can make access to clean drinking water difficult.

ISOLATION – Many elders live alone, with family scattered or gone.

LONELINESS – Days can pass without human contact.

ILLNESS – Chronic health conditions worsen when medical care is interrupted.

INFLATION – Rising prices make basic necessities increasingly unaffordable.

FEAR – The constant buzz of drones and air raid sirens creates relentless anxiety.

DEPRESSION – The emotional toll of prolonged war weighs heavily on the elderly.

UNCERTAINTY – Not knowing what tomorrow will bring.

This Passover, as we remember the plagues of the Exodus, we are reminded that our tradition calls on us not only to remember suffering — but to respond to it.