



## Miriam's Cup

### Topic

Miriam's Cup

### Grade Level(s)

All

### Goals for the Lesson/Activity

#### **Students will**

- Gain familiarity with the customs and meaning of *Kos Miriam* (Miriam's Cup)
- Create a beautiful, functional, ritual object for their Seder table

### Materials needed

- 1 glass footed goblet per student (Dollar Store, IKEA and big box stores are all good sources)
- blue beads, all different shades (representing water)
- small bells (evocative of Miriam's timbrel)
- craft wire- about 18 inches per person
- Gold and silver paint pens

### Background for Teachers

Miriam was the sister of Moses. We first saw her in the Torah when she placed Moses into the waters of the Nile and hid in the reeds to make sure that he was taken by someone who would take care of him. Later, Miriam is associated with the well that followed *B'nei Yisrael* (the Children of Israel) as they traveled through the desert. According to the Rabbis, the well that traveled through the desert did so because of the merit of Miriam (Tractate Ta'anit 9a, Rashi on Bemidbar 20:2).

Miriam's association with water has led to an innovation on the Seder table, Miriam's Cup. This cup, filled with water, is meant to remind Seder participants of the important role that women played in the Exodus from Egypt and in *B'nei Yisrael's* travels through the desert.

There is no set ritual associated with Miriam's Cup, but there are particular moments during the Seder that have become more common for its use. Some people fill the cup at the beginning of the *maggid* section of the Seder. Others use the cup during times of song to remind participants of how Miriam led the Israelite women in song after crossing the Reed Sea (Shemot 15:20-21). Still others combine Miriam's Cup with Elijah's Cup.



## **Miriam's Cup**

### **Description of Activities**

1. To begin, string and secure a bell on the end of each 18-inch piece of wire. The bell will serve as a knot, enabling the children to bead easily and without incident. For your youngest participants, buy pony beads or any other beads that are fairly large and have big holes.
2. Once they have strung beads and bells on the wire, twist the wire around the top bead to secure.
3. Then wrap the beaded wire around the glass stem to decorate the cup.
4. With older children you may want to have gold paint pens available so that they can write "Miriam's Cup" on the glass in Hebrew or English. One tip: if you wish the students to write on the glass in Hebrew, use the accompanying download. Have kids tape it inside the glass with the Hebrew visible through the glass so that they can use it as a pattern (it helps students feel secure.) In case of mistakes, have cotton balls and rubbing alcohol available to remove the paint pen.