MOSES AND THE BRAZEN SERPENT (MOISÉS Y LA SERPIENTE DE BRONCE)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. RELIGIOUS

SERIE: SCENES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT (PAINTING, CA. 1770 - 1780) (1/4)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1770 - 1780
UBICACIÓN	Unknown Collection
DIMENSIONES	Desconocidas
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	10 Jan 2010 / 09 Apr 2026
INVENTARIO	1107 -

HISTORIA

This work, along with the others in the series, belonged to the collection of the Duke and Duchess of Aveyro, in Madrid. Its current whereabouts are unknown.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

The story of Moses and the brass serpent tells of how the people of Israel, weary and starving during their

long walk to the Promised Land, spoke out against God and his prophet. The Lord sent serpents, which bit and killed many of the Hebrews. Sorry for their actions, the people asked Moses for forgiveness, and God ordered him to fashion a serpent and to fix it on a pole, so that whenever one of the people was bitten by a snake, they would be saved simply by looking at this brass animal (Numbers 21:4-9).

The painting represents this biblical scene in a broad, open space although not quite in a desert, since there are some trees at the edges of the composition. Moses, dressed in a tunic, stands in the centre, pointing towards the pole with the image of the serpent, while some Hebrews who have been bitten are rolling on the floor in pain and turning to look at the brass serpent.

This painting and its companion pieces appeared in a publication by Gudiol and are only known through photographs, which makes their correct attribution more difficult. The simplified shapes and the brushstrokes effects of this work are not incongruous with Goya's technique, although they also indicate that these works could in fact be sketches.

The use of empty space suggests that this painting may have been made during the first years that Goya spent in Madrid, with the naturalism of the scenery recalling the backgrounds that appear in the artist's earliest tapestry cartoons.

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ENLACES EXTERNOS