

Excavations at the ancient synagogue of Gush Halav

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Hike of the Month

The box is surmounted by a triangle within which appears a scallop-shaped, ribbed decoration often called a conch shell sometimes accompanied by a hanging lamp. In 564, the synagogue was rebuilt.

Jish

Further evidence for a Torah Shrine in ancient synagogues is found in the many ancient artistic depictions of such a structure in the Roman-Byzantine world—on mosaics, gold glass, frescoes, sarcophagi, and coins. The state of conservation of the sites that were exposed in an excavation: at the two sites that are currently being exposed conservation measures are being implemented concurrent with the excavation; however, at 16 sites, constituting about half of the synagogues that were exposed over the years, no conservation work has ever been done! The Nabratein Torah Ark features two rampant lions flanking a gabled roof.

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Along the outside of the western wall we found part of a stairway that did not, however, date to the original construction of the synagogue. Although no physical remains of Torah shrines were found in synagogues with mosaic floors, the large fragment of a shrine found at the Nabratein synagogue fits this imagery. Although a third century synagogue Khirbet Shema near Nabratein and the famous third century synagogue of Dura Europos in Syria were both built on a broadhouse plan, with the wall of orientation on the long, Jerusalem-facing wall, nevertheless, scholars still persisted in the view that the basilica rather than the broadhouse was the earlier synagogue type.

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But other interpretations of the mosaic abound.

Gush Halav (Jish) Stream Hike

Siting Meroth could locate this hitherto unidentified northern border of Israel. Another, much larger, mikveh north of the synagogue served the general population.

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