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ARCHAEOLOGY

2,000-year-old Jewish rebel coin, minted decades after Jesus, unearthed in Jerusalem

Archaeologist calls timing of discovery 'symbolic' as coin dates to final revolt period



By **Andrea Margolis** · Fox News

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The exceptional structure, dating to the First Temple period, was revealed during excavations conducted by the Israel Antiquities Authority in the City of David. (Credit: Asaf Peri and Emil Aladjem, City of David & the Israel Antiquities Authority.)

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A coin minted by Jewish rebels just before the destruction of the Second Temple – an event [Jesus predicted](#) in the Gospels – has been unearthed in Jerusalem.

The 2,000-year-old artifact was found at the Jerusalem Archaeological Park, located in the [Old City](#) and just a stone's throw away from the Temple Mount.

The discovery was announced by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) on July 31, just days before Tisha B'Av – the Jewish day of mourning that marks the Romans' destruction of the Temple, near where the coin was found.

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"The obverse side of the coin carries the inscription in ancient Hebrew script: 'For the Redemption of Zion' – expressing the heartfelt desire of [Jerusalem's Jews](#), toward the end of the revolt," the IAA noted.

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A rare bronze coin from the final year of the Jewish revolt was uncovered at the Jerusalem Archaeological Park. (Eliyahu Yanai, City of David; Reut Vilf, City of David)

The coin was discovered by Yaniv David Levy, a coin specialist with the IAA, who described its state of preservation as "quite good."

"From the looks of it, [we thought] it might be a rare coin."

"On its reverse is a lulav, a palm frond used in [the Sukkot festival](#) ritual," Levy said.

"Next to it are two etrogs, the citron used in that same ritual."

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He noted, "The [Year Four] inscription denotes the number of years since the outbreak of the rebellion and allows us to accurately date the coin to the period between the Hebrew month of Nissan (March-April) of the year 69 CE, and the month of Adar (February-March) of the year 70 CE."

Speaking about her experience during the excavation, [archaeologist Esther Rakow-Mellet](#) told the IAA she had a feeling it was an unusual discovery.

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She also noted the striking timing of the discovery, just days before Tisha B'Av.

"Two thousand years after the minting of this coin ... [we found] such a moving testimony to that great destruction, and I think there is nothing more symbolic," said Rakow-Mellet.



Archaeologist Esther Rakow-Mellet, pictured, said she had a strong feeling the coin was a rare and meaningful find. (Asaf Peri, City of David)

The IAA noted that Year Four coins are "relatively rare," since they were minted toward the end of the revolt when rebels had reduced production capabilities.

Excavation director Yuval Baruch said the coin's inscription "indicates a profound change of identity and mindset, and perhaps also reflects the desperate situation of the rebel forces."

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"It would seem that in the rebellion's fourth year, the mood of the rebels now besieged in Jerusalem changed from euphoria and anticipation of freedom at hand, to a dispirited mood and a yearning for redemption," the archaeologist observed.

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Archaeologists unearthed the coin just days before Tisha B'Av, a day of mourning for the Temple's destruction. (Eliyahu Yanai, City of David)

The recent discovery is one of many archaeological finds made in Jerusalem this year: an ancient garden was recently found at the [holiest site in Christianity](#), the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

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In the Room of the Last Supper, located on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, [centuries-old inscriptions](#) have also recently resurfaced.

Fox News Digital's Ashley DiMella contributed reporting.

Andrea Margolis is a lifestyle writer for Fox News Digital and Fox Business. Readers can follow her on X at [@andreamargs](#) or send story tips to andrea.margolis@fox.com.

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