The Wailing Wall By Salvador Dali

Reference:

MPD-007651
Description
Plate number 3 of the serie "Aliyah the rebirth of Israel". signed lower right.

"Aliyah, The Rebirth of Israel," are the series of paintings captures the spirit of the Jews from the first days of the exile and for nearly 2,000 years in the diaspora until their final return to their cherished soil of Israel. Embracing a wide spectrum of moods, from gaiety to deep drama to stark tragedy, it culminates in the ultimate triumph of justice and the joyous restoration of the nation.

An epic history of the return of the Jewish people to their homeland — expressed in 25 bold, dramatic, yet sensitive drawings, -this is a plate number 3 of - sketches and water-color paintings by the surrealist master, Salvador Dali.

About this plate:

The "Temple of Solomon" was built on a rounded hilltop in approximately 950 B.C.E. It lasted almost 400 years, after which, it destroyed by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, in 586 B.C.E. The Temple, however, was rebuilt as the "Second Temple" 70 years later, after the return of the Jews from Babylon. When Herod became king in the first century C.E., he decided to engage in several major building projects, one of which was a new temple mount and a new temple. So, he built a very large platform that covered the top of the hill, forming what is now known as the "Temple Mount." The platform is very large, as aerial photographs show. It was one of the major building projects of the Roman Empire, itself known for its spectacular building program.

On this platform, Herod built his own (Second) Temple, which was destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E. Nothing remains of that Temple, not even the walls. What does remain are the retaining walls of the platform that Herod built. They are the only remnant of the time when the Temple still stood. The Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque are later Islamic buildings.

The Holy of Holies in the Temple was the place where God was said to reside; it was closest to the western retaining wall. This retaining wall, then, as the physical remnant of Herod's (Second) Temple that was closest to the Holy of Holies and, hence, to God's real Presence among the people, became the place of pilgrimage to which all Jews went to lament the destruction of the Temple and the earlier Jewish state, and to mourn the exile of the Jewish people. Known as "The Western Wall," "The Wailing Wall," or simply as "The Wall" or "The Kotel," it is the place where, even today, one feels closest to God's physical Presence among us. One prays, and one brings one's deepest prayers on slips of paper and inserts them into the Wall, at this holy site.

The Wall is actually quite long and only a small part of it is visible today, even after the Israelis created a large plaza in front of it following the liberation of Jerusalem in 1967. Today, one can take a tour of the tunnels under the city and follow the Wall along a good part of its course.

Interestingly, Dali's representation of the Wailing Wall shows it in its form before the liberation of Jerusalem and the construction of the current plaza. Note the very narrow area in front of the Wall itself. This would seem to be good evidence that Dali had not visited the site itself and did the work from a photograph, as he did for other works of art. Note, too, that men and women are praying together, as was the custom before 1967.

Read more about

Main Image: 

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- Height: 26

- Width: 19 1/2

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