

THE HOLY LAND and CHRISTIANITY



100%

The gold **daric** of the Persian Empire was first mentioned in Chronicles I 29:7 and later in Ezra 2:69 and 8:27 in the context of large sums of gold and silver to build, and later rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. C.425 BC Obv: The Great King of Persia advancing with spear and bow. Rev: irregular punch on these very thick 8+ gram coins. NGC ch uncirculated \$3977. Highest grade out of 200 coins.



100%

Akko mint again, struck 310/309 BC VF \$377.
Akko mint silver drachm, rare denomination uncertain year VF/F \$277.



100%

The silver **sigloi** of the Persian Empire were not mentioned by name but the Persian king **Artaxerxes** 465-425 BC supplied thousands of pounds of silver along with the gold darics to help rebuild the Temple, and some of that silver could easily have been in the form of these bullion like silver 5+ gram bullets. Exact same designs and size as the darics. Choice EF \$147.



100%

Silver siglos c 450 BC Obv: Great King with bow, wielding dagger
Rev: dished blank Abt Unc, odd shape \$137.



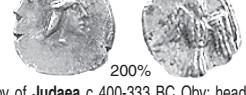
100%

The city of **Byblos**, in Phoenicia, from whence the word **Bible** is derived. Byblos was an ancient center for the production of papyrus, on which many early scriptures were written. 400-333 B.C., silver 1/8 shekel Obv: Greek hoplites (heavily armored mercenaries) in a Phoenician galley, above a hippocamp (type of sea serpent). Rev: lion attacking a bull. EF \$127. VF \$77. F \$47.



100%

Silver obol of **Gaza**, imitating the famous Athenian owl c 350BC? VF light surface oxidation as pleasing dark tone \$477.



200%

Silver 1/2 obol of **Judea** c 400-333 BC Obv: head of Persian king Rev: falcon with wings spread, YHD off flan EF \$770.



300%

Silver 1/2 obol of Jerusalem? C 350 BC Period of Persian rule Obv: Lily Rev: falcon with wings spread, **Yehud**, Hebrew YHD EF slight oxidation Very rare this nice \$1,977.



200%

Silver 1/2 obol of **Samaria** Obv: helmeted male head Rev: facing female face VF or better ragged flan \$477.



100%

Alexander the Great liberated the Holy Land from the Persian empire with his victory at Issus in 333 BC. With the consolidation of his vast conquests came lots of loot which needed to be struck into coins usable in commerce. Akko was the only mint in the modern boundaries of Israel, and it served the merchants from the sea and the caravans of the land routes to the East. About 17 grams, Obv: Hercules wearing lion's skin headdress Rev: Zeus enthroned, holding eagle. Struck 325/4 BC Fine, lifetime of Alexander!. \$197.



100%

Akko mint again, struck 310/309 BC VF \$377.
Akko mint silver drachm, rare denomination uncertain year VF/F \$277.



100%

Silver tetradrachm of **Antiochus IV**, Greek king of Syria 175-164 BC. Antiochus looted the Temple treasury, destroyed holy texts, defiled the altar by sacrificing a pig, and forbade circumcision in an effort to Hellenize the Jews. He precipitated the Maccabean revolt which ultimately established the sanctity of Jerusalem and freedom for the Jewish worship. Obv: diademed head of Antiochus IV Rev: Zeus enthroned. EF+ \$877. Fine \$277.



100%

Bronze of Antiochus IV Obv: wreathed bust of **Isis** Rev: eagle on thunderbolt VF \$277.
Large 32 mm of Antiochus IV Obv: Zeus Rev: Eagle VG \$137.
Small 14mm scalloped bronzes of Antiochus IV VF \$97. F \$57.



100%

Jerusalem bronze prutah struck by John Hyrcanus, 132-130 B.C., as vassal of Antiochus VII, Seleukid king of Syria. John was the son of Simon the Maccabee, and the nephew of the legendary hero Judah Maccabee. Obv: Lily, a much used flower decoration on the Temple and priestly robes. Rev: upside down anchor, as stored on a galley ready for use, and the name of Antiochus in Greek. The persistent use of the anchor during the next 150 years of coinage referred to the importance of the seacoast cities of the Holy Land, where trade routes by sea and by land intersected. VF \$197. Fine \$67. Poor \$12.



100%

Several alternate "Thirty Pieces of Silver" have been suggested by various scholars. The coin I consider most plausible is very similar in design and still meets the Tyrian silver requirement. The silver tetradrachms of Antiochus VII and Demetrios II, Seleukid kings from 138 to 126 BC, but only from the Tyre mint, would have been accepted for the temple dues. The money changers in the temple exchanged any other coinages for a fee. It was this commercial activity in the temple that disgusted Christ. Obv: diademed head of king Rev: eagle, club of Hercules before. VF \$297. 11 coin moneychangers surcharge free with this purchase.



100%

Bronze prutah of **John Hyrcanus I**, 130-104 B.C., as high priest and head of the council of the Jews. John Hyrcanus was the first Maccabee, or Hasmonean, to issue coins. He was a political and military genius and built a sound foundation for the young Judean kingdom which took a couple generations of his descendants to waste and ruin. Obv: double cornucopiae, pomegranate in middle. Rev: Hebrew inscription in wreath. VF \$127. Fine \$47. VG \$27.



100%

Judah Aristobulus I, 104-103 B.C. was the eldest son of John Hyrcanus I who proclaimed himself king, and adopted the Greek name meaning "friend of the Hellenes". He threw his mother and 3 of his brothers in prison, and inadvertently had his friendly brother assassinated because of his paranoia. Either illness or his heavy guilt killed him quickly. EF \$377. VF \$277. F \$117. VG \$47.



100%

Bronze prutah of **Alexander Jannaeus**, 103-76 B.C. younger brother of Judah Aristobulus and a capable ruler and general, but often in conflict with the Pharisees. Obv: anchor, "King Alexander" in Greek. Rev: Star of eight rays surrounded by a diadem, sometimes Hebrew letters between rays or outside diadem. The Widow's Mite of Mark 12:41-44 could have been any of the small bronze coins circulating in Judea during the lifetime of Christ. The prutah of Jannaeus were struck in such vast quantities that statistically they become the most likely candidates. They certainly circulated for a long time and they have been found in strata as late as 300 AD. crudely struck, VF \$47. Fine \$23.



100%

Bronze prutah of **Mattathias Antigonus**, 40-37 B.C., son of Aristobulus II, sought the military aid of the Parthian king Oredes II, allegedly with a gift including 500 Jewish women. Mattathias and the Parthian army occupied Jerusalem. At least one historian accuses Mattathias of gnawing off his uncle Hyrcanus II's ears, so he could no longer be the high priest of the Jews, since the high priest was required to be without bodily blemish. Antigonus then claimed that office. Herod (later the Great) of the Idumean dynasty, and governor of Galilee, fled to Rome to enlist support, and where he was officially designated King of Judea. Herod and the Roman legions besieged Jerusalem, and captured it in 37 B.C. and executed Mattathias, ending the Hasmonean dynasty. Obv: Double cornucopiae, ear of barley in middle. Rev: Hebrew for Mattatayah in wreath, very crude, and always on double thick planchet fine \$57. Fair \$17. Larger 4 prutah Fine \$87.



100%

Even larger 8 prutah Fine+ \$377. Fair \$77.



100%

Silver drachm of the Parthian king **Orodes II** 57-38 BC, who aided Mattathias and was already famous for his spectacular victory over the Roman legions led by Crassus in 54 BC Obv: diademed bust of Orodes II Rev: seated archer, anchor behind F++ \$87. EF \$177.



100%

Bronze 8 prutah of **Herod the Great**, 40-4 B.C., When Herod ordered the execution of two of his sons, Augustus remarked that "It is better to be Herod's pig than his son." Herod had also executed his wife, and anyone else under his rule of whom he feared. Herod ordered the "Massacre of the Innocents" Matthew 2: 16-18, which was the mass execution of all Jewish male infants and toddlers anywhere near Bethlehem, where he had heard a future king of the Jews would be born. With taxes he extracted from the populace he did rebuild the Temple, and other public buildings in Jerusalem. He built artificial harbors, palaces, and a series of palace fortresses, including the famous Masada. Obv: Tripod and bowl, his name and title in Greek, year 3 = 40 BC Rev: military helmet VF \$377. Fine \$187. G \$57.



100%

Bronze prutah of Herod the Great are the second strongest candidate for the actual widow's mite, since they were issued in large numbers, for a long reign and many are tiny and poorly made. Obv: Anchor, Greek for "King Herod". Rev: double cornucopiae, caduceus in middle, dots above VF \$147. Fine \$47. Poor \$9.

One of the most interesting tiny bronzes of Herod the Great shows a standing eagle on the reverse. It is said to represent the golden eagle of the Caesar which Herod mounted above the entrance to the Temple. During the reign of Herod's son Archelaus scholars removed the profane bird, only to be executed. Massive riots ensued and soldiers killed over 3,000 Jews. Fine \$57. Fair to poor \$17.



100%

Silver tetradrachm of **Antioch** under Roman rule 57-16 BC Obv: head of Philip Philadelphos, the last Seleucid ruler of Syria Rev: Zeus enthroned EF-AU raw \$187. NGC genuine \$147. raw VG \$57.

JONATHAN K. KERN Continued