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## Workshop Of Frans Francken The Younger (1581-1642), The Fall Of The Egyptians In The Red Sea

3 800 EUR



Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 83

Height : 58

### Description

Workshop of Frans Francken the Younger (Antwerp, 1581-1642) The Fall of the Egyptians in the Red Sea Oil on wood, 58 x 83 cm - with frame, 74 x 98 cm The work examined, a refined oil on panel from the workshop of Frans Francken the Younger, captures with narrative vivacity one of the most dramatic and iconic moments of the Old Testament: the fall of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. The scene is built on an effective dynamic and chromatic contrast, where the left part of the painting is dominated by the tumult of dark waters swirling over the Pharaoh's army, overwhelming horses, golden chariots and soldiers in a whirlpool of white foam. On the contrary, on the right, the safe shore is populated by the people of Israel, led by Moses who, with his staff still outstretched, seals the fulfillment of

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the divine miracle. The figures of the survivors, including priests in ceremonial robes and women praying alongside precious vessels and chests, express a mixture of amazement and gratitude, as a long procession of figures winds upward along the hilly path, symbolizing the freedom finally achieved. The biblical episode, taken from the book of Exodus, narrates the flight of the Jews from slavery in Egypt; pursued by Pharaoh's troops, the fugitives found refuge thanks to the intervention of God who, at the hands of Moses, divided the waters to allow their passage, then fatally closed them over their pursuers. Frans Francken the Younger, a leading figure of the famous dynasty of Antwerp painters, was educated by his father Frans Francken the Elder and became the most prolific and innovative representative of the family. Specializing in small and medium-format paintings, so-called "cabinet paintings," Francken was renowned for his extraordinary ability to miniature small figures and for introducing new subjects into Flemish art, often collaborating with landscape or architectural specialists. His production was not aimed at mere aesthetic delight, since behind his elaborate mythological, historical and biblical representations there was almost always a profound moralizing message, intended to instruct the observer on the consequences of sin or on the power of divine providence. Francken's studio was an enormously active family business, where children, sons-in-law, and apprentices made replicas and variations of his most successful subjects to meet the demands of the art market of the time. An emblematic example of the critical success of this specific theme is offered by the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, which houses the painting *Crossing the Red Sea*, an autograph version by Frans Francken the Younger, a work that shares the compositional approach and attention to precious details with the panel described here, confirming how the master's original prototype had become a reference model for his entire workshop. Another

painting by Francken with the same subject and a different compositional solution is *The Israelites after Crossing the Red Sea with Joseph's body in his tomb*, now in the collections of the English National Trust. Over time, Francken's style evolved from a dense chromatic impasto towards thinner glazes and free brushstrokes, but always retained that ability to transform the sacred tale into a genre scene rich in narrative detail, where the epic of the miracle merges with the meticulous care for everyday objects and exotic costumes, typical of Flemish Baroque sensibility.