

Lesson 1 The Rise and Expansion of Rome

MAIN IDEAS

Government Early Rome grew from a small village to a thriving republic on the Italian peninsula.

Culture The Romans eventually built a large empire that spread their culture to many lands.

Belief Systems During the Roman Empire, a powerful new religion known as Christianity emerged.

The Origins of Rome

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did Rome begin?

The Geography of Rome

- Latins, Greeks, Etruscans lived on Italian peninsula 700–500 B.C.
- Latins built Rome among a group of hills along Tiber River
- Settlement of Rome benefited from favorable environment:
 - Apennines Mountains protected region from harsh weather, invaders
 - cool, rainy winters provided rich farmland
 - Tiber River enabled long-distance trade

A Kingdom Emerges

- Rome became a kingdom during eighth century B.C.; ruled by kings
- Many kings were Etruscans, a powerful group from northern Italy
- Tarquin the Proud ruled harshly; Romans overthrew him in 510 B.C.
- Romans ended kingship, based government on the will of the people

REVIEW QUESTION

What brought an end to the kingdom of Rome?

From Republic to Empire

ESSENTIAL QUESTION Why did Rome change from a republic to an empire?

The Roman Republic

- Romans established form of government known as republic
 - **republic**—power rests with citizens who elect leaders by vote
- Republic gave average citizens a voice, free-born males could vote
- Romans developed system of laws to protect citizen’s basic rights
 - two consuls served at head of government; one-year term limit
 - lawmaking body called Senate acted as check on consuls’ power
- Powerful, well-organized army conquered all of present-day Italy
- Rome defeated Carthage, North Africa in Punic Wars (264–146 B.C.)
 - victory gave Romans control over majority of Mediterranean Sea

Decline of the Republic

- Expanding republic grew unstable; class-based civil war broke out
- Julius Caesar claimed sole power in 45 B.C.; murdered by opponents
- Caesar’s adopted son took power; claimed title **Augustus**—divine one

Rome Becomes an Empire

- Augustus turned Rome into **empire**—different groups ruled by one leader
- Augustus was careful and brilliant **emperor**—ruler of an empire
 - decades of peace, prosperity called Pax Romana or “Roman peace”
- Augustus died A.D.14; his policies enabled Rome to grow powerful
 - 60–100 million people under Roman rule by second century
 - included Germans, Africans, Greeks, Jews, Egyptians

REVIEW QUESTION

How did Rome build such a powerful empire?

The Rise of Christianity

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did Christianity grow so powerful?

Jesus And His Teachings

- A new religion known as Christianity emerged under the Roman Empire
- **Christianity**—religion based on the teachings of Jesus
 - believe Jesus to be son of God; believe in one God
 - love friends, enemies; there is an afterlife in heaven
- Teachings disturbed Roman, Jewish leaders; authorities kill Jesus
- Christians believe Jesus rose to heaven

REVIEW QUESTION

What were some of the main teachings of Jesus?

Lesson Summary

- The Romans established an early form of a republic, in which average citizens had a strong voice in government.
- Rome eventually became a large empire that spread its influence to many lands.
- Christianity emerged during the Roman era and became one of the world's influential religions.

Why It Matters Now . . .

Christianity remains one of the most popular and significant religions today with some two billion followers worldwide.