Chapter 6 - Ancient Rome and the Rise of Christianity. (509 BC - AD 476).

(1) Roman World Takes Shape.
(2) From Republic to Empire.
(3) The Roman Achievement.
(4) The Rise of Christianity.
(5) The Long Decline.

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(1) The Roman World Takes Shape.

Vocabulary.
- republic - government chosen ‘by people.’
- patrician - upper class landowners.
- consul - patrician chosen as leader for one year.
- dictator - ruler with absolute power for 6 months.
- plebeian - lower class workers.
- tribune - plebeian-elected official.
- veto - to block approval. (L.‘vetare’=forbid).
- legion - basic military unit of 5000 men.

Setting the Scene.
The legend is that brothers Romulus and Remus were thrown into Tiber by great-uncle usurper but rescued by gods and a wolf and raised by shepherd as his own sons. The boys later killed great-uncle and founded Rome in 753 BC on seven hills atop Tiber. The moral of the story is that strength, justice, and favor of gods win against danger and greed.

Virgil (70-19 BC) created an epic "Aeneid" that provided Romans with a new legend in a way Homer did with “Iliad” for Greeks. The moral of his story is that Rome was linked to older civilizations of Greece and Asia Minor. Rome won control of Mediterranean world in Punic Wars between 265 and 44 BC.

Geography and Peoples of Italy.

Geography.
Italian peninsula is a boot with toe off near Sicily and top blocked by Alps. It is centrally located in Mediterranean Sea. The city of Rome enjoyed natural boundaries being inland on west coast, the most fertile. Its location helped expansion first within Italy and then into lands around Mediterranean.
Peoples.
c. 800 BC. Latins migrated into Italy and settled into farming life settlement which would become Rome. Latin founders were farmers and herders with belief in duty, discipline and patriotism. Romans though adopted ideas from Phoenicians and Greeks who had set up colonies.
c. 600 BC. Etruscans seize Rome.
Romans adapt Etruscan alphabet, art and the arch.

The Roman Republic
509 BC. Romans overthrow Etruscans. Establish a republic in which all citizens voted to elected leaders. Society had patricians (L."patri"=father) or wealthy landowners, plebeians (‘plebs’=plenty) or common people, and slaves.
Early government: Senate had 300 patricians who served for life and who chose every year two consuls, or officials, to administer the laws of Rome. Each consul had veto right. In times of crisis, the Senate would appoint a dictator with absolute power for six months. Cincinnatus was an example of a good one.
Roman army was only patricians at first; later (post 390 BC) plebeians too.
It was divided into legions of 5000 men which were subdivided for mobility.

Plebians Demand Equality.
At first, government officials were all patricians even though the plebians (farmers, merchants, artisans, traders) made up the bulk of the population.
450 BC. Rome had first written law code carved into 12 stone tablets set in Forum or marketplace. The Laws of the Twelve Tables made it possible for the first time for plebians to appeal a judgment of a patrician judge.

Roman Society.
The family was basic unit of Roman society with male head absolute power.
Women were citizens, maybe court witnesses, but could not vote or hold public office.
Women did run businesses (Caesar’s mother is example) and later got control over property and could make wills leaving property.

Education.
Both boys and girls learned to read and write. Tutors were often Greeks. Rhetoric was a important subject for boys who wanted political career.

Religion
Romans had many gods that resembled those of the Etruscans and Greeks. Every home had a shrine. In town, there were many public religious festivals.

Expansion in Italy.
Between 509 BC and 133 BC Roman legions fought first for control of Italy (Greeks) and then for supremacy of the Mediterranean world (Carthage).
The conquest of Italy took 200 years after start of the Republic (509 BC).
Rome expanded southward and hit on Greek cities of southern Italy who got Pyrrhus, king of Epirus to help in what is now known as a "pyrrhic victory."

264 BC. Rome ruled all Italy. Gave citizenship to Latins. Built Appian Way.
(2) From Republic to Empire.

Vocabulary
imperialism - establishing control over foreign lands.
province - land under Roman rule.
latifunda - huge estate.
census - population count.

Setting the Scene.
After gaining control of Italian peninsula Rome began to build an empire.
Effects of expanding territory: republic will die and empire will be born.

Winning an Empire.

Wars With Carthage.
c. 814 BC. Phoenician traders established Carthage, a city-state on coast of North Africa
that ruled over an empire that stretched across North Africa.
264 - 146 BC. Rome had three wars with Carthage. Called Punic Wars.
The word Punic comes from Latin ‘punicus’ for Phoenician.
The word Carthage comes from Phoenician for ‘New City.’

First Punic War. 264-241 BC. Centered on control of Sicily. Carthage sued for peace, paid
fine, and gave up Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica.
Second Punic War. 218-202 BC. Started with Hannibal (son of Hamilcar) leading army
across Alps from Spain to northern Italy, elephants. Returns to protect Carthage. Loses.
Carthage gave up Spain. Vowed not to wage war.
Third Punic War. 149-146 BC. City of Carthage destroyed (salt sewn).
Cato (234-149)”Carthage must be destroyed.” Great-granddad Cato (95-46).

Other Conquests.
Rome was committed to policy of imperialism or establishing control over foreign lands.
Rome took over Macedonia, Greece, and Asia Minor and set up provinces headed by
governors appointed by Senate (who set taxes).
Rome tolerant policy was NOT to change local customs, religion, government.
Local governors got no pay but became rich through acceptance of bribes.

By 133 BC Roman power extended from Spain to Egypt. Romans were now justified in
calling the Mediterranean Sea Mare Nostrum or ‘Our Sea.’

Social and Economic Effects.
There were three ‘prizes’ from expansion: grain, treasure, and slaves.
(a) Tons of grain poured into Rome as tribute or forced payment (hurting small farmers)
(b) New class of wealthy Romans emerged who created big farms called latifundia. (L.
‘latus’=broad/lateral, ‘fundus’=estate/bottom) wherein absentee landlords used cheap slave
labor to work the land.
(c) Slave labor made landless farmers drift to Rome where they joined unemployed soldiers
and complained about luxuries of the rich. They in time became the mob in the city swayed
to violence by bribes.
Attempts at Reform.
Two young patricians, brothers, were among the first to attempt reform.
Tiberius Gracchus. (163-133): "the men who fight their country’s battles enjoy nothing ..."
133 BC. He and 300 followers were clubbed to death. Bodies tossed into Tiber. This massacre marks introduction of murder into Roman politics and beginning of the disintegration of ruling oligarchy from some in its own ranks.
Gaius Gracchus (156-121) tried to avenge older brother with legislation and resorted to violence. Died in riot after 3000 of his followers were executed.

Popular leaders like the Gracchi championed the poor with platforms for:
- limiting size of large estates to legal limit of 300 acres.
- redistributing surplus land to the poor.
- settling landless farmers in the provinces.

There was a need for reform. Economic situation affected military strength.
- The Roman army was made up of citizens owning property, but if men lost their farms and became urban paupers they would sink below the minimum property qualification and be classified ‘proletari’ who were not subject to conscription.
- The army likely took paupers in (leading to a further difficulty) since these men had no resources except war booty and notably no farm to go to when demobilized.

Decline of the Republic.
Unable to resolve problems peacefully Rome had a series of civil wars.
Old legions of citizen-soldiers became professional armies loyal to general.

133-44 BC. Violent upheavals shook Rome and slave revolts abroad.
81 BC. Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix (138-78 BC) was elected Dictator.
61 BC. Julius Caesar was denied consul. He was 39 years old.
49 BC. Caesar ‘crossed the Rubicon’ (a final, decisive step) into Rome.
49-44 BC. Caesar won victories in Middle East, North Africa, and Spain.
in 44 BC. Caesar was appointed Dictator for Life. Assassinated March 15.
31 BC. Octavian defeats Antony/Cleo at naval Battle of Actium.

Death of Julius Caesar (44 BC) plunged Rome into another civil war.
The legal heir of Julius Caesar was Octavian, 19, Caesar’s grand-nephew.
In 27 BC the Senate gave Octavian the title "Augustus" or Exhalted One.
Nomen. The family name.
Cognomen. Last name to distinguish man from others with identical first and family name (denoting physical characteristic, idiosyncrasy, etc.).

praenomen nomen cognomen

Roman Empire and Roman Peace.
Under Augustus (27 BC to AD 14) the age of the Roman empire began.
The 500-year-old republic had come to an end that many scholars surmise traced its downward spiral to the deaths of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus.
Pax Romana (Peace of Rome): span between Augustus- Marcus Aurelius.
A Stable Government.
Augustus left senate in place. Created efficient civil service to enforce laws.
Offered top jobs to deserving men, regardless of their class. Had fair taxes.
Ordered census or population count (for taxes). Issued new coins for trade.
His government worked well for 200 years but rule of succession was hurdle.

Bad Emperors and Good Emperors.
Augustus’ title imperator (‘emperor’), commander-in-chief. (Caesar=Tsar).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>27BC-AD14</td>
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<td>Tiberius</td>
<td>AD14-37</td>
<td>79</td>
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<td>Caligula</td>
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<td>Claudius</td>
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<td>Nero</td>
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In AD 64 great fire destroyed Rome. Nero blamed Christians. Started reign of terror.
AD 68, Nero died, starting succession of emperors who were generals:

- Galba. 68-69.
- Otho. 69.
- Vitellius. 69.
- Vespian. 69-79.
- Titus. 79-81.
- Domitian. 81-96.
- Nerva. 96-98.

Trajan (98-117). Adopted Hadrian as heir. Brought empire to greatest size.


Rome population grew to nearly 1,000,000. People flocked to city.
Bread and Circuses. People expected spectacular entertainment, handouts.

Troubling Signs.
The general prosperity of Pax Romana (costly projects) was misleading.
Governing was expensive, especially paying soldiers at frontiers.
When wars of conquest stopped there was no more booty.
Government increased taxes, reduced size of army, weakened empire.
Emperors issued new coins, mixed lead with gold to devalue coins or lower their value.
Since devalued coins were worth less, merchants demanded more coins for same product or
they raised prices. Higher prices meant more money was needed.
An increase in money supply followed by an increase in prices is inflation.
(3) The Roman Achievement.

Vocabulary.
- satirize - to ridicule.
- mosaic - picture formed with chipped stone.
- engineering - application of math and science.
- aqueduct - structure carry water.

Setting the Scene.
Marcus Tullius Cicero was a philosopher, politician and passionate defender of law who was (not in text) proud of having a Greek education.

Greco-Roman Civilization.
In its early days Rome took ideas from Greek colonists in southern Italy. Rome continued to borrow a lot from Greek culture after defeat of Greece. The Roman poet Horace: “Greece has conquered her rude conqueror.” The blending of Greek, Hellenistic, Roman traditions is Greco-Roman.

Literature, Philosophy, and History.

Poetry.
Roman writers adapted Greek literary forms like lyric poetry and drama to the Latin language.
    Juvenal (55-110) satires. He coins ‘Bread and Circuses.’
    Martial (40-104) satires. His best work is scurrilous.

History.
Tacitus (AD 55-117)"Annals" history of Rome. Augustus death 14-AD 70.
Caesar wrote on military campaign. Commentaries on the Gallic Wars.”
Cicero wrote clear, logical style of writing that became model for others.

Philosophy.
Rome borrowed much of its philosophy from the Greeks. The Hellenistic philosophy of Stoicism impressed Roman thinkers like the emperor Marcus Aurelius (121-180) who read books in Greek during his evenings in his tent on the battlefield. He wrote “Meditations” that is not only considered the last great statement of Stoic philosophy but also one of the masterpieces of world literature.

Art and Architecture.

Art.
Roman sculptors made marble copies of bronze original Greek statues. Then made statues realistic versus idealistic. Designed mosaics (L.’musa’=muse, artistic) which are pictures formed of chips of colored stone. Examples found at Pompeii, buried city in AD 79 that provides preserved remains of structures entombed with hard ash.
Architecture.
Romans made advances. Took idea of columns and arches from Etruscans and Greeks. Improved on arch by inventing dome, a roof of rounded arches. Romans introduced concrete (sand, gravel, cement, water) big structures. Roman architecture was more ornate than simple. Strength v. Elegance.

Technology and Science.
Romans excelled at engineering which is the application of math and science. Practical purpose: strong bridges, supported by arches; roads to last forever; aqueducts (L. ‘aqua’=water, ‘ductus’=to lead) are bridge-like stone structures designed to carry water from reservoirs in country to the city.

Pliny the Elder. (AD 23-79). produced "Natural History" in 37 volumes, an encyclopedia on astrology, medicine, geography and botany. Died (out of curiosity) at Pompeii after Mount Vesuvius erupted in AD 79.

Pliny the Younger. (AD 62-113). was a nephew of the Elder and also a writer.


Roman Law.
Rome left as its greatest legacy a commitment to the rule of law and justice. Roman law established a common standard of justice for the entire empire.

Two Systems.
Civil law was for Roman citizens. Law of nations was for claims of foreigners.

In Pax Romana (post Augustus’s death) punishments were less severe than in the republic. Roman law was the foundation of law codes developed in Europe that have gone around the world. American courthouses have at entrances statues of Roman goddess of justice, Astra (G ‘astron’=star).

Common Principles.
An accused person was considered innocent until proven guilty. An accused person was allowed to face the accuser and offer defense. Guilt had to be established ‘clearer than daylight’ through evidence.
(4) The Rise of Christianity.

Vocabulary.
messiah - an anointed king.
apostle - a follower.
martyr - a sufferer for faith.
patriarch - bishop in eastern empire.
pope - bishop of Rome.
heresy - a contrary belief.

Setting the Scene.
Christianity was just one of many but by AD 392 the official religion of Roman Empire.
Christianity succeeded in part to the religious climate of Roman world.

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Religious Diversity in Early Empire.

Mystery Religions.
People liked secret rituals: Egyptian cult of Isis. Persian god Mithras.
Magic signs, secret passwords were seen as a way to gain immortality
because they offered *spiritual comfort to the poor* and in huge impersonal
Roman Empire, a *sense of belonging*.

Religious Toleration.
Rome tolerated religions as long as citizens showed loyalty to Roman gods.
People were polytheistic and content to worship Roman gods with theirs.
Sacrifices to emperor were official ceremonies to show loyalty to Rome and not really
religious. Many Romans worshipped old gods like Jupiter, Mars).

Divisions in Judea.
63 BC. Rome conquered Judea.
    Zealots wanted Jews to revolt. Messiah soon to lead them.

Jewish Revolt.
AD 70. Rome disbanded the Jewish state.
Jesus and His Message.
Jesus was born about 4 BC in Bethlehem. Raised in Nazareth.
Studied in synagogue. Trained as carpenter.
Source: Gospels (good news), first four books of New Testament of Bible.
Large crowds worried both Jewish and Roman officials.
Seen as troublemaker. Arrested. Tried before Pontius Pilate (26-36). Condemned to die by crucifixion (INRI).
Parables are short stories with simple moral lessons regarding Jesus teachings rooted in Hebrew religious tradition: one God, Ten Commandments, etc.

Spread of Christianity.
Jesus’ followers or apostles preached first to Jews, then to gentiles as well.

Work of Paul.
Jesus chose 12 disciples as apostles but Paul was not one of them.
(1) Apostles preached to Jews in Palestine; (2) Peter converted Jews in Rome but Paul (d. AD 64), a Greek-speaking Jew from Tarsus, went after Gentiles or non-Jews. Paul wrote hundreds of letters or epistles to explain Christian beliefs (New Testament).

Persecution.
Roman emperors used Christians as scapegoats in bad political or economic conditions. Many became martyrs - people who suffer or die for their faith.

AD 313 Edict of Milan. Constantine introduced policy toleration of religion.

Reasons for Christianity’s Appeal.
Christianity appealed to people in all walks of life with promise of afterlife.

The Early Christian Church.
Only gradually did the scattered communities organize a structured Church.
Every Christian community had its own priest who was only male.
The priest was under the authority of a bishop, a Church official responsible for all Christians in an area called a diocese.

The bishops of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Constantinople gained the honorary title of patriarch, and exercised authority over other bishops in their areas. The bishop of Rome came to be called pope.

The Christian Church was thus a hierarchy (‘hieros’=sacred, ‘arch’=rule) or a type of organization with individuals arranged according to rank.

Looking Ahead.
While the Christian Church was growing in strength and influence, the power of Rome was going in the other direction.
When the western Roman empire finally fell, the Church inherited many of its functions.
(5) The Long Decline.

**Vocabulary.**
inflation - rapid rise in prices.
mercenary - foreign soldier hired for pay.

**Setting the Scene.**
Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus indicated that the western half of the Roman empire fell because of ‘declining values.’ Others cite complex problem.
In any case, decay had set in centuries before the final fall of Rome in AD 476.

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- 27. BC.
- 184. AD.
- 284. AD.
- 312. AD.
- 476. AD.

**Crisis and Reform.**
After Marcus Aurelius death (AD 180), the golden age of Pax Romana ended.
For the next 100 years political and economic turmoil rocked the empire.

**Struggles for Power.**
After Marcus Aurelius, the system of choosing emperors (sons) broke down. Between AD 234-284, fifty years, at least 26 emperors ruled. Assassinations.
Soldiers auctioned off the office of emperor. By example, Septimus Severus (193-211) told his son on deathbed to enrich soldiers.

**Economic and Social Problems.**
High taxes to support the army placed heavy burden on business people.
Continued devaluation. Issuance of more coins of copper with only a thin coating of gold.
New coins were worth less than old ones. Prices and wages rose sharply. Economic instability followed.
Many small farmers or coloni (colonists) worked land for noble landowners and, although technically free, they were not allowed to leave the land.

**Emperor Diocletian.**
AD 284. Diocletian (284-305) was general made emperor by legions in east. Diocletian restores order and splits the empire into two governable parts. Diocletian took wealthier eastern provinces. Maximian (286-305) took west. But co-emperor reports to Diocletian who wears purple robe to be kissed. Diocletian reorganizes civil service. Makes officials directly reportable to him. Enlarges the army and trains new calvary units to fight invaders. Builds new forts and roads to reinforce the frontier defenses. Sets limits on prices to slow inflation (too much money chasing too few goods). Orders people to stay in their jobs.
Emperor Constantine.
He becomes emperor of west (312) and later (324) reunites east & west.
Constantine rules west (306-324) with Licinus (308-324) ruling east.
Constantine rules alone (324-337).
He continues Diocletian reforms but, also, takes two steps to change history.
(1) Grants toleration to Christians (312). Encourages Christianity.
(2) Builds new capital at Byzantium, Greek city on the Bosphorus, to be called
Constantinople. Today: Istanbul (Gk. ‘eis ten polin’=‘into the city’).
New capital symbolizes declining influence of Rome and growing importance of east.
It counters Rome as ‘pagan’. He wants Christian city.
Wants to be closer to great commercial centers of eastern Mediterranean.

Mixed Results.
Reforms of Diocletian, Constantine revives economy, government power.
Reforms helped to hold empire together (100 years) but did not stop decline.
After Constantine dies (AD 337) the empire is again split into two: east and west.
The eastern empire flourishes but the western empire collapses under internal stress and pressure of invaders.

Foreign Invasions.
For centuries Rome faced attacks from Germanic peoples on east of Rhine.
Germans were semi nomadic herders and farmers migrating ex Scandinavia. Early
description on Germanic tribes from Tacitus: A tribe was ruled by an elected king with
council of chiefs who led band of warriors paid with food.
By third century AD growing population forced Germans to seek new land.

Impact of the Huns.
AD 350. Huns were nomads (Central Asia) who (superb riders) easily defeated Ostrogoths
and, fearing a similar fate, another tribe, Visigoths, sought protection in Roman empire.
The impact of Huns is that Germanic tribes fled them into Roman territory.

Rome Defeated.
AD 376. Visigoths got permission to cross Danube.

AD 378. Visigoths beat Romans in Battle of Adrianople.
A stunning Roman defeat. A signal Rome was no longer unbeatable.

AD 410. Visigoth general Alaric sacked Rome.
He was granted southern Gaul and Spain.

Meanwhile, Huns conquer eastern Europe under Attila, "Scourge of God."

AD 451. Rome and Germanic allies stop Huns at Battle of Troyes.
Another Germanic tribe, the Vandals, swept through Gaul into Spain onto
Carthage and from Carthage onto Italy.

AD 455. Vandals raiders sack Rome.
As Roman legions withdrew from the frontier to defend cities in Italy other tribes - the Burgindians, the Franks, and later the Lombards moved into the western empire.

AD 476. Minor German chief, Odoacer, captures Rome. Forces emperor to give up throne. Odoacer declares himself "king." Historians refer to this event as the ‘fall of Rome’.

After AD 476 the fact that there was no emperor in west meant no unity.

However the eastern empire went on another century until AD 1453.

Causes of Fall Of Rome
Rome fell not because of a single problem but a combination of problems.
Modern historians identify a number of interrelated causes, to wit:
   Military Causes.
   Political Causes.
   Economic Causes.
   Social Causes.

Military Causes.
Most obvious cause is Germanic invasions. Still, these attacks were successful because the Roman army was not disciplined and trained as it was in past. Army had mercenaries, foreign hires, in their ranks with no loyalty to Rome.

Political Causes.
Citizens felt less responsible to government.
Citizens expected emperor to look after them.
Vast size of empire and widespread corruption made efficient government difficult.
Division of empire hurt west since good officials and generals went east.

Economic Causes.
Wealth was in east and not in west.
No more war booty.
Invasions hurt trade and agriculture.
Tax collecting was difficult.
Coinage devaluation caused inflation.
Heavy taxes and high unemployment meant less prosperity.

Social Causes.
Loss of loyalty and civic pride.
Draft avoidance. Soldiers sans patriotism.
People felt no stake in empire. Didn’t care.
Epidemics in the 300s increased hopelessness.

Did Rome Fall?
The phrase ‘fall of Rome’ is shorthand for a long, slow change from one way of life to another. But Roman civilization survived the events of 476. In Italy, people continued to live much as they had before, though under new rulers.