

THE HOLY LAND and CHRISTIANITY

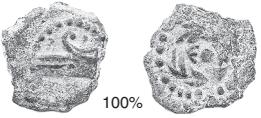


100%

Silver tetradrachm of Antioch struck 4/3 BC, the closest possible coin to the birth year of Christ. Obv: laurate bust of Augustus Rev: the city goddess Tyche of Antioch, holding palm frond, with her foot on the swimming river god Euphrates EF \$577.

Holy Land, 0 A.D.

Bronze prutah of **Herod Archelaus**, one of Herod's more fortunate sons, ruled Judaea 4 B.C. to 6 A.D. Augustus confirmed him as "ethnarch", a title which appears on his coins in Greek. He clashed with the faithful Jews in Jerusalem, ruled so brutally, and was so disliked, (Luke 19:14), that Augustus removed him from office, confiscated his wealth, and banished him to Gaul. Augustus then made Judaea a subdivision of the province of Syria, with the ruler an appointed Roman prefect.



100%

Obv: prow of galley, HPW, Greek for Herod. Rev: ETHN, in Greek, for ethnarch, inside wreath. Fine \$97. VG \$27. Poor \$9.



100%

Obv: bunch of grapes on vine. "Herod" Rev: tall crested helmet, "Ethnarch". VF \$197. Fine \$97. VG. \$27. Fair \$9.



100%

Bronze prutah of **Coponius**, 6 to 9 AD, prefect of Judaea, appointed by Augustus. Obv: ear of barley, "of Caesar" Rev: palm tree, "year 36" of Augustus, or 6 A.D. Very Fine \$177. Fine \$47. VG ... \$27.



100%

Bronze prutah of **Marcus Ambibulus**, prefect of Judaea 9 to 12 AD, also appointed by Augustus. Obv: ear of barley, "of Caesar". Rev: palm tree, "year 39", "40" or "41" of Augustus, = 9, 10, or 11 A.D. Very Fine \$197. Fine \$47. VG \$27.

Poor condition of one of these previous prefects 6-12 AD.....



100%

Silver half shekel of **Tyre**, 126 BC to 55 AD was about 7.1 grams of 95% pure silver, favored by the priests in the Temple. Jewish law required this amount to be paid each year by every male Jew to the Temple. Obv: laureate head of Melqarth, the local version of Hercules Rev: eagle on prow of galley, club of Hercules and date in front. 93/92 BC EF \$877. VF \$477. Fine \$247. Fair \$137.



100%

Half shekel of Tyre struck 76/75 BC EF+ light oxidation \$877.



60%

11 prutot of Judaea, mixed types 150 BC to 70 AD. The full shekels were much more common than the halves, requiring change to be made. Any foreign silver had to be converted to the necessary Tyrian half shekel. The money changers in the Temple, who infuriated Jesus, performed these functions for a fee of 11 prutot. With any purchase of the alternate Shekel of Tyre, a half shekel of Tyre, or a full shekel of Tyre you will receive 11 Judaean bronzes at no extra charge. Better silver will get better bronzes.



100%

Bronze prutah of **Valerius Gratus**, prefect of Judaea 15 to 26 AD, appointed by Tiberius, stepson of Augustus. Obv: "Tiberius Caesar" in wreath. Rev: "Julia" (also known as Livia, mother of Tiberius), palm branch, and year 4, 5, or 11 = 17,18 or 24 A.D. VF \$97. F \$27. Poor \$9. NGC genuine



100%

The "Tribute Penny of the Bible" Mark 12: 14-17, was a silver denarius of the Roman emperor Tiberius, the third of the Twelve Caesars, who ruled from 14 to 37 AD. Obv: laureate bust of Tiberius Rev: Livia, his mother, seated. EF \$477. VF \$387.

The Crucifixion

Bronze prutah struck by **Pontius Pilate** as prefect or procurator of Judaea. The early title for this office was prefect, and it was not officially designated procurator until the reign of Claudius, 41-54 C.E. He was appointed by Tiberius Caesar, the stepson of Augustus Caesar and the third of the Twelve Caesars who ruled Rome from 14 to 37 AD. Pontius Pilate ruled in the Holy Land from 26 to 36 AD. He presided over the trial of Jesus Christ and ordered the Crucifixion only after the mob threatened to riot.



100%

The first type was struck in 29 AD and features three barley ears surrounded by the name Julia (Tiberius' mother usually known as Livia) and her titule. On the reverse is the sacrificial ladle called a simpulum, surrounded by Greek letters reading "of Tiberius Caesar year 16". VF \$277. Fine \$77. VG \$47. Poor \$12. NGC genuine



100%

The second type was struck in 30 to 31 AD and features a **lituus or curved wand of an augur** on the obverse surrounded by "Tiberius Caesar" in Greek. The foretelling of the future by augury was an important element in Roman religion and the implements of the high priests occur regularly on Roman coins. Not surprisingly the Romans once again offended the Jews with this symbol of augury, which was specifically prohibited by Jewish law. The reverse has the date, "year 17 or 18" surrounded by a wreath. VF \$277. Fine \$77. VG \$47. Poor \$12. NGC genuine

Thirty Pieces of Silver

The "Thirty Pieces of Silver" paid to Judas for his betrayal of Christ has always been designated as a tetradrachm (Phoenician standard of 14.2 grams) or shekel, of the Phoenician city of Tyre. Tyre was an independent city after 126 BC and prospered as an important seaport. The Jewish law required that the annual temple tax for every male Jew be paid in the form of Tyrian silver, long known for its full weight and high fineness. The shekels of Tyre feature Melqarth, or the Tyrian version of Hercules, on the obverse and an eagle and the club of Hercules on the reverse. This design continues from 126 BC to the First Revolt of Judaea.

There are some interesting debates concerning this Tyrian silver. By 20 B.C. the output of silver tetradrachms of Antioch dominated the economy of the Roman East, and several distinguished scholars believe the Tyre mint was closed, and the production of "Tyrian shekels" was moved to Jerusalem about 18 BC and supervised by Herod and his successors, with the permission of Augustus, to fill the demand for these pure silver coins to pay the temple tax. The most telling ancient source is from the Jewish **Talmud**, in **Tosephat Kethuboth** 13:20: "Silver, whenever mentioned in the Pentateuch, is Tyrian silver. What is a Tyrian silver? It is a Jerusalemitic."



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck 97/96 BC NGC VF \$577. Various dates our choice 126 BC to 55 AD raw VF \$477. F \$377. VG \$227. Poor

\$127.



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck 96/95 BC NGC EF

\$770.



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck 94/93 BC NGC About Uncirculated

\$1,077.



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck 17/16 BC now at the Jerusalem mint NGC About Uncirculated

\$1,077.



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck 12/11 BC in Jerusalem NGC VF

\$577.



100%

Star of Bethlehem?

Shekel of Tyre struck 12/11 BC in Jerusalem raw VF This curious coin has a countermark very near the obverse center. On any other ancient coin this design is variously described as a comet or star. I found 3 of these in a hoard buried in 13 AD. Out of over 1000 shekels of Tyre, I have never seen any others test cut or countermarked. It makes me believe that a very dramatic astronomical event visible in Judaea between 12 BC and 13 AD was being emphasized.

\$3,700.



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck 5/6 AD in Jerusalem. Lifetime of Christ NGC EF

\$877.



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck in 9/10 AD in Jerusalem raw about Unc. \$1,277.



100%

Shekel of Tyre struck 18/19 AD in Jerusalem. VF \$577. Other dates lifetime of Christ our choice VF \$577. F \$447. VG \$347. Fair



100%

Silver drachm 11-40 AD of **Aretas IV** king of the Nabateans 9BC-40AD with his capital at Petra. Aretas was the father-in-law of Herod Antipas "the Fox" and he sought to arrest the apostle Paul in Damascus. Paul escaped the city by being lowered in a basket from a high window in the outside city wall. Obv: conjoined busts of Aretas IV and his queen Shaqilath Rev: his bust Fine



100%

Bronze of Aretas IV with his queen 11-40AD The Roman emperor Caligula gave the city of **Damascus** to Aretas. Rev: double cornucopiae VF \$77. F \$37. Fair



100%

Bronze prutah of **Herod Agrippa**, king of Judaea 37-44 AD. He was a grandson of Herod the Great, educated in Rome, and a friend of Caligula, who appointed him as a Herod to re-occupy the throne of Judaea. In Acts 12 he was smitten by an angel of the Lord. Obv: umbrella or canopy Rev: three ears of barley Struck 41/42 AD in Jerusalem. VF \$77. nice Fine \$37. Fair



100%

Silver cistophorus, or 3 Roman denarii, of **Ephesus**, the Greek city in Asia Minor visited by the Apostle Paul during his 2nd and 3rd journeys. Struck 189-133 B.C. Obv: snake emerging from basket, ivy wreath around. Rev: snakes on either side of bow case. EF/VF \$227. VG

\$87.

The same coin was also struck in Pergamus, which the angel in Revelations called "Satan's Throne" EF off center



100%

Bronze prutah 54 AD struck by the Roman procurator of Judaea, Antonius Felix. Felix imprisoned Paul, and the Roman historian Tacitus recorded "with all manner of cruelty and lust he exercised the royal function in the spirit of a slave". This is the only plentiful coin to bear the name of Britannicus, the son of Claudius and Messalina. **Britannicus** was passed over for the throne in favor of Nero, possibly his older illegitimate brother. Nero poisoned him in 55 AD. Obv: Nero Caesar is name around two crossed shields and spears. Rev: BPIT (Greek for Britannicus) above date palm. Very Fine \$177. Fine \$47. G+

\$17.

JONATHAN K. KERN Continued