

CENTRE FOR COINS, CULTURE AND RELIGIOUS HISTORY

USING CCCRH MATERIALS AS TEACHING RESOURCES

This example is based on learning units from the K-12 RE Curriculum Framework at Clarence Valley Anglican School.

Year 5	Term 1: <u>Galilee, Geography and History</u> Term 2: <u>From the Maccabees to Herod</u> Term 3: <u>Refugees and Exiles</u> Term 4: <u>Icons and Mosaics</u>
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5.2 From the Maccabees to Herod

For almost 200 years prior to the birth of Jesus, the Jewish community in Palestine was struggling to find its place in the new international order created by Alexander the Great and then reinforced by the Roman Empire.

KLA: *Australian colonisation*

CCCRH MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR SHORT TERM LOAN

Coins from Seleucid, Hasmonean and Herodian periods

- (see following pages for a brief list of typical coins available for loan)

First-century writing equipment:

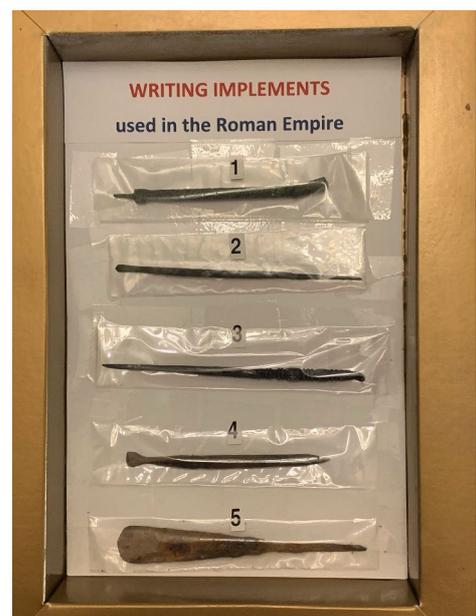
- Clay lamp and phial, 1st century CE
- Papyrus fragment, 100 BCE – 200 CE
- Roman ink well with writing implements

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- Please visit the CCCRH website: www.cccrh.org
- Contact the CCCRH Director, Dr Greg Jenks: 0426067344 or gregjenks@me.com



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REPRESENTATIVE COINS

Seleucid Empire • Hasmonean • Herodian • Early Roman

After the Maccabean revolt in 167 BCE Judea was ruled by members of the Hasmonean family until 40 BCE, at which time Herod secured recognition as “king of the Jews” by the Roman Senate.

1. **Silver coin of the Seleucid king Antiochus II (261–246 BCE) minted at Seleucia on the Tigris.**



Obverse: Antiochus I (his father). Reverse: Apollo seated on the Omphalos.

2. **Silver coin of the Seleucid king, Demetrius II (2nd reign 129–125 BCE) minted at Tyre in 127 BCE.**



Obverse: Demetrius II. Reverse: eagle.

Demetrius was captured by the Parthians but released after ten years.

3. **Silver coin of Tyre with the date 100 BCE.**



Obverse: Heracles (Hercules). Reverse: eagle.

The Jews paid the temple tax with these coins which were issued from 126 BCE when Tyre became self-governing. These coins had very high silver values and were the only coins accepted by the priests at the Jerusalem Temple despite the pagan god, Hercules, on the obverse.

4. Small bronze coin of Alexander Jannaeus, 104–76 BCE.



Obverse: star with Hebrew letters. Reverse: anchor with Greek letters.

Alexander Jannaeus conquered Galilee and brought it under direct rule from Jerusalem for the first time. He minted a large number of coins and they remained in use long after his death. This coin was most likely the 'Widow's Mite' mentioned in Mark 12:41–44.

The **star** refers to Numbers 24:17 (A star shall arise out of Jacob). The **anchor** probably refers to his conquest of coastal cities. Hebrew letters surround the star, and Greek letters surround the anchor. This dual language reflects the nationalistic aspirations of the Hasmoneans as well as their 'real world' context in the Hellenistic world.

5. Bronze coin of Mattathias Antigonus, King of Judea (40–37 BCE).

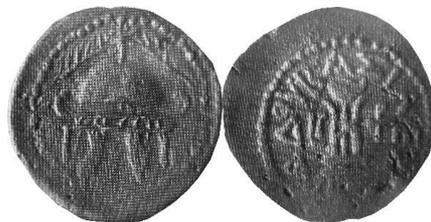


Obverse: 2 cornucopias with Hebrew letters. Reverse: wreath with Greek letters.

Cornucopias symbolize prosperity and the Hebrew words mean 'Mattatayah the High Priest and Council of the Jews'. The Greek words around the **wreath** mean 'of King Antigonus'.

Antigonus was the last of the Hasmonean rulers, and was deposed by his brother-in-law, Herod, who had been appointed "king of the Jews" by the Roman Senate in 40 BCE. After capturing Jerusalem in 37 BCE, Herod had Antigonus killed.

6. Bronze coin of Herod I, (40) 37–4 BCE.



Obverse: helmet with cheek plates. Reverse: bowl on a tripod with Greek letters.

Herod secured recognition as "king of the Jews" by the Roman Senate in 40 BCE prior to taking total control in 37 BCE. He is better known as Herod the Great.

7. Silver coin of the Roman emperor Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE) minted at Seleucia in Pieria in 6 CE.



Obverse: Augustus. Reverse: thunderbolt (symbol of Jupiter) on a stand. St Paul began his missionary journeys when he sailed out of Seleucia harbour.

8. Denarius of the Roman emperor Tiberius (14–37 CE) minted at Lugdunum in Gaul.



Obverse: Tiberius. Reverse: seated woman (probably Livia, Tiberius' mother). This coin is commonly thought to be the one shown to Jesus in Mark 12:15.

9. Bronze coin of Herod Archelaus, ruler of Judea (4 BCE–6 CE).



Obverse: helmet with a caduceus to the left. Reverse: bunch of grapes on a vine with a leaf. Archelaus is mentioned in Matthew 2:19–23.

10. Bronze coin of Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee (4 BCE–39 CE).



Obverse: 'Tiberias' in a wreath. Reverse: upright reed.

Tiberias was Antipas' capital city which he founded around 20 CE and named in honour of the new Roman emperor, Tiberius. Jesus may refer to the reed (growing by the edge of the lake) as a symbol for Antipas in Luke 7:24.

11. Bronze coin of Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea 26–36 CE, minted at Jerusalem in 29 CE.



Obverse: 3 ears of grain with the name 'Livia Caesar' (Tiberius' mother). Reverse: a ladle (symbol of the Roman high-priest, i.e. Tiberius). Jesus was crucified in 30 CE.

12. Bronze coin of Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea 26–36 CE, minted at Jerusalem in 31 CE.



Obverse: date (year 18) in a wreath. Reverse: a *lituus* (a staff curved at the top, used in divination and here referring to Tiberius).

13. Bronze coin of Agrippa I, King of Judea 37–44 CE.



Obverse: an umbrella with a fringe (held over royal persons). Reverse: 3 ears of grain. Agrippa I features in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 12.

14. Billon (silver alloy) coin of the Roman emperor Nero, 54–68 CE, minted at Alexandria in Egypt in 64 CE.



Obverse: Nero wears a radiate crown. Reverse: Sarapis (a popular god).