



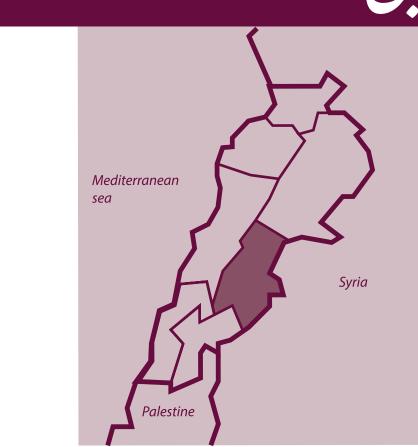


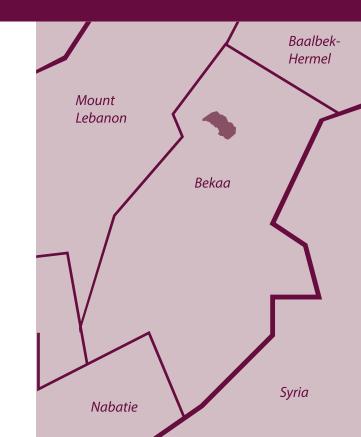




THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE

INTRODUCTION Niha is a small village located in the Beqaa Valley. It is situated 65 Km East of the capital Beirut, 8 Km north of Zahle, 2 Km north East of the city of Ablah and 29 Km away from the touristic city of Baalbek. At the West of the village, Ferzol; rich in agricultural lands and archaeological sites as well as Nabi Ayla where the prophet Elia is buried. At the South of the village "Ablah", where the most important military base in the Beqaa is found. On the East side, Tammine; characterized by an important concentration of the Shiia community as well as a big concentration of commercial activities and finally on the north side, Sannine; the western Lebanese mountain chain. The only access to the village is a secondary road that turns around itself, creating a quite intimate, private and calm atmosphere for the village away from any noise pollution or vehicular traffic.

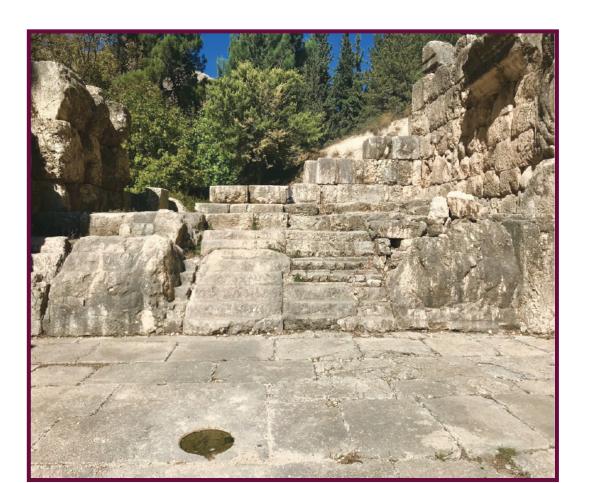








Approximate Plan

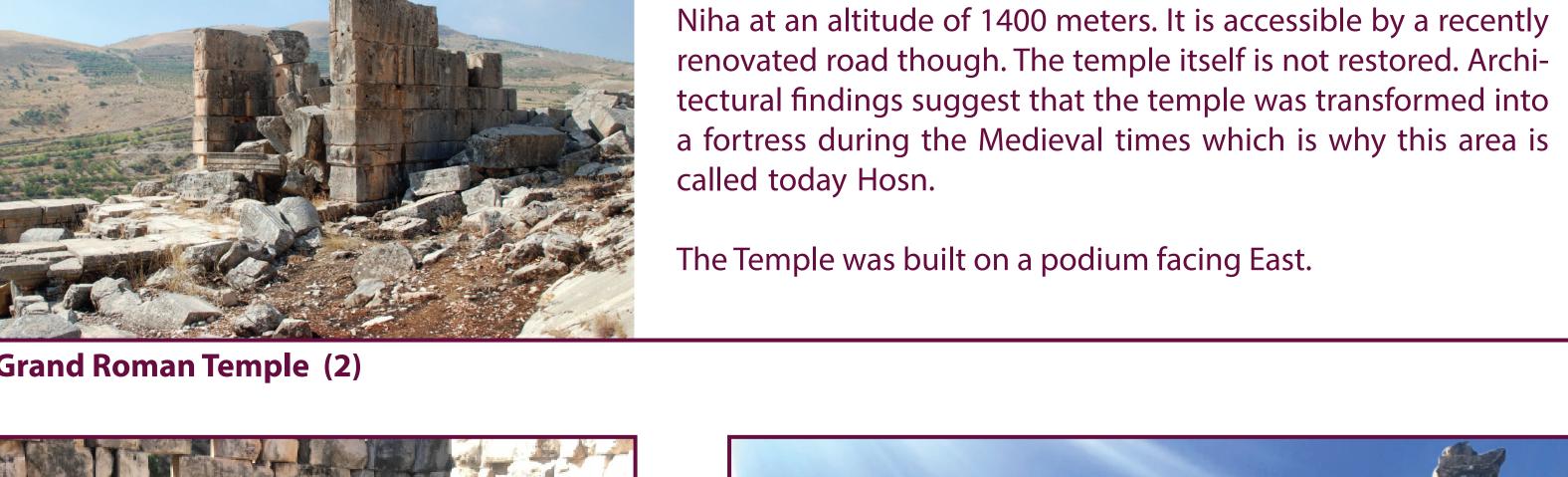


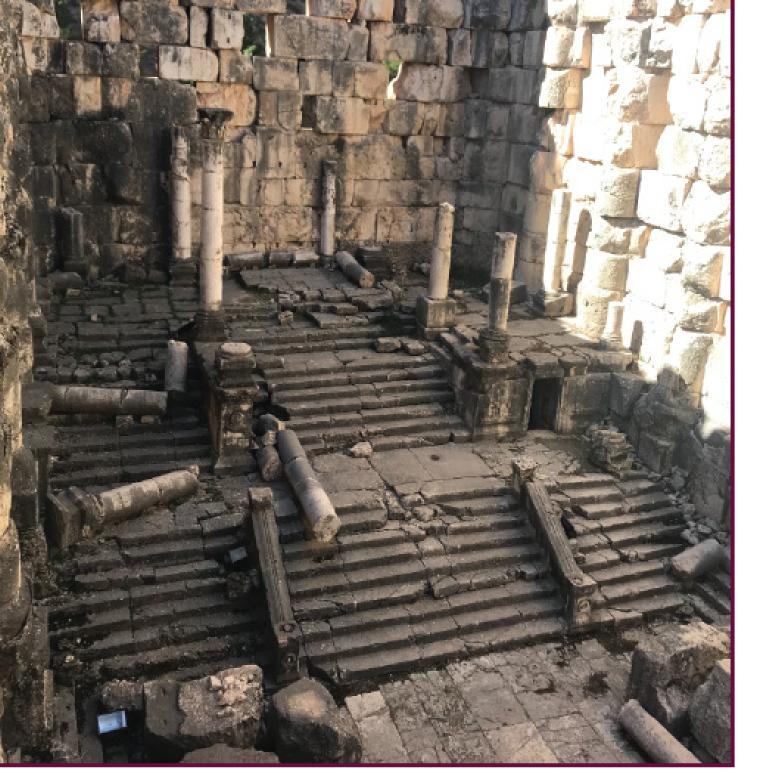
The Rule of 9 Steps

The Upper Grand Temple is built 2 Km away from the village of

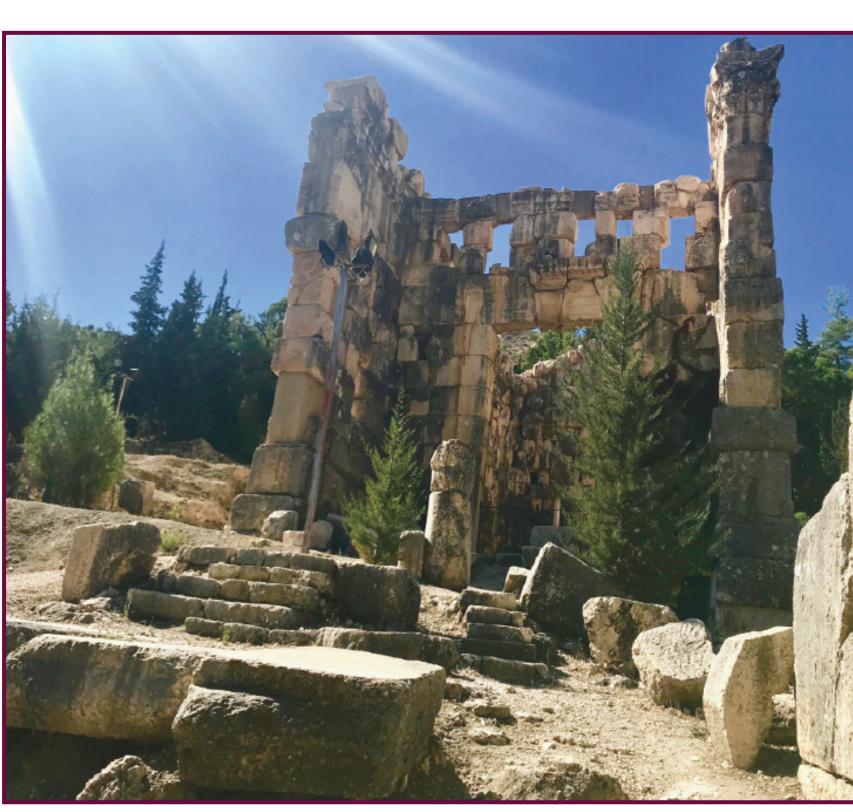


Upper Grand Roman Temple (2)





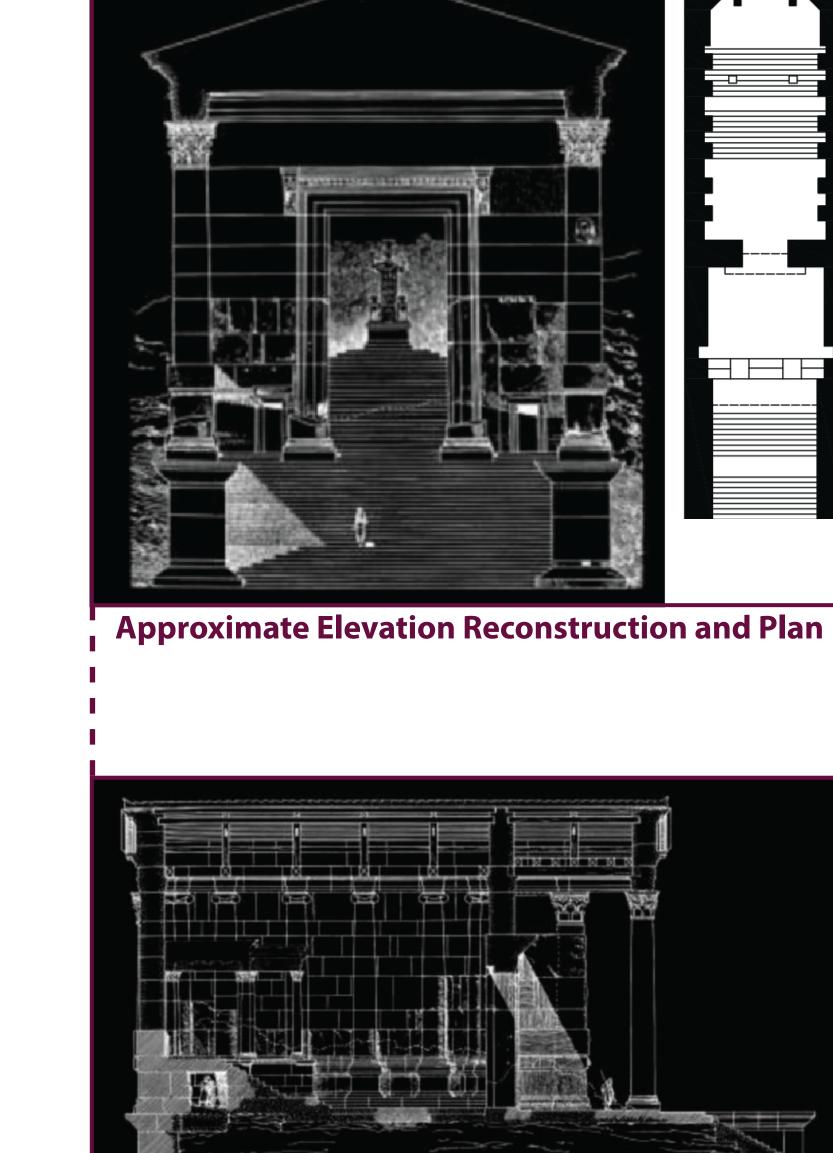
The Big Roman Temple (1)



The Big Roman Temple



As the name indicates, the fountain was founded during the Roman Empire time. Today, it is the one and only access to potable water for citizens of Niha who fill their bottles of water from this fountain instead of a water supplier.



Approximate Section Reconstruction

Map of Niha Legend Greek - Roman Period 333 B.C. – 300 A.D. Ottoman Period 1516 - 1917 A.D. French Mandate 1920 - 1943 A.D. Lebanese State 1943 - Present Roman Traces Beqaa Highway

Ferzol

Nabi Ayla

Ablah

Roman Stone Quarry (3)

Sannine

The Romans excavated and found stones used for the construction of their temples from that area. Today it is inaccessible by car since no road actually leads there. Forming a big network with the Small, Big and Upper Grand temples.

Tammine

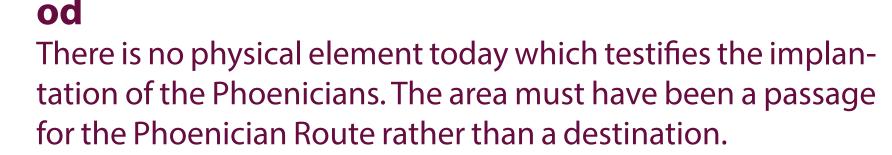
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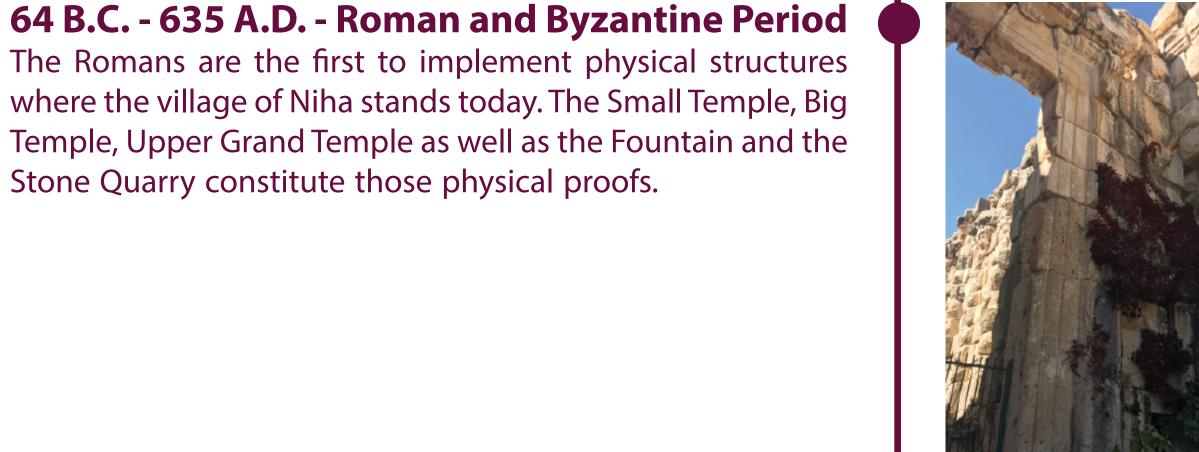
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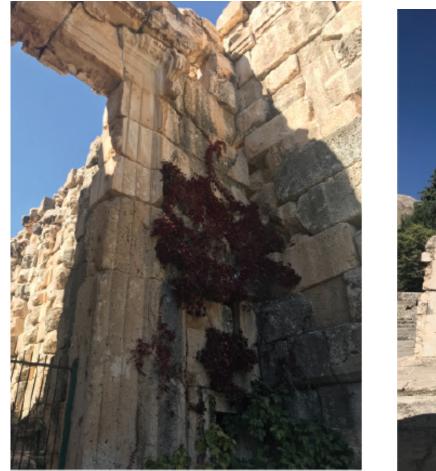
The Roman Fountain (1)

CHRONOLOGY OF MAIN EVENTS

1200 - 333 B.C. - Phoenician and Canaanite Peri-







Big Temple

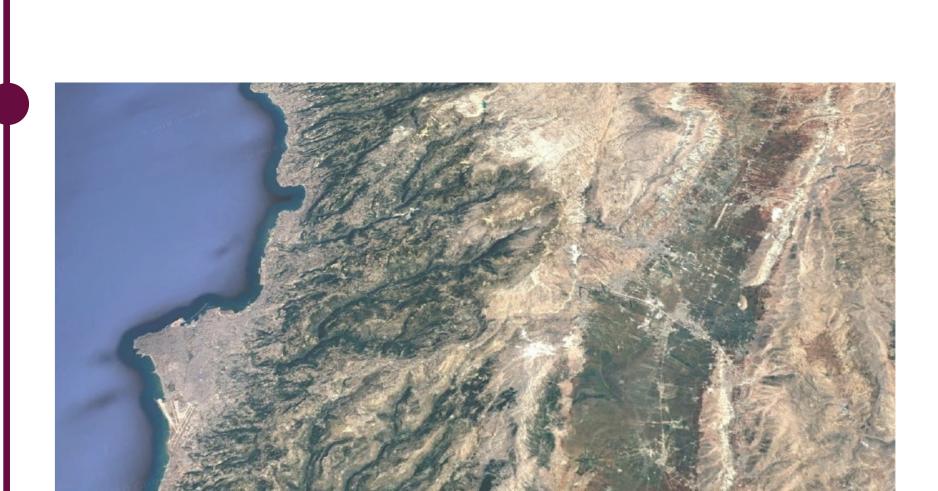
Small Temple

1700 - Christian Communities Arrival The area sees the arrival of Christian communities.

1100 A.D. - Immigration of Shiia Communities The Shiia communities escape from the Crusades and the Mamelukes to the north of the Beqaa. The name Niha signifies then a peaceful safe environment.



2000 - Niha State Niha is one of the very few places of Christian concentration in the Beqaa District.



1800 - Land Exchange An agreement between the Shiia and Christian communities leads to a continuous land exchange as well as a displacement of majorities. Therefore, Niha becomes a village of Christian majority.



EVALUATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

Map of Niha and the surrounding villages (Sannine, Ferzol, Nabi Ayla, Ablah and Tammine)

A very smart initiative taken by the Municipality of Niha is to incorporate those monuments and temples with the lives of the citizens. In fact, every summer since 1980, the village of Niha organizes the Niha Summer Festival where people all across Lebanon and more, specifcally the Beqaa area gather around the Small and Big Temples in order to attend several shows, runways, activities for kids and much more. The money collected is used afterwards for the maintenance of those landmarks. Unfortunately, the costs are very high especially for a village as small as Niha, which explains why the Upper Grand Temples remains destroyed. The money collected is also used for the construction of new projects in the village like the hotel which is under construction at the moment as well as the Cathedral of the Beqaa.

The beauty of those landmarks though is destroyed aspect, which reveals how strong those structures built thousands of years ago were as well as this amazing symbiosis between them and the surrounding nature.

Aerial picture showing the small and big Roman temples surrounded by fertile agricultural lands.

