

Khirbat al-Duhayriyya



Khirbat al-Duhayriyya - Depopulated Palestinian Village of the Ramla Subdistrict

Khirbat al-Duhayriyya, also rendered al-Zuhayriyya or al-Dhahiriyya in different sources, was a Palestinian village in the Ramla Subdistrict. It stood approximately six kilometers northeast of Ramla on uneven terrain in the central coastal plain, at an average elevation of about 125 meters above sea level.

Small secondary roads linked the village with Lydda and neighboring localities. The Palestine Index Gazetteer classified Khirbat al-Duhayriyya as a hamlet, and its inhabitants were Muslims whose principal livelihood was rain-fed agriculture.

Item	Information
Subdistrict	Ramla
Alternative Name	al-Zuhayriyya / al-Dhahiriyya
Distance from Ramla	Approximately 6 km northeast
Average Elevation	Approximately 125 meters
Population in 1931	69 – official Census of Palestine
Occupied Houses in 1931	10 – official Census of Palestine
Population in 1944/1945	100
Estimated Population in 1948	116 in later Palestinian demographic estimates; not an official census
Total Land Area in 1944/1945	1,341 dunums
Recorded Depopulation Date	10 July 1948 in Palestinian depopulated-locality lists
Military Context	The first phase of Operation Dani is the probable and widely cited context
Military Unit	Uncertain: Palestine Remembered attributes the attack to the Giv'ati Brigade, but PalQuest does not list Giv'ati among the forces participating in Operation Dani
Cause of Displacement	Military assault resulting in the complete depopulation of the village
Israeli Settlements on Village Land	None documented by Khalidi/PalQuest

Name

Walid Khalidi connects the name al-Duhayriyya with the Arabic term *dahr*, referring to an elevated ridge or high ground.

Mandate records rendered the locality as *Zuheiriya*, *Ez*, while Arabic sources also use the form al-Dhahiriyya.

Location

Khirbat al-Duhayriyya stood on uneven land in the central coastal plain and was surrounded by small wadis.

Secondary roads connected the locality with Lydda and neighboring villages.

The village lay approximately six kilometers northeast of Ramla and had an average elevation of about 125 meters above sea level.

The Village before the Nakba

The Palestine Index Gazetteer classified Khirbat al-Duhayriyya as a hamlet.

The inhabitants were Muslims, and rain-fed agriculture formed the principal basis of their economy.

Visible older foundations indicated that construction materials from earlier occupation of the site had been reused in some village structures.

Rock-cut cisterns and abundant pottery fragments were also recorded at the site.

Population in 1922

Several later Palestinian sources give **69 inhabitants** for 1922.

That number was not independently verified from the original 1922 census table during preparation of this article and is therefore presented with greater caution than the securely documented 1931 total.

Population in 1931

The official 1931 Census of Palestine recorded the locality as *Zuheiriya, Ez.*

Total	69
Category	Number
Males	37
Females	32
Occupied Houses	10

All residents recorded in the census were Muslims.

Population in 1944/1945

The official late-Mandate statistics recorded **100 inhabitants** in Khirbat al-Duhayriyya.

Estimated Population in 1948

Later Palestinian databases give an estimated **116 inhabitants** for Khirbat al-Duhayriyya in 1948.

This is a retrospective demographic estimate rather than an official census conducted in 1948.

Some databases also give sixteen houses for 1948, but this is not an independently documented official housing count and is therefore not treated as equivalent to the ten occupied houses recorded by the 1931 census.

Year	Population	Nature of Figure
1922	69	Reported in later Palestinian sources; not independently verified here from the original census table
1931	69	Official Census of Palestine
1944/1945	100	Official late-Mandate statistics
1948	116	Later demographic estimate, not an official census

Land Ownership in 1944/1945

Khirbat al-Duhayriyya had a total land area of **1,341 dunums**.

Total	1,341
Ownership Category	Dunums
Palestinian	1,341
Transferred to Zionists	0
Communal/Public	0

In the terminology of the official Mandate statistics, all village land was recorded in the Arab ownership category.

Land Use in 1944/1945

Total	1,341
Land Use	Dunums
Cereals	1,224
Plantations and Irrigable Land	66
Total Cultivable Land	1,290
Non-Cultivable Land	51

The figures reconcile exactly: $1,224 + 66 + 51 = 1,341$ dunums.

Economic Life

Rain-fed agriculture formed the principal livelihood of Khirbat al-Duhayriyya.

Cereals occupied the overwhelming majority of cultivated land, while a smaller area was irrigated or planted with orchards.

Olives and citrus are also identified among the village's agricultural products.

Water

A well at the southeastern edge of the village supplied the inhabitants with water for domestic use.

Older rock-cut cisterns were also present at the site, although these archaeological remains should be distinguished from the well used by the modern Palestinian village.

Education and Services

No independently documented village school was identified in the principal sources reviewed.

Educational facilities in Lydda or surrounding villages are therefore not reassigned to Khirbat al-Duhayriyya without direct evidence.

Operation Dani

Operation Dani began on **9 July 1948** and continued until 18 July.

It was the largest Israeli offensive of the Ten Days between the first and second truces and was designed to capture Lydda and Ramla and expand Israeli control of the corridor between the coastal plain and Jerusalem.

Its first phase, from 9 to 12 July, resulted in the capture of numerous localities around Lydda and Ramla and ultimately the two cities themselves.

The recorded depopulation date of Khirbat al-Duhayriyya—10 July—therefore falls squarely within the first phase of Operation Dani.

Uncertainty over the Military Unit

Palestine Remembered and several later Palestinian village databases identify the **Giv'ati Brigade** as the force responsible for the attack on Khirbat al-Duhayriyya.

PalQuest's Operation Dani entry, however, does not list Giv'ati among the formations participating in the operation. Instead, it identifies the Har'el, Yiftach, Eighth Armored, Kiryati, Alexandroni, and Etziyyoni brigades.

PalQuest also does not include Khirbat al-Duhayriyya in its list of affected villages for Operation Dani.

For this reason, this article does not present the Giv'ati attribution as conclusively established.

Most cautious conclusion: the village's recorded depopulation on 10 July 1948 places it in the immediate military context of the first phase of Operation Dani, but the exact unit that entered Khirbat al-Duhayriyya remains unresolved in the Palestinian sources reviewed.

Occupation and Displacement Chronology

Stage	Date	Details
Pre-Nakba Village	Until July 1948	A small agricultural locality with approximately 100 inhabitants in the 1944/45 statistics.
Beginning of Operation Dani	9 July 1948	The major offensive against the Lydda–Ramla region and the corridor toward Jerusalem began.
Depopulation of Khirbat al-Duhayriyya	10 July 1948	Palestinian locality registers record the village as depopulated following military assault on the second day of the operation's first phase.
Capture of Lydda	10–11 July 1948	The military advance simultaneously overran Palestinian localities surrounding Lydda.
Capture of Ramla	12 July 1948	Both principal cities of the district came under Israeli control during the first stage of Operation Dani.
End of Operation Dani	18 July 1948	The operation ended after a second phase directed toward the Ramallah–al-Latrun road.

Cause of Displacement

Palestinian sources that provide a depopulation cause identify **direct military assault** as the reason the inhabitants left Khirbat al-Duhayriyya.

The village's complete depopulation formed part of the collapse of Palestinian communities around Lydda and Ramla during the July 1948 offensive.

Some Palestinian documentation applies the term “ethnic cleansing” to the outcome. This article uses the directly documented formulation: the village was completely depopulated following military attack, and its inhabitants were not able to return after the war.

Extent of Destruction

Most of Khirbat al-Duhayriyya's built environment was destroyed and reduced to stone rubble.

Descriptions stating that it was “completely destroyed” nevertheless require qualification because Walid Khalidi's field survey recorded the walls of approximately **ten houses still standing**.

The most accurate description is therefore that most of the village was destroyed, with parts of several houses surviving. No reliable numerical destruction percentage is available.

Israeli Settlements on Village Land

Walid Khalidi and PalQuest record **no Israeli settlements established on Khirbat al-Duhayriyya's village lands**.

No nearby locality should therefore be described as standing on village land solely because of geographic proximity.

Khirbat al-Duhayriyya Today

The available site description is based on historical field research incorporated into Walid Khalidi's *All That Remains* and is not a direct 2026 field verification.

At the time of that documentation, the walls of approximately ten houses remained standing while most of the locality had become piles of stone rubble.

Fig, doum palm, and almond trees grew among the ruins together with thorn bushes and wild vegetation. Cactuses grew along the northern and southern sides of the site.

The site was fenced and used as grazing land.

Sources

- [PalQuest – Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question: Khirbat al-Duhayriyya](#)
- [PalQuest – Operation Dani](#)
- [Institute for Palestine Studies – Walid Khalidi, All That Remains](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Census of Palestine, 1931: Zuheiriya, Ez](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – Khirbat al-Duhayriyya: Population, Land and Depopulation Data](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – Khirbat al-Duhayriyya entry from All That Remains](#)
- [Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates – Depopulated Palestinian Localities of 1948](#)