

ANCIENT COINS

THE BRODY FAMILY COLLECTION OF JEWISH COINS (PART I)

MARTIN BRODY, M.D.

I first met Dr. Martin Brody at a coin show in Miami Beach in the very early 1980s. According to Dr. Brody's memory, "That chance meeting peaked my Judaic interest in the coins of our ancestors, and I was hooked." Dr. Brody became a collector of ancient Judean coins par excellence.

While Dr. Brody did not publish numismatic articles, his studies and inquiries about the coins of the Persian Period, the Hasmonean dynasty, the Jewish War, and the Bar Kokhba war were significant. He combined his love of coins with his love of Jewish history and scholarship to create a dynamic focal point for learning and enriching his knowledge.

I frequently consulted with Dr. Brody when writing about these coins, and, shortly after each edition of my book *Guide to Biblical Coins* was published, I knew I could expect to receive an extensive critique, not only listing each and every typographical error in English, Hebrew, or Aramaic, but some very interesting intellectual observations as well. (I recently found in my files some correspondence from Dr. Brody dated to 2001—five single spaced type pages in English, annotated with notes in both modern Hebrew and paleo Hebrew script.)

I always appreciated Dr. Brody's taste and desire to own the best possible specimen of each coin type, and to squeeze the maximum amount of information and historic memory from each coin he examined. Dr. Brody had patience in his collecting, and was willing to wait for another day rather than to rush into buying a coin of inferior quality. As one can quickly see from this catalog, Dr. Brody obtained coins from leading dealers and premier auction houses over the past four decades, always seeking excellent quality and interesting variations.

During my 50 years as a student and writer about of the coins of ancient Judaea, I have encountered less than a handful of collectors who I would consider true scholars of the time and place these coins were struck. Martin Brody is certainly one of them.

--David Hendin 11/2016

Nearly every coin in the Brody Collection will be accompanied by a full page detailed description. Including provenance date of purchase and cost.



1 Ancient Judean Stone Weight Collection. Judean Stone Weights Palmyrene Period (Iron Age III, 9th-7th centuries BCE), 14 weights, and Herodian Period (1st-2nd centuries CE) 2 weights.

Includes the following:

1. **Libra:** 116.53g, no inscription.
2. **3/10 Libra:** 83.4g, with inscription.
3. **8 Shekel:** 91.35g, with inscription.
4. **4 Shekel:** 43.39.4g, with inscription.
5. **2 Shekel:** 22.7g, with inscription.
6. **1 Shekel:** 11.0g, with inscription.
- 7 & 8. **1 Nezev (5/6 Shekel):** 9.4g 2 pieces, each with inscription.
9. **1 Pim (2/3 Shekel):** 8.4g with inscription.
- 10 & 11. **1 Beka (1/2 Shekel):** 5.4g, with inscription and one without.
12. **8 Gerah:** 4.3g, with inscription.
13. **7 Gerah:** 4.1g, with inscription.
14. **6 Gerah:** 3.0g, with inscription.
15. **5 Gerah.** 2.9g, with inscription. 16. **3 Gerah:** 2.0g, with inscription.

Lot of 16 weights.

\$ 5,000

Purchased over a period from 1960s thru 1990s, from Superior Galleries, David Hendin and several European auction houses.

Accompanying this interesting lot is an archive of background material relating to these stone weights.

This 16-piece collection is one of the finest and most complete sets of Judean scale weights to appear on the market. The Israelite weights which range from 8 *shekels* to 3 *gerah*, are the typical Judean limestone weights with domed tops and flat bottoms. The bottoms were flat so the otherwise globe-shaped weights would not roll off of the balance scale pans in which they were used. These weights were mainly used to weigh amounts of silver, often in the form of small, irregular silver ingots today referred to as *hacksilber*.

The Judean weights are based on a standard of 11.4 grams to the shekel—this is not derived from ancient literature, but rather from the modern study, and weight averaging, of existing engraved Judean weights which are quite rare. Most of Dr. Brody's scale weight collection consists of inscribed Israelite period weights. Weights inscribed with the Hebrew words (in paleo Hebrew script) *nezev* (5/6 shekel), *pym* (2/3 shekel), and *beka* (1/2 shekel) are the rarest and of great interest since they are among the few existing Hebrew inscriptions from the First Temple Period. There is some evidence that weights from this period without inscriptions may have been originally inscribed with ink or paint, worn or washed away by the ages. The Judean weights of 8, 2, and one *shekels* are, interestingly, inscribed with Hieratic (Egyptian post hieroglyphic) symbols. This may suggest the close trading relationship at this period with Egypt, which the comparable weight standard at the time was called the *qedet*, and weighed about 9.1 grams. This creates an interesting situation in which the Judean *nezev* weight corresponds almost exactly to the *qedet*. This goes further to enable convenience in trade between nations—a 4 *shekel* weight is equal to 5 *qedet* and an 8 *shekel* weight equals 10 *qedet* (for further discussion of the Judean limestone weights see *Ancient Scale Weights* by David Hendin, pp. 80-86 and 173-182).

The two Herodian period weights are quite similar to those found at excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem, and especially similar in shape and weight standard to one weight, found in the "Burnt House", which was inscribed "Bar Kathros" the name of the Priestly family that apparently lived there. The Herodian limestone weights are shaped like quite thick disks, and generally correspond to a Roman weight standard (for further discussion of the Herodian limestone weights see ASW pp. 206-208.)

PERSIAN PERIOD - SAMARIA AND JUDAH



- 2 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Silver Gerah (0.45 g), ca. 375-332 BCE. Head of Athena right, wearing Attic helmet decorated with olive wreath. Rev. 'YHD' (Yehud), owl standing right, head facing; in upper left field, lily. (TJC 4; Hendin 1050). Toned with some encrustation on the obverse. Very fine. \$ 500

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, August 1988.

A Judaeen imitation of the internationally recognized types of Athenian coinage, but with the usual olive spray of the reverse converted into the lily symbol of Jerusalem. The inordinately large olive leaves on Athena's helmet foreshadow the crenellated crown of later issues featuring the head of the Persian Great King (or debased Athena?).

- 3 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Silver Gerah (0.44 g), ca. 375-332 BCE. Head of Athena right, wearing Attic helmet decorated with olive wreath. Rev. 'YHD' (Yehud; retrograde), owl standing left, head facing; in upper right field, olive spray. (TJC 5; Hendin 1051). Attractive dark find patina. Toned. Extremely fine. \$ 1,500

ex Dr. Jonathan A. Herbst Collection (Superior, 8-9 December 1995), lot 1063.

This coin closely imitates the Athena and owl types of contemporary Athenian coinage, but depicts the owl standing left and the olive spray to right in contrast to the usual right-facing bird and olive spray in the upper left corner. This reversal suggests that the reverse die was produced by an inexperienced engraver who failed to cut the mirror image of the intended final design. He has also erroneously cut the legend so that it appears retrograde on the coin.

Delightful Yehud Silver Gerah, ca. 375-332 BCE



- 4 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Silver Gerah (0.45 g), ca. 375-332 BCE. Head of Persian king wearing jagged crown right; below the head, a circular motif due to a clashed die error. Rev. 'YHD' (Yehud), owl standing right, head facing; in upper left field, lily. (TJC 6; Hendin 1057). Toned. Extremely fine. \$ 2,000

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler at the NYINC, December 1987.

This coin combines types related to the two competing influences on Judaeen political and monetary affairs in the fourth century BCE. The obverse features a stylized head wearing a crenellated crown - almost certainly intended to represent the Persian Great King who ruled over Judaea as the administrative district of Yehud - and an owl copied from contemporary coins of Athens, whose coins had become an international symbol of good money despite frequent Athenian conflict with Persian interests. Here, the olive spray that normally accompanies the owl on official Athenian coins has been transformed into a lily, the emblem of Jerusalem.

Incredible Quality Lily/Falcon Yehud Silver 1/2 Gerah, ca. 375-332 BCE



- 5 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Silver 1/2 Gerah (0.33 g), ca. 375-332 BCE. Lily. Rev. 'YHD' (Yehud), falcon with wings displayed, head turned to right. (TJC 15; Hendin 1060). Darkly toned. Unusually well centered. Among the finest in existence. Extremely fine. \$ 2,500

ex Dr. Jonathan A. Herbst Collection (Superior, 8-9 December 1995), lot 1058.

The obverse of this coin proudly identifies itself as produced in Jerusalem through the prominent lily type. This became so well established as the badge of the city and its local rulers that it appeared on later Seleukid coins struck by the High Priest John Hyrcanus I for Antiochos VII Sidetes in 132-130 BCE, and Hyrcanus' descendant, the Priest-King Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BCE).

Incredibly Preserved Yehud Silver 1/2 Gerah, ca. 375-332 BCE



- 6 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Silver 1/2 Gerah (0.24 g), ca. 375-332 BCE. Lily. Rev. 'YHD' (Yehud), falcon with wings displayed, head turned to right. (TJC 15; Hendin 1060). Dark find patina. About extremely fine.

\$ 2,000

Purchased privately from D. Hendin at the NYINC, December 1988.

Magnificent Hezekiah. Silver 1/2 Ma'ah Obol, ca. 375-332 BCE



- 7 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Hezekiah. Silver 1/2 Ma'ah Obol (0.22 g), ca. 375-332 BCE. Youthful male head left. Rev. 'YHZQYH' (Yehezqio - Hezekiah), forepart of winged and horned lynx left. (TJC 24; Hendin 1065). Attractive find patina. Well centered and sharply struck. Toned. Superb extremely fine. \$ 2,000

Purchased privately at the NYINC, January 2002.

This remarkable coin names Hezekiah, who is usually identified as a High Priest of Jerusalem serving as governor of Judaea in the late Persian period. Lorber and Gitler have argued that the use of the Persic weight standard for this issue seems to support this dating, although it is also possible that it was struck shortly after the conquest of the region by Alexander the Great in 333/2 BC. Subsequent issues of Hezekiah feature the Attic standard favored by Alexander, but the young male head on this Persic-weight issue seems out of place in the late Persian period. Could it be a local portrait of Alexander himself? The peculiar lynx-griffin type of the reverse reflects local taste - similar creatures occur on Philistian and Samaritan coinages of the fourth century BCE.

Marvelous Yehud Hezekiah Silver 1/2 Ma'ah Obol, ca. 333/2-302/1 BCE



- 8 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Hezekiah. Silver 1/2 Ma'ah Obol (0.22 g), ca. 333/2-302/1 BCE. Facing head within beaded circular border. Rev. 'HPHH YHZQYH' (Yehezqio the governor - Hezekiah), owl standing right, head facing; in lower right field, Greek letter A. (cf. TJC 22 (without Greek A); cf. Hendin 1069 (same)). Outstanding. Toned. Extremely fine. \$ 1,500

Purchased privately, December 2001.

In contrast to the earlier issue of Hezekiah in this sale, this one and its two fellows were struck to the Attic standard favored for the coinages of Alexander the Great. This abandonment of the former Persic standard has led to the conclusion that they postdate the Macedonian conquest of Judaea. The coins of the Macedonian period also give Hezekiah his official title as *ha pecha*, the governor. The reverse type depicts the Athenian owl, perhaps partly to signal the new use of the Attic weight standard, but also looking back to the traditions of the Yehud coinage of the Persian period.



- 9 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Hezekiah. Silver ½ Ma'ah Obol (0.19 g), ca. 333/2-302/1 BCE. Facing head within beaded circular border. Rev. 'HPHH [YHZQYH]' (Yehezqio the governor - Hezekiah), owl standing right, head facing. (TJC 22; L. Mildenberg, "Jehud: A Preliminary Study of the Provincial Coinage of Judaea," *Essays Thompson* pl. 22, 16 (this coin); Hendin 1069). Nicely toned.
About extremely fine. \$ 1,500

Purchased privately from NFA, August 1988.

Historical Notes on Lot 9, 10 and 11:

In the scroll (Megillah) of the Jewish holiday of Purim, the king Achashverus of Persia sent letters to the governors (ha'puchos) of all his provinces, including Israel, to destroy the Jews as proposed by the wicked Haman. These coins are from Judea and noted on them is Hezekia, , the governor (ha'pucha) of Judah. (Chapter 3:12) at the actual time of the Purim narrative.



- 10 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Hezekiah. Silver ½ Ma'ah Obol (0.18 g), ca. 333/2-302/1 BCE. Facing head without beaded circular border (obscured?). Rev. 'HPHH YHZQYH' (Yehezqio the governor - Hezekiah), owl standing right, head facing. (cf. TJC 22 (beaded border); cf. Hendin 1069 (same)). Particularly bold and sharp legend. Toned. Very Fine / Extremely fine. \$ 1,500

ex Abraham Bromberg Collection, II (Superior, 10 December 1992), lot 319.



- 11 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Hezekiah. Silver ½ Ma'ah Obol (0.18 g), ca. 333/2-302/1 BCE. Facing head within beaded circular border. Rev. 'HPHH YHZQYH' (Yehezqio the governor - Hezekiah; blundered legend), owl standing right, head facing. (TJC 23; Hendin 1069a). Lightly toned. Very fine. \$ 1,000

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, May 1991.

- 12 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Hezekiah. Silver ½ Ma'ah Obol (0.37 g), ca. 333/2-302/1 BCE. Head of chimaera right. Rev. 'YHWDH (Yehud), duck (or dove?) standing right, head turned to look back. (TJC 27; Hendin 1075). Toned. Very fine. \$ 1,500

Purchased privately at the NYINC, January 2002.

The obverse type of this coin has undergone a dramatic shift since it was first published by Meshorer. It was originally described as the head of a horse, but Lorber and Gitler have shown that when the type is rotated a few degrees to the left it becomes recognizable as a crude left-facing lion's head. While the horse's head seemed an odd iconographic choice, the lion's head has parallels in Samaritan and Philistian coinage of the fourth century BCE. However, here the head clearly faces to the right, and Hendin refers to it as the head of a chimaera. The bird on the reverse is often described as a duck, but it is almost certainly a dove - a common sacrificial animal in the Jerusalem Temple.



- 13 Judaea, Yehud (Judah). Hezekiah. Silver ½ Ma'ah Obol (0.30 g), ca. 333/2-302/1 BCE. Head of chimaera right, degraded to the shaped of an egg or pellet. Rev. 'YHWDH (Yehud), duck standing right, head turned to look back. (TJC 27; Hendin 1075c). Toned. Very fine. \$ 1,500

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler, June 1988.

HASMONEAN DYNASTY



- 14 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. John Hyrcanus I (Yehohanan). Æ Prutah (1.49 g), 134-104 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehohanan the High Priest and the Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew) in four lines within wreath; above inscription, Greek letter A. Rev. Double cornucopiae adorned with ribbons, pomegranate between horns, within circular beaded border. (TJG grp. A; Hendin 1132). Well centered with an attractive sandy-brown desert patina. Extremely fine. \$ 150

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1991.

This prutah features the distinctive types - a Paleo-Hebrew legend enclosed within a wreath on the obverse, and a double cornucopiae with poppy on the reverse - that would be associated with the Hasmonean dynasty from the time of John Hyrcanus I until the disastrous reign of Mattathias II Antigonus (40-37 BCE). It was even resurrected by Herod the Great as means of establishing his connection to the Hasmonean house and giving himself an air of legitimacy as its successor.

- 15 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. John Hyrcanus I (Yehohanan). Æ ½ Prutah (0.63 g), 134-104 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehohanan the High Priest and the Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew) in two lines above and below palm branch. Rev. Lily between two grain ears, within circular beaded border. Cf. (TJC grp. C (all with monogram to left of lily); Hendin 1134a). Nice reddish-brown patina. Extremely fine. \$ 750

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1990.

It is unclear whether the palm branch on this and the following coin should be interpreted as a Jewish ritual object or as an emblem celebrating one or more of John Hyrcanus' many victories over the Seleukids and other neighboring peoples who were opposed to increasing Hasmonean power in the region. The lily on the reverse serves as the emblem of Jerusalem and perhaps a cipher for John Hyrcanus I himself.



- 16 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. John Hyrcanus I (Yehohanan). Æ ½ Prutah (0.59 g), 134-104 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehohanan the High Priest and the Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew) in two lines above and below palm branch. Rev. Lily between two grain ears, within circular beaded border. (cf. TJC grp. C (all with monogram to left of lily); Hendin 1134a). Dark brown patina with sandy-green deposits. Extremely fine. \$ 750

Purchased privately, January 1988.

Extremely Rare Double Prutah of John Hyrcanus I, 134-104 BCE



- 17 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. John Hyrcanus I (Yehohanan). Æ Double Prutah (5.34 g), 134-104 BCE. Uncertain Samaritan mint(?). 'Yehohanan the High Priest and Head of the Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew), double cornucopia adorned with ribbons, within circular beaded border. Rev. Macedonian helmet with high crest and cheek guards right, within circular beaded border; in lower left field, monogram (off flan). (TJC grp. H, pl. 18, H1P (same rev. die); Hendin 1136). *An important rarity*. Dark green desert patina. Very fine. \$ 7,000

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1987.

The types of this rare coin depart dramatically from the usual iconographic repertoire of John Hyrcanus I. The parallel double cornucopia is distinct from the splayed double cornucopia of Hyrcanus' main coinage with its apparent associations with the priesthood of the Jerusalem Temple. Here the parallel cornucopias and the Macedonian cavalry helmet may be derived from the roughly contemporary coinage of the Seleukid usurper, Alexander II Zabinas (128-122 BCE). Josephus (*AJ* 33.9.3) tells us that Hyrcanus and Zabinas were on friendly terms, presumably because both had an interest in defending their claims to power against the legitimate kings of the Seleukid dynasty.



- 18 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. John Hyrcanus I (Yehohanan). Æ Double Prutah (4.37 g), 134-104 BCE. Uncertain Samaritan mint(?). 'Yehohanan the High Priest and Head of the Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew), double cornucopia adorned with ribbons, within circular beaded border. Rev. Macedonian helmet with high crest and cheek guards right, within circular beaded border; in lower left field, monogram. (TJC grp. H; Hendin 1136). *Very rare*. Heavy earthen-brown patina. About very fine. \$ 5,000

Purchased privately, August 1993.



- 19 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Judah Aristobulus I (Yehudah). Æ Prutah (2.28 g), 104 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehudah the High Priest and the Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew; block-style letters) in five lines within wreath. Rev. Double cornucopia adorned with ribbons, pomegranate between horns, within circular beaded border. (TJC grp. U; Hendin 1143). Attractive sandy-brown desert patina. Extremely fine. \$ 300

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1991.

The engraving of this emission of Judah Aristobulus I has linked it to early issues in the name of his brother and successor, Alexander Jannaeus (104-76 BCE). It is remarkable that these evidently late coins still refer to Aristobulus I only as High Priest when Josephus clearly states that he was the first of the Hasmonean rulers to claim the title of king. This coinage may perhaps stand as evidence against whatever textual source Josephus used to craft his rather melodramatic account of the rule of Aristobulus I.

Amazing Quality Alexander Jannaeus Æ 1/2 Prutah, 103-76 BCE



- 20 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Alexander Jannaeus (Yehonatan). Æ 1/2 Prutah (1.28 g), 104-76 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehonatan the King' (Paleo-Hebrew), upright palm branch, within circular beaded border. Rev. Lily, within circular beaded border. (TJC grp. O; Hendin 1147). An amazing example with every letter discernible. Very attractive desert-green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 2,500

Purchased privately, October 1994.

The palm branch and lily types of this rare issue of Alexander Jannaeus take their inspiration from an earlier coinage of his father, John Hyrcanus I, probably as a means of visually indicating his legitimacy. Legitimacy was a perennial problem for Jannaeus, who was constantly at violent odds with the Pharisees who challenged his right to be High Priest. When they pelted him with fruit at the Feast of Tabernacles he responded by crucifying hundreds of his political opponents. This led to a slow-burning civil war between Jannaeus and his subjects that dragged on for six years.



- 21 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Alexander Jannaeus (Yehonatan). Æ Prutah (2.35 g), 104-76 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehonatan the King' (Paleo-Hebrew), lily, within circular beaded border. Rev. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ, inverted anchor within circle. (TJC grp. N; Hendin 1148). Dark green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 250

Purchased privately, May 1991.

This emission seems to look back to the Seleukid coinage struck at Jerusalem by John Hyrcanus I for his ostensible overlord, the Seleukid king Antiochos VII Sideres in 132-130 BCE. Both feature a lily on the obverse as a symbol of Jerusalem and an anchor as a badge of royal (Seleukid) authority. Here, however, Jannaeus seems to use it as a means of indicating his legitimacy as the successor to the now feeble and virtually extinct line of Seleukid kings. It is no accident that the Paleo-Hebrew legend appears alongside the Jewish emblem of the lily while the Greek legend is associated with the anchor.



- 22 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Alexander Jannaeus (Yehonatan). Æ Prutah (1.85 g), 104-76 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehonatan the King' (Paleo-Hebrew), lily, within circular beaded border. Rev. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ, inverted anchor within circle. (TJC grp. N; Hendin 1148). Black patina. Extremely fine. \$250

ex Moreira Collection, Part 1 (Superior, 31 May-1 June 1988), lot 1562.

- 23 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Alexander Jannaeus (Yehonatan). Æ Prutah (2.11 g), 104-76 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehonatan the King' (Paleo-Hebrew) between the rays of star with eight rays, all within diadem. Rev. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ, inverted anchor. (TJC grp. K; Hendin 1150). Lovely sandy light green patina. *Rare in such high grade*. Superb extremely fine. \$ 300

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1991.

Easily the most well known of Alexander Jannaeus' prutah coinages, this issue boldly advertises his status as king while paying attention to Jewish prohibitions against graven images of living things which had evolved since the time of the Yehud coinages in the fourth century BCE. While contemporary Seleukid and Ptolemaic kings regularly had their diademed portraits shown on their coins, Jannaeus was forced to content himself with depicting a star - apparently as a cipher for his image - surrounded by a diadem. It is unclear whether the star was meant to give a messianic flavor to Jannaeus' somewhat brutal style of kingship, but the anchor reverse casts him as a successor to dying Seleukid power in the Southern Levant.



- 24 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Alexander Jannaeus (Yehonatan). Æ Prutah (4.02 g), 104-76 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Yehonatan the King' (Paleo-Hebrew) between the rays of star with eight rays, all within diadem. Rev. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ, inverted anchor. (TJC grp. K; Hendin 1150a). An extremely heavy example. Light desert green patina. Superb extremely fine. \$ 200

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1991.



- 25 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Mattathias Antigonos (Mattatayah). Æ 8 Prutot (17.88 g), 40-37 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Mattatayah the High Priest and Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew), double cornucopiae. Rev. [ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ] ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΟΥ, ivy wreath tied with ribbons. (TJC 36; Hendin 1162). Attractive green patina with light earthen overlays. Unusually choice for this issue. Choice very fine. \$ 600

Purchased privately, January 1988.

In 40 BCE, at the head of a Parthian army, Mattathias Antigonos drove Herod the Great and his puppet, the Hasmonaean ethnarch, John Hyrcanus II, out of Jerusalem and was proclaimed king and High Priest by the Parthians and his Jewish supporters. Unfortunately, the wily Herod was not so easily defeated and returned in 39 BCE armed with recognition as the Roman client-king of Judaea. The hapless Mattathias was ultimately defeated and crucified for his troubles, leaving Judaea to begin a new period in its troubled history under the often hated Herodian dynasty.



- 26 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Mattathias Antigonos (Mattatayah). Æ 8 Prutot (14.11 g), 40-37 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Mattatayah the High Priest and Council of the Jews' (Paleo-Hebrew), double cornucopiae. Rev. [BACIAEΩ]C ANTI[ΓONOY], ivy wreath tied with ribbons. (TJC 36; Hendin 1162). Dark desert-green patina. Another outstanding example. Choice very fine. \$ 600

ex Superior (3 December 1987), lot 559.

The 8-prutah and the following 4-prutah denominations of Mattathias Antigonos take their typological cues from the coinages of earlier Hasmonaean rulers as a means of presenting him as a legitimate ruler. The cornucopiae and wreath types look back to the heady days of John Hyrcanus I (134-104 BCE) and the foundation of the fully autonomous Hasmonaean Jewish state while the Paleo-Hebrew legend identifying him as High Priest and the Greek legend naming him as king follow the pattern established by Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BCE).



- 27 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Mattathias Antigonos (Mattatayah). Æ 4 Prutot (7.69 g), 40-37 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Mattatayah the High Priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), cornucopiae tied with ribbons, decorated with vine-leaf and grapes. Rev. BACIA/EΩC AN/TIΓON in three lines within wreath tied at left. (TJC 37a; Hendin 1163). Boldly contrasting dark brown and sandy green patina. Choice very fine. \$ 400

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler, October 1996.

- 28 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Mattathias Antigonos (Mattatayah). Æ Prutah (1.89 g), 40-37 BCE. Jerusalem. 'Mattatayah' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath; all within circular beaded border. Rev. Double cornucopiae adorned with ribbons, pomegranate between horns, within circular beaded border. (Hendin 1167) *Very Rare*. Dark green-brown patina with light earthen deposits. . Choice very fine. \$ 800

Purchased privately from D. Hendin at the NYINC, December 1990.

This prutah of Mattathias Antigonos consciously looks back to the issues of John Hyrcanus I and other Hasmonaean ancestors as a means of casting himself as the legitimate king of the Jews when Herod and the Romans sought to remove him and bring an inglorious end to the Hasmonaean dynasty.

The Famous Menorah Æ Prutah of Mattathias Antigonos, 40-37 BCE



- 29 Judaea, Hasmonean Kingdom. Mattathias Antigonos (Mattatayah). Æ Prutah (1.60 g), 40-37 BCE. Jerusalem. Trace of 'Mattatayah the High Priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), showbread table. Rev. [BA]ΣΙΑΕ[ΩΣ ANTIΓONOY], seven-branched menorah. (TJC 42; Hendin 1168). A great rarity and the only ancient Jewish coin depicting the menorah. Very fine. \$ 25,000

Purchased privately from D. Hendin at the NYINC, December 1988.

Perhaps the most desirable of all of Mattathias Antigonos' coins are his prutot depicting a table and a seven-branched menorah. These are generally agreed to represent elements of the furnishings of the Jerusalem Temple. A similar menorah is shown being carried off by Roman troops on the Arch of Titus in Rome and the table is generally thought to be the show-bread table. These explicit religious types appear at this time as Mattathias attempted to defend his failing regime against the Idumaeen Herod and his Roman supporters, both of whom threatened Jewish religious custom.

THE JEWISH WAR - 66-70 CE

Phenomenal Quality Year One Silver Shekel, 66-70 CE



- 30 Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver Shekel (13.83 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 1 (66/7 CE). 'Shekel of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with wide, smooth rim, pellet on either side, and flat base with pearly ends; above, '[year] 1'. Rev. 'Jerusalem [the] holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 187; Hendin 1354). Virtually as struck. Superb. Nearly mint state. \$ 8,000

Purchased privately from Superior, May 1989.

Choice Quality Year One Silver Shekel, 66-70 CE



- 31 Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver Shekel (14.16 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 1 (66/7 CE). 'Shekel of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with wide, smooth rim, pellet on either side, and flat base with pearly ends; above, '[year] 1'. Rev. 'Jerusalem [the] holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 187; Hendin 1354). Die-break on the obverse. Lightly toned. Extremely fine. \$ 7,000

ex Superior (8-10 August 1983), lot 114.

The silver shekel of the first year (May 66-March 67 CE) of the Jewish War against Rome is perhaps one of the most iconic coins in the ancient Jewish coin series. The chalice on the obverse is widely believed to represent a ritual chalice used in the Jerusalem Temple while the reverse may represent a staff with three pomegranates. The pomegranate was a traditional symbol of Jewish priestly authority.

Stunning Quality Year One Silver 1/2 Shekel, 66-70 CE



- 32 Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver 1/2 Shekel (6.73 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 1 (66/7 CE). 'Half of a Shekel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with wide, smooth rim, pellet on either side, and flat base with pearly ends; above, '[year] 1'. Rev. 'Jerusalem [the] holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 188; Hendin 1355). Virtually as struck. Nearly mint state. \$ 7,000

Purchased privately at the NYINC, January 1988.

The dramatic first year (May 66-March 67 CE) of the Jewish War against Rome gave some hope that the Jewish rebels might actually win their independence. Late in 66 CE they defeated the Twelfth Legion commanded by the Roman procurator Cestius Gallus. Some of the silver coinage struck in this year may perhaps have been produced from the booty carried off by the victorious Jews in this confrontation. Unfortunately, this Roman defeat led to Vespasian's transfer to the theater of conflict and the eventual quashing of the revolt in the Galilee.

Another Choice Quality Year One Silver 1/2 Shekel, 66-70 CE



- 33** Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver 1/2 Shekel (6.99 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 1 (66/70 CE). 'Half of a Shekel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with wide, smooth rim, pellet on either side, and flat base with pearly ends; above, '[year] 1'. Rev. 'Jerusalem [the] holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 188; Hendin 1355). Lightly toned. Extremely fine. \$ 5,000

ex Dr. Jonathan A. Herbst Collection (Superior, 8-9 December 1995), lot 1236.



- 34** Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver Shekel (14.14 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 2 (67/68 CE). 'Shekel of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with pearly rim, the base raised by projections on both ends; above, 'year 2'. Rev. 'Jerusalem the holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 193; Hendin 1358). Nicely toned. Superb extremely fine. \$ 5,000

ex Superior (4-7 June 1984), 1495.

The second year of the Jewish War against Rome (April 67-March 68 CE) saw the Zealot-led rebellion in the Galilee crushed by the forces of Vespasian, soon to become the imperial successor of Nero. During this campaign, the future historian Josephus was famously placed in command of the fortress at Gamla. When it was clear that all was lost, the leadership agreed not to surrender to the Romans, choosing instead to die by killing one other by lot. When all were dead but Josephus and one other man, they both fearing death, surrendered to the Romans. Thanks to this, Josephus lived on for many years, writing his account of the war responsible for coins like this shekel.



- 35** Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver 1/2 Shekel (6.59 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 2 (67/68 CE). 'Half of a Shekel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with pearly rim, the base raised by projections on both ends; above, 'year 2'. Rev. 'Jerusalem the holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 195; Hendin 1359). Nicely Toned. Extremely fine. \$ 4,000

Purchased privately from Superior, March 1985.



- 36 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ Prutah (3.43 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 2 (67/8 CE). 'Year two' (Paleo Hebrew), amphora with broad rim and two handles. Rev. 'The freedom of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), vine leaf on small branch with tendril. (TJC 196; Hendin 1360). Well centered and struck. Nice desert green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 150

Purchased privately from D. Hendin at the NYINC, December 1984.

Although struck by the Jewish rebels against Rome, the the prutot of the Jewish War take much of their typological inspiration from the earlier coinages struck for Judaea by the Roman praetorial government.



- 37 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ Prutah (1.96 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 2 (67/8 CE). 'Year two' (Paleo Hebrew), amphora with broad rim and two handles. Rev. 'The freedom of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), vine leaf on small branch with tendril. (TJC 198; Hendin 1360b). Dark brown patina with light sandy highlights. Extremely fine. \$ 150

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler, October 1987.

Like many of the prutot struck for Judaea under the Roman administration and the Herodian and Hasmonean dynasties, the prutot of the Jewish War were struck on a large scale. Even so we must keep in mind that the "mint" in an ancient society was nothing like the modern factory style mint we understand today. Ancient mints may have been small and with only a few employees. There is evidence that ancient mints produced coins only periodically, and for this reason it is quite likely at some times and in some geographic areas where there was a shortage of small money, irregular issues, such as this coin, were manufactured. The irregular issues were, quite simply, irregular in their manufacture, their design, their legends, and their metallurgy. Irregular coins during the Jewish War were likely made at multiple locations. One thing we definitely know about these irregular coins is that archaeological evidence proves that they were used side-by-side and apparently without discrimination between the regular issues. In this respect they may be considered similar to the Hard Times tokens of the United States or the Condor tokens of England.

Lustrous Year Three Silver Shekel, 66-70 CE



- 38 Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver Shekel (13.99 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 3 (68/9 CE). 'Shekel of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with pearly rim, the base raised by projections on both ends; above, 'year 3'. Rev. 'Jerusalem the holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 202; Hendin 1361). Delicate golden toning. Lustrous. Superb extremely fine. \$ 6,000

Purchased privately from NFA, November 1984.

The third year (April 68-May 69 CE) of the Jewish War saw some slight respite from the Roman advance as the death of Nero plunged the Roman Empire into a civil war into which Vespasian was drawn. However, violence in Jerusalem reached new heights as the Zealot leaders of the crushed northern revolt waged their own civil war against Ananus ben Ananus, the leader of the more moderate priestly authorities. This factional conflict resulted in an ignominious siege of Jerusalem by the Zealots and the slaughter of Ananus and his adherents. Jerusalem the holy, as it is described on the shekels, had been defiled by the blood of its own people before ever the Romans entered the city.



- 39 Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver $\frac{1}{2}$ Shekel (6.69 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 3 (68/9 CE). 'Half of a Shekel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with pearly rim, the base raised by projections on both ends; above, 'year 3'. Rev. 'Jerusalem the holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 203; AJC 19a (this coin); Hendin 1362). Light iridescent toning along the periphery. Extremely fine. \$ 6,000

ex Superior (21 November 1983), lot 44.



- 40 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ Prutah (2.40 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 3 (68/9 CE). 'Year three' (Paleo Hebrew), amphora with broad rim, two handles, and conical lid decorated with tiny globes hanging around edge. Rev. 'The freedom of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), vine leaf on small branch. (TJC 204; Hendin 1363). Earthen-brown patina. Extremely fine. \$ 200

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, November 1992.

Magnificent Year Four Silver Shekel



- 41 Judaea, The Jewish War. Silver Shekel (13.41 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Shekel of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), ritual chalice with pearly rim, the base raised by projections on both ends; above, 'year 4'. Rev. 'Jerusalem the holy' (Paleo-Hebrew), staff with three pomegranate buds, round base. (TJC 207; Hendin 1364). *Very Rare*. Uncleaned and perfectly centered. *Among the finest known examples*. Extremely fine.

\$ 30,000

Purchased privately, November 1984.

The disasters brought by the internecine conflict among the Jewish rebel factions in the third year of the Jewish War turned into horror in the fourth (April 69-March 70 CE) as Titus marched south against Jerusalem and laid siege to the heavily fortified city. The Jews trapped within faced the torment of starvation. Hunger stalked the streets and compelled the Jerusalemites to eat the leather from their shoes, belts, and even the coverings of their shields. Some even descended to cannibalism in order to survive, according to Josephus. By this point, the possibility of redeeming Zion from the Romans was long past and the tragic fall of the Holy City was soon to come.

The Very Rare Jewish War Æ 1/2 (Shekel) Year 4



- 42 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ 1/2 Shekel (17.01 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Year four, half' (Shekel) (Paleo-Hebrew), two lulav branches flanking ethrog (citron). Rev. 'To the redemption of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), palm tree with two bunches of dates, flanked by baskets with dates. (TJC 211; Hendin 1367). Medallion flan. Dark green and brown patina with earthen highlights. Very fine. \$ 5,000

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1995.

The introduction of large bronze denominations in the final year (April 69-March 70 CE) of the Jewish War illustrates the desperate state of the Jewish rebels as they struggled to defend Jerusalem against the Roman forces led by Titus and against the violent rifts in the rebel leadership. Silver denominations from this disastrous year are very rare, suggesting that silver had become more difficult to obtain in the Holy City. Josephus even provides us with the scene of inhabitants so desperate that they took to swallowing their silver and gold. These large bronzes must have filled in the gaps in the rebel currency system as the horrific end of the war loomed closer; indeed, they carry legends identifying them as a "half," presumably indicating a fiduciary token standing in for a proper silver 1/2 Shekel.



- 43 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ 1/4 Shekel (9.56 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Year four, quarter' (Paleo-Hebrew), two lulav branches. Rev. 'To the redemption of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), etrog. (TJC 213; Hendin 1368). Lovely dark green patina with flecks of red and sandy highlights. Choice very fine. \$ 2,500

ex Superior (1-2 December 1990), lot 2219.

The lulav branches and etrog types depicted on the token bronze quarter shekels of the fourth year (April 69-March 70 CE) of the Jewish War refer to Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, which was both a harvest celebration and a commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. This typology may appear at this time because the rebels had reached the point of no return and had no hope of surviving the coming Roman onslaught without divine aid.



- 44 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ ¼ Shekel (8.47 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Year four, quarter' (Paleo-Hebrew), two lulav branches. Rev. 'To the redemption of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), etrog. (TJC 213; Hendin 1368). Uncleaned. Very fine. \$ 1,500

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, August 1988.



- 45 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ ⅛ Shekel (5.20 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Year four' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav branch flanked by an etrog on either sider. Rev. 'To the redemption of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), chalice with pearly rim. (TJC 214; Hendin 1369). Pleasing green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 400

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, June 1987.

The bronze eighth denomination of the fourth year (April 69-March 70 CE) of the Jewish War is remarkable for its use of the pearly chalice type on the reverse when this had previously been reserved for silver shekels and fractions. It may signal that this denomination, although unmarked, was intended as a token representing a value in silver.

- 46 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ ⅛ Shekel (4.47 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Year four' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav branch flanked by an etrog on either sider. Rev. 'To the redemption of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), chalice with pearly rim. (TJC 214; Hendin 1369). Reddish-brown patina. Extremely fine. \$ 400

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, November 1985.



47 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ 1/8 Shekel (5.60 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Year four' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav branch flanked by an etrog on either side. Rev. 'To the redemption of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), chalice with pearly rim. (TJC 214; Hendin 1369). Attractive desert-green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 400

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1998.



48

BAR KOKHBA by David Hendin

The coins of Bar Kokhba have been written about significantly and eloquently by Barag, Mildenberg, Meshorer, Kaufman, Reifenberg, Romanoff, Eshel, Adler, Zissu, myself, and others.

Today's scholars have had the chance to absorb and consolidate earlier information. and because of this, I am able to make some observations that may have previously escaped earlier generations as well as myself. This short essay will discuss a few of these aspects. While a number of the Bar Kokhba coins listed in this catalog also have individual notes, it is hoped that the reader will benefit from this consolidation.



47 Judaea, The Jewish War. Æ 1/8 Shekel (5.60 g), 66-70 CE. Jerusalem, year 4 (69/70 CE). 'Year four' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav branch flanked by an etrog on either sider. Rev. 'To the redemption of Zion' (Paleo-Hebrew), chalice with pearly rim. (TJC 214; Hendin 1369). Attractive desert-green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 400

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1998.



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1. THE TEMPLE.

The Temple portrayed on the sela'im (tetradrachms) of Bar Kokhba is a stylized version of a messianic approach to how an idealized Jerusalem Temple. It combines both fantasy and reality. It was created by competent die engravers who were not fine artists, hence the elegant but two dimensional images. By all accounts the façade to the Jerusalem temple had four columns with twelve steps leading up to it, which are portrayed under the temple as a horizontal ladder—usually with 10-12 divisions. It was previously described as a “fence” or a “colonnade” neither of which are mentioned in the sources.

Isadore Goldstein observed that the wavy line, the cross, and the rosette over the Temple are not fanciful, but have a literal meaning. And their meaning has nothing to do with one translation of Bar Kokhba's name “son of the star.” Nor does the cross relate to Christianity. The Mishna states that “a golden vine was positioned over the entrance to the sanctuary and hung over the beams” (m. Midd. 3.8). The vine was used to hang donated objects, often in the form of golden grapes and vine leaves that were brought by pilgrims who came from near and far. The wavy line seems to represent that vine.

Another portion of Mishnah (m. Yom. 3:10) refers to a gift to the Temple by Helena, Queen of Adiabene, who “set a golden candelabra over the door of the Sanctuary. Helena was a converted Jew, who visited Jerusalem and was buried there around 56 CE. Rabbinic literature says that Helena's candelabra sparkled with rays and reflected light that could be seen from many places in Jerusalem. Thus the star and the cross apparently represent this well-publicized bright light hung above the entrance to the Temple.

The object in the center of the temple was described by Barag as the show-bread table, and others have described it as a Holy Ark in which we can see the ends of the scrolls. This would be a highly messianic description since the Holy Ark never stood in the Second Temple, it disappeared after the destruction of the First Temple.

2. BAR KOKHBA'S NAME.

We learned from the Bar Kokhba letters discovered in the Judean desert in the mid-20th century, that his name was Simon ben Kosiba (“ben” is the Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew “bar”). Admirers later called him bar Kokhba (son of the star) but those who were disappointed that he was a false Messiah, referred to him for years as “ben Koziba” (son of the lie).

Before the discovery of the Bar Kokhba letters, the only knowledge we had about this man's first name was on coins struck during his revolt, which referred to him as “Simon.”

3. ELEAZAR THE PRIEST.

In a 2014 article in the *Israel Numismatic Journal* (18:155 – 167), I proposed that Eleazar was not a living person—such as Eleazar ben Azaria, of a priestly family and an eminent rabbi or Bar Kokhba's uncle, Eleazar of Modi'in. Instead I suggested that the use of the name Eleazar is a messianic and heroic reference to Eleazar the Priest, son of the biblical Aaron, whose name was known to every Jew of Bar Kokhba's time. When the already-legendary Joshua crossed the Jordan River to conquer Canaan, Eleazar the Priest was at his side. Eleazar's persona was directly related to various aspects of Bar Kokhba's cause: first, the redemption of Jerusalem; second, the rebuilding of the Temple, and finally, at least in the eyes of Bar Kokhba's early rabbinic loyalists, the coming of the Messiah.

Bar Kokhba's letters show him to be quite a micro-manager, as well as a self-focused leader. It seems unlikely that he would share the leadership role by putting the names of low ranking officials on his coins.

4. INSCRIPTIONS.

The paleo Hebrew inscriptions on the Bar Kokhba coins are often jumbled or abbreviated. We are not aware of all of the reasons for this. Illiteracy of the ancient script, not otherwise in use during the second century CE, among designers and engravers and available space might have been among them. But the use of the first three letters of Simon's name, which are the same letters as the name of the essential Jewish prayer, the "Shema" (or Sma on the coins) must not have been accidental. Ancient sources also tell us that early in his revolt, Bar Kokhba recited the Shema as he rode into battle—as did generations of Jews before him. But near the end of the war, with his successes against Hadrian's army shattered, his revised prayer before battle was for the Lord "neither help me nor hinder me...." This represents a gradual separation of Bar Kokhba from the rabbis who originally supported him such as the great Rabbi Akiba. Once the war was lost, Bar Kokhba was viewed as a false messiah.

5. MOTIFS

Virtually all of the motifs on the coins of Bar Kokhba are related directly to either a messianic view of the Jerusalem Temple or the holiday of Sukkot, Feast of the Tabernacles (booths). It was possibly the most popular Jewish holiday in ancient times and one of the three pilgrimage festivals in the time of the Second Temple (the other two were Passover and Shavout [Pentecost]). Sukkot was referred to as "the festival of the Lord" or simply "the festival".

In Leviticus the Jews are commanded to "take you on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook, and ye shall rejoice....Ye shall dwell in booths for seven days..." (Lev. 23: 39 – 43). These four species, including the citron, a lemon-like fruit, myrtle twigs (hadasim); palm branch (lulav) and willows (aravot) made up the lulab and etrog shown on Bar Kokhba's sela'im. The musical instruments, palm and willow branches, trumpets, jugs, and even date palm trees are all related to this holiday.

6. MINTING

Unlike previous Jewish rulers, Bar Kokhba inherited no infrastructure whatsoever, since Jerusalem and its Temple had been destroyed more than 60 years earlier by the army of Vespasian and Titus. It was thus a major convenience for Bar Kokhba's tiny government to restrike the circulating bronze and silver coins, rather than create a full mint with a smelting operation. Every known Bar Kokhba coin was struck upon a previously circulating coin of silver or bronze. Sometimes the previous coin can be discerned, sometimes the merest traces can be seen. It seems clear that this use of circulating coinage was much more a matter of opportunity than the oft-repeated statement that the primary reason for over-striking the Roman coins was to make a political statement.

Bar Kokhba's overall minting operation, had quite good quality control, since other than being off center, there are rarely double struck or other mis-struck coins that entered circulation.

Bar Kokhba's government operated at least two different mints. In no case do the dies of "irregular" coins combine with the dies of "regular" coins. To date, however, we have no real clues as to why the irregular mint (or mints) existed.

Exceptional Quality - Highly Important Year One Silver Sela



- 48 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.21 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 3 (O1/R3); TJC 218; Hendin 1373).
Exceptional quality and nice toning. Superb extremely fine. \$ 60,000

ex Leu 91 (10 May 2004), lot 295.

The Year 1 (132-33 CE) Sela of the Bar Kokhba Revolt classically depicts, on the reverse, the four species of the holiday of Succos which are observed by Jews even today. According to the Talmud, the four species consist of one citron (etrog), one palm fond (lulav) on each side of which are three (3) myrtle twigs (hadassim) and two (2) willow twigs (aravos). However, Rabbi Akiva suggested that there should be only one myrtle twig on one side and one willow twig on the other side of the palm fond (lulav). His opinion was not accepted. Nonetheless, since Rabbi Akiva felt that Simon Bar Kokhba was the Jewish Messiah and it may be noted that on all the selas (tetradrachmas) of Bar Kokhba, on close inspection, there appears to be only one myrtle and one willow as in the opinion of Rabbi Akiva. Another interesting observation on many of the Bar Kokhba selas (tetradrachms), the depicted etrog has a constriction in the middle as if it is wearing a belt or "garter". Many Jews today prefer such an etrog, with a "garter", on their own clothes (Hassidic custom). This may be indicative of the belt separating the upper "clean" part of the body from the lower.

The Bar Kokhba War (132-135 CE) broke out when Hadrian decided to refound Jerusalem - still largely ruined from the disastrous Jewish Revolt (66-73 CE) - as the pagan city of Aelia Capitolina. Although Jewish discontent had already erupted into violence in the Diaspora during the reign of Trajan, the Jews of Judaea seem not to have risen up against the Romans until this threatened abomination against the site of the Temple and the surrounding Holy City. The leader of this new rebellion, which took the form of a bloody guerilla war, was Simon bar Kokhba who had messianic pretensions and gained a reputation as a great warrior. Unfortunately, although Bar Kokhba managed to make Hadrian pay dearly for Aelia Capitolina, when the emperor assembled an army of six full legions to invade Judaea in 134 CE the rebellion was soon crushed. In punishment almost the entirety of Judaea was laid waste by the victorious Romans and the Jewish population destroyed or driven out.

In order to fund the rebellion, Bar Kokhba and his supporters used what circulating coins they could find or capture from the Romans and restruck them with new types more suitable for their revolutionary purposes. The most remarkable and desirable of the new types were used for the silver sela overstruck primarily on Syrian and Phoenician tetradrachms. The obverse features a depiction of the façade of the Jerusalem Temple with an uncertain object inside, which has been variously interpreted as the show bread table or the Ark of the Covenant. It has been suggested that the Bar Kokhba rebels intended to rebuild the Temple, but the presence of either the show bread table or the Ark - items lost at the end of the Jewish Revolt or earlier - seems to imply that the image represents the idea of the Temple to rally support rather than any real edifice planned by the Bar Kokhba rebels. The reverse type looks back to the coinage of the Jewish Revolt in its depiction of the lulav and etrog associated with the Fest of Tabernacles.

Extremely Rare Year One Bar Kokhba Silver Zuz



- 49 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Zuz (3.15 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), jug with handle; at right, willow branch. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), grape bunch with branch and small leaf. (Mildenberg 1 (O1/R1); TJC 219; Hendin 1374). Overstruck on a denarius of Trajan, with legend and portrait on host coin partially visible. Choice very fine. \$ 20,000

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler, March 1990.

The silver zuzim of the Bar Kokhba War were regularly overstruck on Roman imperial denarii and provincial drachms from Capadocia and Bostra that had been captured by the rebels from the invading Roman forces. The types seem to be influenced by the bronze prutot of the earlier Jewish Revolt (66-73 CE) which featured an amphora and a vine leaf. The zuzim of the Bar Kokhba War mirror this typology by depicting a one-handed jug on the obverse and a grape bunch on the reverse, and those of the first year of the war (132/3 CE) are especially notable because they name "Eleazar the priest," a mysterious figure who disappears from the coins in the subsequent years of issue except for some mules. It is often suggested that he is none other than Rabbi Eleazar of Modein, an uncle of Simon bar Kokhba who seems to have lent his religious authority to the cause of war against the Romans. Later, after having begun doubting his actions and planning to surrender to the forces of Hadrian, Bar Kokhba reportedly kicked him to death.

Very Rare Year One 'Abu Jara'



- 50 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Large Bronze (17.95 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), amphora with two handles. (Mildenberg 12 (O3/R4); TJC 221; Hendin 1375). *Very Rare*. Dark sandy green patina on a perfectly round flan. Very fine. \$ 15,000

Purchased privately at the NYINC, December 1993.

Like the silver zuz, the large bronze denomination of the first year (132/3 CE) of the Bar Kokhba War also takes its typological cues from earlier Jewish coinage. The wreathed paleo-Hebrew inscription naming Jerusalem, the coinage was almost certainly inspired by the ubiquitous prutot of the Hasmonean high priests and priest-kings. This hearkened back to the lost glory days of the late second and early first centuries BCE when Judaea was a free and powerful state that struck fear into the hearts of its many pagan neighbors, but it may also have been intended to make a direct connection between Simon bar Kokhba and the Hasmonean dynasty for the sake of legitimacy. It is probably no coincidence that both Bar Kokhba and the Hasmonaeans hailed from the town of Modein in the Judaean Shephelah. The amphora reverse is very similar to that found on prutot of the first failed Jewish Revolt (66-73 CE) and serves to connect the Bar Kokhba War to the previous tragic struggle of the Judaean Jews against Rome.

Very Rare and Impressive Year One 'Abu Jara'



- 51 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Large Bronze (27.62 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), amphora with two handles. (Mildenberg 2 (O1/R2); TJC 220b; Hendin 1376). *Very Rare*. Dark green patina with earthen highlights on a full round flan. Very fine. \$ 15,000

Purchased privately from Superior, December 1987.

This variety of the large bronze denomination of the first year (132/3 CE) of the Bar Kokhba War (132-135 CE) is notable for its obverse paleo-Hebrew legend which does not name Jerusalem within the wreath anymore, but rather Simon [bar Kokhba] as *nasi* (president) of Israel. Although *nasi* is sometimes translated as "prince" rather than "president," it almost certainly refers to Simon bar Kokhba's role as the leader of the Great Sanhedrin (the Jewish religious assembly that originally held court in the Jerusalem Temple before its destruction).

Beautiful Year One 'Abu Jara'



- 52 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Large Bronze (26.75 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), amphora with two handles. (Mildenberg 4a (O1/R2; this coin); TJC 220b; Hendin 1376). *Very Rare*. Dark brown patina with sandy-earthen highlights. Choice very fine. \$ 15,000

ex Sugar Collection (Rosenblum 25A, 23 February 1995), lot 85
ex Tomkin Collection.

Another Outstanding Quality Year One 'Abu Jara'



- 53 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Large Bronze (26.28 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), amphora with two handles. (Mildenberg 6 (O1/R6); TJC 220b; Hendin 1376). *Very Rare*. Sandy-green desert patina. Choice very fine. \$ 15,000

Purchased privately from E. Waddell at the NYINC, January 2003.



- 54 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Medium Bronze (8.83 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), palm branch within wreath. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo Hebrew), wide lyre with five strings. (Mildenberg 20 (O1/R1); TJC 223; Hendin 1377). *Very rare - only seven specimens from this die combination cited by Mildenberg.* Lovely earthen green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 1,250

Purchased privately from D. Hendin at the NYINC, December 1994.

The reverse type of this and the following two middle bronze denominations of the first year (132/3 CE) of the Bar Kokhba War is commonly identified as a nevel, a stringed instrument thought to have been similar to the Greek chelys. Although the kinnor - a related instrument similar to the Greek kithara - was prescribed as an instrument to be played in the Jerusalem Temple, the nevel had an even more important status in some rabbinical Jewish traditions. It was said that the world was actually sung into existence to the accompaniment of a perfect 22-stringed nevel. The reverberating notes of these strings subsequently became the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Considering the messianic flavor of the Bar Kokhba revolt one wonders whether the nevel type alludes to a new creation for Judaea free from Roman oppression. The palm branch on the obverse may perhaps celebrate the early victories of the Bar Kokhba rebels during "year one of the redemption of Israel."



- 55 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Medium Bronze (12.52 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), palm branch within wreath. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), wide lyre with four strings. (Mildenberg 25 (O1/R6); TJC 223; Hendin 1377). *Very rare only four specimens from this die combination cited by Mildenberg.* Nice green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 1,250

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, March 1993.



- 56 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Medium Bronze (14.97 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), palm branch within wreath. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), wide lyre with five strings. (Mildenberg 25 (O1/R6); TJC 223; Hendin 1377). Green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 1,250

ex Jascha Heifetz Collection, pt. 2 (Superior, 9-10 December 1989), lot 2836.



- 57 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Medium Bronze (17.23g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), vine leaf on tendril. (Mildenberg 34a (O1/R6; this coin); TJC 222; Hendin 1378). This coin illustrated in Mildenberg and cited as one of the five best examples out of around fifty known. Brown patina with green encrustations. Extremely fine. \$ 1,000

ex Abraham Bromberg Collection, Part I (Superior, 5 December 1991), lot 240;

ex NFA III (27 March 1976), lot 119;

ex Glendining's (5 March 1970), lot 174.

The vine leaf reverse of this and the following middle bronze denomination of the first year (132/3 CE) of the Bar Kokhba War may have been inspired by the prutot of the earlier failed Jewish Revolt (66-73 CE) that employed a similar type. In this way the Bar Kochba War was presented as a continuation of the earlier fight and lent it legitimacy in historical terms. The palm tree was a symbol of Judaea going back at least to the time of the Jewish Revolt since it regularly appears on Roman coins in conjunction with Jewish captives under Vespasian and his successors. The seven branches consciously recall the seven arms of the menorah, perhaps the Jewish symbol par excellence. The palm tree was also prominent on coins of the Galilean city of Sepphoris, which became an important center of rabbinic Judaism after the Bar Kokhba War.



- 58 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Medium Bronze (14.12 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), vine leaf on tendril. (Mildenberg 38 (O1/R5); TJC 222; Hendin 1378). Green patina with earthen overtones. About extremely fine. \$ 700

ex Goldberg 48 (16 September 2008), lot 1846.



- 59 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Medium Bronze (12.05 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Simon, Prince of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), vine leaf on tendril. (Mildenberg 46 (O2/R11); TJC 222a; Hendin 1378). Green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 700

Purchased privately from H. Kriednler, October 1994.



- 60** Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Medium Bronze (12.47 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Sma' (abbreviating Simon; Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), vine leaf on tendril. (Mildenberg 167 (O6/R6); TJC 258; Hendin 1379a). *Very rare - only 4 examples cited by Mildenberg.* Brown patina with sandy highlights. Choice very fine. \$ 1,000

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, July 1989.

This is a so-called irregular issue of the main year 1 middle bronze palm tree series. Like all of the irregular issues of the Bar Kokhba War (132-135 CE), it is distinguished by crude engraving and errors in the legends. These irregularities indicate either the use of unskilled die cutters at the Bar Kokhba mint(s) or that these particular issues were produced in haste and otherwise difficult circumstances. features an obverse legend that abbreviates the name of Simon bar Kokhba and his title as *nasi* (president) of Israel to the three letters SMA. It is the type common to year 2 medium bronzes, but here is paired with a reverse of year 1.



- 61** Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Small Bronze (6.32 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), bunch of grapes with branch and small leaf. (Mildenberg 150 (O1/R4); TJC 224; Hendin 1380). Earthen-green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 600

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, November 1985.

The small bronze denomination of the first year (132/3 CE) of the Bar Kokhba War is typologically connected to the middle bronze palm tree denominations. The palm tree emblem of Judaea appears again on the obverse, but on the reverse the vine leaf of the middle bronze denomination is replaced by a grape bunch.



- 62 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Small Bronze (5.63 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), bunch of grapes with branch and small leaf. (Mildenberg 147 (O1/R1); TJC 224; Hendin 1380a). Attractive desert brown and green patina. Superb extremely fine. \$ 750

Purchased privately from Superior at the NYINC, December 1988.

This example of the year 1 small bronze denomination exhibits the irregularity of a retrograde paleo-Hebrew inscription. Evidently the engraver did not understand that he needed to cut the letters backwards into the die in order for them to appear properly on the finished coin. Also interesting is that it shares its reverse die with the silver zuzim of year 1, cf. (Mildenberg series II, 1, die O1).



- 63 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Small Bronze (5.01 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), bunch of grapes with branch and small leaf. (Mildenberg 149 (O1/R3); TJC 224a; Hendin 1380c). *Very rare - only five examples cited in Mildenberg.* Dark earthen-green patina. Extremely fine. \$ 600

ex NFA XXVI (14 August 1991), lot 160.

This small bronze denomination variety of the first year (132/3 CE) of the Bar Kochba War is notable for the variant form of its paleo-Hebrew obverse inscription.

Very Rare H-1381 Year One Small Bronze



- 64 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Small Bronze (4.36 g), 132-135 CE. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), bunch of grapes with branch and small leaf. (Mildenberg 151 (O1/R5); TJC 227; Hendin 1381). *Very rare*. Green patina with earthen highlights. Nearly extremely fine. \$ 2,000

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler, November 1997.

This small bronze denomination is linked to the silver sela'im and one series of large bronze denominations of the first year (132/3 CE) of the Bar Kochba War through the use of a paleo-Hebrew legend naming Jerusalem instead of Simon bar Kochba.



- 65 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Æ Small Bronze (4.81 g), 132-135 CE. Irregular issue. Year 1 (132/3 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo-Hebrew), seven-branched palm tree with two bunches of dates. Rev. 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), bunch of grapes with branch and small leaf. (Mildenberg 227 (O3/R3); TJC 228; Hendin 1381b). *Extremely rare - (Mildenberg cites just one specimen)*. Dark green patina. Very fine. \$ 1,000

Purchased privately, January 1988.

Besides dated Year One, the coarse style and the leaf-like treatment of the grape bunch identify this as the product of the irregular rebel mint. The rarity of this particular issue may be gauged by the fact that only one specimen was cited by (Mildenberg).

Very Rare Hybrid Year One / Year Two Silver Zuz



- 66 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Zuz (3.33 g), 132-135 CE. Hybrid year 1, year 2 (132/3-133/4 CE). 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), bunch of grapes with branch and small leaf. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), palm branch. (Mildenberg 10 (O2/R8); TJC 237; Hendin 1382). Boldly struck and delicately toned. Superb extremely fine. \$ 9,000

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, October 1989
ex Maltiel-Gerstenfeld Collection.

This and the following zuz represent hybrid coins struck from two reverse dies, one from the first year (132/3 CE) and the other from the second year (133/4 CE) of the Bar Kokhba War. According to (Mildenberg's die studies, the Year 1 / 2 hybrids were struck quite early in the second year.

Phenomenal Hybrid Year One / Year Two Silver Zuz



- 67 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Zuz (3.06 g), 132-135 CE. Hybrid year 1, year 2 (132/3-133/4 CE). 'Year one of the redemption of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), bunch of grapes with branch and small leaf. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), wide lyre with three strings and four dots on sound box. (Mildenberg 9 (O1/R7); TJC 236; Hendin 1383). *Very rare - only six examples cited by Mildenberg.* Struck on a huge flan. Superb. Nearly mint state. \$ 10,000

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, May 1991.



- 68 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Zuz (2.71 g), 132-135 CE. Hybrid year 1, year 2 (132/3-133/4 CE). 'Sma' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath of thin branches wrapped around eight almonds, with a medallion at top and tendrils at bottom. Rev. 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), fluted jug with handle on left; in right field, palm branch. (Mildenberg 3 (O3/R1); TJC 235; Hendin 1384). Magnificent quality, one of the finest known. Delicately toned. Superb extremely fine. \$ 4,000

ex Superior (9-10 December 1994), lot 822.

This and the following three hybrid zuzim mule two obverse dies of different years of the Bar Kochba War. The wreathed obverse die with the abbreviated name of Simon bar Kochba belongs to the second year (132/3 CE) while the jug obverse die belongs to the first year and names Eleazar the priest. It has been suggested that Simon's name is abbreviated here (and on other coins) in such a way that it could also be read as the word *shema* ("hear"), the first word in Deuteronomy 6: 4 ("Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is One.") which is the centerpiece of morning and evening Jewish prayer known as the *Shema Yisrael* and the most important prayer in Judaism. Literature suggests that the Shema prayer served as a rallying cry for the Bar Kochba rebels.



- 69 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Zuz (3.01 g), 132-135 CE. Hybrid year 1, year 2 (132/3-133/4 CE). 'Sma' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath of thin branches wrapped around eight almonds, with a medallion at top and tendrils at bottom. Rev. 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), fluted jug with handle on left; in right field, palm branch. (Mildenberg 4 (O3/R2); TJC 235; Hendin 1384). *Very rare - only six specimens cited in Mildenberg.* Superb extremely fine. \$ 4,000

ex Dr. Jonathan A. Herbst Collection (Superior, 8-9 December 1995), lot 1250.



- 70 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Zuz (3.23 g), 132-135 CE. Hybrid year 1, year 2 (132/3-133/4 CE). 'Sma' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath of thin branches wrapped around eight almonds, with a medallion at top and tendrils at bottom. Rev. 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), fluted jug with handle on left; in right field, palm branch. (Mildenberg 7 (O4/R5); TJC 235; Hendin 1384). Toned. Extremely fine. \$ 4,000

ex Abraham Bromberg Collection, part II (Superior, 10 December 1992), lot 442.



- 71 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Zuz (3.52 g), 132-135 CE. Hybrid year 1, year 2 (132/3-133/4 CE). 'Sma' (Paleo-Hebrew) within wreath of thin branches wrapped around eight almonds, with a medallion at top and tendrils at bottom. Rev. 'Eleazar the priest' (Paleo-Hebrew), fluted jug with handle on left; in right field, palm branch. (Mildenberg 5 (O3/R3); TJC 235; Hendin 1384). *Rare - only nine examples cited in Mildenberg.* Boldly struck. Superb extremely fine. \$ 4,000

Purchased privately, June 1988.

Ex Bromberg Cover Coin Year Two Silver Sela



- 72 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.02 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 9.8 (O1/R8; this coin); TJC 229; Hendin 1385). *Rare - only ten specimens cited by Mildenberg.* The cover coin from Bromberg II, and overstruck on a tetradrachm of Nero from Antioch. Toned. Superb extremely fine. \$ 10,000

ex Abraham Bromberg Collection, part. II (Superior, 10 December 1992), lot 394 (cover coin)
ex Beit Mirsim Hoard.

Very Rare H-1385 Hybrid Year Two Silver Sela



- 73 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.02 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 7 (O1/R5); TJC 229; Hendin 1385). *Very rare - only six specimens cited by Mildenberg.* Toned. Nearly extremely fine. \$ 8,000

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler, November 2003.

A hybrid issue as this sela was struck with an obverse die used on the first year of issue.

Exceptional Quality Year Two Silver Sela



- 74 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.46 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, + dividing legend. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 10O2/R8); TJC 229; Hendin 1386). Beautifully toned. Superb extremely fine. \$ 7,000

Purchased privately from D. Hendin, July 1988.

Extremely Rare (Mildenberg 12 - Year Two Sela



- 75 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.00 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, + dividing legend. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 12 (O2/R7); TJC 229; Hendin 1386). *Extremely rare - Mildenberg cites just two specimens.* Darkly toned. About extremely fine. \$ 7,000

Purchased privately from Antiqua at the NYINC, January 2003.

Well Pedigreed Year Two Silver Sela



- 76 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.88 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, +. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 14 (O3/R8); TJC 230a; Hendin 1387). Toned.
Extremely fine. \$ 7,000

ex Dr. Jonathan A. Herbst Collection (Superior, 8-9 December 1995) lot 1261
ex Abramowitz Collection (Superior Stamp & Coin Co. Inc. December 8, 1993), lot 86
ex Hess-Leu 36, lot 348

Magnificent Quality Year Two Silver Sela



- 77 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.32 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, +. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 16 (O4/R10); TJC 230a; Hendin 1387). *Extremely Rare - only one cited by Mildenberg.* Lustrous superb extremely fine. \$ 7,000

Purchased privately from I. Goldberg, September 1998.

This sela and the following six examples also represent the regular issues of the second year (133/4 CE) of the Bar Kokhba War. As with all sela'im, the reverse type depicts the lulav bundle and the etrog (citron). As discussed earlier this fruit and branch combination was used at the festival of Sukkot. While the Jerusalem Temple stood, the lulav and etrog were used only on the first day of the 7-day holiday. But after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, Rabbi Johanan ben Zaki said they should be used for each of the seven days of the festival in memory of the ruined Jerusalem Temple. Thus they both symbolized the tragic past and pointed to a possible messianic future.

Phenomenal Quality Year Two Silver Sela



- 78 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.10 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, +. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 18 (O4/R12); TJC 230a; Hendin 1387). *Extremely Rare - only one specimen cited by Mildenberg.* Virtually as struck. Lustrous Nearly mint state. \$ 7,000

Purchased privately from Antiqua at the NYINC, January 2007.

Marvelous Quality Year Two Silver Sela



- 79 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.44 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, +. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 22 (O4/R15); TJC 230a; Hendin 1387). *Incredibly well struck and perfectly centered. Superb extremely fine.* \$ 7,000

Purchased from Frank Sternberg via H. Kreindler, January 10, 1996.



- 80 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (14.71 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, +. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 25 (O5/R16); TJC 230a; Hendin 1387). *Extremely Rare - just two specimens cited by Mildenberg.* Lustrous surfaces. Superb extremely fine. \$ 7,000

Purchased privately from I. Goldberg, June 2001.



- 81 Judaea, Bar Kokhba Revolt. Silver Sela (13.78 g), 132-135 CE. Year 2 (133/4 CE). 'Jerusalem' (Paleo Hebrew), tetrastyle façade of the Temple of Jerusalem; show bread table or Ark of the Covenant in chest form with semicircular lid and short legs, seen from a narrow side; above façade, +. Rev. 'Year two of the freedom of Israel' (Paleo-Hebrew), lulav with etrog at left. (Mildenberg 20 (O4/R10); TJC 230a; Hendin 1387). *Extremely Rare - only two specimens cited by Mildenberg.* Nicely toned. Extremely fine. \$ 5,000

Purchased privately from H. Kriendler, December 1994.

The outline of the emperor's head and one or two letters are clear on this coin, but not enough to identify the undertype.