

Qalazin / Tayaha

Qalazin / Tayaha - Palestinian Bedouin Clan of the Beersheba Subdistrict

Qalazin Tayaha was a Palestinian Bedouin clan associated with the Tayaha tribal grouping in the Beersheba Subdistrict. The Qalazin were not a single nucleated village with one fixed built-up center, but a tribal community living within the much larger Tayaha territorial domain.

The history of the Qalazin requires a fundamental distinction between two branches: Qalazin Tayaha and Qalazin Jabarat. Palestinian tribal sources state that the Qalazin were originally one group but later divided after an intertribal conflict, with one section joining the Tayaha and the other becoming associated with the Jabarat.

Item	Information
District	Beersheba
Tribal Affiliation	Qalazin Tayaha; the Qalazin branch historically associated with the Tayaha
Type of Community	Dispersed Bedouin clan rather than a single nucleated village
Population in 1922	480 – official Census of Palestine, recorded as Qalazin within the Tayaha section
Population in 1931	164 – official Census of Palestine for Qalazin Tayaha specifically
'Arif al-'Arif's Estimate	Approximately 200 people in 31 households/tents
Estimated Population in 1948	334 in an updated Abu Sitta register; an older Atlas edition gives 275
Displacement Date	No independently documented date; the updated register leaves the date field blank

Item	Information
Military Context	Operation Yoav and the conquest of Beersheba and the Naqab form the wider regional context, but no clan-specific military operation is established
Military Unit	No brigade or battalion is independently documented at the Qalazin Tayaha level
Land Area	No independent Qalazin land total is documented; 2,085,825 dunums applies to the Tayaha as a whole
Settlements on Clan Land	No specific post-1948 settlement can be reliably assigned to Qalazin Tayaha land from the sources reviewed

The Division between Qalazin Tayaha and Qalazin Jabarat

'Arif al-'Arif, followed by later tribal reference works, records that the Qalazin were originally one community but split during a tribal conflict known as the war of 'Awda and 'Amir.

One section joined the Tayaha and became known as **Qalazin Tayaha**, while another joined the Jabarat and became known as **Qalazin Jabarat**.

Al-'Arif estimated Qalazin Tayaha at approximately 31 “houses” and 200 people, compared with 59 houses and 304 people for Qalazin Jabarat.

The two branches must therefore be kept separate when discussing population, tribal subdivisions, displacement, and post-1948 history.

Tribal Traditions of Origin

'Arif al-'Arif records a tribal tradition in which the Qalazin claimed Husayni or sharifian descent and said that they had come from the Hijaz after leaving Mecca.

The same tradition mentions a man named Hamid al-Tabba', known as al-Wahidi, who accompanied them and became a shaykh over them and over groups among

the Jabarat.

This is presented as a recorded tribal genealogical tradition rather than as independently verified documentary genealogy.

Leadership

Khalid 'Awad's documentation of Beersheba tribal leadership identifies the shaykh of Qalazin Tayaha as:

'Abd Allah bin Salim bin Muhammad bin 'Abd Rabbuh Abu al-Ghusain.

The Abu al-Ghusain name also appears among the principal families associated with Qalazin in later tribal accounts.

Subdivisions of Qalazin Tayaha

'Arif al-'Arif and 'Umar Rida Kahhala list the following families or subdivisions:

- al-Ghusaynat.
- al-Qatamin.
- al-Hamudat / al-Khumudat.
- al-'Afayira.
- al-Dababigha.
- al-Qatatwa.
- al-Ju'aythi / al-Ja'ithi.

Minor spelling differences occur among printed and electronic versions of the source, so variant forms are preserved where the reading is uncertain.

Territory and Encampments

The principal sources reviewed do not identify one conventional village center for Qalazin Tayaha from which a single distance to Beersheba can be calculated.

The Tayaha as a whole occupied a broad area in northern and central Beersheba

Subdistrict, between the territorial zones of the Jabarat, 'Azazmeh, Sa'idiyin, and the approaches toward the Hebron highlands.

Assigning a single coordinate, elevation, or village-center distance to Qalazin Tayaha would therefore be misleading without documentation for a particular encampment.

Population in 1922

The official 1922 Census of Palestine recorded **Qalazin** within the Tayaha section of the Beersheba Subdistrict.

Total	480
Category	Number
Males	244
Females	236

All were recorded as Muslims.

Population in 1931

The 1931 census made the classification more explicit by listing a separate entry for **Qalazin Tayaha**.

Total	164
Category	Number
Males	95
Females	69

Elsewhere in the same Beersheba census tables, another Qalazin entry associated with the Jabarat records 304 people: 146 males and 158 females.

The two Qalazin branches therefore totaled 468 in 1931, remarkably close to the 480 persons recorded under Qalazin in the Tayaha section in 1922.

It would consequently be misleading to interpret the fall from 480 in 1922 to 164 Qalazin Tayaha in 1931 simply as demographic decline. A change in the classification of the two Qalazin branches appears to be an important factor, although the census itself does not explicitly explain the change.

Households

The 1931 census gives no occupied-house figure for Qalazin Tayaha, as was common for the non-synchronous Bedouin tribal enumeration in Beersheba.

'Arif al-'Arif, however, estimated the group at approximately **31 “houses”** and 200 people.

In the Bedouin context, “house” should be understood as a household, tent, or family unit depending on the circumstances, rather than necessarily as a permanent masonry house in a compact village.

Estimated Population in 1948

Different editions of Salman Abu Sitta's work provide different retrospective estimates for Qalazin Tayaha.

An older edition of the *Atlas of Palestine* gives approximately **275 people**, while an updated register gives **334**.

This article uses 334 as the later estimate while explicitly noting the discrepancy. Neither figure is an official 1948 census.

The updated table also gives a later refugee-and-descendant estimate of approximately 2,049, which likewise should not be treated as an official census.

Land and Property

The 1945 Village Statistics do not provide a separate land-ownership unit for Qalazin Tayaha from which a clan-specific ownership table can be constructed.

Salman Abu Sitta gives approximately **2,085,825 dunums** for the Tayaha as a whole. This figure covers many clans and tribal territories and cannot be reassigned to Qalazin alone.

Landholding in the Beersheba region also relied substantially on tribal territorial boundaries, cultivation rights, grazing rights, and access to water, which did not always correspond to the cadastral system applied to settled villages elsewhere in Palestine.

Economic Life

Qalazin Tayaha participated in the mixed pastoral and agricultural economy characteristic of the Tayaha in northern and central Naqab.

Tayaha clans raised sheep, goats, and camels and practiced seasonal cereal cultivation. Farming also became increasingly important within the broader Tayaha lands.

No separate agricultural statistics exist for Qalazin Tayaha, so crop acreage and livestock figures belonging to the wider Tayaha are not reassigned to this clan.

Water, Education, and Services

The sources reviewed do not document a separate school serving Qalazin Tayaha as a single unit, nor do they provide a comprehensive clan-specific inventory of wells or public institutions.

This limitation is consistent with the dispersed nature of the clan's encampments rather than residence in one permanent village center.

Qalazin Tayaha and the Nakba

The conquest of Beersheba and the wider military transformation of the Naqab in the autumn of 1948 disrupted tribal territories and patterns of movement throughout the district.

Operation Yoav began on 15 October 1948 and continued until 4 November. It aimed to break Egyptian lines and connect Israeli forces in the Naqab with areas farther north, and it resulted in the capture of substantial areas of southern Palestine, including Beersheba on 21 October.

The Qalazin Tayaha case, however, requires caution. Salman Abu Sitta's updated table does not assign the clan an independent displacement date, unlike several other Tayaha groups for which specific dates are supplied.

A date such as 20 or 21 October should therefore not be assigned automatically to the entire Qalazin Tayaha clan without clan-specific evidence.

Occupation and Displacement Chronology

Stage	Date	Details
Pre-Nakba Encampments	Until 1948	Qalazin Tayaha lived within the wider Tayaha tribal domain rather than in one documented nucleated village.
Beginning of Operation Yoav	15 October 1948	A major offensive transformed military control across southern Palestine and the Naqab.
Occupation of Beersheba	21 October 1948	The fall of the district's principal administrative center profoundly disrupted Bedouin movement and tribal territory.
Status of Qalazin Tayaha	1948 and afterward	Abu Sitta's updated register supplies no independent depopulation date, preventing a single-day displacement chronology from being established.
Postwar Reorganization of Bedouin Territory	Late 1940s–1950s	Naqab Bedouins broadly experienced displacement, land confiscation, movement restrictions, and spatial concentration, while the precise Qalazin Tayaha trajectory requires further clan-specific documentation.

Military Operation and Unit

Military Context: Operation Yoav provides the principal regional military context for the conquest of Beersheba and the Naqab in the autumn of 1948.

The Giv'ati, Yiftach, Negev, and Har'el brigades participated in Operation Yoav.

No source reviewed, however, independently identifies one of these brigades as the force that specifically occupied or displaced Qalazin Tayaha.

The village- or clan-level military unit therefore remains **undocumented**.

Cause of Displacement

The wider dispersal of Beersheba Bedouins was associated with the Israeli military advance through the Naqab, the occupation of Beersheba, and subsequent land confiscation, closure, and population relocation policies.

For Qalazin Tayaha specifically, the available register does not supply a single departure date or detailed account of the mechanism by which all clan members left or were displaced.

Their history should therefore be placed within the military and territorial transformation of the Naqab without inventing a single unsupported attack narrative.

Qalazin Tayaha versus Qalazin Jabarat after 1948

The two branches must again be distinguished in the post-Nakba period.

Palestinian accounts of the Naqab Bedouins specifically state that **Qalazin Jabarat** were among groups that moved to the Gaza Strip.

The same source does not make an equally explicit statement about **Qalazin Tayaha**. The fate of the Jabarat branch should therefore not automatically be

transferred to the Tayaha branch.

Destruction of Dwellings

There was no single masonry village called Qalazin Tayaha for which a destruction percentage can reliably be calculated.

The principal sources do not provide a complete inventory of destroyed tents, houses, wells, or encampments belonging specifically to Qalazin Tayaha.

The article therefore avoids unsupported descriptions such as “completely destroyed” or an invented numerical destruction rate.

Settlements on Qalazin Tayaha Land

The reviewed Palestinian sources do not provide a clan-specific cadastral map that would allow a particular Israeli settlement to be conclusively identified as standing specifically on Qalazin Tayaha land.

The Palestinian Villages Encyclopedia likewise records no specific post-1948 settlement data for the Qalazin locality.

No nearby settlement is therefore assigned to Qalazin merely because it lies within the wider Tayaha tribal region.

Qalazin / Tayaha Today

There is no single former “Qalazin Tayaha village site” to describe today because the clan did not originally constitute one nucleated village.

The sources reviewed also do not provide sufficiently precise documentation to reconstruct the complete present-day distribution of Qalazin Tayaha descendants separately from Qalazin Jabarat or the wider Tayaha population.

A fuller contemporary study would require combining refugee records, family registers, oral history, and maps of historical tribal territory. This section therefore

reflects the documented historical record rather than a comprehensive 2026 demographic or field survey.

Sources

- [Government of Palestine – Census of Palestine, 1922: Qalazin within the Tayaha section](#)
- [Government of Palestine – Census of Palestine, 1931: Qalazin Tayaha](#)
- ['Arif al-'Arif – Tarikh Bir al-Saba' wa-Qaba'iliha](#)
- ['Umar Rida Kahhala – Mu'jam Qaba'il al-'Arab: Qalazin](#)
- [Encyclopedia of Palestinian Villages – Qalazin / Tayaha](#)
- [Salman Abu Sitta – The Palestinian Nakba 1948 / Register of Palestinian Localities](#)
- [Salman Abu Sitta – Atlas of Palestine 1917-1966](#)
- [Palestine Land Society – Pre-1948 Beersheba Tribal Lands](#)
- [PalQuest – Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question: Operation Yoav](#)