

The ancient Jewish site of Nabratein, known as Kfar Niboraya in Roman period Jewish texts, is located in Upper Galilee north of the modern city of Safed. At least one famous figure--a man named Jacob--was from Kfar Niboraya. He is mentioned in several rabbinic texts for rendering ritual decisions even though he was not a rabbi. Abundant remains of a synagogue at Nabratein were reported as early as 1864 by Ernest Renan. Subsequently, in 1905, the site was investigated by Heinrich Kohl and Carl Watzinger for the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft. In 1980 and 1981, Eric Meyers directed an excavation at Nabratein on behalf of Duke University. The synagogue, shown here, lies in the center of the site. Three phases in its history have been identified: 135-250 C.E., 250-363 C.E. and a complete repair and reuse as a synagogue from 564 to 600/700 C.E. The columns were put back into their upright positions during the 1980 excavations.