

PARSHAT BO  
EXODUS 10:1-13:16  
HAFTARAH JEREMIAH 46:14-28  
8 SHIVAT 5784/18 JANUARY 2024



*Years of Fear*  
Oil on canvass by Roberto Matta

TO ENTER THE EXPANSE

1. ...thick darkness descended upon all the land of Egypt for three days. People could not see one another, and for three days no one could get up from where he was....There was no house where there was not someone dead. (Exodus 11:22-23; 12:30)
2. [יֵאמֶר יְיָ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בֹּא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה (Exodus 10:1)

Why does it say, “Come to Pharaoh”? It should have said, “Go to Pharaoh.” God brought Moses into a chamber within a chamber, to the supernal and mighty serpent from which many levels evolve which Moses feared to approach himself... When the blessed Holy One saw that Moses was afraid, the blessed Holy One waged war against him [Pharaoh]. (Zohar 2:34a)

3. “In you must go.”  
“What’s in there?”  
“Only what you take with you.”  
(Yoda and Luke at the Dagobah cave, *The Empire Strikes Back*)

4. Everything in this painting is psychological...How to picture the battlefield, not the physical one, but the one inside of us: fear against courage, criticism, and hate, suspicion and trust? (Roberto Matta)
5. It is said that before entering the sea  
a river trembles with fear.

She looks back at the path she has traveled,  
from the peaks of the mountains,  
the long winding road crossing forests and villages.

And in front of her,  
she sees an ocean so vast,  
that to enter  
there seems nothing more than to disappear forever.

But there is no other way.  
The river cannot go back.

Nobody can go back.  
To go back is impossible in existence.

The river needs to take the risk  
of entering the ocean  
because only then will fear disappear,  
because that's where the river will know  
it's not about disappearing into the ocean,  
but of becoming the ocean.

("Fear," Khalil Gibran)

6. Resistance is in each of us. We resist by exercising our creativity. That is true poetry – when we seek new comparisons, other ways of looking and conceiving of things. (Roberto Matta)