

THE PLENARY PLUTARCH SERIES

# PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF JULIUS CAESAR



ANNOTATED & EXPANDED

BY RACHEL LEBOWITZ



**PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF JULIUS CAESAR**  
**PLENARY ANNOTATED STUDY GUIDE**

**THE PLENARY PLUTARCH SERIES**  
**VOLUME 3**

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A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY PRESENTS  
THE PLENARY PLUTARCH SERIES

PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF JULIUS CAESAR  
ANNOTATED EDITION

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK BY  
GEORGE LONG, AUBREY STEWART, AND EDWIN GINN  
ANNOTATED, EDITED, AND EXPANDED BY RACHEL LEBOWITZ



# JULIUS CAESAR

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## PLENARY PREFACE

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### TO PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF JULIUS CAESAR

Thank you for reading Plutarch with The Plenary!

Plutarch was a Greek historian who lived c. 45-120 C.E. He is said to be the very first "biographer" and he wrote biographies of Greek and Roman men in his book *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*. But he didn't just write about the accomplishments of these men, he also wrote about the smaller happenings of their lives in order to give us a glimpse into their characters. This is why Charlotte Mason included Plutarch in her curriculum. It is about evaluating character.

What makes a person great? What makes a person weak? What makes a tyrant? Plutarch shows us that it is the small decisions in a man's life that make up his character. We then get to see the consequences of those decisions. Plutarch does not judge for us. He lays the man's life before us and we are left to judge. It truly is a remarkable way to study character and morality.

Charlotte started her students in Citizenship Studies in Form 2B, or about 4th grade. The student spent a whole year reading *Stories from the History of Rome* by Beesly. This prepared the student for Plutarch by providing the context of Ancient Roman society. Then in Form 2A, or 5th grade, the student started reading one of Plutarch's *Lives* every term. This is the foundation of her character/citizenship teaching. It is not to be missed.

### HOW TO USE THIS PLENARY GUIDE

This Study Guide comes with the original text translated from the Greek. You do not need to purchase anything else to study Plutarch.

We have included several sections written by The Plenary to help the student:

- The Introduction includes biographical information about Plutarch himself.
- A "Who's Who" helps you understand the key players in *Julius Caesar*.
- A Prologue sets the scene in Lesson 1 and gives you essential background information to begin your study of Julius Caesar.
- The Epilogue in Lesson 12 wraps up the Study Guide, connects it to more modern events, and gives the student some important ideas to think about.

Lessons 2-11 include the original text by Plutarch. The text has been edited to remove anything unsuitable for students. You can feel comfortable about handing over this Study Guide to your student for independent use.

For ease of reading, we put the text in the inner column and The Plenary annotations in the outer column. The annotations define vocabulary and phrases and includes some pronunciations. The annotations also provide context to help you understand Plutarch's frequent references to the people, places, and culture of ancient Greece and Rome. **All annotated words are in bold type.**

## PLUTARCH RESOURCES

As you read through the Plutarch Study Guide, you will find references to other resources that connect to the story of Julius Caesar. These include classic paintings, poems, and other items that help further illustrate the text. It is our intent to provide you with these additional resources to bring your Plutarch study alive. All of the additional resources are free and can be found on the Plutarch Resources page of our website under the heading of RESOURCES: PLUTARCH. We encourage you and your student to take advantage of these additional resources.

## PLUTARCH PICTURE STUDY

We offer Picture Study packages to go with each of our Plutarch Guides. The picture studies really bring Plutarch's text to life! It's incredible to see how many famous artists have painted scenes from Plutarch's Lives. The Plutarch Picture Study packages include artwork by Rembrandt, David, Botticelli, and Rubens, just to name a few! The Picture Study comes with detailed information about each painting and includes study questions to connect the artwork to Plutarch's text.

## FREE PARENT/TEACHER GUIDE

To download a free Parent / Teacher Guide to Plutarch's Life of Julius Caesar, go to [CMPLENARY.COM/PLUTARCH-RESOURCES/JULIUS-CAESAR](http://CMPLENARY.COM/PLUTARCH-RESOURCES/JULIUS-CAESAR). The Teacher's Guide includes Lesson summaries, lists of vocabulary, references to artwork included in the Julius Caesar Picture Study, and links to resources.

## A THANK YOU

I hope you will find this Plenary Study Guide helpful in better understanding Plutarch and implementing it in your home. For more resources, please visit our website at [CMPLENARY.COM](http://CMPLENARY.COM).

Thank you for choosing THE PLENARY,

*Rachel Lebowitz*

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## LESSON 3

### LEADER OF THE ROMAN ARMY

Caesar, being out of his **praetorship**, had got the province of Spain, but was in great embarrassment with his creditors, who, as he was going off, came upon him, and were very pressing and **importunate**. This led him to apply himself to **Crassus**, who was the richest man in Rome, but wanted Caesar's youthful vigor and heat to sustain the opposition against Pompey. Crassus took upon him to satisfy those creditors who were most uneasy to him, and would not be put off any longer, and engaged himself to the amount of eight hundred and thirty talents, upon which Caesar was now at liberty to go to his province. In his journey, as he was crossing the Alps, and passing by a small village of the barbarians with but few inhabitants, and those wretchedly poor, his companions asked the question among themselves, by way of mockery, if there were any canvassing for offices there; any contention which should be uppermost, or feuds of great men one against another. To which Caesar made answer, seriously, "For my part, I had rather be the first man among these fellows, than the second man in Rome."

It is said that another time, when free from business in Spain, after reading some part of the history of Alexander, he sat a great while very thoughtful, and at last burst out into tears. His friends were surprised, and asked him the reason of it. "Do you think," said he, "I have not just cause to weep when I consider that Alexander at my age had conquered so many nations, and I have all this time done nothing that is memorable?" As soon as he came into Spain he was very active, and in a few days had got together ten new **cohorts** of foot, in addition to the twenty which were there before. With these he marched against the **Calaici** and **Lusi-**

The elected office of **praetorship** was a magistrate position that ranked just below the office of consul. The office was similar to that of an elected state Governor.

**Importunate** (adj) - persistent, especially to the point of annoyance or intrusion

Marcus Licinius **Crassus** was a Roman general and politician who supported Julius Caesar and opposed Pompey. Plutarch's *Lives* also contains a biography on the life of Crassus.

A **cohort** is a grouping of five hundred soldiers, or one-tenth of a Roman legion.

The **Calaici** and **Lusitani** refer to people living in an area that is now Spain and Portugal before they were conquered by the Romans.

**Imperator** was a title which meant *commander*. This title was given to a Roman general if his troops voted to grant him the title after a great victory. Once an Imperator, a general had a right to use the title after his name. A general had to have the title in order to ask the Senate for a triumph.

The title of Imperator also came with very wide legal power vaguely defined as “the power vested by the state in a person to do what he considers to be in the best interests of the state.”

**tani** and conquered them, and advancing as far as the ocean, subdued the tribes which never before had been subject to the Romans. Having managed his military affairs with good success, he was equally happy in the course of his civil government. He took pains to establish a good understanding amongst the several states, and no less care to heal the differences between debtors and creditors. He ordered that the creditor should receive two parts of the debtor’s yearly income, and that the other part should be managed by the debtor himself, till by this method the whole debt was at last discharged. This conduct made him leave his province with a fair reputation; being rich himself, and having enriched his soldiers, and having received from them the honorable name of **Imperator**.

There is a law among the Romans, that whoever desires the honor of a triumph must stay without the city and expect his answer. And another, that those who stand for the consulship shall appear personally upon the place. Caesar was come home at the very time of choosing consuls, and being in a difficulty between these two opposite laws, sent to the senate to desire that since he was obliged to be absent, he might sue for the consulship by his friends. Cato, being backed by the law, at first opposed his request; afterwards perceiving that Caesar had prevailed with a great part of the senate to comply with it, he made it his business to gain time, and went on wasting the whole day in speaking. Upon which, Caesar thought fit to let the triumph fall, and pursued the consulship. Entering the town and coming forward immediately, he had recourse to a piece of state-policy by which everybody was deceived but Cato. This was the reconciling of Crassus and Pompey, the two men who then were most powerful in Rome. There had been a quarrel between them, which he now succeeded in making up, and by this means strengthened himself by the united power of both, and so under the cover of an action which carried all the ap-

pearance of a piece of kindness and good-nature, caused what was in effect a revolution in the government. For it was not the quarrel between Pompey and Caesar, as most men imagine, which was the origin of the civil wars, but their union, their conspiring together at first to subvert the aristocracy, and so quarrelling afterwards between themselves. Cato, who often foretold what the consequence of this alliance would be, had then the character of a sullen, interfering man, but in the end the reputation of a wise but unsuccessful counsellor.

Thus Caesar being doubly supported by the interests of Crassus and Pompey, was promoted to the consulship, and triumphantly proclaimed with **Calpurnius Bibulus**. When he entered on his office, he brought in bills which would have been preferred with better grace by the most audacious of the tribunes than by a consul, in which he proposed the plantation of colonies and division of lands, simply to please the commonalty. The best and most honorable of the senators opposed it, upon which, as he had long wished for nothing more than for such a **colorable** pretext, he loudly protested how much against his will it was to be driven to seek support from the people, and how the senate's insulting and harsh conduct left no other course possible for him than to devote himself henceforth to the popular cause and interest. And so he hurried out of the senate, and presenting himself to the people, and there placing Crassus and Pompey one on each side of him, he asked them whether they consented to the bills he had proposed. They owned their assent, upon which he desired them to assist him against those who had threatened to oppose him with their swords. They engaged they would, and Pompey added further, that he would meet their swords with a sword and **buckler** too. These words the nobles much resented, as neither suitable to his own dignity, nor becoming the reverence due to the senate, but resembling rather the vehemence of a boy, or

**Calpurnius Bibulus** was a political opponent of Caesar's and was nominated for consul by his party to counter Caesar's policies.

**Colorable** (adj) - correct or justified

A **buckler** was a small, round shield.

the fury of a madman. But the people were pleased with it.

In order to get a yet firmer hold upon Pompey, Caesar, having a daughter, Julia, who had been before contracted to Servilius Caepio, now betrothed her to Pompey, and told Servilius he should have Pompey's daughter, who was not unengaged either, but promised to Sulla's son, Faustus. A little time after, Caesar married **Calpurnia**, the daughter of **Piso**, and got Piso made consul for the year following. Cato exclaimed loudly against this, and protested that it was intolerable the government should be prostituted by marriages, and that they should advance one another to the commands of armies, provinces, and other great posts, by means of women.

Pompey, when he was married, at once filled the forum with soldiers, and gave the people his help in passing the new laws, and secured Caesar the government of all **Gaul**, both on this and the other side of the Alps, together with **Illyricum**, and the command of four legions for five years. Cato made some attempts against these proceedings, but was seized and led off on the way to prison by Caesar, who expected he would appeal to the tribunes. But when he saw that Cato went along without speaking a word, and not only the nobility were indignant, but that the people also, out of respect for Cato's virtue, were following in silence, and with dejected looks, he himself privately desired one of the tribunes to rescue Cato.

As for the other senators, some few of them attended the house; the rest being disgusted, absented themselves. Hence Considius, a very old man, took occasion one day to tell Caesar, that the senators did not meet because they were afraid of his soldiers. Caesar asked, "Why don't you then, out of the same fear, keep at home?" To which Considius replied, that age was his guard against fear, and that the small remains of his life were not worth much caution.

Gaius Calpurnius **Piso** was a Roman consul and member of the Optimates party. Caesar married his daughter, **Calpurnia**, in 59 BCE. She was seventeen years old when she married Caesar.

**Gaul** was a region in Europe that included the modern-day areas of northern Italy, Belgium, Germany, and France.

**Illyricum** was a Roman province along the east coast of the Adriatic Sea.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think Caesar means when he says that he would "rather be the first man among these fellows than the second man in Rome"?
2. What laws did Caesar enact?
3. Read the annotation regarding the title of Imperator. How might such a title be used for good? For evil?
4. How did the title of Imperator help Caesar's political ambitions?
5. What do you think of Caesar arranging his daughter's marriage to Pompey?
6. What does Considius' message say about Caesar?

# APPENDIX

## PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF JULIUS CAESAR

### PLENARY ANNOTATED STUDY GUIDE



## TIMELINE

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### PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF JULIUS CAESAR

- c. 500 BCE Founding of the Roman Republic
- 100 BCE Birth of Gaius Julius Caesar
- 81 BCE Sulla Dictator of Rome
- 75 BCE Julius Caesar captured by pirates
- 63 BCE Cicero elected Consul; Julius Caesar elected Pontifex Maximus
- 59 BCE Caesar elected Consul; marries Calpurnia
- 58 BCE Beginning of the Gallic War
- 55 BCE Caesar invades Britain
- 51 BCE End of Gallic War
- 49 BCE Caesar crosses the Rubicon
- 48 BCE Caesar defeats Pompey; crosses into Egypt
- 46 BCE Cato commits suicide
- 45 BCE Roman Senate appoints Julius Caesar Dictator for life
- 44 BCE Caesar murdered
- 43 BCE Octavian, Marc Antony, and Lepidus form the Second Triumvirate
- 42 BCE Brutus and Cassius defeated at Philippi



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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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**RACHEL LEBOWITZ is the owner of A Charlotte Mason Plenary.** She and her husband have always homeschooled their two children using the Charlotte Mason method of education. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Houston where she studied Communications and Political Science. Before attending college, she traveled as a member of Up With People, a performing arts organization with a mission to transcend cultural barriers and create global understanding through music. After college, she spent many years as a Radio and Television Journalist. She currently lives in Texas with her husband, two children, two dogs, and one guinea pig.

For more information about the Charlotte Mason method, go to **CMPLEINARY.COM**.

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