

[Ancient Greek and Roman Coins of the Bible Tribute Penny Widow's Mite 30 Pieces](#)

Learn about the many different coins that were described in the bible with this helpful video presentation of coins from the ANA.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUoR1Mhoz-8>

Coins explored in the video and in the presentation:

- Half Shekel of Tyre coin used by the ancient Jewish people to pay the yearly tax due on visits.
- Widow's Mite, a coin where the moral of the story is that giving or doing your best counts more, even though some could give more.
- Tribute Penny coin of Roman emperor Tiberius, which was circulating during the lifetime and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
- Pontius Pilate coin, a local procurator, or ruler on behalf of the Roman empire before whom Jesus Christ was brought for his trial and crucifixion.

Historical ancient coins give us a great connection to the past. I am an ancient coin expert, enthusiast, author and dealer and have **many of these coins available for sale** in my eBay store here: <http://stores.ebay.com/Authentic-Ancient-Greek-Roman-Coins> I have many **articles and videos on the subject** of ancient coins and history here: <http://www.trustedancientcoins.com/articles/> .

Photo Gallery

Click the pictures to enlarge

COINS of the BIBLE

Money is often mentioned in the Bible, especially in relation to events in the life of Jesus Christ. Much of the money can be identified with known coins from modern Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. They range



from Imperial Roman coins to the coinage of the Judean Kingdom and the revolts that ended in the Jewish Diaspora. These events resulted in the spread of Christianity throughout the Empire, setting the stage for its eventual adoption as the official religion by Constantine the Great. Before that time Christians were to endure many hardships as a result of Imperial policies that identified Christians as scapegoats for many problems, starting with Nero's claim that the fires that destroyed much of Rome in A.D. 64 were caused by Christians. Some of these events are featured on coins.



HEROD THE GREAT (74 - 4 B.C.)

The Gospel of Matthew chapter 2 tells of Herod having all the boys in Bethlehem under age two put to death. This story identifies Herod's fear that a competitor would rise up to challenge his right to rule. His reign, from 40 to 4 B.C., is marked by both good and bad deeds. Herod's coinage is relatively common.

THE WIDOW'S MITE

In the Gospels of Mark chapter 12 and Luke chapter 21, Jesus tells the lesson of the Widow's Mite, where a poor widow who donates "two mites" to the temples pleases God more than the much larger donations from the rich. The King James Bible translation of the word "mite" is accepted to mean the smallest coin in circulation at that time. This small coin would then be the leptons minted under Alexander Jannaeus (King of Judaea, 103 - 76 B.C.). One of these coins would only have been enough to purchase a small slice of bread. These coins are very common today.



THE MONEYCHANGERS AT THE TEMPLE

The Gospel of Matthew chapter 21 relates the outrage of Jesus that moneychangers were set up in the temple courtyard to exchange pilgrims' money for a fee. The temple would only accept half shekels and shekels of Tyre, coinage that was not considered blasphemous. Since each Jewish male owed a temple tax of a half shekel per year and many did not live in areas where shekels of Tyre circulated, the exchange business was profitable.



Scarsellino's 16th century painting, "Driving the Merchants from the Temple"

Famous Widow's Mite coin explained, Herod the Great Birth of Jesus time coins, and the Famous Jewish Temple Tax Half Shekel of Tyre explained

COINS of the BIBLE



TIBERIUS (A.D. 14 – 37)

The Gospel of Mark chapter 12 relates the story of Roman soldiers who try to trick Jesus into disavowing allegiance to the emperor by asking if it is right to pay the imperial tax. When Jesus asks a soldier to show him a coin and then asks "whose image is upon it" the soldier replies "Caesar." This most likely was one of the then-reigning Roman emperors, Tiberius. Jesus famously replies: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Since Tiberius had a single denarius design for virtually his entire reign we can be reasonably sure that this is the coin.

THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER

The Gospel of Matthew chapter 26 relates the story of Judas betraying Jesus. In return for this betrayal Judas is paid "thirty pieces of silver." The bible verse does not state the specific money being paid, but the largest silver coin in circulation in Judaea at the time was the shekel of Tyre. This payment amounted to one third of a year's pay for a Roman soldier. Quite a bribe indeed!

PONTIUS PILATE (PREFECT OF JUDAEA, A.D. 26 – 36)

The Gospel of Matthew chapter 27 relates the story of Jesus being condemned by Pontius Pilate. Pilate was a governor of Judaea under Tiberius. Although the story shows his desire to not punish Jesus, Pilate is remembered as the man who put Jesus Christ to death by crucifixion. Roman governors routinely produced small bronze coins in their own name to meet the needs of commerce.



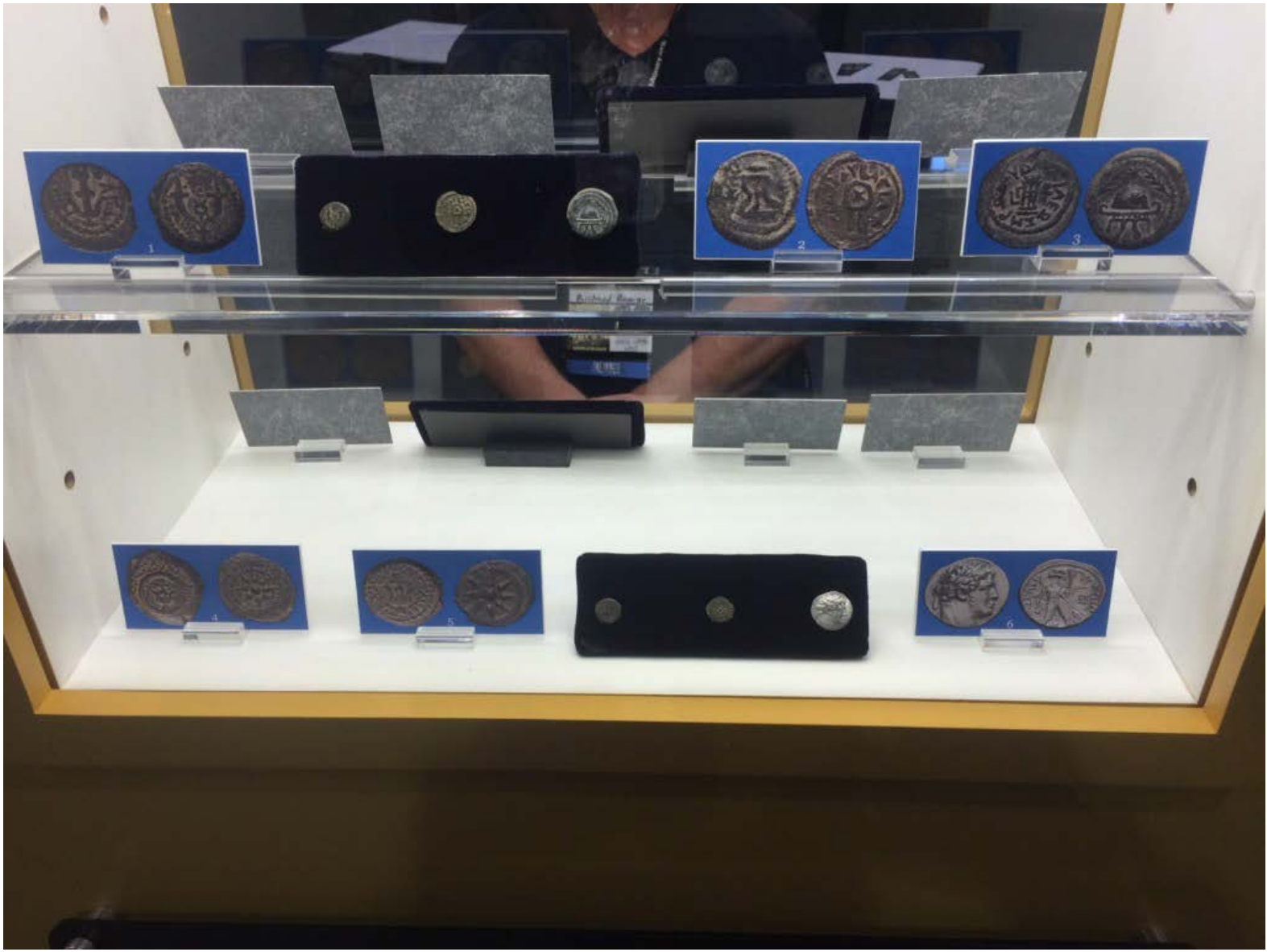
CHRIST FIRST APPEARS ON COINAGE

Constantine the Great (A.D. 306 – 337) was the first Roman emperor to accept Christianity, enabling Christians to live without fear of persecution for the first time within the Roman Empire. Although later Roman emperors were also Christian, Christ did not appear on coins until the reign of the Byzantine emperor Justinian II. Later Byzantine issues routinely featured the image of Christ.

CONCLUSIONS

The coins here are likely to be pieces mentioned in the Bible. However, as the pieces are not mentioned by name, we cannot be absolutely sure. Regardless, these coins stand as a testament to a turbulent period in a small province of the Roman Empire known as Judaea, and they can be connected to events described in the Bible.

Tribute Penny, Thirty Pieces of Silver and Pontius Pilate coins explained



Biblical coins related to people of the Christian and Jewish Faiths



Display of the famous biblical "Tribute Penny" of emperor Tiberius, the Shekel of Tyre known as the 30 Pieces of Silver Judas betrayed Jesus for, Pontius Pilate the Roman ruler whom Christ was crucified under and the first Byzantine gold coin featuring Jesus Christ.

COINS OF THE BIBLE

Coinage related to the Bible can include a wide array of issues related to the ancient Mediterranean region. Many collectors focus on those issues that have specific reference in the Gospels of the New Testament. These coins relate to specific stories and teachings of Jesus Christ. We have provided some of the most significant issues here.

7 TIBERIUS (ROMAN EMPEROR, A.D. 14 - 37)
TIBERIUS (14-37) TRIBUTE PENNY - DENARIUS (3.84g, LEGDUNUM (LYONS), A.D. 36-37
Obverse: TI CAESAR DIVI AVG F AVGVSIVS, head with laurel wreath nr
Reverse: PONTIF - MAXIM, Livia with scepter and branch on Sella nr RIC 30, RSC 16a

8 THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER
PHOENICIA, TYRE, 126/5 B.C.-A.D. 65/6, AR SHEKEL (22MM, 14.16 G., 12G), DATED CY 157 (A.D. 31/32)
Obverse: Laureate bust of Melkart right, lion skin around neck
Reverse: Eagle standing left on prow; palm frond in background; to left, PNZ (date) above club; to right, KP above ZB(T); unclear letter between legs. Rouvier -; RPC -; DCA 920; cf. HGC 10, 357 (unlisted date)

9 PHOENICIA, TYRE, 126/5 B.C.-A.D. 65/6, AR SHEKEL (22MM, 14.28 G., 12G), DATED CY 159 (A.D. 33/34)
Obverse: Laureate bust of Melkart right, lion skin around neck
Reverse: Eagle standing left on prow; palm frond in background; to left, PNQ (date) above club; to right,

KP above monogram; Phoenician II between legs. Rouvier 2107 var. (monogram); RPC 466; DCA 920; HGC 10, 357, n (The Crucifixion Year!)

10 PONTIUS PILATE (PREFECT OF JUDEA, A.D. 26 - 36)
PONTIUS PILATE, LEPTON, A.D. 29
Obverse: Three bound ears of barley, the outer two ears droop, surrounded by Greek inscription "IOYMA KAIKAPOC" (Julia Caesar - mother of Tiberius)
Reverse: Libation ladle (simpulum) surrounded by Greek inscription "TIBEPLOY KAICAPOC" (of Tiberius Caesar) and date "LIS" (year 16)

11 PONTIUS PILATE, LEPTON, A.D. 30
Obverse: Litas surrounded by Greek inscription "TIBEPLOY KAICAPOC" (of Tiberius Caesar)
Reverse: Date "LIZ" (year 17) within wreath

12 CHRIST FIRST APPEARS ON COINAGE
JUSTINIAN II STABINUS, CONSTANTINOPEL, A.D. 692 - 695, 4.24 GMS
Obverse: Bust of Christ facing with cross behind head, he has long hair and full beard, wears pallium and colobium, and raises right hand in benediction, he holds book of Gospels in left hand
Reverse: Justinian wearing crown and liris, standing facing, holding cross potent (set on two steps) and akakia, beneath CONOB. Berk-186

COINS IN THIS EXHIBIT ARE DISPLAYED COURTESY OF MIKE GASVOVA.

Plaque Describing the Different coins such as the Tiberius Tribute Penny, Thirty Pieces of Silver, Phoenician Shekel of f Tyre, Pontius Pilate and first appearance of Christ on coinage.

Related Articles:

- [Ancient Coins of Biblical Jerusalem Collecting Guide \(Article with Video\)](#)
- [Symbols of Early Christianity on Ancient Roman and Medieval Coins](#)
- [Tribute Penny Render Unto Caesar Jesus Christ Biblical Coins \(Article with Video\)](#)
- [Jesus Christ Portrait Anonymous Class A-N Byzantine Follis Coins Reference Article with Video\)](#)
- [Herod the Great 40-4BC Coins JESUS CHRIST Bethlehem Birth Ancient JERUSALEM Biblical Coins](#)



[Download this article by right-clicking here and selecting save as](#)

Article by [Ilya Zlobin](#), world-renowned expert numismatist, enthusiast, author and dealer in authentic ancient Greek, ancient Roman, ancient Byzantine coins and beyond.

For more great articles and videos on ancient coins, visit, <http://www.trustedancientcoins.com/articles/> or [Click here to see all of my EDUCATIONAL COIN VIDEOS](#)