

Mount Nebo

For other places with the same name, see Mount Nebo (disambiguation).

Mount Nebo (Arabic: جبل نيبو *Jabal Nibū*; Hebrew:



Mount Nebo seen from the east

הַר נְבוֹ *Har Nevo*) is an elevated ridge in Jordan, approximately 817 metres (2,680 ft) above sea level, mentioned in the Hebrew Bible as the place where Moses was granted a view of the Promised Land. The view from the summit provides a panorama of the Holy Land and, to the north, a more limited one of the valley of the River Jordan. The West Bank city of Jericho is usually visible from the summit, as is Jerusalem on a very clear day.

1 Religious significance

According to the final chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses ascended Mount Nebo to view the Land of Israel, which God had said he would not enter, and to die there; he was buried in an unknown valley location in Moab.^[1]

According to Christian tradition, Moses was buried on the mountain, although his place of burial is not specified.(Deuteronomy 34:6) Some Islamic traditions also stated the same,^[2] although there is a grave of Moses located at Maqam El-Nabi Musa, 11 km (6.8 mi) south of Jericho and 20 km (12 mi) east of Jerusalem in the Judean wilderness.^[3] Scholars continue to dispute whether the mountain currently known as Nebo is the same as the mountain referred to in Deuteronomy.

According to 2 Maccabees, (2:4–7), the prophet Jeremiah hid the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant in a cave there.

On March 20, 2000, Pope John Paul II visited the site

during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land.^[4] During his visit he planted an olive tree beside the Byzantine chapel as a symbol of peace.^[5] Pope Benedict XVI visited the site in 2009, gave a speech, and looked out from the top of the mountain in the direction of Jerusalem.^[6]

A serpentine cross sculpture (the Brazen Serpent Monument) atop Mount Nebo was created by Italian artist Giovanni Fantoni. It is symbolic of the bronze serpent created by Moses in the wilderness (Numbers 21:4–9) and the cross upon which Jesus was crucified (John 3:14).

2 Archaeology

On the highest point of the mountain, Syagha,^[7] the remains of a Byzantine church and monastery were discovered in 1933.^[8] The church was first constructed in the second half of the 4th century to commemorate the place of Moses' death. The church design follows a typical basilica pattern. It was enlarged in the late fifth century A.D. and rebuilt in A.D. 597. The church is first mentioned in an account of a pilgrimage made by a lady Aetheria in A.D. 394. Six tombs have been found hollowed from the natural rock beneath the mosaic-covered floor of the church. In the modern chapel presbytery, built to protect the site and provide worship space, remnants of mosaic floors from different periods can be seen. The earliest of these is a panel with a braided cross presently placed on the east end of the south wall.

Since 2007, the building on Mount Nebo that houses the Byzantine mosaics has been closed for renovation, and continues to be closed as of April 2015. Two mosaics can be seen in a covered tent, but the other mosaics cannot be seen by the public until renovations are complete.

3 Gallery

- Stone at the entrance of the mount.
- Stone marking the entrance to historic Mount Nebo
- Plaque showing the distance from Mount Nebo to various locations
- Structure protecting excavated remains of a church
- Ornate floor mosaics
- Baptismal Font