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Roman Emperors of the New Testament Period

Dates	Emperor	Contact with New Testament Concerns
27 BCE–14 CE	Augustus (Octavian)	usually regarded as the first Roman emperor; credited with establishing the <i>Pax Romana</i> ; birth of Jesus during his reign (Luke 2:1)
14–37 CE	Tiberius	ministry and death of Jesus occurred during his reign (Luke 3:1); appointed and later removed Pilate as governor of Judea; his image would have been on the coin shown to Jesus (Mark 12:14–17); see also Luke 23:2; John 19:12, 15; Acts 17:7
37–41 CE	Caligula (Gaius)	established reputation of emperors for cruelty and decadence; demanded that a statue of himself be placed in Jewish temple but died before this could be carried out
41–54 CE	Claudius	installed as a figurehead but turned out to be surprisingly competent; expelled Jews from Rome due to a disturbance over “Chrestus,” which brought Priscilla and Aquila into contact with Paul (Acts 18:1–4); made Herod Agrippa I king over Palestine (Acts 12:1–3)
54–68 CE	Nero	an exemplary ruler during his first five years, then turned self-indulgent and violent; responsible for horrific persecution of Christians; Peter was crucified and Paul beheaded during his reign (ca. 62–64)
69 CE	Galba Otho Vitellius	a time of civil war known as the “Year of Four Emperors”; Galba, Otho, and Vitellius rose to power in quick and forgettable successions before stability was restored under Vespasian
69–79 CE	Vespasian	the Roman general in the war with the Jews; returned to Rome to seize power when Nero died
79–81 CE	Titus	son of Vespasian; took over command of troops when his father became emperor; crushed the Jewish rebellion, destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, and presided over prolonged siege of Masada
81–96 CE	Domitian	reported to have persecuted Christians, but solid evidence for this is lacking; his reign perhaps forms the background for the anti-Roman sentiments in the book of Revelation