



*God is present in History*



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# *God is present in History 3*

*(Roman Emperors from Constantine to the fall of Roman Empire,  
Byzantine Emperors, Catholic and Orthodox Church)*



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São Paulo - SP - Brazil - April 2016*

I thank you, Lord, for making me see that in you there is justice, and that your eyes are always attentive to your saints on earth.

I dedicate this book to all brothers in Christ who have a heart willing to obey and a bold mouth to proclaim His truth among men.

“Then he looked up at his disciples and said: ‘Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets’” (Lk. 6: 20-26).

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### Notes:

- Words or phrases enclosed in brackets [ / ] or parenthesis ( ), in italics, were placed by me, in most cases, to explain the biblical text, although some verses already contain them [not in italics].
- The version used here is the New Revised Standard Version, NRSV – 1989 (1995)
- NIV = New International Version (it will be used in brackets in some verses to make it easier for readers to understand).
- Source of research for texts and images: Wikipedia.org
- Source of research for images: crystalinks.com

## *Introduction*

This is the third book of the series “God is present in history”, continuing to speak now of Rome and the Roman Emperors, from Constantine and the Constantinian Dynasty.

In the first book we commented about the Intertestamental Period and, in sequence, the Hellenistic Period, which began with Alexander the Great, of Macedonia, and the division of the Empire after his death, among his four generals. Then we understood Daniel’s prophecy (Daniel 11: 1-45) about the Seleucids and Ptolemies, and the end times, with the rise of Antichrist. Afterwards we studied about the Great Tribulation period and the Rapture of the Church, besides the judgment of God over evil.

In the second book we started talking about Rome and why the Lord calls it a whore in the book of Revelation and condemns all idolatry that it spread throughout the world at that time.

In this third volume we’ll continue studying about Rome and the Roman Emperors, now from Constantine, since History places him as the first Roman Emperor to profess Christianity.

As I’ve said in the introduction of the first book, it is, so to speak, a journey through the centuries, from the times of Daniel in Babylon and Persia, already prophesied concerning nowadays, passing through the Intertestamental Period and going through the period of Roman Empire, where the Church initiated by Jesus was in the verge of extinction due to the heresies and the distortion of His word by men who were accustomed to mix it with idolatry.

With the beginning of the Roman Empire under the reign of Caesar Augustus, not only Israel but the entire world of that time suffered a great transformation. It was during the reign of Caesar Augustus (29 BC-14 AD) that Jesus was born, bringing the light that humanity needed to be free from the spiritual bondage to which it was arrested.

When the bible calls Rome a whore (‘Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth’s abominations’ – Rev. 17: 5) we do not have an idea of what this means until we study about its emperors and the idolatry that was there, still under Greek and Persian influence from past centuries and Rulers of darkness that influenced the birth of the Catholic Church and consequently the world, for it was its representatives who spread Christianity in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. When we read about the Roman Empire, we understand better the prophecies of Daniel, especially on the fourth beast (Dan. 7: 7; Dan. 7: 19; Dan. 7: 24).

Despite all these bad things you’ve read and you will still read in some chapters of this volume, there is something good to be said: God’s patience exists. Who else would wait so many millennia for humanity to repent and return to the true light?

I hope you enjoy the reading and the Holy Spirit may reveal to you some secrets of the spiritual world.

May the light of the Lord be upon you.

Tânia Cristina

Volumes 1 and 2 of this book:

<https://www.searaagape.com.br/godispresentinhistory1.pdf>

<https://www.searaagape.com.br/godispresentinhistory2.pdf>

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## *Roman Emperors 4*

After the Tetrarchy established by Emperor Diocletian (284-305), the era of Constantine I or Constantine the Great began. The era of Constantine marked a distinct epoch in the history of the Roman Empire. He built a new imperial residence in Byzantium and renamed the city as Constantinople, according to his name, which meant a shift in the center of imperial power from West to East. In particular, the reign of Constantine was important for the support he gave to Christianity, which in a few decades became the preferred religion of the state. However, it was officially legalized later, on 27<sup>th</sup> February 380 AD by Theodosius I, through the Edict of Thessalonica when it was established that the Nicene Christianity would become exclusively the state religion in the Roman Empire, and abolishing all polytheistic practices and shutting the temples. The Nicene Christianity (Council of Nicea – 325 AD) confirmed that Christ is ‘true God’ and ‘of one essence with the Father.’ As the theme about Constantine leads us inevitably to others, I’ll put here only the details of the life of this emperor. In another chapter, we will proceed with the other members of the Constantinian dynasty.

**Subjects of this chapter:** the Papacy, the first Councils of Christianity, the Holy Trinity, the arch of Constantine, the labarum of Constantine, Nestorianism, Arianism, Sabellianism, Nestorius (428-431 – patriarch of Constantinople), Sabellius (early third century, a Christian theologian), theotokos, anthropotokos, Christotokos, dyophysitism, monophysitism, miaphysitism, monothelitism, iconoclasm, flamines, vestal virgins, the Altar of Victory in the Senate.

**XI) Constantinian Dynasty (324-364 AD):** Constantine the Great (r. 324-337), as sole emperor / Constantine II (r. 337-340, as Augustus of Gaul, Britannia and Hispania) / Constans (or Constans I) as Augustus of Italy, Illyria and Africa (r. 337-350) / Constantius II (as Augustus of Asia and Egypt – 337-350, and as sole emperor – 350-361) / Julian (360-363) / Jovian (363-364).



**Constantine I**

**1) Constantine I**, also known as Constantine the Great (Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus) – r. 305-337. He reigned as sole emperor (324-337). He is known as Saint Constantine (in the Orthodox Church, ‘Equal to the Apostles’).

Birth name: Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus

Name as emperor: Caesar Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus (306-312 as Augustus of the West; 312-324 in competition with Licinius the Augustus of the East; 324-337 as Emperor of the unified empire)

Title: Imperatori Caesari Flavio Constantino Maximo Pio Felici Invicto Augusto Pontifici Maximo, Germanico Maximo III, Sarmatico Maximo, Britannico Maximo, Arabico Maximo, Medico Maximo, Armenico Maximo, Gothico Maximo, tribunicia potestate XIII, imperatori XIII, consuli IIII, patri patriae, proconsuli, Flavius Terentianus vir perfectissimus praeses provinciae Mauretaniae Sitifensis numini maiestatique eius semper dicatissimus.

Translation: Emperor Caesar Flavius Constantine Maximus Pious Happy Invincible Augustus, Maximum Pontiff, Maximum Germanicus (Germanic Wars), Maximum Sarmatian (referring to the Sarmatians, peoples of Iranian tribes located on the western border of Scythia beyond the Tanais or Don River), Britannicus Maximum (referring to the barbarians in Britannia), Maximum Arabian (referring to the Arabs, in fact a war he never undertook), Maximum Medical (referring to the Sassanians, ancient region of Media and Persia; in fact a war he never undertook. This war occurred in the reign of his son Constantius II and Julian – 337-363), Maximum Armenian (referring to Armenia, but History does not refer to this war in his reign), Maximum Gothic (by defeating the Goths), tribunicia potestate XIII, emperor XIII, consul IIII, Father of the Fatherland, Proconsul, Flavius Terentianus a perfect president of the province of Mauretania Sitifensis divinity and his majesty always dedicated.

- Flavius Terentianus was probably a prefect of the region, appointed by Rome. His name is very difficult to be found as a character in the History at the time.

- Tribuniciae Potestatis, in Latin, is written in Italian as Tribunicia potestas or tribunicia potestate, which means, the power given to the tribunes of the people in ancient Rome. From the time of Augustus Caesar, the title was also given to all the Roman emperors, and it was based on the sacrosanct implications of the office of tribune. This title assured to the emperor the inviolability of his office and gave him the opportunity to legislate freely.

- Mauretaniae Sitifensis was the third province of Mauretania (Mauretania Caesariensis, Mauretania Tingitana and Mauretania Sitifensis, or Roman Mauretania) established in the government of Diocletian, by the division of the small region of Sitifensis from the Mauretania Caesariensis to form the new Mauretania Sitifensis, with the capital in the city of Sitifis or Setif, a small city in Algeria.



**Region of Scythia, where the Sarmatians lived**



**The three regions of Mauretania with their capitals: Sitifis or Setif, Caesarea and Tingis**

Father: Gaius Flavius Valerius Constantius Herculus Augustus or Constantius Chlorus or Constantius I

Mother: Helena of Constantinople. She was of Greek origin, but also a Christian.

Wives: Minervina and Flavia Maxima Fausta (daughter of Maximian), whom he married because of a political agreement in 307 AD, when she was eighteen years old but they were already committed to one another since 293 AD. Constantine was 35 years old at the time.

Children:

By Minervina:

- Crispus: Flavius Julius Crispus (died 326, at twenty years old), also known as Flavius Claudius Crispus and Flavius Valerius Crispus. He was proclaimed Caesar along with his younger half-brother Constantine II and his first cousin Licinius Iunior. As Constantine II had only one month of age at the time of this proclamation, only Crispus assumed the duties as commander in Gaul. Crispus married a young woman called Helena and had a son, whose name is unknown as well as his fate. Crispus was adored by the army and was victorious over the Franks. He assisted Constantine in the war against Licinius and was appointed as commander of the imperial fleet. In 326, however, by Constantine's order, Crispus was tried and sentenced to death, on the day of the commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his father's reign in Rome. Soon after, Fausta was also killed by the emperor. She died at 37 years old, suffocated in a superheated bath (326 DC). Some historians suggest that this occurred by jealousy of Fausta, who feared that Crispus could become heir to throne and plotted against him. So she lied to Constantine. Other sources say that she and Crispus had a loving affair, so Constantine murdered them. The hot bath was the technique of that time to induce abortion, which would suggest an unwanted child, probably the result of adultery. The emperor ordered a 'damnatio memoriae' of his wife and his son. Damnatio Memoriae, in Latin, means 'damnation of memory' in the sense of removing from memory. It was a form of dishonor that could be passed by the Senate to the traitors or others who brought shame to the Roman state.

By Flavia Maxima Fausta:

- Constantina (also named Constantia and Constantiana) married her cousin Flavius Hannibalianus, son of Flavius Dalmatius, who was half-brother of Constantine. She received from the father the title of Augusta (Latin) or Augustae (Greek), and after her death she was venerated as a saint, Saint Constance (In Italian, Santa Constanza). It's not known if her husband Hannibalianus died during the purge of the imperial family by Constantius II in 337 AD, after Constantine's death. So, she was given in marriage to Flavius Claudius Constantius Gallus, first cousin of Hannibalianus. Gallus was twenty-five or twenty-six years old at the time, much younger than Constantina. This marriage gave them a daughter called Anastasia, whose full name and fate are unknown.

- Constantine II (Flavius Claudius Constantinus): probably, he never married nor had children. He died in the struggles among the three sons of Constantine I, after his death.

- Constantius II – his first wife was half-sister of the emperor Flavius Claudius Julianus or Julian the apostate, and daughter of Julius Constantius, son of Constantius Chlorus and half-brother of Constantine). Constantius II didn't have children by this first wife (name unknown). He married Flavia Aurelia Eusebia (born in a Greek family of Macedonia), and he didn't have children by her too. By his third wife Faustina, who gave birth to a son after his death, Constantius had a daughter named Flavia Maxima Faustina Constantia, who later married the emperor Gratian.

- Constans I, who married Helena, his sister, daughter of Constantine and Flavia Maxima Fausta

- Helena, who married Constans I, her brother, and was also wife of the future emperor Julian (her cousin, son of Julius Constantius, half-brother of Constantine). Helena didn't have children with Julian. She died in the purge of the family, decreed by her brother Constantius II.

Half-brothers:

1) Flavius Dalmatius. He married a woman of unknown name and had two sons:

- Flavius Hannibalianus, who married Constantina

- Flavius Dalmatius (Dalmatius Caesar), who died in 337, leaving his territories to Constans and Constantius

2) Julius Constantius, who married Galla and had three children:

- Flavius Claudius Constantius Gallus, who in turn married his cousin Constantina (daughter of Constantine I), but he didn't have children by her.

- An unknown son, who died in the massacre of the family in 337.

- A daughter who married her cousin Constantius II (name unknown).

Julius Constantius also married Basilina and had a son, Flavius Claudius Julianus, the future emperor Julian, known as the apostate.

Half-sisters:

- Anastasia, who would marry the Senator Bassianus, but the marriage was never accomplished because Bassianus was involved in a plot to kill Constantine I and was murdered.

- Flavia Julia Constantia (wife of the emperor Licinius)

- Eutropia (wife of Virus Nepotianus and mother of Nepotianus, a short-lived roman usurper, ruling in the city of Rome for only twenty-eight days, when Marcellinus, the general of another usurper, Maxentius, killed him).

Constantine's Death: at 65 years old (272-337). Constantine I died in May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 337 AD, when preparing a military campaign against the Sassanians. The Sassanian Empire was the last pre-Islamic Persian Empire, ruled by the Sassanian Dynasty (224-651 AD) and succeeded the Parthian Empire in the east.



Constantine also fought successfully against the Franks and Alemanni, the Visigoths and the Sarmatians for some time of his reign, even after the resettlement of Dacia, which had been abandoned during the previous century.

After a series of power struggles among the emperors of the Diocletian Tetrarchy, Constantine had to face the father-in-law Maximianus (father of Fausta). He ascended the throne and was formally recognized by Galerius as Augustus in 310, but he grew in power when defeated Maxentius the usurper, his brother-in-law and Fausta's brother, in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge on 28<sup>th</sup> October 312, near Rome; a victory which he later attributed to the Christian God because of a dream he had the night before the battle; however, he did not abandon his worship of the god Sol Invictus, maintaining his image as the main symbol on their coins till 315. Thus, Constantine went down in History as the first Roman emperor to profess Christianity.



**This is The Milvian Bridge (2005) over the Tiber, north of Rome, where Constantine fought against Maxentius.**

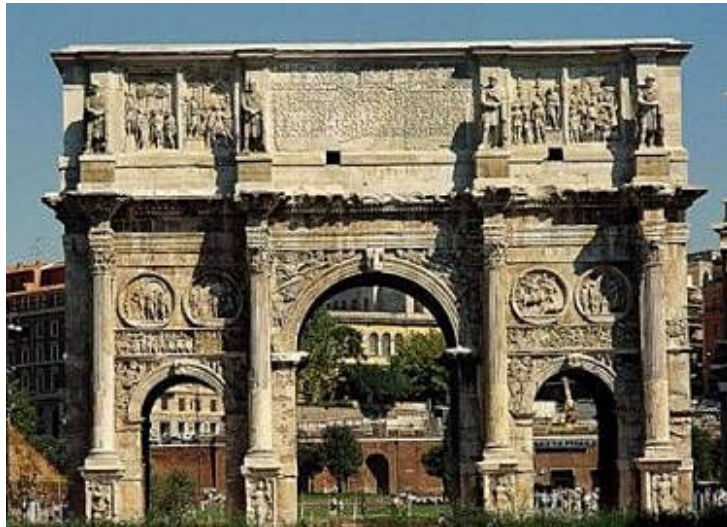
The Arch of Constantine dedicated by the Senate was erected to celebrate this victory. It brought him the title of Augustus in the West and it was recognized by Licinius, the only Augustus remaining in the East, after 313 AD. The arch was carefully positioned between the Palatine Hill and Caelian Hill, in order to align it with the colossal statue of the Sun built by Nero (r. 54-68) and located at the Coliseum. There is still an inscription on it, exposed on the north and south sides, in which the victory is associated with to divine intervention:

The main inscription on the top should have been originally of bronze letters. It can still be easily read; only the recesses in which the letters were placed and their fixing holes remain. One reads on both sides north and south (with the abbreviations in parentheses):

IMP(eratori) · CAES(ari) · FL(avio) · CONSTANTINO · MAXIMO · P(io) · F(elici) ·  
AVGUSTO · S(enatus) · P(opulus) · Q(ue) · R(omanus) · QVOD · INSTINCTV ·  
DIVINITATIS · MENTIS · MAGNITVDINE · CVM · EXERCITV · SVO · TAM ·  
DE · TYRANNO · QVAM · DE · OMNI · EIVS · FACTIONE · VNO · TEMPORE ·  
IVSTIS · REMPVBLICAM · VLTVS · EST · ARMIS · ARCV · TRIVMPHIS ·  
INSIGNEM · DICAUIT

“To the Emperor Caesar Flavius Constantinus, the greatest, pious, and blessed Augustus: because he, inspired by the divine, and by the greatness of his mind, has

delivered the state from the tyrant and all of his followers at the same time, with his army and just force of arms, the Senate and People of Rome have dedicated this arch, decorated with triumphs.”



**Arch of Constantine with the inscription on the south side of the Arch**

The expression ‘inspired by the divine’ (*‘instinctu divinitatis mentis’* = ‘instigation of divinity’) concerns a dream he had of the Christian God, on the day before the battle against Maxentius, in which he was advised to mark the heavenly sign of God on the shields of his soldiers. The sign contained two letters of the name Christ in Greek (Christòs, Χριστός). The first two letters should be written: Chi (χ) and Rho (ρ); so the symbol would look like the image you see below. In the morning, a little before the battle, he ordered to paint the sign on the shields of soldiers and won an overwhelming victory over the enemy. Another historical version says that on the same day of the battle against Maxentius, when marching at noon Constantine saw with his own eyes in heaven one cross resulting of sunlight, and it was written in Latin: ‘In Hoc Signo Vincēs’ = ‘Under this symbol you will win.’ A third version of events says that Constantine had a dream the night after the battle, in which Christ appeared saying to put the sign in the standard (*labarum*) of his troops (the ‘*labarum* of Constantine’). The standard of the Roman army consisted of a flag hanging over a crossbar as a cross,

symbolizing the crucifixion of Christ. The ancient sources say that there is a distinction between labarum and the Christogram (Chi-Rho); however, they have become synonymous. The etymological origin of the Latin word 'labarum' is unclear and does not explain the symbolism of the standard. Only after 317 he began to adopt, clearly, slogans and Christian symbols, such as 'The labarum of Constantine.' All this is part of myth Constantine with his imperial iconography and advertising of himself.



**Christogram of Constantine**



**The divine sign on the standard and shield**

However, at the time of his triumphal entry into Rome in 312, Constantine refused to go up to Capitoline Hill (one of the seven hills of Rome dedicated to the god Jupiter) to worship him, an attitude that would repeat in his two other solemn visits to the ancient capital to celebrate the jubilees of his reign, in 315 and 326 AD. Maybe he adopted Christianity under the influence of his mother, who although Greek, was also a Christian.

But despite his baptism, just before the time of his death, there are doubts if Constantine actually converted to Christianity, for he continued to care for the pagan religion, protecting its rights. Some historical sources say that on the day before his death, Constantine had made a sacrifice to Zeus, and that, knowing the meaning of

baptism in relation to the cleansing of sins committed previously, he acknowledged that as emperor, his chances of sinning were great and decided not waste this practice before he actually reached the end of his life. In very clear words, he did not understand anything about the meaning of Jesus' death or the meaning of the baptism of repentance as a grace freely offered by God. The pride of the flesh prevailed. Until the last day of his life he used the pagan title of maximum pontiff (Pontifex Maximus). The worst of all is: Constantine was baptized by an Arian bishop, Eusebius of Nicomedia. **Arianism** is a heretical view of Christ created by Arius (c. 250-336 AD), a Christian presbyter of Alexandria (a bishop), in the early days of the Early Church and that denied the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus, that is, He was accepted as the son of God, but was not equal to God the Father, therefore, was not God. He was subordinate to God, but was not God. Thus, the Arian thesis says that the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, and God the Father would be of different substances (Greek: ousia).

Both **Constantine I** and his son and successor **Constantius II** demonstrated their inclination towards Arianism, since both tried to present **the figure of the emperor as a being similar to the Arian Christ**: a divine emanation, the earthly reflection of the Word (the Logos). With this, we can already notice the conflict between Constantine and the Orthodox Church, this one defending the original doctrine of Christianity (at least, that's what this church intended to do). In fact, even before his death, the emperor sent into exile the patriarch of Alexandria, the **Archbishop Athanasius I**, defender of orthodoxy, in the capital Augusta of Treveri (Augusta Treverorum, City of Augustus in the land of the Treveri), also called Trier (German, modern Treves, on the border of the Rhine River) due to his attitudes against Arianism [His episcopate lasted 45 years (328-373), of which over 17 were spent in five exiles ordered by four different Roman emperors]. However, the orthodox attitude cannot be regarded as a faithful representation of the gospel taught by Jesus and preached by His apostles, since the Orthodox Church canonized Constantine after his death ('St. Constantine', or 'Equal to the Apostles'), as we have seen with his daughter Constantina (also called Constantia and Constantiana) who, after death, he was venerated as a saint, 'Santa Constantia' (in Italian, Santa Constanza). 'Equal to the Apostles' is a special title granted to some saints in Eastern Christianity, used by the Orthodox Church and the Eastern Catholic Churches. The title is a recognition of the exceptional service provided by these saints in the dissemination and consolidation of Christianity, comparable to that of the original twelve apostles (source: wikipedia.org).

In other words, the Christianity created by Rome continued to do the same thing was repeated for centuries in the Roman Empire: deification of the emperor, human idolatry (canonizing 'saints'), continuing to erect statues of 'saints' in the same way that Greek-Roman gods were carved and placed in strategic places to be worshiped; selling indulgences (Speaking plainly, to give the sinner the means to get rid of the consequences of his sins here on earth, before he goes to purgatory or to hell), to minister the sacraments to achieve salvation (it was the same thing that was done in roman polytheistic cult), instead of remaining steady in the single and simplest way to achieve this: accepting Jesus through faith as the only God and Lord (Rom. 10: 9-10).

In fact, Constantine formally converted to Christianity, not as an act of religious faith, but as a coup of political skill, seeing in the growth of Christianity a way to facilitate the expansion of the Roman Empire. Even because he supported a heretical theory as Arianism, which denied the divinity of Jesus. He legalized Christianity by the Edict of Milan in 313 AD, and later in 325 AD, he summoned the Council of Nicaea, as an attempt to unify Christianity. The Council of Nicaea, in Asia Minor, headed by him, was composed of the bishops who were appointed by the Emperor and others who were



appointed by religious leaders of various communities. What was left of the Early Christian Church founded by Jesus (practically nothing), Constantine joined to his followers and began to call it the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church. Catholic, in Greek, means universal, because the intention of the Roman Empire was to dominate the whole Earth. Apostolic, because it was organized by the apostles of Constantine, not by the Disciples of Christ. Roman, because it incorporated the customs and rituals of pagan Romans and started to serve the interests of the Roman State. Thus, all the cults and dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church are an adaptation of beliefs, customs and legends of the pagan rituals. His thirst for conquest and his voracity showed that Daniel's prophecy of the fourth beast was already being fulfilled, and a little sample of what the Apostle John said in the book of Revelation: 'Roman, the great whore.'

One of Constantine's influence on the Catholic Church was the **Edict of Constantine**, promulgated in 321 AD, which officially established Sunday as a day of rest (confirmed at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD), except for the farmers – making use of his prerogative of the Supreme Pontiff, who thought himself in the right to set the calendar of religious festivals (work being prohibited during these days; in the case of the farmers was hypocritical because he did not want to see the crop without the care for the wheat or the vineyards, which gave profit for the state). In fact, according to this Edict, Sunday was chosen as a day of rest, not only because of the Jewish-Christian tradition on the Sabbath Day, but also for being the 'day of the Sun' (in English, Sunday) – reminiscence of the cult of god Sol Invictus (the god of the soldiers), that he never abandoned. The keeping of the Sabbath was abolished at the Council of Laodicea (we do not know in what date it occurred).

#### **ECUMENICAL COUNCILS** (except for the Laodicean, no known date)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Nicaea (325) – The establishment of the Nicene Creed: it accepted the divinity of Jesus Christ and recognized His unity (one essence) with the Father. It also believed in the Holy Spirit; therefore it recognized the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This Council rejected Arianism. At the Council of Nicaea was established a bishop as leader of the capital of each province, recognizing the authority of the bishops of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch (However, it was considered that Rome had a special authority because of its connection to Saint Peter). The bishop of Jerusalem would be entitled to a special honor, but no authority over other bishops.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Constantinople in 381 (during the reign of Theodosius I, in the East – 379-392, and Gratian in the West – 375-395) – was an affirmation of the Nicene Creed, remodeling or expanding some statements made in the first (using bible verses for this), and thereby setting the Nicene creed, emphasizing the Trinity, the eternity of Jesus Christ, through whom all things were made, and that through the Holy Spirit incarnated in the womb of the Virgin Mary, suffered and rose again on the third day, and one day will come in glory to judge the living and the dead, ending the text with the affirmation of the duty to believe in a church, one, holy, catholic and apostolic. It was the first to gather Christianity. It condemned Arianism as a heresy, and Arius was exiled. It proclaimed the equal nature of the Father and the Son. Arianism is a heretical view of Christ created by Arius (c. 250-336 AD), a Christian presbyter of Alexandria, in the early days of the Early Church and denied the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus, that is, He was accepted as the Son of God, but was not equal to God the Father, therefore, was not God. He was subordinate to God, but was not God. Thus, the Arian thesis says that the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, and God the Father would be of different substances (Greek: ousia). The First Council of Nicaea (325) was altered by the First Council of Constantinople (381), and the altered form is referred as the Nicene-

Constantinopolitan Creed. In other words, this Council gave final form to the Nicene Creed, with the traditional division into twelve articles:

1. I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,
2. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;
5. He descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead;
6. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
7. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. The Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints,
10. The forgiveness of sins,
11. The resurrection of the body,
12. And life everlasting. Amen.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Ephesus (431) – was summoned by Emperor Theodosius II (408-450) and discussed the Christological and Mariological (the study about Virgin Mary) teaching of Nestorius the Patriarch of Constantinople. The 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Ephesus decreed that Jesus was a single person, complete God and complete man, and declared as dogma that the Virgin Mary should be called Theotokos, because she conceived and gave birth to God as a man. In other words, the Council affirmed the unity of the person of Christ and the divine motherhood of Mary (that is, Virgin Mary is venerated as the Mother of God, and is in second place after the Trinity). The profession of faith proclaimed at the Council of Ephesus was the Nicene Creed, adopted by the First Council of Nicaea in 325, not the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed attributed to Constantinople Council First of 381. The council condemned Nestorianism as heresy, as well as the Arianism and Sabellianism.

**Nestorius** (428-431), patriarch of Constantinople, affirmed that Christ would not be a single person, but in Him there would be a human nature and another divine, distinct one from another and, therefore, he denied the traditional teaching that the Virgin Mary could be the ‘mother of God’ (Theotokos in Greek), so she would only be the mother of the man (Gk. anthropotokos) or the ‘mother of Christ’ (Greek, ‘Christotokos’), to restrict her role as mother only of the human nature of Christ and not of His divine nature. Theotokos (Greek: Θεοτόκος; literal translation in English: ‘bearer of God’ or ‘birth-giver of God’) is the Greek title of Mary, used especially in the Orthodox Church or patriarchal Churches of the East (Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch and Constantinople) and Eastern Catholic Churches. Translations less literal include ‘Mother of God.’ Catholics, Anglicans, and some Protestant denominations use most often the title of ‘Mother of God’ than Theotokos.

**Sabellius** (early third century) was a Christian theologian, probably born in Libya or Egypt. His theory (Sabellianism) says that God would be constituted of a unique and indivisible substance, but divided into three main activities, or ways, manifesting himself successively as the Father (creator and legislator), Son (the redeemer), and the Holy Spirit (the creator of life, and God’s presence in man). For the Sabellians the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one and the same person, that is, an indistinct individual, manifesting, but in different forms or figures, as necessary. Like **Nestorius**, he too was also considered heretic by the Catholic Church.

- The Council of Chalcedon (451) was summoned by the emperor of the East, Marcian (450–457), during the reign of Valentinian III the emperor of the West (425-455) – repudiation of Monophysitism, declaring the divine and human nature of Jesus,

the second person of the Trinity. In other words, it defended **Dyophysitism**, the divine and human natures of Jesus differently within Him, in a complete and perfect unity – Jesus preserved within Himself the two natures: Jn. 1: 1; 14; Jn. 2: 24-25; Jn. 6: 33-35; Jn. 6: 46-59; Jn. 10: 30; Jn. 14: 9-11; Rom. 8: 3-4; 2 Cor. 5: 21; Heb. 2: 17-18; Heb. 4: 15; 1 Jn. 4: 2 (my note). The Council of Chalcedon was rejected by **Monophysitism**: Jesus Christ would have only one nature, the divine, not the divine and human coexisting within Him. Later, another term arose, **Miaphysitism**, i.e., the line of thinking that accepts an incarnate nature of Christ in union without divisions of the human and divine natures, without separation, without confusion and without change. Even at that time, some churches did not accept the fourth council, the Chalcedon in 451 and none of those that came after, continuing to profess Arianism, Monophysitism and Miaphysitism. This stance resulted in constant conflict between East and West, as well as attempts of reconciliation, but in 1054 AD the great division occurred: in the East, the Oriental Orthodox Churches (those that accept monophysitism), and in the West, the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church. The Oriental Orthodox Churches are: Coptic Orthodox Church (Egypt), Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Ethiopia), Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church, Jacobite Syrian Church, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (Indian Orthodox Church) and Eritrean Orthodox Church (East of Africa). The Eastern churches that support dyophysitism, namely, which accept the Council of Chalcedon are called ‘Eastern Orthodox Churches.’

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Council of Constantinople (553, during the reign of Justinian I, 527-565) – Condemns the Nestorians and other documents, such as those of Origen of Alexandria or Origen of Caesarea, or else, **Origen**, the Christian (185-253), who mixed the Bible teachings with the Greek teachings of Plato.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Council of Constantinople (680–681) in the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IV (668-685 – Heraclian Dynasty). This Council states as a dogma the two natures of Christ the divine and human, existing in a unique divine person of the Incarnate Word. It condemns **Monothelitism** (Jesus Christ, although having within Him the two natures, divine and human, just had one will, by the perfect identification of the human will with the divine will, which became known in the history of heresies by Monothelitism). The issue was clarified in the Third Council of Constantinople in 681: Jesus Christ had two wills, human and divine: “... Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done” (Lk. 22: 42; Matt. 26: 39; Mk 14: 36 – my note)... “Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world” (Jn 17: 24 – my note)... “for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.” (Jn 6: 38 – my note).

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Council of Nicaea (787), during the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VI (780-797 – Isaurian Dynasty). This Council has regulated the issue of the veneration of images (icons) and condemned the iconoclasts. The claim for what the religious Catholics of the time practiced is that they didn’t worship images, but venerated them. Veneration comes from the Latin ‘veneratio’ or from the Greek: ‘douleuo’ or ‘dulia’, meaning: to honor; this way, the veneration of saints describes the practice of devotion to the saints, who as heroic models of virtue, intercede in heaven for the Church. According to these confessions, the ‘worship’ (Greek: ‘latría’) is a distinct service and reserved exclusively for God, while ‘veneration’ (‘dulia’) is the honor and respect given to the saints. So according to these confessions, veneration should not be confused with idolatry. Veneration is demonstrated externally by reverence for holy images of saints (statues or icons) and relics (parts of their bodies or that have been in contact with them). According to these denominations ‘who worships

the image, prostrates himself before the person (hypostasis) that is represented in the image.’ They base their traditions on practices and examples of clothing and biblical worship, as in Ex. 25: 17-22 (when God gives to Moses the order to make the ark, putting the two cherubim on it), Num. 21: 8-9 (when God tells Moses to make a bronze serpent and put it on the stem) and 1 Chr. 28: 18-19 (when in plain sight of the entire court David gives the model of the temple to be built, especially the gold for the golden altar and the tables with the Bread of the Presence or shewbread). The veneration of images and icons is practiced by the Catholic Church, Byzantine Orthodox, Nestorian (Nestorius – see above: 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Ephesus), Eastern Orthodox and some groups of the Anglican Communion and Lutheran. The Council condemned the **Iconoclasm**. Iconoclasm (from the Greek εἰκών, transliterated to ‘eikon’, ‘icon’, ‘image’, and κλαστειν, transliteration: klastein, ‘break’, so ‘he who breaks images’) was a political and religious movement against the worship of icons and religious images in the Byzantine Empire that began in the early eighth century and lasted until the ninth century. The Iconoclasts believed that the sacred images would be idols, and the veneration and worship of icons, consequently, would be idolatry.

When a graven image or a human figure become venerated and revered as a god who receives worship is actually a representative of darkness; in the case of Mary, a higher caste of demons: a ‘Ruler’ or ‘Authority’ or ‘Principality’ (Col. 1: 16; Eph. 1: 21). He is the same that was worshiped during the various ages of mankind, with the names of: Queen of Heaven – Jer. 44: 18-19; 25; Asherah, Astarte or Ashtoreth (goddess of fertility, love and war, the Canaanites and Phoenicians); Isis or Queen of Heaven, (Egyptian); Ishtar (Babylonian); Diana (Roman); Artemis (Greek) and Nina (Assyrians, giving its name to the city of Nineveh, whose name was written with a sign representing a fish in a womb); Eostre, Germanic goddess of Ancient times, related to the spring; Ostera, older name of Eostre. Just as the ‘The Ruler or Authority or Principality’ (no matter the version of the bible) received all these names, depending on the location where he worked, Mary also received several names, i.e., the same demon became worshiped by Christians in later eras, depending on the location and ‘supernatural’ feats he performed: Our Lady Aparecida, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Lourdes etc. Therefore, the entity that is worshiped in Catholicism is not the young mother of Jesus, sweet and gentle.

Who can be our intercessor or work miracles in our favor? The bible says that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the mediators between us and God the Father. Thus, neither Mary nor anyone else can be our intercessor (Rom. 8: 26-27; Rom. 8: 33-34; 1 Tim. 2: 5; Heb 4: 16; Heb. 7: 25).

When we read all these controversies and religious heresies, we can see that almost nothing was left of the Christian doctrine preached by Jesus and the twelve apostles, and nothing of the Early Church that had received the revival at the time of Pentecost, especially after the death of the last apostle of Jesus, John, around 98 or 100 AD. More than anything, it reminds us what the apostle Paul said prophetically, crying, to the elders of the church of Ephesus when he was in Miletus, almost before returning to Jerusalem and being arrested. I’m talking about Acts 20: 17-38, especially verses 28-32: “Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears. And now I commend you to

God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified.”

### **ROMAN BISHOPS AND PAPACY:**

Bishop comes from the ancient Greek, ἐπίσκοπος or episcopos; and from the Latin ‘episcopus’: ‘inspector’, ‘director’, ‘superintendent’ or literally ‘supervisor’, from epi, ‘end’, ‘edge’ + skopos, ‘view’, that is, ‘one who sees from above, from on high’, ‘the one who oversees.’ Before Christianity, the term was used to describe all kinds of administrator or supervisor in civil, financial, military and judicial domains.

The ‘elders’ to whom the bible refers in Acts 20: 17 are called in Acts 20: 28, ‘overseers’ [in NRSV, NIV and KJV. In ARA in Portuguese, the word is ‘bishops’, as well as in Greek] because of their office. In 1 Tim. 3: 2-7, the apostle Paul particularizes the qualities that should clothe those who have to carry out this mission in the church. The bishops also played pastoral functions (Acts 20: 28; 1 Tim. 5: 17). When the organization of the Christian churches among the Gentiles required the pastoral superintendence, the title of ‘episcopus’ or ‘episcopos’ was promptly adopted by the Greeks, as had been the term ‘elder’ (presbyter) in the mother church of Jerusalem. Consequently, there is no doubt that the word ‘elder’ and ‘presbyters’ or ‘overseer’ (Strong Gr. 4245: presbuteroi or presbuteros) and ‘bishop’ (episkopon or episcopos) were considered primarily equivalent (1 Tim. 5: 17 – elders = presbuteroi; 1 Tm 3: 1-2 – overseer or bishop = episkopon or episcopos – Strong Gr. #1984)

In the first century the terms ‘elders’ and ‘bishops’ or ‘overseers’ were used for local church leaders submitted to an apostle (for example, Titus and Timothy, chosen by Paul of Tarsus), and at the end of the first century and until the middle of the second century the Roman Church did not have only one bishop as head of the local church, but a group leadership, and the mono episcopacy began only later, and thus, originally **the Papal ministry did not exist. It is not true** that Peter was the first Pope of Rome; it is also not true that he chose his successor Lino as the second Pope, much less that Clement, a Christian of Rome, has become the 4<sup>th</sup> Pope. The bishops that Constantine chose to found the Roman Catholic Church were therefore idolatrous high priests of the Roman gods or public persons as senators, who longed for the title in order to get power. **The leadership of Peter** was given by Jesus Himself and his recognition was by the other apostles (Matt. 16: 18-19; Lk. 22: 32; Jn. 21: 15-23; Acts 1: 15-26; Acts 2: 14).

The supremacy of the Roman bishop (**Papacy**) was created with the support of the Roman emperors. Rome was the center of government for the Roman Empire, so Constantine and his successors gave support to the bishop of Rome as supreme ruler of the Church. By centralizing government and religious state in the same place there would unity to the Empire. When it fell, the bishops took upon themselves the title which previously belonged to the Roman emperors: the Pontifex Maximus (Pope). Some sources attribute to Pope Leo I (440-461) the use of the title of maximum pontiff. Other sources, also without documentary evidence, state that the title was first used by Pope Gregory I (590-604), since the Western Roman Empire had recently collapsed. However, it was only much later, in the eleventh century that the term was used only by the Pope.

As it was written in the text of the Gordian dynasty ‘Maximum Pontiff’ (Latin: ‘Pontifex Maximus’ means literally: ‘builder of bridges’ (pons + facere); ‘Maximus’, signifies bigger, higher, maximum, supreme, maximum or supreme builder of bridges). In Ancient Rome, it designated the supreme priest of the College of Pontiffs (Latin: Collegium Pontificum), the highest dignity in the Roman religion. Initially only the

patricians (citizens of the Roman aristocracy or of hereditary noble lineage) could occupy this office. Perhaps the title was first used in its literal sense, that is, the position of bridge builder was really important in Rome, where the bridges along the sacred river Tiber were adorned with statues of deities and only the authorities who held the sacred functions could pass by them. In a symbolic sense, it was always understood that the pontiffs would be the builders of the bridge between gods and men.

The College of priests or College of Pontiffs (Latin: Collegium Pontificum) was composed of the highest priests of the Roman religion. The college consisted of maximum Pontiff and other pontiffs, the king of the holy things, fifteen young priests (the **flamines**, in plural; flamen, in singular) dedicated to serving specific gods (3 major flamines – patricians – to serve the gods of the Archaic Triad of Capitoline: Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus; and 12 plebeians youths – minor flamines – to serve the other gods) and six **Vestals** (in Latin, ‘Virgo Vestalis’, were priestesses who worshiped the Roman goddess Vesta, which corresponds to the Greek goddess Hestia, in Greek mythology, the virgin goddess of home, fireplace, architecture, domestic life, family and state), and they were virgins chosen between six and ten years old, who served for thirty years and preserved their chastity and virginity. Any violation of these symbols of purity would mean a sacrilege to the Roman gods and therefore to the Roman society too. The punishment for breaking the vow of chastity of thirty years was death, being buried alive. In addition to the College of priests or Pontiffs College was the college of augurs (who read omens), like a school of prophets today.



**Flamen and a chief-Vestal**

Maximum Pontiff was a religious office of the Roman Republic until 254 BC, when a plebeian was appointed king of Rome. Thus, from a religious position during the Republic, it was gradually being politicized until be incorporated by the Emperor (already in 63 BC, during the reign of Julius Caesar – Maximum Pontiff), more specifically, from Caesar Augustus (29 BC). The main duty of the pontiff was to keep pax deorum or peace of the gods. From Augustus on, it was the emperor who chose the pontiffs; with this, the emperor acquired a religious dignity and responsibility of the entire Roman cult of the state, the maximum pontiff title became one of the many titles of the emperor. The first Christian Roman emperors continued to use the title. The

pontiffs took care of the Roman calendar and determined the days needed to be added to synchronize the calendar with the seasons of the year. Under his authority as the highest pontiff, Julius Caesar introduced the calendar reform that created the Julian calendar, with a failure of a day per century, corrected by the introduction of a day in the leap year of 366 days. In addition, the Julian year was 12 months (365 days) starting on 1<sup>st</sup> January. The months were of 30 days, interspersed with months of 31 days, and in July-August the 31 days were repeated in honor of the Roman Emperors (Julius and Augustus). The Julian calendar lasted for about 1,600 years. It was used until the introduction of the Gregorian calendar (by Pope Gregory XIII – 1582), in which every four years there is a leap year (solar), except in the secular years, where the number formed by the digits of hundreds and thousands it is not divisible by four. Ten days were omitted (5–14 October 1582), corrected the measurement of the solar year estimating that this one lasted 365 solar days, 5 hours, 14 minutes and 12 seconds. The year started on 1<sup>st</sup> January, in honor of Janus. Janus (in Latin) was the Roman god of changes and transitions, the god of beginnings, decisions and choices. Janus is represented with a double face, symbolizing ‘entry and exit’, ‘past and future.’ One face looks forward and the other looks back. He is often represented as a bearded male figure; sometimes, without it.

Flavius Augustus Gratianus (367-383 AD) clearly favored the Christian religion against paganism, refusing to repeat the pagan rituals of the previous emperors and taking away the Altar of Victory from the Senate in 382 AD. The **Altar of Victory** was a golden statue and had been placed in the Senate hall in honor of the goddess Victory (Victoria, in Latin) by the emperor Caesar Augustus in 29 BC to celebrate the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium (Greece), for they had opposed him. The Roman senators did not like the removal of the statue, since for centuries they swore solemnly before her, recited prayers and made libations of wine and burned incense. Since the title of ‘pontiff’ was a Latin word equivalent to ‘high priest’, as can be seen in its translation into other languages, such as Greek, the term equivalent in Greek was used in the text of the Septuagint.

In particular, **the reign of Constantine** was important for two reasons: the first was to change the center of imperial power from West to the East, especially with the foundation of the capital Constantinople, which would be the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire by over a thousand years; the second reason is the support he gave to Christianity, which in a few decades became the preferred religion of the state. However, it was only officially legalized later, on 27<sup>th</sup> February 380 AD by Theodosius I, through the **Edict of Thessalonica** when it was established that the Nicene Christianity would become exclusively the state religion in the Roman Empire, and abolishing all polytheistic practices and shutting the temples.

Although the term ‘**Byzantine Empire**’ can only be used in fact to the Roman Empire after 476 AD (the fall of the Western Roman Empire), some classifications have begun to use the name Byzantine Empire since the time of Constantine the Great when he moved the capital of the empire to Constantinople.

Constantine was succeeded by his three children by Flavia Maxima Fausta: Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans I, who divided among themselves the administration of the empire until, after a series of confused struggles, Constantius II emerged as the only one Augustus. The initial division was: Constantine II (Hispania and Gaul) – 337-340 / Constans I with Italy, Illyria (or Illyricum, that is, Dalmatia and Pannonia) and Africa – 337-350 / Constantius II (Constantinople) – 337-361.

The Empire that had been initiated by the Tetrarchy, invigorated and continued by Constantine I would be finished with the end of the Constantinian dynasty in 364 AD.



## *Roman Emperors 5*

Here, we will proceed with the study of the other members of the Constantinian dynasty, the Valentinian dynasty and Theodosian dynasty, already showing the weakening of the Western Roman Empire, alongside a bigger stabilization of the Eastern Roman Empire. However, the external struggles against the barbarian invasions and the internal struggles in religious matters were still a great factor of worry for both sides, also facilitating the intrusion by usurpers of the throne. The truth is that the Empire was being ruled by military eager for power and unprepared for administrative functions. Here, we can see a more active participation of certain empresses, who helped many emperors to stay in power, but would not prevent the next collapse of the Empire. The influence of the church on the government, and vice versa, was also a very harmful factor for Rome. Constantine's struggle to maintain a united Empire was practically in vain, with the losses of the Roman territories after his death.

In this chapter, you'll study about the following Dynasties:

- Constantinian Dynasty (it continues with: Constantine II, Constans, Constantius II, Julian, Jovian)
- Valentinian Dynasty (Valentinian I, Valens, Gratian, Valentinian II)
- Theodosian Dynasty (Theodosius I, Arcadius, Honorius, Theodosius II, Valentinian III, Marcian with his wife Pulcheria)

**XI) Constantinian Dynasty (324-364 AD):** Constantine the Great (r. 324-337), as sole emperor / Constantine II (r. 337-340, as Augustus of Gaul, Britannia and Hispania) / Constans (or Constans I) as Augustus of Italy, Illyria (or Illyricum, that is, Dalmatia and Pannonia) and Africa (r. 337-350) / Constantius II (as Augustus of Asia and Egypt – 337-350, and as sole emperor – 350-361) / Julian (360-363) / Jovian (363-364).



Constantine II

Constantius II

Constans

- 2) Flavius Claudius Constantinus Augustus or Constantine II – 337-340 (3 years)**  
 As Caesar in the West under Constantine I – r. 317-337 (he was made Caesar at the age of one)  
 He gained Hispania, Gaul and Britannia in the partition of the Empire  
 Birth: 316 AD  
 Death: 24 years, killed in an ambush



The death of Constantine the Great actually gave way to many conflicts among his children. Constantine II was the eldest son of Constantine and Fausta (Flavia Maxima Fausta) and was educated as a Christian. With 7 years of age (323), he went along with his father to the campaign against the Sarmatians. With 10 years of age, after the death of Crispus, his half-brother by Constantine, he became the commander of Gaul. Due to the victory of his army against the Alemanni, he received the title of Alamannicus, when he was 14 years old. At the age of 16 years (332 AD) was appointed by his father, commander of the campaign against the Goths. In 337 AD, after the death of Constantine the Great, Constantine II, at 21 years old, became emperor along with his brothers Constantius II and Constans I, with the empire divided among the three brothers and their cousins, Flavius Dalmatius and Flavius Hannibalianus as Caesars. The sons of Constantine conspired with the army to murder the whole family; thus, the two Caesars died in the massacre. In September 337, the three brothers met in Pannonia to divide the empire among them. Constantine II was hailed Augustus by the troops, and received Hispania, Britannia and Gaul.

Unfortunately, he was influenced by the difference of opinion within the Christian Church. The West tended to **orthodoxy**, because of the influence from the Pope in Rome, while the East favored **Arianism** (that, in short, denied the divinity of Jesus Christ). Influenced by the Pope, he freed the Archbishop of Alexandria, Athanasius I, whom his father had sent into exile. Athanasius believed in the Holy Trinity and defended this thesis, opposing Arianism. Because of his attitude and his religious choice, Constantine II found himself in a delicate situation with his brother Constantius II, who was leader in Constantinople and a partisan of Arianism.

Constantine II was the guardian of his younger brother, Constans I, who had received Italia, Illyria and Africa. So he found himself in the right to complain about the fact that his younger brother had received Thrace (currently is divided between Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria) and Macedonia (A region to the northwest of Thrace) and before it was domain of his cousin Dalmatius. Constans tried a peace agreement, giving him the African provinces. Shortly afterwards, they discussed because of Carthage, for it had not been very clear what was the part of each of them in that territory. When Constans I reached the age of majority, Constantine II insisted on continuing as the guardian of his younger brother. So he invaded Italia when his brother was in Dacia (the Greek part of Thrace). Constans, then, counterattacked. Constantine II was caught in an ambush in Aquileia (a district to northeast of Italia), and died in 340, while he tried to overthrow Constans.

**3) Flavius Julius Constans** Augustus or Constans I – r. 337-340 [as Augustus of Italy, Illyria (or Illyricum, that is, Dalmatia and Pannonia) and Africa] and 340-350 (Italy, Illyricum, Africa, Hispania, Gaul and Britannia) – total: 13 years of reign.

As Caesar in the West under Constantine I – r. 333-337

Birth: 323 AD

Death: at the age of 27, assassinated

Constans was the third son of Constantine the Great. He had received the government of Italia, Illyria and Africa. With the death of his older brother, Constantine II, he annexed Hispania, Gaul and Britannia to his territories. At the end of 337 he had to deal with an invasion of the Sarmatians and won the battle. In 341-342, Constans led a successful campaign against the Franks. In 341, Constans promulgated an edict banning pagan sacrifices, for he decided to be tolerant with the Jews. The dispute between Orthodox and Arians continued. Constans also supported the Orthodox, while Constantius II supported the Arians. Then, in 343 Constans summoned the 1<sup>st</sup> Council

of Sardica and soon after, the 2<sup>nd</sup> in 347 to resolve the differences between the Orthodox Archbishop Athanasius of Alexandria and the Arian, Paul I of Constantinople. **The Council of Sardica** was an attempt to adjust Christian doctrine; Constantius II, his older brother, was also present and had supported the council's convocation. As the result was failure, they decided to let each emperor supported the religious group of his choice within their territories. Some historians make mention of Constans' homosexual tendency, which brought shame to the Empire. At the end of his reign, he acquired a reputation for cruelty and bad government. He lost the support of the legions by giving more attention to his favorites and his bodyguards. In 350, the general Magnentius, the usurper, declared himself emperor with the support of troops on the border of the Rhine, and the last in the western portion of the Roman Empire. Constans did not have immediate support and was forced to flee to save his life. He ended up being killed by a grouping of light cavalry near the Pyrenees in southwest Gaul.

**4) Flavius Julius Constantius (Flavius Iulius Constantius) or Constantius II** – r. 337-350 (as Augustus of Asia and Egypt) and 350-361 (as sole emperor) – total: 24 years of reign.

As Caesar in the West under Constantine I – r. 324-337

Birth: 317 AD

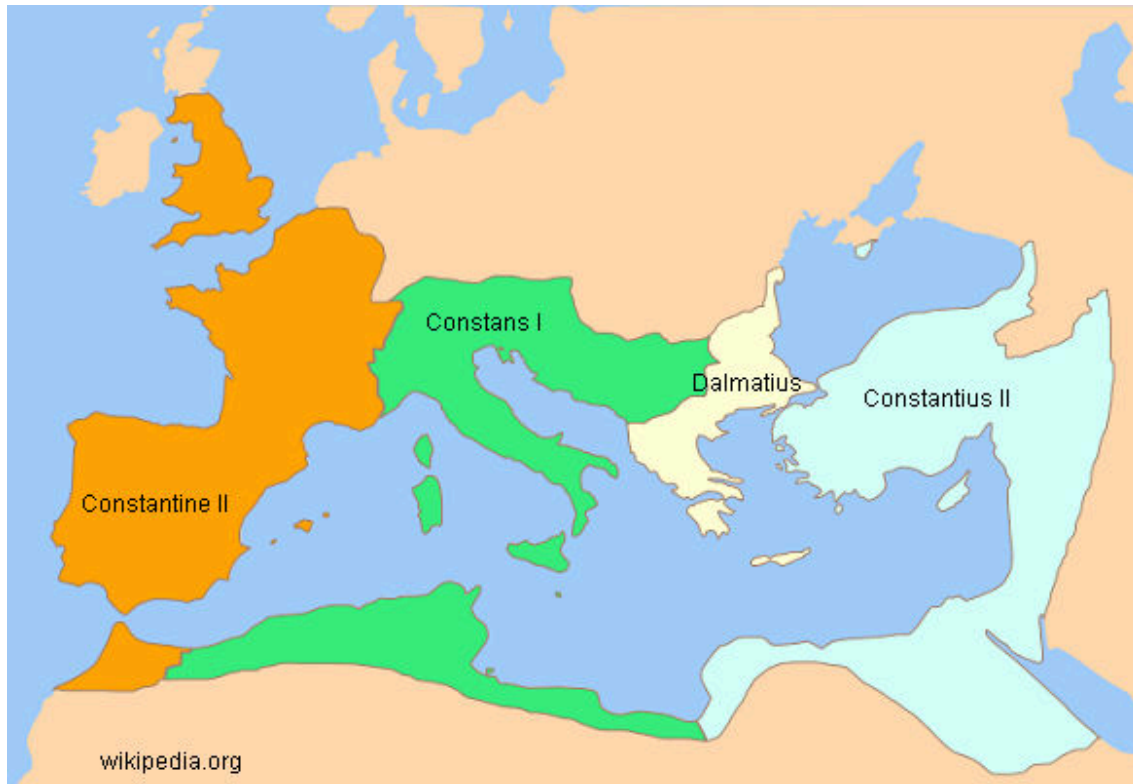
Wives: 1) the daughter of his uncle Julius Constantius (woman whose name is unknown), 2) Flavia Aurelia Eusebia (born in a Greek family of Macedonia) and 3) Faustina

Children: a daughter named Flavia Maxima Faustina Constantia, who was born soon after the death of her father, and married the emperor Gratian.

Death: 44 years old, due to fever.

He was the second son of Constantine I the Great, and ruled the Eastern Roman Empire. After the division of the Roman Empire, Constantius II returned to Constantinople, where he organized and witnessed the funeral ceremony of the father: with this gesture he strengthened his rights as successor and obtained the support of the army, an important component of the policy of Constantine. There was an attempt of murder against Constantine's family after his death in 337 AD at the hands of the army (according to some historians, this happened on the orders of Constantius II) and a few male relatives survived: the three sons of Constantine and two of his grandchildren still children (Gallus and Julian, sons of his half-brother Julius Constantius). Constantina, Constantine's daughter also survived. After the massacre, he met with his other brothers in Pannonia. The division of power between the three brothers did not last long: Constantine II died in 340, while he tried to overthrow Constans, and Constantius II won the Balkans. Constans was overthrown in 350 AD by Magnentius, the usurper. So Constantius II became as eastern Augustus, ruling Asia, with its capital in Constantinople, and Egypt. Not to lose the government of the empire, he attacked Magnentius and defeated him in two battles. Magnentius committed suicide (353). In 354 he defeated the Alemanni, and 357, the Quadi (a small Germanic tribe) and the Sarmatians. Against the Sassanians in the east, achievements remained balanced. In order to better govern the Empire, he raised his cousin, Constantius Gallus, to the post of Caesar. However, he executed him three years later to learn of his conduct and his violent and corrupt nature. Soon after, in 355 he promoted his only surviving cousin, Julian, with the title of Caesar. But he claimed the title of Augustus in 360, leading them to war. In the end, there was no battle because Constantius became ill and died in 361, appointing Julian as his successor. After his death, he was deified by the Roman Senate. As to the stance of Constantius II in relation to Christianity, he seemed to prefer an

intermediate point between orthodox Christianity and Arianism. As to the Jews, his policy was severe, including prohibiting the marriage of Jews and Christian women. And if someone converted to Judaism would have all his property confiscated by the State. Jews couldn't also buy or own Gentile slaves.



The usurpers of the throne, trying to interrupt the reign of Constantine's descendants were: Magnentius and Vetranio.

- Flavius Magnus **Magnentius** – r. 350-353 (3 years)

He was a Roman usurper against the emperors Constantine I and Constantius II. The dissatisfaction against emperor Constans became unbearable for the Roman army, so in 350 in the town of Autun, the soldiers proclaimed Magnentius as emperor. Constans was abandoned and ended up murdered by a grouping of light cavalry near the Pyrenees. Magnentius quickly won the loyalty of the British provinces, Gaul and Hispania, in part because he proved to be much more tolerant both with Christians and pagans. Nepotianus son of Eutropia, Constantine's half-sister, tried to usurp the throne, ruling in the city of Rome for only twenty-eight days but after this short revolt he was killed by Marcellinus, the general of the usurper Magnentius. This one realized that his position needed to be consolidated before the members of the royal family of Constantine the Great. Knowing of the death of his brother Constans, the Emperor Constantius II interrupted his campaign against the Sassanians in Syria and came to the West. Magnentius tried to attract Vetranio (commander of the legions of Pannonia) to his cause, but everything ended up turning against him, because the old general abdicated after the meeting with Constantius II. Magnentius tried to resist in the Battle of Mursa Major (351). With his army defeated, Magnentius retreated to Gaul. In 353 at the Battle of Mount Seleucus, Magnentius tried a new resistance but was defeated and committed suicide (at the age of 50), falling on his own sword.

• **Vetranio** – r. 350

Vetranio, the commander of the legions of Pannonia, received the request from Constantina, the sister of Roman emperors Constant and Constantius II, to proclaim himself Caesar (March 350), for his brother Constans I, was killed by Magnentius at the beginning of the year and she probably believed that Vetranio would protect the family and her against the usurper. Vetranio agreed to be emperor and coins were minted in his name bearing the title of Augustus ('senior emperor') instead of Caesar ('Junior Emperor'). Constantius II apparently accepted the new emperor and Vetranio in turn asked him for money and military aid to face Magnentius, the usurper. However, the negotiations did not take the desired direction and Vetranio turned to Magnentius and they sent an embassy to Constantius II. Magnentius offered his daughter in marriage to Constantius II and asked the hand of Constance (Flavia Julia Constantia), his sister, which would ensure his position in the Constantinian dynasty. The condition was that he renounced his position as the main emperor. So Constantius II rejected all proposals. Magnentius took the throne in Italia, and Constantius II, who was coming back home after a campaign against the Sassanian Empire in the east, met Vetranio. Both went together to Naissus. Both went up a platform before the troops, and after a powerful speech, Constantius II was acclaimed emperor. Then, he took the purple robe from Vetranio, showing this way that the general was not the emperor. Vetranio was allowed to live away from politics receiving a pension from the Roman state in Bithynia (the name of the ancient Anatolia, in Asia Minor, modern Turkey on the coast of Black Sea). He lived a further six years. Constantius II remained in power until 361.



**Julian**



**Jovian**

**5) Flavius Claudius Julianus**, also known as **Julian the Apostate** – 361-363 DC (20 months as sole emperor)

From birth to accession: Flavius Claudius Iulianus

Name as Caesar (under Constantius II): Flavius Claudius Iulianus Caesar – 355-360

Name as Augustus (under Constantius II): Flavius Claudius Iulianus Augustus – 360-361

Sole ruler – 361-363

Parents: Julius Constantius (Constantine's half-brother) and Basilina, who were Christians

Wife: Helena, daughter of Constantine and Fausta

Children: none

Half-brother: Gallus

Death: at the age of 32, due to a deadly wound made in battle

Flavius Claudius Julianus or simply Julian was the last pagan emperor of the Roman Empire. He succeeded his cousin Constantius II, and became known as 'the Apostate' for not following Christianity at a time when it was already accepted and even encouraged by his predecessors since Constantine I. On the contrary, Julian encouraged the return to paganism like Septimius Severus had fomented religious syncretism. He put himself under the protection of Zeus and Helios. His intention was to restore the values of the ancient pagan religion of Rome. Although being created in Christianity, he acquired the interest in culture and Greek-Roman pagan beliefs. Nevertheless, he did not persecute the Christians in his reign; there is also no report of any religious intolerance.

In 354, Gallus imposed a reign of terror on the territories under his control; so he was executed at the age of 29 by order of Constantius II, who made Julian Caesar in place of the other one. As Caesar of Constantius II, Julian succeeded in his campaigns against the Franks and Alamanni. In 357 at the Battle of Argentoratum against the Alamanni at Strasbourg, with an army of only 13,000 soldiers, he defeated the enemy, who had an army three times more numerous. In 360 at Lutetia (Paris), Julian was proclaimed Augustus by his soldiers, sparking a civil war against Constantius. However, there was no battle because Constantius II died before because of an illness. Before he died, he appointed Julian as his rightful heir. In 363 Julian made war against the Sassanians, but was mortally wounded by an unintentional spear that hit his abdomen. Jovian, one of Julian's bodyguards who accompanied him on the expedition and was present at his death, was elected by the soldiers to occupy the throne. Although with a short reign, Jovian established Christianity in a privileged position throughout the Empire.

#### **6) Flavius Jovianus (Jovian) – 363-364 DC (eight months)**

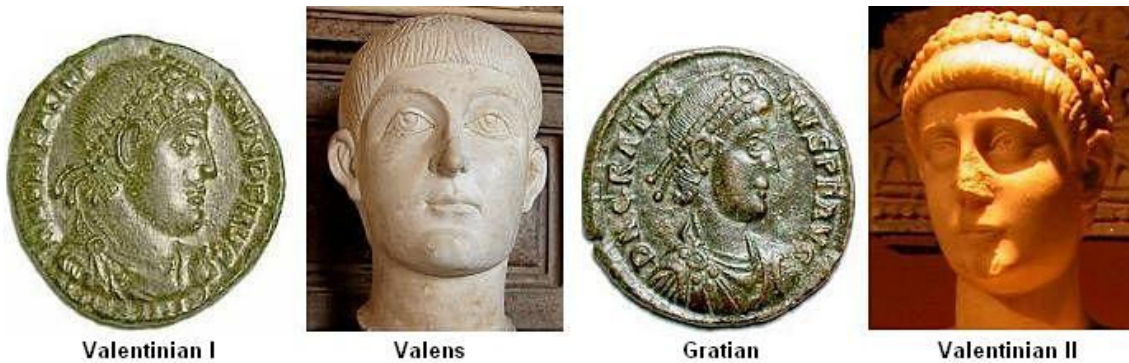
Birth name: Flavius Jovianus

Name as emperor: Flavius Jovianus Augustus

Death: sudden death at 32 years old

Flavius Jovianus (Flavius Iovianus) was a soldier elected Roman Emperor by the army in 363, after the death of Julian the Apostate. Once the Roman army was in Persian territory, Jovian was forced to make a peace treaty on unfavorable terms, in order to be able to bring his troops back to the Roman territory. He had to cede parts of the Roman Empire (Five Roman provinces east of the Tigris conquered by Galerius in 298, which Diocletian had annexed, and relinquish the Roman interest in Armenia in favor of the Persians), a misfortune that had never occurred before, since the foundation of Rome. Upon arriving in Antioch, he revoked the decree of Julian against the Christians. The Labarum of Constantine the Great became the standard of the army again. From the reign of Jovian until the fifteenth century, Christianity was the dominant religion in the West as in the East, until the fall of Constantinople under the Turks in 1453. Then, Jovian marched to Constantinople to consolidate his political position there. Marching back home, Jovian died of sudden death, between Ankara (formerly known as Ancyra or Angora) and Nicaea, northwest Turkey, after a reign of eight months. According to sources of research, he was found dead in bed inside his tent; some historians say he was asphyxiated. Jovian was a Christian.

**XII) Valentinian Dynasty** (364-392 AD in the Western Roman Empire and 364-378 in the Eastern Roman Empire): Valentinian I (364-375 AD – Emperor in the West) / Valens (364-378 AD – Emperor in the East) / Gratian (375-383 AD – Emperor in the West) / Valentinian II (375-392 AD – Emperor in the West).



**1) Flavius Valentinianus Augustus (Valentinian I or Valentinian the Great) – 364** (the whole empire; 1 month) / 364-375 AD in the Western Roman Empire (10 years 8 months) with his brother Valens (364-378 AD – Emperor in the East)

Birth name: Flavius Valentinianus

Name as emperor: Flavius Valentinianus Augustus

Father: Gratian, the Elder. He was an officer of Roman army and was successful in his military career.

Brother: Flavius Iulius Valens

Wives: Marina Severa (married Valentinian before he ascended to the throne) and Justina (widow of usurper Magnentius; Justina was too young at the time of her first marriage to have children). Justina became the stepmother of Gratian, the son of Valentinian I by Marina Severa. She was an Arian. She died at 51 years old.

Children:

- By Marina Severa: Gratian. He died in 383, during the revolt of the usurper Magnus Maximus.

- By Justina: a son named Valentinian II and three daughters: Galla, Grata and Justa. Grata and Justa didn't marry. Probably they were still alive until 392. Valentinian II reigned from 375 to 392.

Death: 54 years old (375 AD), by a stroke.

Valentinian I was proclaimed emperor by the Roman army at Nicaea (in Turkey). He settled in Mediolanum (now Milan) and joined his brother Valens. With much strategy of war against the Alamanni, he cast them out of Gaul. Also had victory over the Quadi (a small Germanic tribe) and the Sarmatians (a confederation of Iranian tribes). He established peace in Britannia (367-368 in a revolt known as the Great Conspiracy, which was the result of the losses of the usurper Magnentius, during the reign of Constantius II, when the Roman Empire suffered many attacks by the Picts (north of Scotland), the Scots (other Celtic group originated of the merger between the Picts and Gaels) and Saxons (a Germanic tribe that lived near the North Sea, between Europe and England) and stifled a revolt in Africa, by a heretical sect within Catholicism. For him, the soldiers were more valued than the senators, and to increase their salary he had to increase the taxes from the landowners. 'Fervent Christian', with the help of Pope Damasus I (366-384) in 371 he adopted an unusual policy of religious toleration (In other words, the toleration toward pagan religions).

In 373, hostilities with the Quadi erupted again. Like the Alamanni, the Quadi were outraged that Valentinian was building fortifications in their territory. They complained and sent delegations that were ignored. Maximinus, praetorian prefect of Gaul wanted to promote his son Marcellianus and put him in charge to finish the project of the building fortifications. The protests of Quadic leaders delayed the project, and Marcellianus murdered ostensibly the Quadic king Gabinius at a banquet arranged for peaceful



negotiations. This provoked the Quadi to war, along with their allies the Sarmatians, damaging heavily the unprotected countryside. Two legions were sent but were defeated by the Sarmatians. Meanwhile, another group of Sarmatians invaded Moesia, but was driven back by the son of Theodosius, the future emperor. Valentinian did not know of these crises until late 374. He tried peace with the Sarmatians, but not knowing the treacherous purpose of Marcellianus decided to punish the Quadi. In the beginning of winter he retired to Savaria, to his encampment. In the spring of 375 he decided to continue campaigning and moved from Savaria to Brigetio. Upon arriving there, he received a delegation from the Quadi. In exchange for supplying fresh recruits to the Roman army, Quadi should be allowed to leave in peace. However, before the envoys went out, Valentinian granted them an audience. The envoys insisted that the conflict was caused by the building of Roman forts in their lands; furthermore individual bands of Quadi didn't agree with the rule of the chiefs who had made treaties with the Romans, and thus, might attack the Romans at any time. The attitude of the envoys caused such anger in Valentinian that he suffered a burst of blood vessel in the skull while he was yelling angrily at them, provoking his death in November 375.

**2) Flavius Iulius Valens** (364-375 AD) in the Eastern Roman Empire with Valentinian I (364-375 AD – Western Roman Empire) / 375-378 (Eastern Roman Empire) with his nephews Gratian and Valentinian II in the West.

Birth name: Flavius Iulius Valens

Name as emperor: Flavius Iulius Valens Augustus

Father: Gratian, the Elder. He was an officer of Roman army and was successful in his military career.

Brother: Valentinian I (Flavius Valentinianus)

Wife: Albia Dominica, daughter of a prefect of the Praetorian Guard, powerful and unpopular, called Petronio, hated by his greed and cruelty. Albia Dominica was an Arian and tried to convince Valens to follow this sect too, and he persecuted cruelly the Nicene Christians because of her.

Children: two daughters: Anastasia and Carosa, and a son and heir: Flavius Valentinianus Galates, who died at 4 years old (366-370). He fell sick, and his mother thought this was a punishment by the fact of Valens having persecuted the Orthodox Christian bishop, Basil of Caesarea, because Valens was a semi-Arian. They asked the Orthodox bishop to pray for the healing of the boy, to what he answered that he would only pray if the father converted to Orthodox Christianity. Valens refused and the child died.

Death: at the age of 50 in the Battle of Adrianople (378 AD), 8 miles to the north of Adrianople (modern Edirne in European Turkey, near the border with Greece and Bulgaria) in the Roman province of Thrace.

Valens, brother of Valentinian I, received the Eastern Empire, which had given its possessions in Mesopotamia and Armenia to the Persians, the treaty made by the Emperor Jovian with Shapur II. Valens had the intention to move to the east to regain the territories. However, in reaching the central region of Anatolia (modern Turkey) near Cappadocia, he learned of the rebellion of the usurper Procopius, a living relative of the Emperor Julian by his mother, who had proclaimed himself emperor in Constantinople. However, his chances of winning had diminished with the desertion of most of his troops to the West. The two legions sent by Valens to Procopius turned to the side of this one. With no support of his brother Valentinian I, Valens had no strength to resist Procopius, who took possession of the diocese of Thrace and the diocese of Asia. A few months later, Valens could gather an army to fight against the usurper,

defeating him in Thyatira; then, there was another encounter in Nakoleia where troops of Procopius abandoned him and he was executed. His head was sent to Valentinian I in Trier.

Trying to regain Armenia (to which Jovian had resigned) Valens ended up by engaging in an unnecessary conflict between the Armenians and the Sassanians, and that prevented him from acting in the East. So his plans for an eastern campaign have never come true.

The most significant episode of his reign was the battle of Adrianople (in the ancient region of Thrace, now Edirne, Turkey), in August 378 when he faced a Confederate barbarian army which included Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Huns and Alans.

The transfer of troops to the Western empire in 374 had left many gaps in the eastern ranks. His advisers said it was possible to recruit an army with barbarian soldiers. But the entry of barbarians in his army has only worsened the situation. Meanwhile, Valens' Generals warned him, asking him to wait for Gratian coming from Gaul with his victorious legions, something that Gratian tenaciously defended. However, Valens, jealous of the success of his nephew Gratian, wanted the victory for himself. When on 9<sup>th</sup> August 378 (in the Battle of Adrianople or Hadrianopolis) the barbarians attacked (a group of rebel Gothic tribes) the cavalry of Valens succumbed. As a result, the infantry was also defeated. Valens was injured and was transported to his tent. The exact circumstances of his death are unknown. In short, the battle was disastrous for the Romans, and Valens himself died in it. Two-thirds of the Roman army of the east was destroyed, in what the contemporaries and historians considered the beginning of the end of the Roman territorial integrity. The Goths continued to move east and attacked Constantinople. Because there was no emperor to lead the forces, the Empress Domitilla was forced to organize a counterattack. Domitilla paid the salaries of soldiers with the imperial treasury to any civilian volunteers who were willing to arm themselves against the invaders. After the death of her husband, she ruled as regent and defended Constantinople against the Goths attackers until his successor, Theodosius I arrived and was appointed as the new emperor of the East. The nineteen-year-old Emperor Gratian was crushed by the disaster and was not able to deal with it.

Valens and Valentinian had different religious beliefs: Valens was an Arian and Valentinian had accepted the Nicene Christianity. Valens was an Arian Christian and persecuted the Nicene Christians, instigated by his wife. The Nicene Christians were those who, according to the Council of Nicaea in 325, accept the divinity of Jesus Christ and recognize His unity with the Father. They also believed in the Holy Spirit. The Arian Christians did not believe in the Trinity, they accepted Jesus and God the Father, but being Jesus, subordinate to God the Father; therefore, without being God. In other words, He would be His son, but not God Himself. Anyway, with Valens' death the Arianism came to an end, for his successor **Theodosius I** began to impose the Nicene Creed on 27<sup>th</sup> February 380 AD, through the **Edict of Thessalonica** when it was established that the Nicene Christianity would become exclusively the state religion in the Roman Empire, and abolishing all polytheistic practices and shutting the temples.

**3) Gratian** (Flavius Gratianus Augustus) – r. 375-383 (Western Roman Empire) with Valens, his uncle, 375-378 (Eastern Roman Empire) / with Valentinian II, his brother (West – 375-392) / with Theodosius I (379-395 – Eastern Roman Empire)

Birth: 359 AD

Birth name: Flavius Gratianus

Name as emperor: Flavius Gratianus Augustus

Father: Valentinian I (Flavius Valentinianus Augustus)



Half-Brother: Valentinian II

Wives:

- Gratian married for the first time at 14 years old with Flavia Maxima Faustina Constantia – daughter of Constantius II (Constantine's brother) and Faustina, his third wife. Flavia Maxima Faustina Constantia was born in 262, after the death of his father, and was 12 years old when she married Gratian. She died at 21 years old.

- His second wife was Laeta in the short period between the death of Constantia and the death of Gratian. There is no information about her; only that she and her mother supplied many people with food during the siege of Rome by Visigoths in 408.

Children: none

Death: 383 AD, 24 years old, assassinated

Flavius Gratianus Augustus was the son of Emperor Valentinian I. In 367 he received from his father the title of Augustus. With Valentinian's death (375), the troops in Pannonia hailed Valentinian II, 4 years old, the youngest son of Valentinian I and Justina, emperor. Gratian, then, separated to himself the administration of the provinces of Gaul, and handed Italia, Illyricum and Africa to Valentinian II and his mother, who fixed her residence at Mediolanum (Milan). Despite this formal division, the real authority remained in the hands of Gratian. In 378, with the death of his uncle Valens on the battlefield, Gratian also began to rule the Eastern Roman Empire, which granted in 379 AD to Flavius Theodosius I, for he felt unable to withstand the onslaught of the barbarians. He clearly favored the Christian religion against paganism, refusing to repeat the pagan rituals of the previous emperors and taking away the Altar of Victory from the Senate in 382 AD. The Altar of Victory was a golden statue and had been placed in the Senate hall in honor of the goddess Victory (Victoria, in Latin) by the emperor Caesar Augustus in 29 BC to celebrate the defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium (Greece), for they opposed him. The Roman senators did not like the removal of the statue, since for centuries they swore solemnly before her, recited prayers and made libations of wine and burned incense. Gratian also refused to use the title of maximum Pontiff unlike the emperors before him.

For some years he ruled the Empire successfully and forcefully, but gradually fell in indolence, being a puppet in the hands of a Frankish General, Merobaudes, and Ambrose (Bishop of Milan). The reign of Gratian marked an important epoch in ecclesiastical history, because during this period the Nicene Christianity for the first time became dominant throughout the Empire. The emperor removed every privilege from the vestals and pagan priests. Nevertheless, Gratian was still deified after his death. He was assassinated by a soldier of his own troops in 383, when he was preparing to fight the usurper Magnus Maximus (Flavius Magnus Maximus Augustus) or Maximian (383-388 AD), proclaimed emperor by the legions of Britannia; other versions say that who killed him was a cavalry soldier of Maximus.

**4) Valentinian II** (Flavius Valentinianus Augustus) – 375-392 (Western Roman Empire)

Birth name: Flavius Valentinianus

Name as emperor: Flavius Valentinianus Augustus

Father: Valentinian I (Flavius Valentinianus Augustus)

Half-Brother: Gratian

Half-Sisters: Galla, Grata and Justa

Death: 21 years old, strangled.

Valentinian II (375-392 AD), son of the Roman emperor Valentinian I, succeeded him in power and divided the government of Illyria with the brother Gratian. The

mother of Valentinian II was called Justina, and ruled in his place, because he was only four years old when he was made emperor. Valentinian I (364-378) professed Nicene Christianity. Justina (widow of usurper Magnentius, from the time of Valentinian I) was an Arian. Who actually ruled in place of Justina was a powerful general, Merobaudes. The half-brother of Valentinian II, Gratian, was 16 years old at the time. Years later, in 384, while Theodosius I reigned in the east at the behest of Gratian, Magnus Maximus (Flavius Magnus Maximus Augustus or Maximus the usurper – 383-388 AD) reigned in Britannia and Gaul, trying to negotiate with the emperor of the East Theodosius I. Valentinian II kept Italia, Pannonia, Hispania and Africa. In 387, to expand his empire, Maximus invaded Italy and was defeated by Theodosius in battle in 388, restoring the throne of the West to Valentinian II. Gaul and Britannia were theoretically with no ruler (only later they were occupied by the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine III, between 407 and 411). The tutor of Valentinian II, Arbogast (Flavius Arbogastes), master of cavalry and Frankish General of the Western Roman Empire, ordered to strangle him in 392. His body was found hanging from a tree, perhaps for having left Arianism and joined the Catholic Church. Mediolanum (Milan), at that time was a city shepherded by the Christian bishop Aurelius Ambrose (340-397), who much likely influenced Valentinian II, and was the religious leader whom Justina opposed. The reign of this emperor **was a harbinger of the fifth century**, when children or nonentities reigning as emperors were controlled by powerful generals and officers.

**Interlude** – two usurpers: Flavius **Magnus Maximus** Augustus or Maximus the usurper (383-388 AD) and **Flavius Eugenius** (392-394 AD).

- Flavius **Magnus Maximus** Augustus (Maximus the usurper) – 383-388 AD (5 years)

Magnus Maximus was a general of Gratian. Maximus began to establish his control over a part of the Roman Empire, including Great-Britain, Gaul, Hispania and the Diocese of Africa. He ruled from his capital at Augusta Treverorum (Treves, Trier) and was able to negotiate his recognition by Valentinian II and Theodosius I, from 384. The area of Valentinian II had been effectively limited to Italy, ruling from Mediolanum (now Milan). In 387 the truce between Valentinian II and Maximus ended. The latter crossed the Alps in the Po Valley (also called Po Plain, Plain of the Po, or Padan Plain) and threatened Milan. Valentinian and his mother Justina fled the capital to Thessalonica, capital of the Praetorian Prefecture of Illyria, and at the time, the chosen residence of Theodosius. Gala, also daughter Justina and sister of Valentinian II accompanied them. Theodosius was at the time, widower of his first wife Aelia Flaccilla, who died in 385 or 386. Theodosius granted refuge to fugitives and came to marry Gala.

- **Flavius Eugenius** – 392-394 AD (2 years)

Flavius Eugenius reigned from 392-394 AD as successor Valentinian II (Italia, Pannonia, Hispania and Africa), and opposed the Emperor Theodosius I or Theodosius the Great. Eugenius was proclaimed Augustus of the East after the death of Valentinian II in unclear circumstances. He died in the Battle of the River Frigidus against Theodosius I. He represented the last revival of pagan tradition against the Christianity, which was to prevail as the only faith of the state. Though himself a Christian, he was the last Emperor to support Roman polytheism.

**XIII) Theodosian Dynasty** (379-455 AD in the Western Roman Empire and 379-457 in the Eastern Roman Empire): Theodosius I (379-395 as emperor of the East) / Arcadius (383-395 with the father; 395-408 as sole emperor of the East) / Honorius (395-423 as Emperor of the West) / Theodosius II (408-450 as Emperor of the East) / Valentinian III (423-425 as Caesar in the West; 425-455 as Emperor in the West) / Marcian (450-457 as Emperor of the East, with his wife Pulcheria 450-453).



Theodosius I



Arcadius



Honorius

**1) Flavius Theodosius or Theodosius I the Great** – 379-392 as Emperor of the East / 392-395 as sole ruler of the Empire, having his son Arcadius as Augustus Junior in the East (383-395). He reigned for 16 years.

Birth name: Flavius Theodosius

Name as emperor: Flavius Theodosius Augustus

Father: Count Theodosius or Theodosius the Elder

Mother: Thermantia

Wife: Aelia Flaccilla (died in 385 or 386) and Flavia Galla

Children:

- With Aelia Flaccilla: Arcadius, Honorius and Aelia Pulcheria (385-386 – she died in childhood, and may not be confused with the other Aelia Pulcheria, grand-daughter of Theodosius I. This one was daughter of Aelia Eudoxia with Arcadius, the son of Theodosius I)

- With Flavia Galla:

- 1) Gratian – born in 388 AD and died in early age

- 2) Aelia Galla Placidia (392-450 AD), mother of Valentinian III and Justa Grata Honoria. She was the Regent for the Emperor Valentinian III from 423 until his majority in 437, and a major force in Roman politics for most of her life. She was the consort of Ataulf, King of the Visigoths from 414 until his death in 415, and Empress Consort of Constantius III for a short time in 421.

- 3) John – he died along with his mother Galla, during childbirth (394)

Death: at the age of 48 due to congestive heart failure

Theodosius I, the Great, or Flavius Theodosius, was a Byzantine emperor from 379 to 395 AD. He was born in Hispania around 346-347 and died in Milan in 395. He was the son of Count Theodosius, also known as Theodosius the Elder. Theodosius was the last leader of a united Roman Empire. After the division between his heirs, the empire would never be ruled by only one man. The Emperor Gratian appointed Theodosius I co-emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire in 379, after the death of Emperor Valens, killed by the Goths at the Battle of Adrianople (378). After a few unsuccessful campaigns, Theodosius ended up making a treaty by which the Goths could be

politically independent within the Roman Empire in exchange for being required to provide troops for the imperial army. This treaty was one of the causes of the Roman military weakening, after to the sack of Rome by the same Goths in 410. They were recruiting barbarians to fight other barbarians. With the death of Valentinian II, Gratian's brother, in 392 AD, Theodosius ended up taking the Western empire and ruled as sole emperor after defeating the usurper Eugenius in 394 in the **Battle of the River Frigidus**, also called the Battle of the Frigid River. And as co-Augustus of the West, he appointed his youngest son in 393.

In the religious sphere, Theodosius decided to make Nicene Christianity, or Catholicism, the official religion of the Empire, by issuing the **Edict of Thessalonica** (380 AD), ending with the state support to the traditional Roman religion, and prohibiting the public worship of the ancient gods. The **Massacre of Thessalonica** was an episode of persecution and violence against the non-Christians of the Roman Empire in the year 388 or 390, and that resulted in the murder of hundreds or thousands of people (some versions say 7,000 people killed), by order of Theodosius I. He enacted laws forbidding worship to the Greek gods, and forbidding the practice of divination under penalty of death. Many philosophers and teachers had to go into exile in order to avoid the persecution of the emperor. One of the major conflicts between the new religion of the Empire and the pagan tradition was related to the condemnation of homosexuality, which was normal in ancient Greece and the Roman Empire, even among soldiers and emperors, as Alexander the Great and his lover Hephaestion; or the Roman Emperor Hadrian and his lover Antinous, to whom he erected a temple in Egypt after his death; and Nero, with Sporus. Theodosius had published a decree condemning to death those who practiced homosexuality or pederasty. To enforce this law the Gothic general Butheric, threw in the prison in Thessalonica a Greek, driver of chariots in the circus, popular athlete who earned a lot of money in games, and was pederast. The people revolted, and the barbarian soldiers with hatred killed general Butheric. Theodosius was in Milan and ordered a massacre of the people when they were gathered to the circus. Some sources say that he would have revoked the order, but it arrived late and in this repression several people died. The Bishop Ambrose protested about the cruelty of the emperor and prevented him from entering the church and receiving the communion wafer. Only after the emperor underwent the penance imposed by the bishop, he could enter the church. This was the first example of submission of an emperor to spiritual power.

Theodosius died in Milan 395 due to congestive heart failure.

As I said above, Theodosius was the last leader of a united Roman Empire. After the division between his heirs, the empire would never be ruled by only one man. Successors of Theodosius:

Flavius Arcadius – East – 395-408 AD

Flavius Honorius – West – 395-423 AD – Emperor Caesar Flavius Honorius Pious Happy Augustus (Imperator Caesar Flavius Honorius Augustus Pius Felix)

**2) Flavius Arcadius Augustus** – as co-Augustus in the East (383-395), as sole ruler in the East: 395-408 AD (25 years)

Birth name: Flavius Arcadius

Name as emperor: Flavius Arcadius Augustus

Father: Flavius Theodosius or Theodosius I or Theodosius the Great

Mother: Aelia Flaccilla (first wife of Theodosius I)

Brother: Flavius Honorius

Half-sister: Aelia Galla Placidia – 392-450 AD, mother of Valentinian III and Justa Grata Honoria. She was consort to Ataulf, King of the Visigoths, and consort of Constantius III.

Wife: Aelia Eudoxia

Children: Flacilla (b.397 – stillbirth), Aelia Pulcheria (399-453; she married Marcian, but took a vow of virginity), Arcadia (400–444; she took a vow of virginity like her sister; she remained unmarried), Theodosius II (401-450) and Marina (b. 404 – stillbirth; this birth caused the death of Eudoxia by bleeding and infection).

Death: 30-31 years old, of unknown cause.

Flavius Arcadius (Flavius Arcadius – 395-408 AD) was a Roman Emperor of the East. Arcadius was born in Hispania, the eldest son of Emperor Theodosius I and Aelia Flacilla, and brother of Honorius, who would become the Roman emperor of the West. His father appointed him an Augustus and co-ruler of the eastern half of the empire, in January 383. His younger brother was also appointed Augustus in 393, for the Western half. He was appointed consul three times in 385, 392 and 394. Instructed in the Christian religion, he finally proved to be a weak prince under the influence of several counselors at his side. As the brother Honorius, Arcadius was under control of his ministers throughout his reign. Aelia Eudoxia, the wife of the emperor was appointed Augusta in 400 AD and became the new power behind the throne. During her rule, the court witnessed several clashes between her and the Archbishop John Chrysostom, the Patriarch of Constantinople, patron of the early Christianity, and ended up being deposed.

From 404 with the death of Aelia Eudoxia, the throne was ruled indirectly by the praetorian prefect of the East Flavius Anthemius until the death of the emperor in 408 AD. He also continued ruling during the minority of Theodosius II. Anthemius worked to finish with the government abuses, as well as expand the Christianization and the defense of the East against attacks. Laws against paganism, Judaism and heresies were approved and peace was sealed with the West, especially after the establishment of a conjoint consulate between Anthemius and Flavius Stilicho in 405; the latter was a high-ranking general (magister militum) in the Roman army and adviser of Honorius in the west. He was of mixed ancestry (Vandal and Roman), besides being an Arian. He came to marry the niece of the Emperor Theodosius I. In 414, Anthemius suddenly disappeared from History reports and the regency was assumed by Augusta Pulcheria (Wife of Emperor of the East, Marcian. She was the second daughter of Arcadius), while his post of prefect of the Praetorian Guard was taken on by Aurelian (a Byzantine officer). Anthemius fate is unknown, although it is possible that he was still alive in 415. The cause of death of Flavius Arcadius is unknown.

### 3) Flavius **Honorius** Augustus – 395-423 AD – as Augustus in the West (28 years)

Birth name: Flavius Honorius

Name as emperor: Imperator Caesar Flavius Honorius Pius Felix Augustus (Emperor Caesar Flavius Honorius Pious Happy Augustus)

Father: Flavius Theodosius or Theodosius I or Theodosius the Great

Mother: Aelia Flaccilla (first wife of Theodosius I)

Brother: Flavius Arcadius

Half-sister: Aelia Galla Placidia – 392-450 DC, mother of Valentinian III and Justa Grata Honoria. She was consort to Ataulf, King of the Visigoths, and Empress Consort of Constantius III.

Wives: Maria and Thermantia (Aemilia Materna Thermantia)

Children: none

Death: at the age of 38, due to congestive heart failure

Flavius Honorius Augustus was an emperor of the Western Roman Empire, while his brother Arcadius took the throne of the East (at 10 years old). He was appointed Augustus at the age of eight (393 AD). With his father's death (395), he stayed under the tutelage of the military master Flavius Stilicho a General of origin half Vandal and half Roman, married to Serena, the favorite niece of Theodosius I. Stilicho ruled in fact, due to the weak personality of the emperor Honorius, and made him marry his daughters Maria and Thermantia, one after another. During the reign of Flavius Honorius it was issued the edict that finished the gladiator fights (404), and Gaul was occupied by the Vandals, Suebi and Alamanni (406). Stilicho lost the favor of the people by showing himself unable to contain the barbarian invasions, and because it was suspected that he conspired with the Visigoths to put his son Eucherius as heir to the Emperor, and was finally executed (408). During the reign of Honorius occurred the sack of Rome by the Visigoths under the command of Alaric I (August 24<sup>th</sup>, 410), and the emperor took refuge in Ravenna (a region of Italy), one of the most disastrous events the history of Rome, and that reverberated from Britannia to Judea. The weakness and timidity of the emperor, combined with the adverse circumstances of the attacks of the Vandals and Visigoths, made of his government one of the worst that Rome had ever witnessed. His negative actions contributed to the weakening and the fall of the western empire. He died of congestive heart failure at 38 years old.



Theodosius II



Valentinian III



Marcian



Pulcheria

#### 4) Flavius Theodosius Augustus or **Theodosius II** – 408-450 AD – Emperor of the East

Birth name: Flavius Theodosius Iunior

Name as emperor: Flavius Theodosius Augustus

Father: Flavius Arcadius

Mother: Aelia Eudoxia

Sisters: Aelia Pulcheria (she married Marcian, but took a vow of virginity) and Arcadia (she took a vow of virginity like her sister; she remained unmarried)

Wife: Aelia Eudocia Augusta, of Greek origin and then converted to Orthodox Catholicism. She was banished from the court in 443 because of adultery and died in Jerusalem. She was also known as Eustacia or Eustaxia.

Children: Licinia Eudoxia (married her cousin Valentinian III), Flaccilla (died in 431) e Arcadius (died in infancy)

Death: at the age of 49 as the result of a horse-riding accident

Flavius Theodosius or Theodosius II, called the calligrapher, was a Byzantine emperor. When Arcadius died, he was only 7 years old and the throne was ruled indirectly by the praetorian prefect of the East Flavius Anthemius, who helped his father Arcadius. Flavius Theodosius or Theodosius II is best known for the promulgation of



**Theodosius' Code** ('Codex Theodosianus', a compilation of the laws of the Roman Empire under the Christian emperors since 312, and published in 438 AD), as well as by **Theodosius Wall**. The Walls of Constantinople are a series of stone walls that surrounded and protected the city of Constantinople, now Istanbul in Turkey since its foundation by Constantine. The **walls** received other additions and modifications throughout their history, and became a major fortification of Ancient times. During his reign it began the construction of a new wall of 1,500 meters to the west of the former.



**The wall of Theodosius II**

Pulcheria, her sister, who helped in the regency (408-416), increased the interest of Theodosius by Christianity, and this restarted a war against the Sassanians (421-422), who were persecuting Christians. The Romans were forced to accept peace when the Huns threatened Constantinople. The emperor of the West Flavius Augustus Honorius, uncle of Theodosius II, in the final years of his empire contributed to the decline of Rome. In his reign (410) there was the sack of Rome by the Visigoths. He died in 423 and John (known as Ioannes, the usurper, who died in 425 and head of administrative services) began to reign in the West in competition with Valentinian III, son of the half-sister of Honorius and Arcadius, Aelia Galla Placidia. So they asked for help to Theodosius II in Constantinople in 424. Theodosius fought against John, restituting the throne to Valentinian III in 425 AD, and gave him his daughter Licinia Eudoxia as wife. In 435 AD Theodosius II ordered the destruction of all remaining pagan temples. After that, there were several wars between barbarians and Africans of Carthage (Tunisia), where Romans of the West and the East were involved, and Theodosius II, under the influence of the bishop of Constantinople paid 300 kilograms of gold to the Huns as a tribute so that there was peace (447 DC). Theodosius II died in 450, at the age of 49 after a horse-riding accident. In the power struggle that followed his sister Pulcheria, who has recently returned to the court, defeated the eunuch Chrysaphius (chief minister of Theodosius). She married General Marcian (Flavius Marcianus), making him the emperor, but had no children with him, for she had taken a vow of chastity.

**5) Flavius Placidus Valentinianus or Valentinian III** – 425-455 AD – Emperor of the West (30 years)

Birth name: Flavius Placidus Valentinianus

Caesar in the West: 423-425 AD

Name as emperor: Flavius Placidus Valentinianus Augustus

Father: Constantius III or Flavius Constantius; killed in 421 AD. He was the emperor of the Western Roman Empire for seven months in 421 AD. He was a great general and politician, and was the power behind the throne throughout the decade of 410 and, in 421 AD, co-emperor with Honorius (Flavius Honorius Augustus), one of the sons of Theodosius I.

Mother: Aelia Galla Placidia, daughter of Flavius Theodosius or Theodosius I and Flavia Galla

Sister: Justa Grata Honoria

Cousin: Theodosius II

Wife: Licinia Eudoxia (his cousin)

Children: Eudocia and Placidia

Death: at the age of 36, assassinated

Valentinian III (Flavius Placidus Valentinianus) reigned from 425-455 AD, already at the stage of decay of the Empire. He remained dependent on Theodosius II, emperor of the East, and his cousin. He lost Britannia and during his reign, the Vandals and Huns (a tribe from Asia and who came to dwell in Germania) settled in the Empire. He did nothing very relevant. He ascended the throne at the age of 6, by help of his cousin Theodosius II, having his mother Aelia Galla Placidia behind the throne as ruler, but in 433 DC the power was transferred to Flavius Aetius, commander of the army. Despite the intervention of two armies of the Eastern Roman Empire, Valentinian was forced to allow the Vandals settled down in Africa in 442 AD. Valentinian III in 449 AD suffered enough by an act of betrayal of his sister Justa Grata Honoria (Iusta Grata Honoria), sending Attila the Hun a ring and a letter, asking for help and promising her hand in marriage, for her bridegroom Flavius Bassus Herculanus was not of her will, and her lover, the butler Eugene was killed.

Thus, Attila and his Huns invaded the Western Empire, and entered Italy in 452 AD. The opponents of Flavius Aetius, the real ruler behind the throne, instigated Valentinian III to kill him. Aetius was killed by order of the emperor in 454, but his death was avenged by two of his guards of the Praetorian Guard, which killed Valentinian III. This one was succeeded by Petronius Maximus (he reigned from March to April in 455). Some historians say that the son of Petronius was Flavius Anicius Olybrius, the husband of Placidia, daughter of Valentinian III. It is only known that the empress Licinia Eudoxia, furious at Petronius Maximus, who had killed Valentinian III, asked for help to Genseric, the Vandal king of Africa. He came to Rome, destroying what he could, killing Maximum (after his brief reign 77 days) and taking the remaining senators and their wives as hostages to Carthage, and the empress Eudoxia, her daughter Eudocia, whom he gave as wife to his son Huneric, and her other daughter, Placidia, whose husband Flavius Anicius Olybrius was in Constantinople at the time.

According to the sources, Placidia spent six or seven years in captivity, and the Emperor of the East, Leo I the Thracian, paid a ransom for her, who went to live in Constantinople. In 472, after many disputes between Roman generals and barbarians by the throne of the West, Flavius Anicius Olybrius was proclaimed emperor but died six months later of lung edema. His wife Placidia and his daughter remained in Constantinople.

**6) Aelia Pulcheria Augusta – 450-453 AD – Empress of the East (3 years)**

Birth name: Aelia Pulcheria

Name as empress: Aelia Pulcheria Augusta



Father: Flavius Arcadius, the son of Theodosius I

Mother: Aelia Eudoxia

Siblings: Theodosius II and Arcadia (like her sister Pulcheria, she also took a vow of chastity and never married).

Husband: Marcian (Flavius Marcianus)

Children: none

Death: at the age of 54 (453 AD), natural cause

When his father Arcadius died in 408, his brother Theodosius II, at the age of seven, ascended the throne in the Eastern Roman Empire. On 4 July 414, Pulcheria, then, at fifteen years old, was proclaimed regent of her brother, who was thirteen, and self-proclaimed Augusta and Roman empress of the East. During the reign of the brother she held the power, as well as her influence was great on religious matters in the church, including the politics against the Roman paganism, the construction of churches and the debate on the title of Mary, the mother of Jesus, because the Orthodox current of thought called her 'mother of God' (Greek, *theotókos*), and other current (Nestorian), created by Nestorius, the patriarch of Alexandria, proposed to call her 'The mother of the Messiah' (*Christotokos*). This debate summoned the Council of Ephesus in 431. Pulcheria trained her brother not only in imperial skills but also taught him how to be a godly Christian leader, but Theodosius despised her teaching. She and her brother had an aversion to the Jews and they began to proclaim laws against Judaism in the city of Constantinople, including destroying synagogues and ordering the execution of some Jews in Palestine.

Because of jealousy of her sister-in-law, Eudoxia, in relation to her influence on Theodosius II, Pulcheria left the palace and went to live in Hebdomon (now Bakırköy), ten kilometers of Constantinople. Eudoxia, in turn, left for the Holy Land, embracing Nestorianism. After her brother's death in July 450, Pulcheria reigned alone for four months. In November of the same year she married Marcian, under pressure from the Roman Senate who, although respected her authority, did not want a woman to reign alone. He and the empress were proclaimed emperor and empress of the Eastern Roman Empire. But she kept her vow of chastity. Marcia Euphemia (Marcia Euphemia) was the only daughter of Marcian by an unnamed woman. The government of the two was marked by religious conflicts between Nestorianism and the Councils of Ephesus (1<sup>st</sup> in 431, still in the reign of Theodosius II) and Chalcedon (451 AD). Nestorianism put in 'check' the religious values of Pulcheria, the 'virgin empress.' He was deposed and accused of heresy. The Council of Chalcedon confirmed the position of the Council of Nicaea in relation to the Trinity of God (God was Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and also claimed that Jesus during His incarnation was, for all time, fully divine and fully human. Pulcheria had built three churches to the Virgin Mary. It is not known the cause of his death; probably from natural causes. After her death, she was canonized.

**7) Flavius Marcianus Augustus or **Marcian** – 450–457 DC – Emperor of the East (7 years)**

Birth name: Flavius Marcianus

Name as Emperor: Flavius Marcianus Augustus

Wife: Aelia Pulcheria

Daughter: Marcia Euphemia, with an unknown woman

Death: at the age of 65 (457 AD), by gangrene.

He was originally a soldier, and after a war against the Sassanians, already occupying the post of chief and commander of his troops, he became ill. When recovered, he went to Constantinople, where he worked for 15 years as a bodyguard or

elite guard of the emperor Theodosius II. In 431-434 he was arrested by vandals in a battle in Africa, but released by the barbarian chief. Influenced by two influential generals, he became captain of the guard and then elevated to the rank of consul. After the death of Theodosius II in 450, his sister Pulcheria (who already had helped him to reign in his minority) married the General Marcian (Flavius Marcianus), making him the Emperor (at that time, he already had 58 years old), but she had no children with him, for she had taken a religious vow of chastity. The Emperor Caesar Flavius Marcianus Augustus was emperor of the East from 450 to 457 AD. His government marked the recovery of the eastern Empire, since the emperor protected it from the external threats and reformed it economically. He also stopped the payment of taxes to the Huns. On the other hand, Marcian's policy of isolation has left the Western Roman Empire without help against barbarian attacks, which came to pass in the Italian campaigns of Attila and in the vandal sack of Rome (455 AD). He probably died of gangrene after a religious pilgrimage. He was aided by his daughter Euphemia (Marcian's daughter with his first wife whose name is unknown) and by his son-in-law, Anthemius (the future emperor of the West). His wife Pulcheria still lived. As he did not have a son to succeed him on the throne, General Aspar took the place until the military Emperor Leo was chosen.

## *Roman Emperors 6*

In this chapter it will be addressed the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the posterior division between East and West. In general, the term fall of the Roman Empire refers to the end of the Western Roman Empire, occurred in 476 AD, with the taking of Rome by the Heruli, once the Eastern Empire, which later, the historians denominated the Byzantine Empire, continued to exist for nearly a thousand years, until 1453, when there was the Fall of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks. The fall of the Western Roman Empire was caused by a series of factors, including the barbarian invasions that led to the final overthrow of the State. Heruli were a Germanic tribe, possibly originating from southern Scandinavia (Denmark, Sweden and Norway) and invaded the Roman Empire in the third century. The Heruli with the Goths participated in several expeditions, looting the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea. The Vandals defeated the Romans in the Battle of Cape Bon (or Cap Bon). The Byzantine Empire was not free of problems too, because in the reign of Zeno I a great religious controversy arose because of the **Henotikon**, a document issued by the emperor, trying to resolve the differences between the Catholic Orthodoxy and Monophysitism, a heresy that already had been convicted in previous Councils. As we saw in the previous chapter, Theodosius I (379-392 as emperor of the East; and 392-395 as sole emperor of the whole empire of West and East) had already made the decision to make Nicene Christianity, or Catholicism, the official religion of the Roman Empire, by issuing the Edict of Thessalonica (380 AD). However, Arianism and Monophysitism (already considered as heresies) insisted on prevailing.

In this chapter, you'll study about:

- The last emperors of the Western Roman Empire: Petronius Maximus, Avitus, Majorianus or Majorian, Libius Severus, Anthemius, Flavius Olybrius, Glycerius, Julius Nepos, Romulus Augustus
- Heruli and Goths
- Leonid Dynasty (Leo I, the Thracian; Zeno, Basiliscus, Anastasius I Dicorus)

### **XIV) The last emperors of the Western Roman Empire:**



#### **1) Flavius Anicius Petronius Maximus – 455 AD (78 days)**

While Pulcheria and Marcian reigned in the East, Valentinian III exercised his last years of reign (425-455 AD) in the West. Valentinian III (Flavius Placidus Valentinianus), remained dependent on Theodosius II, emperor of the East, and his cousin. In his reign, the Vandals and Huns (a tribe from Asia and who came to dwell in

Germania) settled in the ~~Empire~~. Though he was the emperor in 433 AD, the power was in the hands of Flavius Aetius, the army commander. Despite the intervention of two armies of the Eastern Roman Empire, Valentinian was forced to allow the Vandals settled down in Africa in 442 AD. In 449 AD his sister Honoria (Justa Grata Honoria or Iusta Grata Honoria) sent to Attila the Hun a ring and a letter, asking for help and promising her hand in marriage, for her bridegroom Flavius Bassus Herculanus was not of her will, and her lover, the butler Eugene was killed. Thus, Attila and his Huns invaded the Western Empire, and entered Italy in 452 AD. The opponents of Flavius Aetius, the real ruler behind the throne, instigated Valentinian III to kill him. Aetius was killed on the order of the emperor in 454 (others say Valentinian killed him with his own sword), but his death was avenged by two of his Praetorian Guards, who killed Valentinian III.

This one was succeeded by Flavius Anicius Petronius Maximus). Petronius had already held the position of magistrate, urban prefect twice (420-421 and still before 433), praetorian prefect of Italia twice (435 and 439-441) and twice consul (the first time with Theodosius II). Probably, he participated in the death of Valentinian III in 455. He married the widow of the emperor (Licinia Eudoxia), because of his intention to occupy the throne (that's why he was considered a usurper). They had a son called Palladius, who married his step-sister Eudocia and was executed later. When Licinia Eudoxia suspected of Petronius Maximus as the mastermind of the death of her husband Valentinian III, she asked for help to Genseric, the Vandal king of Africa, living in Carthage. Upon learning of the approaching of the armies of Genseric, Petronius Maximus tried to flee, but he was soon taken prisoner and ended up lynched (stoned to death) by the people. He died at the age of 59 (after his brief reign of 78 days), as well as his son Palladius.

Genseric came to Rome (455), destroying what he could, taking the remaining senators and their wives as hostages to Carthage, as well as the empress Licinia Eudoxia, her daughter Eudocia, whom he gave as wife to his son Huneric (as was initially predicted), and her another daughter, Placidia, whose husband, Flavius Olybrius, son of Petronius Maximus was in Constantinople at the time. According to the sources, Placidia spent six or seven years in captivity and the Emperor of the East, Leo I the Thracian, paid a ransom for her, who went to live in Constantinople. In 472, after many disputes between Roman generals and barbarians by the Western throne, **Flavius Anicius Olybrius** was proclaimed emperor, but died six months later of lung edema. His wife Placidia and her daughter remained in Constantinople. Petronius was succeeded by **Avitus**.

Placidia, daughter of Valentinian III, was probably the last Western Roman empress-consort known by name. Glycerius and Romulus Augustus did not get married. Julius Nepos married an unnamed niece of Aelia Verina and Leo I the Thracian.

**2) Eparchius Avitus Augustus** – July 455–October 456 AD (One year and three months)

Eparchius Avitus was Western Roman Emperor under the name of 'Our Lord Eparchius Avitus Augustus' (Dominus Noster Eparchius Avitus Augustus), for he was Bishop in Piacenza (an archdiocese to northern Italy). He belonged to the group of so-called 'Byzantine Emperors' of the West. He ruled for a little more than one year and neglected the duties of emperor. He died at the age of 71 (in 456 AD). Avitus was a Roman born in Gaul and his predecessors were senators. In the government of Petronius Maximus he became master of the soldiers being sent on a diplomatic mission to the Visigoth king Theodoric II. He was already there when he learned of the sack of Rome

by Genseric (455), the Vandal king of Carthage, and the death of Petronius Maximus. It was Theodoric that persuaded him to take on the office of emperor, and he was hailed by an assembly of Gallo-Roman senators. Avitus received the approval of the Emperor Marcian (of the East) and was proclaimed emperor by the soldiers, and entered Rome (455). In 456, he re-conquered Pannonia and had a naval victory over the Vandals. The master of the soldiers who supported him was Flavius Ricimer, faithful to King Theodoric II (the Visigoth); he was a Roman general of Visigoth origin (his grandfather was a Visigoth king). The naval victory could not, however, win the naval blockade of the Vandals against Rome, because these barbarians still had the maritime control of the Mediterranean. Rome was starving and he had to give up his personal guard of Goths mercenaries. To be paid, he tore several bronze statues to pay them their salaries. Making use of the people's discontentment, Flavius Ricimer allied to Majorian, and both started a revolt. Avitus fled to the French district of Arles, and since his request for help did not come to Theodoric II (the Visigoth), he mustered the best army he could and marched to Italy. He was defeated and captured in Piacenza (a district of Italy), where his life was forgiven, but being forced to take the priestly habits, becoming Bishop of Piacenza in 456. Fearing for his life, he tried to escape to Gaul, but He was killed right there. Other sources claim he was murdered, strangled by Flavius Ricimer himself, the master of the soldiers, or caught at his home and left there to starve.



**3) Flavius Iulius Valerius Maiorianus Augustus or Majorian – 457-461 AD (4 years)**

Flavius Julius Valerius Maiorianus, known as Majorian, was proclaimed emperor by the support of the general Flavius Ricimer, the grandson of an ancient Visigoth king and who had helped him to get rid of his predecessor, Avitus, in 456. Majorian had only Italy, Dalmatia and some territories to the north of Gaul. He fought bravely against the enemies of the empire. Winning a battle against the Vandals, he launched another campaign now against the Visigoths, to the south of Gaul, and defeated the king Theodoric II, what also made the Goths retreat to their former federate territories,



releasing Hispania and Septimania, a province to the west of Gaul. Majorian also attacked the Burgundians (Germanic tribe that lived in the Rhine region) and defeated them. In 460, his generals attacked the Swabians (or Suebi), in the region of Hispania that today corresponds to Portugal, winning them too. However, in his campaign against the Vandals in 461 to restore Africa as Roman province, he saw his naval fleet destroyed by an act of treason. Majorian sought to reform the imperial administration in order to make it more efficient and fair. The powerful general Flavius Ricimer then deposed and murdered Majorian, who had become unpopular with the Roman Senate because of these reforms. Historians say Majorian was like a great and heroic character that sometimes arises in a denigrated era to vindicate the honor of the human species. Therefore, he broke off relations with his ally, General Flavius Ricimer. This one arrested Majorian and executed him in 461 AD. He was beheaded and was 40 years old when he died. He was succeeded by Libius Severus.



#### 4) Flavius **Libius Severus** Serpentinus – 461-465 AD (3 years and 9 months)

The sources describe him as a religious and pious man.

Flavius Libius Severus Serpentinus was proclaimed emperor by General Ricimer after the murder of Majorian, and had to face several problems during his reign, because of the presence of Ricimer and because his government was not recognized in several provinces. Even the Eastern Emperor Leo I, the Thracian, did not recognize Libius Severus.

At the beginning of 460 the Western Roman Empire no longer had mastery over several imperial provinces: Britannia had been abandoned; Africa had been conquered

by the Vandals; Hispania was occupied by the Suebi and Visigoths (who were 'foederati' or 'federated' of the Empire). 'Foederatus', in Latin, was any of several peripheral nations in ancient Rome, which were provided with benefits in exchange for military aid. The term was also used, especially in the Roman Empire to barbarian groups of mercenaries of various sizes. Vandals continued their attacks during the reign of Severus.

However, the area under control of Libius Severus was even smaller (he only had Italy), since the governors of several provinces did not recognize him as emperor; both Aegidius, in Gaul, as Marcellinus, a semi-autonomous governor over Sicily and Illyria, and Nepotianus in Hispania, all those who had supported Majorian. Aegidius was friend of Ricimer and Majorian, and they formed a sort of triumvirate. After Avitus' death in 457, Aegidius was sent to the North of Gaul with the purpose to defend it from the Visigoths, Franks and Burgundians. In 461, with the murder of Majorian, Aegidius wanted to separate from Ricimer and Libius Severus. The latter was afraid that Marcellinus, commander of a powerful army, could descend on Italy, and asked for help from Leo I. The Emperor of the East sent an ambassador to Marcellinus and dissuaded him from the attack. This episode is also important because it marks the passage of Illyria from the West to the sphere of influence of the East.

Severus fought Aegidius in 461 putting Agrippinus in charge of the troops in Gaul, who asked for help to the Visigoths to withstand the onslaughts of Aegidius and his Frankish allies, led by King Childeric I. The participation of the Visigoths brought one more breach in an empire already decadent: in exchange for his support, Severus gave them the city of Narbonne, thereby facilitating the access of the barbarians to the Mediterranean Sea, and separating Aegidius from the rest of the Empire. In 465, Severus defeated him. Other sources say that in 465 he was murdered by a soldier sent by Ricimer. After the death of Aegidius, Gaul returned to the influence of Severus, for a short period of time. There was also difficulty in maintaining order among the Praetorian Guard, because of intrigues and acts of betrayal inside it against him.

Death of Libius Severus: probably by natural causes in 465.



##### 5) Procopius **Anthemius** Augustus – 467-472 AD (5 years)

Wife: Aelia Marcia Euphemia, daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Marcian.

Children: Alypia, Anthemiolus, Marcian, Procopius Anthemius and Romulus

- Alypia married General Ricimer. They had no children. When Anthemius was beheaded by Ricimer, no one knows what happened to Alypia.

- Anthemiolus: His name means 'little Anthemius' and is probably a diminutive of his real name Anthemius. He was sent to Gaul by his father to prevent the invasion of the Visigoths, taking with him a powerful army and three generals. All were defeated by the Visigoth king and killed in 471 AD.

- Marcian: married Leontia, younger daughter of Leo the Thracian and Verina. Ariadne, the older sister of Leontia, married General Zeno, who was chosen as consul in 469 and 472. Leo I was succeeded by his grandson Leo II (7 years old), the son of Ariadne and Zeno I, who already ruled in co-regency with his son. The boy died that same year and Zeno I reigned alone, but without the full support of the people. Some were not on his side because of his Isaurian origin (Isauria is located to the south of the province of Konya in Turkey in the northern part of Taurus Mountains and adjacent lands). He even changed his original name, Tarasis Kodisa Rousombladadiotes to the Greek name, Zeno. The people preferred Marcian because Leontia had married him when Leo I was already king, while the older sister married when Leo I was a simple soldier; therefore, in their point of view, Leontia was the one that 'carried the purple', namely, 'the purple-born' (Latin: porphyrogenita or porphyrogenitus), meaning 'born in the purple.' The Byzantine Empire had several titles for the nobles. To show that the ancestry of an emperor was legitimate, and therefore, his right to the throne, they added the title 'the purple-born.' The title meant they were born in the 'porphyry' (the division of the imperial palace where child births of empresses happened and it was covered with purple marble slabs) when the father of those children was a reigning emperor. The power of Zeno was challenged by Basiliscus, brother of Aelia Verina (his mother-in-law), who managed to bring him down in 475 and maintain power for one year before Zeno take the throne back. In 478-479, Marcian and his brothers (Procopius Anthemius and Romulus), with the participation of Leontia led a revolt against Zeno. Marcian was betrayed by a General also Isaurian who facilitated the escape of Zeno when the rebels entered Constantinople. Marcian, without the help of a Gothic General, who did not arrive in time, was arrested with his brothers and the revolt failed. His brothers managed to escape, but Marcian was arrested, and along with his wife, they ended up being exiled to Isauria. Afterwards, Marcian escaped from exile and sought refuge at the court of Odoacer king of the Heruli.

- Procopius Anthemius: lived in Constantinople while his father Anthemius reigned in the West. During the failed revolt of Marcian against Zeno, Procopius and Romulus fled to Thrace and then to Rome. In the government of Anastasius I Dicorus, Procopius returned to Constantinople. Ariadne, after the death of Zeno, married Anastasius Dicorus, and asked him to appoint Procopius as Praetorian Prefect. Anastasius refused, but in 515 Procopius occupied the post of consul.

- Romulus: also participated in the revolt against Zeno. Nothing is known about him, after having arrived in Rome.

Anthemius was a descendant from a noble family. Born in Constantinople in 420 he studied in Alexandria. In 433 he married Aelia Marcia Euphemia. The reign of Anthemius was characterized by a good diplomatic relationship with the Eastern Empire. In 468, his son Marcian was elected consul by the West, while Flavius Zeno (later Zeno I) was elected consul by the East. The ties with the Eastern Empire were strengthened in 471 by Marcian's marriage to Leontia daughter of Leo the Thracian.

Anthemius Procopius was appointed emperor of the West by the Roman emperor of the East Leo I the Thracian (457-474), with the mission to restore control over the Persian provinces, Africa and Gaul, but failed. His goal was to conquer Sicily again and also failed. In 468, Leo I, Anthemius and Marcellinus (a semi-autonomous governor over Sicily and Illyria) organized a great operation against the Vandal kingdom of Africa. The commander in chief was Basiliscus (brother-in-law of Leo I), who would become emperor of the East seven years later. An allied fleet of thousands of ships (the exact number of ships is different in various sources) was used for the transport of



eastern and western Illyrians armies, as well as a huge amount of gold was spent in this endeavor.

Before Basiliscus cast anchor in Promontorium Mercurii, now Cap Bon, opposite to Sicily, his fellows Marcellinus and Heraclius had conquered Sardinia and Libya. The Vandal king Genseric asked Basiliscus five days to think about the peace agreement. But during this time of negotiations, the Vandals did something quite unexpected: they filled many unmanned ships with combustible materials and, at night, they were directed against the unprotected and unsuspecting Roman fleet. The Byzantine commanders even tried to save some ships, but were attacked by other Vandal ships. Basiliscus had time to escape, while his lieutenant, Joannes, remained fighting the enemies, but finally drowned in the sea, dressed in his heavy armor. The result of all this was that one half of the Roman fleet perished in the Battle of Cap Bon. Heraclius, one of the participants in the expedition fled to Libya, where stayed for two years until he was called back. Marcellinus retired to Sicily, where he was reached by Basiliscus, but was assassinated by one of the captains of Ricimer. Basiliscus then fled to Constantinople and took refuge in the church of Hagia Sophia (Saint Sophia), and only escaped the wrath of the people and the emperor's revenge by mediation of the Empress Aelia Verina, being banished to Heraclea Sintica, in Thrace.

Leo I made a peace treaty with Genseric (or Gaiseric), the king of Carthage, and this way, Anthemius was left alone, without support, and turned his attention to the West, to the Visigoths who tried to invade the Empire. His attempts to win Gaul back were thwarted.

In 470 there was a quarrel between Anthemius and the powerful general Flavius Ricimer because of a Roman senator, tried for treason and executed by the emperor, but supported by the general. After a truce of two years, the fight between them restarted (in early 472). Anthemius was forced to pretend to be ill and took refuge in the Basilica of St. Peter. Leo I sent Flavius Anicius Olybrius to mediate the issue. According to some historians, Leo I would have sent a secret letter to Anthemius for him to kill Olybrius, but it was intercepted by Ricimer, who showed it to Olybrius. Thus, Anthemius was deposed and general Ricimer put Olybrius in the place of Emperor. The fight between the two has become an open war, which lasted five months. Ricimer could separate the door on the Tiber River in the Palatine area, leaving the emperor and his followers without food. The emperor fled again to the Basilica of St. Peter, but was found and beheaded by Ricimer or by Gundobad (king of the Burgundians) and Ricimer's nephew.

Anthemius was 52 years old when he died. Flavius Ricimer was a Roman general of Visigoth origin who led a part of the Roman army and effectively controlled part of the Western Roman Empire, from the government of Avitus (one of the puppet-emperors in his hands). The Goths were divided into two peoples: the Ostrogoths (to the east) and the Visigoths (to the west) and encompassed the ancient tribe of the Suebi (occupants of Hispania and Galacia – Gallia, Gallaecia or Callaecia, also known as Hispania Gallaecia, a region north-west of Hispania, nowadays: Galicia, northern Portugal, Asturias and Leon), i.e., now the Iberian Peninsula. Anthemius' successor was Flavius Anicius Olybrius, the husband of Placidia, daughter of Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia.



**Cape Bon or Cap Bon, in modern Tunisia is the place where the Roman fleet led by Basiliscus landed to launch an attack upon the Vandal capital of Carthage.**



**6) Flavius Anicius Olybrius Augustus – 472 AD (six months)**

Flavius Anicius Olybrius was the son of Petronius Maximus, who succeeded Valentinian III. It was another puppet-emperor placed on the throne by General Flavius Ricimer, since Olybrius was a member of the senatorial aristocracy of Rome. He was the husband of Placidia, daughter of Valentinian III and Licinia Eudoxia. Olybrius had a daughter named Anicia Juliana. Olybrius had the support of the Vandal king Genseric in previous years because his son Huneric also had married a daughter of Licinia Eudoxia and with him on the throne, Genseric could exert a great influence on the Western Roman Empire. However, he only came to power in 472, after the death of Anthemius. Shortly after, the General Ricimer also died, and his barbarian nephew Gundobad (king of the Burgundians) was made magister militum (master of soldiers) in his place. There is not much to be said about the government of Olybrius. He was seen as a pious man and acted in accordance with his belief. Apparently, he had little interest in military affairs. He died in November of that same year, six or seven months after his accession, due to lung edema.

### 7) Flavius **Glycerius** – 473-474 AD (1 year)

Flavius Glycerius was proclaimed emperor in Ravenna at the end of a civil war, by the commander of the Italian army, the German General Gundobad (so Glycerius was considered a usurper). Glycerius was a 'comes domesticorum' when he became emperor. 'Comes domesticorum' was a member of an elite guard unit or bodyguards of the emperor (the commander of the Imperial guard of the court) that was permanently at the Imperial Palace. Despite being supported by General Gundobad (the nephew of General Ricimer), Glycerius was rejected by the court in Constantinople and deposed by Julius Nepos, military commander of Dalmatia and one of the last Roman emperors of the West, soon after deviating an ostrogoths invasion from Italy to Gaul (474). Julius dominated Ostia on his return to Italy and Glycerius gave him the power without resistance. Later he served as bishop of Salona in Dalmatia (now Croatia) in the Early Catholic Church. As a bishop, he was confessor of Nepos himself, who would be assassinated in 480 (approximate date). Glycerius died in Salona, at the age of 60 and adopted as religion, the Chalcedonian Christianity.

**8) Flavius Julius Nepos** (Flavius Iulius Nepos) – 474-480 AD (six years), even exiled from Rome after 475 AD.

Father: probably Nepotianus, ruling in Hispania during the reign of Majorian and Libius Severus.

Mother: unknown name, Marcellinus' sister, semi-autonomous governor over Sicily and Illyria during the reign of Majorian and Libius Severus.

Flavius Julius Nepos was the last Roman emperor of the West considered legitimate. Nepos was the husband of the niece of Leo's wife, Roman emperor of the East, so the nickname Nepos ('nephew', in Latin). His wife, Aelia Verina, arranged the marriage of his two daughters Ariadne and Leontia respectively to Zeno I or Flavius Zeno (Byzantine emperor) and Marcian (a usurper), son of Anthemius Procopius (former emperor of the West) and Marcia Euphemia, daughter of the Byzantine emperor, Marcian. Julius Nepos initially ruled the province of Dalmatia (now Croatia); then he was appointed Emperor of the West by Leo I the Thracian in 474, ending the reign of the usurper Glycerius. As emperor, Nepos sought to consolidate what remained of the Western Roman Empire (Italy and some lands in northern and southern Gaul), trying to negotiate with a Visigoth king the province of Provence (located today in France), regaining the Roman control over it.

As to the naval dominion in the Mediterranean Sea, he failed in his negotiations with the Vandal king Genseric, who exercised piracy. Nepos, while being one of the most capable among the last emperors of the West, was unpopular with the Senate because of his ties to the East. Julius Nepos made the mistake of appointing Flavius Orestes (of barbarian origin, born in Pannonia) to the post of master of the soldiers, and this took all his support in the Empire of the West. In 475 he was deposed by **Flavius Orestes** himself and fled to Dalmatia (Dalmatia is a region covering the territories of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro on the east coast of the Adriatic Sea). As Orestes was of barbarian origin, born in Pannonia, he could not assume the imperial mantle, but appointed his son Romulus, whose mother was Roman, as emperor (Augustus). Nevertheless, Julius Nepos continued to rule in Dalmatia as the rightful emperor, recognized as such in Gaul and in the court of Constantinople. When Odoacer (a prince of Heruli) captured Ravenna in **476 AD**, he killed Orestes the usurper and deposed Romulus Augustus, proclaiming himself the ruler of Italy and pleaded with the Eastern Emperor Zeno I to be appointed patrician of the Roman Empire and Viceroy of Italy. Flavius Zeno consented since Odoacer recognized Julius Nepos as emperor of the

West, a reason by which Odoacer came to mint coins with the name of Nepos. This one was assassinated at the age of 50 (480 AD) in Salona probably by his own soldiers. Odoacer took advantage of the opportunity and immediately invaded Dalmatia and annexed it to his kingdom. Therefore, the entry of Odoacer in Italy (in the region of Ravenna), and the deposition of Romulus Augustus marked the date of the **fall of Western Roman Empire**.

After the death of Nepos, the emperor Zeno formally abolished the division of the Empire.

#### 9) Flavius **Romulus Augustus** – 475-476 AD (10 months)

Flavius Romulus Augustus is considered the last Roman emperor of the West. With age between 15-18 years, he was crowned emperor by his father, General Flavius Orestes, of barbarian origin (having served Attila the Hun) and had deposed Julius Nepos. Under pressure from his father, Romulus Augustus saw himself impotent against an empire in crisis, and became known by the disparaging title of 'Romulus Augustulus' ('little Augustus'). Throughout the fifth century, Rome and Italian peninsula (practically what was left of the Western Empire) found themselves repeatedly devastated by barbarian incursions (Visigoths, Huns and Vandals), but still managed to react and survive. By deposing the Emperor Romulus Augustus in 476, **Odoacer** (king of Heruli) put an end to the Western Roman Empire and became the first of the barbarian kings of Rome. This date is traditionally known as **the end of the Western Roman Empire**, the end of Antiquity and the beginning of the Middle Ages. Some historians say that Romulus' fate is unknown. Others say that Romulus Augustus ended his life in exile in Campania.



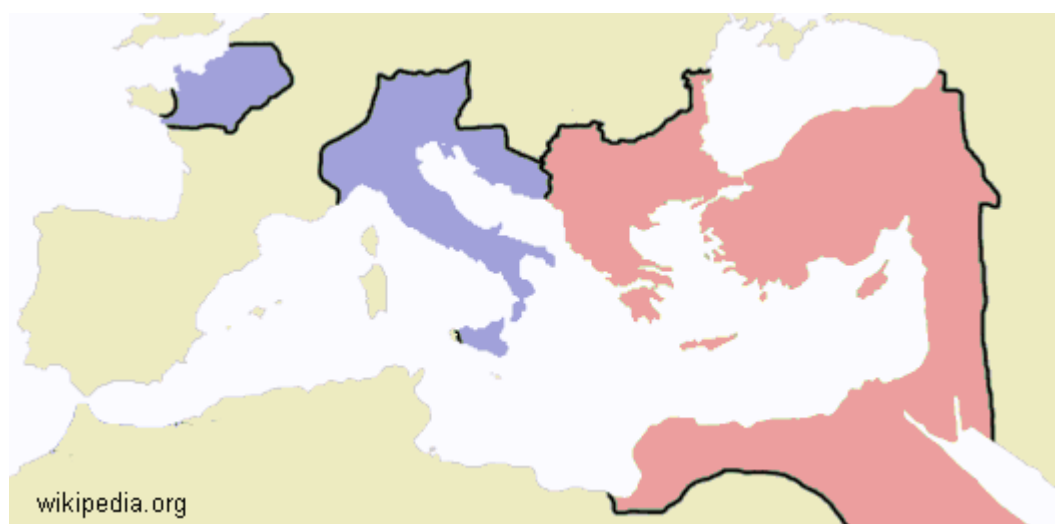
wikipedia.org



**Region of Ravenna in Italy / Romulus Augustus abdicates the throne before Odoacer**

The story is that Odoacer entered Ravenna, deposed the Emperor Romulus Augustus, but with pity for being young, he spared his life, and because of his beauty he gave him a pension of six thousand pieces of gold, sending him to Campania to live as a free man with his relatives. The Roman Senate did not accept Odoacer, but

acknowledged Zeno as the ruler of East and West. In fact, Flavius Odoacer (Son of Edeko, prince of the court of Attila, king of the Huns) was never considered Emperor of the West, but only king of Italy, under the command of the Roman Emperor of the East. Italy would suffer far greater devastation in the next century, when the Byzantine Emperor Justinian re-conquered it. The administration of Flavius Odoacer was based on a conservative policy, leaving the Romans the possibility of maintaining the performance of smaller positions and the free exercise of Christianity, thus keeping substantially intact the previous organizational structure. In this way he ensured the loyalty of the aristocracy, the Senate and the Church. After a military campaign against the Vandals (476-477) who occupied Sicily and the annexation of Dalmatia, Zeno, concerned about the recent successes of the Germanic king Odoacer, encouraged Theodoric the Great, king of the Ostrogoths, to invade the Italian Peninsula. Theodoric defeated Odoacer in Verona (489) and, after a long siege of Ravenna, forced him to capitulate (493), and then try him for treason. As for Romulus Augustus, it is assumed that was still alive in 507 AD.



**Western and the Eastern Roman Empire around 476**



**Modern location of Brno**



[1] Heruli – The Heruli were a Germanic people, possibly originating from the south of Scandinavia (Denmark, Sweden and Norway) and invaded the Roman Empire in the third century. The Heruli with the Goths participated in several expeditions plundering the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea. The Heruli participated in a coalition with other Barbarians (268-269), as the Carpians (or karpianoí, or carpiani or carpi) – in the eastern portions of the current Romania), the small Germanic tribes, the Gepids (or Gepidae, in the region of Dacia, a subdivision of the Goths) and especially the Goths. They settled down on the coast of Black Sea, where they were dominated by the Ostrogoths and the Huns in the third and fourth centuries (= Huns a tribe from Asia and who came to dwell in Germania). Some of their members migrated to Scandinavia and others were engaged as mercenaries of the army of the Eastern Roman Empire. After the death of Attila the Hun in 453, the Heruli in 454 separated from the Huns and constituted a strong kingdom around Brno (southern Moravia – which currently constitutes the eastern part of the Czech Republic) and Vienna. In 476, the Heruli led by Odoacer invaded Italy and deposed Romulus Augustus, the last ruler of the Western Roman Empire.

[2] Goths – The Goths were a Germanic people originally from the southern regions of Scandinavia (Denmark, Sweden and Norway). This long migration could have begun in the Baltic around 1490 BC, and it is possible that the Goths have developed as a distinct people from other barbarians at the borders of the Roman Empire. The Goths used round shields and short swords. The region of origin of the Goths was probably the island of Scandza (perhaps the current Sweden or Gotland). In the first and second centuries the Goths occupied the current region of Poland, moving in small groups to the shores of the Black Sea, now Romania, Moldavia and Ukraine. Some people like the Vandals and Gepids were related to the Goths. From 370 AD the unified kingdom of the Goths in southern Scandinavia region was invaded by Huns, and his people were divided between Visigoths (meaning ‘Goths of the West’) and Ostrogoths (meaning ‘Goths of the East’). In the following centuries, the Visigoths had an important role in the regions of the Iberian Peninsula, in particular part of Spain.

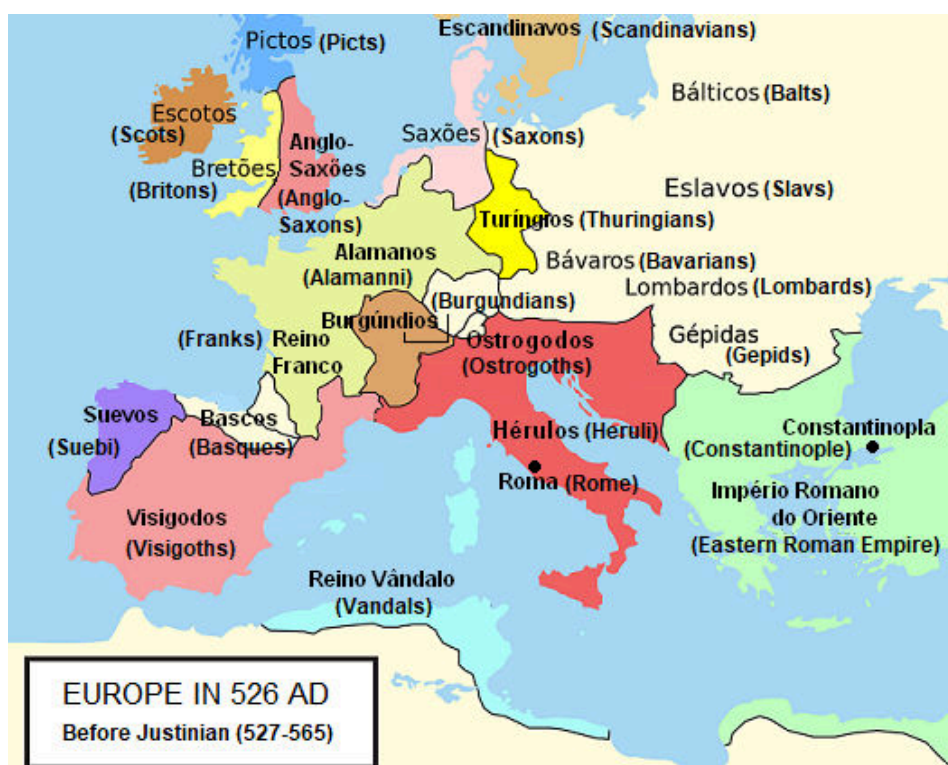


Image above: **The barbarian peoples that occupied the Earth after the fall of the Western Roman Empire (476 AD) are:** Alamanni (Germany); Franks (France); Burgundians (Switzerland); Anglo-Saxons (England); Visigoths (Spain); Swabians or Suebi (Portugal); Lombards (Russia and divisions); Vandals (North Africa, Mediterranean); Heruli (Italy) and Ostrogoths (Austria).

Although the term '**Byzantine Empire**' can only be used in fact to the Roman Empire after 476 AD (the fall of the Western Roman Empire), some classifications have begun to use the name 'Byzantine Empire' since the time of Constantine the Great when he moved the capital of the Empire to Constantinople.

The **Byzantine Empire** was a continuation of the Roman Empire during Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Its capital was Constantinople (modern Istanbul), originally known as Byzantium. Initially the eastern part of the Roman Empire (often called the Eastern Roman Empire), survived the fragmentation and collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century and continued to thrive for over a thousand years until its fall to the expansion of Turkish Ottomans in 1453. The Byzantine Empire was known simply as the Roman Empire (in Greek: Basileia Rhōmaïōn; in Latin: Imperium Romanum) or Romania (in Greek: Rhōmanía) by its inhabitants and neighbors.

Several events of the fourth century to the sixth century marked the period of transition during which the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire was divided:

- In 285, the emperor **Diocletian** (r. 284-305) divided the imperial administration in two halves.
- Between 324 and 330, **Constantine** (r. 306-337) transferred the main capital from Rome to **Byzantium**, later known as Constantinople ('City of Constantine').
- Under **Theodosius I** (r. 379-395), **Christianity became the official religion of the empire** and, after his death, the Roman Empire was divided definitively in two halves, each controlled by one of his sons.
- Finally, under the reign of **Heraclius** (610-641 AD), the administration and the armed forces of the Empire were restructured and the Greek language was adopted in the place of Latin.

In short, Byzantium is distinguished from ancient Rome in that it was directed to the Greek culture instead of Latin.

**XV) Leonid Dynasty (457-518 AD):** Leo I, the Thracian – 457-474 / Leo II – 474 / Zeno – 474-475 / Basiliscus – 475-476 / Zeno – 476-491 / Anastasius I Dicorus – 491-518. The House of Leo ruled the Eastern Roman Empire from 457 to 518 and various parts of the Western Roman Empire from 474 to 480.



Leo I, the Thracian



Leo II



Zeno

Flavius Marcianus Augustus, the previous emperor (Theodosian Dynasty) probably died of gangrene after a religious pilgrimage. He was aided by his daughter Euphemia (Marcian's daughter by his first wife whose name is unknown) and by his son-in-law, Anthemius (the future emperor of the West). As he did not have a son to succeed him on the throne, General Flavius Ardabur Aspar (master of soldiers) took the place until the military Emperor Leo was chosen. Aspar could not occupy the throne because he was an Alan (an Iranian barbarian tribe, belonging to Sarmatia) and also an Arian Christian (he didn't believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ), while most of the ruling class had accepted Nicene Christianity (they believed in the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ). Thus, the Leonid Dynasty ascended the throne.

**1) Flavius Valerius Leo Augustus or Leo I, the Thracian** – r. 457-474 AD (17 years) – Emperor of the East

Birth name: Leo Marcellus

Name as Emperor: Flavius Valerius Leo Augustus

Wife: Aelia Verina, sister of Basiliscus

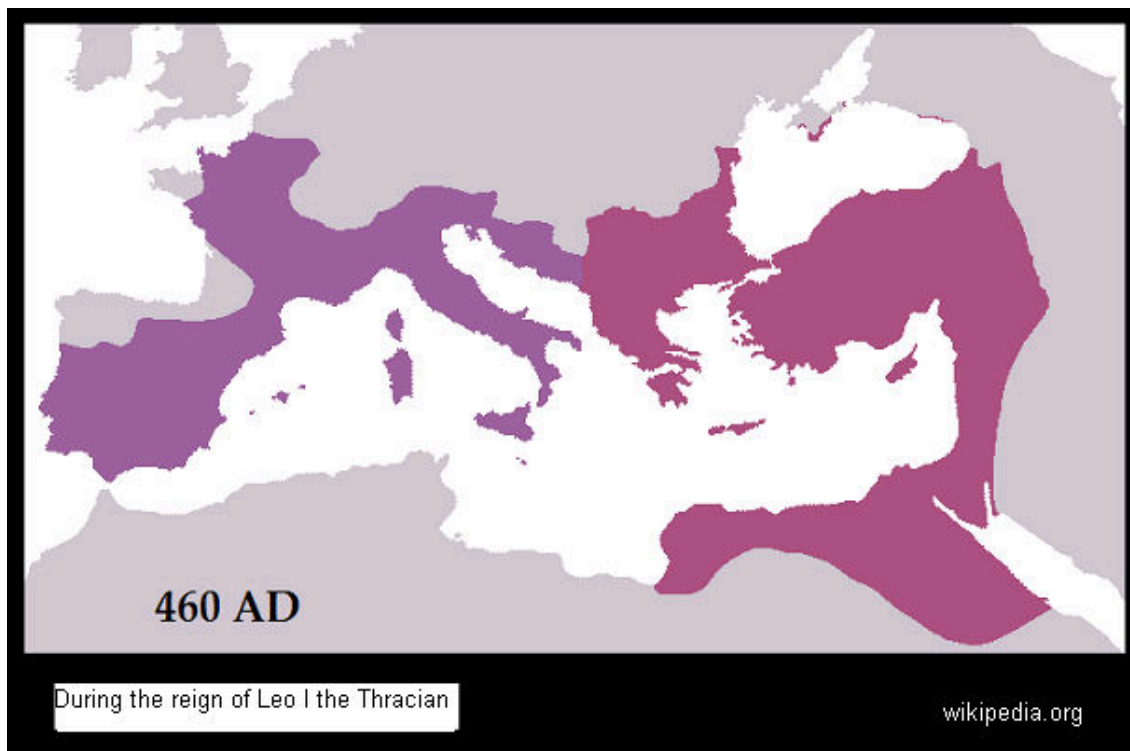
Daughters: Ariadne and Leontia. Ariadne was the mother of Leo II and wife of Flavius Zeno. Later, she married Anastasius I Dicorus. Leontia married Marcian, son of Aelia Marcia Euphemia, daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Marcian. Leo I had a son in 463, who died at the age of 5 months.

Death: of dysentery, at the age of 73.

Religion: Orthodox Christian

Leo I was born in Thrace or Dacia Aureliana (in the ancient region of Moesia Superior) and was a Thraco-Roman officer of the Eastern Roman army; he was acclaimed emperor by General Flavius Ardabur Aspar, the master of the soldiers. Leo I was Orthodox Christian. He was known as Magnus Thrax (the 'Great Thracian') by his partisans; and 'Macelles' ('The executioner' or 'the butcher') by his enemies. Leo earned the nickname 'Macelles' (the Butcher) for the manner of the deaths. He proved to be a capable ruler, overseeing many great political and military plans intended mainly to the aid of the Western Empire already weakened to regain its former territories. He helped in the appointment of Procopius Anthemius as emperor of the West. He was the first emperor of the East to legislate in Greek instead of Latin. In 468, to seal an alliance with Tarasis Kodisa Rousombladadiotes, an Isaurian officer, Leo I gave him his eldest daughter Ariadne in marriage. Later, Tarasis Kodisa changed his name to Zeno, to become more pleasing to the people of Greek language of Constantinople. Isauria is situated to the south of province of Konya in Turkey, in the northern part of Taurus Mountains and adjacent lands. In 469 AD, Aspar attempted to assassinate Zeno; however, his coup was thwarted. Later Leo I, influenced by Aspar, sought to marry her youngest daughter Leontia with Julius Patricius (son of Aspar), but several religious riots broke out in Constantinople, because Julius Patricius and his father were Arians, and the bishops of the city didn't accept the marriage, unless father and son converted to Orthodox Christianity. Moreover, by revolts of the soldiers, Leo I ordered the execution of the soldier who organized the rebellion (Ardabur, the son of Aspar), as well as Aspar, around 471 AD. Julius Patricius was killed later in the government of Basiliscus. In October 473, Leo's grandson, Leo II, was proclaimed 'Caesar' and effectively became the legal heir to the throne for being the closest relative of Leo. In February 474, at the age of 73, Leo I died of dysentery.





**2) Flavius Leo Junior or Leo II – 474 AD (r. 10 months) – Emperor of the East**

Birth name: Flavius Leo Junior

Name as Caesar (473): Caesar Flavius Leo Junior

Grandson of Leo I and Verina, and son of Zeno and Ariadne

Death: at the age of 7, of disease

Leo II (Flavius Leo Junior – reigned in 474 AD) was Roman Emperor of the East, reigning only 10 months. He was the son of Zeno (formerly Tarasis Kodisa) and Ariadne (daughter of Leo I and Verina). In October 473, Leo II was acclaimed ‘Caesar’, for being the closest male relative of the emperor. He ascended the throne when his grandfather died, but being a boy of seven years old. His father acted as regent during his reign. In the first 10 months of his reign, Leo II died of an unknown illness and was succeeded by his father, Zeno I. Probably he was poisoned by order of someone who would like to see Zeno on the throne instead of Leo II.

**3) Caesar Flavius Zeno Augustus or Zeno I – 474-475 and 476-491 AD (r. 17 years and 2 months) – Emperor of the East – After Nepos’ death (480), the emperor Zeno I formally abolished the division of the Empire.**

Birth name: Tarasis Kodisa Rousombladadiotes, an Isaurian

Name as Emperor: Caesar Flavius Zeno Augustus

Wife: Ariadne

Death: at the age of 66, of dysentery or epilepsy.

Zeno was born in Isauria, the old name to the south of Asia Minor, covering much of the southern area of the province of Konya (or Iconium, described in the bible) and Lystra, in Turkey, in the northern part of the Taurus Mountains and adjacent lands. The Isaurians were considered barbarians by the Romans, although were Roman citizens since the third century. As a general, he was chosen as consul in 469 and 472. In 468, to seal an alliance with him, Leo I gave him his eldest daughter Ariadne in marriage. Leo I was succeeded by his grandson Leo II (7 years old), the son of Ariadne and Zeno I, who

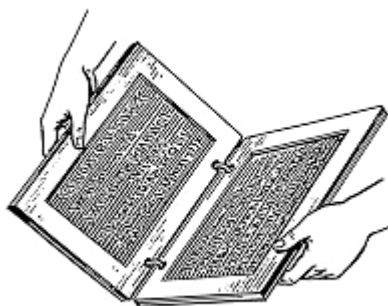
already ruled in co-regency with his son. The boy died that same year and Zeno I began to reign alone, but without the full support of the people. Some were not on his side because of his Isaurian origin. He himself changed his original name, Tarasis Kodisa Rousombladadiotes to the Greek name, Zeno. The people preferred Marcian because Leontia had married him when Lion I was already king, while the older sister married when Leo I was a simple soldier; therefore, in their point of view, Leontia was the one that ‘carried the purple’, namely, ‘the purple-born’ (Latin: *porphyrogenita*), which means ‘born in the purple.’ The Byzantine Empire had several titles for the nobles. To show that the ancestry of an emperor was legitimate, and therefore, his right to the throne, they added the title ‘the purple-born’ or ‘*Porphyrogennetos*.’ The title meant they were born in the ‘porphyry’ (the division of the imperial palace where child births of empresses happened and it was covered with purple marble slabs) when the father of those children was a reigning emperor.



Flavius Zeno was one of the most prominent among the first Byzantine emperors. Internal revolts and religious dissension marked his reign. He saw the end of the Western Roman Empire under Julius Nepos and Romulus Augustus, but he greatly contributed to the stabilization of the eastern empire. In ecclesiastical history, Zeno is associated with the promulgation of **Henotikon** (‘act of union’ or ‘instrument of union’), signed by all the Eastern bishops, a document that attempted to solve the Monophysite controversy, namely, the one that defends the idea that Jesus had just the divine nature, not human united in His flesh. This document was based on the decisions adopted at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 (Establishing the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and in the First Council of Constantinople (AD 381), i.e., Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed: a reshuffle of what was discussed at the Council of Nicaea, emphasizing the Trinity, the eternity of Jesus Christ, through whom all things were made, and that through the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, suffered and rose again on the third day, and one day will come in glory to judge the living and the dead, ending the text with the affirmation of the duty to believe in a church, one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

The document (**Henotikon**) was compiled by the Patriarch of Constantinople, Acacius (471-489). In other words, the **Henotikon** forbade theological discussions that did not use the criteria defined in the first Council of Nicaea and the first Council of Constantinople (**it despised the council of Chalcedon** in AD 451, which had already

repudiated Monophysitism, declaring the divine and human nature of Jesus, the second person of the Trinity; God incarnate, God made man), avoiding any mention of the two natures of Christ, which made use of an ambiguous formula in order to reconcile the Monophysites to orthodoxy. Despite its efforts, the Henotikon ended displeasing both the Monophysites and the Orthodox. But Acacius of Constantinople, Peter Mongus of Alexandria [Bishop Peter III of Alexandria, also known as Mongus, from the Greek: μωγγός mongos, ‘the stammerer’], Martyrius, the bishop of Jerusalem, and Peter the Fuller in Antioch, signed the document, even knowing of the disapproval of the Pope Felix III of Rome. ‘Fuller’ can be explained this way: fulling, tucking or walking was one of the steps in woollen cloth making, which involved the cleansing of cloth to eliminate oils, dirt, and other impurities, and making it thicker. The worker who does the job is a fuller, a tucker, or a walker. The Pope Felix III of Rome (483-492) condemned the emperor’s decree, deposed and excommunicated Acacius, Peter Mongus and Peter the Fuller. Acacius (the Patriarch of Constantinople) removed his name from the **Diptychs** (official lists of the living and the dead, in two sheets, considering the bishops in communion with diptych or in removal, indicating a schism or excommunication). In addition, Acacius persecuted the Orthodox in Constantinople, leading to a schism of 35 years, the **Acacian schism**. Acacius died in 489, no one knows how.



**Diptych**

The power of Zeno was challenged by Basiliscus, brother of Aelia Verina (his mother-in-law), who was proclaimed Augustus by the Senate and the palace ministers in January 475. Zeno was forced to flee Constantinople. Basiliscus executed Julius Patricius (the other son of General Flavius Ardabur Aspar, and now Verina’s lover), not to usurp the throne. A year later, Zeno managed to return and reclaim the throne. In 478-479, Marcian and his brothers (Procopius Anthemius and Romulus), along with Leontia led a revolt against Zeno. Marcian was betrayed by a general also Isaurian who facilitated the flight of Zeno, when the rebels entered Constantinople. Marcian, without the help of a Gothic general, who did not arrive in time, was arrested with his brothers and the revolt failed. His brothers managed to escape, but Marcian was arrested, and along with his wife, they were finally exiled to Isauria. Afterwards, Marcian escaped from exile and sought refuge at the court of Odoacer king of the Heruli. After Marcian’s revolt, Zeno also had to suppress the revolt of Illus, the same general who supported him in Marcian’s revolt and helped him to escape from Basiliscus. Once again, Zeno had victory and kept the throne. There are also reports of conflicts with the Samaritans (484 AD) during his reign, resulting in many deaths, both Jews and Christians. In fact, no one knows to this day who started the conflict: if Jews (Samaritans) or Zeno. The Roman coin (the Tremissis) that was minted in his time showed a design that celebrated

the victories of Zeno, and were issued during his second reign. The struggle between Basiliscus and Zeno prevented the intervention of the Byzantine Empire in the fall of the Western Roman Empire, which began more or less in September 476. Odoacer, the leader of the Heruli, sent the insignia of the Western emperor to Constantinople. Zeno had just recovered his throne, and had to appoint Odoacer viceroy of Italy. After the death of Nepos (480), the emperor Zeno formally abolished the division of the Empire. Zeno was succeeded by Anastasius I Dicorus (Flavius Anastasius Augustus) – 491-518 AD.



Basiliscus

Anastasius I Dicorus

**4) Flavius Basiliscus** Augustus – 475-476 AD (20 months) – Emperor of the East (usurper)

Birth name: Flavius Basiliscus

Name as Emperor: Flavius Basiliscus Augustus

Sister: Aelia Verina, wife of Leo I

Wife: Aelia Zenonis

Son: Marcus (Flavius Marcus Augustus)

Death: one does not know how old he was when he died, but he, his wife and his son died in exile in Cappadocia.

Basiliscus was appointed by Leo I in 468 the commander in chief for the military expedition against the Vandals in North Africa and their king Genseric, because of the sack of Rome in 455. Sardinia and Libya were already conquered by Marcellinus and Heraclius, when Basiliscus we arrived at the Promontory of Mercurii today called Cap Bon, about sixty-four kilometers of Carthage. Genseric, king of the Vandals, asked for five days in order to prepare the conditions for peace. During this time, however, he gathered his ships and suddenly attacked the Roman fleet at night with ships loaded with combustible materials. The Byzantine commanders tried to rescue some ships from destruction, but their attempts were blocked by the attack of other vandal ships. Result: The expedition was a failure, the allied force of Leo I, Anthemius (emperor of the West) and Marcellinus, the general who ruled Sicily and Illyria, had to withdraw, and Basiliscus fled in the middle of the battle, taking many people with him. Half of the Roman fleet was burned, sunk or captured. Returning to Constantinople, Basiliscus hid in the Basilica of Hagia Sophia to escape the people's wrath and the emperor's vengeance. By the influence of Verina over Leo I, he was pardoned and sent into exile in Thrace.

Because of a conspiracy planned by Aelia Verina along with some Byzantine and barbarian generals Zeno was deposed and forced to flee, leaving the way clear for Basiliscus, who came to power and was proclaimed Augustus by the Senate and the palace ministers in January 475. Basiliscus tried to appoint those who were faithful to

him to occupy important positions, and this made him unpopular among the influential people of the imperial court, including his sister Aelia Verina. As a ruler, he was a bad administrator, losing the confidence of his supporters. Because of so much money spent on the failed expedition against the Vandals, Basiliscus was forced to raise taxes to supply the imperial treasury. He reached the point of extorting money from the church. That was bad for him.

Early in his reign, Constantinople suffered a massive fire that destroyed houses, churches, and burned completely the great library built by Emperor Julian the Apostate (r. 360-363). The fire was seen as a bad omen for the government of Basiliscus.

In the court, he lost the support of many, including his sister Aelia Verina, who had made the son of Aspar, Julius Patricius, her lover. He was executed by Basiliscus because his aim was to usurp the throne too. Basiliscus, his wife (Aelia Zenonis) and his son (Marcus Flavius Augustus) were persecuted by Zeno, when he regained power at the end of August 476 AD. They took refuge in a church. Zeno sent them to exile in a fortress in Cappadocia (in central Turkey), where the emperor ordered them to be confined in a dry cistern to die of hunger and thirst.

**5) Anastasius I Dicorus** (Flavius Anastasius Augustus) – 491-518 AD (27 years) – Emperor of the East

Birth name: Flavius Anastasius

Name as Emperor: Flavius Anastasius Augustus

Father: Pompeius, a nobleman

Mother: Anastasia Constantina. On the part of his mother, Anastasius Dicorus was great great-grandson of the Emperor Flavius Claudius Constantius Gallus (Caesar – 351-354 AD) and Constantina (Gallus' cousin, and daughter of Constantine)

Wife: Ariadne. Anastasius was son-in-law of Leo I, and was placed on the throne by choice of Ariadne, Zeno's widow

Children: none

Descendants: many nephews and nieces (most unknown); others without evidence.

Death: at the age of 88.

Anastasius was born in Dyrrhachium, modern Durrës in Albania, the oldest and one of the most important cities of Albania (Illyria). Anastasius earned the nickname Dicorus because he had one eye black and one eye blue. Dicorus, in Greek, means 'two-pupils.' Anastasius Dicorus was an official of Zeno's palace, and with his death, Ariadne, the widow of the emperor put him on the throne. They married soon after his accession in 491. His reign was marked by external wars (against the Sassanians – 502-505) and the Isaurian war (492-497) in Turkey, internal wars and religious conflicts. Nevertheless, he won the trust and popular support reducing taxes, showing great strength and power in the management of imperial affairs. He was responsible for the monetary reforms of 498 AD, adopting the Greek numbering system for the Byzantine Empire. During his reign the Roman eastern border was extensively fortified, including the construction of Dara, soon after the battle against the Sassanians in 502-505, which is a stronghold that can be compared to Nisibis fortress (in the province of Mardin, Turkey, which had been Persian Empire of the Achaemenid Dynasty, then passing to the Sassanians and after, definitively, to the Ottoman Turks, which ended the Byzantine Empire or Eastern Roman Empire). In the reign of Anastasius I some Balkan provinces were left without troops and ended up devastated by invasions of Slavs and Bulgarians. To protect Constantinople and its surroundings against them, the emperor built the 'Wall of Anastasius' or the 'Long Walls of Thrace', stretching from the Sea of Marmara



(it is an inland sea that separates the Black Sea from the Aegean Sea and thus the Asian part of Turkey from its European part) to the Euxine (the Black Sea).



**Location of Anastasius' wall**



**Ruins of a building in Dara**

The emperor was a miaphysite, that is, he defended the religious point of miaphysitism, who taught 'an incarnate nature of Christ' in a union without divisions of human and divine nature, unlike the Council of Chalcedon and the Pope preached, namely, Dyophysitism: Jesus preserved within Himself the two natures, divine and human while an incarnated being (Jn. 1: 1; 14; Jn. 2: 24-25; Jn. 6: 33-35; Jn. 6: 46-59; Jn. 10: 30; Jn. 14: 9-11; Rom. 8: 3-4; 2 Cor. 5: 21; Heb. 2: 17-18; Heb. 4: 15; 1 Jn. 4: 2 – my note). However, Anastasius kept the idea to himself without showing it openly. The Byzantine population, already angry with the religious divisions, forced him, in 512 AD, to adopt directly a miaphysite program, which led to his unpopularity in the European provinces, and Vitalian, an ambitious general, took advantage of this situation



to organize a dangerous rebellion against Anastasius. However, he was helped by the Hun army (514-515). The revolt of Vitalian was finally suppressed in a naval victory in Constantinople led by Marinus, one of his loyal advisors, supporting his religious policy. Marinus survived until the reign of Justin I (518-527), when he, for the second time, took his post as praetorian prefect, but was soon removed from power. Anastasius died childless in Constantinople 518. He was succeeded by Justin, the chief of his guard.

## Roman Emperors 7

Let's talk now of the dynasties of the Byzantine Empire, especially Justinian Dynasty. We can say that the emperor Justinian was the last emperor to try to regain the territory lost by the Roman Empire to the barbarians. But the fate of the Empire was already set. He failed, and the barbarians took possession of the former territories. After the description of the last emperor of this study a list will be placed with the Emperors of the West since Caesar Augustus until the fall of the Western Roman Empire (476 AD) and the Byzantine Emperors until 1453, the date considered as the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire. It will also be placed a more detailed explanation about the difference between the Roman Apostolic Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

In this chapter you'll study about the Byzantine Emperors (East):

- Justinian Dynasty (Justin I, Justinian I the Great along with Theodora I, Justin II, Tiberius II Constantine, Maurice I Tiberius)
- List of the Byzantine Emperors (after Constantine the Great) and the Emperors of the West since Caesar Augustus
- Roman Apostolic Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church

**XVI) Justinian Dynasty** (518-602 AD): Justin I (518-527); Justinian I the Great (527-565; co-regency with Theodora I – 527-548); Justin II (565–578); Tiberius II Constantine (574–582); Maurice I Tiberius (582-602)

Anastasius' successor was Justin, the chief of his guard, after 27 years of reign. Emperor Justin I (518-527) gave rise to the Justinian Dynasty. Then, other dynasties followed, until the taking of the Empire by the Ottoman Turks (1453).



Justin I



Justinian



Justin II

**1) Flavius Justinus Augustus or Justin I** – 518-527 AD (r. 9 years) – Emperor of the East

Birth name: Istok

Name as Emperor: Flavius Justinus Augustus

Wife: Euphemia (born with the name of Lupicina), a non-Roman woman, and former slave, and who some historians denigrated her image, saying she was a prostitute. She received the name Euphemia because of a martyr in the government of Diocletian.

Sister: Vigilantia, who married Sabbatius and had a son, Petrus Sabbatius, later called Justinian, and a daughter also called Vigilantia

Children: Justinian (adoptive), his nephew

Death: at the age of 77, by natural causes

Justin was born in a hovel in Thrace and was a peasant. His birth name was Istok. As a teenager, he fled a barbarian invasion in Illyria (his birthplace) and took refuge in Constantinople, enlisting in the army of the Eastern Empire. Flavius Justinus began his career a Byzantine soldier and later general and commander of the palace guard in Constantinople during the reign of Anastasius I Dicorus. Although illiterate and having already nearly 70 years old, Justin was made emperor. To govern properly, he had trustful advisors, as his nephew Flavius Petrus Sabbatius, whom he adopted as a son and added him the name Justinian (he would reign later with the name of Justinian I). In his reign, John II (surnamed Cappadox or the Cappadocian), the patriarch of Constantinople (518–520) and the Roman bishop Hormisdas, later Pope (514-523), sealed the peace between the eastern and western church, ending the ‘Acacian schism’ (see chapter 6, reign of Zeno). His reign founded a dynasty and created laws that reduced the influence of the old Byzantine nobility.

**2) Flavius Petrus Sabbatius Justinianus or Justinian I or Justinian the Great – 527-565 AD (r. 38 years 3 months and 15 days), along with Theodora I, his wife (527-548) – Emperor of the East**

Birth name: Petrus Sabbatius

Name as Emperor: Flavius Petrus Sabbatius Iustinianus

Father: Sabbatius

Mother: Vigilantia

Sister: Vigilantia, who married Dulcissimus. They had a son (Justin II) who married Sophia, the niece of the empress Theodora

Wife: Theodora (died in 548, possibly of cancer)

Children: a stillborn son with Theodora

Death: at the age of 83, of natural causes

Religion: Chalcedonian Christianity

Flavius Petrus Sabbatius Justinianus (or Justinian I) was crowned along with his wife, Theodora, in 527. He was born into a family of humble origins of Macedonia (town Tauresium) and was appointed consul by his uncle Justin I, succeeded him after his death. He was refined, well educated, intelligent and ambitious and, during his administration, the Byzantine Empire prospered. Unfortunately, Theodora, his wife, had in the past a riotous way of living as an actress, dancer and prostitute; and this would bring many bad influences in politics and religion in the future. Persons directly linked to him were Tribonian (a lawyer), Belisarius (the general, responsible for the expansion of the Byzantine Empire), John the Cappadocian (official who held the function of praetorian prefect of the East) and Narses (an Armenian, the right arm of General Belisarius in the time of Justinian). With the voracity with which he pursued his bold goals, Justinian eventually caused riots, as the sedition of Nika in 532 in Constantinople, caused by dissatisfaction with high taxes and misery.

Nika (nikos, in Greek, means: victory) is the name of a horse. **The revolt of Nika** (or riot of Nika) happened in the Hippodrome of Constantinople, and started because of a doubt as to which horse had won the race: Nika, the horse by which the population cheered, or the horse of emperor's team, and that crossed the finish line almost together. Being consulted, the emperor said the winning horse was his. The people, already

enraged, rebelled, causing a discussion between the social classes. In fact, the horse was only the trigger for a revolution because the real reason was the dissatisfaction of citizens with what was going on for many years: hunger, lack of dwelling, and especially the high taxes. There were sports organizations defined by colors in the hippodrome, reflecting the different social, political and religious classes. These groups have become political parties. The blue represented the large landowners and the Orthodox Church. The green ones supported the pure or anarchic democracy, and were represented by senior officials from the eastern provinces, merchants, craftsmen and partisans of monophysitism, contested by the Council of Chalcedon. It is not known exactly what the symbol of the other two colors was: white and red. Justinian refused to take sides, which caused the union of greens and blues, who rebelled. The spread of the rebellion reached across the capital and grew. The people wanted the decrease in taxes. They started shouting 'Nika!' and butchered the imperial guard and dominated the city, proclaiming a new emperor and destroying buildings and setting fire to churches. Justinian threatened to leave the throne, but the haughty attitude of his wife Theodora, who refused to flee and abandon the royalty, made him give orders to General Belisarius to contain the turmoil that lasted one week. The General quickly suppressed the revolt with his army, beheading nearly thirty thousand people. After the revolt, Justinian went on to rule as an autocrat, like Diocletian. **Autocracy** ['Autos', in Greek, means: 'by oneself'; and Kratos, 'power'] is a form of government in which there is only one holder of state political power, whether a ruler, a leader, a committee, a party or an assembly. In summary, the ruler has absolute control of all levels in the state. It is practically synonymous with dictatorship.

In his government, between the years 529 and 534 AD, it was written the **Justinian Code** (the Codex Iustinianus), a basic system of laws that affirmed the unlimited power of the emperor and at the same time, assured the submission of slaves and settlers to their masters. Civil servants, dependent and obedient to the emperor, guarded and controlled all aspects of life of the inhabitants of the Empire, thus helping in the bureaucracy. Justinian also stood out as a builder: fortifications around all borders, roads, bridges, temples and public buildings were some of his works. As to what concerns the internal policy, the major problems faced were the local lords and the heresies, which broke the unity of the Church of Constantinople and generally arose in the provinces of the Empire, thus acquiring a character of struggle for autonomy from the central power.

Justinian had the ultimate goal of uniting the East and West through religion. So, he sought to solidify Monophysitism, which was strong in Syria and Egypt (Although being a Chalcedonian Christian; therefore, he should support the Council of Chalcedon which condemned Monophysitism). Theodora was a partisan of this doctrine, opposing the Dyophysitism (doctrine that claimed that Jesus preserved within Himself the two natures, human and divine). In his authoritarianism, Justinian fought and persecuted Jews in 540 AD, the pagans (he closed the Academy of Plato in 529 AD) and the heretics, intervening in all church affairs in order to keep it as mainstay of the Empire and under his control. He built the cathedrals of the Holy Apostles and Saint Sophia (Hagia Sophia) to demonstrate the imperial power.

As to what relates to foreign policy, Justinian tried the rebuilding of the fragmented Western Roman Empire, which since 450 was a victim of the attacks of the German barbarians and which had succumbed in 476. His first goal was to destroy the Vandals in northern Africa (533-534), where had just arisen **St. Augustine's doctrine**. General Belisarius led the campaigns, conquering Carthage, Sicily and the Balearic Islands (a

cluster of islands in the Mediterranean Sea belonging to Spain). He also conquered Rome in 539, freeing it from the Ostrogoths. The following year he conquered Ravenna.

**Saint Augustine** (354-430) was born in the city of Thagaste, in North Africa (in the Roman Province of Numidia, now Algeria), and his mother, Monica, was a devout Catholic. His father Patricius was a pagan who converted to Christianity on his deathbed. As a young man (At the age of 17) he studied rhetoric under one of Carthage's most famous orators and became a very eloquent but dissolute lawyer. He was one of the most important church fathers of the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries and Bishop of Hippo (present-day Annaba, Algeria). Before becoming Bishop of Hippo, Augustine converted to Manichaeism or Manichaean faith, a religion (now extinct) where men were guiltless, regardless of the injustices they practiced (matter was evil by nature, but spirit was good; its 'elect' achieved purification through of a rigorous ascetic life), as well as being influenced by Neoplatonism. Neoplatonism is directed towards the spiritual and cosmological aspects of Platonic thought, synthesizing Platonism with Egyptian and Jewish theology, which influenced Christian mysticism. Neoplatonism is a philosophical and religious system developed by the followers of Plotinus in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Plato was a Greek philosopher of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (429-347 BC) who founded a doctrine mainly characterized by the theory of ideas and the concern with ethical issues, where all philosophical meditation aimed at the knowledge of the good, knowledge that is supposed to be sufficient to the implementation of justice among states and among men. In Carthage, Augustine had a relationship with a concubine for thirteen or fifteen years, a young Carthaginian girl, and a son by that union: Adeodatus (372-388), which means 'Gift from God.' Therefore, he did not become 'an elect' in Manichaeism.

As a Manichean, he was called to Mediolanus (modern Milan) to oppose the Christian bishop Aurelius Ambrose (340-397). But when the Empress Justine [mother and co-ruler of her infant son Valentinian II (371-392; r. 375-392)] sends the imperial guards to seize the basilica where Ambrose preaches, and where Augustine's mother was praying, a massacre of innocent people takes place, which moves his heart and leads him to conversion to Catholicism (when reading Paul's epistle, Rom. 13: 13-14). This happened in 386. He and his son were baptized in 387 by Ambrose. The Roman emperor Theodosius I had issued a decree of death for all Manichaean monks in 382 and declared Christianity to be the only legitimate religion for the Roman Empire on 27 February 380 by the Edict of Thessalonica (380). So, in 388, after his baptism, Augustine decided to go back to Africa, but his mother Monica died at Ostia, Italy, as they prepared to embark. Soon after, Adeodatus died too. In Hippo he was ordained a priest in 391. In 395, he was made coadjutor Bishop of Hippo and became full Bishop shortly thereafter; and he gave his property to the church of Thagaste. In 429 the Vandals had entered North Africa. In the city of Hippo, he also mediated military matters between Rome and the Vandal king Genseric (who reigned 428-477), who besieged it in 430 AD. Augustine offered himself as a hostage to the Vandals, in exchange for the people he had imprisoned. The Vandal king freed the hostages, including Augustine, and made a peace treaty, as long as the Roman governor of the city gave up the attack on the barbarians and accepted their peaceful entry into the city. It would be a way to end the siege. But the general resisted. Augustine, who was already sick at the time, and leaving for Rome at the call of the Pope, ended up giving up this chance of rescue and stays in the city with his people, dying there. A short time later, the vandals set it on fire. They destroyed everything but the cathedral and Augustine's library. Augustine accepted Christian baptism, the grace of Jesus Christ as indispensable to human freedom, the Holy Trinity, but maintained the Christological theories of the Catholic Church's indulgences, purgatory and the motherhood of Mary over Jesus ('Mary is the mother of God'). He

developed the concept of the 'catholic church' as a spiritual 'City of God', distinct from the earthly and material city, Jerusalem. He advocated the idea that bishops and church fathers are successors of the apostles and that their authority is conferred by God.

Returning to our study about the Roman Emperors, in the year 542 the bubonic plague attacked a large proportion of the populous cities in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is said that even Justinian contracted the disease but survived. And in 551, there was an earthquake in the eastern Mediterranean, with tremors from Antioch to Alexandria, which triggered a tsunami.



Rome suffered important attacks of the Ostrogoths, but could resist from 544 to 549 AD, being finally conquered and destroyed by the enemy. In 551, Justinian replaced Belisarius by Narses, who eliminated the Ostrogoths armies. The barbarian king left Rome, taking 300 young hostages chosen from the most important families of the city. In 552, Narses defeated them in the battle of Taginae. Totila, the Ostrogoth king, died in battle or during the escape, and the last Ostrogothic king in Italy, Teia, killed the 300 young hostages of Totila, as well as all prisoners and the families of senators. However, the Ostrogoths lost most of the cavalry, having to leave Italy. The war lasted 20 years.

In 554 AD, Justinian I occupied a large section of southern Spain, and the Mediterranean returned to be under the control of the Eastern Roman Empire. The Empire reached its maximum extent; it was only smaller than that of Trajan (98-117). He left a little aside the West of the Empire to give attention to the need to strengthen the eastern border against the Persians, especially the Sassanians, perhaps instigated by Theodora. The Sassanians (Persians) attacked constantly, in order to occupy Armenia, Mesopotamia and Syria. To buy peace with his neighbors, Justinian was forced to dispose of huge amounts of gold, resulting from taxes taken from the citizens.

Justinian died in 565 in Constantinople, of natural causes. The date of his death is traditionally considered the final term of the Roman law.



**3) Flavius Iustinus Iunior Augustus or Justin II** – r. 565–578 AD (13 years) – Emperor of the East

Birth name: Flavius Iustinus Iunior

Name as Emperor: Flavius Iustinus Iunior Augustus

Father: Dulcissimus

Mother: Vigilantia

Wives: Aelia Sophia (niece of the empress Theodora)

Children: Tiberius II Constantine (adoptive); Justus and Arabia, who married Baduarius, a Byzantine aristocrat, and had a daughter called Firmina

Death: at the age of 58, of insanity

In the early days of his reign Justin II paid the debts left by his uncle, administered justice in person and proclaimed a universal religious toleration, but failed to make further reforms against a rebellious aristocracy and provincial governors, also rebels. During his reign, Italy was invaded by the Lombards, a barbarian people of the north of Germany, in 568. He also had to fight the Avars to the north (also called Avars or Abares), a nomadic Eurasian people (or Euro-Asian) before inhabitant of Western Asia and migrated to Central and Eastern Europe in the sixth century. They dominated the Pannonia (in the region of Balkans). He was not successful against the Avars and refused to pay them tribute, because in the reign of emperor Justinian they received money for the Byzantine Empire to be spared, and so they moved to the north, to Germania. In 572 Justin II found himself at war against the Sassanians, who invaded Syria. He had to buy peace by paying an annual tribute.

He also had health problems, for example, temporary bouts of insanity. Therefore, he raised General Tiberius to the post of Caesar in December 574, by suggestion of his wife Sophia, and withdrew from public life. Tiberius and Sophia reigned together for four years, while Justin progressively lost lucidity. He died in 578.

**4) Flavius Tiberius Constantinus Augustus or Tiberius II Constantine** – 574–582 AD (8 years) – Emperor of the East

Name as Emperor: Flavius Tiberius Constantinus Augustus

Wife: Ino (later called Aelia Anastasia)

Daughters: Constantina (who married Maurice I) and Charito (married Germanus, who was a patrician and governor of the praetorian prefecture of Africa)

Death: at the age of 62, probably poisoned



Tiberius II Constantine



Maurice

Tiberius II Constantine was a friend of Justin II, who appointed him commander of Excubitors, or sentinels (In Latin: Excubitores or Excubiti, literally ‘those out of bed’, i.e., ‘sentinels’), a unit of imperial guards of the Byzantine emperors, founded by Leo I the Thracian in 460. Tiberius II took control of the empire when Justin went insane in 574 and sent the Armenian general Maurice to defeat the Persians in Armenia. He took on the reign completely until the death of Justin II in 578 and initiated military actions in the territory of the former Western Roman Empire, negotiating peace with the Visigoths in Hispania, and defeating the Moors in North Africa [Other sources mention ‘the Berbers’ (peoples in the North Africa, of African-Asian languages, therefore, not Greek, who called themselves ‘freemen’)]. In 579 the Slavs (Indo-European peoples who live mainly in Central and Eastern Europe, and in the sixth century began to inhabit the regions of the Balkans) began to migrate to the Balkans, but the Byzantine Empire could not avoid because was busy with the Persians.

His wife, Ino (later called Aelia Anastasia) was probably born on the coast of Bithynia on the Black Sea. She already had a daughter (name unknown) of his first marriage to John (Ioannes, a low-ranking officer who served the centurion as a lieutenant). As John and his daughter died, Ino married Tiberius. They had two daughters, Constantina and Charito. The sources report another daughter (or son), who died before the appointment of Tiberius II as Caesar. As Ino was scorned by Sophia, the wife of Justin II, she left with her two daughters back to his hometown in Daphnudium (possibly the island of Daphnusia off the coast of Bithynia in the Black Sea). But after the death of Justin II, they came back to live in the palace again.

In 582, Tiberius fell ill and Maurice was named his heir. Maurice was a general who had been promised to Constantina, daughter of Tiberius II. Tiberius died in August 582, between rumors of poisoning. His grandchildren were assassinated after the deposition of Maurice I, except a granddaughter, Maria or Miriam, who escaped to Persia and became the wife of Khosrau II of Armenia. No one really knows if she really existed or if she is just a legendary character.

**5) Flavius Mauricius Tiberius Augustus or Maurice I – 582-602 AD (20 years) – Emperor of the East**

Name as Emperor: Flavius Mauricius Tiberius Augustus

Siblings: Petrus, Theoctiste and Gordia

Wife: Constantina

Children: Theodosius (married a daughter of Germanus), Tiberius, Petrus, Paulus, Justin, Justinian, Anastasia, Theoctiste, Cleopatra

Death: at the age of 63, beheaded

Flavius Mauricius Tiberius Augustus or Maurice I became emperor with the death of his father-in-law, one week after the wedding. During his reign, Maurice I had to deal with endless wars in all borders, and despite his qualities as a ruler he only managed to delay the disintegration of the great empire of Justinian I. In 590 Maurice helped the mediation of a Persian civil war to choose a ruler. One of the claimants was chosen, and Mesopotamia and Armenia returned to the control of the Byzantine Empire. The Balkans had their provinces devastated by the Slavs, and only centuries later they were recovered. Maurice had to make an effort to contain the advance of the Slavs in the Peloponnese (peninsula in southern Greece separated from the continent by the Isthmus of Corinth). In the West, Maurice chose military representatives (as ambassadors today) to rule the Byzantine territories threatened in Italia and Africa.

In 602, with financial problems, he let the army spend the winter beyond the Danube, but it does not seem to have been a good decision. The exhausted troops

mutinied and proclaimed Phocas as their leader, demanding that Maurice abdicated in favor of his son Theodosius, or General Germanus, married to Charito, the sister of his wife Constantina. Germanus had a daughter of unknown name who had married Theodosius, the son of Maurice. Much confusion was created around this incident, accusing Theodosius and Germanus of treason. Maurice and his family had to take refuge in Nicomedia (now Izmit in Turkey on the Coast of the Sea of Marmara). Theodosius fled to Persia. Phocas entered Constantinople and was crowned emperor. Maurice and his family were captured. He and his sons (Tiberius, Petrus, Paulus, Justin and Justinian) were executed. Theodosius died after the brothers, later captured by Phocas. The Empress Constantina and her three daughters were spared and sent to a monastery, and after about three years were executed in Chalcedon. Germanus and his daughter were also murdered on the island of Prote (in the Sea of Marmara, in Turkey). Sources say that all were beheaded. Maurice is venerated as a saint by the Orthodox Church.

After Maurice's death, the tyrant Phocas (Flavius Phocas Augustus) was proclaimed emperor (602-610 AD), but he was not part of the Justinian Dynasty. He was overthrown by Heraclius, of Heraclian Dynasty. The Byzantine Empire continued to exist until 1453, when it was taken by the Ottoman Turks.



**Phocas**

### **List of the Roman Emperors (Western Roman Empire)**

#### **Julio-Claudian Dynasty**

Caesar Augustus – 29 BC-14 AD

Tiberius – 14-37 DC

Caligula – 37-41

Claudius – 41-54

Nero – 54-68

#### **Year of the four Emperors (68-69)**

Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian (the founder of Flavian Dynasty)

#### **Flavian Dynasty**

Vespasian – 69-79

Titus – 79-81

Domitian – 81-96

#### **Nerva-Antonine Dynasty**

Nerva – 96-98  
 Trajan – 98-117  
 Hadrian – 117-138  
 Antoninus Pius – 138-161  
 Marcus Aurelius – 161-169  
 Lucius Verus – 161-180  
 Commodus – 180-192

#### **Year of the five Emperors (193)**

Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Pescennius Niger, Clodius Albinus and Septimius Severus  
 (Founder of the Severan Dynasty)

#### **Severan Dynasty**

Septimius Severus – 193-211  
 Publius Septimus Geta – 209-211  
 Lucius Septimius Bassianus (Caracalla) – 198-211 in co-regency with the father; 211-217 as sole ruler  
 Marcus Opellius Macrinus – 217-218  
 Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (Elagabalus or Heliogabalus) – 218-222  
 Severus Alexander – 222-235

#### **Crisis of the third century (235-284)**

##### **Gordian Dynasty**

Maximinus Trax or Maximinus I – 235-238  
 Gordian I – 238  
 Gordian II – 238  
 Pupienus and Balbinus – 238  
 Gordian III – 238-244

##### **Four Emperors**

Phillip the Arab – 244-249  
 Decius – 249-251  
 Trebonianus Gallus – 251-253  
 Aemilian – 253

##### **Valerian Dynasty**

Valerian I – 253-260  
 Gallienus – 253-260 in co-regency with the father Valerian; 260-268 as sole ruler

#### **Sequence of the decline of the Roman Empire (till 284 AD)**

Claudius Gothicus – 268-270  
 Quintillus – 270  
 Aurelian – 270-275  
 Tacitus – 275-276  
 Florianus – 276  
 Probus – 276-282  
 Carus – 282-283  
 Numerian – 282-283 (in co-regency with the father Carus); July 283-November 284, along with Carinus

Carinus – 282-283 (in co-regency with the father Carus); 283-284 along with Numerian;  
284-285 in competition with Diocletian

### **The Tetrarchy of Diocletian**

Diocletian (285-305)

Maximian (285-305)

Constantius Chlorus (305–306)

Galerius (305-311)

### **Other emperors of the Tetrarchy**

Flavius Severus – 305-307

Maxentius – 306-312

Maximinus Daia or Maximinus Daja or Maximinus II – 308-313

Licinius – 308-324

### **Constantinian Dynasty**

Constantine the Great – 306-337 (Constantinople) / 324-337 (as sole emperor of East and West)

Constantine II (Hispania, Gaul and Britannia) – 337-340

Constans or Constans I (Italy, Illyria, Africa) – 337-350

Constantius II – 337-350 (Asia, Egypt); 350-361 (as sole emperor)

Julian – 360-363

### **Non-dynastic**

Jovian – 363-364

### **Valentinian Dynasty**

Valentinian I – 364-375 (Emperor of the West)

Valens – 364-378 (Emperor of the East)

Gratian – 375-383 (378-379 ruled over the Western and Eastern Empire)

Valentinian II – 375-392 (Emperor of the West)

**Teodosian Dynasty** (The dynasty ruled in the East, except Honorius and Valentinian III that, although they were Byzantines, reigned in the West)

Theodosius I – 379-395

Arcadius – 395-408

Honorius – 393–423 (Emperor of the West)

Theodosius II – 408-450

Valentinian III – 423–455 (Emperor of the West)

Pulcheria – 450-453

Marcian – 450-457

### **The last emperors of the Western Roman Empire**

Petronius Maximus – 455

Avitus – July 455 – October 456

Maorianus or Majorian – 457-461

Libius Severus – 461-465

Anthemius – 467-472

Flavius Olybrius – 472

Glycerius – 473-474

Julius Nepos – 474-480, even exiled from Rome after 475  
 Romulus Augustus – 475-476

### **List of Byzantine Emperors (Eastern Roman Empire)**

Although the term ‘**Byzantine Empire**’ can only be used in fact to the Roman Empire after 476 AD (the fall of the Western Roman Empire), some classifications have begun to use the name ‘Byzantine Empire’ since the time of Constantine the Great when he moved the capital of the Empire to Constantinople (modern Istanbul), originally known as Byzantium (the foundation of Constantinople was in 330 AD). Initially the eastern part of the Roman Empire (often called the Eastern Roman Empire), survived the fragmentation and collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century and continued to thrive for over a thousand years until its fall to the expansion of Turkish Ottomans in 1453. The Byzantine Empire was known simply as the Roman Empire (in Greek: Basileia Rhōmaiōn; in Latin: Imperium Romanum) or Romania (in Greek: Rhōmanía) by its inhabitants and neighbors.

#### **Constantinian Dynasty**

Constantine the Great – 306-337 (Constantinople) / 324-337 (as sole emperor of East and West)  
 Constantine II (Hispania, Gaul and Britannia) – 337-340  
 Constans or Constans I (Italy, Illyria, Africa) – 337-350  
 Constantius II – 337-350 (Asia, Egypt); 350-361 (as sole emperor)  
 Julian – 360-363

#### **Non-dynastic**

Jovian – 363-364

#### **Valentinian Dynasty**

Valentinian I – 364-375 (Emperor of the West)  
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**Teodosian Dynasty** (The dynasty ruled in the East, except Honorius and Valentinian III that, although they were Byzantines, reigned in the West)

Theodosius I – 379-395  
 Arcadius – 395-408  
 Honorius – 393-423 (Emperor of the West)  
 Theodosius II – 408-450  
 Valentinian III – 423-455 (Emperor of the West)  
 Pulcheria – 450-453  
 Marcian – 450-457

#### **Leonid Dynasty**

Leo I, the Thracian (Flavius Valerius Leo) – 457-474  
 Leo II (Flavius Leo Junior) – 474  
 Zeno I – 474-475  
 Basiliscus – 475-476  
 Zeno I – 476-491



Anastasius I Dicorus – 491-518

### **Justinian Dynasty**

Justin I – 518-527

Justinian the Great I – 527-565, along with Theodora I – 527-548

Justin II – 565-578

Tiberius II – 578-582

Maurice I Tiberius – 582-602

### **Non-dynastic**

Phocas the tyrant – 602-610

### **Heraclian Dynasty**

Heraclius 610-641 – like some of his predecessors, he made the Greek the official language instead of Latin. Anyway, the Byzantines themselves continued to consider their empire as Roman for over a thousand years.

Constantine III – 641 (ruler only for three months)

Heraklonas 641 – seven months

Constans II – 641-668

Constantine IV ‘the Bearded’ – 668-685

Justinian II ‘the Slit-nosed’ – 685-695

### **Twenty Year's Anarchy**

Leontius – 695-698

Tiberius III Apsimar – 698-705

Justinian II ‘the Slit-nosed’ – 705-711

Philippikos Bardanes – 711-713

Anastasios II – 713-715

Theodosius III – 715-717

### **Isaurian Dynasty**

Leo III, ‘the Isaurian’ – 717-741

Constantine V ‘the Dung-Named’ (in Latin, Copronymus; because he allegedly defaecated during his baptism) – 741-775

Artabasdos – 742-743

Leo IV, ‘the Khazar’ – 775-780

Constantine VI ‘the blind’ – 780-797

Irene of Athens (‘the Athenian’) – 797-802

### **Nikeforian Dynasty**

Nikephoros I, ‘the Logothete’ or Genikos (in Greek: ‘the Victor’; nikos = victory) – 802-811. The General Logothete, frequently, called genikos logothetēs or simply ‘ho genikos’ was a title and office ascribed to the responsible for the ‘ministry of finance’, the general Logothete (genikon logothesion) of the medium Byzantine Empire.

Staurakios – 811 – ruled for three months

Michael I – 811-813

### **Non-dynastic**

Leo V, ‘the Armenian’ – 813-820

**Amorian Dynasty**

Michael II, 'the Amorian' – 820-829

Theophilos – 829-842

Theodora II – 842-855 Regent of Michael III

Michael III, 'the Drunkard' – 842-867

**Macedonian Dynasty**

Basil I 'the Macedonian' – 867-886

Leo VI 'the Wise' – 886-912

Alexander – 912-913

Constantine VII 'the Purple-born' (Porphyrogennetos) – 908-959

Romanos I Lekapenos – 920-944 Co-emperor with Constantine VII

Romanos II 'the Purple-born' (Porphyrogennetos) – 959-963

Nikephoros II Phokas – 963-969

John I Tzimiskes – 969-976

Basil II 'the Bulgar-Slayer' – 976-1025

Constantine VIII 'the Purple-born' (Porphyrogennetos) – 1025-1028

Zoe 'the Purple-born' (Porphyrogenneta) – 1028-1050

Romanos III Argyros – 1028-1034 First husband of Zoe

Michael IV Paphlagonian – 1034-1041 Second husband of Zoe

Michael V, 'the Caulker' – 1041-1042

Theodora III – 1042 Sister of Zoe. She rules for the first time

Constantine IX Monomachos – 1042-1055 Third husband of Zoe

Theodora III – 1055-1056 She rules for the second time

**Non-dynastic**

Michael VI Bringas 'Stratiotikos' ('the Military One', 'the Warlike', or 'the Bellicose') or Gerontas ('the Old') – 1056-1057

**Kommenid Dynasty**

Isaac I Komnenos – 1057-1059

**Doukid Dynasty**

Constantine X Doukas – 1059-1067

Michael VII Doukas – 1067-1078

Romanos IV Diogenes (The Armenian) – 1067-1071 Co-Emperor and stepfather of Michael VII

Nikephoros III Botaneiates – 1078-1081

**Kommenid Dynasty**

Alexios I Komnenos – 1081-1118

John II Komnenos – 1118-1143

Manuel I Komnenos – 1143-1180

Alexios II Komnenos – 1180-1183

Andronikos I Komnenos – 1183-1185

**Angelid Dynasty**

Isaac II Angelos – 1185-1195

Alexios III Angelos – 1195-1203

Isaac II Angelos – 1203-1204

Alexios IV Angelos – 1023-1024 Co-Emperor with the father, Isaac II  
 Nicholas Kanabos – 1024 (1 month)  
 Alexios V Doukas – 1024 (2 months)

### **Laskarid Dynasty (Empire of Nicaea)**

Theodore I Laskaris – 1204-1221  
 John III Doukas Vatatzes – 1221-1254  
 Theodore II Laskaris – 1254-1258  
 John IV Laskaris – 1258-1261

### **Palaiologan Dynasty**

Byzantine Empire restored in Constantinople, and unified  
 Michael VIII Palaiologos – 1261-1282  
 Andronikos II Palaiologos – 1282-1328  
 Michael IX Palaiologos – 1294-1320 Firstborn of Andronikos II, died eight years before the father, then his son Andronikos III came to occupy the first place in the line of succession  
 Andronikos III Palaiologos – 1328-1341  
 John V Palaiologos – 1341-1347 He rules for the first time  
 John VI Kantakouzenos – 1347-1354  
 John V Palaiologos – 1354-1376 He rules for the second time  
 Andonikos IV Palaiologos – 1376-1379  
 John V Palaiologos – 1379-1390 He rules for the third time  
 John VII Palaiologos – 1390 (5 months)  
 John V Palaiologos – 1390-1391 He rules for the fourth time  
 Manuel II Palaiologos – 1391-1425  
 John VIII Palaiologos – 1425-1448  
 Constantine XI Palaiologos – 1448-1453



Constantine XI Palaiologos was the last reigning Roman emperor. A member of the Palaiologan Dynasty, he ruled the feeble remnant of the Eastern Roman Empire from 1449 until his death in 1453, defending its capital Constantinople.

## **Roman Apostolic Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church**

Orthodox Church or Orthodox Catholic Church is a Christian church that has a bishop as the head of each of its churches, and that was the result of the Christian church of the Byzantine Empire. The Orthodox Church gives honor to a bishop of more experience, but does not recognize him as the supreme leader of all as it is the Pope for the Western Church (Since the Great Schism between East and West in 1054). Orthodox Church says itself a descendant of the Church founded by Jesus, considering its leaders as successors of the apostles and does not accept the dogmas proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church in recent centuries, such as the Immaculate Conception and papal infallibility. Eastern and Western Churches ceased to have the same leadership since the Empire was divided after the death of Theodosius I or Theodosius the Great in 395; even more with the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD and the failure of Justinian I (527-565) to unify the Empire in 535. In 1453 with the fall of the Byzantine Empire or Eastern Roman Empire and the rise of Islam (Ottoman Empire), besides the most difficult maritime trade between East and West (with Greek and Latin languages respectively), the cultural unity ceased to exist.

The Orthodox Church still preserves some rituals of the Catholic Church: the seven sacraments, respect for the icons and liturgical vestments in its services. Sacrament is the sacred sign instituted by Jesus Christ (according to Catholic doctrine) to grant the divine salvation to those who, by receiving Him, make a profession of faith (public confession of a belief). They are seven: Baptism, chrism (confirmation of baptism), the Eucharist, penance or confession, the order (it confers the power to exercise ecclesiastical functions), marriage and extreme unction (to those who are dying). The most important Orthodox churches are the Greek and Russian. In English there are two words used to differentiate the Eastern churches who accept the Council of Chalcedon (which supports dyophysitism) and those that do not accept it (that is, those that accept monophysitism). The first are called 'Eastern Orthodox Churches' and the latter 'Oriental Orthodox Churches.' In the Latin languages, those that do not accept the Council of Chalcedon are called Oriental Orthodox Churches, and those who accept it, Byzantine Orthodox Churches or Chalcedonian Churches.

At the Council of Nicaea (325 AD) a bishop was established as the leader of the capital of each province, recognizing the authority of the bishops of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch (However, it was considered that Rome had a special authority because of its connection to Saint Peter). The bishop of Jerusalem would be entitled to a special honor, but had no authority over other bishops. In 330 AD, when Constantine moved the capital of the Empire to Constantinople, the Bishop of Rome has lost influence in the Eastern churches, which began to be led by the Bishop of Constantinople. Many doctrinal divisions and power struggles led to the split in 1054, called the 'Great Schism' or 'Schism of East and West.' Since the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204) the relationship only deteriorated between the Catholic Church of East and West, but worsened with the fall of Constantinople in 1453, for they gave in to Islam. Orthodoxy remained strong in Russia until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the church became a state institution. With the atheism of state of communist nations, the church suffered even more.

The Orthodox Churches that do not accept the Council of Chalcedon and constituted the Oriental Orthodox Churches are:

Coptic Orthodox Church

Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church

Jacobite Syrian Church

Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church (Indian Orthodox Church)

Eritrean Orthodox Church

## *Conclusion about Rome and Emperors*

In all the rulers we can see the most striking features of Rome since the time of its foundation until the day of its fall (both the Eastern and the Western Empire): vanity, pomp, arrogance, violence, cruelty, thirst for conquest, greed, ostentation of power and boundless ambition. Above all, there was a so great idolatry that seemed impossible to have a space for God to act with freedom there, because under the action of Rulers and Authorities of the darkness, as the bible says, even the emperors with good intentions sooner or later were taken to do things harmful to themselves and for all citizens of the Empire. This study gives us an idea on how these high castes of demons manipulate and oppress nations, for the collective sin gives them the permissiveness to act with all kinds of destruction: emotional and mental and spiritual oppression, cruelty of people against their fellow men, often without reason, whether with wars between nations or with extermination of certain social groups because of religious differences.

We also see that at that time the lifetime was short compared to today, with a high rate of infant mortality and too much abuse of children, whether because of sexual perversion of the powerful (pederasty) or because of the influence of their own parents who, as rulers, made their children from seven to ten years old to go to war with them, not only causing early maturation, as well as shaping their character in order to accept that kind of life as a normal pattern to be followed. When it was not war, it was pre-chosen weddings, promising a daughter still a child to some emperor with the interest of sealing political pacts. Boys became puppets in the hands of ambitious generals, taking office as emperors (Caesars) with few months of age or four years old. And then they died assassinated at the age of 17 by envy of the Praetorian Guard. In other words, most children and adolescents had no choice and often they grew with severe deformities of character. It is the example of Caligula, who at the age of three was already wearing soldier's uniform and went with his father in his battles. When he grew up, we know what has become of him. This is the case of Elagabalus that, at an early age (2 years old) has been appointed to be a priest of El-Gabal (Elagabalus in Latin, or Heliogabalus in Greek, which was the Syrian Sun-God, called El-Gabal, in Aramaic). Later, his government was one of the worst that Rome has ever faced.

The horrors of war and the cruelty of the killings and executions often make us see the extent to which a human being can be corrupted. This did not happen only in relation to Rome, but also by the barbarous inhabitants of the surrounding nations. The power struggle behind the throne often led to mass executions of an entire family because of a single member with this type of character deformation. Among the cruelest emperors of the Empire we can quote: Tiberius Caesar, Caligula, Nero, Domitian, Titus, Commodus, Caracalla, Diocletian, Maximian, Maximinus II, Constans (the youngest son of Constantine I, especially at the end of his reign), Constantius II (the second son of Constantine I who conspired with the Praetorian Guard to kill the family after his father's death not to have competitors to the throne), Constantius Gallus (the cousin of Constantius II), Leo I the Thracian [known as Magnus Thrac (the 'Great Thracian') by his partisans; and 'Macelles' ('The executioner' or 'the butcher') by his enemies. Leo earned the nickname 'Macelles' (the Butcher) for the manner of the deaths]; and many other Emperors.

Other characteristics of the Roman Empire: 1) Divorce, adultery, separation, polygamy, marriages by interest, including supported by religious leaders. 2) Hypocrisy and religiosity, for example, Trajan: a great emperor to the Roman people and very bad for Christians. Antoninus Pius was called 'Pius' by the fact that he insisted on the



deification of his adoptive father Hadrian. Pulcheria, queen of the east, who married only under pressure from the Roman Senate, but took a vow of chastity to be called 'the virgin empress,' and thus show everyone her devotion to the Virgin Mary, to whom she raised three churches. 3) Sexual perversions (sodomy, pederasty): Nero and Otho, both with Sporus as a lover; Heliogabalus with Hierocles, his charioteer; Hadrian and his lover Antinous, to whom he erected a temple in Egypt after his death. Commodus as well as several Roman generals, with other male lovers; some historians make mention of homosexual tendency of Constans (son of Constantine the Great). There was Greek heritage influencing Rome also: Alexander the Great and his lover Hephaestion.

More than it was said until here, we can see:

- At the time there was inflation too, financial devaluation and social inequality because of high taxes, monumental buildings, waste of money (as Caligula with his palatial parties, Nero with the golden house and the Colossus of Nero; Hadrian building a Hellenistic city upon the ruins of Jerusalem; Caracalla with his baths; Commodus with his fantasies, and many other emperors with their unnecessary military campaigns or ridiculous games in the arenas) and even auction to get the title of emperor and to buy the loyalty of the Praetorian Guard (Titus Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus, Didius Julianus and Marcus Aurelius).

- When we studied about the Seleucid Empire and the revelations of Daniel chapter 11, we talked about Antiochus IV as a figure of the Antichrist (he sacrificed a pig – unclean animal – on the altar of the temple and installed a statue of Zeus inside it). After this study on Rome we can find out a few more characters: Caligula and Nero personifying gods (Caligula put a statue of himself in the temple in Jerusalem), Titus (with the violence that he destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and made sacrifices to Roman gods there), Hadrian (he placed on the temple mount – mount Zion – a shrine dedicated to Jupiter, Zeus to the Greeks; next to Golgotha (where Jesus was crucified) he rose a temple to the Greek goddess Aphrodite, Venus to the Romans), and another two or three, with their extravagances and delusions of grandeur, aiming to be gods.

We can ask:

“Why did God allow all this?”

“I cannot tell you what goes on in the mind of God and His eternal purposes, but I can surely say that He was in control of everything and even then He did justice in one way or another. We can see that in Rev. 17: 6 it is written: “And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly amazed.” The servants of God on earth prayed and the dead asked the same question: “When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given; they cried out with a loud voice, ‘Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?’ They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters, who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed” (Rev. 6: 9-11).”

The altar to which the Bible was referring to was the bronze altar, where the sacrifices of burnt offerings were made. Wesley explains the first part of the verse as representing the martyrs killed under the heathen Rome, and the following, the martyrs killed under the Papal Rome. In Rev. 18: 21-24, God does His justice destroying the city, which the bible calls Babylon: “Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘With such violence Babylon the great city will be thrown down, and will be found no more; and the sound of harpists and minstrels and of flutists and trumpeters will be heard in you no more; and an artisan of

any trade will be found in you no more; and the sound of the millstone will be heard in you no more; and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more; and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more; for your merchants were the magnates of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery. And in you was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slaughtered on earth.” In verse 23b, the bible is clear: “all nations were deceived by your sorcery.”

In Rev. 19: 1-3, the wail and cry are transformed into joy because of the righteousness of God: “After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power to our God, for his judgments are true and just; he has judged the great whore who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants’. Once more they said, ‘Hallelujah! The smoke goes up from her forever and ever.’”

As for the atrocities committed by the heathen Rome, when we read the stories of all these emperors we can see that precisely those who most persecuted the Christians were the ones who died of violent deaths or faced some natural disasters and wars against barbarian peoples in their reign. For example:

- Titus Flavius Vespasian Augustus (r. 79-81), who entered Jerusalem and destroyed the temple in 70 AD, and is also considered as a figure of Antichrist, faced big disasters during his reign period: the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD reaching the cities of Herculaneum, Pompeii, Oplontis and Stabiae, and the fire of Rome in 80 AD.

- Valerian I (r. 253-260), even having been arrested by the Sassanians (Persians) sent two letters to the Roman Senate, ordering measures against Christians. Result: There was a bloody persecution of Christians, but the death of that emperor as a prisoner in Persia was horrible: it is said to have been flayed and made into a footstool. Valerian reigned during the period known as ‘Crisis of Third Century’ (235-284), when Rome faced a pandemic of smallpox or measles, which also hit Ethiopia and Alexandria (Egypt) and was called ‘Plague of Cyprian’ bishop of Carthage (now Tunisia) that identified it. In this historical period, one can say that the Empire faced 50 years of civil wars, foreign invasion, and collapse of the economy.

- In the reign of Theodosius II (Emperor of the East – 408-450 AD), there was the sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410 AD

- In the reign of Valentinian III in the West (425-455), Attila and his Huns entered Italy in 452 AD. Rome barely recovered of this attack, in 455 Genseric, the Vandal king in Africa, came to the town and killed many people, taking the remaining senators and their wives as hostages to Carthage, as well as the Empress Eudoxia and her two daughters: Eudocia and Placidia.

- In 476, during the reign of Romulus Augustus, Odoacer (king of the Heruli) put an end to the Western Roman Empire and became the first of the barbarian kings of Rome.

- In the reign of Basiliscus (a usurper reigning in the east – 475-476), Constantinople suffered a massive fire that destroyed houses, churches, and burned completely the great library built by Emperor Julian the Apostate (r. 360-363).

- In the reign of Justinian I or Justinian the Great (Emperor of the East – 527-565), trying to regain the Western Empire that had been defeated by the barbarians, was frustrated in his ambition and in the greed with which he pursued his goals. In the year 542 AD bubonic plague attacked a large proportion of the populous cities in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is said that even Justinian contracted the disease but survived. And in 551 AD, there was an earthquake in the eastern Mediterranean, with tremors from Antioch to Alexandria, which triggered a tsunami.

“What are all these plunders, wars and disasters of nature; coincidence or the hand of God doing justice to His servants?”

If all this happened as an explanation for Rev. 6: 9 (“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given”), why God will not do justice regarding to the death of the saints during the papal period, as is described in the following verses? (“They cried out with a loud voice, ‘Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?’ They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters, who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed” – Rev. 6: 10-11).

This study was made for people to understand why God calls Rome a whore. Because more important than all the abominations commented above there is one unbearable for God and is called idolatry.

Since the death of the Apostle John (the last apostle of Jesus, who died in 98 or 100 AD), the original Christianity practically ceased to exist. Paul, when he said goodbye to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20: 17-35), he warned that after his departure savage wolves would come in among them, not sparing the flock, and some even from their own group would come with heresies in order to entice the disciples to follow them (Acts 20: 29-30).

It was custom of the Roman emperors consider themselves gods, building temples for themselves or deifying emperors or empresses who preceded them:

- Gaius Julius Caesar (49-44 BC)
- Caesar Augustus (29 BC-14 AD)
- Tiberius (14-37 AD)
- Caligula (37-41 AD)
- Vespasian (69-79 AD)
- Nero (54-68 AD)
- Domitian (81-96 AD)
- Plotina wife of Trajan (98-117 AD)
- Annia Galeria Faustina or Faustina I (Faustina Major), wife of Antoninus Pius (138-161 AD) was deified after her death
- Antoninus Pius (138-161 AD)
- Lucius Verus (161-169 AD).
- Commodus (180-192 AD)
- Septimius Severus (193-211 AD) fomented the religious syncretism
- Caecilia Paulina or Diva Caecilia Paulina Pia, wife of Maximinus Trax (235-238 AD) was deified after her death
- Gordian I and II (238 AD)
- Valerian (253-260 AD)
- Claudius Gothicus (268-270 AD). He erected a temple to the sun-god (Sol Invictus, the god of soldiers)
- Aurelian (270-275 AD)
- Diocletian (284-305 AD)
- Prisca and Galeria Valeria, wife and daughter of Diocletian (284-305 AD). Both were canonized as Christian saints.
- Maximian (285-305 AD)
- Constantine I (324-337 AD)
- Constantina (also named Constantia and Constantiana) daughter of Constantine I (324-337 AD) was venerated as a saint, Saint Constance (In Italian, Santa Constanza).

- Constantius II (337-361 AD)
- Julian the Apostate (361-363 AD) favored paganism (Christianity was already one of the official state religions)
- Gratian (375-383 AD)
- Flavius Eugenius (392-394 AD), although a Christian, he was the last Emperor to support Roman polytheism (Christianity was already one of the official religions of the State)
- Aelia Pulcheria (450-453 AD) was canonized
- Maurice I Tiberius (582-602 AD) was canonized by the Orthodox Church

Christianity created by Rome continued to do the same thing was repeated for centuries in the Roman Empire: deification of the emperor, human idolatry (canonizing 'saints'), continuing to erect statues of 'saints' in the same way that the Greek-Roman gods were carved and placed in strategic places to be worshiped; 'to sell' indulgences (Speaking plainly, to give the sinner the means to get rid of the consequences of his sins here on earth, before he goes to purgatory or to hell). The Roman Christianity continued to minister the sacraments to achieve salvation (it was the same thing that was done in roman polytheistic cult) instead of remaining steady in the single and simplest way to achieve this: accepting Jesus through faith as the only God and Lord (Rom. 10: 9-10).

In the New Testament there is no mention about the Popes, the worship of Virgin Mary, her assumption, or Mary as co-redeemer and mediator; there is no mention about the canonization of someone as a saint, neither mentions the petition of blessings to the so-called saints. It makes no mention of apostolic succession, the Church's ordinances functioning as sacraments, infant baptism, confession of sins to a priest in a confessional inside the church (cf. James 5: 16 – 'confess your sins to one another' can refer to any brother in Christ anointed with the Holy Spirit and with whom we have intimacy to open our hearts and pray together); it doesn't speak about purgatory, indulgences, let alone the equal authority of church tradition and of the Scriptures; idem for all the feasts that it celebrates, such as the day of each 'saint' and Corpus Christi etc.

Actions related to the Ruler 'Queen of Heaven', worshiped by Catholicism as Mary or Our Lady:

- Diseases.
- Physical and spiritual prostitution (ecumenism and acceptance of other idolatrous creeds mixed with biblical truths); moral, material and spiritual corruption.
- Rebellion to authority and power struggle (reversing things and taking to him (the Ruler) the authority that belongs to God).
- Misery, pain and suffering (martyrdom).
- False prophecy.
- Confusion.
- Religiosity.
- Fear of death.
- Uncontrolled emotions (emotional imbalance) [influence of the Authority called Jezebel, referring to the wife of King Ahab of Israel, idolatrous woman who worshiped the same Ruler described above (Asherah Pole – 1 Kin. 18: 19; 1 Kin. 16: 31-33), and whose demons under her authority are sent to torment men emotionally]. It is a symbol of immorality, carnality, lust, false prophecy and all sort of emotional disarray.

The word "Babylon" in Sumerian is written as kà-dingir-ra, which means "Door of God"; and in Hebrew it is written as Babhel (Strong # 894; Gen. 10: 10; Gen. 11: 9 – the tower of Babel), which comes from the Hebrew root bālal (Strong #1101), meaning "confusion" or "mixture." Ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia was the political,

commercial, and religious center of a world empire. It was known for its luxury and moral decadence.

Today, more than the ancient city of Babylon in Chaldea (with its spiritual prostitutions) or the city of Rome (seen by the apostle John as the symbol of all that represented a force contrary to the teachings of Christ), we can say that Babylon represents this anti-Christian force, the confused, perverse and profane world system, antagonistic to the Kingdom of God, using not only religion (The apostate church, prostituted with worldly abominations, that is, the religious system of the Antichrist) but also secular powers (such as the world monetary system, trade and politics) to oppress and try to steal faith in God's word preached by Jesus. As in the past Babylon has brought oppression and confusion upon people, including God's people, it brings the same thing today, trying to oppress and divert believers from the path that God has drawn for them. The Rulers and Authorities of the darkness are the instruments of the devil to do this. Many theologians and historians summarize this definition of Babylon as: the entire political, economic and religious system of the world in general under the rule of the Antichrist.

Despite all these bad things we mentioned there is something good to be said: God's patience exists. Who else would wait so many millennia for humanity to repent and return to the true light? God's righteousness exists; yesterday, today and forever, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb. 13: 8).

"I will be with you that you take my presence and my perfume to the poor of life and light. Speak of my love; especially exude my love so that others may know that I'm real. The language of the heart is wiser than the language of the mind. Draw near to me and I will reveal you the secrets of my heart."



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