Hamza Younis, the man who escaped three times from the occupation's prisons.

Given the strength of the security measures in the prisons of the occupation, the idea of escape is almost impossible, especially since disappearing outside the prison is equally difficult. However, the prisoner Hamza Younis managed to escape three times.

Who is Hamza Younis?

He is a former boxing champion and a commander in the Storm Forces affiliated with the Fatah movement. He was born in the village of Aara, south of Haifa, and trained in boxing, winning the youth championship in 1962.

Hamza Younis - First Escape... Straight from the Door

Location: Ashkelon Prison (southwest of Palestine)

Date: April 1, 1964

At that time, Hamza Younis was a young man, 22 years old, arrested with his cousin Makram Younis and the young man Hafez Masalha from the village of Daburia, and faced 7 charges, the most prominent of which was cooperation with Egyptian intelligence. Younis says, "It was in April, and the judge, mocking me, said, 'I will see how many Aprils you will spend in prison.' I replied, 'God willing, not one April,' and indeed I escaped after only 17 days of my detention.

Younis expected to be imprisoned for 15 years, so he entered prison singing "Two days and the third away from loved ones". He told those around him that he would soon be released, as he and his colleagues planned to surprise the guards before the 8 p.m. shift change, when the shifts were exchanged, and as soon as the shift consisting of 3 armed guards approached the door of the prison room, Younis pushed the door forcefully and ran out, after struggling with the armed guards and injuring 6 of them.

"We were the element of surprise in this plan. They did not imagine that anyone would escape, to the extent that as I was escaping, I shouted at one of the guards, and ran towards him and he ran away from me." Younis says this proudly, adding that he, along with Makram and Hafez, succeeded in running outside the prison walls amidst intense gunfire and walked in the darkness towards the Gaza Strip until they arrived at midnight.

"And we resorted to an unpaved road between the sea and the main beach to swim in the sea in case they caught us on land, and Gaza was under Egyptian

administration at the time, and they couldn't believe that three isolated prisoners could escape from one of the most fortified prisons."

"Hamza Younis - Second Escape.. Succeeded despite his injured feet

Place: English Hospital (Gaza)

Date: June 1967

This time was the strangest, as after 3 years of the first escape, Younis was injured in his feet during his resistance to the Gaza occupation, and he was captured while being treated in the hospital. He was lying in a room containing 30 patients without beds, unable to walk or relieve himself, so the guard around him was relaxed, and he took advantage of that to escape.

His athlete friends, Saleh, Kayed Al-Ghoul, Shukri Al-Khaldi, and Ziad Al-Shubaki, hesitated to visit him, and they later planned to get Younis out of the hospital, and they did. They picked him up from the window of his room on the second floor, and took him out through a back door, after arranging with the Arab guard, then they took Younis to the Beach Camp, and from there to Biyarot near Jabalia, where he hid and trained to walk for a whole month. Afterwards, he obtained a fake identity card in the name of Aref Salem from Tulkarm, and managed to leave to Jordan, where he completed his treatment, and from there to Egypt, where he worked in the radio, and eventually settled in Lebanon."

"Hamza Younis - Third Escape.. The Bet of the Shoe

Place: Ramla Prison (northwest of Jerusalem)

Date: Late 1971

Yes, he escaped a third time, and then he wrote about his heroism in a novel he called "Escape from Ramla Prison". This time he joined the groups of Palestinian fedayeen in Lebanon, and the Israeli occupation arrested him with four of his colleagues on a boat at sea, and transferred him to Ramla Prison, and sentenced him to 7 life sentences (each life sentence is 99 years). "They said to me, 'You will die and you will never see the sun.' I argued with the prison director in front of the prisoners, and he said to me in detail, 'God will not release you from prison except with my approval,' so I shouted at him defiantly, 'I will get out within two years despite you,' and he said to me sarcastically, 'You are crazy.'

He was not crazy, and he was able to be released after two years indeed, with the help of his friends in prison who had a good relationship with some of the guards. According to a well-thought-out plan, Younis and a greedy guard made a bet involving a shoe, and the latter won the bet. Younis gave him a size 44 shoe, and sent it to his house with the help from outside the prison, but it was not an ordinary shoe. When the guard put it on and entered Younis's room with his friends, one of them (Omar Al-Silawi) intentionally poured coffee on it, apologized regretfully, and offered to wash the shoe. During the washing process, they extracted steel sheets deliberately placed inside.

Younis and his companions used these sheets to cut the iron bars of the window, and then escape through them, and what followed were critical moments and an adrenaline rush, after activating the alarm system and firing, but they succeeded in climbing the wall, which was occupied by maintenance scaffolds, and ran under the rain and on the mud, and they were hidden by the fog that surrounded them from the eyes of the occupation soldiers and their dogs."

"Arrest in Saudi Arabia

His journey with arrest did not stop at the occupation's prisons, as during the first Gulf War in 1980, Saudi Arabia arrested him and his comrade Afif Jihad and sentenced them to death on charges of firing on a bus carrying American soldiers in Jeddah, before the leadership of the Liberation Organization intervened to reduce the sentence to 7 years, and they were released after two and a half years by royal amnesty.

Hamza looks at the plight of Palestinian prisoners today with some sorrow, as he sees that solidarity with them is almost nonexistent compared to the past, where he says, 'In the past, resistance factions carried out special operations to support prisoners and avenge the aggression of the occupation against them,' stressing that they are the responsibility of the entire Palestinian people, 'It is inconceivable that we should not hesitate to stand with them or to demonstrate or to sacrifice,' or so he says.