

## Daniyal



**Subdistrict:** Ramla

**Estimated population in 1948:** 476

**Date of occupation and depopulation:** 10 July 1948

**Military unit:** Yiftach Brigade (Palmach)

**Israeli settlements established on the village's lands before 1948:** None

**Israeli settlements established on the village site after 1948:** Kefar Daniyyel, established in 1949

Daniyal was located approximately 5 kilometres east of Ramla.

Daniyal was a depopulated Palestinian village in the Ramla Subdistrict. Israeli forces occupied the village on 10 July 1948 during the Nakba and displaced its Palestinian inhabitants. Kefar Daniyyel was subsequently established on the village site in 1949. Although much of Daniyal was destroyed, several houses, the village school, and the shrine of al-Nabi Daniyal survived.

The village stood on level ground in the central coastal plain. Two secondary roads connected it with Lydda and Ramla, while unpaved tracks linked it to several neighbouring villages. Daniyal was named after al-Nabi Daniyal—the Prophet Daniel—a figure revered in Islamic tradition and also known from the Hebrew Bible.

The village was connected to Lydda and Ramla by two maintained local roads. Narrower tracks also connected it to nearby villages and localities, including Jimzu, Khirbat al-Duhayriyya, Kharruba, and ‘Innaba.

## Boundaries of Daniyal

**Daniyal was situated among the following villages and localities:**

- North: Khirbat al-Duhayriyya.
  - Northwest: Lydda.
  - West: Ramla.
- South: [al-Barriyya](#).
- Southeast: [‘Innaba](#).
  - East: [Jimzu](#).
- Northeast: Dayr Abu Salama.

## Architectural Structure of Daniyal

In the late nineteenth century, the British Royal Engineers described Daniyal as a small

settlement built around the shrine of al-Nabi Daniyal. All its inhabitants were Muslims. Houses constructed from adobe brick or stone were arranged along an east–west axis, forming a rectangular plan with several shops at its centre. House construction increased during the final years of the British Mandate, and the village expanded while retaining its original layout.

## Land Ownership in Daniyal

| Ownership category    | Land area (dunums)* |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Palestinian ownership | 2,728               |
| Jewish ownership      | 0                   |
| Public land           | 80                  |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>2,808</b>        |

\* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres.

## Land Use in 1944–1945

| Land-use category           | Area (dunums)* |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Irrigated land and orchards | 37             |
| Cereal cultivation          | 2,599          |
| Built-up area               | 15             |
| Total cultivable land       | 2,636          |
| Uncultivated land           | 157            |

\* One dunam equals approximately 1,000 square metres.

## Occupation and Depopulation of Daniyal

According to the Israeli account titled *History of the War of Independence*, units of the Yiftach Brigade entered Daniyal on 10 July 1948 during the first phase of Operation Dani. The village's inhabitants either fled during the military assault or were expelled. The same forces proceeded towards Lydda, which they attacked the following day.

In September 1948, Israeli prime minister David Ben-Gurion included Daniyal among fourteen Palestinian villages proposed for partial demolition. Israeli historian Benny Morris does not specify whether or when that demolition order was carried out. The surviving structures indicate that the village was not entirely demolished.

## Population of Daniyal

The British Mandate census of 1922 recorded 277 inhabitants in Daniyal, all of whom were Muslims. In 1931, the village had 284 inhabitants living in 71 houses. Its population was recorded as 410 in the 1944–1945 village statistics.

## Historical Population Figures for Daniyal

| Year                                                                                   | Population*     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1922                                                                                   | 277             |
| 1931                                                                                   | 284             |
| 1944–1945                                                                              | 410             |
| 1948                                                                                   | 476 (estimated) |
| Estimated number of Palestinian refugees descended from the village population in 1998 | 2,921           |

\* The figures for 1922, 1931, and 1944–1945 are based on British Mandate records. The figures for 1948 and 1998 are later demographic estimates rather than contemporary census counts.

## Number of Houses in Daniyal

| Year | Number of houses* |
|------|-------------------|
| 1931 | 71                |
| 1948 | 119 (estimated)   |

\* The 1931 figure is derived from the British Mandate census, while the 1948 figure is a later estimate.

## Israeli Settlement on Daniyal's Site

Kefar Daniyyel was established on the site of the depopulated Palestinian village in 1949.

## Daniyal Today

The shrine of al-Nabi Daniyal, the village school, and seven well-built houses remain at the site. The abandoned stone shrine stands among wild vegetation and several trees. Its ground floor has arched doors and windows, while a second storey rises over part of the building and contains a porch and a rectangular window.

The surviving houses are built of stone and have flat roofs, with a combination of arched and rectangular doors and windows. One of the houses has been used as a warehouse. The former village school is used by residents of Kefar Daniyyel. Cactus, cypress, olive, Christ's-thorn, and castor-oil plants grow at the site, while the surrounding land is cultivated by Israelis.

## Sources and References

- [Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question \(PalQuest\), "Daniyal"](#) .
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