



Miriam's Timbrel

Topic

Passover

Grade Level(s)

All

Goals for the Lesson/Activity

Students will

- Be able to sing a song of praise
- Be able to explain that *B'nei Yisrael* (Children of Israel) sang to God after crossing *Yam Suf* (the Reed Sea)
- Reflect on ways to praise God and show gratitude

Materials needed

- Small children's tambourines (available online)
- Markers
- Assorted colorful ribbons
- Circular cut-outs of *Shemot* 15:20
- Blank circular cut-outs (for student extension opportunities)

Background for Teachers

When *B'nei Yisrael* left Egypt, Pharaoh followed them with his army. God protected *B'nei Yisrael* as they reached *Yam Suf* (the Sea of Reeds, better known as the Red Sea). God split the *Yam Suf* and *B'nei Yisrael* crossed dry and unscathed. When the Egyptians followed *B'nei Yisrael* through the split waters, God put the waters back together and drowned the Egyptian army. At this point, *B'nei Yisrael* saw that God had completed the defeat of the Egyptians and that they were truly free. *B'nei Yisrael* broke into song (the Song of the Sea). At the end of the song, the Torah teaches us that Miriam took a timbrel and instructed the other women to join her. Together, they sang and danced in praise and gratitude to God.

Description of Activities

1. Teach students a song of praise for God. You can find some examples here:



Miriam's Timbrel

- Miriam's Song by Debbie Friedman (great images of Miriam and her Timbrel for students to watch while listening to the music)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZdSEsZ8bMo>
 - Shirat Ha'yam by Pizmon
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_8U9zXzoPs
 - Shirat Ha'yam by Haim Lachmish
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZtjiwtrGM>
2. Explain to students that, after *B'nei Yisrael* crossed *Yam Suf*, they sang to God. Part of this celebration included Miriam gathering the rest of the women to play timbrels, dance, and sing to God. [See Background for Teachers for further information.]
 3. Ask students what other ways they can praise God. Take a few suggestions.
 4. Share with the students that they will be making festive timbrels.
 5. Glue circular cut-outs of *Shemot* 15:20 into the middle of a small child's tambourine. Invite students to illuminate their tambourines with artistic interpretations of the *pasuk* (verse). They may also decorate the timbrels with ribbons.
 6. When students have finished making their tambourine, as a class sing the song that you taught at the beginning of the lesson and encourage students to dance and play their timbrels while they sing.

Differentiation Options

Knowing that students learn in a variety of ways and modalities, the following options are provided to adjust the above lesson to meet the unique needs of your learners.

For learners who need more assistance

- Teach the song as a *niggun* (a song without words) and discuss the power of melody.

For learners who need extension opportunities

- Ask students to find, learn, and teach a song of praise to the class.