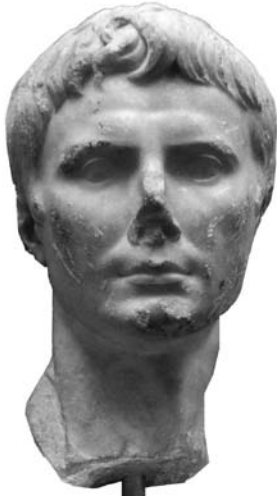


Augustus

Caesar Augustus (Lat. *Imperator Caesari Divi Filius Augustus*) (23 September 63 B.C. – 19 August A.D. 14), known to modern historians as Octavian for the period of his life prior to 27 B.C., is considered the first and one of the most important of the Roman emperors, though he downplayed his own position by preferring the traditional Republican title of *princeps*, usually translated as 'first citizen'. Although he preserved the outward form of the Roman Republic, he ruled as an autocrat for more than forty years, and his rule is the dividing line between the Republic and the Roman Empire. He ended a century of civil wars and gave Rome an era of peace, prosperity and imperial greatness, known as the Pax Romana, the Roman peace. He was married to Livia Drusilla for fifty-one years (information taken from *Wikipedia*).

Picture: Peter Cox (courtesy of the British Museum)



The photograph to the left was taken in the British Museum, and, like most of the statues of Augustus, it shows him as a young man, despite this one being produced in his later years! He is of interest to us as he is named in Luke 2:1 as the ruler of the Roman world at the time of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was Augustus who ordered the census that in turn required Mary and Joseph to enrol in their home town. (The Augustus named in Acts 25:25 is Nero, whose full name was Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus.)

Augustus had the month of August named after himself, which until then had been called Sextilis (the sixth month of the Roman calendar).

Whilst on the subject, we should point out that the 'tax' referred to in the first few verses on Luke 2 (AV) was a registration or enrolment, very similar to our own practice in the UK and many other countries where there is a census every ten years.

Peter Cox