Majd al-Krum Massacre 1948: Men Executed before Their Families

Majd al-Krum

Majd al-Krum is a Palestinian village in the western Galilee, north-east of the city of Acre, on the road between Acre and Safad, surrounded by the villages of al-Bi'na, Deir al-Asad, Yirka, Julis, Sha'ab and al-Birwa. [3] Its lands covered 20,042 dunums, 1,710 of them planted with olives, and it had about 1,400 inhabitants in 1945. [3] As its name suggests, the village was known for its vineyards and olive groves.

The occupation: white flags

Israeli forces occupied Majd al-Krum on 29 October 1948, during the sweeping offensive on the Galilee. [3] According to the testimony of Umm Abid al-Qiblawi, recorded by Palestinian historian Nafez Nazzal, on the morning of 30 October a few villagers decided to go out under white flags to meet the Israeli forces west of the village, and tell them the village was free of fighters and "safe and prepared to surrender." [1]

The massacre at the village spring

But a second Israeli force approached from the east and ordered the villagers to assemble at the Majd al-Krum spring in the center of the village. There, the witness says, "Jewish soldiers picked twelve of our men at random, blindfolded them, and shot them in front of us." [1]

Palestinian sources recount the incident with a different pretext: a force of the Israeli army entered the village "on the pretext of searching for weapons," gathered the residents in one of the squares, then executed eight of them. [2] [4] In both accounts, the victims were unarmed civilians from a village that had

surrendered, executed in front of their families without any process.

The toll: what do the sources say?

Source	Date	Killed
Palestinian National Information Center (WAFA) and Arabi21	5 November 1948	8 [2] [4]
Testimony of Umm Abid al-Qiblawi (Nafez Nazzal)	30 October 1948	12 men [1]
UN documents (cited by historian Michael Palumbo)	—	9, including two women [1]

Historian Michael Palumbo cited a UN archive file titled “Atrocities September–November” stating that Israeli forces killed nine people in Majd al-Krum, including two women, and that the Belgian UN observer A. Pallemans wrote: “there is no doubt about these murders.” [1]

After the massacre

Many of Majd al-Krum’s people remained in their village after the Nakba, unlike most villages of the Acre district, while some were driven out. [3] But the occupation confiscated most of its land: of some 20,000 dunums, 15,305 had been confiscated by 1962. [3] Nearby, the village of al-Birwa was destroyed, and the settlement of “Yas’ur” was established on its site in January 1949. [5]

Read about the Zionist massacres against the Palestinian people.

Conclusion

In Majd al-Krum, white flags did not protect the villagers. The village surrendered, its people were gathered at its spring, and soldiers then picked men from among them and executed them in front of their families. The massacre, with its varying toll of between eight and twelve killed, remains a testament that the occupation of the Galilee in 1948 was accompanied by summary executions of unarmed civilians,

documented even by UN observers.

Frequently asked questions about the Majd al-Krum massacre

When did the Majd al-Krum massacre take place?

It took place in the autumn of 1948, during the occupation of the Galilee; WAFA dates it to 5 November 1948, while Nafez Nazzal’s testimony places it on 30 October 1948.

How many people were killed in the Majd al-Krum massacre?

Between 8 and 12, depending on the source: 8 according to WAFA, 12 men according to Umm Abid al-Qiblawi’s testimony, and 9 including two women according to UN documents.

How did the Majd al-Krum massacre happen?

Israeli soldiers gathered the villagers at the village spring after its surrender, picked men at random, blindfolded them and executed them in front of their families.

Did the United Nations document the Majd al-Krum massacre?

Yes; a Belgian UN observer wrote that “there is no doubt about these murders,” as cited by historian Michael Palumbo from the UN archives.

Where is Majd al-Krum?

It lies in the western Galilee, north-east of the city of Acre, on the road between Acre and Safad.

Sources and references

Arabic-language sources are listed with translated titles.

1. Nafez Nazzal, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee 1948*, Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut, 1978, pp. 90–93, as cited by Palestine Remembered.
2. “Israeli Massacres,” Palestinian National Information Center (WAFA).
3. “Majd al-Kurum, Acre district,” Palestine Remembered.
4. “Assassination of a Homeland: 37 Israeli Massacres in the Year of the Nakba,” Arabi21.
5. “Al-Birwa, Acre district,” Palestine Remembered.