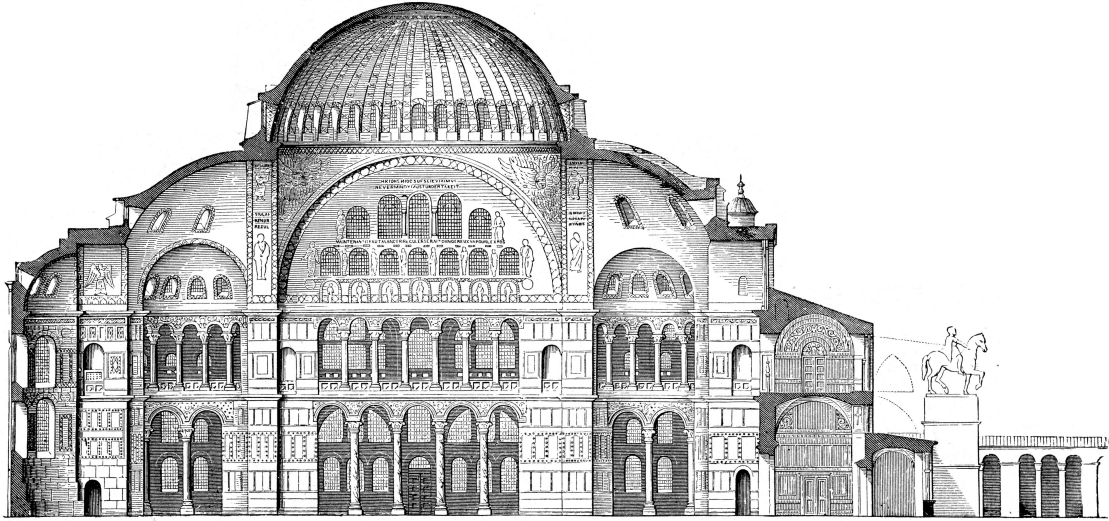


Ancient Civilizations

Volume Three: Rome, Christianity and Islam



The Key School
2014-2015

STUDENT:

Ancient Civilizations Course Packet

Volume Three: Rome, Christianity and Islam

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Alexander the Great

The decisive battle of Philip's conquest of Greece occurred in 338 BC at Chaeronea in Boeotia, when Philip beat the Athenians and their allies. The military feat that won that day was a cavalry charge by Philip's eighteen year old son, Alexander. Alexander seems to have inherited much from his brilliant father: physical courage, arrogance, extreme intelligence, and, most importantly, unbridled ambition. For when his father died in 336 BC at an assassin's hand, Alexander quickly consolidated his power and set out to conquer the world. At the age of twenty-one...

He had been a youth of infinite promise. Physically handsome, strong, brave, and nothing short of brilliant, he had been schooled by no less a person than Aristotle. With all these qualities, he took up his father's ambition and prosecuted it with a swiftness that is almost frightening.

In 334 BC, Alexander crossed over into Asia Minor to begin his conquest of Persia. To conquer Persia was to conquer the world, for the Persian Empire sprawled over most of the known world: Asia Minor, the Middle East, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Iran. He didn't have much to go on: his army numbered thirty thousand infantry and only five thousand cavalry. He had no navy. He had no money.

His strategy was simple. He would move quickly and begin with a few sure victories, so he could gain money and supplies. He would focus on the coastal cities so that he could gain control of the ports; in that way, the Persian navy would have no place to make landfall. Finally, he took the battle right to the center of the opposing forces, and he threw himself into the very worst of the battle. His enemies were stunned and his troops grew intensely loyal to this man who threw both them *and* himself right into the teeth of the wolf.

He quickly overran Asian Minor after defeating the Persian forces that controlled the territory, and after seizing all the coastal cities, he turned inland towards Syria in 333 BC. There he engaged the main Persian army under the leadership of the Persian king, Darius, at a city called Issus. As he had done at Chaeronea, he led a astounding cavalry charge against a superior opponent and forced them to break ranks. Darius, and much of his army, ran inland towards Mesopotamia, leaving Alexander free to continue south. He seized the coastal towns along the Phoenician and Palestinian coasts. When he entered Jerusalem, he was hailed as their great liberator. He continued south and conquered Egypt with almost no resistance whatsoever; the Egyptians called him king and son of Re.

By this point, Darius understood that the situation was out of his control. As Alexander moved down the Phoenician coast, he managed to conquer the city of Tyre, which was absolutely central to Persian naval operations. Darius knew that he could never recover Asia Minor, Phoenicia, or Palestine, so he sent an offer to halt hostilities. If Alexander would cease, Darius would cede to him all of the Persian Empire west of the Euphrates River; Mesopotamia, Persia (modern day Iran), and the northern territories would remain Persian.

Alexander would have none of this. In 331 BC, he crossed the Euphrates river into Mesopotamia. Darius met him near the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh, the city that had been

destroyed by the Chaldeans only three centuries earlier. This was the last battle between Darius and Alexander; the Macedonian king again put the numerically superior Persian army to flight, and Darius ran also. In January of 330 BC, Alexander entered Babylon: he had conquered Mesopotamia and now controlled its greatest and wealthiest city.

The Persians had amassed vast wealth from the tribute paid by the various states under them. Alexander, who had started with no money at all, was now in control of the fattest treasury that had ever existed.

Darius, meanwhile, met his death at the hands of a conspiracy. The Persian nobles no longer felt that he could effectively lead them and, under the leadership of his brother Bessus, the nobles killed Darius and left his body for Alexander to find. Alexander, however, pushed on, found Bessus, and killed him and as many Persian nobles as he could. The Persian Empire had officially come to a close.

QUESTION: How was Alexander able to conquer the Persian Empire?

Having conquered what was then the known world, Alexander had pushed his army to the very limits of civilization as he knew it. But he wanted more; he saw that the world extended further and partly out of curiosity, and partly out of a desire to conquer the entire world within the boundaries of the river Ocean (the Greeks believed that a great river, called Ocean, encircled all the land of the world), Alexander and his army pushed east, through Scythia (northern Iran), and all the way to Pakistan and India. He had conquered Bactria at the foot of the western Himalayas, gained a huge Bactrian army, and married a Bactrian princess, Roxane. But when he tried to push on past Pakistan, his army grew tired, and he abandoned the eastward conquest in 327 BC.

In 324 BC, Alexander returned to Babylon. He was now, literally, king of the world, and began to lay down his strategies for consolidating his empire. He began to plan cities and building works, new conquests, and even considered deifying himself. But like so many human gods, his own death caught up with him. In 323 BC, at the age of thirty-three, he fell into a fever and died. It's rare in history that human events become so focused on a single individual; rarely is that focus justified. Alexander, however, is one of the notable exceptions. The age of Alexander was the age created by Alexander, and he would permanently stamp world culture with a Greek character. He was in many ways a brilliant and selfless person, quite possibly the most brilliant military leader in human history. With a small army, little or no supplies, and no money, he conquered the greatest, wealthiest, and most powerful empire in the world. He never lost a battle, not once, and he flung himself into battle with intense physical bravery. He was also a tyrant and a bully, given to fits of uncompromising violence. He was certainly a drunkard and at times unstable. We will never know if he could have ruled or unified this huge empire, for it may have crumbled into nothing within a few

years. His death, however, guaranteed that the empire he had built would never last. (from <http://public.wsu.edu/~dee/GREECE/ALEX.HTM>)

Plutarch: *Parallel Lives- Alexander*

QUESTIONS:

How would you describe Alexander's relationship with his father?

Why would Plutarch retell the story of Alexander and the horse?

What image do you have of Alexander after reading Plutarch?

Plutarch, a Roman historian who lived during the first century AD (ca. 46-119), wrote his Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans intending to draw parallels between great figures of Greek antiquity and Romans of his own time. He chose to compare Alexander the Great with Julius Caesar. In his Life of Alexander, Plutarch tells some of the most famous stories related about Alexander.

Ch. 9

While Philip went on his expedition against the Byzantines, he left Alexander, then sixteen years old, his lieutenant in Macedonia, committing the charge of his seal to him; who, not to sit idle, reduced the rebellious Maedi, and having taken their chief town by storm, drove out the barbarous inhabitants, and planting a colony of several nations in their room, called the place after his own name, Alexandropolis. At the battle of Chaeronea, which his father fought against the Grecians, he is said to have been the first man that charged the Thebans' sacred band. And even in my remembrance, there stood an old oak near the river Cephissus, which people called Alexander's oak, because his tent was pitched under it. And not far off are to be seen the graves of the Macedonians who fell in that battle. This early bravery made Philip so fond of him, that nothing pleased him more than to hear his subjects call himself their general and Alexander their king.

But the disorders of his family, chiefly caused by his new marriages and attachments (the troubles that began in the women's chambers spreading, so to say, to the whole kingdom), raised various complaints and differences between them, which the violence of Olympias, a woman of a jealous and implacable temper, made wider, by exasperating Alexander against his father. Among the rest, this accident contributed most to their falling out. At the wedding of Cleopatra, whom Philip fell in love with and married, she being much too young for him, her uncle Attalus in his drink desired the Macedonians would implore the gods to give them a lawful successor to the kingdom by his niece. This so irritated Alexander, that throwing one of the cups at his head, "You villain," said he, "what, am I then a bastard?" Then Philip, taking Attalus's part, rose up and would have run his son through; but by good fortune for them both, either his over-hasty rage, or the wine he had drunk, made his foot slip, so that he fell down on the floor. At which Alexander reproachfully insulted over him: "See there," said he, "the man who makes preparations to pass out of Europe into Asia, overturned in passing from one seat to another." After this debauch, he and his mother Olympias withdrew from Philip's company, and when he had placed her in Epirus, he himself retired into Illyria.

Ch. 10

When Philonius, the Thessalian, offered the horse named Bucephalus in sale to Philip [Alexander's father], at the price of thirteen talents, the king, with the prince and many others, went into the field to see some trial made of him. The horse appeared extremely vicious and unmanageable, and was so far from suffering himself to be mounted, that he would not bear to be spoken to, but turned fiercely on all the grooms. Philip was displeased at their bringing him so wild and ungovernable a horse, and bade them take him away. But Alexander, who had observed him well, said, "What a horse they are losing, for want of skill

and spirit to manage him!" Philip at first took no notice of this, but, upon the prince's often repeating the same expression, and showing great uneasiness, said, "Young man, you find fault with your elders, as if you knew more than they, or could manage the horse better." "And I certainly could," answered the prince. "If you should not be able to ride him, what forfeiture will you submit to for your rashness?" "I will pay the price of the horse."

Upon this all the company laughed, but the king and prince agreeing as to the forfeiture, Alexander ran to the horse, and laying hold on the bridle, turned him to the sun; for he had observed, it seems, that the shadow which fell before the horse, and continually moved as he moved, greatly disturbed him. While his fierceness and fury abated, he kept speaking to him softly and stroking him; after which he gently let fall his mantle, leaped lightly upon his back, and got his seat very safe. Then, without pulling the reins too hard, or using either whip or spur, he set him a-going. As soon as he perceived his uneasiness abated, and that he wanted only to run, he put him in a full gallop, and pushed him on both with the voice and spur.

Philip and all his court were in great distress for him at first, and a profound silence took place. But when the prince had turned him and brought him straight back, they all received him with loud acclamations, except his father, who wept for joy, and kissing him, said, "Seek another kingdom, my son, that may be worthy of thy abilities; for Macedonia is too small for thee..."

[Philip] sent for Aristotle, the most celebrated and learned of all the philosophers; and the reward he gave him for forming his son Alexander was not only honorable, but remarkable for its propriety. He had formerly dismantled the city of Stagira, where that philosopher was born, and now he re-built it, and reestablished the inhabitants, who had either fled or been reduced to slavery... Aristotle was the man Alexander admired in his younger years, and, as he said himself, he had no less affection for him than for his own father...

Source:

From: John Langhorne and William Langhorne, eds., *Plutarch's Lives, Translated from the Original Greek*. Cincinnati: Applegate, Pounsford and Co., 1874, pp. 434-439.

**Arrian: Speech of Alexander the Great,
from *The Campaigns of Alexander***

QUESTIONS:

Does the speech fit with the character of Alexander as described by Plutarch? Why or why not? What is his primary argument to his men? What does he want them to do? Why does Alexander bring up Heracles and Dionysus in his speech?

I observe, gentlemen, that when I would lead you on a new venture you no longer follow me with your old spirit. I have asked you to meet me that we may come to a decision together: are we, upon my advice, to go forward, or, upon yours, to turn back?

If you have any complaint to make about the results of your efforts hitherto, or about myself as your commander, there is no more to say. But let me remind you: through your courage and endurance you have gained possession of Ionia, the Hellespont, both Phrygias, Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Lydia, Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia, Phoenicia, and Egypt; the Greek part of Libya is now yours, together with much of Arabia, lowland Syria, Mesopotamia, Babylon, and Susia; Persia and Media with all the territories either formerly controlled by them or not are in your hands; you have made yourselves masters of the lands beyond the Caspian Gates, beyond the Caucasus, beyond the Tanais, of Bactria, Hyrcania, and the Hyrcanian sea; we have driven the Scythians back into the desert; and Indus and Hydaspes, Acesines and Hydraotes flow now through country which is ours. With all that accomplished, why do you hesitate to extend the power of Macedon—*your* power--to the Hyphasis and the tribes on the other side? Are you afraid that a few natives who may still be left will offer opposition? Come, come! These natives either surrender without a blow or are caught on the run--or leave their country undefended for your taking; and when we take it, we make a present of it to those who have joined us of their own free will and fight on our side.

For a man who *is* a man, work, in my belief, if it is directed to noble ends, has no object beyond itself; none the less, if any of you wish to know what limit may be set to this particular campaign, let me tell you that the area of country still ahead of us, from here to the Ganges and the Eastern ocean, is comparatively small. You will undoubtedly find that this ocean is connected with the Hyrcanian Sea, for the great Stream of Ocean encircles the earth. Moreover I shall prove to you, my friends, that the Indian and Persian Gulfs and the Hyrcanian Sea are all three connected and continuous. Our ships will sail round from the Persian Gulf to Libya as far as the Pillars of Hercules, whence all Libya to the eastward will soon be ours, and all Asia too, and to this empire there will be no boundaries but what God Himself has made for the whole world.

But if you turn back now, there will remain unconquered many warlike peoples between the Hyphasis and the Eastern Ocean, and many more to the northward and the Hyrcanian Sea, with the Scythians, too, not far away; so that if we withdraw now there is a danger that the territory which we do not yet securely hold may be stirred to revolt by some nation or other we have not yet forced into submission. Should that happen, all that we have done and suffered will have proved fruitless--or we shall be faced with the task of doing it over again from the beginning. Gentlemen of Macedon, and you, my friends and allies, this must not be. Stand firm; for well you know that hardship and danger are the price of glory, and that sweet is the savour of a life of courage and of deathless renown beyond the grave.

Are you not aware that if Heracles, my ancestor, had gone no further than Tiryns or Argos--or even than the Peloponnese or Thebes--he could never have won the glory which changed him from a man into a god, actual or apparent? Even Dionysus, who is a god indeed, in a sense beyond what is applicable to Heracles, faced not a few laborious tasks; yet we have done more: we have passed beyond Nysa and we have taken the rock of Aornos which Heracles himself could not take. Come, then; add the rest of Asia to what you already possess--a small addition to the great sum of your conquests. What great or noble work could we ourselves have achieved had we thought it enough,

living at ease in Macedon, merely to guard our homes, accepting no burden beyond checking the encroachment of the Thracians on our borders, or the Illyrians and Triballians, or perhaps such Greeks as might prove a menace to our comfort ?

I could not have blamed you for being the first to lose heart if I, your commander, had not shared in your exhausting marches and your perilous campaigns; it would have been natural enough if you had done all the work merely for others to reap the reward. But it is not so. You and I, gentlemen, have shared the labour and shared the danger, and the rewards are for us all. The conquered territory belongs to you; from your ranks the governors of it are chosen; already the greater part of its treasure passes into your hands, and when all Asia is overrun, then indeed I will go further than the mere satisfaction of our ambitions: the utmost hopes of riches or power which each one of you cherishes will be far surpassed, and whoever wishes to return home will be allowed to go, either with me or without me. I will make those who stay the envy of those who return.

Source:

Scanned by: J. S. Arkenberg, Dept. of History, Cal. State Fullerton. Prof. Arkenberg may have modernized the text.

Hellenism- After Alexander

From (<http://www.pothos.org/content/index.php?page=hellenism---after-alexander>)

The centuries after Alexander's death are known as the era of Hellenism. One might argue Hellenism lasted from the years of Alexander's reign until 146 BC, when Greece was annexed by the Roman empire; or even until 30 BC, when the famous Greek-Egyptian Queen Cleopatra died, the last Hellenistic ruler. In any case, Hellenism was the new world order shaped by Alexander's conquests.

Trade

The campaigns of Alexander had opened up gigantic areas to world trade and economic development. The conquering Greeks had aroused the sleeping masses of the east and profitable industries and agricultural enterprises sprung up everywhere. Because Alexander had started to mint the gold reserves of the Persian kings, huge amounts of money came into circulation. For centuries the Persian dynasts had safeguarded the treasures stored in their palaces. Alexander tried to spend them all within a matter of years.

These factors combined, Hellenism can be seen as the world's first major economic boom. The system of economics and trade that developed after Alexander's death would remain basically unchanged for over two thousand years, until the industrial revolution of the 19th century. When the Romans began to expand their empire around 200 BC they inherited a world of flourishing trade contacts for which Alexander had laid the foundations.

Cities

As world population was rapidly growing, the Hellenistic era saw the rise of new Greek cities everywhere - from cosmopolitan Alexandria in Egypt to the cultural melting pot of Taxila in present day Pakistan. The Seleucid dynasty, successors of Alexander in Asia, was the biggest city founding monarchy in history. Most Seleucid cities bore the names of their kings, like Seleucia and Antioch, or of their queens, like Apameia. Egyptian Alexandria, on the crossroads of trade routes and the principal city of Hellenism, had one million inhabitants. Seleucia, the first Seleucid capital in Mesopotamia, had half a million.

Though Hellenistic cities were centers of trade, science and arts, life was not a bed of roses. The Hellenistic world was a very capitalistic society with huge gaps between the rich and the poor. While the cities offered splendour and luxury for the wealthy, large portions of the

population lived in absolutely miserable conditions. Especially in Alexandria riots were common.

Empires

After Alexander's death five empires of his successors competed for domination: Macedonia, the Antigonids of Asia Minor, the Seleucids of Asia, the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Thracian empire of Lysimachos. It seemed Antigonos was the most powerful of the new kings, but he was defeated at the battle of Ipsos in 301 BC. This 'Battle of the Kings' put an end to all hopes of a reunification of Alexander's domains.

From then on the Hellenistic world was divided in three parts: the Egyptian empire of Alexander's general Ptolemy, the richest and most stable of the kingdoms; the gigantic empire of Alexander's officer Seleucos, stretching from the Aegean to Central Asia, which slowly crumbled to pieces over the centuries; Macedonia, which, although the smallest and poorest of the empires, was still prestigious as Alexander's motherland.

Art

The arts flourished in the Hellenistic world - especially painting, sculpture and architecture - although the emphasis was on quantity rather than quality. The harmonic principles of earlier Greek art were neglected. More works of art were produced than ever before, but few of them were masterpieces and 'bombast' ruled.

On the Greek island of Rhodes the Colossos was erected, a gigantic statue guarding the harbor. It was said the arms of a man could not embrace even a finger of the Colossos. The statue was destroyed in an earthquake in 225 BC. This monstrosity would have been surpassed if the sculptor and architect Dinocrates would have had his way. His plan was to carve a 2,000 meter high statue of Alexander in the rocks of Mount Athos in northern Greece - sitting with its head in the clouds and its feet in the sea.

War

Just like with the arts, the emphasis in warfare was on 'more' rather than 'better'. The battles fought by the successors in the years after Alexander's death involved larger armies, heavier armor and bigger weapons. The Hellenistic commanders loved elephants. The Seleucids had traded their Indian possessions for 500 war elephants which they used to devastating effect at the battle of Ipsos. In retrospect, the years of Alexander's campaigns seem rather peaceful compared to the massive wars that raged afterwards.

The accent on army size and weaponry resulted in deterioration of training and tactics. The Hellenistic kings started to use double sized, heavily armoured phalanxes as their primary weapon of attack - whilst Alexander had used lighter phalanxes in a more defensive role. When the Romans wiped out the Macedonian forces at Cynoscephalae in 197 BC and Pydna in 168 BC the quality of troops and leadership was a mere shadow of the military standards achieved under Philip II and Alexander.

Science

Science blossomed during Hellenism. The metropolis of Alexandria hosted the largest library of Antiquity with over 70,000 books and half a million scrolls. It was destroyed by a fire in 47 BC. The library of Pergamum in Asia Minor was a good runner up. Regarding geography, the British Isles were put on the map by the Greek navigator Pytheas. In 235 BC Erasthostenes measured the circumference of the earth by comparing the length of shadows in Upper and Lower Egypt. His calculations predicted the equator should be about 47,000 kilometers long. (The correct answer, as we know now, is 40,000 kilometers.)

Technical progress was enormous. New machines and instruments were invented. But the greatest genius of the era was Archimedes, the 'Einstein' or the 'Newton' of Hellenism. This Greek mathematician and physicist, living in Syracuse on Sicily and famous for the discovery of the rules of density, is considered the most important scientist of Antiquity.

Seven Wonders

The concept of 'the Seven Wonders of the Earth' dates back to the Hellenistic period. These seven wonders were the principal landmarks of the world of Hellenism. The first three were the statue of Zeus in Olympia, the Pyramids of Egypt and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Connected by straight lines these three form a triangle indicating the economic heartland of the Hellenistic civilisation.

The next four were the Temple of Artemis in Ephesos, the Mausoleum in Halicarnassus, the Colossos of Rhodes and the Pharos (lighthouse) of Alexandria. They lay more or less in a straight line corresponding with the major trade route between Asia Minor and Egypt: the economic aorta of the Hellenistic empires.

Overview of Early Roman History

The Etruscans and Rome

Somewhere between 900 and 800 BC, the Italian peninsula was settled by a mysterious peoples called the **Etruscans**. We don't know where the Etruscans came from, but archaeologists suspect that they came from the eastern Mediterranean, possibly Asia Minor. We will, however, never really know where they came from or why they colonized Italy. We do know that when they came to Italy, they brought civilization and urbanization with them. They founded their civilizations in north-eastern Italy between the Appenine mountain range and the Tyrrhenian Sea. Their civilization stretched from the Arno river in the north to the Tiber river towards the center of the Italian peninsula; it was on the Tiber river that a small village of Latins, the village that would become Rome, sat. So the Romans, who were only villagers during the rise of the Etruscan civilization, were in close contact with the Etruscans, their language, their ideas, their religion, and their civilization; the Etruscans were the single most important influence on Roman culture in its transition to civilization.

The Etruscans lived in independent, fortified city-states; these city-states would form small confederacies. In the earliest times, these city-states were ruled by a monarch, but were later ruled by oligarchies that governed through a council and through elected officials. Like the surrounding peoples, the Etruscans were largely an agrarian people, but they also had a strong military, and used that military to dominate all the surrounding peoples. These dominated populations were forced to do the agricultural labor on the Etruscan farms, so the Etruscans had time to devote to commerce and industry. In the seventh and sixth centuries, the Etruscan military had subjugated much of Italy, including Rome, and regions outside of Italy, such as the island of Corsica.

They were a sophisticated people, with an alphabet based on the Greek alphabet, a powerfully original sculptural and painting tradition, a religion based on human-type gods which they had learned from the Greeks, and a complicated set of rituals for divining the future, which they handed down to the Romans. Unlike most civilizations of the time, gender inequality seems not to have been very pronounced.

While the Etruscans were busy building their power over Italy and engaging in active commerce with the east and with Africa, a city to their south began to grow precipitously, a city imitating Etruscans in many ways: the Roman kingdom.

Rome was founded by an agrarian Italic peoples living south of the Tiber river. They were a tribal people and the social logic of tribal organization dominated Roman society in both its early and late histories. The date of the founding of Rome is uncertain, but archaeologists date its founding to around 753 BC, although it probably existed as a small village long before then. As the Romans steadily developed their city, its government, and its culture, they imitated the neighboring civilization to the north, the Etruscans. The Etruscans, though, as they saw the power and influence of the Latin city to their south grow, would take over the government from these new, threatening people.

The early Roman government was a monarchy, but it was founded on a tribal logic. The monarch was given absolute power over the people; the Romans called this power **imperium**. However, the monarch's relationship to the people was seen as similar or identical to the power a father had over his household; in other words, the Roman monarchy was strictly patriarchal. The relationship between a patriarch and his family is a relationship of mutual obligations, and this is how the Romans understood the monarchy. In early Roman society, however, the father exercised incredible authority over the family. The father could sell his children into slavery (or could kill them if he could justify it). This arbitrary power was limited: before a father sold or killed his children, he was required to consult with the family and with the public. While the father was not allowed to kill or sell his wife, he was allowed to divorce her; this was allowed, however, only in the most extreme circumstances. In addition, the father served as the priest of the family. In many ways, the Roman monarch followed this model of power: absolute but limited by the people, their welfare, and tradition. The monarch served as a legislator, as the head of the military, as the head of the judiciary, and as a chief priest to the people. His authority, however, was limited and controlled by a constitution which he was powerless to change.

The monarch ruled alongside a Senate and an assembly. The Senate was a council of elders, a weak oligarchy, that was composed of the heads of various clan groups. These elders were originally clan leaders (and this function probably didn't change), so the Senate in its earliest form was a kind of clan confederacy. The Senate had the power to approve or veto the appointment of the king, so no individual could ascend the throne without the approval of the clan leaders. The Senate also judged the legislation and actions of the king to make sure that they accorded both with the constitution and with traditional custom; while the Senate seems to have ratified just about everything the king decided, they still exercised an important check on monarchical power. In this respect, the early Roman Senate served largely the same function that the Supreme Court serves in the United States.

The assembly consisted of all male citizens of Rome; citizenship was granted only to individuals who could demonstrate that *both* parents were native Romans. The assembly's principle function was to grant *imperium* to the monarch ratified by the Senate; there was, therefore, a limited democracy in the Roman kingdom: the clan leaders approved the candidate for king and the entire male population of Rome handed the king absolute rule. The assembly was organized into thirty groups based on kinship lines; each group got a single vote, so there were a grand total of thirty votes in the assembly. Each group would base its vote on the majority decision of the group. So while the citizens had a certain amount of say in the government in the assembly, that influence was greatly diminished by its diffusion in the group vote.

QUESTION: What was the earliest government of Rome like?

As Rome grew in power and influence, wealth began to accumulate in the hands of a few people. While we know little of the social structure of the very early Romans, by a very early period in the city's history, society was divided up into two groups: the patricians and the plebeians. The patricians were the wealthiest members of society; they controlled

most of the wealth, trade, power, and the military. Only patricians could serve as clan leaders; therefore, only patricians were allowed to sit on the Senate or hold any appointed or elected offices. The plebeians were the majority of the population; they were mainly small farmers, hard laborers, and craftspeople. They worked mainly for the patricians, although some small farmers worked their own lands rather than the lands of the wealthy. The plebeians did have a small voice in government, though: the assembly was the governmental body that represented their interests, although the institution of the group vote severely watered down individual voices.

During the monarchy, Rome greatly expanded its control over surrounding territories. The monarchy itself had been established with the express purpose of providing stability and security; the conquest of surrounding territories were undertaken with the same goals in mind. It doesn't seem that the Romans were particularly greedy for land or wealth; their conquests seem largely motivated by anxieties over the threat to their security posed by the surrounding populations. As their territorial power grew, however, they attracted the notice of the powerful Etruscans to the north who, in the middle of the sixth century BC, took over the government of Rome. From the middle of the sixth century, the Roman monarchs became Etruscan, and the Romans bitterly resented it. Finally, when an Etruscan prince of the Etruscan family that ruled Rome, the Tarquins, raped the wife of a patrician, the Romans rose up in revolt and threw the Tarquins out of power in 509 BC. While the rape of Lucretia and the overthrow of the Tarquins by Lucius Junius Brutus may be fictional (then again, it may not), the expulsion of the Etruscan monarchs began the decline in Etruscan power and civilization.

QUESTIONS: What is the relationship between Rome and the Etruscans?

In Roman tradition, the king ruled only because of the consent of the people and in conformity with tradition and the constitution; the Tarquins had broken that tradition. Rather than reinstall a Latin monarch, however, the Romans dismantled the institution of the monarchy entirely. The age of the Roman Republic, an age that would see the greatest expansion of Roman power and numerous wars, had been opened.

The Roman Republic

After the overthrow of the Tarquin monarchy by Lucius Junius Brutus in 509 BC, Rome does not revert back to a monarchy for the rest of its history. The era of the great expansion of Roman power and civilization is the era of the Roman **Republic**, in which Rome is ruled by its Senate and its assembly, which were institutions formed at the beginning of the monarchy. The history of the Republic is a history of continuous warfare; all of the historical stories which the Romans will use as stories of Roman virtue and values date from this tumultuous period of defense and invasion.

The Romans had at the beginning of the Republic a constitution which had laid down the

traditions and institutions of government; this constitution, however, was not a formal or even a written document, but rather a series of unwritten traditions and laws. These traditions and laws were based on the institution of a monarchy, so while the Romans did not revive the monarchy, they still invested enormous amounts of power in their officials. At the top were the **consuls**, who were two patricians elected to the office for one year. These patricians exercised *imperium* in much the same way the kings had in the Roman monarchy. These consuls initiated legislation, served as the head of the judiciary and the military, and served as chief priests to the nation. They even dressed as monarchs, by wearing purple robes and sitting on the seat traditionally reserved for the monarch: the ivory chair.

QUESTIONS: What did the consuls do?

However, the power of the consuls were severely limited. First, they only served for one year, at which point they would have to be re-elected or enter into private life again. Second, there were two consuls; either consul could effectively prevent any action or decision by the other consul by simply vetoing him. No consul could act without the other consul in agreement. Third, the consuls would have to serve on the Senate after their term in office; this led them to cultivate assiduously the cooperation of the senate. So the consuls exercised absolute power, *imperium*, but their power was severely hamstrung by the circumstances of their office. As a result, the consuls did not exercise much initiative or creativity, so Roman government tended to be highly conservative and cautious. This, however, was the intent of the consular system. In 325 BC, however, the consul system was changed to allow for **proconsuls**, who were consuls whose terms in office were extended because of military campaigns.

Beneath the consuls were two financial officers called **quaestors**, and as the Republic evolved, an official called the **praetor** was invented. The praetorship was originally a judicial office, but later became a military office; the praetors were essentially the central generals of Rome. The praetorship, like the consulship, was a one-year appointment, but like the consulship could be extended in times of war. In addition, the task of classifying citizens according to wealth and tax status, which was a consular duty, eventually fell to a new pair of officials called **censors**. It was the job of the censor to draw up the roll of citizens (somewhat like our modern day census; census is the Latin word from which "censor" is derived) and to fix their tax status. As you might imagine, the censors had all kinds of opportunities for bribery and corruption since they were setting tax rates, so after a while the office fell only to the most incorruptible and virtuous men of the Republic: former consuls. Eventually, the office of the censor acquired great powers, such as the power to dismiss senators from the Senate not merely for financial reasons, but any reason at all. By the time of the late Republic, the censors had become some of the most powerful politicians in Rome.

QUESTION: What was the job of the quaestors and praetors?

It is immediately evident that the *imperium* was fully concentrated in the hands of the patricians. The consuls were elected from the patrician class, as were the quaestors and the praetors; the censors, by definition, were always patricians. Because the consul reverted to the Senate, the Senate, composed only of patricians, became the principle power in Rome. The Republic in its early form was largely a transfer of power from the monarch to the wealthiest classes in Rome, and this dominance of Roman law, finances, and foreign policy by the patricians instantly produced resentment among the plebeians; from its inception in 509 BC to its demise at the hands of Caesar in the middle of the first century BC, the political history of the Roman Republic is a tumultuous, chaotic, and often violent conflict between the two classes in Rome vying for political power.

This conflict was called "the struggle of the orders" (the orders of society) and is largely about the patrician class attempting to hold onto power while the plebeians attempted to achieve social and political equality. The patricians found themselves unable to exist without the plebeians: not only did the plebeians produce the food and supply the labor that kept the Roman economy going, they also supplied the soldiers for the Roman military. If the plebeians could act as a group, they could effectively shut down the Roman economy and military; the latter was especially important since Rome was in continual military conflict during the age of the Republic.

In Roman historical tradition, in 494 BC the plebeians withdrew from Rome and occupied the Sacred Mount. There they declared an alternative government. They formed a tribal assembly, modelled after the Roman assembly, which would be headed by tribunes who were heads of their tribes. They declared that these tribunes could veto any decision by a Roman magistrate or official, and could veto any decision or legislation by the Senate. The assembly itself, like the former assembly, voted by tribe, and the decision of the assembly was binding on all plebeians. In other words, the plebeians had won for themselves the right to author their own legislation. Their decisions, however, were not binding on non-plebeians.

QUESTION: What was the struggle of the orders?

In 450 BC, the struggle of the orders produced the **Law of the Twelve Tables**, which simply formalized and codified Roman law and its constitution. The Romans, however, saw it as a victory for the rights of the citizen for it gave them an instrument to know where they stood as far as the law is concerned. In 445 BC, plebeians acquired the right to marry a patrician, and in 367 the plebeians gained the right to be elected consul, when the first plebeian consul was elected. The Licinian-Sextian laws demanded that at least one consul be a plebeian. After the completion of the term of consular office, the consul became a member of the Senate, so the patrician hold on the Senate had, in part, been broken when the plebeians gained full access to the office of the consul. In 300 BC, plebeians were allowed to serve at all levels of the priesthood, thus making them religiously equal to the patricians. Finally, in the greatest victory of all in terms of power and influence, in 287 BC, the decisions and legislation of the plebeian assembly were not only binding on the plebeians, but on the entire Roman citizenry. These reforms were purchased without any civil war or internal bloodshed; they would not resolve the struggle, but they certainly

prevented out and out civil war.

The Romans, then, reformed their government as the need arose rather than pursuing any particular plan of reform or development. At the same time, the Romans built their territorial power with the same lack of planning and purpose. Originally, the wars which the Republic fought were largely defensive wars; the expulsion of the Tarquins provoked many attacks by their allies and by Etruscans. Soon, however, the Romans were moving to gain control over neighboring territory in order to neutralize the threat of attack. Their logic was that control over these territories would obviate any potential attack from the people occupying those territories and at the same time provide a buffer region between themselves and potential attackers. Roman conquest, then, was pursued largely for Roman security; the end result of this process would be, first, the conquest of the entire Italian peninsula by 265 BC, and then the conquest of the world. The Roman Empire was an accident, so to speak; it was formed in the pursuit of other policies, namely, security. Only in its later stages was the Roman Empire a deliberate objective.

Livy: The Rape of Lucretia, from the *History of Rome*

It took the Roman historian Livy (d. 17 AD) forty years to write his 142-book History of Rome. In this excerpt, he repeats a legend which was extremely important to Romans during the Republic. The sons of the King of Rome, Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, are at Ardea, a city which the army is attempting to conquer, when they hear of the virtue of the Roman matron Lucretia.

Question:

What virtues does this story put forth for Roman society through the example of Lucretia? Why would this story have mattered to Romans?

LVII. One day when the young men were drinking at the house of Sextus Tarquinius, after a supper where they had dined with the son of Egerius, Tarquinius Conlatinus, they fell to talking about their wives, and each man fell to praising his wife to excess. Finally Tarquinius Conlatinus declared that there was no need to argue; they might all be sure that no one was more worthy than his Lucretia. "Young and vigorous as we are, why don't we go get out horses and go and see for ourselves what our wives are doing? And we will base our judgement on whatever we see them doing when their husbands arrive unannounced." Encouraged by the wine, "Yes, let's go!" they all cried, and they went on horseback to the city. Darkness was beginning to fall when they arrived and they went to the house of Conlatinus. There, they found Lucretia behaving quite differently from the daughters-in-law of the King, whom they had found with their friends before a grand feast, preparing to have a night of fun. Lucretia, even though it was night, was still working on her spinning, with her servants, in the middle of her house. They were all impressed by Lucretia's chaste honor. When her husband and the Tarquins arrived, she received them, and her husband, the winner, was obliged to invite the king's sons in. It was then that Sextus Tarquinius was seized by the desire to violate Lucretia's chastity, seduced both by her beauty and by her exemplary virtue. Finally, after a night of youthful games, they returned to the camp.

LVIII. Several days passed. Sextus Tarquinius returned to the house of Conlatinus, with one of his companions. He was well received and given the hospitality of the house, and maddened with love, he waited until he was sure everyone else was asleep. Then he took up his sword and went to Lucretia's bedroom, and placing his sword against her left breast, he said, "Quiet, Lucretia; I am Sextus Tarquinius, and I have a sword in my hand. If you speak, you will die." Awakening from sleep, the poor woman realized that she was without help and very close to death. Sextus Tarquinius declared his love for her, begging and threatening her alternately, and attacked her soul in every way. Finally, before her steadfastness, which was not affected by the fear of death even after his intimidation, he added another menace. "When I have killed you, I will put next to you the body of a nude servant, and everyone will say that you were killed during a dishonorable act of adultery." With this menace, Sextus Tarquinius triumphed over her virtue, and when he had raped her he left, having taken away her honor. Lucretia, overcome with sorrow and shame, sent messengers both to her husband at Ardea and her father at Rome, asking them each to come "at once, with a good friend, because a very terrible thing had happened." Spurius Lucretius, her father, came with Publius Valerius, the son of Volesus, and Conlatinus came with Lucius Junius Brutus; they had just returned to Rome when they met Lucretia's messenger. They found Lucretia in her chamber, overpowered by grief. When she saw them she began to cry. "How are you?" her husband asked. "Very bad," she replied, "how can anything go well for a woman who has lost her honor? There are the marks of another man in your bed, Conlatinus. My body is greatly soiled, though my heart is still pure, as my death will prove. But give me your right hand in faith that you will not allow the guilty to escape. It was Sextus Tarquinius who returned our hospitality with enmity last night. With his sword in his hand, he came to take his pleasure for my unhappiness, but it will also be his sorrow if you are real men." They promised her that they would pursue him, and they tried to appease her sorrow, saying that it was the soul that did wrong, and not the body, and because she had had no bad intention, she did no wrong. "It is your responsibility to see that he gets what he deserves," she said, "I will absolve myself of blame, and I will not free myself from punishment. No woman shall use Lucretia as her example in dishonor."

Then she took up a knife which she had hidden beneath her robe, and plunged it into her heart, collapsing from her wound; she died there amid the cries of her husband and father.

LIX. Brutus, leaving them in their grief, took the knife from Lucretia's wound, and holding it all covered with blood up in the aid, cried, "By this blood, which was so pure before the crime of the prince, I swear before you, O gods, to chase the King Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, with his criminal wife and all their offspring, by fire, iron, and all the methods I have at my disposal, and never to tolerate Kings in Rome evermore, whether of that family of any other."

Source:

Translated from the original in Jean Bayet, ed., Tite-Live: *Histoire Romaine*, Tome I, livre I. Paris: Societé d'Édition "les belles-lettres," 1954, pp. 92-95.

Livy: Horatius at The Bridge

QUESTIONS:

Who is Horatius?

What makes him heroic in this account?

By this time the Tarquins had fled to Lars Porsena, king of Clusium. There, with advice and entreaties, they besought him not to suffer them, who were descended from the Etrurians and of the same blood and name, to live in exile and poverty; and advised him not to let this practice of expelling kings to pass unpunished. Liberty, they declared, had charms enough in itself; and unless kings defended their crowns with as much vigor as the people pursued their liberty, the highest must be reduced to a level with the lowest; there would be nothing exalted, nothing distinguished above the rest; hence there must be an end of regal government, the most beautiful institution both among gods and men. Porsena, thinking it would be an honor to the Tuscans that there should be a king at Rome, especially one of the Etrurian nation, marched towards Rome with an army. Never before had such terror seized the Senate, so powerful was the state of Clusium at the time, and so great the renown of Porsena. Nor did they only dread their enemies, but even their own citizens, lest the common people, through excess of fear should, by receiving the Tarquins into the city, accept peace even though purchased with slavery. Many concessions were therefore granted to the people by the Senate during that period. Their attention, in the first place, was directed to the markets, and persons were sent, some to the Volscians, others to Cumæ, to buy up corn. The privilege of selling salt, because it was farmed at a high rate, was also taken into the hands of the government, and withdrawn from private individuals; and the people were freed from port-duties and taxes, in order that the rich, who could bear the burden, should contribute; the poor paid tax enough if they educated their children. This indulgent care of the fathers accordingly kept the whole state in such concord amid the subsequent severities of the siege and famine, that the highest as well as the lowest abhorred the name of king; nor was any individual afterwards so popular by intriguing practices as the whole Senate was by their excellent government.

Some parts of the city seemed secured by the walls, others by the River Tiber. The Sublician Bridge wellnigh afforded a passage to the enemy, had there not been one man, Horatius Cocles (fortunately Rome had on that day such a defender) who, happening to be posted on guard at the bridge, when he saw the Janiculum taken by a sudden assault and the enemy pouring down thence at full speed, and that his own party, in terror and confusion, were abandoning their arms and ranks, laying hold of them one by one, standing in their way and appealing to the faith of gods and men, he declared that their flight would avail them nothing if they deserted their post; if they passed the bridge, there would soon be more of the enemy in the Palatium and Capitol than in the Janiculum. For that reason he charged them to demolish the bridge, by sword, by fire, or by any means whatever; declaring that he would stand the shock of the enemy as far as could be done by one man. He then advanced to the first entrance of the bridge, and being easily distinguished among those who showed their backs in retreating, faced about to engage the foe hand to hand, and by his surprising bravery he terrified the enemy. Two indeed remained with him from a sense of shame: Sp. Lartius and T. Herminius, men eminent for their birth, and renowned for their gallant exploits. With them he for a short time stood the first storm of the danger, and the severest brunt of the battle. But as they who demolished the bridge called upon them to retire, he obliged them also to withdraw to a place of safety on a small portion of

the bridge that was still left. Then casting his stern eyes toward the officers of the Etrurians in a threatening manner, he now challenged them singly, and then reproached them, slaves of haughty tyrants who, regardless of their own freedom, came to oppress the liberty of others. They hesitated for a time, looking round one at the other, to begin the fight; shame then put the army in motion, and a shout being raised, they hurled weapons from all sides at their single adversary; and when they all stuck in his upraised shield, and he with no less obstinacy kept possession of the bridge, they endeavored to thrust him down from it by one push, when the crash of the falling bridge was heard, and at the same time a shout of the Romans raised for joy at having completed their purpose, checked their ardor with sudden panic. Then said Cocles: "Holy Father Tiber, I pray thee, receive these arms, and this thy soldier, in thy propitious stream." Armed as he was, he leaped into the Tiber, and amid showers of darts, swam across safe to his party, having dared an act which is likely to obtain with posterity more fame than credit. The state was grateful for such valor; a statue was erected to him in the comitium, and as much land given to him as he could plow in one day. The zeal of private individuals was also conspicuous among his public honors. For amid the great scarcity, each contributed something, according to his supply depriving himself of his own support.

The Twelve Tables

Introduction

Duodecim Tabularum. Tradition tells us that the code was composed by a commission, first of ten and then of twelve men, in 451-450 B.C., was ratified by the Centuriate Assembly in 449 B.C., was engraved on twelve tablets (whence the title), which were attached to the Rostra before the Curia in the Forum of Rome.

QUESTIONS:

How do these laws compare to earlier examples we've seen in other cultures?

Does this provide an effective foundation for Roman Law?

Are there any laws in the Tables that you find particularly controversial? List them.

Table I. Proceedings Preliminary to Trial

1. If the plaintiff summons the defendant to court the defendant shall go. If the defendant does not go the plaintiff shall call a witness thereto. Only then the plaintiff shall seize the defendant.
2. If the defendant attempts evasion or takes flight the plaintiff shall lay hand on him.
3. If sickness or age is an impediment he who summons the defendant to court shall grant him a vehicle. If he does not wish he shall not spread a carriage with cushions.
4. For a freeholder' a freeholder shall be surety; for a proletarian anyone who wishes shall be surety.
5. There shall be the same right of bond and of conveyance with the Roman people for a steadfast person and for a person restored to allegiance.
6. When the parties agree on the matter the magistrate shall announce it.
7. If they agree not on terms the parties shall state their case before the assembly in the meeting place or before the magistrate in the market place before noon. Both parties being present shall plead the case throughout together.
8. If one of the parties does not appear the magistrate shall adjudge the case, after noon, in favor of the one present.
9. If both parties are present sunset shall be the time limit of the proceedings.

Table II. Trial

- 1a. The penal sum in an action by solemn deposit shall be either 500 asses or 50 asses ... It shall be argued by solemn deposit with 500 asses, when the property is valued at 1,000 asses or more, but with 50 asses, when the property is valued at less than 1,000 asses. But if the controversy is about the freedom of a person, although the person may be very valuable, yet the case shall be argued by a solemn deposit of 50 asses. ...
- 1b. An action by demand for a judex ... concerning that which is claimed in accordance with a stipulation ... concerning division of an inheritance among joint heirs....
3. Whoever needs evidence shall go every third day to shout before the doorway.

Table III. Execution of Judgment

1. Thirty days shall be allowed by law for payment of confessed debt and for settlement of matters adjudged in court.
2. After this time the creditor shall have the right of laying hand on the debtor. The creditor shall hale the debtor into court.

3. Unless the debtor discharges the debt adjudged or unless someone offers surety for him in court the creditor shall take the debtor with him. He shall bind him either with a thong or with fetters of not less than fifteen pounds in weight, or if he wishes he shall bind him with fetters of more than this weight.

4. If the debtor wishes he shall live on his own means." If he does not live on his own means the creditor who holds him in bonds shall give him a pound of grits daily. If he wishes he shall give him more.

5. ... Meanwhile they shall have the right to compromise, and unless they make a compromise the debtors shall be held in bonds for sixty days. During these days they shall be brought to the praetor" into the meeting place on three successive market days, and the amount for which they have been judged liable shall be declared publicly. Moreover, on the third market day they shall suffer capital punishment or shall be delivered for sale abroad across the Tiber River.

6. On the third market day the creditors shall cut shares. If they have cut more or less than their shares it shall be without prejudice.

Table IV. Paternal Power

1. A notably deformed child shall be killed immediately.

2a. To a father ...shall be given over a son the power of life and death.

2b. If a father thrice surrenders a son for sale the son shall be free from the father.

3. To repudiate his wife her husband shall order her... to have her own property for herself, shall take the keys, shall expel her.

4. A child born within ten months of the father's death shall enter into the inheritance ...

Table V. Inheritance and Guardianship

1. ...Women, even though they are of full age, because of their levity of mind shall be under guardianship ... except vestal virgins, who ... shall be free from guardianship ...

2. The conveyable possessions of a woman who is under guardianship of male agnates shall not be acquired by prescriptive right unless they are transferred by herself with the authorization of her guardian ...

3. According as a person has made bequest regarding his personal property or the guardianship of his estate so shall be the law.

4. If anyone who has no direct heir dies nearest male agnate shall have the estate.

5. If there is not a male agnate the male clansmen shall have the estate.

6. Persons for whom by will ... a guardian is not given, for them ... their male agnates shall be guardians. If a person is insane authority over him and his personal property shall belong to his male agnates and in default of these to his male clansmen....

8. If a Roman citizen freedman dies intestate without a direct heir, to his patron shall fall the inheritance ...said household ... into said household.

9. Those items that are in the category of accounts due to the deceased ...shall be divided among the heirs by ordinary operation of law in proportion to their shares of the inheritance. ... Debts of the estate of a deceased shall be divided, according to law, among the heirs, proportionately to the share of the inheritance that each acquires.

10. ...Action for division of an estate shall be available for joint heirs wishing to withdraw from common and equal participation ...

Table VI. Ownership and Possession

1. When a person makes bond and conveyance, according as he specified with his tongue so shall be the law.

2. It shall be sufficient to make good those faults that have been named by his tongue, while for those flaws that he has denied expressly, when questioned about them. vendor shall undergo a penalty of double damages ...

3. Warranty of prescriptive right in land shall be two years to acquire ownership. ... Of all other things, prescriptive right shall be for one year to acquire ownership.

4. Against an alien a warranty of ownership or prescriptive right shall be valid forever.

5. ... If any woman is unwilling to be subjected in this manner to her husband's marital control she shall absent herself for three successive nights in every year and by this means shall interrupt his prescriptive right of each year.

6a. If the parties join their hands on the disputed property when pleading in court ...

6b. Both conveyance and surrender in court ... shall be confirmed.

7. ... Interim possession shall be granted in favor of liberty.

8. One shall not take from framework timber fixed in buildings or in vineyard ... One shall be permitted neither to remove nor to claim stolen timber fixed in buildings or in vineyards, ... but against the person who is convicted of having fixed such timber there an action for double damages shall be given.

9. ... Whenever the vines are pruned, until the timbers removed ...

Table VII. Real Property

... 6. The width of a road shall be eight feet on a straight stretch, on a bend sixteen feet.

7. They shall build and repair the road: unless they keep it free from stones one shall drive one's beast or marriage where one wishes....

8b. If a watercourse conducted through a public place does damage to a private person the said person shall have the right to bring an action ... that security against damage may be given to the owner.

9a. ... Branches of a tree shall be pruned all around to a height of fifteen feet.

9b. If a tree from a neighbor's farm has been felled by the wind over one's farm, ... one rightfully can take legal action for that tree to be removed.

10. ... It shall be lawful to gather fruit falling upon another's farm.

11. Articles sold ... and delivered shall not be acquired by the purchaser, unless he pays the price to the seller or in some other way satisfies the seller, as, for example, by giving a surety or a pledge ...

12. A slave is ordered in a will to be a free man under this condition: "if he has given 10,000 asses to the heir"; although the slave has been alienated by the heir, yet the slave by giving the said money to the buyer shall enter into his freedom..

Table VIII. Torts or Delicts

1a. Whoever enchants by singing an evil incantation ...

1b. ... If anyone sings or composes an incantation that can cause dishonor or disgrace to another ... he shall suffer a capital penalty.

2. If anyone has broken another's limb there shall be retaliation in kind unless he compounds for compensation with him.

3. ... If a person breaks a bone of a freeman with hand or by club, he shall undergo a penalty of 300 asses; or of 150 asses, if of a slave.

4. If one commits an outrage against another the penalty shall be twenty-five asses....

6. If a quadruped is said to have caused damage an action shall lie therefor ... either for surrendering that which did the damage to the aggrieved person ... or for offering an assessment of the damage.

7. If fruit from your tree falls onto my farm and if I feed my flock off it by letting the flock onto it. ... no action can lie against me either on the statute concerning pasturage of a flock, because it is not being pastured on your land, or on the statute concerning damage caused by an animal ...

9. If anyone pastures on or cuts by night another's crops obtained by cultivation the penalty for an adult shall be capital punishment and, after having been hung up, death as a sacrifice to Ceres ... A person below the age of puberty at the praetor's decision shall be scourged and shall be judged as a person either to be surrendered to the plaintiff for damage done or to pay double damages.

10. Whoever destroys by burning a building or a stack of grain placed beside a house ..., shall be bound, scourged, burned to death, provided that knowingly and consciously he has committed this crime; but if this deed is by accident, that is, by negligence, either he shall repair the damage or if he is unable he shall be corporally punished more lightly.

11. Whoever fells unjustly another's trees shall pay twenty-five asses for each tree.

12. If a thief commits a theft by night, if the owner kills the thief, the thief shall be killed lawfully.

13. By daylight ... if a thief defends himself with a weapon ... and the owner shall shout.

14. In the case of all other ... thieves caught in the act freemen shall be scourged and shall be adjudged as bondsmen to the person against whom the theft has been committed provided that they have done this by daylight and have not defended themselves with a weapon; slaves caught in the act of theft ..., shall be whipped with scourges and shall be thrown from the rock; but children below the age of puberty shall be scourged at the praetor's decision and the damage done by them shall be repaired.

15a. The penalty for detected and planted theft shall be triple damages....

16. If a person prosecutes for theft which is not of the type wherein the thief is caught in the act ... the thief shall settle the loss by paying double damages.

17. Title to a stolen article ... shall not be acquired by prescriptive right.

18a. ... No person shall practice usury at a rate of more than one twelfths.

18b. ... A thief shall be condemned for double damages and a usurer for quadruple damages.

19. From a suit about an article deposited ..., an action for double damages shall be given.

20a. If guardians are suspect in their administration there shall be the right to accuse them as such ...

20b. If ... guardians steal a ward's property ... there shall be an action ... against a guardian for double damages; each guardian shall be held for the entire sum.

21. If a patron defrauds a client he shall be accursed.

22. Unless he speaks his testimony whoever allows him self to be called as a witness or is a scales-bearer shall be dishonored and incompetent to give or obtain testimony.

23. ... Whoever is convicted of speaking false witness shall be flung from the Tarpeian Rock.

24a. If a weapon has sped accidentally from one's hand, rather than if one has aimed and hurled it, to atone for the deed a ram is substituted as a peace offering to prevent blood revenge.

24b. If anyone pastures on or cuts stealthily by night ... another's crops ... the penalty shall be capital punishment, and, after having been hung up, death as a sacrifice to Ceres, a punishment more severe than in homicide....

26. ... No person shall hold nocturnal meetings in the city.

27. These guild members shall have the power ... to make for themselves any rule that they may wish provided that they impair no part of the public law.

Table IX. Public Law

- 1-2. Laws of personal exception shall not be proposed. Laws concerning capital punishment of a citizen shall not be passed ... except by the Greatest Assembly ...
3. A judex or an arbiter legally appointed who has been convicted of receiving money for declaring a decision shall be punished capitally.
4. ... the investigators of murder ... who have charge
5. Whoever incites a public enemy or whoever betrays a citizen to a public enemy shall be punished capitally.
6. For anyone whomsoever to be put to death without a trial and unconvicted ... is forbidden.

Table X. Sacred Law

1. A dead person shall not be buried or burned in the city.
2. ... More than this one shall not do: one shall not smooth a funeral pyre with an ax.
3. ... Expenses of a funeral shall be limited to three mourners wearing veils and one mourner wearing an inexpensive purple tunic and ten flutists
4. Women shall not tear their cheeks or shall not make a sorrowful outcry on account of a funeral.
- 5a. A dead person's bones shall not be collected that one may make a second funeral.
- 5b. An exception is for death in battle and on foreign soil.
- 6a. ... Anointing by slaves is abolished and every kind of drinking bout ... there shall be no costly sprinkling, no long garlands, no incense boxes ...
- 6b. ... A myrrh-spiced drink ... shall not be poured on a dead person.
7. Whoever wins a crown himself or by his property, by honor, or by valor, the crown is bestowed on him at his burial ...
8. ... Nor gold shall be added to a corpse. But if any one buries or burns a corpse that has gold dental work it shall be without prejudice.
9. It is forbidden ... to build a new pyre or a burning mound nearer than sixty feet to another's building without the owner's consent.
10. It is forbidden to acquire by prescriptive right a vestibule of a sepulcher or a burning mound.

Table XI. Supplementary Laws

1. ... There shall not be intermarriage between plebeians and patricians ...
2. ... regulations concerning intercalation ...
3. ... regulations concerning days permissible for official legal action.

Table XII. Supplementary Laws

1. ... There shall be introduced a seizure of pledge against a person who buys an animal for sacrifice and does not pay the price; likewise against a person who does not make payment for that animal which anyone lets to him for this purpose, that the lessor may spend money received therefrom on a sacred banquet, that is, on a sacrifice.
 - 2a. If a slave commits a theft or does damage to property ...
 - 2b. From delinquency of children of the household and of slaves ... actions for damages shall be appointed, that the father or the master may be permitted either to undergo assessment of the claim or to deliver the delinquent for punishment ...
3. If one has obtained an unjustifiable grant of interim possession and if his adversary wishes ... the magistrate shall grant three arbiters; by their arbitration ... the unjustifiable

holder of interim possession shall settle the plaintiff's loss of enjoyment of the thing by paying double damages.

4. It is forbidden to dedicate for consecrated use a thing concerning whose ownership there is a controversy; otherwise a penalty of double the value involved shall be suffered ...

5. Whatever the people ordain last shall be legally valid.

Source:

Ancient Roman statutes : translation, with introduction, commentary, glossary, and index
by Allan Chester Johnson, Paul Robinson Coleman-Norton, Frank Card Bourne ; general editor, Clyde Pharr

Austin : University of Texas Press, 1961

Overview of the Punic Wars

The three Punic Wars between Carthage and Rome took place over nearly a century, beginning in 264 B.C. and ending with the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C. By the time the First Punic War broke out, Rome had become the dominant power throughout the Italian peninsula, while Carthage—a powerful city-state in northern Africa—had established itself as the leading maritime power in the world. The First Punic War broke out in 264 B.C. when Rome interfered in a dispute on the Carthaginian-controlled island of Sicily; the war ended with Rome in control of both Sicily and Corsica and marked the empire's emergence as a naval as well as a land power. In the Second Punic War, the great Carthaginian general Hannibal invaded Italy and scored great victories at Lake Trasimene and Cannae before his eventual defeat at the hands of Rome's Scipio Africanus in 202 B.C. left Rome in control of the western Mediterranean and much of Spain. In the Third Punic War, the Romans, led by Scipio the Younger, captured and destroyed the city of Carthage in 146 B.C., turning Africa into yet another province of the mighty Roman Empire.

The First Punic War

Tradition holds that Phoenician settlers from the Mediterranean port of Tyre (in what is now Lebanon) founded the city-state of Carthage on the northern coast of Africa, just north of modern-day Tunis, around 814 B.C. (The word "Punic," later the name for the series of wars between Carthage and Rome, was derived from the Latin word for Phoenician.) By 265 B.C., Carthage was the wealthiest and most advanced city in the region, as well as its leading naval power. Though Carthage had clashed violently with several other powers in the region, notably Greece, its relations with Rome were historically friendly, and the cities had signed several treaties defining trading rights over the years.

In 264 B.C., Rome decided to intervene in a dispute on the western coast of the island of Sicily (then a Carthaginian province) involving an attack by soldiers from the city of Syracuse against the city of Messina. While Carthage supported Syracuse, Rome supported Messina, and the struggle soon exploded into a direct conflict between the two powers, with control of Sicily at stake. Over the course of nearly 20 years, Rome rebuilt its entire fleet in order to confront Carthage's powerful navy, scoring its first sea victory at Mylae in 260 B.C. and a major victory in the Battle of Ecnomus in 256 B.C. Though its invasion of North Africa that same year ended in defeat, Rome refused to give up, and in 241 B.C. the Roman fleet was able to win a decisive victory against the Carthaginians at sea, breaking their legendary naval superiority. At the end of the First Punic War, Sicily became Rome's first overseas province.

The Second Punic War

Over the next decades, Rome took over control of both Corsica and Sardinia as well, but Carthage was able to establish a new base of influence in Spain beginning in 237 B.C., under the leadership of the powerful general Hamilcar Barca and, later, his son-in-law Hasdrubal. According to Polybius and Livy in their histories of Rome, Hamilcar Barca, who died in 229 B.C., made his younger son Hannibal swear a blood oath against Rome when he was just a young boy. Upon Hasdrubal's death in 221 B.C., Hannibal took command of Carthaginian forces in Spain. Two years later, he marched his army across the Ebro River into Saguntum, an Iberian city under Roman protection, effectively declaring war on Rome. The Second Punic War saw Hannibal and his troops—including as many as 90,000 infantry, 12,000

cavalry and a number of elephants—march from Spain across the Alps and into Italy, where they scored a string of victories over Roman troops at Ticinus, Trebia and Trasimene. Hannibal's daring invasion of Rome reached its height at Cannae in 216 B.C., where he used his superior cavalry to surround a Roman army twice the size of his own and inflict massive casualties.

After this disastrous defeat, however, the Romans managed to rebound, and the Carthaginians lost hold in Italy as Rome won victories in Spain and North Africa under the rising young general Publius Cornelius Scipio (later known as Scipio Africanus). In 203 B.C., Hannibal's forces were forced to abandon the struggle in Italy in order to defend North Africa, and the following year Scipio's army routed the Carthaginians at Zama. Hannibal's losses in the Second Punic War effectively put an end to Carthage's empire in the western Mediterranean, leaving Rome in control of Spain and allowing Carthage to retain only its territory in North Africa. Carthage was also forced to give up its fleet and pay a large indemnity to Rome in silver.

The Third Punic War

The Third Punic War, by far the most controversial of the three conflicts between Rome and Carthage, was the result of efforts by Cato the Elder and other hawkish members of the Roman Senate to convince their colleagues that Carthage (even in its weakened state) was a continuing threat to Rome's supremacy in the region. In 149 B.C., after Carthage technically broke its treaty with Rome by declaring war against the neighboring state of Numidia, the Romans sent an army to North Africa, beginning the Third Punic War.

Carthage withstood the Roman siege for two years before a change of Roman command put the young general Scipio Aemilianus (later known as Scipio the Younger) in charge of the North Africa campaign in 147 B.C. After tightening the Roman positions around Carthage, Aemilianus launched a forceful attack on its harbor side in the spring of 146 B.C., pushing into the city and destroying house after house while pushing enemy troops towards their citadel. After seven days of horrific bloodshed, the Carthaginians surrendered, obliterating an ancient city that had survived for some 700 years. The surviving 50,000 citizens of Carthage were sold into slavery. Also in 146 B.C., Roman troops moved east to defeat King Philip V of Macedonia in the Macedonian Wars, and by year's end Rome reigned supreme over an empire stretching from the Atlantic coast of Spain to the border between Greece and Asia Minor (now Turkey).

Polybius (c.200-after 118 BCE): Rome at the End of the Punic Wars [History, Book 6]

[Thatcher Introduction]: ROME, with the end of the third Punic war, 146 B. C., had completely conquered the last of the civilized world. The best authority for this period of her history is Polybius. He was born in Arcadia, in 204 B. C., and died in 122 B. C. Polybius was an officer of the Achaean League, which sought by federating the Peloponnesus to make it strong enough to keep its independence against the Romans, but Rome was already too strong to be resisted, and arresting a thousand of the most influential members, sent them to Italy to await trial for conspiracy. Polybius had the good fortune, during seventeen years exile, to be allowed to live with the Scipios. He was present at the destructions of Carthage and Corinth, in 146 B. C., and did more than anyone else to get the Greeks to accept the inevitable Roman rule. Polybius is the most reliable, but not the most brilliant, of ancient historians.

QUESTIONS:

What are some of the primary differences between Rome and Carthage?

Compare this text with Pericles' assessment of Athens and Sparta.

Do you trust Polybius' analysis of the Carthaginians? Why or why not?

Rome and Carthage Compared:

The government of Carthage seems also to have been originally well contrived with regard to those general forms that have been mentioned. For there were kings in this government, together with a senate, which was vested with aristocratic authority. The people likewise enjoy the exercise of certain powers that were appropriated to them. In a word, the entire frame of the republic very much resembled those of Rome and Sparta. But at the time of the war of Hannibal the Carthaginian constitution was worse in its condition than the Roman. For as nature has assigned to every body, every government, and every action, three successive periods; the first, of growth; the second, of perfection; and that which follows, of decay; and as the period of perfection is the time in which they severally display their greatest strength; from hence arose the difference that was then found between the two republics. For the government of Carthage, having reached the highest point of vigor and perfection much sooner than that of Rome, had now declined from it in the same proportion: whereas the Romans, at this very time, had just raised their constitution to the most flourishing and perfect state. The effect of this difference was, that among the Carthaginians the people possessed the greatest sway in all deliberations, but the senate among the Romans. And as, in the one republic, all measures were determined by the multitude; and, in the other, by the most eminent citizens; of so great force was this advantage in the conduct of affairs, that the Romans, though brought by repeated losses into the greatest danger, became, through the wisdom of their counsels, superior to the Carthaginians in the war.

QUESTION: What warning does Polybius put in this passage for the Romans?

If we descend to a more particular comparison, we shall find, that with respect to military science, for example, the Carthaginians, in the management and conduct of a naval war, are more skillful than the Romans. For the Carthaginians have derived this knowledge from their ancestors through a long course of ages; and are more exercised in maritime affairs than any other people. But the Romans, on the other hand, are far superior in all things that belong to the establishment and discipline of armies. For this discipline, which is regarded by them as the chief and constant object of their care, is utterly neglected by the Carthaginians; except only that they bestow some little attention upon their cavalry. The reason of this difference is, that the Carthaginians employ foreign mercenaries; and that on the contrary the Roman armies are composed of citizens, and of the people of the country. Now in this respect the government of Rome is greatly preferable to that of Carthage. For while the Carthaginians entrust the preservation of their liberty to the care of venal troops; the Romans place all their confidence in their own bravery, and in the assistance of their allies. From hence it happens, that the Romans, though at first defeated, are always able to renew the war; and that the Carthaginian armies never are repaired without great difficulty. Add to this, that the Romans, fighting for their country and their children, never suffer their ardor to be slackened; but persist with the same steady spirit till they become superior to their enemies. From hence it happens, likewise, that even in actions upon the sea, the Romans, though inferior to the Carthaginians, as we have already observed, in naval knowledge and experience, very frequently obtain success through the mere bravery of their forces. For though in all such contests a skill in maritime affairs must be allowed to be of the greatest use; yet, on the other hand, the valor of the troops that are engaged is no less effectual to draw the victory to their side.

Now the people of Italy are by nature superior to the Carthaginians and the Africans, both in bodily strength, and in courage. Add to this, that they have among them certain institutions by which the young men are greatly animated to perform acts of bravery. It will be sufficient to mention one of these, as a proof of the attention that is shown by the Roman government, to infuse such a spirit into the citizens as shall lead them to encounter every kind of danger for the sake of obtaining reputation in their country. When any illustrious person dies, he is carried in procession with the rest of the funeral pomp, to the *rostra* in the forum; sometimes placed conspicuous in an upright posture; and sometimes, though less frequently, reclined. And while the people are all standing round, his son, if he has left one of sufficient age, and who is then at Rome, or, if otherwise, some person of his kindred, ascends the rostra, and extols the virtues of the deceased, and the great deeds that were performed by him in his life. By this discourse, which recalls his past actions to remembrance, and places them in open view before all the multitude, not those alone who were sharers in his victories, but even the rest who bore no part in his exploits, are moved to such sympathy of sorrow, that the accident seems rather to be a public misfortune, than a private loss. He is then buried with the usual rites; and afterwards an image, which both in features and complexion expresses an exact resemblance of his face, is set up in the most conspicuous part of the house, enclosed in a shrine of wood. Upon solemn festivals, these images are uncovered, and adorned with the greatest care.

And when any other person of the same family dies, they are carried also in the funeral procession, with a body added to the bust, that the representation may be just, even with regard to size. They are dressed likewise in the habits that belong to the ranks which they severally filled when they were alive. If they were consuls or praetors, in a gown bordered with purple: if censors, in a purple robe: and if they triumphed, or obtained any similar honor, in a vest embroidered with gold. Thus appeared, they are drawn along in chariots

preceded by the rods and axes, and other ensigns of their former dignity. And when they arrive at the forum, they are all seated upon chairs of ivory; and there exhibit the noblest objects that can be offered to youthful mind, warmed with the love of virtue and of glory. For who can behold without emotion the forms of so many illustrious men, thus living, as it were, and breathing together in his presence? Or what spectacle can be conceived more great and striking? The person also that is appointed to harangue, when he has exhausted all the praises of the deceased, turns his discourse to the rest, whose images are before him; and, beginning with the most ancient of them, recounts the fortunes and the exploits of every one in turn. By this method, which renews continually the remembrance of men celebrated for their virtue, the fame of every great and noble action become immortal. And the glory of those, by whose services their country has been benefited, is rendered familiar to the people, and delivered down to future times. But the chief advantage is, that by the hope of obtaining this honorable fame, which is reserved for virtue, the young men are animated to sustain all danger, in the cause of the common safety. For from hence it has happened, that many among the Romans have voluntarily engaged in single combat, in order to decide the fortune of an entire war. Many also have devoted themselves to inevitable death; some of them in battle, to save the lives of other citizens; and some in time of peace to rescue the whole state from destruction. Others again, who have been invested with the highest dignities have, in defiance of all law and customs, condemned their own sons to die; showing greater regard to the advantage of their country, than to the bonds of nature, and the closest ties of kindred.

QUESTION: What is beneficial about the way Romans handle their dead?

Very frequent are the examples of this kind, that are recorded in the Roman story. I shall here mention one, as a signal instance, and proof of the truth of all that I have affirmed. Horatius, surnamed Cocles, being engaged in combat with two enemies, at the farthest extremity of the bridge that led into Rome across the Tiber, and perceiving that many others were advancing fast to their assistance, was apprehensive that they would force their way together into the city. turning himself, therefore, to his companions that were behind him, he called to them aloud, that should immediately retire and break the bridge. While they were employed in this work, Horatius, covered over with wounds, still maintained the post, and stopped the progress of the enemy; who were struck with his firmness and intrepid courage, even more than with the strength of his resistance. And when the bridge was broken, and the city secured from insult, he threw himself into the river with his armor, and there lost his life as he had designed: having preferred the safety of his country, and the future fame that was sure to follow such an action, to his own present existence, and to the time that remained for him to live. Such is the spirit, and such the emulation of achieving glorious action, which the Roman institutions are fitted to infuse into the minds of youth.

In things that regard the acquisition of wealth, the manners also, and the customs of the Romans, are greatly preferable to those of the Carthaginians. Among the latter, nothing is reputed infamous, that is joined with gain. But among the former, nothing is held more base than to be corrupted by gifts, or to covet an increase of wealth by means that are unjust. For as much as they esteem the possession of honest riches to be fair and honorable, so much,

on the other hand, all those that are amassed by unlawful arts, are viewed by them with horror and reproach. The truth of this fact is clearly seen in the following instance. Among the Carthaginians, money is openly employed to obtain the dignities of the state: but all such proceeding is a capital crime in Rome. As the rewards, therefore, that are proposed to virtue in the two republics are so different, it cannot but happen, that the attention of the citizens to form their minds to virtuous actions must be also different.

But among all the useful institutions, that demonstrate the superior excellence of the Roman government, the most considerable perhaps is the opinion which the people are taught to hold concerning the gods: and that, which other men regard as an object of disgrace, appears in my judgment to be the very thing by which this republic chiefly is sustained. I mean, superstition: which is impressed with all its terrors; and influences both the private actions of the citizens, and the public administration also of the state, in a degree that can scarcely be exceeded. This may appear astonishing to many. To me it is evident, that this contrivance was at first adopted for the sake of the multitude. For if it were possible that a state could be composed of wise men only, there would be no need, perhaps, of any such invention. But as the people universally are fickle and inconstant, filled with irregular desires, too precipitate in their passions, and prone to violence; there is no way left to restrain them, but by the dread of things unseen, and by the pageantry of terrifying fiction. The ancients, therefore, acted not absurdly, nor without good reason, when they inculcated the notions concerning the gods, and the belief of infernal punishments; but much more those of the present age are to be charged with rashness and absurdity, in endeavoring to extirpate these opinions. For, not to mention effects that flow from such an institution, if, among the Greeks, for example, a single talent only be entrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money; though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals and twice as many witnesses, they are unable to discharge the trusts reposed in them with integrity. But the Romans, on the other hand, who in the course of their magistracies, and in embassies, disperse the greatest sums, are prevailed on by the single obligation of an oath to perform their duties with inviolable honesty. And as, in other states, a man is rarely found whose hands are pure from public robbery; so, among the Romans, it is no less rare to discover one that is tainted with this crime. But all things are subject to decay and change. This is a truth so evident, and so demonstrated by the perpetual and the necessary force of nature, that it needs no other proof.

Now there are two ways by which every kind of government is destroyed; either by some accident that happens from without, or some evil that arises within itself. What the first will be is not always easy to foresee: but the latter is certain and determinate. We have already shown what are the original and what: the secondary forms of government; and in what manner also they are reciprocally converted each into the other. Whoever, therefore, is able to connect the beginning with the end in this enquiry, will be able also to declare with some assurance what will be the future fortune of the Roman government. At least in my judgment nothing is more easy. For when a state, after having passed with safety through many and great dangers, arrives at the highest degree of power, and possesses an entire and undisputed sovereignty; it is manifest that the long continuance of prosperity must give birth to costly and luxurious manners, and that the minds of men will be heated with ambitious contest, and become too eager and aspiring in the pursuit of dignities. And as these evils are continually increased, the desire of power and rule, and the imagined ignominy of remaining in a subject state, will first begin to work the ruin of the republic; arrogance and luxury will afterwards advance it: and in the end the change will be completed by the people; as the avarice of some is found to injure and oppress them, and

the ambition of others swells their vanity and poisons them with flattering hopes. For then, being with rage, and following only the dictates of their passions, they no longer will submit to any control, or be contented with an equal share of the administration, in conjunction with their rulers; but will draw to themselves the entire sovereignty and supreme direction of all affairs. When this is done, the government will assume indeed the fairest of all names, that of a free and popular state; but will, in truth, be the greatest of all evils, the government of the multitude.

As we have thus sufficiently explained the constitution and the growth of the Roman government; have marked the causes of that greatness in which it now subsists; and shown by comparison, in what view it may be judged inferior, and in what superior, to other states; we shall here close this discourse. But as every skillful artist offers some piece of work to public view, as a proof of his abilities: in the same manner we also, taking some part of history that is connected with the times from which we were led into this digression and making a short recital of one single action, shall endeavor to demonstrate by fact as well as words what was the strength, and how great the vigor, which at that time were displayed by this republic.

When Hannibal, after the battle of Cannae, had taken prisoners eight thousand of the Romans, who were left to guard the camp; he permitted them to send a deputation to Rome, to treat of their ransom and redemption. Ten persons, the most illustrious that were among them, were appointed for this purpose: and the general, having first commanded them to swear that they would return to him again, suffered them to depart. But one of the number, as soon as they had passed the entrenchment, having said that he had forgotten something, went back into camp, took what he had left, and then continued his journey with the rest; persuading himself that by his return he had discharged his promise, and satisfied the obligation of the oath. When they arrived at Rome, they earnestly entreated the senate not to envy them the safety that was offered, but to suffer them to be restored to their families, at the price of three *minae* for each prisoner, which was the sum that Hannibal demanded; that they were not unworthy of this favor; that they neither had through cowardice deserted their post in battle, nor done anything that had brought dishonor upon the Roman name; but that having been left to guard the camp, they had been thrown by unavoidable necessity, after the destruction of the rest of the army, into the power of the enemy.

The Romans were at this time weakened by repeated losses; were deserted by almost every one of their allies; and seemed even to expect that Rome itself would instantly be attacked; yet when they had heard the deputies, they neither were deterred by adverse fortune from attending to what was fit and right, nor neglected any of those measures that were necessary to the public safety. But perceiving that the design of Hannibal in this proceeding was both to acquire a large supply of money and at the same time to check the ardor of his enemies in battle, by opening to their view the means of safety, even though they should be conquered, they were so far from yielding to this request, that they showed no regard either to the distressed condition of their fellow citizens, or to the services that might be expected from the prisoners: but resolved to disappoint the hopes and frustrate the intentions of this general, by rejecting all terms of ransom. They made a law also, by which it was declared that the soldiers that were left must either conquer or must die; and that no other hope of safety was reserved for them, in case that they were conquered. After this determination they dismissed the nine deputies, who, on account of their oath were, willing to return, and taking the other, who had endeavored to elude by sophistry what he had sworn, they sent

him bound back to the enemy; so that Hannibal was much less filled with joy from having vanquished the Romans in the field, than he was struck with terror and astonishment at the firmness and magnanimity what appeared in their deliberations.

Source:

From: Oliver J. Thatcher, ed., *The Library of Original Sources* (Milwaukee: University Research Extension Co., 1907), Vol. III: *The Roman World*, pp. 166-193

Problems for the Republic

Rome had begun as a small city-state. Its constitution, its government, its social structure, and its moral values were those of a small, mainly agrarian state. All of these, the constitution, government, social structure, and values, adapted well to the governing of Italy. The Empire, however, which Rome had stumbled into by accident, provoked a profound crisis in Roman society, government, and morals.

In particular, the Second Punic War created vast disparities in wealth. Up until the Second Punic War, the plebeians were farmers, craftsmen, or laborers. They would farm their own land that, even though it was small, was still their property. As laborers or craftsmen, they worked for decent wages (or the equivalent of wages). However, Hannibal had razed the countryside; while the wealth sat secure within the walls of Rome, thousands of people had their farmlands and houses destroyed. With no land they had no work and so began to flood the cities. The wealthy, who had grown wealthier because of the spoils of war, bought up the farmlands so that by the middle of the second century, Roman agriculture was dominated by large plantations owned by fabulously wealthy landowners. This was only the tip of the iceberg, though. The Punic Wars and the Macedonian Wars flooded Rome and Roman territories with new slaves. Rome had had slave labor before then, but the second century saw a major shift in the Roman economy from a laborer economy to a slave economy. By the end of the second century BC, the majority of the population in Italy were slaves. This severely depressed job opportunities and wages. For slavery is an economic phenomenon more than anything else; slavery is an economic device to keep the remuneration of labor at or slightly below subsistence level. This meant that the poor who were not slaves either couldn't work or had to work at below subsistence wages; it also caused massive migrations of the unemployed into cities. As in most migrations of the unemployed, the result was not necessarily employment in a new place. In Rome, however, it meant the concentration of a large population of poor, disaffected, and *angry* free Romans. The tinder-box was set to go off.

The Age of Augustus

Augustus called himself "princeps," or "first" (from which we get the word, "prince"); his full title that he assumed was "first among equals." So, in language at least, nothing had really changed in Roman freedom and equality. His successors, however, would name themselves after their power, the "imperium," and called themselves "imperator." Augustus, however, was on a mission to restore order and even equity to the Empire, and so in many ways is considered the greatest of all these emperors. He radically reformed the government to curb corruption and ambition; he also extended Roman citizenship to all Italians. While he allowed elections to public office, he rigged those elections so that only the best candidates would fill the office, and so many members of the lower classes entered into government. He resettled his soldiers on farmland, and so agrarian equity was more closely achieved than at any time since the Second Punic Wars. He turned the military from a volunteer army into a standing, professional army; Rome and the provinces became, in essence, a police state. The military presence throughout the Empire spread the Roman language and Roman culture throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. And since Augustus controlled Rome militarily and politically, he put the provinces in the hands of intelligent, less ambitious, and virtuous men; for the first time since Rome began to build its empire, the provinces settled down into peace and prosperity—this peace and prosperity would be the hallmark of the Age of Augustus.

Finally, Augustus began a vast project of building and patronage of the arts, and Roman culture flourished in a boom of creativity that would make the age stand out as the greatest cultural period in the history of Rome. Two ages stand out as the great creative periods in Rome: the age of Cicero near the end of the Republic, and the Age of Augustus and the beginning of Imperial Rome.

The Age of Augustus is known as the Golden Age of Roman literature, for during this time flourished the greatest poets of Rome. Under Augustus, poets and artists were patronized not by individuals, but solely through the *princeps* himself. To this end, Augustus appointed a cultural advisor, Maecenas, to aid him in extending patronage to poets. The result was an incredibly powerful system for identifying the best poets who could further the ideology of the Augustan government.

QUESTION: According to this, what are some Augustus' greatest accomplishments?

The Deeds of the Divine Augustus

By Augustus - Written 14 A.C.E.

Translated by Thomas Bushnell, BSG

QUESTIONS:

Why would Augustus feel the need to write the Res Gestae?

In what ways was Augustus a republican leader? In what ways was he something entirely new?

What military exploits does Augustus discuss in the text?

A copy below of the deeds of the divine Augustus, by which he subjected the whole wide earth to the rule of the Roman people, and of the money which he spent for the state and Roman people, inscribed on two bronze pillars, which are set up in Rome.

1. In my nineteenth year, on my own initiative and at my own expense, I raised an army with which I set free the state, which was oppressed by the domination of a faction. For that reason, the senate enrolled me in its order by laudatory resolutions, when Gaius Pansa and Aulus Hirtius were consuls (43 B.C.E.), assigning me the place of a consul in the giving of opinions, and gave me the imperium. With me as propraetor, it ordered me, together with the consuls, to take care lest any detriment befall the state. But the people made me consul in the same year, when the consuls each perished in battle, and they made me a triumvir for the settling of the state.

2. I drove the men who slaughtered my father into exile with a legal order, punishing their crime, and afterwards, when they waged war on the state, I conquered them in two battles.

3. I often waged war, civil and foreign, on the earth and sea, in the whole wide world, and as victor I spared all the citizens who sought pardon. As for foreign nations, those which I was able to safely forgive, I preferred to preserve than to destroy. About five hundred thousand Roman citizens were sworn to me. I led something more than three hundred thousand of them into colonies and I returned them to their cities, after their stipend had been earned, and I assigned all of them fields or gave them money for their military service. I captured six hundred ships in addition to those smaller than triremes.

4. Twice I triumphed with an ovation, and three times I enjoyed a curule triumph and twenty one times I was named emperor. When the senate decreed more triumphs for me, I sat out from all of them. I placed the laurel from the fasces in the Capitol, when the vows which I pronounced in each war had been fulfilled. On account of the things successfully done by me and through my officers, under my auspices, on earth and sea, the senate decreed fifty-five times that there be sacrifices to the immortal gods. Moreover there were 890 days on which the senate decreed there would be sacrifices. In my triumphs kings and nine children of kings were led before my chariot. I had been consul thirteen times, when I wrote this, and I was in the thirty-seventh year of tribunician power (14 A.C.E.).

5. When the dictatorship was offered to me, both in my presence and my absence, by the people and senate, when Marcus Marcellus and Lucius Arruntius were consuls (22 B.C.E.), I did not accept it. I did not evade the curatorship of grain in the height of the food shortage, which I so arranged that within a few days I freed the entire city from the present fear and danger by my own expense and administration. When the annual and perpetual consulate was then again offered to me, I did not accept it....

9. The senate decreed that vows be undertaken for my health by the consuls and priests every fifth year. In fulfillment of these vows they often celebrated games for my life; several times the four highest colleges of priests, several times the consuls. Also both privately and as a city all the citizens unanimously and continuously prayed at all the shrines for my health.

10. By a senate decree my name was included in the Saliar Hymn, and it was sanctified by a law, both that I would be sacrosanct for ever, and that, as long as I would live, the tribunician power would be mine. I was unwilling to be high priest in the place of my living colleague; when the people offered me that priesthood which my father had, I refused it. And I received that priesthood, after several years, with the death of him who had occupied it since the opportunity of the civil disturbance, with a multitude flocking together out of all Italy to my election, so many as had never before been in Rome, when Publius Sulpicius and Gaius Valgius were consuls (12 B.C.E.).

11. The senate consecrated the altar of Fortune the Bringer-back before the temples of Honor and Virtue at the Campanian gate for my return, on which it ordered the priests and Vestal virgins to offer yearly sacrifices on the day when I had returned to the city from Syria (when Quintus Lucretius and Marcus Vinicius were consuls (19 Bc)), and it named that day Augustalia after my cognomen.

13. Our ancestors wanted Janus Quirinus to be closed when throughout the all the rule of the Roman people, by land and sea, peace had been secured through victory. Although before my birth it had been closed twice in all in recorded memory from the founding of the city, the senate voted three times in my principate that it be closed.

14. When my sons Gaius and Lucius Caesar, whom fortune stole from me as youths, were fourteen, the senate and Roman people made them consuls-designate on behalf of my honor, so that they would enter that magistracy after five years, and the senate decreed that on that day when they were led into the forum they would be included in public councils. Moreover the Roman knights together named each of them first of the youth and gave them shields and spears.

15. I paid to the Roman plebs, HS 300 per man from my father's will and in my own name gave HS 400 from the spoils of war when I was consul for the fifth time (29 B.C.E.); furthermore I again paid out a public gift of HS 400 per man, in my tenth consulate (24 B.C.E.), from my own patrimony; and, when consul for the eleventh time (23 B.C.E.), twelve doles of grain personally bought were measured out; and in my twelfth year of tribunician power (12-11 B.C.E.) I gave HS 400 per man for the third time. And these public gifts of mine never reached fewer than 250,000 men. In my eighteenth year of tribunician power, as consul for the twelfth time (5 B.C.E.), I gave to 320,000 plebs of the city HS 240 per man. And, when consul the fifth time (29 B.C.E.), I gave from my war-spoils to colonies of my soldiers each HS 1000 per man; about 120,000 men in the colonies received this triumphal public gift. Consul for the thirteenth time (2 B.C.E.), I gave HS 240 to the plebs who then received the public grain; they were a few more than 200,000.

16. I paid the towns money for the fields which I had assigned to soldiers in my fourth consulate (30 B.C.E.) and then when Marcus Crassus and Gnaeus Lentulus Augur were consuls (14 B.C.E.); the sum was about HS 600,000,000 which I paid out for Italian estates, and about HS 260,000,000 which I paid for provincial fields. I was first and alone who did

this among all who founded military colonies in Italy or the provinces according to the memory of my age. And afterwards, when Tiberius Nero and Gnaeus Piso were consuls (7 B.C.E.), and likewise when Gaius Antistius and Decius Laelius were consuls (6 B.C.E.), and when Gaius Calvisius and Lucius Passienus were consuls (4 B.C.E.), and when Lucius Lentulus and Marcus Messalla were consuls (3 B.C.E.), and when Lucius Caninius and Quintus Fabricius were consuls (2 B.C.E.) , I paid out rewards in cash to the soldiers whom I had led into their towns when their service was completed, and in this venture I spent about HS 400,000,000.

17. Four times I helped the senatorial treasury with my money, so that I offered HS 150,000,000 to those who were in charge of the treasury. And when Marcus Lepidus and Luciu Arruntius were consuls (6 A.C.E.), I offered HS 170,000,000 from my patrimony to the military treasury, which was founded by my advice and from which rewards were given to soldiers who had served twenty or more times.

18. From that year when Gnaeus and Publius Lentulus were consuls (18 Bc), when the taxes fell short, I gave out contributions of grain and money from my granary and patrimony, sometimes to 100,000 men, sometimes to many more.

19. I built the senate-house and the Chalcidicum which adjoins it and the temple of Apollo on the Palatine with porticos, the temple of divine Julius, the Lupercal, the portico at the Flaminian circus, which I allowed to be called by the name Octavian, after he who had earlier built in the same place, the state box at the great circus, the temple on the Capitoline of Jupiter Subduer and Jupiter Thunderer, the temple of Quirinus, the temples of Minerva and Queen Juno and Jupiter Liberator on the Aventine, the temple of the Lares at the top of the holy street, the temple of the gods of the Penates on the Velian, the temple of Youth, and the temple of the Great Mother on the Palatine.

20. I rebuilt the Capitol and the theater of Pompey, each work at enormous cost, without any inscription of my name. I rebuilt aqueducts in many places that had decayed with age, and I doubled the capacity of the Marcian aqueduct by sending a new spring into its channel. I completed the Forum of Julius and the basilic which he built between the temple of Castor and the temple of Saturn, works begun and almost finished by my father. When the same basilica was burned with fire I expanded its grounds and I began it under an inscription of the name of my sons, and, if I should not complete it alive, I ordered it to be completed by my heirs. Consul for the sixth time (28 B.C.E.), I rebuilt eighty-two temples of the gods in the city by the authority of the senate, omitting nothing which ought to have been rebuilt at that time. Consul for the seventh time (27 B.C.E.), I rebuilt the Flaminian road from the city to Ariminum and all the bridges except the Mulvian and Minucian.

21. I built the temple of Mars Ultor on private ground and the forum of Augustus from war-spoils. I build the theater at the temple of Apollo on ground largely bought from private owners, under the name of Marcus Marcellus my son-in-law. I consecrated gifts from war-spoils in the Capitol and in the temple of divine Julius, in the temple of Apollo, in the temple of Vesta, and in the temple of Mars Ultor, which cost me about HS 100,000,000. I sent back gold crowns weighing 35,000 to the towns and colonies of Italy, which had been contributed for my triumphs, and later, however many times I was named emperor, I refused gold crowns from the towns and colonies which they equally kindly decreed, and before they had decreed them.

22. Three times I gave shows of gladiators under my name and five times under the name of my sons and grandsons; in these shows about 10,000 men fought. Twice I furnished under my name spectacles of athletes gathered from everywhere, and three times under my grandson's name. I celebrated games under my name four times, and furthermore in the place of other magistrates twenty-three times. As master of the college I celebrated the secular games for the college of the Fifteen, with my colleague Marcus Agrippa, when Gaius Furnius and Gaius Silanus were consuls (17 B.C.E.). Consul for the thirteenth time (2 B.C.E.), I celebrated the first games of Mas, which after that time thereafter in following years, by a senate decree and a law, the consuls were to celebrate. Twenty-six times, under my name or that of my sons and grandsons, I gave the people hunts of African beasts in the circus, in the open, or in the amphitheater; in them about 3,500 beasts were killed.

23. I gave the people a spectacle of a naval battle, in the place across the Tiber where the grove of the Caesars is now, with the ground excavated in length 1,800 feet, in width 1,200, in which thirty beaked ships, biremes or triremes, but many smaller, fought among themselves; in these ships about 3,000 men fought in addition to the rowers.

24. In the temples of all the cities of the province of Asia, as victor, I replaced the ornaments which he with whom I fought the war had possessed privately after he despoiled the temples. Silver statues of me on foot, on horseback, and standing in a chariot-were erected in about eighty cities, which I myself removed, and from the money I placed golden offerings in the temple of Apollo under my name and of those who paid the honor of the statues to me.

25. I restored peace to the sea from pirates. In that slave war I handed over to their masters for the infliction of punishments about 30,000 captured, who had fled their masters and taken up arms against the state. All Italy swore allegiance to me voluntarily, and demanded me as leader of the war which I won at Actium; the provinces of Gaul, Spain, Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia swore the same allegiance. And those who then fought under my standard were more than 700 senators, among whom 83 were made consuls either before or after, up to the day this was written, and about 170 were made priests.

26. I extended the borders of all the provinces of the Roman people which neighbored nations not subject to our rule. I restored peace to the provinces of Gaul and Spain, likewise Germany, which includes the ocean from Cadiz to the mouth of the river Elbe. I brought peace to the Alps from the region which is near the Adriatic Sea to the Tuscan, with no unjust war waged against any nation. I sailed my ships on the ocean from the mouth of the Rhine to the east region up to the borders of the Cimbri, where no Roman had gone before that time by land or sea, and the Cimbri and the Charydes and the Semnones and the other Germans of the same territory sought by envoys the friendship of me and of the Roman people. By my order and auspices two armies were led at about the same time into Ethiopia and into that part of Arabia which is called Happy, and the troops of each nation of enemies were slaughtered in battle and many towns captured. They penetrated into Ethiopia all the way to the town Nabata, which is near to Meroe; and into Arabia all the way to the border of the Sabaei, advancing to the town Mariba.

27. I added Egypt to the rule of the Roman people. When Artaxes, king of Greater Armenia, was killed, though I could have made it a province, I preferred, by the example of our elders, to hand over that kingdom to Tigranes, son of king Artavasdes, and grandson of King Tigranes, through Tiberius Nero, who was then my step-son. And the same nation, after

revolting and rebelling, and subdued through my son Gaius, I handed over to be ruled by King Ariobarzanes son of Artabazus, King of the Medes, and after his death, to his son Artavasdes; and when he was killed, I sent Tigranes, who came from the royal clan of the Armenians, into that rule. I recovered all the provinces which lie across the Adriatic to the east and Cyrene, with kings now possessing them in large part, and Sicily and Sardina, which had been occupied earlier in the slave war.

28. I founded colonies of soldiers in Africa, Sicily, Macedonia, each Spain, Greece, Asia, Syria, Narbonian Gaul, and Pisidia, and furthermore had twenty-eight colonies founded in Italy under my authority, which were very populous and crowded while I lived.

29. I recovered from Spain, Gaul, and Dalmatia the many military standards lost through other leaders, after defeating the enemies. I compelled the Parthians to return to me the spoils and standards of three Roman armies, and as suppliants to seek the friendship of the Roman people. Furthermore I placed those standards in the sanctuary of the temple of Mars Ultor.

34. In my sixth and seventh consulates (28-27 B.C.E.), after putting out the civil war, having obtained all things by universal consent, I handed over the state from my power to the dominion of the senate and Roman people. And for this merit of mine, by a senate decree, I was called Augustus and the doors of my temple were publicly clothed with laurel and a civic crown was fixed over my door and a gold shield placed in the Julian senate-house, and the inscription of that shield testified to the virtue, mercy, justice, and piety, for which the senate and Roman people gave it to me. After that time, I exceeded all in influence, but I had no greater power than the others who were colleagues with me in each magistracy.

35. When I administered my thirteenth consulate (2 B.C.E.), the senate and Equestrian order and Roman people all called me father of the country, and voted that the same be inscribed in the vestibule of my temple, in the Julian senate-house, and in the forum of Augustus under the chario which had been placed there for me by a decision of the senate. When I wrote this I was seventy-six years old.

Appendix

Written after Augustus' death.

1. All the expenditures which he gave either into the treasury or to the Roman plebs or to discharged soldiers: HS 2,400,000,000.

2. The works he built: the temples of Mars, of Jupiter Subduer and Thunderer, of Apollo, of divine Julius, of Minerva, of Queen Juno, of Jupiter Liberator, of the Lares, of the gods of the Penates, of Youth, and of the Great Mother, the Lupercal, the state box at the circus, the senate-house with the Chalcidicum, the forum of Augustus, the Julian basilica, the theater of Marcellus, the Octavian portico, and the grove of the Caesars across the Tiber.

3. He rebuilt the Capitol and holy temples numbering eighty-two, the theater of Pompey, waterways, and the Flaminian road.

4. The sum expended on theatrical spectacles and gladiatorial games and athletes and hunts and mock naval battles and money given to colonies, cities, and towns destroyed by

earthquake and fire or per man to friends and senators, whom he raised to the senate rating: innumerable.

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Tacitus, *Agricola*, excerpt

Tacitus, an important Roman historian, wrote a biography of the Roman general, Gnaeus Julius Agricola, who also happened to be his father-in-law, at the end of the first century CE. As is the case with his other histories, Tacitus adopts a somewhat critical attitude toward Roman policies. In this book, he celebrates the life of the man largely responsible for the successful conquest of Britain, while also being critical of the entire Imperial establishment. In this excerpt, Tacitus quotes Galgacus, a leader of the Britons, resisting the Roman occupation.

***De vita et moribus Iulii Agricolae* (Eng: *On the Life and Character of Julius Agricola or The Agricola*)**

QUESTIONS:

What opinions of Roman Imperialism are expressed here?

What seems to be the purpose of this story of Galgacus' speech?

How would you characterize the Roman occupation of Britain?

29. Early in the summer Agricola sustained a domestic affliction in the loss of a son born a year before, a calamity which he endured, neither with the ostentatious fortitude displayed by many brave men, nor, on the other hand, with womanish tears and grief. In his sorrow he found one source of relief in war. Having sent on a fleet, which by its ravages at various points might cause a vague and wide-spread alarm, he advanced with a lightly equipped force, including in its ranks some Britons of remarkable bravery, whose fidelity had been tried through years of peace, as far as the Grampian mountains, which the enemy had already occupied. For the Britons, indeed, in no way cowed by the result of the late engagement, had made up their minds to be either avenged or enslaved, and convinced at length that a common danger must be averted by union, had, by embassies and treaties, summoned forth the whole strength of all their states. More than 30,000 armed men were now to be seen, and still there were pressing in all the youth of the country, with all whose old age was yet hale and vigorous, men renowned in war and bearing each decorations of his own. Meanwhile, among the many leaders, one superior to the rest in valour and in birth, Galgacus by name, is said to have thus harangued the multitude gathered around him and clamouring for battle: --

30. "Whenever I consider the origin of this war and the necessities of our position, I have a sure confidence that this day, and this union of yours, will be the beginning of freedom to the whole of Britain. To all of us slavery is a thing unknown; there are no lands beyond us, and even the sea is not safe, menaced as we are by a Roman fleet. And thus in war and battle, in which the brave find glory, even the coward will find safety. Former contests, in which, with varying fortune, the Romans were resisted, still left in us a last hope of succour, inasmuch as being the most renowned nation of Britain, dwelling in the very heart of the country, and out of sight of the shores of the conquered, we could keep even our eyes unpolluted by the contagion of slavery. To us who dwell on the uttermost confines of the earth and of freedom, this remote sanctuary of Britain's glory has up to this time been a defence. Now, however, the furthest limits of Britain are thrown open, and the unknown always passes for the marvellous. But there are no tribes beyond us, nothing indeed but waves and rocks, and the yet more terrible

Romans, from whose oppression escape is vainly sought by obedience and submission. Robbers of the world, having by their universal plunder exhausted the land, they rifle the deep. If the enemy be rich, they are rapacious; if he be poor, they lust for dominion; neither the east nor the west has been able to satisfy them. Alone among men they covet with equal eagerness poverty and riches. To robbery, slaughter, plunder, they give the lying name of empire; they make a desert and call it peace.

31. "Nature has willed that every man's children and kindred should be his dearest objects. Yet these are torn from us by conscriptions to be slaves elsewhere. Our wives and our sisters, even though they may escape violation from the enemy, are dishonoured under the names of friendship and hospitality. Our goods and fortunes they collect for their tribute, our harvests for their granaries. Our very hands and bodies, under the lash and in the midst of insult, are worn down by the toil of clearing forests and morasses. Creatures born to slavery are sold once and for all, and are, moreover, fed by their masters; but Britain is daily purchasing, is daily feeding, her own enslaved people. And as in a household the last comer among the slaves is always the butt of his companions, so we in a world long used to slavery, as the newest and most contemptible, are marked out for destruction. We have neither fruitful plains, nor mines, nor harbours, for the working of which we may be spared. Valour, too, and high spirit in subjects, are offensive to rulers; besides, remoteness and seclusion, while they give safety, provoke suspicion. Since then you cannot hope for quarter, take courage, I beseech you, whether it be safety or renown that you hold most precious. Under a woman's leadership the Brigantes were able to burn a colony, to storm a camp, and had not success ended in supineness, might have thrown off the yoke. Let us, then, a fresh and unconquered people, never likely to abuse our freedom, show forthwith at the very first onset what heroes Caledonia has in reserve.

32. "Do you suppose that the Romans will be as brave in war as they are licentious in peace? To our strifes and discords they owe their fame, and they turn the errors of an enemy to the renown of their own army, an army which, composed as it is of every variety of nations, is held together by success and will be broken up by disaster. These Gauls and Germans, and, I blush to say, these Britons, who, though they lend their lives to support a stranger's rule, have been its enemies longer than its subjects, you cannot imagine to be bound by fidelity and affection. Fear and terror there certainly are, feeble bonds of attachment; remove them, and those who have ceased to fear will begin to hate. All the incentives to victory are on our side. The Romans have no wives to kindle their courage; no parents to taunt them with flight, man have either no country or one far away. Few in number, dismayed by their ignorance, looking around upon a sky, a sea, and forests which are all unfamiliar to them; hemmed in, as it were, and enmeshed, the Gods have delivered them into our hands. Be not frightened by the idle display, by the glitter of gold and of silver, which can neither protect nor wound. In the very ranks of the enemy we shall find our own forces. Britons will acknowledge their own cause; Gauls will remember past freedom; the other Germans will abandon them, as but lately did the Usipii. Behind them there is nothing to dread. The forts are ungarrisoned; the colonies in the hands of aged men; what with disloyal subjects and oppressive rulers, the towns are ill-affected and rife with discord. On the one side you have a general and an army; on the other, tribute, the mines, and all the other penalties of an enslaved people. Whether you endure these for ever, or instantly avenge them, this field is to decide. Think, therefore, as you advance to battle, at once of your ancestors and of your posterity."

A History of Christianity

Edited By: Robert A. Guiseppi
The Origins Of Christianity

In the initial decades of the Roman Empire, at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, a new religion, Christianity, emerged. Much of the impetus for this new religion rested in issues in the Jewish religion, including long-standing belief in the coming of a Messiah and rigidities that had developed in the Jewish priesthood. Whether or not Christianity was created by God, as Christians believe, the early stages of the religion focused on cleansing the Jewish religion of stiff rituals and haughty leaders. It had little at first to do with Roman culture. Christianity arose in a remote province and appealed particularly to the poorer classes. It is not easy, as a result, to fit Christianity neatly into the patterns of Roman history: It was deliberately separate, and only gradually had wider impact.

Christianity originated with Jesus of Nazareth, a Jewish prophet and teacher who probably came to believe he was the Son of God and certainly was regarded as such by his disciples. Jesus preached in Israel during the time of Augustus, urging a purification of the Jewish religion that would free Israel and establish the kingdom of God on earth. He urged a moral code based on love, charity, and humility, and he asked the faithful to follow his lessons, abandoning worldly concern. Many disciples believed that a Final Judgment day was near at hand, on which God would reward the righteous with immortality and condemn sinners to everlasting hell.

Jesus won many followers among the poor. He also roused suspicion among the upper classes and the leaders of the Jewish religion. These helped persuade the Roman governor, already concerned about unrest among the Jews, that Jesus was a dangerous agitator. Jesus was put to death as a result, crucified like a common criminal, about A.D. 30. His followers believed that he was resurrected on the third day after his death, a proof that he was the Son of God. This belief helped the religion spread farther among Jewish communities in the Middle East, both within the Roman Empire and beyond. As they realized that the Messiah was not immediately returning to earth to set up the Kingdom of God, the disciples of Jesus began to fan out, particularly around the eastern Mediterranean, to spread the new Christian message.

Initially, Christian converts were Jewish by birth and followed the basic Jewish law. Their belief that Christ was divine as well as human, however, roused hostility among other Jews. When one early convert, Stephen, was stoned to death, many disciples left Israel and traveled throughout western Asia.

QUESTION: Why would Christianity initially appeal so much to the poor?

Christianity Gains Converts And Religious Structure

Gradually over the next 250 years, Christianity won a growing number of converts. By the 4th century A.D., about 10 percent of the residents of the Roman Empire were Christian, and the new religion had also made converts elsewhere in the Middle East and Ethiopia. As it spread, Christianity connected increasingly with larger themes in Roman history.

With its particularly great appeal to some of the poor, Christianity was well positioned to reflect social grievances in an empire increasingly marked by inequality. Slaves, dispossessed farmers and impoverished city dwellers found hope in a religion that promised rewards after death. Christianity also answered cultural and spiritual needs - especially but not exclusively among the poor - left untended by mainstream Roman religion and culture. Roman values had stressed political goals and ethics suitable for life in this world. They did not join peoples of the empire in more spiritual loyalties, and they did not offer many emotionally satisfying rituals. As the empire consolidated, reducing direct political participation, a number of mystery religions spread from the Middle East and Egypt, religions that offered emotionally charged rituals. Worship of gods such as Mithra or Isis, derived from earlier Mesopotamian or Egyptian beliefs, attracted some Roman soldiers and others with rites of sacrifice and a strong sense of religious community. Christianity, though far more than a mystery religion, had some of these qualities and won converts on this basis as well. Christianity, in sum, gained ground in part because of features of Roman political and cultural life.

The spread of Christianity also benefited from some of the positive qualities of Rome's great empire. Political stability and communications over a wide area aided missionary efforts, while the Roman example helped inspire the government forms of the growing Christian church. Early Christian communities regulated themselves, but with expansion more formal government was introduced, with bishops playing a role not unlike Rome's provincial governors. Bishops headed churches in regional centers and supervised the activities of other churches in the area. Bishops in politically powerful cities, including Rome, gained particular authority. Roman principles also helped move what initially had been a religion among Jews to a genuinely cosmopolitan stance. Under the leadership of Paul, converted to Christianity about A.D. 35, Christian missionaries began to move away from insistence that adherents of the new religion must follow Jewish law. Rather, in the spirit of Rome and of Hellenism, the new faith was seen as universal, open to all whether or not they followed Jewish practices in diet, male circumcision, and so on.

Paul's conversion to Christianity proved vital. Paul was Jewish, but he had been born in a Greek city and was familiar with Greco-Roman culture. He helped explain basic Christian beliefs in terms other adherents of this culture could grasp, and he preached in Greece and Italy as well as the Middle East. Paul essentially created Christian theology, as a set of intellectual principles that followed from, but generalized, the message of Jesus. Paul also modified certain initial Christian impulses. Jesus himself had drawn a large number of women followers, but Paul emphasized women's subordination to men and the dangers of sexuality. It was Paul's stress on Christianity as a universal religion, requiring abandonment of other religious beliefs, and his related use of Greek - the dominant language of the day throughout the eastern Mediterranean - that particularly transformed the new faith.

QUESTION: What factors enabled Paul and other missionaries to find success in spreading the religion throughout the empire?

Relations With The Roman Empire

Gradually, Christian theological leaders made further contact with Greco-Roman intellectual life. They began to develop a body of Christian writings beyond the Bible messages written by the disciples of Jesus. By the 4th century A.D., Christian writings became the only creative cultural expressions in the Roman Empire, as theologians sought not only to explain issues in the new religion but also to relate it to Greek philosophy and Roman ethics. Ironically, as the Roman Empire was in most respects declining, Christianity produced an outpouring of complex thought and often elegant use of language. In this effort, Christianity redirected Roman culture (never known for abundant religious subtlety) but also preserved many earlier literary and philosophical achievements.

Adherents of the new religion clashed with Roman authorities, to be sure. Christians, who put their duties to God first, would not honor the emperor as a divinity and might seem to reject the authority of the state in other spheres. Several early emperors, including the mad Nero, persecuted Christians, killing some and driving their worship underground. Persecution was not constant, however, which helps explain why the religion continued to spread. It resumed only in the 4th century, when several emperors sought to use religious conformity and new claims to divinity as a way of cementing loyalties to a declining state. Roman beliefs, including periodic tolerance, helped shape a Christian view that the state had a legitimately separate if subordinate sphere; Western Christians would often cite Christ as saying "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's."

The full story of early Christianity goes beyond the history of Rome. Christianity had more to do with opening a new era in the history of the Mediterranean region than with shaping the later Roman Empire. Yet important connections did exist that explain features of Christianity and of later Roman history. Though not a Roman product and though benefiting in part from the empire's decline, Christianity in some of its qualities can be counted as part of the Greco-Roman legacy. (from http://history-world.org/origins_of_christianity.htm)

New Testament, Matthew 13:1-30 (New International Version)

QUESTIONS:

What is a parable?

Why does Jesus teach in parables?

What is the point of the Parable of the Weeds?

What is the message in the Parable of The Sheep and the Goats?

Matthew 13

The Parable of the Sower

13 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. ² Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. ³ Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ Whoever has ears, let them hear."

¹⁰ The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

¹¹ He replied, "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. ¹² Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see;
though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

¹⁴ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

"You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts

and turn, and I would heal them.'^[a]

¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. ¹⁷ For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

¹⁸ "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰ The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the

word, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

The Parable of the Weeds

²⁴ Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷ "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

²⁸ "An enemy did this,' he replied.

"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'

²⁹ "No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.' "

New Testament, Matthew 25:31-46 (New International Version)

New International Version (NIV)

The Sheep and the Goats

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you

did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

44"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

45"He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

46"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

Matthew 26-28 (New International Version)

QUESTIONS:

What is the process by which Jesus was condemned?

Was Jesus treated more or less harshly than any other prisoners would have been? Why?

Why is The Resurrection an essential component of Christianity?

Matthew 26

The Plot Against Jesus

¹When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, ²"As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

³Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, ⁴and they plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him. ⁵"But not during the Feast," they said, "or there may be a riot among the people."

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

⁶While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, ⁷a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

⁸When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. "Why this waste?" they asked. ⁹"This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."

¹⁰Aware of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ¹¹The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. ¹²When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. ¹³I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

¹⁴Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests ¹⁵and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. ¹⁶From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

The Lord's Supper

¹⁷On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

¹⁸He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.' " ¹⁹So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

²⁰When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. ²¹And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me."

²²They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?"

²³Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.
²⁴The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

²⁵Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?"
Jesus answered, "Yes, it is you."

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

²⁷Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.
²⁸This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
²⁹I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."

³⁰When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

³¹Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written:

" I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'³²But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

³³Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

³⁴"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

³⁵But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.

Gethsemane

³⁶Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

³⁹Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

⁴⁰Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

⁴²He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

⁴³When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

⁴⁵Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Rise, let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

Jesus Arrested

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

⁴⁸Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him."

⁴⁹Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him.

⁵⁰Jesus replied, "Friend, do what you came for."

Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁵¹With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

⁵²"Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?"

⁵⁵At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Matthew 27

Judas Hangs Himself

¹Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death. ²They bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.

³When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. ⁴"I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood."

"What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility."

⁵So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

⁶The chief priests picked up the coins and said, "It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money." ⁷So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. ⁸That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty

silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel, ¹⁰and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."^[a]

Jesus Before Pilate

¹¹Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

¹²When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. ¹³Then Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?" ¹⁴But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.

¹⁵Now it was the governor's custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. ¹⁶At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. ¹⁷So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him.

¹⁹While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."

²⁰But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

²¹"Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor.

"Barabbas," they answered.

²²"What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" Pilate asked.

They all answered, "Crucify him!"

²³"Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

²⁴When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"

²⁵All the people answered, "Let his blood be on us and on our children!"

²⁶Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

²⁷Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. ²⁸They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. ³⁰They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. ³¹After they had

mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

³²As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. ³³They came to a place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull). ³⁴There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. ³⁵When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.^[b] ³⁶And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. ³⁷Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ³⁸Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"

⁴¹In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. ⁴²"He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.' " ⁴⁴In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

The Death of Jesus

⁴⁵From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. ⁴⁶About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi,^[c] lama sabachthani?"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"^[d]

⁴⁷When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."

⁴⁸Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. ⁴⁹The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

⁵⁰And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

⁵¹At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. ⁵²The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. ⁵³They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

⁵⁴When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son^[e] of God!"

⁵⁵Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. ⁵⁶Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

The Burial of Jesus

⁵⁷As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate

ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

⁶²The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. ⁶³"Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵"Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Matthew 28

The Resurrection

¹After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

²There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

⁸So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

John 1, 20

New International Version (NIV)

QUESTIONS:

How does this compare with Matthew's account?

What is the purpose of John's Gospel?

John 1

The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome[Ⓜ] it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and[Ⓜ] is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

John 20

The Empty Tomb

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there,⁷ as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

¹³ They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

¹⁷ Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Jesus Appears to Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

²⁸ Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe^[b] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The Conflict with Early Christianity

The story of Christianity's rise to prominence is a remarkable one, but the traditional story of its progression from a tiny, persecuted religion to the established religion in the medieval West needs some debunking.

Although in the first few centuries AD Christians were prosecuted and punished, often with death, there were also periods when they were more secure. Secondly, the rise of Christianity to imperial-sponsored dominance in the fourth and fifth centuries, although surprising, was not without precedent, and its spread hardly as inexorable as contemporary Christians portrayed it.

Christians were first, and horribly, targeted for persecution as a group by the emperor Nero in 64 AD. A colossal fire broke out at Rome, and destroyed much of the city. Rumours abounded that Nero himself was responsible. He certainly took advantage of the resulting devastation of the city, building a lavish private palace on part of the site of the fire. Perhaps to divert attention from the rumours, Nero ordered that Christians should be rounded up and killed. Some were torn apart by dogs, others burnt alive as human torches. Over the next hundred years or so, Christians were sporadically persecuted. It was not until the mid-third century that emperors initiated intensive persecutions. It should be noted that recent scholarship has suggested that though Christian persecution did exist in the Roman Empire, it may not have been as widespread as previously believed. The martyrdom of early Christians was likely enhanced to attract new converts.

The Ritual Cannibalism Charge Against Christians

QUESTIONS:

In what way does claiming Christians are cannibals make sense?

How would a legitimate misunderstanding about Christian rituals lead to so many misunderstandings about their faith and practices?

From **Minucius Felix. Octavius**

And now, as wicked things advance more fruitfully, and abandoned manners creep on day by day, those abominable shrines of an impious assembly are maturing themselves throughout the whole world. Assuredly this confederacy ought to be rooted out and execrated. They know one another by secret marks and insignia, and they love one another almost before they know one another; everywhere also there is mingled among them a certain religion of lust, and they call one another promiscuously brothers and sisters, that even a not unusual debauchery may by the intervention of that sacred name become incestuous: it is thus that their vain and senseless superstition glories in crimes.

Nor, concerning these things, would intelligent report speak of things so great and various, and requiring to be prefaced by an apology, unless truth were at the bottom of it. I hear that they adore the head of an ass, that basest of creatures, consecrated by I know not what silly persuasion, a worthy and appropriate religion for such manners. Some say that they worship the genitals of their pontiff and priest, and adore the nature, as it were, of their common parent. I know not whether these things are false; certainly suspicion is applicable to secret and nocturnal rites; and he who explains their ceremonies by reference to a man punished by extreme suffering for his wickedness, and to the deadly wood of the cross,

appropriates fitting altars for reprobate and wicked men, that they may worship what they deserve.

Now the story about the initiation of young novices is as much to be detested as it is well known. An infant covered over with meal, that it may deceive the unwary, is placed before him who is to be stained with their rites: this infant is slain by the young pupil, who has been urged on as if to harmless blows on the surface of the meal, with dark and secret wounds. Thirstily - O horror! they lick up its blood; eagerly they divide its limbs. By this victim they are pledged together; with this consciousness of wickedness they are covenanted to mutual silence.

From Minucius Felix, Octavius, R. E. Wallis, trans. in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo, N. Y.: The Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887), Vol. 4, pp. 177-178.

“Decline” and “Fall?”

While people like to talk about the "decline" or the "fall" of Rome, no such thing really happened. Although Rome underwent several shocks in the fourth and fifth centuries, some of them violent with a transfer of the imperiate to non-Romans, Rome really did remain in existence. It's impossible to say when the history of Rome ends and when the medieval ("medieval" means "in the middle") period begins, so I'm going to arbitrarily end this history of Rome with the assumption of the imperiate by foreigners. But the empire really does end, for all practical purposes, with the restructuring of the empire by Diocletian.

Diocletian (284-305) came to the throne after a century of disorganization, internal dissent, economic collapse, and foreign invasions. A tough and practical soldier he had one ambition: to retire from the imperiate alive. And he managed to do it (an exceptional feat). To stem the descent into chaos, he decided that the Empire was too large to be administered by a central authority, so he divided it in half. The western half would be ruled by a colleague, Maximian, and the seat of government would be Rome; the eastern half would be ruled by Diocletian, and the seat of government was in Nicomedia. Maximian recognized Diocletian as "Augustus," or the senior ruler of the Roman emperor. Beneath these two were appointed to each two officials, called caesars, not only to help manage the administration, but to assume their respective empires on the death of the emperor. In this way, the succession was always guaranteed and the successors had already spent much of their career administering the empire. This would prevent both the possibility of the ambitious seizing of the imperiate by provincial generals and would prevent incompetents from assuming control of the Empire.

QUESTION: According to this, when does the Roman Empire end?

This was a brilliant strategy and, with other innovations, stabilized the Empire. Diocletian was the first emperor to manifestly break with Roman tradition. He shifted the seat of power to the east, in Nicomedia in Turkey. He also adopted eastern ideas of monarchy; he no longer called himself *princeps* or even *imperator*, but *dominus*, or "Lord." He took a crown and wore royal clothing; he demanded and got out and out worship by his subjects.

In 305, Diocletian retired to a farm to raise cabbages; he forced Maximian also to retire. So the imperiate passed without fuss to their two caesars. This brilliant system, so promising in its inception, fell apart immediately as the two emperors began feuding. Within a year, the son of one of the original caesars gained the throne: Constantine (306-337). Like Diocletian, he ruled only half of the Roman Empire, the western half. But in 324, he abandoned the system and ruled over a single, united empire. However, he shifted the seat of government east to his own city in Turkey, Constantinople.

Constantine was like Diocletian in his affection for eastern ways of life and eastern views of monarchy. He took on himself all the trappings of an eastern king, as Diocletian had done, and declared the imperiate to be hereditary. After eight hundred years without a monarch, Rome had finally returned back to monarchy. Constantine, however, is one of the most noted rulers in Rome for he was the first emperor to convert to Christianity. Although he didn't make Christianity a state religion, his conversion

provoked a wild proliferation of the faith, particularly in the eastern empire. Constantine, however, never really became a Christian ruler. He retained all the trappings of power including the demand that he be venerated as a god, as Diocletian had done.

Constantine, however, had several problems with his new faith. The first was that there was no established doctrine. In fact, there were as many forms of Christianity as there were communities of Christians. The second was more pressing, for foundational Christianity was manifestly anti-political. Its founder, Jesus of Nazareth, consistently condemned worldly authority and insisted that the Christian life is a non-worldly, individualistic, *non-political* life. As a result, the foundational Christian texts are not only anti-Roman (for Judaea was part of the Roman Empire during the life of Jesus of Nazareth), but consistently dismissive of human, worldly authority. If Christianity were going to work as a religion in a state ruled by a monarch that demanded worship and absolute authority, it would have to be changed. To this end, Constantine convened a group of Christian bishops at Nicea in 325; there, the basic orthodoxy of Christianity was instantiated in what came to be called the **Nicene creed**, the basic statement of belief for orthodox Christianity. Constantine accomplished more, however, for the Nicene council also ratified his own power and Christianity would begin the long struggle, lasting to this day, between the anti-political ideas of Jesus of Nazareth and the Christianity that is compromised to allow for human authority and power. (A more thorough discussion of the Nicene Council and the history of Christianity in the late Empire can be found in the module, "Early Christianity")

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

QUESTION: What is important about the Nicene Creed?

When Constantine died, he divided the Empire between his three sons who, as you might expect, began fighting one another over complete control of the Empire. His sons all adopted Christianity as well, but the emperor, Julian the Apostate (361-363), opposed the religion and tried to undo it by dismissing all the Christians from the

government. He was a little too late and reigned a little too briefly, though, to have any real effect. The government of Rome during the fourth century essentially traces out a history of dynastic squabbles and constant internal fractiousness; it wasn't until the end of the century, in the rule of Theodosius (379-395), that Rome was again united under a single emperor. Theodosius made his mark in history by declaring Christianity the state religion of Rome; he made all pagan religions illegal. The Christian Roman state had entered the stage; however, history was about to dramatically change the character of Rome. In 410, the Visigoths, a Germanic tribe that had migrated into northern Italy under the pressure of migrations of the Huns, captured and sacked Rome. From 451 to 453, Rome was overrun by the Hunnish leader, Attila, and finally, in 455, the Vandals, another Germanic tribe, conquered Rome. Finally, in 476, Odoacer deposed the Roman emperor and made himself emperor. Power had passed from the Romans to the barbarians war-chiefs; the Middle Ages had begun. Rome now passed to two heirs: Europe in the west and, to the east, the Byzantines, who carried on the government structure, the social structure, the art and the thought of classical Rome and Greece.

(from <http://public.wsu.edu/~dee/ROME/LATE.HTM>)

Galerius and Constantine: Edicts of Toleration 311/313

Both in the case of the edict of toleration by Galerius and that by Constantine and Licinius, the original Latin text is to be found in Lactantius, and merely a Greek translation in Eusebius, (H. E., Bk. VIII, 17, and X, 5). Both Mason and Allard take this view. (For discussion of the authorship of the De more. Pers. and the genuineness of the Edict of Milan see appendix to Vol. 11 of Gibbon, ed. by Bury.. 1896.)

QUESTIONS:

How does the Edict of Milan differ from the Edict of Toleration?

What is Constantine's rationale for no longer persecuting Christians?

What has happened to Christian property? What should be done with it?

EDICT OF TOLERATION BY GALERIUS- 311 A. D.

(Ch. 34.) Among other arrangements which we are always accustomed to make for the prosperity and welfare of the republic, we had desired formerly to bring all things into harmony with the ancient laws and public order of the Romans, and to provide that even the Christians who had left the religion of their fathers should come back to reason ; since, indeed, the Christians themselves, for some reason, had followed such a caprice and had fallen into such a folly that they would not obey the institutes of antiquity, which perchance their own ancestors had first established; but at their own will and pleasure, they would thus make laws unto themselves which they should observe and would collect various peoples in diverse places in congregations. Finally when our law had been promulgated to the effect that they should conform to the institutes of antiquity, many were subdued by the fear of danger, many even suffered death. And yet since most of them persevered in their determination, and we saw that they neither paid the reverence and awe due to the gods nor worshipped the God of the Christians, in view of our most mild clemency and the constant habit by which we are accustomed to grant indulgence to all, we thought that we ought to grant our most prompt indulgence also to these, so that they may again be Christians and may hold their conventicles, provided they do nothing contrary to good order. But we shall tell the magistrates in another letter what they ought to do.

Wherefore, for this our indulgence, they ought to pray to their God for our safety, for that of the republic, and for their own, that the republic may continue uninjured on every side, and that they may be able to live securely in their homes.

(c.35) This edict is published at Nicomedia on the day before the Kalends of May, in our eighth consulship and the second of Maximinus.

from Lactantius, *De Mort. Pers.* ch. 34, 35. Opera, ed. O. F. Fritzsche, II, P. 273. (Bibl. Patt. Ecc. Lat. XI, Leipzig, 1844.)

The "Edict of Milan " (313 A. D.)

When I, Constantine Augustus, as well as I Licinius Augustus d fortunately met near Mediolanurn (Milan), and were considering everything that pertained to the public welfare and security, we thought -, among other things which we saw would be for the good of many, those regulations pertaining to the reverence of the Divinity ought certainly to be made first, so that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred; whence any Divinity whatsoever in the seat of the heavens may be propitious and kindly disposed to us and all who are placed under our rule And thus by this wholesome counsel and most upright provision we thought to arrange that no one

whatsoever should be denied the opportunity to give his heart to the observance of the Christian religion, of that religion which he should think best for himself, so that the Supreme Deity, to whose worship we freely yield our hearts) may show in all things His usual favor and benevolence. Therefore, your Worship should know that it has pleased us to remove all conditions whatsoever, which were in the rescripts formerly given to you officially, concerning the Christians and now any one of these who wishes to observe Christian religion may do so freely and openly, without molestation. We thought it fit to commend these things most fully to your care that you may know that we have given to those Christians free and unrestricted opportunity of religious worship. When you see that this has been granted to them by us, your Worship will know that we have also conceded to other religions the right of open and free observance of their worship for the sake of the peace of our times, that each one may have the free opportunity to worship as he pleases ; this regulation is made we that we may not seem to detract from any dignity or any religion.

Moreover, in the case of the Christians especially we esteemed it best to order that if it happens anyone heretofore has bought from our treasury from anyone whatsoever, those places where they were previously accustomed to assemble, concerning which a certain decree had been made and a letter sent to you officially, the same shall be restored to the Christians without payment or any claim of recompense and without any kind of fraud or deception, Those, moreover, who have obtained the same by gift, are likewise to return them at once to the Christians. Besides, both those who have purchased and those who have secured them by gift, are to appeal to the vicar if they seek any recompense from our bounty, that they may be cared for through our clemency,. All this property ought to be delivered at once to the community of the Christians through your intercession, and without delay. And since these Christians are known to have possessed not only those places in which they were accustomed to assemble, but also other property, namely the churches, belonging to them as a corporation and not as individuals, all these things which we have included under the above law, you will order to be restored, without any hesitation or controversy at all, to these Christians, that is to say to the corporations and their conventicles: providing, of course, that the above arrangements be followed so that those who return the same without payment, as we have said, may hope for an indemnity from our bounty. In all these circumstances you ought to tender your most efficacious intervention to the community of the Christians, that our command may be carried into effect as quickly as possible, whereby, moreover, through our clemency, public order may be secured. Let this be done so that, as we have said above, Divine favor towards us, which, under the most important circumstances we have already experienced, may, for all time, preserve and prosper our successes together with the good of the state. Moreover, in order that the statement of this decree of our good will may come to the notice of all, this rescript, published by your decree, shall be announced everywhere and brought to the knowledge of all, so that the decree of this, our benevolence, cannot be concealed.

from Lactantius, *De Mort. Pers.*, ch. 48. opera, ed. O. F. Fritzsche, II, p 288 sq. (Bibl Patr. Ecc. Lat. XI).

Both texts translated in University of Pennsylvania. Dept. of History: *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European history*, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press [1897?-1907?]), Vol 4:, 1, pp. 28-30

The Theodosian Code: On Religion, 4th Century CE

QUESTIONS:

Did Theodosius make each of these laws? How do you know?

Is Theodosius a Christian? How do you know?

What does Theodosius' attitude toward Manichaeans reveal about changing power structures in Rome?

C. Th. XV.xii.1: Bloody spectacles are not suitable for civil ease and domestic quiet.

Wherefore since we have proscribed gladiators, those who have been accustomed to be sentenced to such work as punishment for their crimes, you should cause to serve in the mines, so that they may be punished without shedding their blood. Constantine Augustus.

C. Th. XVI.v.1: It is necessary that the privileges which are bestowed for the cultivation of religion should be given only to followers of the Catholic faith. We desire that heretics and schismatics be not only kept from these privileges, but be subjected to various fines.

Constantine Augustus.

C. Th. XVI.x.4: It is decreed that in all places and all cities the temples should be closed at once, and after a general warning, the opportunity of sinning be taken from the wicked. We decree also that we shall cease from making sacrifices. And if anyone has committed such a crime, let him be stricken with the avenging sword. And we decree that the property of the one executed shall be claimed by the city, and that rulers of the provinces be punished in the same way, if they neglect to punish such crimes. Constantine and Constans Augusti.

C. Th. XVI.vii.1: The ability and right of making wills shall be taken from those who turn from Christians to pagans, and the testament of such an one, if he made any, shall be abrogated after his death. Gratian, Valentinian, and Valens Augusti.

C.Th. XI.vii.13: Let the course of all law suits and all business cease on Sunday, which our fathers have rightly called the Lord's day, and let no one try to collect either a public or a private debt; and let there be no hearing of disputes by any judges either those required to serve by law or those voluntarily chosen by disputants. And he is to be held not only infamous but sacrilegious who has turned away from the service and observance of holy religion on that day. Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius Augusti.

C.Th. XV.v.1: On the Lord's day, which is the first day of the week, on Christmas, and on the days of Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost, inasmuch as then the [white] garments [of Christians] symbolizing the light of heavenly cleansing bear witness to the new light of holy baptism, at the time also of the suffering of the apostles, the example for all Christians, the pleasures of the theaters and games are to be kept from the people in all cities, and all the thoughts of Christians and believers are to be occupied with the worship of God. And if any are kept from that worship through the madness of Jewish impiety or the error and insanity of foolish paganism, let them know that there is one time for prayer and another for pleasure. And lest anyone should think he is compelled by the honor due to our person, as if by the greater necessity of his imperial office, or that unless he attempted to hold the games in contempt of the religious prohibition, he might offend our serenity in showing less than the usual devotion toward us; let no one doubt that our clemency is revered in the highest degree by humankind when the worship of the whole world is paid to the might and goodness of God. Theodosius Augustus and Caesar Valentinian.

C. Th.XVI.i.2: We desire that all the people under the rule of our clemency should live by that religion which divine Peter the apostle is said to have given to the Romans, and which it is evident that Pope Damasus and Peter, bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolic sanctity, followed; that is that we should believe in the one deity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with

equal majesty and in the Holy Trinity according to the apostolic teaching and the authority of the gospel. Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius Augusti.

C. Th. XVI.v.iii: Whenever there is found a meeting of a mob of Manichaeans, let the leaders be punished with a heavy fine and let those who attended be known as infamous and dishonored, and be shut out from association with men, and let the house and the dwellings where the profane doctrine was taught be seized by the officers of the city. Valentinian and Valens Augusti.

Source:

Oliver J. Thatcher, ed., *The Library of Original Sources* (Milwaukee: University Research Extension Co., 1907), Vol. IV: The Early Medieval World, pp. 69-71.

Overview of Islam

Islam stands as one of the major religions of the world and may possibly be the major religion of the world. Like Christianity and Buddhism, it is an international cultural form that is integrally rooted in the culture of a single people, the Arabs. Unlike Christianity and Buddhism, however, Islam has maintained strong cultural roots in its Arabic origins even down to the language of its foundation. While no Christian alive knows a single word of Christ's teachings in the Aramaic or Hebrew that Christ spoke, and only a few Buddhists can move easily within the Pali that Siddhartha spoke, nearly every Muslim from Muhammad to the present day begins and ends each day with the magisterial cadences of the Arabic words spoken by Muhammad as revelation. The sacred text of the Muslims, the Qur'an, or "Recitation," is, unlike either the New Testament or the teachings of Buddha, absolutely authoritative and subject to no questions since its redaction only a couple decades after the death of Muhammad. The Christian New Testament, in contrast, circulated in numerous and contradictory formats so that the present version is highly suspect and frequently inharmonious; the various schools of Buddhism are often at loggerheads over the legitimacy of various teachings—these disputed teachings sometimes form the core of separate movements. In addition to language and text, at the heart of Islam is the Arabic vision of the world and society. Codified only a couple hundred years after the foundation of Islam, the **Shari'ah**, or law of Islam installed permanently the Arabic order of society on subsequent generations. The genius of Islam, then, is fundamentally the genius of the Arabs; the cadences of Islam are the cadences of the Arabic language; the universe of Islam was one forged in the mind of Arabic culture. This is the heritage that we'll explore over countless centuries, this diffusion of Arabic genius throughout the Middle East, Africa, Europe, India, China, and finally, the Americas as a late but integral chapter in the African Diaspora.

We will first start, however, with the Arabs themselves: merchants, raiders, nomads, and city-dwellers, living at the crossroads of empires and cultures. For Arabic culture was a "multiculture," as nomadic, tribal Arabs lived side by side with Jews, Greeks, Christians, and Persians. The unique character of Islam and the real genius of Muhammad will involve the fusion of the multiple cultures into a coherent whole, a vision of the universe and human life that would eventually become the dominant social and religious reality in the human world.

But what is Islam as a faith? How can it be simplified or reduced to a single system? Unlike Christianity and Buddhism, reducing Islam as faith to a single set of principles is relatively easy because the faith has remained relatively intact from its origins to the present day in its fundamentals. While one can clearly distinguish foundational Christianity as a belief system from early Christianity, and modern Christianity as a set of beliefs appears to have almost nothing in common with either foundational or early Christianity, there's a remarkable coherence in the historical development of Islam. While one can speak of foundational Islam and distinguish this from later Islam, for the most part the similarities between the two outnumber the differences. One finds, then, that a definition of foundational Islam as represented in the Qur'an and in the sayings and actions of Muhammad, called the **Sunnah**, can more or less be applied to Islam as a whole.

Foundational Islam has the following characteristics:

- Islam is monotheistic. The overwhelming message of Islam is that there is one and only one god, that this god is single and unified (**tawhid**). This thesis is represented in the first half of the Muslim testament of faith: "there is no god but god." The primary duty of humanity is to remember that there is only one god in all one's thoughts, words, and actions; this remembrance, which is the cornerstone of Islam, is called **dhikr**. Islam, however, does not reject other religions. Fundamental to the Islamic message is that all religions are based on the singularity and unity of God; some religions, however, have fallen away from this message (such as Christianity which divides God into Father and Son), but the essential message of all religions is this unity of God.

- Islam is creationist. The universe in Islam is a creation of God and is separate from God. The relationship of the world (including humanity) to God is the relationship between created and creator. While God is not present in the world (immanentalism), still the world reflects the nature and guidance of God.
- Islam is transcendentalist. Although God created the universe, God is still absolutely separate from creation—to postulate that God was part of the changeable world would be to contradict the unity, singularity, and unchangeableness of God. Transcendentalism, however, postulates more than just an absolute separation. It also describes a relationship between the creator god and creation. In a transcendental relationship, the transcendent term (God) is absolutely independent of the non-transcendent term (creation); however, the non-transcendent term (creation) only has existence, meaning, or value in relationship to the transcendent term (God). To say that God is transcendent in Islam is to say that God is separate, distinct, and independent from the created universe, but that the created universe, though entirely separate from God, is nonetheless dependent on God for its existence and value.
- Islam is rationalistic. At the foundation of Islam is the principle of **iman** or faith. This word, however, is untranslatable into English or other European languages since "faith" is rooted in Christianity. In Christianity, faith is "super-rational," that is, it exists above the level of rationality; human rationality is construed as fundamentally useless foundational Christianity ("the wisdom of the world is the wisdom of fools"). Islam, however, postulates that rationality is the highest function given to human beings and that no "faith" is legitimate without it. What *iman* means, then, is something closer to "reasoned faith." It is expected that each and every Muslim will carefully weigh the alternatives and, after exercising their reason on the contents of their faith, will be ultimately persuaded of the rightness of their faith.
- Islam is submission. The word, **islam**, means "submission," and a **muslim** is "one who submits." Islam is the submission of one's actions and thoughts to God. In general, submission refers to the ritualistic rules that each and every Muslim must obey; these rituals, however, are primarily symbolic of one's submission to the will of God. Submission to God is displayed in each and every action; the law (**Shari'a**) built off of the text of the Qur'an and the various precepts in the Sunnah is to be obeyed in every respect.
- Islam is androcentric. The most important aspect of creation in Islam is humanity, which is the "viceregent of God on earth." While Islam adopts the Judeo-Christian idea of the fall, humanity is in general glorified in foundational and later Islam. Despite the Fall, humanity has the power to discern the unity of God and the reflection of the nature of God in creation. At the core of the Islamic message is that it is possible for human beings to live a perfect life in relationship to God—the life of Muhammad was one such perfect life and the concern with recording and remembering all of Muhammad's actions argues that each individual Muslim could *imitate* Muhammad. In Islam, the dignity of humanity is one of the most recurring themes of the religion.
- Islam is world-affirming. As a corollary to the generally optimistic view that Islam takes towards humanity, it also construes the created world as fundamentally a good place that was designed for the use and enjoyment of humanity. The use and enjoyment of the world, then, is not a spiritual falling-away, as it is in Christianity, but an active part of the religious life if it is used with the right intention. This includes sexuality, for even Muhammad was married and had sexual relations. This world-affirming aspect of Islam would have far-reaching consequences in the culture of Islam. While Christian Europe, for instance, largely abandoned Greek and Roman science and mercantilism, both of these were preserved and thrived in the Islamic world.
- Islam is an afterlife religion. Strictly speaking, Islam is not a "salvation" religion even though the religion is ruthlessly focussed on the afterlife. The goal of individual life is to attain an afterlife within one of the heavens described in the Qur'an and to avoid one of the numerous hells. Salvation religions, however, postulate that admission to paradise or a good afterlife is almost solely in the control of god or some god; in Islam, however, one's afterlife is in large part determined by the sum of one's activities in this life over which **one has complete**

- responsibility.** In that sense, it's not fair to describe Islam as a salvation religion; unlike salvation religions, Islam requires the active, ethical participation of the faithful in every circumstance of the conduct of their lives.
- Islam is eschatological. In the Islamic view of history, time is finite and follows an overall, predetermined course. Each human age begins with the foundation of a new religion founded on the unity of God; each new religion is introduced by a **rasul** or "messenger." Following the introduction of this new monotheism, humanity gradually falls away and the religion becomes corrupt. Periodically, God sends "prophets" to renew the original vigor of the monotheistic religion, but the overall course is a decline in the monotheistic vision. At the lowest stage of decline, God sends another "messenger" that renews monotheism by creating a new religion; the sixth "messenger" was Jesus Christ and the seventh, and last, was Muhammad. At the end of the seventh period, when the new religion has declined, history will come to an end. At the end of history, all humans will be judged based on the contents of their lives, both in terms of faith, submission, and ethical actions, and will be permanently assigned to a place of punishment or one of many paradises.
 - Islam is ethical. Like Christianity, foundational Islam is overwhelmingly concerned with individuals as ethical agents. The Qur'an itself deals primarily with two subjects: the unity of God and human ethical responsibilities to the community. In addition, the Sunnah, being both sayings *and* actions of Muhammad, is meant to be a guide to practical living in the here and now. The Qur'an, then, in most of its history has been primarily used as a guide for behavior and social organization. Unlike foundational Christianity, the ethical imperatives of Islam are communal rather than individualistic.
 - Islam is societistic. Perhaps stemming from the fact that Islam arises in a predominately tribal culture organized around kinship lines, the religion is primarily focused on the community and society rather than the individual. While the individual is responsible for his or her salvation, Islam requires that each individual participate in the moral life of the community. If one were to sum up the societistic responsibility of the Muslim it would be this: it is incumbent on each Muslim to "islamicize" society, that is, to bring the life of society in line with the ethical philosophy contained in the Qur'an and the Sunnah.
 - Islam is primarily exoteric. Islam is primarily an exoteric religion: it is focussed on the community of the faithful rather than limited to exceptional individuals. The rituals and ethical guidelines are meant for everybody and salvation through individual exertion is available to all. Foundational and later Islam, however, does recognize a hierarchy among the faithful: there are the "nobility," or spiritually more perfect, and the "common" faithful, or spiritually less perfect.
 - Islam is both exterioristic and interioristic. Islam requires of its believers both an outward and an inward conformance to the rules and practices of the faith. Unlike foundational Christianity, Islam doesn't fully reject the rigorous and faithful observance of rituals and ethical practices, but like Christianity, Islam understands that these rituals and ethical practices can be done mechanically, that is, that they don't reflect the interior state of the individual. For this reason, Islam requires that all rituals and behaviors be accompanied by the "right intention." While this can't be measured by exterior actions, anyone who doesn't perform the rituals and ethical behaviors are certainly proving that they don't have the right intentions.
 - Islam is egalitarian. Like Christianity, Islam is based on the fundamental notion that each human being is spiritually equal to every other human being in the eyes of God. The rituals of Islam, from daily prayers to the pilgrimage to Mecca, are meant to stress this spiritual egalitarianism. This spiritual egalitarianism, however, does not mean social egalitarianism. Social distinctions and subordination, such as the subordination of women to men, are seen as necessary to the maintenance of society, order, and morality. (from <http://public.wsu.edu/~dee/ISLAM/ISLAM.HTM>)

QUESTION: What factors make Islam easier to explain than earlier religions?

It was in Mecca that a relatively obscure, forty-year old citizen named Muhammad from a lower clan began to preach a new religion. In 610 AD, Muhammad revealed to his closest relatives that he had been asked by the voice of God to recite a new message to the world. He initially kept this message private among his closest relatives; three years later, however, they would persuade him to carry his recitation to a wider audience. These recitations, which Muhammad would later come to consider to be the voice of an intermediary of God, would form the heart and soul of Islam: the **Qur'an**, or "Recitation."

Muhammad considered himself a "Messenger of God," or **rasul Allah**—a messenger of God in Islam does more than just carry a message to God's people, a messenger carries an entirely new and revivifying message to humanity. It was as a *rasul Allah* that the life of Muhammad would come down to us. Of his forty years of life before the Recitation, the only sources we have are oral traditions that construct that early life in the context of his great calling.

We do know that he came from a relatively poor clan, the Hashim, that was, in fact, the clan that headed the opposition to the wealthy merchant clans. He was born after the death of his father—this meant that he could inherit none of his father's property so he grew up in poverty. He became the servant and at the age of twenty-five married a wealthy widow, Khadija.

Muhammad's poverty in his youth and the social tensions in Mecca with bitter divisions resulting from the unequal distribution of wealth among the clans became significant aspects of the message of Islam. While the message of the Qur'an is universal, it is also very historically specific in its content and the traditions surrounding its content. The message that Muhammad delivered was meant for very specific circumstances and many of the revelations would address specific concerns addressed to Muhammad. As far as the division of wealth and Muhammad's poverty, one of the fundamental messages of the *Qur'an* is the emphasis on material welfare and the entire community's responsibility for the material welfare of all its members.

While Muhammad gained several followers in Mecca, the wealthiest and most powerful clans bitterly opposed the new religion. The revelations recited by Muhammad were often specifically directed against the most powerful clans, particularly in the direct commands to redistribute wealth. Because of this opposition to the wealthy clans, Muhammad's new religion largely appealed to the unfortunate of Mecca: foreigners who were not protected by any clan, members of poor clans, and the children of the wealthiest clans who had fallen out of favor or somehow lost their inheritance. **QUESTION: How does Muhammed compare to other prophets we have discussed this year?**

At first, though opposed to the religion, the wealthiest clans took a wait-and-see attitude. As the religion gained followers, the wealthiest clans tried to appropriate Muhammad for themselves, offering him a wealthy marriage and entrance into the most powerful merchant clans if he would stop preaching his new religion. When that didn't work, the wealthy clans brought pressure on Muhammad's clan, the Hashim, to force him to stop his recitations. But the Hashim were led by Muhammad's uncle, Abu Talib, who sided with Muhammad. The wealthy clans then boycotted the

Hashim and tried to force them economically to give over this new religion.

Although he was supported by his clan and although his message was fundamentally opposed to the attitude and practices of the wealthy clans, Muhammad seems to have tried to make some peace with these clans in the first decade. It was this attempt to make peace that the incident of the **Satanic verses** took place. Seeking some accommodation, Muhammad seems to have sought to reconcile his new religion with the traditional religion of Mecca by incorporating other gods—the three gods of Meccan religion: al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat. It would later be revealed to Muhammad that these Quranic verses had been sent to him by Satan and were thus deceptions. When Muhammad recanted these verses as Satanic, the wealthiest clans turned against him bitterly and would attempt no more reconciliation.

The opening came with the death of Abu Talib in 619; the Hashimite clan fell under the leadership of Abu Lahab who dismissed Muhammad from the protection of the clan. What this meant was that anyone could do anything to Muhammad and the clan would not seek revenge—for all effects and purposes, Muhammad had fallen outside the protection of any law. Muhammad desperately sought for protection under other clans, but they all refused.

Then one day in 620, Muhammad met with six men from Yathrib. These men were so impressed that they would later lead a larger delegation to meet with Muhammad and discuss both his revelations and the possibility of his moving to Yathrib.

Yathrib at the time was torn apart by clan violence. The city consisted of a majority of Arabic clans and a minority of Jewish clans—although the two groups had separate religions, they were little different culturally or ethnically. It was largely through blood-feuds that the violence in Yathrib slowly spread—by 618, these blood-feuds erupted into all-out war involving almost every clan.

These circumstances in part explain the readiness of the inhabitants of Yathrib to accept a new religion. But the overwhelming selling point was Muhammad himself and the message he spoke. In 621, five of the original six returned again to Mecca and brought along seven more men. Again, they were so impressed that they swore to follow this new religion. These twelve then persuaded over seventy-five fellow citizens to meet Muhammad again in 622—these seventy-five swore to both follow the new religion and fight for Muhammad.

Muhammad now had the protection he so desperately needed for his followers and he put into motion the emigration of his followers from Mecca to Yathrib, which he renamed **Medina**. However, he had to be cautious—if the wealthy clans got wind of his plans, they would interpret it as a threat and would use any means to stop it. So Muhammad had his followers gradually leave the city while he remained behind with his father-in-law, Abu Bakr, and his son-in-law, Ali. The ruse worked—while his followers left the city, the powerful clans suspected nothing.

Leaving the city would be more difficult. Once he left the city, Muhammad knew that the Meccans would track him down quickly. Under cover of night he left the city for some caves above the city. Here he hid out until the Meccans stopped searching the roadways for him—after three days he set out to Medina along the least-travelled roads. This journey to Medina was the **Hijra** and it is from this year that the Muslim calendar begins. While normally translated "pilgrimage," *Hijra* means something like "severing relational ties" (the closest English equivalent I can think of is, "running away from home" or "divorcing your relatives").

In Medina, he was greeted with enthusiasm. Here Muhammad was in part called on to mediate disputes between rival clans. And it was here that the Recitation profoundly changed character. While the Meccan revelations concerned themselves with general ethics and spiritual matters, the Medinan verses are more concerned with ethical and political questions. While the Meccan verses address the question of how to make one's life right with God, the Medinan revelations address the

question of building and maintaining a community with a common religious tie.

It was also in the Medinan years that Muhammad turned his religion away from Judaism and the Jews. In Mecca and in the early years in Medina, Muhammad tried to incorporate Jews into both the recitations and the community of Islam. The tensions in Medina, however, translated into a series of rejections of Judaism and Jews. The final blow came when Muhammad, at prayer, suddenly had a verse revealed to him that believers should not pray to Jerusalem but to Mecca. He then ordered his congregation to turn completely around (Mecca is 180 degrees in the opposite direction from Jerusalem when you're in Medina); symbolically, the gesture signified that Islam had broken completely from Judaism.

In both the Islamic and the Western world, there is a great deal of controversy regarding Muhammad's attitude towards Mecca. Whether or not he planned to go to war with Mecca, he soon became engaged in activities that would guarantee a war between Medina and Mecca.

He began with raids on Meccan trading caravans. At first these raids, or **razzia**, were only carried out by the Meccan emigrants. As they began to rack up a few successes, they were soon joined by Medinans, who were called **Ansar**, or "Helpers."

Battle with the Meccans was inevitable, and in 624 (year 2 in the Muslim calendar), Muhammad, with only 300 men, defeated a Meccan force of over 900 men at Badr, the single most significant battle in Islamic history. A series of battles followed until the Meccans laid siege to Medina in 627. Arabs, however, prosecuted warfare through the use of raids—unused to laying siege, the Meccans gave it over in a little over a day.

The failure of the Medinan siege left the Meccans with no prestige left, particularly among those, such as the Persians and the southern Arabians, who would be inspired to fight for them. Muhammad re-entered Mecca as a pilgrim in 628; in 630 (year 8 on the Muslim calendar), Muhammad re-entered Mecca as its conqueror.

QUESTION: How was Muhammed able to conquer Mecca?

He was a disenfranchised son of a poor clan. He had received messages from God and established a new religion. Cast out from his clan's protection, he fled to Medina where his religion grew quickly. And now he had returned to Mecca as the head of a growing political unit, in fact, a germinating empire. He turned his attention to dealing with other Arabian tribes. His goal was in part to protect his community and in part an effort to unify the Arabian tribes. When he beat a group of tribes, the Hawazin, he became the most powerful military presence in Arabia.

As Muhammad brought various tribes and cities into alliance, at first he demanded that the people acknowledge Islam and his role as the messenger of God. These were not normal political alliances, but *tribal* alliances. As Islam expanded, this tribal character would not admit non-Arabs into the same structure—non-Arabs allied themselves to Islam by being a **mawali**, or "client" of a tribe.

But the Islamic peace in Arabia was only a peace at the surface. There was still much opposition among the tribes; along the Persian Gulf, for instance, most of the tribes and clans were non-Islamic and towards Syria the tribes allied themselves with the Byzantine empire. The last two years of Muhammad's life were largely spent dealing with these internal threats to the Islamic peace.

In his last year of life, Muhammad led a great pilgrimage or **Hajj** to the Ka'aba in Mecca. This final

gesture gave to Islam the last of its fundamental obligations. Three months later he died.

Although he had bequeathed a religion on his people and had brilliantly conquered and ruled over an Arabian unity founded in the city of Mecca, he left no political mechanism in place for either political or religious succession. Who would rule in his place? Who could keep the alliances together? Most importantly, what would happen to the religion he founded? Since Muhammad was a source of constant revelation, what would happen to the Islamic world when cast adrift from the source of their religious ideas and revelation?

QUESTION: Why was so much left in the air when Muhammed died?

his would occupy the Islamic mind for the first decades after Muhammad's death. Two things result from this: an Islamic empire stretching across Africa to Europe itself and, the greatest of all Islamic achievements, the Qur'an.

Ibn Ishaq (d. c. 773 CE): Selections from the *Life of Muhammad*

This biography of Muhammad - a Sira - was written by Ibn Ishaq, an Arab who lived in the century after Muhammad did, dying around 151 AH (that is, about 773 CE). It is one of the few full biographies of the Prophet.

QUESTIONS:

What do these anecdotes teach us about Muhammad?

In what ways is Muhammad similar to other prophets we have studied?

What is the significance of being washed out with snow?

It is alleged in popular stories (and only God knows the truth) that Amina d. Wahb, the mother of God's apostle, used to say when she was pregnant with God's apostle that a voice said to her, "You are pregnant with the lord of this people and when he is born say, 'I put him in the care of the One from the evil of every envier; then call him Muhammad.'" As she was pregnant with him she saw a light come forth from her by which she could see the castles of Busra in Syria.... Halima the apostle's foster mother used to say that she went forth from her country with her husband and little son whom she was nursing, among the women of her tribe, in search of other babies to nurse. This was a year of famine when they were destitute.... They could not sleep the whole night because of the weeping of her hungry child. She had no milk to give him, not could their she-camel provide a morning draught, but we were hoping for rain and relief. 'I rode upon my donkey which had kept back the other riders through its weakness and emaciation so that it was a nuisance to them. When we reached Mecca, we looked out for foster children, and the apostle of God was offered to everyone of us, and each woman refused him when she was told he was an orphan, because we hoped to get payment from the child's father. We said, "An orphan! and what will his mother and grandfather do?" and so we spurned him because of that. Every woman who came with me got a suckling except me, and when we decided to depart I said to my husband: "By God, I do not like the idea of returning with my friends without a suckling; I will go and take that orphan." He replied, "Do as you please; perhaps God will bless us on his account." So I went and took him for the sole reason that I could not find anyone else. I took him back to my baggage, and as soon as I put him in my bosom, my breasts overflowed with milk which he drank until he was satisfied, as also did his foster-brother.... When we used to have him with us my flock used to yield milk in abundance. We milked them and drank while other people had not a drop, nor could they find anything in their animals' udders....

[A learned man] told me that some of the apostle's companions asked him to tell them about himself. He said: "I am what Abraham my father prayed for and the good news of [my brother] Jesus. When my mother was carrying me she saw a light proceeding from her which showed her the castles of Syria. I was suckled among the B. Sa'd b. Bakr, and while I was with a brother of mine behind our tents shepherding the lambs, two men in white raiment came to me with a gold basin full of snow. Then they seized me and opened up my belly, extracted my heart and split it; then they extracted a black drop from it and threw it away; then they washed my heart and my belly with that snow until they had thoroughly cleansed them. Then one said to the other, weigh him against ten of his people; they did so and I outweighed them. Then they weighed me against a hundred and then a thousand, and I outweighed them. He said, 'Leave him alone, for by God, if you weighed him against all his people he would outweigh them.'"...

Source:

<http://www.juniata.edu/~tuten/muhammad.html>

The Qu'ran

The Qur'an (in Anglicized form: *Koran*) is certainly the greatest literary work in classical Arabic and for all Muslims stands as the definitive word of God (in Arabic: *Allah*) spoken to the prophet **Muhammad** by the angel Gabriel. When reading the *Qur'an* , you should realize that, for all Muslims, the text you are reading is quite literally the voice of God; because the *Qur'an* is the direct speech of God in Arabic, translation of the work is seen as blasphemy, as an unforgivable tampering with God's own speech. Nevertheless, the *Qur'an* has been translated into Turkish and Farsi (the language of Iran) in this century and is recited in these languages in religious services in Turkey and Iran. The Muslim community tolerates this but just barely. For all practical purposes, to be Muslim, then, means almost universally to be able to read and understand classical Arabic, despite what one's native language is.

The recitation began one night in the year 610 A.D., when Muhammad, born in Medina in 570, was asleep in Ramadan; a voice from heaven called out to him with the command, "Recite! Recite! Recite!" The angel recited three verses to him and when he awoke he had these verses, as he said, inscribed in his heart. From that point on, Muhammad believed himself to be a prophet and messenger of God, the last in a line of seven prophets (beginning with Abraham and ending with Jesus Christ, who was prophet number six) and responsible for inscribing the last and most important of God's direct messages to the world, the Arabic Recitation, which is the full name of the work. The people of God, that is, the Jews and the Christians, were going astray; the purpose of the Arabic Recitation was to restore God's faithful to the proper path. At different times in Muhammed's life the recitations would come to him; he would then repeat what he had heard and these would be memorized by certain people trained in remembering verses; some of these verses were written down on whatever was at hand. All these writings were collected in the caliphate of 'Uthman and the canonical text was established around 650 A.D. The writings were collected into a group of surah's and ordered according to length (each surah is meant to be a single recitation), though all Muslims also know the chronological order of the recitations.

The *Qur'an* is organized into separate chapters called **surahs**. The order of the surahs, however, does not reflect the chronological order of the Quranic verses, nor does the surah structure reflect the nature of the original Quranic revelation. During his lifetime, Muhammad would have individual verses revealed to him; these revelations occurred unexpectedly and in surprising places. Typically, revelation would put Muhammad in a trance-like state. He, and others, would memorize the revealed verses and, under the guidance of Gabriel, Muhammad organized these verses into the existing surahs. The intervention of Gabriel in ordering the various verses in Islamic history is meant to guarantee not only the sanctity of the individual verses, but the religious validity of the organization of these verses in the *Qur'an* .

The *Qur'an* was an oral text throughout the lifetime of Muhammad; it was also a fluid text. The complete text resided only in the memories of Muhammad and his followers. As he added verses and reorganized the text, his followers would rememorize the text in the light of the additions or edits. This means that the *Qur'an* was a living text during the lifetime of Muhammad. Certain verses revealed to Muhammad were later repudiated by him as "satanic" verses revealed not by Gabriel but by Satan. These verses were expunged from the text that so many had memorized.

QUESTION: How does the writing of the Koran compare to the writing of the Old Testament? The New Testament?

After the death of Muhammad, the text of the *Qur'an* was written down in the caliphate of Abu Bakr. Until 'Uthman, one and only one written text existed. For over a decade after the death of Muhammad, the *Qur'an* remained primarily an oral text in the memories of the faithful. In Islamic accounts of the history of the *Qur'an*, this oral text was entirely faithful to the original verses—this is entirely possible, but Western historians generally agree that some corruptions must have produced slight variations throughout the Islamic world. Nevertheless, the military expansion of Islam led to two direct consequences concerning the integrity of the Quranic text. First, large numbers of the faithful were dying out in the various military expeditions. Each time someone died who had the Quranic text memorized, that meant that one copy of the *Qur'an* disappeared forever. Second, the expansion of Islam swelled the ranks of the faithful. Many of these new converts spoke other languages and the original Arabic of the *Qur'an* began to corrupt. Faced with these two threats to the integrity of the *Qur'an*, 'Uthman ordered a **rescension** of the text to be made and to serve as the definitive written version of the text. A rescension is a version of a text that is assembled from all the variant versions of that text. 'Uthman, however, relied on two sources: the written text that had been ordered by Abu Bakr and that still existed, and the various oral texts of Muslims who memorized it during the lifetime of Muhammad. In Islamic history, there is no variation between these two sources, so the Uthmanic "rescension" is largely a codifying of a single version of a text. This version, the **'Uthmanic rescension**, is the version of the *Qur'an* that has remained, unchanged, the central holy text of Islam.

The Qur'an has one overriding theme, endlessly repeated and elaborated throughout the text: complete submission (in Arabic: *islam*; *muslim* means "one who submits") to the word and the will of God, who is one God and the only God. The God of Islam is both a stern judge and endlessly forgiving; obedience to God wipes away all transgression. This submission, however, must be fully and rationally given; faith (*iman*) is a rational consent to the truth of the word of God. Therefore, much of the *Qur'an* concerns the word of God and how it is received and believed, or not received and believed as the case may be. As you read the text, try to identify the central ethical and religious principles. How are people supposed to behave towards one another? How is the human world divided? What human activities indicate faith? What is the role of mercy? What is the role of violence? What theory of history seems to animate this account? Why do people choose not to believe the prophets from Allah? In particular, the "theme" of this surah is the nature of Allah's "signs"? What are these signs? What guarantees their truth? Why are they called "manifest"? Why do they not convince the unbelievers?

You may find the text a bit disorganized and repetitious; the compositional principle of the *Qur'an* is called in Arabic, *haqqiqah*, or "formless essence." This is understood to mean that the various commands, injunctions, and accounts of God take on their fullest meaning by being repeated in several different combinations. This compositional principle becomes an artistic principle in Islamic art and architecture.

Your text is taken from *The Qur'an*, translated by E. H. Palmer (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

1880). This text has been updated to more colloquial English by me. I'm only a beginner with Arabic, so the text has been updated in part by consulting other English translations.

Excerpts from The Qu'ran

QUESTIONS:

How does this description of Allah compare to the Hebrew Yahweh?

Why would the story of Abraham be a part of Islam?

What is the connection between the Exodus and Islam?

What is the role of Jesus in Islam?

MUHAMMAD SPEAKS OF ALLAH: 'THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE. . . ('Qur'an,' II, 256-9; VI, 102-3)

God

there is no god but He, the Living, the Everlasting.

Slumber seizes Him not, neither sleep;

to Him belongs

all that is in the heavens and the earth

Who is there that shall intercede with Him save by His leave?

He knows what lies before them

and what is after them,

and they comprehend not anything of His knowledge

save such as He wills.

His Throne comprises the heavens and earth;

the preserving of them oppresses Him not;

He is the All-high, the All-glorious.

No compulsion is there in religion.

Rectitude has become clear from error.

So whosoever disbelieves in idols

and believes in God, has laid hold of

the most firm handle, unbreaking; God is

All-hearing, All-knowing.

God is the protector of the believers;

He brings them forth from the shadows

into the light.

And the unbelievers-their protectors are

idols, that bring them forth from the light

into the shadows;

those are the inhabitants of the Fire,

therein dwelling forever. (II, 256-9)

That then is God your Lord;

there is no god but He,

the Creator of everything.

So serve Him,

for He is Guardian over everything.

The eyes attain Him not, but He attains the eyes;

He is the All-subtle, the All-aware. (VI, 102-3)

ALLAH TELLS MUHAMMAD THE STORY OF ABRAHAM

('Qur'an,' XIX, 42-52)

*And mention in the Book Abraham;
surely he was a true man, a Prophet.
When he said to his father, 'Father,
why worshippeth thou that which-neither
hears nor sees, nor avails thee anything?
Father, there has come to me knowledge
such as came not to thee; so follow me,
And I will guide thee on a level path.
Father, serve not Satan; surely Satan
is a rebel against the All-merciful.
Father, I fear that some chastisement
from the All-merciful will smite thee,
so that thou becomest a friend to Satan'.
Said he, 'What, art thou shrinking
from my gods, Abraham? Surely, if thou
givest not over, I shall stone thee;
so forsake me now for some while.'
He said, 'Peace be upon thee!
I will ask my Lord to forgive thee;
surely He is ever gracious to me.
Now I will go apart from you
and that you call upon, apart from
God; I will call upon my Lord,
and haply I shall not be, in calling
upon my Lord, unprosperous.'
So, when he went apart from them
and that they were serving, apart
from God, We gave him Isaac and
Jacob, and each We made a Prophet
and We gave them of Our mercy,
and We appointed unto them
a tongue of truthfulness, sublime.*

ALLAH REVEALS TO MUHAMMAD HOW HE SAVED THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

('Qur'an,' XVII, 104-9)

*And We gave Moses nine signs,
clear signs. Ask the Children of Israel
when he came to them, and Pharaoh
said to him, 'Moses, I think thou art bewitched.'
He said, 'Indeed thou knowest that none
sent these down, except the Lord*

*of the heavens and earth, as clear
proofs; and, Pharaoh, I think thou art accursed.'
He desired to startle them from the land;
and We drowned him and those with him, all together.
And We said to the Children of Israel
after him, 'Dwell in the land; and
when the promise of the world to come
comes to pass, we shall bring you a rabble.'*

*With the truth We have sent it down,
and with the truth it has come down;
and We have sent thee not, except
good tidings to bear, and warning,
and a Koran We have divided,
for thee to recite it to mankind
at intervals, and We have sent it down successively.
Say: 'Believe in it, or believe not';
those who were given the knowledge before it
when it is recited to them, fall down
upon their faces prostrating, and say,
'Glory be to our Lord! Our Lord's promise is performed.'*

ALLAH SENT THE TORAH, THE PROPHETS AND JESUS, SON OF MARY
(*'Qur'an,' V, 50-3*)

*And We sent, following
in their footsteps, Jesus
son of Mary, confirming
the Torah before him;
and We gave to him
the Gospel, wherein
is guidance and light,
and confirming the Torah
before it, as a guidance
and an admonition
unto the godfearing.
So let the People of the Gospel judge
according to what God has sent down
therein. Whosoever judges not
according to what God has sent down
they are the ungodly.*

*And We have sent down to thee the Book
with the truth, confirming the Book
that was before it, and assuring it.
So judge between them according to what
God has sent down, and do not follow
their caprices, to forsake the truth
that has come to thee. To every one
of you We have appointed a right way
and an open road.*

Translation by A. J. Arberry

Teachings of Islam (conduct that is encouraged and things that are prohibited) Part 1

Surat Loqman

1. These are verses of the wise Book,
2. As guidance and mercy for the doers of good
3. Who establish prayer and give zakah, and they, of the Hereafter, are certain [in faith].
4. Those are on [right] guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful.
 12. And We had certainly given Luqman wisdom [and said], "Be grateful to Allah ." And whoever is grateful is grateful for [the benefit of] himself. And whoever denies [His favor] - then indeed, Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy.
 13. And [mention, O Muhammad], when Luqman said to his son while he was instructing him, "O my son, do not associate [anything] with Allah . Indeed, association [with him] is great injustice."
 14. And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the [final] destination.
 15. But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them but accompany them in [this] world with appropriate kindness and follow the way of those who turn back to Me [in repentance]. Then to Me will be your return, and I will inform you about what you used to do.
 16. [And Luqman said], "O my son, indeed if wrong should be the weight of a mustard seed and should be within a rock or [anywhere] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Acquainted.
 17. O my son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and be patient over what befalls you. Indeed, [all] that is of the matters [requiring] determination.
 18. And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful.
 19. And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; indeed, the most disagreeable of sounds is the voice of donkeys.

Surat Al Shuura

36. So whatever thing you have been given - it is but [for] enjoyment of the worldly life. But what is with Allah is better and more lasting for those who have believed and upon their Lord rely.

37. And those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, and when they are angry, they forgive,

38. And those who have responded to their lord and established prayer and whose affair is [determined by] consultation among themselves, and from what We have provided them, they spend.

43. And whoever is patient and forgives - indeed, that is of the matters [requiring] determination.

Suurat Al Furqaan

61. Blessed is He who has placed in the sky great stars and placed therein a [burning] lamp and luminous moon.

62. And it is He who has made the night and the day in succession for whoever desires to remember or desires gratitude.

63. And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace,

64. And those who spend [part of] the night to their Lord prostrating and standing [in prayer]

65. And those who say, "Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of Hell. Indeed, its punishment is ever adhering;

66. Indeed, it is evil as a settlement and residence."

67. And [they are] those who, when they spend, do so not excessively or sparingly but are ever, between that, [justly] moderate

68. And those who do not invoke with Allah another deity or kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed], except by right, and do not commit unlawful sexual intercourse. And whoever should do that will meet a penalty.

69. Multiplied for him is the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein humiliated-

70. Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.

71. And he who repents and does righteousness does indeed turn to Allah with [accepted] repentance.

72. And [they are] those who do not testify to falsehood, and when they pass near ill speech, they pass by with dignity.

73. And those who, when reminded of the verses of their Lord, do not fall upon them deaf and blind.

74. And those who say, "Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous."

75. Those will be awarded the Chamber for what they patiently endured, and they will be received therein with greetings and [words of] peace.

76. Abiding eternally therein. Good is the settlement and residence.

Suurat Aal Imraan

14. Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire - of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return.

15. Say, "Shall I inform you of [something] better than that? For those who fear Allah will be gardens in the presence of their Lord beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally, and purified spouses and approval from Allah . And Allah is Seeing of [His] servants -

16. Those who say, "Our Lord, indeed we have believed, so forgive us our sins and protect us from the punishment of the Fire,"

17. The patient, the true, the obedient, those who spend [in the way of Allah], and those who seek forgiveness before dawn.

103. And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided.

104. And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.

105. And do not be like the ones who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. And those will have a great punishment.

130. O you who have believed, do not consume usury, doubled and multiplied, but fear Allah that you may be successful.

131. And fear the Fire, which has been prepared for the disbelievers.

132. And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy.

133. And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous

134. Who spend [in the cause of Allah] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good;

135. And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins - and who can forgive sins except Allah ? - and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know.

136. Those - their reward is forgiveness from their Lord and gardens beneath which rivers flow [in Paradise], wherein they will abide eternally; and excellent is the reward of the [righteous] workers.

Suurat Al Baqara

153. O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient

173. He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah . But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit], there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.

177. Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah , the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.

219. They ask you about wine and gambling. Say, "In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefit for people. But their sin is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they should spend. Say, "The excess [beyond needs]." Thus Allah makes clear to you the verses [of revelation] that you might give thought.

261. The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

262. Those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah and then do not follow up what they have spent with reminders [of it] or [other] injury will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.

263. Kind speech and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury. And Allah is Free of need and Forbearing.

264. O you who have believed, do not invalidate your charities with reminders or injury as does one who spends his wealth [only] to be seen by the people and does not believe in Allah and the Last Day. His example is like that of a [large] smooth stone upon which is dust and is hit by a downpour that leaves it bare. They are unable [to keep] anything of what they have earned. And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.

265. And the example of those who spend their wealth seeking means to the approval of Allah and assuring [reward for] themselves is like a garden on high ground which is hit by a downpour - so it yields its fruits in double. And [even] if it is not hit by a downpour, then a drizzle [is sufficient]. And Allah , of what you do, is Seeing.

267. O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth. And do not aim toward the defective therefrom, spending [from that] while you would not take it [yourself] except with closed eyes. And know that Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy.

268. Satan threatens you with poverty and orders you to immorality, while Allah promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

270. And whatever you spend of expenditures or make of vows - indeed, Allah knows of it. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.

271. If you disclose your charitable expenditures, they are good; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, it is better for you, and He will remove from you some of your misdeeds [thereby]. And Allah, with what you do, is [fully] Acquainted.

272. Not upon you, [O Muhammad], is [responsibility for] their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever good you [believers] spend is for yourselves, and you do not spend except seeking the countenance of Allah. And whatever you spend of good - it will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.

274. Those who spend their wealth [in Allah's way] by night and by day, secretly and publicly - they will have their reward with their Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.

275. Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, "Trade is [just] like interest." But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest. So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and desists may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah. But whoever returns to [dealing in interest or usury] - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.

276. Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever.

277. Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds and establish prayer and give zakah will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.

278. O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers.

279. And if you do not, then be informed of a war [against you] from Allah and His Messenger. But if you repent, you may have your principal - [thus] you do no wrong, nor are you wronged.

280. And if someone is in hardship, then [let there be] postponement until [a time of] ease. But if you give [from your right as] charity, then it is better for you, if you only knew.

281. And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah. Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be treated unjustly.

282. O you who have believed, when you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down. And let a scribe write [it] between you in justice. Let no scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him. So let him write and let the one who has the

obligation dictate. And let him fear Allah , his Lord, and not leave anything out of it. But if the one who has the obligation is of limited understanding or weak or unable to dictate himself, then let his guardian dictate in justice. And bring to witness two witnesses from among your men. And if there are not two men [available], then a man and two women from those whom you accept as witnesses - so that if one of the women errs, then the other can remind her. And let not the witnesses refuse when they are called upon. And do not be [too] weary to write it, whether it is small or large, for its [specified] term. That is more just in the sight of Allah and stronger as evidence and more likely to prevent doubt between you, except when it is an immediate transaction which you conduct among yourselves. For [then] there is no blame upon you if you do not write it. And take witnesses when you conclude a contract. Let no scribe be harmed or any witness. For if you do so, indeed, it is [grave] disobedience in you. And fear Allah . And Allah teaches you. And Allah is Knowing of all things.

283. And if you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe, then a security deposit [should be] taken. And if one of you entrusts another, then let him who is entrusted discharge his trust [faithfully] and let him fear Allah , his Lord. And do not conceal testimony, for whoever conceals it - his heart is indeed sinful, and Allah is Knowing of what you do.

Teachings of Islam (conduct that is encouraged and things that are prohibited) Part 2

Suorat Al Mu'minun

1. Certainly will the believers have succeeded:
2. They who are during their prayer humbly submissive
3. And they who turn away from ill speech
4. And they who are observant of zakah
5. And they who guard their private parts
8. And they who are to their trusts and their promises attentive
9. And they who carefully maintain their prayers –
10. Those are the inheritors
11. Who will inherit al-Firdaus. They will abide therein eternally.

Surat Al Anaam

151. Say, "Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited to you. [He commands] that you not associate anything with Him, and to parents, good treatment, and do not kill your children out of poverty; We will provide for you and them. And do not approach immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed. And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed] except by [legal] right. This has He instructed you that you may use reason."

152. And do not approach the orphan's property except in a way that is best until he reaches maturity. And give full measure and weight in justice. We do not charge any soul except [with that within] its capacity. And when you testify, be just, even if [it concerns] a near relative. And the covenant of Allah fulfill. This has He instructed you that you may remember.

153. And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous.

Suorat Al Nisaa'

29. O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful.

30. And whoever does that in aggression and injustice - then We will drive him into a Fire. And that, for Allah, is [always] easy.

31. If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins and admit you to a noble entrance [into Paradise].

32. And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask Allah of his bounty. Indeed Allah is ever, of all things, Knowing.

37. Who are stingy and enjoin upon [other] people stinginess and conceal what Allah has given them of His bounty - and We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment -

58. Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing.

Surat Al Nuur

20. O you who have believed, do not follow the footsteps of Satan. And whoever follows the footsteps of Satan - indeed, he enjoins immorality and wrongdoing. And if not for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy, not one of you would have been pure, ever, but Allah purifies whom He wills, and Allah is Hearing and Knowing.

23. Indeed, those who [falsely] accuse chaste, unaware and believing women are cursed in this world and the Hereafter; and they will have a great punishment

27. O you who have believed, do not enter houses other than your own houses until you ascertain welcome and greet their inhabitants. That is best for you; perhaps you will be reminded.

28. And if you do not find anyone therein, do not enter them until permission has been given you. And if it is said to you, "Go back," then go back; it is purer for you. And Allah is Knowing of what you do.

29. There is no blame upon you for entering houses not inhabited in which there is convenience for you. And Allah knows what you reveal and what you conceal.

Surat Al Hujurat

9. And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah . And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.

10. The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy.

11. O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after [one's] faith. And whoever does not repent - then it is those who are the wrongdoers.

12. O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to

eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah ; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.

Surat Al Ma'ida

8. O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah , witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah ; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.

87. O you who have believed, do not prohibit the good things which Allah has made lawful to you and do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.

90. O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful.

91. Satan only wants to cause between you animosity and hatred through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?

Suorat Al Mutaffifun

1. Woe to those who give less [than due],
2. Who, when they take a measure from people, take in full.
3. But if they give by measure or by weight to them, they cause loss.
4. Do they not think that they will be resurrected
5. For a tremendous Day –
6. The Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds?

Suorat Al Nahl

90. Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.

91. And fulfill the covenant of Allah when you have taken it, [O believers], and do not break oaths after their confirmation while you have made Allah , over you, a witness. Indeed, Allah knows what you do.

92. And do not be like she who untwisted her spun thread after it was strong [by] taking your oaths as [means of] deceit between you because one community is more plentiful [in number or wealth] than another community. Allah only tries you thereby. And He will surely make clear to you on the Day of Resurrection that over which you used to differ.

94. And do not exchange the covenant of Allah for a small price. Indeed, what is with Allah is best for you, if only you could know.

95. And do not take your oaths as [means of] deceit between you, lest a foot slip after it was [once] firm, and you would taste evil [in this world] for what [people]

you diverted from the way of Allah , and you would have [in the Hereafter] a great punishment.

96. Whatever you have will end, but what Allah has is lasting. And We will surely give those who were patient their reward according to the best of what they used to do.

97. Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do.

Strong Obligation on Muslims

Suurat al Baqara

285. The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say, "We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination."

Suurat 'al Nisaa

136. O you who have believed, believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Book that He sent down upon His Messenger and the Scripture which He sent down before. And whoever disbelieves in Allah , His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day has certainly gone far astray.

162. But those firm in knowledge among them and the believers believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you. And the establishers of prayer [especially] and the givers of zakah and the believers in Allah and the Last Day - those We will give a great reward.