

Ancient Rome-Overview

The history of Rome covers a massive empire, a rich culture, a profound philosophical legacy, and a lengthy era. In studying this unit, you cannot possibly cover every fascinating and valuable facet of Roman history. The aspects of the life in the Greco-Roman world will help you place the New Testament in its original historical setting and consequently understand it better. The New Testament era was a society influenced by Hellenistic ideas, customs, religion and language but dominated by Roman law, governmental forms, ideas of class and the military.

Shadows of Rome appear in unexpected places: in advertisements and speeches, in books on government and art, in classes on church history and economics. To be well educated is to be acquainted with ancient Roman civilization. Rome's language, legal system, and architecture were some of the foundations for Western civilization.

A study of ancient Rome will give you a better understanding of Jesus and the early church. Jesus Christ lived His entire human life under the Roman empire, the first half under Caesar Augustus (Luke 2:1), who reigned when He was born in Bethlehem, the second half under Tiberius (Luke 3:1) when He still lived at Nazareth in Galilee, before moving to Capernaum on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, until His Crucifixion at Calvary in Jerusalem.

Paul was a Jew in under the Roman authorities in Jerusalem. He was sent to Rome after he exercised his legal right as a Roman citizen to appeal his case to Caesar (Acts 26:32). After an extremely dangerous voyage across The Mediterranean Sea that included a shipwreck on Malta , Paul arrived in Rome (Acts 28:16)around 61 A.D.

Wayne Blank explains in the Daily Bible Study,

Rome was then the center of a vast and powerful empire that spanned from Britain, throughout southern and central Europe, northern Africa, and deep into the Middle East, measuring about 3,000 miles / 4,900 kilometers east to west and 2,000 miles / 3,200 kilometers north to south (see Ancient Empires - Rome). The population of the city at that time has been estimated to be 1,500,000 - a very large percentage of which were slaves.

Paul remained in Rome for at least two years (Acts 28:30), where, despite being a prisoner, he wrote a very large part of what we now have as the New Testament epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and possibly Hebrews. Although the Bible record does not include his fate, most scholars believe that he was eventually acquitted of the charges and released in 63 or 64 A.D., upon which he made his way back through Greece and Asia

Minor (i.e. Turkey) before again being arrested and returned to Rome where he was martyred, by beheading, or torn apart by wild animals in the arena before a cheering crowd, about 67 A.D., during the time of Emperor Nero.¹

Rome had two great eras: the Republic and the Empire. The transition from one era to the other is intriguing. In the early years of Rome, the people valued discipline, hard work, and respect for authority. The government that arose reflected those values. The Republic was based on a checks-and-balances system that ensured fairness to all. As the Romans became selfish, indulgent, and self-absorbed, their political system changed. As you investigate, you should form your own opinion as to whether the same problems that afflicted Rome will also bring America to poverty, ruin, and war.

People have compared America with ancient Rome. “John Adams wrote that whenever he read Thucydides and Tacitus, ‘I seem to be only reading the History of my own times and my own life’” (Kopel, p.47). Would you make such a comparison? As you study, discover whether you seem to be “only reading the history” of your own times.

To place the New Testament in its original historical setting and consequently understand it better, it would be a great help for you to read the following before you begin this unit:



[The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era](#) 🔑 ♥

Read: “Historical Background to the New Testament Era” (15-18). The first chapter serves as a warm-up for the chapters that follow. It describes a fictive dinner at the home of a member of the ruling class of first-century Jerusalem. Also see “A Summary of Greco-Roman History” (293-320). See description on page 32.

Discuss with your parents your plans for studying ancient Rome. You are investigating a civilization that warred against God’s people for centuries. Some of the events and people are decidedly un-Christian. You must choose how well you want to be acquainted with them.

Recommended Literature for this Unit



[Bronze Bow](#) by Elizabeth George Speare

Footnote

Blank, Wayne (2000), Daily Bible Study, A freely-provided non-denominational Christian ministry.
<http://www.execulink.com/~wblank/index.htm> Email: wblank@execulink.com

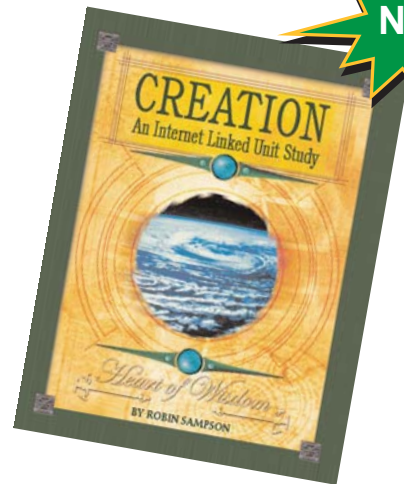
Resources recommended in ♦ several lessons, ★ several units, ♥ other HOW Units. 🔑 Key Resource (see beginning of unit).

We hope you enjoyed the sample pages from Heart of Wisdom.

Want to see more? Click on any book below to read more!

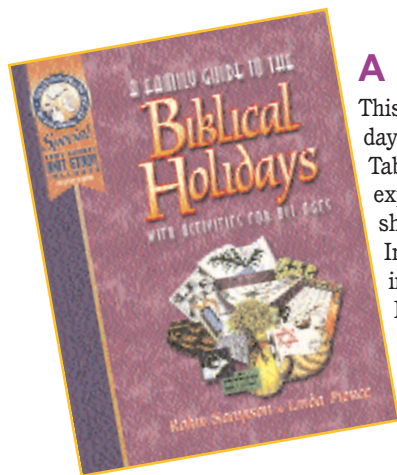
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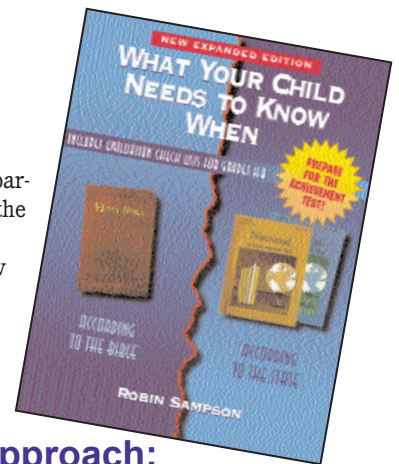
A Family Guide to the Biblical Holidays

This giant, 585-page telephone-size book gives an extensive look at the nine annual holidays: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles, Hanukkah, Purim and the weekly holiday--the Sabbath! This book explains the historical, agricultural, spiritual, and prophetic purposes of each holiday, showing how each points to Christ and creative ways to teach them to your children! Includes projects, crafts, recipes, games, and songs for celebrating each holiday. Also includes instructions for a weekly Bible study and instructions using the Special Home School Section to incorporate the teaching of the biblical holidays with the academic school subjects! Excellent, fascinating information about the true New Testament Church and our Hebrew roots also included! ISBN 0-9701816-0-4. [Read Excerpts at BiblicalHolidays.com](#)



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The Heart of Wisdom Teaching Approach: A Guide to Biblical Education

This book provides you with the methods, program, and resources for a 12-year course of study where students spend half the school day studying God's Word and the other half studying God's world (academics). Students study history chronologically and science in the order of the days of creation. This book will instruct you, step by step, how to give your child an Bible focused, comprehensive education from preschool through high school; one that will train him or her to read, to study, to understand, to love to learn and most importantly to desire and seek true wisdom. The Heart of Wisdom teaching approach is a beautiful, exciting blending of Bible first philosophy, the Charlotte Mason approach, Hebraic education, Delight Directed learning, 4 Step Lessons, and more.

