

Catacomb 20 was the largest catacomb at Beth Shearim, with over 130 limestone sarcophagi, or stone coffins, and hundreds of fragments of marble sarcophagi. Large amounts of figurative art borrowed from Roman motifs were found here, such as representations of lions and eagles, hanging wreaths and schematic heads of bulls. Yet, in the same context, this detailed menorah, a seven-branched candelabrum, from one of the sarcophagi shows the importance of Jewish symbols. The menorah in catacomb 20 and the large number of Hebrew inscriptions show, without doubt, that this was a burial place for prominent Jews, among them rabbis of renown. This was the only sarcophagus discovered at Beth Shearim bearing a menorah, although several menorahs were scratched or carved on the catacomb walls.