

THE SONG OF THE SEA / שִׁירַת הַיָּם

exhibitors: András Böröcz, Blanka Győri, Péter Hecker, Balázs Kicsiny, Flóra Pálhegyi, Sándor Rácmolnár, Gábor Roskó, Zsófia Szemző, Uri Asaf, Ákos Wechter, Dénes Wechter

This our fifth year annual exhibition commemorating Passover, however, due to the spring pandemic lockdown, this year, we had to postpone the show until the fall. This year's new focus is the part where the Pharaoh, scared of the tenth plague inflicted upon all Egyptian firstborn children, decides to let the Jews go from his land. The Jews are already far away in the wilderness when the Pharaoh changes his mind and decides to pursue them with his chariots. However, the Lord intervenes once again. "And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." (Moses II, Chapter 14)

Moses recites a paean to the Lord for their miraculous escape and the end of their enemies – tradition calls this the Song of the Sea - and the people rejoice with him. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances." (Moses II, chapter 15)

In addition to the Torah, the Talmud, which records the oral teachings, also mentions this event – however, the Sanhedrin tractate offers a glimpse of a scene taking place in a higher sphere. "At that time the ministering angels desired to recite a song before the Holy One, Blessed be He. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to them: My handiwork, i.e., the Egyptians, are drowning in the sea, and you are reciting a song before Me?" (Talmud, Sanhedrin tractate 39b)

Meaning that while we on earth may express our emotions freely flow and rejoice, up above the angels should demonstrate self-restraint. The question is, are the ethical issues appearing at divine heights relevant to us humans as well: may we rejoice upon the death of our enemies if they are also creatures of God, like us?