

Bible History to Read and Talk About

The Rise of Rome: Daniel 2:40

The city of Rome was founded around 750 BC, though at first it was just a small town. The Roman Republic was founded around 500 BC and eventually became a mighty nation during the Punic Wars with Carthage in the 200s and 100s BC. Julius Caesar was the mightiest of the powerful Roman generals, but when he sought to make himself Emperor of Rome in 44 BC (destroying the Republic), he was assassinated.

- Discuss together the description of the fourth empire in Daniel. Do you think the Roman Empire fits this description? Why or why not?

Augustus Caesar: Luke 2:1

Octavian was both a schoolboy AND the heir of Julius Caesar when Caesar was assassinated. However, since he was named as the successor to Julius Caesar, he left school and began learning how to run a country. One of Caesar's best generals, Mark Antony, was pretty upset

by all of this, since he thought HE was the right one to take over from Caesar. So, he formed an army, joined forces with Cleopatra, and went to war against Octavian. Octavian beat them fair and square, which made all of the Romans very happy because they did not approve of Mark Antony and Cleopatra. The Roman Senate voted Octavian the title "Augustus," which means "great and mighty ruler" and he took the name he had inherited from Julius. That made him known to the world as "Augustus Caesar" or "Caesar Augustus."

- Discuss together how Caesar Augustus was ruler of the Roman Empire just in time to demand that everyone in his empire be counted. That is what brought Joseph and Mary, when she was great with child, to Bethlehem, the City of David.
- Talk about how perfectly God works out His plans—at just the right time! Have you ever seen this in your own life? Tell about it.

Suggested Books for Reading Together

Famous Men of Rome edited by Rob Shearer

This gives a good introduction to the most important men of the Roman Empire.

Augustus Caesar's World by Genevieve Foster

A fascinating book for all ages, which tells the story of Augustus Caesar, describing the world in which he lived.

Fascinating Folks & Exciting Events

Hannibal and the Elephants

Hannibal was a great general in the great city of Carthage, located in North Africa. During the Second Punic War with Rome, Hannibal decided that the best defense was a good offense, so he took 60,000 men, 6,000 horses, and 38 elephants secretly across the Alps into Rome! The Romans were flabbergasted by this attack and by the

fierceness of the war elephants. Hannibal won battle after battle against much larger enemy forces, but he lost the war when the Roman general, Scipio, went to Carthage to destroy it. The rulers of Carthage told Hannibal to come home immediately to defend the city—which ended the war on Roman soil. Within a few years, Rome had won the Second Punic War.