Synagogues arose during the time of captivity. With the temple destroyed and the nation scattered, there was need for places of instruction and worship wherever there were Jewish communities.

After the captivity, synagogues were continued in the homeland as well as in Jewish communities.

All larger towns had one or more synagogues.

Jerusalem had the temple and a number of synagogues (Some say 480).

Synagogues were presided over by a board of elders, or rulers."

Jews met in the synagogues on the Sabbath.

Placed on the highest hill available so would be facing Jerusalem when they prayed.

Women and children had to sit in a separate section or balcony from the men.

Services included mainly prayers and the reading and explaining of Old Testament passages.