



4. The Christian Period (A.D. 540-1550)

In A.D. 540, the temple Isis at Philae was closed by order of the Byzantine emperor Justinian. Missionaries began to convert Nubia to Christianity at roughly the same time. We have some early accounts of the efforts made to convert Nubia; though they do not all agree on the order of events, apparently the Nubian's were completely converted by the end of the sixth century. Archaeological evidence supports this conclusion. By A.D. 600, tombs containing grave goods disappear, under the influence of the new Christian beliefs.

The study of churches is important for an understanding of Christian Nubia. Among the studies of churches that have been conducted by scholars, the earliest was completed by Geoffrey S. Mileham in 1910, for the University of Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition excavated a church in the settlement at Arminna.