



## Roman Empire, Summary

The Roman Empire was the turning point of ancient and modern history. All of the rivers of ancient civilizations flowed into the lake of the Roman Empire and all the rivers of modern civilization flowed out of the lake of the Roman Empire.

Rome began as a little village on the bank of the Tiber, then became a city-state, then a nation, then a great world empire. Rome gave the world a respect for law and administration. The Greeks were known for their culture, the Persians for their science, and the Romans for their laws and codes.

The Romans began to conquer in 264 BC. They conquered in a dreadful manner. Over a million people died in the Punic Wars. From 264 to 146 BC, they conquered Carthage, Egypt, Macedonia, and Syria. They called themselves SPQR, "The Senate and People of Rome." In this period, many of the rich were killed, leaving only the middle class and poor class.

In 146 BC, the Knights, the Roman middle class, took over and there was some stabilization. However, a mob of a million people, poor, dangerous, and ragged, came out of the Punic wars and the tail began to wag the dog.

The Knights were capitalistic at first, but switched to a dual socialistic-capitalistic system. It is the middle class always that keeps a nation stabilized and operating under free enterprise and capitalism.

Later, the mob took over from the Knights. Who had to sustain the mob? The middle class was forced to sustain the mob by socialism. As long as the middle class were able to pay the bills and feed the mob, the civilization survived. But the middle class reached a point where they were unable to do so.

For example, their currency was destroyed by going off the gold standard. How? When Alexander the Great defeated the Persians in 331 BC, he gained the treasury of Susa containing about 2 million pounds of gold and silver ingots and a half million pounds in gold coins that were poured into the world's economy. But the Romans traded this gold for peacock feathers and other luxuries from China and India.

Then they issued paper money, which had no gold standard. Finally the mobs and socialism destroyed Rome. It would have been destroyed sooner, except Bible doctrine in the souls of believers became the great stabilizing factor during the Antonine Caesars from 96 to 192 AD. The mobs should never be catered to nor the lower classes as this destroys any country.

### Summary of 800 Years

The following summaries contain documentation from over 700 sources to give it maximum clarity and importance.

#### Primitive Rome: up to 509 BC

This was primitive Italy before Roman expansion. Politically, it was governed as a kingdom. It was an agricultural society with some trade. They had solid families with stern morality. Primitive Rome had Etruscan rule, built many buildings, and had great influence. Religion was formal and impersonal.

#### Early Republic of Rome: 509-265 BC

Rome expanded in this period with the conquest of Italy and political organization. They developed governmental bodies, established law, and civil human rights. It was an agricultural society with an increase in trade. It was a time of social equality of the Plebs, the beginning of native literature and



Greek influence resulting in increased Greek religion.

### Expansion: 265-133 BC

The struggle between Rome and Carthage for control of the Western Mediterranean (Punic Wars): 265-201 BC.

The Punic Wars. Supremacy of the Senate. Rapid growth in wealth and luxury. Rise of a new capitalist class. Rapid growth of slavery. Growth of trade and industry. Hellenic influence and new wealth change of life and morals. Hellenized Latin literature (9 major writers). New era in Roman building. Hellenizing of Roman religion. Cult of Cybele of Rome (205 B.C.). Bacchus Cult. Hellenistic Philosophy.

Roman expansion and foreign policy in the Hellenistic east: 200-133 BC.

### The Roman Republic Near the End: 133-27 BC (106 years)

The Gracchan Reforms and the beginnings of revolution of Rome: 133-122 BC.

Civil war and foreign crises: 122-78 BC.

Roman politics and eastern expansion: 78-60 BC.

The end of the Roman Republic and the founding of the Roman Empire: 59-44 BC.

The death agony of the Republic: 44-27 BC.

Government reforms. Factions developing. Civil war. Foreign crises. The military and demagogues increase their control of government. New professional army. Expansion of the Republic. Dictatorship of Julius Caesar. Civil war, victory of Octavian. End of Republic II. Growth of Roman Law. Great slave estates. Growing middle class. Rapid increase of wealth, luxury, trade, industry. Change in the racial character of Rome and Italy. Revolution in life, manners, morals of upper class. Hellenizing of Roman education. Influence of Greek architecture. Growth of sculpturing and painting. Legal theory introduced. Rise of Rationalism and Skepticism. Growing influence of Greek philosophy. Growing influence of oriental cults. Growing influence of Astrology. Lucretius and Epicureanism. Growing increase of Stoicism. Greek science.

### Augustan Age: 27 BC - 14 AD (41 years)

Roman Principate founded. Annexation of Egypt. Rise of the Imperial Cult. Reorganization of Roman array and finance. Provincial government. Roman peace. Great road building. New increase in prosperity as well as of old items. Augustan attempt to revive the morals, religion and Italian Agric. No real change in poor social and moral conditions. Augustan Age of Literature (6 major writers). Greek literature predominant also. Rationalism yields to Mysticism. Revival of Italian cults. Cult of Roma and Augustus. Advance of oriental cults, especially the Isis Cult. Philosophy becomes more pragmatic and less rational. Birth of Jesus Christ.

### Julio-Claudian Age: 34-69 AD (55 years)

Personal despotism in the government. Growth of Imperial Civil Service. New provinces, revolts, and plots. Rise of tenancy. Growth of imperial domains. Industry and trade prosper. Old senatorial nobility die out. Industry and trade prosper. Luxury and spending at a peak. Social and moral of upper class at a very low ebb. Decline of literature. Dominance of rhetoric (11 men). Luxurious buildings. Lavish decorative art. Philosophy yields to rhetoric. Stoicism expresses anti-imperial influence. Decline of religion in upper classes. Advance of Oriental cults. Judaism active. Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.



Organization of Christian churches. Missionary work of Paul. Persecution by Nero. Hellenization of Christianity.

#### Age of Flavian and Antonine Emperors: 69–180 AD (111 years)

Eight (8) emperors. Trend to autocracy, bureaucracy, paternalism. Benevolent monarchy. Rapid expansion of citizenship. Roman Empire at its greatest extent (117 AD). Excellent provincial government. Marcomannic Wars (168-180 AD). Army becomes immobile. Growing tax burden. Compulsory service. Decline of municipal autonomy. Prosperity at height. Decline of slavery, growth of tenancy. Beginning of Colonate. Rapid urbanization. Wide trade. Expansion of agriculture and industry. Rapid growth of Collegia. Humanitarianism and emphasis on social welfare. Splendid imperial buildings. Growth of public education. Silver age of Latin literature (8 writers). Greek literature (8 writers). New Rhetoric (3). Great jurists (5). Decline of rationalism, increase of mysticism. Rapid growth of oriental cults. Expansion of Christianity and growth of complex, organization. Eclecticism in religion and philosophy. Philosophy merges with religion. Rise of heresies in the Church. Growth of Christian literature. Persecution of Christianity; mainly sporadic. Roman science. Greek science.

#### Decline of the Roman Empire: 180-285 AD (105 years)

Military anarchy. Military despotism. Civil war, Imperial successors by violence. Military domination of the civil. Foreignization and democratization of the army. Insubordination of the army. German invasions. Threat of New Persia. Independence of large sections of the Roman Empire. Restoration of order. Universal citizenship. Financial chaos and devaluation of coinage. Decline of industry and cities. Crushing taxation. Rapid subordination of Coloni, Collegia, Curiates. Growing loss of municipal authority. Devastating plagues. Walling of Rome and other cities. Decline of taste in art and industry technique. Rapid decline of Latin literature. Municipal buildings. Growth of Christian literature. Growing oriental influence. Great Jurists (3). Humanization of the law. Law becomes autocratic. Latin and Greek lose old monopoly. Greek historians. Rise of Neo-Platonism, becoming essence of pagan religion and philosophy. Mithraism and sun worship. Eclectic influence of oriental cults, Neo-Platonism, Stoicism, and Christianity on each other. Rapid growth of the Church. Harsh persecutions. Conflict with heresies. Growth of complexity in the Church. Greek mathematics.

#### Reorganization of the Empire under Diocletian and Constantine: 285-337 AD (52 years)

Oriental absolutism. Increased reorganization of the army. Barbarization of the army. End of civil war. Invasions halted. Reform of coinage and taxation. Removal of capital to Constantinople. Division of administration. Civil war and triumph of Constantine. Development of Colonate. Members of collegia reduced to serfs. Ruin of the middle class. Return to primitive economy. Decline of city, industry, and trade. Decline of art and pagan literature. Christian literature replacing pagan literature. Christianity wins the preference of Constantine. First Ecumenical Council (325 AD). Christianity Hellenized and Romanized. Christian culture replaces gradually the pagan culture.

#### Fall of the Roman Empire: 476 AD