A Possible Temple?

Archaeologists have interpreted this building as possibly a temple. Like the palace you visited earlier, this building also possesses several features with Mesopotamian influences. The building is divided into two parts that are approximately equal in size. Each part had a large courtyard in its center. The southern half was used to store goods and prepare food. The northern half was used for ritual and cultic activities. There is a niche that was accessed by a red sandstone threshold. This niche was likely a cella, or small room, where a statue of the temple’s deity was positioned. If this was a temple, the Edomite chief deity Qos may have been worshipped here. In the room’s southeastern corner, a plastered bath was located for ritual cleansing. The bath is connected to a water channel that drains into the large cistern visible in the courtyard’s center.

Bowl found at Busayta with inscription: “Qos has blessed” or “May Qos be blessed.” Qos is the name of the principal deity in the Edomite religion. However, the text by the water outlet follows the format of a curse, and may not refer to the name Qos.

نوَلَبُ قُوسَيْنَا يَبْدِيُكُمَا هُمَا أَمْنًا لِلْأَرْضِ عِنْدَ الْأُدُوِّينَ