

# Go Down Moses

Moderately Slow

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music. The first system begins with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a dynamic marking of *mf*. It features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. A first ending bracket labeled '1' spans the first two measures, and a second ending bracket labeled '2' spans the last two measures. A pedaling instruction 'Ped.' with a triangle symbol is placed below the second ending. The second system continues the melody and bass line, with a *simile* marking below the second ending. The third system starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and includes a *poco ritard.* instruction. The number '531' is printed below the first measure. The fourth system begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* and an *a tempo* marking, followed by a *ritard.* instruction. The score concludes with a double bar line.

When Israel was in Egypt's land, Let my people go, Oppressed so hard they could not stand, Let my people go. Go down, Moses, 'Way down in Egypt's land, Tell ol' Pharoah, let my people go.

# Go Down Moses

1 N.C. (Am) (E7) (Am) E7 Am N.C.

E7 Am

1 Dm Am

E7 Am

This song was a rallying anthem for escaped slaves before the American Civil War, and published after 1862 as “Oh! Let My People Go.” The phrase “Go Down Moses” describes events from Exodus in the Old Testament in which God commands Moses to demand the release of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. This slow and strong melody is arranged as a call-and-response. This style from African music practices allowed for improvisation, a most important element of the music. The melody is heard alone and then combined with right hand chords Am and E7 and left hand chord roots as well as block chords Am and Dm. The right hand requires three and the left hand two different positions.

## Preparatory Hand Positions:

RH 1 3 4 5

RH 1 2 4 5

LH 5 3 1  
below mid.C

RH/ LH 1 2 3 4 5  
A positions above/below mid. C