

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update November 11, 2021 ***(7th Kislev, 5782)***



For the Yachad Report Newsletter For November 2021

Iran to Conduct Massive Military Exercise; Iran is planning a large-scale military exercise in the Gulf of Oman, from north of the Indian Ocean and including parts of the Red Sea, Channel 12 News reported. The exercise will begin on Sunday, November 7, and according to the Iranian Tasnim news agency, it may include the use of "new equipment." Iranian sources said that they will not hesitate to increase their country's military abilities, including the power of its missiles. They also said that Iran's defensive abilities will never be negotiable. Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, Coordinating Deputy of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army, said ahead of the exercise that the Iranian forces will "show the power of the Islamic Republic in far-off waters, and warn the enemies that any act of aggression will trigger a crushing response." Earlier this week, the Iranian government published footage of what they said was a foiled attempt by the US to take over an Iranian oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman. US sources denied the report, Channel 12 noted. On Saturday, November 6, Russia's RIA news outlet reported that the foreign ministers of both Russia and Iran support a return to the original nuclear deal, which was signed in 2015 and abandoned by former US President Donald Trump. Under that agreement, Iran agreed to cease its uranium enrichment in exchange for the lifting of the sanctions against it.

Israel Needs to 'Be Ready' for War, IDF Officer Says as Large-Scale Drill Ends; As the IDF's large-scale Home Front Command and National Emergency Authority (RAHEL) drill simulating a large-scale conflict with Iran and the Lebanese Hezbollah terrorist group comes to a close, officers warn that both citizens and soldiers need to be ready for any type of emergency to hit the home front. "The home front needs to be ready, and so do we. Whenever something should happen we all need to be ready: the citizens and the army," said Northern Command training officer Lt.-Col Yaniv Friedman. Along with the Home Front Command and RAHEL, all security and various governmental bodies, as well as Israel Police and Magen David Adom, participated in the drill that ended on Wednesday night, November 3. "The drill became more complicated as days went on, just like we expect war to become," Friedman said. "We know that there are not only soldiers but also reservists who need to be drilled in order to protect the State of Israel." It is the Home Front Command which is responsible for alerting the public of any rockets that have been fired from Israel's enemies, using sirens and push notifications from their app. In May, over 4,000 rockets and other projectiles were fired into Israel by Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. A soldier and twelve Israeli citizens were

killed. Should a war break out with Hezbollah, tens of thousands of rockets are expected to be fired from Lebanon, with some 2,000 fired toward Israel every day.

Iran Increases its Stockpile of Highly Enriched Uranium; Iran said on Thursday, November 4, it has significantly increased its stockpile of highly enriched uranium, in an announcement that comes ahead of the resumption of talks on its return to the 2015 deal with world powers. "We have more than 210 kilograms (463 pounds) of uranium enriched to 20 percent, and we've produced 25 kilos (55 pounds) at 60 percent, a level that no country apart from those with nuclear arms are able to produce," said Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi, according to the IRNA news agency. In August, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed that Iran has established a process to accelerate the production of highly enriched uranium at its Natanz enrichment plant. The move brought Iran closer to the 90 percent purity level needed for use in a nuclear weapon. Iran has gradually scaled back its compliance with the 2015 deal it signed with world powers because US President Donald Trump and the GOP withdrew from the agreement in May of 2018. In April, the Islamic Republic announced it would begin enriching uranium to 60% purity, a move that would take the uranium much closer to the 90% suitable for a nuclear bomb. Despite its scaling back of its compliance with the deal, the previous Iranian government, headed by former President Hassan Rouhani, had been holding indirect talks with the Biden administration on a return to the agreement. However, the negotiations were adjourned on June 20, two days after Ebrahim Raisi won Iran's presidential election. On Wednesday, November 3, an Iranian diplomat said that the negotiations will restart on November 29 in Vienna.

Taliban Making 'Kill List' of Gay Afghans; The Taliban is a radical Sunni Islamist organization that considers gay identity haram or an affront to its interpretation of Islam. Jihadists in nearly all terrorist organizations have engaged in brutal killings of people suspected of being gay or lesbian; some jihadists support forcing gay people into gender reassignment surgery, essentially imposing a transgender identity. While extremely hostile to LGBT people, Afghanistan has been typically permissive of a traditional practice known as bacha bazi, in which tribesmen rape young boys. The practice was common enough under the previous Afghan government that Taliban jihadists used small children as bait to attract and then kill Afghan security officers. The Afghan government's acceptance of bacha bazi did not stop the widespread persecution of LGBT individuals, particularly gay and lesbian people. Leading Taliban jihadists have insisted for months that they aspire to run an "inclusive" government and respect the human rights of women, which they rampantly violated while in power before America's 2001 invasion of the country. Spokesmen for the terrorist group have specified that they have no intention, however, of respecting the human rights of people they believe to be homosexual. "We now know for sure the Taliban has a 'kill list' circulating, identifying LBTQI+ persons," Kimahli Powell, who runs the Canadian NGO Rainbow Railroad, asserted. The director appeared to suggest that Rainbow Road was among the organizations whose attempts to help imperiled Afghans escape the Taliban were used to persecute LGBT people. The organization confirmed it had received 700 evacuation requests from Afghanistan this year, most of them, presumably, after the Afghan government fell. "[Some] individuals who have reached out to us have told us about how they've received a mystery email from someone claiming to be connected with Rainbow Railroad asking for their information and passport," Powell explained. "That's how we know the information has been leaked." Taliban jihadists have attacked the homes of some of these individuals. In one instance, Powell detailed, a person seeking aid from Rainbow Road received a visit from individuals suspected to be Taliban jihadists who proceeded to beat the person and burn their passport, making their departure from Afghanistan "infinitely harder." The Advocate reported on a separate gruesome incident in Kabul in which the Taliban killed a 24-year-old gay man. The man's boyfriend shared the story under a pseudonym. "I go to my home and he went to his. He said they found him. Two cars came, with Taliban in them. They said, 'Where is his home?' and beat him so much," the man said. "They took him away – nobody knows where – and then they kill him." "Afterwards they said they brought the body and cut his body into pieces to show the people that this is what we do with gay people," he concluded.

Colombia to Open Jerusalem Trade Office in Nod to Israel's Sovereignty; Colombia plans to open a trade and innovation office in Jerusalem on Tuesday, November 9, that would be a satellite of its Tel Aviv embassy, a move that signals President Ivan Duque's recognition of Israeli sovereignty over its capital city. Arriving in Israel on Sunday, November 7, for a three-day visit, Duque will be present for the celebratory opening. Among his first stops in Israel was Jerusalem's Old City, including a visit to the Western Wall, where he donned a kippah to pray and placed a note between the crevices. Duque, who arrived in Israel on Sunday for a three-day visit, will be present for the celebratory opening. Among his first stops in Israel was Jerusalem's Old City, including a visit to the Western Wall. Duque made clear last year his commitment to Jerusalem when he first announced plans to open the trade office, during an address to the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee. The move is seen as a partial victory for Israel's campaign to push the international community to recognize Jerusalem as its capital, particularly in the wake of the US relocation of its embassy to Jerusalem in 2018. Only three countries have followed suit: Guatemala, Honduras and Kosovo. Most countries refuse to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, nor do they view it as part of sovereign Israeli territory. As a result, most embassies in Israel are located in Tel Aviv, including Colombia's. Equatorial Guinea and Malawi have also pledged to open embassies in Jerusalem. The Czech Republic and Hungary took a small step toward recognition by opening diplomatic offices, and Colombia now follows. Israel's ambassador to Colombia, Christian Cantor, told reporters last week that Bogotá was a great friend of Israel and the Jewish people, and that Colombia plays a positive role in helping ties between Israel and Latin America. In a video interview with the American Jewish Committee last year, Duque spoke of his strong feelings for Israel: "Colombia is the No. 1 ally of Israel in Latin America," he said. It was a phrase Duque repeated when he landed in Israel after visiting the United Arab Emirates. Duque is scheduled to meet with President Isaac Herzog and Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and will participate in several economic events, to increase bilateral ties. The six ministers will meet their Israeli counterparts.

Israeli Election Avoided as State Budget Passes into Law after 3.5 Years; The Knesset passed the 2021 state budget into law in a 61-59 vote at 5:30 a.m. Thursday morning, November 4, giving Israel a new budget for the first time since March 15, 2018. By the afternoon, it looked like the 2022 state budget would also be passed by the evening. But then Labor MK Emilie Moatti made a mistake in her vote on a budget clause on funding for school buildings, resulting in a 59-59 vote, and the Finance Committee had to be reconvened to correct the error. The Likud celebrated the win. MK Miki Zohar said Bennett's prediction that the coalition would win every vote was proven false. When the vote on the first budget was announced, coalition MKs applauded and embraced each other in joy. The MKs went to sleep for a few hours and resumed voting on Thursday, passing the Economic Arrangements Law. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett praised the budget's passage, writing on Twitter that he was proud that Israel finally had a budget. The budget needed to pass into law by November 14 to prevent the Knesset from being automatically dispersed, which would have initiated elections in February. According to the coalition agreement, now that a budget has been passed, if elections are initiated for the remainder of the term, the caretaker prime minister will be Foreign Minister Yair Lapid and not Bennett. The Knesset then passed in a 61-57 vote the Economic Arrangements Law which includes key reforms, including raising the retirement age for women, a congestion tax in the Tel Aviv area and a controversial reform in kosher certification. Bennett told reporters in the Knesset that the 2022 budget would pass and that after that, his government would serve all sectors of the population.

Minimum Wage to Increase Gradually to NIS 6,000 By 2025; The Israeli government is set to gradually increase the monthly minimum wage to NIS 6,000 (\$1,912), or about NIS 33 (\$10.5) an hour by 2025, according to a joint announcement on Wednesday, November 3, by the Finance Ministry, the Bank of Israel, and major labor organizations such as the Histadrut (Israel's national trade union) and the Manufacturers Association of Israel. The minimum wage in Israel stands at a monthly NIS 5,300 (\$1,500), or NIS 29 (\$9.2) an hour. It will rise to NIS 5,400 by April 2022, and increase every year until 2025 when it will hit NIS 6,000

by December, according to the announcement. The parties also announced steps designed to increase employer flexibility in allowing more public and private employees to work remotely in the long term where necessary, add an extra paid vacation day for public sector workers for an annual 13 days of time off, and stabilize labor processes in the public sector. These steps will “help reduce [wage] gaps and strengthen the status of low-wage workers, promote managerial flexibility in the private and public sectors, and provide stability in labor relations in the economy,” they said in a statement Wednesday. At the same time, the unions agreed not to allow labor strikes for a year while several collective bargaining deals are being hammered out. The country is often hit by labor strikes and disputes waged by workers in various sectors that can cost the economy millions. Last month, thousands of workers in state-supervised kindergarten and daycare centers held a strike over wages and working conditions, followed by medical interns who were protesting against 26-hour shifts. In August, aviation workers held a brief strike. And last year, a nearly three-week strike by social workers ended after the Finance Ministry agreed to gradually increase wages and work to improve their often dangerous working conditions. That dispute was preceded by a nurses’ strike over manpower shortages. Bank of Israel Governor Amir Yaron said in the statement Wednesday that the new agreements were “important news for the economy at this time. This is especially true in times when the economy is going through — and fortunately is coming out of — a severe economic crisis [brought on by the pandemic]. The industrial stability that is expected to be created... both in the private sector and in the public sector, is essential in its support of the various economic processes in the economy.” Finance Minister Avigdor Liberman said the steps “will lead the economy forward and create labor stability.”

Max Fried Pitches Atlanta Braves to First World Series Win in 26 Years; Jewish ace pitcher Max Fried delivered his Atlanta Braves to their first World Championship since 1995 with six shutout innings in Tuesday’s, November 2, Game 6 of a World Series heralded as the most Jewish in baseball history. The 27-year-old lefty held the Houston Astros to four hits, overcoming a potentially serious injury to strike out six without surrendering a run or a walk. The game contained what might have been the most Jewish play in any Major League Baseball matchup ever: In the bottom of the second inning, Astros star third baseman Alex Bregman stepped up to the plate and sliced Fried’s second pitch to right field, where Braves outfielder Joc Pederson easily caught it for out number two. To most fans, the sequence was a mundane flyout with no significance. But to Jewish fans, the play showcased three Jewish players performing on the sport’s biggest stage.

US in ‘Lockstep’ with Allies, Looking at ‘All Options’ on Iran over Nuclear Deal; The US is in full agreement with its allies on bringing Iran back into compliance with the nuclear deal, including willingness to look at “all of the options necessary” if diplomacy doesn’t work, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Sunday, October 31. Blinken was commenting on US President Joe Biden’s talks on Iran with his German, French and British counterparts during the G20 summit in Rome. “We are absolutely together in lockstep on how we are approaching the challenge of getting Iran back into compliance with the nuclear agreement,” Blinken told CNN in an interview. “And that’s new because we’ve actually been at odds in recent years,” he said, recalling that the Trump administration pulled out of the pact in 2018 while the other countries remained committed. “But we do not yet know if Iran is willing to come back, and to engage in a meaningful way and get back into compliance,” Blinken said. “If it isn’t, if it won’t, then we are looking together at all of the options necessary to deal with this problem.” The four countries, along with Russia and China, signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran in 2015 under President Obama’s leadership. The UN’s atomic watchdog has said Iran is increasingly in violation of the nuclear deal. Iran, which has stalled indirect negotiations with the United States in Vienna regarding a mutual return to the nuclear deal, said last week that it would soon announce a resumption of negotiations to take place by the end of November. Blinken said that the US, Britain, France and Germany were working with Russia and China toward Iran again adopting the full terms of the agreement, as they all agree “that would be the best path forward.” “We continue to believe that diplomacy is the best way to deal with... the threat posed by Iran’s nuclear program,” particularly regarding

steps it has taken since the US pullout, which make the program “increasingly dangerous,” Blinken said. On Saturday, October 30, the US and its three European allies in the deal urged Iran to stop the advances it is making in its nuclear program in order “to avoid a dangerous escalation, which is not in any country’s interest.” Biden also issued a statement in which he said if the US reenters the deal it will not again pull out unless Iran clearly violates its terms.

IRGC Says it Thwarted US Attempt to Confiscate Oil in the Gulf of Oman; The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps said on Wednesday, November 3, that its speedboats intercepted a US military vessel in the Gulf of Oman that was attempting to confiscate Iranian oil exports, Iranian media reported. US officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the Iranian report was not true and there had been no US attempt to seize a tanker. The US ship was said to be confiscating Iranian oil from one tanker and diverting it to another bound for an unknown destination. The IRGC claimed it landed on the deck of the second tanker and diverted it into Iran’s territorial waters. The US forces attempted to pursue the tanker with helicopters and warships but failed to catch it, according to the report, which claimed that the US forces then tried and failed a second time to block the tanker from entering Iranian waters. The American officials said that in reality, Iranian forces had seized a Vietnamese-flagged oil tanker last month and US naval forces were just monitoring the situation. “With the timely and authoritative action of the Guards’ naval forces, the US terrorist Navy’s operation to steal Iranian oil in the Sea of Oman failed,” the IRGC said in a statement published by Iranian state media. “The tanker carrying Iran’s oil docked at the port of Bandar Abbas on October 25.” In recent days, Iranian media reported that Iran’s Navy has reportedly thwarted an attempted “pirate attack” on an oil tanker sailing for the Gulf of Aden, south of Yemen and past the Red Sea. Four boats, each carrying six armed pirates, were en route to hijacking the tanker, which was heading for the Bab al-Mandab Strait, but they were warded off by an Iranian Navy squad aboard the vessel, according to Iran’s semi-official Tasnim News Agency. The report claimed the pirates tried to hijack the vessel but were scared off by the warning shots, which is in line with many attempted pirate attacks. Separately, American officials told Reuters that multiple drones, believed to be Iranian, came close to the US Navy amphibious assault ship Essex in the Strait of Hormuz in the past 24 hours.

Iran Says National Fuel Network Up and Running after Major Cyber Attack; Iran’s fuel distribution system resumed full operation on Tuesday, November 2, a week after it was paralyzed by a cyber attack, authorities said. “The country’s 4,300 service stations are once again connected to the central fuel distribution system,” the spokesperson of the Iranian National Oil Product Distribution Company, Fatemeh Kahi, said in a statement. “From now on, all the service stations will be able to supply subsidized gas using the digital cards,” Kahi added. A cyber attack on October 26 brought all fuel distribution stations in the country to a halt, resulting in traffic jams and long lines at gas stations. The attack prompted sharp responses from top Iranian officials, who blamed outside actors. On Sunday, October 31, leading general Gholamreza Jalali accused the United States and Israel of being behind the attack. “We are still unable to say forensically, but analytically I believe it was carried out by the Zionist regime, the Americans and their agents,” Jalali told state TV in an interview, according to Reuters. He said the investigation was still ongoing, however. Iran has in the past blamed Israel for provoking unrest during protests. In July, Iran claimed to have arrested a Mossad cell that planned to provoke violence during demonstrations over water shortages in the country. Last week’s cyberattack blocked the IT system that allows Iranians to fill their tanks for free or at subsidized prices with a digital card issued by authorities, leading to long lines and frustration as motorists became stranded without fuel. Iran enjoys some of the cheapest gas prices worldwide, but motorists must use the digital cards supplied by the authorities to purchase it at a subsidized rate. Citizens are entitled to a monthly quota of fuel at the subsidized rate before they must buy it at the higher market rate.

Teacher Flogged by Iran's Regime is Re-Arrested; The Islamic Republic of Iran last week re-arrested Javad Lal-Mohammadi, a teacher and human activist from Mashhad, who was whipped during a previous

incarceration for urging the resignation of the Supreme Leader of Iran's regime, Ali Khamenei. In a video posted online in August, Lal-Mohammadi said "For eight days I was in prison. Eight days they beat me. Each time they struck me I shouted: 'No to the Islamic Republic!'" Lal-Mohammadi said "Mr. Khamenei, go away from this country! The people are tired of you. The people are tired of you all, because you have destroyed this country, and have filled it with filth. Honorable people of Iran, I spent eight days in their [prison] cells. For eight days, they flogged my body, the body of a teacher. My body was full of blisters. But in spite of them, I did not moan even once. They were hoping to hear a single moan from me but in vain. Each time the whip landed on my back, I cried out: No to the Islamic Republic!" While there are no independent labor unions in the Islamic Republic, the teachers' sector has an organizational structure. There has been significant labor unrest in the education field. In September, teachers protested in front of the Iranian regime's parliament over low wages and repression imposed on students and teachers, according to the Center for Human Rights in Iran.

Israel to Place Aerial Reconnaissance Balloon in North; As Israel continues to work toward significantly bolstering its air defenses, an advanced aerial surveillance balloon has been raised high in the sky in the North to provide additional early warning capabilities against aerial threats. Following years of development and manufacturing, the Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO) at the Directorate of Defense R&D of the Defense Ministry has "begun initial inflation operations" of the balloon, the ministry said in a statement. The High Availability Aerostat System (HAAS) developed by the American company TCOM, which specializes in aerostat surveillance solutions, is one of the largest in the world and is designed to carry an improved sensor system to provide detection and early warning of advanced threats. "In several flight tests conducted in recent months, we have demonstrated the outstanding capabilities of Israel's multi-tier missile defense, including against cruise missiles," said IMDO director Moshe Patel. "The IMDO and MDA [Missile Defense Agency of the US Defense Department], together with the IAF and defense industries, are constantly improving Israel's threat detection capabilities. This aerostat system will hover at high altitudes and provide exceptional, multidirectional detection capability against advanced threats." The Elevated Sensor (ES) system consists of the HAAS and an advanced radar, designed to detect incoming threats at long ranges when operating at high altitudes, which "will provide additional detection and early warning capabilities to the existing operational air defense detection array deployed around Israel," the statement read. Israel's air defenses include the Iron Dome, designed to shoot down short-range rockets and drones; the Arrow system, which intercepts ballistic missiles outside of the Earth's atmosphere; and the David's Sling missile defense system which is designed to intercept tactical ballistic missiles, medium- to long-range rockets and cruise missiles fired at ranges of 40 km. to 300 km. Israel also has Patriot missile batteries stationed in the North and has used them to intercept drones infiltrating into Israeli airspace from Syria. During the Gaza war in May, the Israel Air Force shot down an Iranian-made drone that had flown into Israeli airspace near the northern city of Beit She'an. The IAF is also working toward implementing a full, permanent defensive umbrella in the North, with plans to expand throughout the entire country. Currently, there are several fixed air defense systems that are supplemented by mobile batteries.

Shekel Spikes to 25-Year High Against Dollar, Highlighting Threat to Exporters; The shekel briefly spiked to a 25-year-high against the dollar on Thursday, October 28, reaching an exchange rate of 3.1005 shekels to the dollar, before receding slightly. The euro also fell against Israel's currency, trading at around 3.6 euros to the shekel, near a 20-year low point. The currencies inched apart again later Thursday amid ongoing fluctuations. The shekel had traded at around 3.6 to the dollar for several years, but more recently has been in the 3.2-3.3 range. The currency's strength is due to factors including Israel's strong economy, foreign investments in Israeli companies moving capital into the country, Bank of Israel monetary policies and strong global equities markets, which can cause Israeli financial institutions to sell foreign currency as their exposure rises. The strong shekel is beneficial for Israelis making purchases abroad or exchanging currency but harms exporters, who are paid in foreign currencies but pay expenses in shekels, sparking fears of production line

closures and layoffs. The pandemic has also wreaked havoc on global supply chains, driving up shipping costs and other expenses. The shekel's climb could also hurt some companies' competitive edge with foreign firms. The Manufacturers Association called an emergency meeting for Wednesday to discuss the situation for exporters. Tech firms that receive revenue in dollars could also be harmed by the exchange rate. The Bank of Israel said last month it plans to reduce its bond purchasing and tighten monetary policy. The bank is scheduled to meet on November 22 to discuss policy. In January, the bank said it planned to buy \$30 billion in foreign currency to stem the shekel's rise in 2021, and later said it was not limited to that amount.

Covid Proteins That Trigger Strokes and Heart Attacks Identified by Israeli Team; Israeli scientists have identified the virus proteins that are triggering strokes and heart attacks in COVID-19 patients, in a breakthrough they expect will pave the way for new drugs. The scientists made the discovery by taking a "peek in the virus's black box," Dr. Ben Maoz of Tel Aviv University told The Times of Israel, explaining that his team analyzed all 29 proteins of the virus to figure out which of them are wreaking havoc in the vascular system. "Coronavirus isn't the purely respiratory disease we first thought, and we have identified the proteins that put patients at increased risk of stroke, heart attack, and other problems associated with the vascular system," Maoz said. He identified the five proteins in SARS-CoV-2 that lead to vascular problems in the peer-reviewed journal eLife. "This work could well help scientists to develop drugs to counter the effect of the coronavirus on the vascular system, by providing an understanding of exactly which proteins, or pieces of the virus, are causing problems," said Maoz. "We have not only discovered which proteins have an impact on the vascular system, but also seen how exactly they exert their effect," said Maoz. "What we found is these specific proteins make your vasculature more leaky. The tubes become more porous and cannot hold liquid as you would hope. This information is also valuable in efforts to develop drugs." Maoz hopes to lay foundations for a more nuanced treatment of coronavirus. "All the evidence shows that the virus severely damages the blood vessels or the endothelial cells that line the blood vessels. I hope that our research will prove useful in enabling more targeted treatment."

Exquisite Gold Ring with Amethyst Stone Found in Byzantine Yavne; A unique gold ring featuring a delicate purple amethyst stone was uncovered in the excavation of a Byzantine winery complex in Yavne, the Antiquities Authority (IAA) announced. The wine factory was used to produce the legendary regional wine, known as Gaza or Ashkelon wine after the ports from where it was exported all over the Mediterranean. The jewel was unearthed near one of the warehouses. "The person who owned the ring was affluent, and the wearing of the jewel indicated their status and wealth," said Dr. Amir Golani on Tuesday, an IAA expert on ancient jewelry. "Such rings could be worn by both men and women. "Amethysts are mentioned in the Bible as one of the 12 precious stones worn by the high priest of the Temple on his ceremonial breastplate," he added. "Many virtues have been attached to this gem [amethyst], including the prevention of the side effect of drinking, the hangover." According to the archaeologists, there could be a connection between this quality attributed to the stone and the location where it was found. A large number of jars were found in the warehouse, some of them positioned upside down to store them or dry them before being brought to be refilled with wine. The artifact was not conclusively dated. It was found in a fill dated between the end of the Byzantine period and the beginning of the early Islamic period, around the 7th century CE. However, since similar rings – gold bands with inlaid amethysts – were common in the Roman world, the jewel could have belonged to someone living in the city as early as the third century CE. After the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans in 70 CE, Raban Yohanan Ben-Zakai moved the Sanhedrin, the supreme court and legislative body in all matters of Halacha, to Yavne. During the Byzantine period it was an important Christian town, also featuring a significant Jewish population.

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