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YIZHAR HIRSCHFELD: The Early Byzantine Monastery at Khirbet ed-Deir in the Judean Desert: The Excavations in 1981-1987

Khirbet ed-Deir is one of the most isolated and remote monastic sites of the Judean Desert. The well-preserved remains of the monastery, founded in the late fifth or early sixth century CE, are concealed in a rocky gorge some 30 km south of Jerusalem. The preserved architectural remains, described in detail in the first chapter, include a stable, a gatehouse and hospice, a baptistery, a large cave church, a burial recess and chapel, a kitchen and refectory, living quarters, an elaborate water supply system and agricultural terraces. Subsequent chapters present all of the finds made at the site: the four Greek inscriptions, rich mosaic pavements, marble furnishings and fittings, fresco fragments, pottery vessels, glass and coins. The concluding chapter comprises a general discussion, placing the results of the excavations in the context of literary sources on monasticism in the Judean Desert and the remains of other monasteries in the region.

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