

Raml Zayta



Raml Zayta (Khirbat Qazaza) - Depopulated Palestinian Village of the Tulkarm District

Raml Zayta, also known as Khirbat Qazaza, was a depopulated Palestinian village in the Tulkarm District. It stood on flat sandy ground on the central coastal plain, approximately 15 kilometers from Tulkarm, at an average elevation of about 25 meters above sea level.

Its inhabitants were displaced during the Nakba and the 1948 occupation of Palestine amid early Haganah operations directed against Palestinian communities

on the central coastal plain. Walid Khalidi does not establish an exact date for the village's depopulation. Some later Palestinian listings give 15 March 1948, while Khalidi states more cautiously that Raml Zayta was probably depopulated under circumstances similar to those of neighboring communities targeted by the Haganah during March and April.

Name and Location

The principal name recorded in the sources is Raml Zayta, while Khirbat Qazaza is given as an alternative name.

It is important not to confuse this village with Qazaza in the Ramla District. The two were separate Palestinian villages with different locations, populations, land areas, and histories of depopulation.

Raml Zayta stood on a flat sandy tract on the central coastal plain. A secondary road linked it to the main coastal highway, while dirt tracks connected it with nearby roads and communities.

The village lay approximately 15 kilometers from Tulkarm and had an average elevation of about 25 meters above sea level.

Raml Zayta and Zayta

Raml Zayta lay in the area northwest of the village of Zayta. The distinction between the two settlements is particularly important when interpreting the 1931 census.

In that census, Raml Zayta and Zayta were counted together. Separate population figures for Raml Zayta therefore cannot be derived from the combined 1931 total.

By 1945, however, the official statistics listed Raml Zayta independently, with its own population and land figures.

Population and Houses

The inhabitants of Raml Zayta were Palestinian Arab Muslims. A complete independent population series is not available because the village was combined with Zayta in the 1931 census.

Year	Population	Note
1931	1,165	Official combined figure for Raml Zayta and Zayta; it does not represent Raml Zayta alone
1945	140	Official independent figure for Raml Zayta; all inhabitants were Muslims
1948	About 162	Later estimate, not an official British census
1998	About 997 refugees and descendants	Later demographic estimate published by Palestine Remembered

The 1931 census recorded 237 houses for Raml Zayta and Zayta together. This figure must not be presented as the house count of Raml Zayta alone. No separate official house count for Raml Zayta in 1945 was found in the principal sources reviewed.

Built Environment and Daily Life

The houses of Raml Zayta were scattered rather than arranged in a compact or regular pattern, and most stood in the middle of agricultural holdings. They were constructed of mud, stone, and cement.

A small number of shops were dispersed among the houses and supplied some of the villagers' everyday needs.

Walid Khalidi's principal entry does not independently document a school or mosque in Raml Zayta. Such features have therefore not been added on the basis of online material that appears to have mixed information from Raml Zayta with that of Qazaza in the Ramla District.

Water Resources

The villagers obtained domestic water from wells. Well water was also used to irrigate part of the agricultural land and orchards.

The principal source does not identify a particular well or spring by name. Water-source names belonging to neighboring Zayta have therefore not been transferred to Raml Zayta without evidence.

Economic Life and Agriculture

Agriculture and livestock raising formed the principal basis of the village economy. Most cultivation was rainfed, while some fields and orchards were irrigated with water drawn from wells.

The principal crops included cereals, vegetables, and watermelons, together with citrus, bananas, and a small area of irrigated orchards.

The 1944/45 official statistics classified 14,267 dunams, or approximately 96 percent of the village land, as cultivated or cultivable.

Land Ownership, 1944/45

The total land area of Raml Zayta was 14,837 dunams. Under the official Government of Palestine categories, ownership was distributed as follows:

Total	14,837
Ownership Category	Area in Dunams
Arab	12,720
Jewish	1,453
Public	664

When the same figures are reproduced using Palestine Remembered's simplified terminology, the source's categories should be preserved as "Palestinian,"

“Transferred to Zionists,” and “Communal/Public.” “Transferred to Zionists” should not be silently replaced with “Jewish ownership,” since the two tables use different terminology.

Land Use, 1944/45

Grand Total	12,720	1,453	664	14,837
Land Use	Arab	Jewish	Public	Total
Cereals	12,554	1,441	111	14,106
Citrus and bananas	126	4	0	130
Plantations and irrigable land	27	4	0	31
Total cultivable/cultivated land	12,707	1,449	111	14,267
Non-cultivable land	13	4	553	570

The table balances exactly: 14,267 dunams of cultivable or cultivated land plus 570 dunams of non-cultivable land equal the total village area of 14,837 dunams.

The official table does not provide a separate built-up-area figure for Raml Zayta.

Khirbat Tall Durur

Khirbat Tall Durur lay in the eastern part of Raml Zayta's lands. Walid Khalidi records that it had been a prosperous village in the Haifa District during the Ottoman period.

It was depopulated during the British Mandate as a result of the dispute over the lands of neighboring Wadi al-Hawarith. Khirbat Tall Durur should therefore be distinguished from the residential core of Raml Zayta when discussing the village's demographic history.

Depopulation of Raml Zayta

Walid Khalidi states that there is no firm direct information establishing the exact

date or detailed circumstances of the depopulation of Raml Zayta.

He places the village within the context of early Haganah operations intended to “clear” the central coastal area of Palestinian communities. As nearby examples, he notes that Wadi al-Hawarith was attacked and its inhabitants pressured to leave on 15 March 1948, while the residents of Arab al-Fuqara' were expelled on 10 April following a decision by the Haganah General Staff.

Khalidi therefore considers it possible that the inhabitants of Raml Zayta were displaced under similar circumstances.

Later Palestinian listings give 15 March 1948 as the date of Raml Zayta's depopulation. This date may be reported as a later indexed date, but it should not be presented as a date firmly established in Khalidi's village account.

The available evidence does not securely connect Raml Zayta with a formally named military operation, nor does it identify a specific Haganah brigade or battalion responsible for entering the village. The most accurate formulation is therefore that its depopulation occurred in the context of early Haganah operations on the central coastal plain.

Occupation Chronology

Stage	Date	Details
Expansion of Haganah operations on the central coast	March 1948	Early Haganah operations targeted Palestinian communities across the central coastal area.
Attack on nearby Wadi al-Hawarith	15 March 1948	Residents were pressured into leaving; Khalidi uses this as one of the neighboring cases relevant to understanding Raml Zayta's likely depopulation circumstances.

Stage	Date	Details
Depopulation of Raml Zayta	Exact date uncertain; later Palestinian listings give 15 March 1948	Khalidi does not establish a direct village-specific date and states only that Raml Zayta was probably depopulated under circumstances similar to nearby communities.
Expulsion of Arab al-Fuqara'	10 April 1948	The neighboring community was expelled following a Haganah General Staff decision, providing another documented example of the pattern of operations in the area.
Military force	March–April 1948	Haganah forces; the village-specific sources do not securely identify a brigade or battalion.
Destruction of most village buildings	Exact date not documented	Later field research found that only two original houses survived, but the date of demolition is not documented.

Israeli Settlements on Village Lands

Sde Yitzhaq was established on the lands of Raml Zayta in 1952.

Hadera, originally established as a settlement in 1890, later expanded so that some of its suburbs came to occupy land belonging to Raml Zayta.

It is therefore important to distinguish between Sde Yitzhaq, established after the Nakba directly on village land, and Hadera, which predated 1948 but subsequently expanded onto part of Raml Zayta's lands.

Raml Zayta Today

According to the field description published in Walid Khalidi's *All That Remains*, stone rubble was visible throughout the village site, and only two of the original houses remained.

At the time of the survey, one of these houses was still inhabited by the only Palestinian family that had remained in the village. The second had been

renovated and enlarged with additional rooms and was occupied by a Jewish family.

Cactuses and eucalyptus, fig, mulberry, and pomegranate trees grew at the site, while parts of the village lands were used for vegetables and orchards.

This description should not be treated as a field verification of the site in 2026. Field research for the *All That Remains* project was carried out between 1987 and 1990. The description therefore records conditions during that survey period; the principal sources reviewed here do not provide a comprehensive recent field survey confirming the present condition of the two houses or the other surviving features.

Sources

- [PalQuest – Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question: Raml Zayta](#)
- [Palestine Remembered – Raml Zayta, Tulkarm District](#)
- [Village Statistics 1945 – Tulkarm Sub-District table, reproduced by Sami Hadawi](#)
- [WAFA – List of Palestinian towns and villages occupied and depopulated in 1948](#)
- [PalQuest – Qazaza, Ramla District; included to distinguish it from Khirbat Qazaza/Raml Zayta](#)
- [PalQuest – All That Remains: Methodology](#)