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A.M.E. Discipline
Lesson 1  September 5, 2021

Moses and Miriam Praise God

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 14:1–15:21
Focus Scripture: Exodus 15:11–21

Key Verse: “In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed; you guided them by your strength to your holy abode.”
Exodus 15:13

Exodus 15:11-21 (NRSV)

11 “Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders? 12 You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them. 13 In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed; you guided them by your strength to your holy abode. 14 The peoples heard, they trembled; pangs seized the inhabitants of Philistia. 15 Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; trembling seized the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan melted away. 16 Terror and dread fell upon them; by the might of your arm, they became still as a stone until your people, O Lord, passed by, until the people whom you acquired passed by. 17 You brought them in and planted them on the mountain of your own possession, the place, O Lord, that you made your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, that your hands have established. 18 The Lord will reign forever and ever.” 19 When the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his chariot drivers went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them; but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. 20 Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. 21 And Miriam sang to them: “Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.”
WORDS TO KNOW

• Majestic – Showing great dignity and grandeur.
• Splendor – The condition of being magnificent, impressive, or brilliant.
• Steadfast – Firm and unwavering in purpose, loyalty, or resolve.
• Abode – Home.
• Triumphed – To overcome.
• Philistia – Pronounced: fih-LIHS-tih-uh.
• Edom – Pronounced: EE-duhm.
• Moab – Pronounced: MO-ab.

INTRODUCTION

Music plays an important part in our lives. We use music to lift our mood, to celebrate special life events, to express our feelings to another person, to heal us from broken relationships, to bring unity, to praise God, to calm us, as therapy, and to dance. Can you think of any other ways we use music? No matter where we are in the world, you are going to hear music. Music has the power to transform the atmosphere we find ourselves in. This includes during church worship services. Praise and worship songs give glory to God, which can usher in the power of the Holy Spirit to move amongst the people.

For the next four weeks we will be examining examples of God’s people who offered praise to him. In today’s lesson, we shall explore why and how Moses and Miriam praised God.

What types of music do you listen to? How does music influence your attitude, thoughts, and actions?
BIBLE STORY

The Israelites were slaves for 430 years. The king of Egypt, Pharaoh, oppressed them cruelly. They prayed and asked God to deliver them. God raised up a leader named Moses (Exo. 3–4). Moses was used by God to rescue the Israelites. However, after they escaped from Egypt, God hardened Pharaoh’s heart. He pursued them along with six hundred men on chariots plus many others. Pharaoh’s army approached the Israelites, who were estimated to be two million in number, at the Red Sea. God had Moses raise his staff and all the people crossed over the Red Sea on dry ground. All of Pharaoh’s army perished when they pursued the Israelites into the Red Sea (14:26-31).

Chapter 15, verses 1 through 18, is the song of Moses and Miriam. It is a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to celebrate God’s spectacular victory over Pharaoh and his army. The whole Israelite community praised God together. The hymn of praise details God’s mighty acts in delivering and rescuing them from slavery. God’s name, “the Lord,” appears ten times. Verse 11 declares that the Lord, who tolerates no rivals, has defeated all the gods of Egypt and their worshippers. It also is used in various statements of belief today regarding the nature of God.

In verses 14 and 15, the hymn mentions Philistia, Edom, Moab, and Canaan. These are places the Israelites would have to pass by on the way to the Promised Land leaving Mount Sinai. The Israelites did not have to worry about being attacked by their enemies. Their enemies had heard about God’s powerful intervention on Israel’s behalf. The Israelites were redeemed by God, who caused their enemies to be still while they passed by on the way to the Promised Land (15:17). Verse 19 summarizes God’s deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea. Moses’ song is considered by some as the oldest song ever recorded.

Miriam, who was Aaron and Moses’ sister, used a tambourine while dancing along with the other women who joined her
in praising God (15:20). Miriam also sang as they celebrated what God had done. They celebrated with great joy. Such a celebration was common after a victory in battle. Music played an important role in Israel’s worship and celebrations.

*Does music have a purpose or message for the listeners? What role does music have in your church’s worship services and other special occasions? How would it feel to have no music during the worship services?*

**LIFE APPLICATION**

Moses and Miriam’s song is a wonderful harmony of praise to God. Can you re-imagine the scriptures using contemporary language to form a new poem or song? Take a sheet of paper and write down first why you are thankful to God. Then use it as a part of the main poem or song. You will use this poem or song as a personal inspiration to praise God regularly.

In the AME Church, music is an important part of worship. The worship service gives us many opportunities to praise and worship God through music. The last stanza of our *Call to Worship* states, “O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth, sing praises!” Read that twice and then dissect each sentence’s meaning. What is it urging us to do? Does “joyful noise” mean only sing and/or play the piano? What musical instrument did
Miriam use as she celebrated God’s faithfulness in song?

**SUMMARY**

The Israelites sang as an expression of love and thanks, and it was a creative way to pass down oral traditions. (What are oral traditions?) People compose songs and poems for different celebrations. Songs and poems can express thankfulness to God and joy for personal victories. What hymn or song reflects your relationship with God? This week share the hymn or song on social media and tell others why you like it. It is the perfect opportunity to witness about the faithfulness of God.

**CLOSING DEVOTIONS**

**Prayer:** God, we will celebrate your faithfulness with praise and thanksgiving. God, you are worthy to be praised. Amen.

**Closing Hymn:** “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (AME Church Hymnal #84)
David and all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim.

They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark.

David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

David danced before the Lord with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod.

So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

They brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord.

When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts,

and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.
WORDS TO KNOW

• **Ark of God** – The chest Moses placed the two stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments in.

• **Cherubim** – An angel depicted as a chubby-faced child with wings which symbolized God’s presence in the midst of the people.

• **Ephod** – The official garment of the high priest, which was later worn by the ordinary priests.

• **Baale-judah** – Pronounced: BAY-uhle-DZHOU-duh.

• **Abinadab** – Pronounced: uh-BIHN-uh-dab.

• **Uzzah** – Pronounced: yoo-ZA-uh.

• **Ahio** – Pronounced: uh-HI-o.

• **Michal** – Pronounced: MAI-kul.

INTRODUCTION

When we are invited to birthday parties or weddings, we expect that there will be food, fun, and dancing. It is so nice to celebrate special occasions. And every culture celebrates differently. Celebrations can be diverse in form and include various actions. This does not mean it is not acceptable, it is just the way they celebrate is unlike what you do. We still must be prepared to try to understand others’ culture and traditions. We should just join the celebration and enjoy ourselves.

In today’s lesson, King David expressed his joy and celebration of God by leading God’s people in music and dance.

*How can differences between people lead to jealousy? What can be done to resolve differences?*
David was anointed as king of all Israel (5:1-5). David and his army conquered Jerusalem and defeated the Philistines in battle (5:6-25). But David was still concerned because the Ark of God (Covenant) was not in Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant (Google for description) represents the presence of Yahweh. It was usually kept in the tabernacle. Since the Philistines had captured the Ark and destroyed Shiloh, the Ark had no permanent resting place (1 Sam. 4-7). David decided to take thirty thousand men with him to transport the Ark on a new cart to Jerusalem from the home of Abinadab (6:3). It had been at Abinadab’s house for 20 years. Abinadab’s sons, Uzzah and Ahio, carried the Ark but Ahio decided to move in front of it. David and all the people rejoiced with dancing, singing, and instruments before the Lord (6:5). But David had not consulted the Lord about moving the Ark of the Covenant so his attempt failed (6:6-11).

Only the Levites (priests) were commissioned to transport (touch) the Ark (Exo. 25:12-14; Num. 4:15; 1 Chron. 13:9, 15:13-15). David realized the error of his ways, and placed the Ark of the Covenant in Obed-Edom’s house because he was a Levite. Obed-Edom’s household was blessed the three months the Ark was present. This encouraged David to go transport it to Jerusalem according to God’s commands. David wore a linen ephod, the priest’s apron, because it was a religious celebration. David and the Israelites rejoiced with shouts, dancing, and blasting the trumpet in celebration of the occasion (6:14-15). The Ark was placed in a tent David had set up in Jerusalem and he (and a priest) offered sacrifices to God. Afterwards, David blessed all the people spiritually and physically (food) (6:18-19).

*How did David and the people celebrate God’s presence? What musical instruments were used?*
LIFE APPLICATION

Identify ways we can celebrate and worship God on Sundays as well as during the week.

______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

Read the following statements and decide if they are True (T) or False (F). Put a (T) or (F) as your response.

1. Cherubim are demons that harm people (6:2). ___
2. The Ark of God was removed from Abinadab’s house (6:3). ___
3. Uzzah was struck dead by God for touching the Ark of God (6:7). ___
4. Obed-edom moved the Ark of God out of his house (6:12). ___
5. Michal celebrated and worshipped God with David (6:16). ___
6. After offering sacrifices to God, David blessed the people and gave them food to take home (6:18-19). ___
SUMMARY

David and the Israelites used different instruments while rejoicing and praising God. They also sang and danced. This week, if possible, speak with your pastor about having a praise and worship service. It can incorporate those who play instruments, singers, praise dancers, artists, spoken word, etc. Those who want to participate, from your church or other churches, invite them to come and share their talent. The worship service will reflect we are one in Christ, with various gifts, who want to praise God for his love, faithfulness, and grace.

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Prayer: God, we’re grateful for you creating such a diverse world with people that honor and celebrate you with their gifts. Help us to appreciate each other and uplift your name in the world. Amen.

Closing Hymn: “Let All the People Praise Thee” (AME Church Hymnal #58)
They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” Jesus stood still and said, “Call him here.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart; get up, he is calling you.” So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him, “My teacher, let me see again.” Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has made you well.” Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.
WORDS TO KNOW

- **Mercy** – To demonstrate compassion or kindness.
- **Sternly** – To speak to someone harshly and strictly.
- **Cloak** – An outer garment.
- **Faith** – To believe and trust in God.
- **Nazareth** – Pronounced: NAZ-uh-rehth.
- **Jericho** – Pronounced: DZHEHR-ih-ko.
- **Bartimaeus** – Pronounced: bar-tih-MEE-uhs.
- **Timaeus** – Pronounced: tai-MEE-uhs.

INTRODUCTION

While in school, there are many decisions to make about your future. Your grades, extra-curricular activities, and behavior will greatly influence your future endeavors. You have to determine whether you will attend college, trade school, enter the military, or take a gap year. These decisions often entail much thought and research. It can be stressful when people continually ask, “What are your future plans?” You may not have an answer. But through the passing of time along with the support and care of your parents/guardians, you can make a decision. It is so wonderful to have someone who is supportive and helpful during challenging times. They make it easier since we can always depend on them being there when we need them most.

In today’s lesson, we explore how Jesus’ demonstrated compassion towards Bartimaeus, who by faith was healed.

*Who do you depend on for support? How does it feel to be supported by others?*
The Gospel of Mark was written by John Mark. He was not one of the twelve disciples. Mark was Paul’s companion on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:13). Mark wanted to present the person, work, and teachings of Jesus. Mark records more miracles than does any other Gospel.

Chapter ten opens with Jesus teaching about marriage and divorce. He held up God’s ideal for marriage and told his disciples to live by it (10:6-12). Jesus then blesses the little children. He also had an encounter with a rich man who desired to know how to obtain eternal life (10:17-22). Jesus commanded him to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor, then follow him. The rich man grieves as he left knowing he would never inherit eternal life because of his love of money. On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus predicts his death for the third time (10:32-34). James and John selfishly asked Jesus to seat them in honored places in his kingdom (10:35-40).

As Jesus, the disciples, and the crowds were leaving Jericho, they encountered Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, on the side of the road (10:46). It was a common for beggars to sit on the road pilgrims used to travel to Jerusalem. When the blind beggar heard Jesus of Nazareth, he began to holler. He needed Jesus’ attention. Jesus was his only hope for healing. Bartimaeus called out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me” (10:47). “Son of David” is a Messianic title (Isa. 11:1-3; Jer. 23:5-6). Bartimaeus believed Jesus was the Messiah.

Many people commanded Bartimaeus to be quiet. But that did not deter Bartimaeus. He hollered louder. It worked in getting Jesus’ attention. When we face struggles, we have to persistently seek Jesus no matter what others say or think. Jesus told them to tell Bartimaeus to come to him (6:49). Bartimaeus threw his cloak off and jumped up. Jesus asked Bartimaeus what he desired for him to do. Bartimaeus asked the teacher...
(rabbI) to restore his sight (6:51). jesuS told him, “go; your faith has maDe you well.” Instantaneously, bartimaeus was able to see. faith makes the impossible possible. he praised God and followed Jesus from that moment on (6:52; Luke 18:35-43).

Why do we have to be persistent in our faith when others try to deter us? How did bartimaeus’ faith help him overcome his challenges? Do you recall an occasion God helped you through a challenging time?

lIfe aPplicatiOn

reaDing the scripture text helps us to understand bartimaeus’ condition and the attitudes of the crowd. we will role-play a similar situation but instead of a blind person, the class will decide who the person is that needs help. the crowd is going to be role-played by church members on their way inside the church. Jesus is going to be role-played by the pastor who is running late for worship service and meets a person in the church parking lot. Volunteers are needed for the parts.

The disciples witnessed Jesus ministering to the people, but that does not mean they believed he was the Son of David and the promised Messiah. Some people can be spiritually blind. Even though they witnessed the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies in the life and ministry of Jesus, they still did not believe he was the Messiah. Even today, many do not believe Jesus is the Son of God who came to save the world from sin.
Bartimaeus was blind but had heard about Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of David. Jesus’ ministry of healing, delivering, and teaching the people was well-known. And since Bartimaeus sat begging outside on the road most people took as they traveled to Jerusalem, he may have heard about Jesus through others’ conversations as they passed by. Nevertheless, he had faith the Son of David could heal him. Because of his faith, Bartimaeus was both physically and spiritually transformed.

Compare and contrast the ways physical brokenness is healed and the ways spiritual brokenness is healed.

Physical brokenness: __________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Spiritual brokenness:
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

SUMMARY

Blind Bartimaeus was an outcast of society. He had to rely on the goodness of others to survive. So when he heard Jesus was present, Bartimaeus sought Jesus out. He refused to let others hinder him from reaching out to Jesus and being made whole. His faith was instrumental in his transformation. Bartimaeus offered praise to God and immediately followed Jesus. People respond to life challenges and victories differently. We can lend a helping hand to those in need. We also can encourage ourselves and others by giving honor and glory to God at all times.

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Prayer: God, we need you to intervene in the lives of those
who are spiritually and physically broken. We have faith that you can make them whole and victorious. Please help (say names silently). Amen.

**Closing Hymn:** “When the Storms of Life Are Raging (Stand by Me)” (AME Church Hymnal #420)
Believers Praise God

Lesson Scripture: Acts 2:32-33, 37-47
Focus Scripture: Acts 2:32-33, 37-47

Key Verse: They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:42

Acts 2:32-33, 37-47 NRSV

32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.
33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear.

37-47

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?”
38 Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
39 For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.”
40 And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”
41 So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.
42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
43 Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles.
44 All who believed were together and had all things in common;
45 they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.
46 Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts,
47 praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.
WORDS TO KNOW

- **Exalt** – To lift up; to elevate.
- **Repent** – To feel regret about your sins or past actions and ask God to forgive you and commit to change.
- **Exhort** – An appeal.
- **Devote** – To show great love and commitment over a long period of time.
- **Awe** – Reverential fear.

INTRODUCTION

What communities do you belong to? Our communities play a vital part in our spiritual, emotional, and personal growth. Each community you engage with serves a purpose in your life. There are some communities that are more influential than others, such as your faith, neighborhood, sports, and school communities. Your life is impacted by those you affiliate with everyday.

In today’s lesson, we explore how the Holy Spirit personally transforms us and impacts our community of faith.

How many hours in a day do you devote to the various communities you interact with? The community that you spend the highest number of hours with reflects your priorities and full commitment to it.

BIBLE STORY

be his witnesses (1:8). On the day of Pentecost, held fifty days after Passover, the Holy Spirit came like a violent wind from heaven and filled all those in the Upper Room (2:1-4). They felt a blazing fire on their tongues which allowed them to speak in other languages, as the Holy Spirit enabled them.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit with fire was the fulfillment of John the Baptist’s words (Lk. 3:16), as well as the prophet Joel’s words about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29). Peter, the disciple who denied Jesus, had been restored by Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness to others. Peter was now known as an apostle, which meant “messenger” or “missionary.” Peter shared a sermon with the Jews gathered, declaring the messiahship and lordship of Christ (2:14-47). He urged the people to repent and get baptized.

Because of the presence of the Holy Spirit and the boldness of Peter, three thousand people were converted and became recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit (2:37-41). It brought power and unity to the newly formed community of believers. The new believers in the Christian church devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching and worship services in the temple, and prayed together regularly. They celebrated communion (“breaking of bread”) in remembrance of Jesus. Some Christians voluntarily shared with others who did not have the basic living essentials (2:44-45). They were committed to coming together, sharing meals in their homes with others. The Christians were jubilant and praised God. The church sustained growth from the increased numbers of those who were saved.

After the people were saved, what steps did they take to grow in their faith? How have you grown in your faith?

LIFE APPLICATION

Read the scriptures and fill-in the blanks and then summarize what each one means to you.
1. This Jesus God ______ up, and of that all of us are _________ (2:32).

2. Peter said to them, “_______, and be _______ every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the ___ ______” (2:38).

3. So those who welcomed his _______ were baptized, and that day about ______ ________ persons were added (2:41).

4. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ ________ and fellowship, to the breaking of _____ and the _______ (2:42).

5. _______ God and having the goodwill of all the people (2:47a).

Peter preached so powerfully that three thousand people accepted Jesus Christ and were baptized. What do you consider powerful and inspirational when listening to a sermon? What do you need to hear in a sermon that you can relate to and share with others?
As a part of the Christian community, we are obligated by God to help others whenever possible. For a moment, think about those in need of help or encouragement. Create a note of encouragement for them. After you give the person the note, ask if you can pray for them. If possible, you can give them a small gift with the note.

**SUMMARY**

In our church community, we can learn, pray, worship, and share with one another. We can actively engage in our local church’s witness and mission. Partner with the missionaries to join any outreach projects they are engaged in. The Holy Spirit will empower us as we seek to show others the love of God in action.

**CLOSING DEVOTIONS**

**Prayer:** Jesus, thank you for saving us from sin. Holy Spirit, empower each of us to do the will of God. Amen.

**Closing Hymn:** “There’s a Sweet, Sweet Spirit (Sweet, Sweet Spirit)” (AME Church Hymnal #196)