

Al-Husayniyya Massacre 1948: Two Palmach Raids in the Hula Valley



In March 1948 Palmach forces attacked the village of al-Husayniyya in the Hula Valley twice within days. In the first attack they blew up 12 homes, killing 15 Palestinians and wounding twenty; in the second, on the night of 16-17 March, they killed more than thirty of the village's men, excluding women and children, and pursued those fleeing the massacre. The toll exceeded sixty. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

The massacre came weeks after the al-Khisas and Sa'sa' massacres in the same Galilee, part of the series of raids that paved the way for the depopulation of the

Hula Valley villages. About a month later, the remaining people of al-Husayniyya were driven out for good. [\[1\]](#)

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The al-Husayniyya massacre at a glance

Item	Details
Date	First attack: 12-13 March 1948; second attack: 16-17 March 1948 [1] [2]
Place	The village of al-Husayniyya, southwestern corner of the Hula Valley, Safad district [1]
Perpetrator	A Palmach force, about fifty armed men in the first attack [1] [2]
First attack	12 houses blown up, 15 killed and 20 wounded [1] [2]
Second attack	More than 30 men killed, excluding women and children [1] [2]
Total toll	More than 60 according to WAFA, and “dozens” according to the Interactive Encyclopedia [2] [1]
Depopulation	Its people were finally driven out on 21 April 1948 [1]

Al-Husayniyya

Al-Husayniyya was a Palestinian village of the Safad district, on a low hill in the

southwestern corner of the Hula Valley, 11 kilometers from Safad, at an elevation of about 125 meters. It had 340 inhabitants in 1945. [1] It was built of stone, had a school, and its land was rich in groundwater and springs; 3,388 dunums were devoted to cereals and 22 dunums to irrigated farming and orchards, alongside livestock. [2] [1]

The first attack: 12-13 March

On 12 March 1948 a Palmach force blew up five houses in al-Husayniyya. At 1:40 a.m. on 13 March, about fifty raiders stormed the village and, “under heavy covering fire,” blew up twelve houses before withdrawing; fifteen Palestinians were killed and twenty wounded. [1]

After the attack, British police and troops entered the village, imposed a curfew and evacuated its residents. [1] [2] Some villagers, however, returned after the first attack. [2]

The second attack: 16-17 March

On the night of 16-17 March 1948 the Palmach attacked al-Husayniyya again. According to the attacking battalion’s own report, “more than 30 Arab adults (excluding women and children) were killed” in this attack. [1] WAFA says Palmach forces pursued those fleeing the massacre and killed some of them. [2]

The toll

Attack	Killed	Wounded
First (12-13 March)	15, with 12 houses blown up	20 [1] [2]
Second (16-17 March)	More than 30 adult men, excluding women and children	— [1] [2]
Total	More than 60 according to WAFA; “dozens” according to the Interactive Encyclopedia	— [2] [1]

Notably, the highest figure comes from Israeli estimates, as WAFA notes, and the attacking battalion's own report did not count the women and children among the dead. [\[2\]](#) [\[1\]](#)

Expulsion and the erasure of the village

After the two massacres, Zionist forces kept shelling the village's homes, and its remaining people fled after 20 March. [\[2\]](#) According to the Interactive Encyclopedia, the last residents did not leave until 21 April 1948, under Haganah mortar and ground attacks during Operation "Yiftach," crossing the border. [\[1\]](#)

Today nothing remains of al-Husayniyya but piles of stones and sections of walls from demolished houses, overgrown with thorns and Christ's-thorn trees and used as pasture, while the surrounding land is cultivated. The settlements of "Chulata" and "Sde Eli'ezer" lie nearby. [\[1\]](#)

Read about [the Zionist massacres against the Palestinian people](#).

Conclusion

In less than a week in March 1948, the Palmach attacked the small village of al-Husayniyya twice, blowing up its homes, killing dozens of its people and pursuing those who fled. A month later the rest were driven out, and the village was erased but for piles of stones. The al-Husayniyya massacre remains a testament that the depopulation of the Hula Valley began with massacres months before the occupation state was declared.

Frequently asked questions about the al-Husayniyya massacre

When did the al-Husayniyya massacre take place?

In two stages: the first attack on 12–13 March 1948, and the second on the night of 16–17 March 1948.

Where is al-Husayniyya?

In the southwestern corner of the Hula Valley, Safad district, 11 kilometers from Safad.

How many people were killed in the al-Husayniyya massacre?

Fifteen in the first attack and more than 30 men in the second, excluding women and children; the total exceeds 60 according to WAFA.

Who carried out the al-Husayniyya massacre?

It was carried out by the Palmach, the strike force of the Zionist Haganah organization.

When were the people of al-Husayniyya driven out?

Some fled after 20 March 1948 under shelling, and the last left on 21 April 1948 during Operation "Yiftach."

Sources and references

Arabic-language sources are listed with translated titles.

1. ["Al-Husayniyya," Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question, Institute for Palestine Studies.](#)
2. ["Israeli Massacres," Palestinian National Information Center \(WAFA\).](#)