Wadi Shubash Massacre

On 23 March 1948 a Zionist military force led by Rehavam Ze’evi raided Bedouin tents in Wadi Shubash, between the city of Jenin and the Jordan River, and killed those inside; none of them managed to escape. Palestinian lists record that dozens were killed in this massacre. [1] [2] [3]

The Wadi Shubash massacre is one of the least documented massacres of the Nakba: neither the exact number of its victims nor their names are known. This article gathers what the sources say about it, and introduces the place and the commander of the force that carried it out.

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The Wadi Shubash massacre at a glance

Item	Details
Date	23 March 1948 [1]
Place	A Bedouin encampment in Wadi Shubash, between the city of Jenin and the Jordan River [1]
Perpetrator	A Zionist military force led by Rehavam Ze’evi [1] [2]

Item	Details
Victims	The inhabitants of the Bedouin tents; none of them managed to escape [1]
Killed	Dozens; the exact number is unknown [2] [3]

Wadi Shubash: the encampment between Jenin and the Jordan

Wadi Shubash is a tributary of the Jordan River on the eastern slopes of the Nablus and Jenin mountains, beginning in the highlands southeast of Jenin. The wadi runs east for about seven kilometers through winding mountainous terrain overlooking the Jordan Valley, then crosses hills and land below sea level until it flows into the Jordan River about 285 meters below sea level. [4]

It is a seasonal wadi that floods in winter, with no large permanent springs along its course. The villagers of its upper basin relied on rain-fed grain farming and grazing. [4] In this wadi stood a Bedouin encampment, which Johnny Mansour describes as “a Bedouin encampment extending between the city of Jenin and the Jordan River.” [1]

The massacre: 23 March 1948

According to the book *Massacres and Plunder* by historian Johnny Mansour, on 23 March 1948 a military force led by Rehavam Ze’evi raided Bedouin tents in Wadi Shubash and killed those inside, “and none of them managed to escape.” [1]

Palestinian lists of massacres record that dozens were killed in this massacre, and that the Israeli force was led by Ze’evi. [2] [3] The available sources do not give the exact number of victims, their names, or the clan that lived in the encampment.

The force’s commander: Rehavam Ze’evi

Rehavam Ze’evi joined the Palmach units in 1942 at the age of sixteen; these units formed the first core of the occupation army and took part in the 1948 war. [5] He later became a minister in the occupation government, until fighters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine assassinated him on 17 October 2001, inside the Hyatt Regency hotel in Jerusalem, in retaliation for the assassination of the Front’s secretary-general, Abu Ali Mustafa. [5] Read: The anniversary of the assassination of the Zionist minister Rehavam Ze’evi.

In the context of March 1948

The Wadi Shubash massacre came in March 1948, in the months when Zionist gangs intensified their attacks on Palestinian villages and communities, weeks before the end of the British Mandate. Johnny Mansour places the massacres of 1948 within the framework of “Plan D” (Dalet), carried out by Zionist forces to seize Palestinian towns and villages and drive out their people. [1]

Bedouin communities in the valleys and plains, with their exposed tents and their distance from the cities, were among the easiest targets of these attacks, and among the least documented, as the survivors of their clans were scattered after the Nakba and their testimonies were never collected.

Read about the Zionist massacres against the Palestinian people.

Conclusion

We know little about the victims of Wadi Shubash: that they were in their tents between Jenin and the Jordan River, that a force led by Rehavam Ze’evi raided and killed them on 23 March 1948, and that none of them survived. Their massacre remains an example of the forgotten massacres of the Nakba, still waiting for someone to gather the names of its victims and the testimonies of their families.

Frequently asked questions about the Wadi Shubash massacre

When did the Wadi Shubash massacre take place?

It took place on 23 March 1948, according to Johnny Mansour's book *Massacres and Plunder*.

Where is Wadi Shubash?

Wadi Shubash is a tributary of the Jordan River, beginning in the highlands southeast of Jenin and flowing into the Jordan River; a Bedouin encampment stood in it.

Who carried out the Wadi Shubash massacre?

It was carried out by a Zionist military force led by Rehavam Ze'evi, who later became a minister and was assassinated by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 2001.

How many people were killed in the Wadi Shubash massacre?

Palestinian lists record that dozens were killed; the exact number is unknown, and none of the inhabitants of the raided tents survived.

Sources and references

Arabic-language sources are listed with translated titles.

1. Johnny Mansour, *Massacres and Plunder: Apologies and Confessions*, PLO Negotiations Affairs Department, p. 28.
2. "Israeli Massacres," Palestinian National Information Center (WAFA).
3. "Lest We Forget: Crimes Time Will Never Erase," Baheth Center for Studies.
4. "Shubash (Wadi)," The Palestinian Encyclopedia.

5. “The Anniversary of the Assassination of the Zionist Minister Rehavam Ze’evi,” Palestinina.