

village at the spiritual level.

Religious festivals (mawasim) were special occasions that drew thousands of villagers from their communities to the holy sites of regional saints. Deir Ghassaneh itself was the site for minor saints and attracted peasants from neighbouring villages. Other occasions, such as the holy month of Ramadan, the Muslim feasts of al-fiter and al-adha, and marriages, were all appropriate times to visit and to invite relatives from inside and outside the village.

Hence, except for the occasional contacts, Deir Ghassaneh remained relatively isolated from the outside world. However, after the first world war, Palestine fell under British rule. The 1920s were a watershed in the social history of the village and the country as a whole, when wage labour and migration opened up the self-contained economy of the community.

