

Jews in Iraq from 1932 until 1952

Initially under the first king's rule conditions were favorable for the Jews, but in the mid-1930s they worsened with the rise of Nazism and Arab nationalism. Anti-Semitism became rampant and persecutions and frequent arrests of Jews became common. On a few occasions there were public hangings of Jews accused of being spies for Zionist causes or sometimes as Communist sympathizers.



Ron (son), Amanda (granddaughter), Sasson Bechor



SASSON BECHOR

born in 1932 in Amara near the southern Iraqi city of Basra

"I painfully remember being a witness to one of those hangings of Jews accused of Zionism or Communism (it did not make a difference what the charges were as long as those "criminals" were Jews)."

- Sasson Bechor

The Farhud

(loosely translated as "pogrom", or "violent dispossession" in Arabic)

In early April 1941, a coup led by a pro-Nazi junta came to power and they immediately began inciting the masses against the Jews.

Mass Grave of the Victims of Farhud



On June 1st and 2nd 1941, in Baghdad during the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, mobs of agitated Muslims began a two-day pogrom that resulted in 180 Jews massacred and hundreds injured. Many women were raped, people were mutilated and countless Jewish homes, shops, and synagogues were looted and destroyed. The Farhud was a tremendous psychological blow to the approximately 140,000 Jews of this ancient community. This was the beginning of the end of the Jewish Babylonian Exile. Soon after the Farhud, many Jews began seriously considering leaving Iraq and never looked back.