Classical Civilization

In this lesson, we will discuss classical civilization. However, before we really discuss Greece and Rome, the bases of classical civilization, we must first explore the Hebrews. How did this small tribe come to play such a large role in history? The answer, of course, is through the spread of Christianity, which came out of Judaism. Hopefully, after you read about the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire, you will have a better grasp of who these people were and are, as well as how they influenced our present.

As Westerners, we find much of our own history in the Greek and the Roman civilizations. Why does the United States have a form of government called democracy? Why does it have a senate? What are the origins of Western philosophy, science, and medicine? They come directly from the Greek and Roman civilizations. They are the foundations of Western civilization, and they are the conduits by which Christianity spread throughout the world. For that reason, this lesson is dedicated to them.

What You’ll Learn to Do

1. Explain monotheism and describe how the Hebrews arrived in Palestine.

2. Describe the importance of the Phoenicians’ influence on the modern English alphabet.

3. List the accomplishments of the Greeks during the Hellenic period (ca 2000 to 338 BC) that the modern world still uses.

4. Explain how Greek ideas of the Hellenistic period (338 to 148 BC) spread throughout the world and which ideas have influenced the present.

5. Describe the founding of Rome and (briefly) how the Greeks influenced the Romans.

6. Describe the governmental structure of the Roman Republic (509 to 27 BC) and the events that led to its collapse.

7. Describe life in the Roman Empire (27 BC to AD 410), including the rise of Christianity. Explain why the empire collapsed.
Objective 1

Explain monotheism and describe how the Hebrews arrived in Palestine.

Map and Overview

In this lesson, we will refer to quite a few places. Please be sure to review the maps in lesson one before continuing on, as they will be important to our narrative.

In the Western Near East

We previously discussed the Mesopotamian civilization and its importance in history (see lesson one). According to the Old Testament, a man named Abraham and his family lived in southern Mesopotamia. He left the region, along with a group of followers, in search of good land eventually finding it in the Nile Delta. The Mesopotamians and Egyptians referred to Abraham and his followers as "Hapiru," homeless nomads, a term that most likely evolved into the word "Hebrew." Once in the Nile Delta, the Hebrews were enslaved by the Egyptians. Under the leadership of Moses, they left and moved into Palestine, arriving there in the thirteenth century BC.

The name of Abraham’s son, Jacob, was changed to Israel, and his twelve sons formed twelve tribes: the twelve tribes of Israel. Around 1000 BC, a man named Saul established a monarchy over them. Saul was succeeded by David (who slew Goliath) who was in turn succeeded by Solomon.

When Solomon was alive, the Hebrew kingdom was united because he was a strong and powerful leader. But after he died, there was simply not a ruler powerful enough to unite the entire region and the kingdom split into two sections. The ten tribes of the north were known as Israel, and the two tribes of the south came to be known as Judah.

The Assyrians, a new empire in Mesopotamia, eventually carried away the kingdom of Israel. The southern kingdom remained independent until 587 BC, when the Babylonians crushed them and led them captive into Babylon (in Mesopotamia). The tribe of Judah did not return for fifty years, but unlike the northern tribes, they did indeed return.
Jewish Religion

The Torah (the Old Testament in Christianity), a combination of history and religious instruction, is the basis for Judaism. Both its contents and the beliefs of Judaism would profoundly influence two of the largest religions in the world, Christianity and Islam (as well as Judaism itself).

When the Hebrews were led out of captivity by Moses (see the map above), God gave them a set of laws known as the Ten Commandments, which would be the basis of Judaism. Among these laws was one that separated Judaism from all the other religions then in existence—the one that stated that believers could only worship the one true God. This practice is known as monotheism.

Let's Check Your Mastery

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

1. On the map below, Samaria is where the ten northern tribes, or the kingdom of Israel, lived prior to being carried away by the Assyrians. Now Judea (Romans called it the kingdom of Judah) is the home of the two southern tribes. Why do you think the northern tribes and the southern tribes went to war against one another?
   a. land
   b. monarchy
   c. hatred
   d. water

2. Imagine you are living in ancient Mesopotamia. You worship many gods (you are polytheistic), such as the creator god, god of death, war god, fertility god, and so forth. A Hebrew comes to you and explains that, to him, all of these gods are really one god known as Yahweh. Why would this seem strange to you?
   a. because you worship only one god
   b. because you worship many gods
   c. because the Hebrews are foreigners
   d. because you rule over the foreigners and they cannot tell you that you are wrong
If you look at the northern part of the map of Palestine above, you will see a region called Phoenicia. The principal city of Phoenicia was Tyre. The Phoenicians are especially important in our narrative for two reasons: their trading empire and their contribution of the phonetic alphabet.

The Phoenicians, in the eighth and seventh centuries BC, were the best traders in the world. They, more than any other civilization, were responsible for the global spread of cultures. This was of course done through trade but also through maintaining their colonies. Their most important colony was called Carthage and was located in north Africa. Carthage will play a large role in the history of Rome, so for now just keep it in the back of your mind.

One of the most important aspects of this spread of culture was that of the alphabet. This alphabet was based on sounds and was called the phonetic alphabet. Unfortunately, however, they did not have vowels. The Greeks, who traded with the Phoenicians, adopted their alphabet and added vowels, which is why our alphabet today uses vowels.
Let’s Check Your Mastery

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

1. Imagine you are a Phoenician. Your alphabet has no vowels. Try to say the following phrase without any vowels: I love history. How would you do it?
   a. _l_v_ h_st_r_
   b. l_v_h_s_t_r
   c. _l_v_h_s_t_r
   d. _l_v_h_s_t_r_y

HIST 66: World Civilizations / Lesson 2: Classical Civilization
Objective 3

List the accomplishments of the Greeks during the Hellenic period (ca 2000 to 338 BC) that the modern world still uses.

Geography and Overview

The geography of Greece is excellent for sailing as it has many harbors, but it is not so good for large farms, as it does not have very many large plains.

The history of Greece has played an especially important role in the development of the history of the world. This history can be divided into two broad periods: Hellenic (or Greek), corresponding with the years 2000 to 338 BC, and Hellenistic (or Greek-like), roughly 338 to 148 BC.

The Minoans (ca 1650 to ca 1400 BC)

To begin our discussion of Greece, we must begin on the island of Crete. The Minoans, as we refer to the ancient inhabitants of the island (although they undoubtedly did not call themselves by this name), rose to dominance by 1650 BC.

Although they grew olives and grapes, this was not enough to sustain a population. So they began trading with other civilizations, such as Egypt and civilizations of the Middle East, for commodities they desired that they couldn't produce themselves. To do this, like all other civilizations, they developed a writing system, which they called Linear A (we have not as yet been able to decipher this writing). Since they were on an island, they needed to become sailors in order to trade abroad. They therefore created perhaps the first navy in history.

Palaces were the symbols of Minoan culture, and by 1650 BC, Crete was dotted with them. But the most important palace was located at Knossos—this palace was five stories high and had 250 rooms, painted walls (murals), and indoor plumbing, which included running water and flushing toilets.
**Mycenaeans (ca 1650 to ca 1100 BC)**

In lesson one, we discussed the Aryans who entered India, dominated the Dravidians, and established a caste system. These Aryans were Indo-European. Another wave of Indo-Europeans entered Greece around 1650 BC. These were the Mycenaeans. Their name comes from the name of their city, Mycenae in the Peloponneseus. (On your map above, Peloponneseus is the region between Olympia and Sparta.)

The Mycenaeans traded with the Minoans and learned a great deal from them. For example, they derived their writing style—called Linear B—from the Minoans and used this writing to keep track of trade, taxes collected, and inventories of the kings’ possessions.

Despite their relationship, around 1450 BC, the Mycenaeans attacked Crete for some unknown reason, destroying many palaces and taking over rule of the island. They ruled for about fifty years until the city was burned to the ground.

Around 1100 BC, Mycenaean Greece itself was destroyed—probably as a result of internal strife. Mycenaean civilization collapsed, ushering in a period of famine and poverty known as the Dark Ages of Greece. Whereas the people previously had writing and wealth, they now were poor and had forgotten how to read and write.

**Homer and the Polis (800 to ca 500 BC)**

Because in the Dark Ages (1200–800 BC) the Greeks had forgotten how to write, they began telling stories from memory about heroic deeds. Around 800 BC, as tradition goes, a blind bard (a person who told stories for a living) named Homer wrote these oral stories down into two books, both of which depicted life during the Dark Age of Greece. The first book was the Iliad, telling of the great battles collectively known as the Trojan War, in which the mighty Greeks, with the help of the gods, defeated the Trojans with the sneaky Trojan horse. The other book was that of the Odyssey, the story of Odysseus and his return home from the Trojan War.

These books came to play a large role in teaching moral lessons to the Greeks, just as stories of the Torah and the Bible do to modern-day Jews and Christians. Key actors in these stories are the gods on Mount Olympus, such as Zeus, Athena, Poseidon, and Cupid. Also important is that Homer wrote these stories down, meaning that once again people were learning how to read and write.

As the Dark Age began to recede, Greeks began to form their basic political unit, the polis, or city-state. This is, incidentally, where the modern term “politics” comes from. There were three main city-states: Sparta, Athens, and Thebes. Take a minute to review where these are on your map. Each polis had its own government and was surrounded by a wall. Each also contained a central, elevated place where the temples were built and where citizens could gather if they were under attack. There was also a public square or marketplace called an agora located on a much lower, level plain.

There were several ways that a polis could be governed. In one system, you might have a monarchy (rule by a king) or perhaps an oligarchy (rule by a few). In another system, you could have a democracy, a government in which all citizens would participate in the governing of their polis. The weakness of a democracy, however, was that it could break down and be replaced by a tyranny (rule by a tyrant). A tyrant is any ruler who seizes power by extralegal means. A king, then, could be a tyrant if he illegally seized power, or he could have inherited his position. In some cases, two or more city-states banded together to form a type of government called federalism where there would be a central government over the city-states, but nearly all internal affairs remained under the authority of the individual states.

**Persian and Peloponnesian Wars**

The period from roughly 500 to 338 BC is known as the Classical Age of Greece. In the sixth century BC, a huge empire known as the Persian Empire arose in the East. Look at your map above and find the Persian Empire. The region shown on the map above was known as Asia Minor to the Greeks and as Anatolia to later peoples, although Asia Minor was only a
small part of the Persian Empire. The Greeks who lived there rose up in rebellion against the Persians and were supported by the Greeks on the Greek Peninsula (especially Athens).

In retaliation, Darius I, king of the Persians, attacked the Greek Peninsula in 490 BC but was defeated in the Battle of Marathon. This marks the beginning of the Persian Wars. It was said that an Athenian soldier was so relieved about the victory that he ran all the way from the battle to Athens to tell his fellow countrymen. He was so exhausted when he arrived that he dropped dead after giving the news. In celebration of his run (so the legend goes), the modern marathon was born.

The Persians returned ten years later and overran Greece, only to later be defeated in a naval battle. Despite the apparent Greek capability of resisting Persian attempts to conquer them, the Greeks couldn’t help but wonder what would happen if the Persians were to someday come back again. Greece decided to establish a confederation of all city-states, just in case. They called this the Delian League because its headquarters was on the island of Delos.

Athens soon came to control the League. The government transferred the entire treasury to Athens and used it to build a beautiful and magnificent city. As part of their acropolis, they built the Parthenon, perhaps the largest temple in Greece, dedicated to Athena, the city’s patron deity.

Not all Greeks agreed that their money should be used to beautify Athens. Principal among the disgruntled parties was Sparta, an extremely militaristic city-state (all able-bodied males had to be in the military). In 431 BC, Sparta and her allies went to war against Athens and her allies. The result of the Peloponnesian Wars was the destruction of Athens and a weakening of Greece in general. It would remain weak until a king from Macedonia, Philip, conquered it in 338 BC.

**Pre-Socratic Philosophers**

Throughout this period of wars and confusion, peace and prosperity, and more wars, many Greeks put down the sword and picked up the pen. Some looked to philosophy and others wrote plays. More often than not, they did both.

The first group of philosophers is known as the pre-Socratics, as their works came before the famous Socrates of Athens. Most of the pre-Socratics were natural philosophers, meaning they wanted to know where they came from and how the world was made. Thales stated that the basic element of the universe was water. Anaximander agreed that it was made out of something, but what? Something indestructible, he said. And Heraclitus argued that the world, with no beginning and no end, had fire as its prime element. In other words, pre-Socratics wanted to know what made up the universe. Their answer: fire, air, earth, and water.

A more popular pre-Socratic philosopher stuck to looking at rules of moral behavior; This was Aesop, and his work has been immortalized as Aesop’s Fables. In these stories, he used animals as the main characters to teach moral lessons.

**The Big Three: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle**

There were three main philosophers ("the big three") who came from Athens: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Together they formed the foundation of Western philosophy.

The first, Socrates, was concerned with the inner self. His philosophy is that the root of all evil is ignorance. The method Socrates employed to teach his listeners has become known as the Socratic Method. It is a two-fold process. First, you destroy the beliefs of the person you are teaching or trying to convince of something. Then you replace their old beliefs with whatever it is you are trying to convince him or her of. But above all, you teach by asking questions rather than merely supplying the answer.

One of Socrates’s students was a man named Plato who established a philosophical school called The Academy. Above all else, Plato is important because of his political philosophy in which he describes the proper form of government in which society is divided into workers and rulers (who are themselves philosophers).
Perhaps the most famous of the big three, however, is Aristotle, a student of Plato. Aristotle wrote forty-six works in all and has influenced later societies more than any other philosopher. His teachings could be summed up in the following:

1. The goal of the state should be to maintain the well-being of the people.
2. Democracy is the best form of government.
3. Slavery is acceptable and natural.
4. Communist societies are undesirable.

Let’s Check Your Mastery

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

1. Flip back to the first palaces in India (lesson one). What similarities were there between Knossos and Mohenjo-daro, for example?

2. We will be discussing in this course how the level of wealth of a population is correlated with its literacy level. Why do you think that in a society such as Mycenae, when it became extremely poor, the people forgot how to read and write?

3. Above, we mentioned two Greek institutions that some Western nations have adopted, although not in their entirety, from the Greeks: democracy and federalism. How are these countries democratic and federalist? How are these democratic and federalist governments different from those of the Greeks?

4. Why do you think that Sparta and her allies were so upset with Athens that they declared war on her?

5. Read the following Aesop’s Fable. What is the moral of the story? How can you apply this to your everyday life?

The Hen and the Golden Eggs
A cottager and his wife had a hen that laid a golden egg every day. They supposed that the hen must contain a great lump of gold in its inside, and in order to get the gold, they killed it. Having done so, they found to their surprise that the hen differed in no respect from their other hens. The foolish pair, thus hoping to become rich all at once, deprived themselves of the gain of which they were assured day by day. (Source: GospelLink 2001, Deseret Book Company, 2000.)
6. Look at the map earlier in Objective 3. Using that map as your guide, write the following places on the map below: Sparta, Athens, Delos, Thebes, Corinth, Delphi, and Olympia. Now, draw on the map the Persian Empire, Thrace, and Macedon. Once that is done, circle the southernmost island. This is the island of Crete.

7. Look at the society in which you live. Which of Aristotle’s teachings do you follow? Which do you disagree with?
Objective 4

Explain how Greek ideas of the Hellenistic period (338 to 148 BC) spread throughout the world and which ideas have influenced the present.

Alexander the Great

In 338 BC, King Philip II of Macedonia (find Macedon on your map above), a state northwest of Greece, conquered the whole of Greece. However, in 336 BC, Philip died and his son, Alexander, became ruler. Alexander’s teacher had been none other than Aristotle, and he considered himself to be Greek. He organized a combined Greek and Macedonian army, marched east, and conquered everything in his path, most notably the Persian Empire. He reached India before turning back, later dying at Babylon in 323 BC.

Alexander—known as Alexander the Great—had acquired the largest empire in the world (at the time). When he died, his generals (after a forty-three-year civil war) carved up his empire into smaller kingdoms. Although the new kingdoms were in the East, they were ruled by Greeks (and Macedonians like Alexander, who considered himself to be Greek). The result was that the official language and culture of the ruling class was Greek. Even though most people spoke Persian, Greek slowly found its way to the general population. For example, so many Jews learned Greek that the Old Testament was translated into that language.

In this culture, Eastern and Greek ideas and language slowly mixed together to form a new culture. It was not truly Greek (Hellenic), but "Greek-like," or Hellenistic.

The main question we should ask ourselves is why the Hellenistic world is historically so important. The answer is that the mixture of Eastern and Western ideas formed new philosophies and created new advances in science and medicine. Let’s look at these.

Philosophy

Have you ever heard the term cynical? It comes from the name of the Greek group called the Cynics. The Cynics believed you could only be happy by getting rid of all luxuries. This school of thought influenced nearly all the other Greek philosophies to succeed this school (and continues to influence us today). Nearly all philosophies, for example, have debated whether more material goods in life will make us happy. Perhaps you have thought about this as well. Have you ever felt that if you just had more money you would be happier? The Cynics would state that money does not make you happy.

Another philosophical group was the Epicureans. They taught that the point of life is to have pleasure, which could be defined as the absence of pain. Thus, anything that causes us pain should be done away with. (If you were an Epicurean, you could argue that this course is causing you pain and therefore you are not attaining pleasure—the point of life. So you would feel a need to stop taking this course. It’s a good thing you’re not an Epicurean.)

Have you met anyone that is stoical? A Stoic is a member of another philosophical group from Greece. Stoics taught that the most important type of person to be was virtuous. It was more important to lead a virtuous life than to get rid of all your luxuries or to lead a life free from pain. But most important, they taught that there was a natural law which governs the universe (a concept especially relevant in the United States’ War of Independence in the eighteenth century).

Science in the Hellenistic World

Science was also important in the Hellenistic world. One Hellenistic scientist was Aristarchus. He taught the heliocentric theory, which said that the earth revolves around the sun. Unfortunately, Aristotle had taught just the opposite (that the sun revolved around the earth—an incorrect assumption). Because Aristotle was more popular, people believed him
(that is, until the sixteenth century AD when the Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus proved Aristotle wrong and Aristarchus correct).

Another scientist was Archimedes. He invented the compound pulley, which is very important for lifting heavy objects, and the Archimedean screw, a device still used in many places today to suction water from the ground.

Finally, there was Eratosthenes, who measured the circumference of the world at 24,675 miles (he was only about 185 miles off). In other words, Eratosthenes and other Greeks taught that the world was round. Even Aristotle taught it was round (though smaller than it actually is). The myth that people in Christopher Columbus’s time thought the world was flat is just that—a myth. It is simply not true.

**Hellenistic Medicine**

There were two main schools of medicinal thought that came out of the Hellenistic world. The first school was the dogmatists, who taught that the best way to discover what was wrong with someone was through dissection of his or her body (cutting it up) and speculation (educated guessing).

The other school was the empiric school of medicine, which taught that observation should first be done (examination of the patient), and then drugs should be administered.

**Conclusion**

The Hellenistic kingdoms lost their independence in 146 BC to a newly arisen power: Rome. The only Hellenistic kingdom to technically retain her independence (for another century) was Egypt. However, she was a weak kingdom and would also soon be incorporated into the Roman Empire. By that time, however, Greek ideas (such as religion) had become so entrenched that they were easily adopted by the Romans.

**Let’s Check Your Mastery**

*Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.*

1. Why do we call Alexander, son of Philip II, Alexander the Great? In other words, what was so "great" about him?

2. If you had to choose from the Greek philosophies we have just discussed, which would you follow? Why?

3. If all the Greek philosophers taught that the world is round, why does Hollywood portray everybody in the time of Christopher Columbus believing the world is flat?

4. What aspects of medicine do we have today that we took from the Greeks?
Objective 5

Describe the founding of Rome and (briefly) how the Greeks influenced the Romans.

Geography and Overview

The city of Rome is located in the western part of Italy. For a thousand years, this city would serve as the center of the Roman Empire. Even with the collapse of the Roman Empire, the city retained its importance as the center of Western Christianity for another thousand years until the Protestant Reformation broke the Catholic Church’s monopoly on religion in the West. It is here that the story of the Roman Empire begins. It can be divided into one short and two broad time periods: the Etruscan period (ca 753 to 509 BC), the Roman Republic (509 to 27 BC), and the Roman Empire (27 BC to ca AD 410).

The Etruscan Period

Earlier in this lesson, we discussed the Indo-European groups that moved into Greece. Another Indo-European group, the Etruscans, moved into Italy. Among the places they controlled was Rome, which at the time was already inhabited by the Romans.

According to Roman legend, two boys, Romulus and Remus, founded Rome in 753 BC. From 753 until 509 BC, Rome was ruled by Etruscans, although the majority of the people living in Rome were probably Romans.

The Romans adopted many Etruscan traditions, many of which the Etruscans had adopted from the Greeks (with whom they were trading). For example, the Greeks had borrowed the alphabet from the Phoenicians (which we discussed earlier) and added vowels. The Etruscans adopted this alphabet from the Greeks and then passed it on to the Romans. The Romans in turn would pass the alphabet on to the entire Western world.

Nonetheless, the Romans got tired of being ruled by foreigners and, according to Roman tradition, expelled the last Etruscan king from Rome in 509 BC. They then proceeded to (loosely) borrow Greek democratic ideas and form a republic.
Let’s Check Your Mastery

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

1. Have you ever heard the phrase "Keeping up with the Joneses"? Indeed, our neighbors (and friends) frequently influence what we do and how we act, much as the Greeks influenced the Romans. Think about the clothes you wear, the shows you watch, and other leisurely activities you participate in. Have you been influenced by others in your choices?
**Objective 6**

Describe the governmental structure of the Roman Republic (509 to 27 BC) and the events that led to its collapse.

**Roman Government and Society**

Roman control began to spread throughout Italy. The Romans were geniuses because after they conquered a territory, they granted their fellow Italians a degree of internal self-government and, after proving their loyalty to Rome, they received Roman citizenship.

In the Roman Republic, society was divided into two broad groups: the patricians and the plebeians. The patricians were the wealthy landowners, and the plebeians were the common people of Rome: artisans, small owners, and city dwellers.

The patricians formed a representative body, a senate, to help rule the republic. As heads of state, they voted in two consuls (later on, one of these would have to be a plebeian). In 471 BC, the plebeians began to meet in an assembly of their own—the Plebeian Assembly (concilium plebis). Later, they elected tribunes to protect their interests in the senate. The laws were eventually written down, and they were called the Law of the Twelve Tables.

**Punic Wars (264 to 146 BC)**

In expanding control over Italy, the Romans ran into another powerful civilization: Carthage. Carthage was originally a Phoenician colony in North Africa but had evolved into its own civilization. Take a minute to find Carthage on the map above and to review the section on Phoenicia (objective two).

Rome and Carthage began to fight over the island of Sicily, which is south of Italy. This fight would lead to a series of wars known as the Punic Wars, which happened in three shifts: 264–241 BC, 218–202 BC, and 149–146 BC. "Punic" is the Latin word for Phoenician.

These wars had three important effects on history. The first was that Carthage had a huge navy, and Rome had none. In order to conquer Carthage, Rome built a large navy which allowed them not only to defeat Carthage but to eventually control the entire Mediterranean Sea.

The second was that Carthage was destroyed. At the end of the Punic Wars, Rome enslaved all of its inhabitants.

Finally, during the Punic Wars, it appeared that Carthage would win, so Greece sided with Carthage. When Carthage lost, Rome turned east to punish the noncompliant Greeks, and the Hellenistic world of Alexander the Great that had been divided up by his generals came under the control of Rome.

**Rome after the Wars**

Up to this point in time, in order to be a soldier, a Roman had to own land. Following the Punic Wars, the Roman soldiers found their farms to be in terrible shape. Lacking the resources to build them back up, many simply sold their farms and moved to Rome. The wealthy who bought up these abandoned farms created huge estates, called latifundia.

Once in Rome, the former soldiers found that no work was available. What could they do since they had already sold their farms? A tribune named Tiberius Gracchus (remember that a tribune’s role was to defend the interests of the plebeians, or commoners, in the senate) managed to give 70,000 of these landless veterans small plots of land. He took this land from public lands that many wealthy aristocrats had been illegally using themselves. Furious, the senators—who were themselves aristocrats—rose up and killed Tiberius in 133 BC.

Tiberius’ brother, Gaius, took up the cause of reform after Tiberius was murdered and began giving out cheap grain to the poor and urging the senate to grant all Italians full citizenship (previously they had only been granted partial citizenship). He also continued the
proposals to give land to the poor. Once again, the senators rose up and killed him (although some historians argue that he took his own life before the senators could murder him).

In other words, Roman soldiers returned to Rome only to find themselves without food. Those that attempted to help them were in turn killed by the senate. The result was political turmoil in Rome.

In 88 BC, a Roman general named Sulla finally got fed up with the problems in Rome. He took his army, marched on Rome, and made himself dictator. Although Rome tried many times after, it would never again be a true republic.

The real heir to Sulla was a man named Julius Caesar. Caesar, through political machination, became dictator of Rome. As dictator, he wanted to reform Rome. He extended citizenship to many non-Romans (what the Gracchus brothers had tried to do) and gave land to many landless veterans (over 80,000 of them received land throughout the Mediterranean).

Now it was undeniable: The Roman armies held loyalty to their commander, not Rome itself. Caesar had the biggest army of all the Roman commanders and therefore commanded the largest group of supporters.

Let’s Check Your Mastery

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

1. Why do you think it is important to have laws written down?

2. Following the Punic Wars, the Romans called the Mediterranean Sea mare nostrum or "our sea." Look at the map of the Roman world. Why do you think it was so important for Rome to retain control of the Mediterranean?

3. Imagine you were a Roman senator. When the Gracchus brothers tried to give away your lands and extend citizenship, you simply rose up and killed them. When Julius Caesar did the same thing—granted land and citizenship—what would you have done?
Describe life in the Roman Empire (27 BC to AD 410), including the rise of Christianity. Explain why the empire collapsed.

In 44 BC, a group of sixty senators killed Julius Caesar, an event that has been immortalized in a play by William Shakespeare. However, the senators were shocked to find that this did not solve their problems. On the contrary, Caesar's army, led by his commander Marc Antony and grandnephew Octavian, hunted them down and killed them. The result: the end of the republic. Antony and Octavian then proceeded to turn on each other. When Octavian returned the victor, he created the Roman Empire (although he did not call it that), destroying once and for all the Republic.

Octavian ended the civil wars that had been raging in Rome since the end of the Punic Wars. The leaders were so grateful that they gave him the title of Augustus. (The term "august" is a descendent of this term, meaning "dignity" and "authority," such as when one speaks in an august manner). Octavian and all subsequent emperors adopted Julius Caesar’s name and turned it into a title, hence the title Caesar Augustus. All of Augustus’s successors, then, would be caesars.

From the time of Augustus to the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century AD, Rome would be ruled by caesars, or emperors. Some were good and some were bad, but they could only retain power if they had support of the military.

Life in Imperial Rome

What was it like to live in Rome? There were between 500,000 and 750,000 people who lived in the city, so to say it was large would very well be an understatement; it was enormous! People lived in either poorly-built houses or apartments. These, however, frequently caught on fire; in fact, at one point over half of Rome burned down (during the reign of Nero). Fire and crime, then, were always problems, even though Augustus created fire and police departments to control them. Sanitation was a problem, as roads were narrow and refuse frequently clogged the streets.

The most popular sources of entertainment were the gladiatorial fighting and chariot racing. Gladiatorial fighting was an ancient Etruscan funeral custom—a blood sacrifice. Most of the fighters were criminals, slaves, or prisoners of war. Chariot racing was even more popular. There were generally four teams that raced each other: the red, white, green, and blue teams. Nearly all Romans had their favorite team to cheer on.

Christianity

The Roman Empire grew very large by taking over all of the surrounding areas of the Mediterranean. One of these areas was called Judea (present day Palestine) where the Jews, or descendents of Abraham, lived. The people of Judea were very unhappy with the Roman rule, and two main movements of discontent developed at this time: the Zealotry movement and the Apocalyptic movement. The Zealots believed in fighting openly against the Romans as a way to gain their independence. The battles were especially bloody, and the Zealots ultimately lost because of their small numbers. The Apocalyptic movement, also known as the Messianic movement, was the more popular of the two. It held the belief that a messiah would come, destroy the Roman Empire, and bring a period of happiness for the Jews. A messiah is a savior that brings peace to the world.

In this tumultuous setting a Jewish boy named Jesus was born. Around the age of thirty, Jesus started to preach a new religion and proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. At first he had many followers among the Zealots, but when they realized that he would not be a military leader, they abandoned him. Jesus’s following still grew, which began to cause problems among the Jewish community because many of their leaders felt that by proclaiming himself to be the...
Messiah he was being blasphemous. After some political intrigue, Jesus was taken to court and crucified, but the movement of his followers did not die out.

Although Jesus did not deliver the people of Judea from Roman rule, his followers believed that by following his teachings, they would find inner peace. Some of his teachings consisted of living a virtuous life, praying and fasting, and accepting him as the savior of the world. One of the principle beliefs among the early followers of Jesus was the concept of resurrection, or the belief that Jesus returned to life after death and therefore all believers could do so as well. The people that followed these teachings came to be known as Christians. They recorded the teachings of Jesus and used them as a guideline for their lives. Later, many of the records were compiled into what is today called the Bible.

Some of the emperors of Rome, such as Nero, persecuted the Christians and tried to force them to denounce their religion. The Christians on occasion were even thrown to wild beasts in the Coliseum as a spectator sport. Yet often their unwillingness to turn away from their faith, even in the face of losing their lives, convinced more people to join their following. At times when the emperors were less harsh, the Christians were able to live a more peaceful life.

Rome Becomes Christian

In AD 312, the emperor of Rome, Constantine, was facing an important battle. He claimed to have received a vision that told him he should order a Christian symbol be placed on his soldiers' shields. When they won the battle, in gratitude, he legalized Christianity. In AD 380, Emperor Theodosius made Christianity the official religion of Rome.

The Fall and Legacy of the Roman Empire

Toward the end of the fourth century AD, a group of Germanic tribes, known as the Goths and Vandals, was pushed into the Roman Empire by still other tribes migrating westward. The Goths and the Vandals went to battle against the Roman Empire and split the Roman Empire in two.

The Goths sacked the western half of the Roman Empire in 410, and the Vandals repeated the sacking in 455. The last of the emperors was deposed in 476.

The eastern half of the Roman Empire, however, was not defeated but continued until 1453, when a Muslim invasion overran the capital, Constantinople (built by Constantine), and renamed it Istanbul. This half of the Roman Empire is known in history as the Byzantine Empire.

The legacies of Rome, however, are the traditions adopted and passed on throughout the rest of the world down to the present. In 1776, the same year as the Declaration of Independence in the United States, Edward Gibbons published The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Roman political and social ideals were formative in the history of the West and the development of the United States of America.

Let's Check Your Mastery

Answer the following questions and then check your answers in the Answer Key at the back of this course manual. Do not submit your answers to Independent Study.

1. What did the Gracchus brothers and Julius Caesar do for the veterans (Roman soldiers)?
   If you were Augustus, would you do the same?

2. Some Romans claimed that people cared more about their favorite team than the actual race. What is your favorite sports team? If your team has a bad season and loses all their games, are you still loyal to it? In this regard, how are you like or unlike the Romans?
3. Matthew, an apostle of Christ, claimed that John the Baptist was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the lord" (From the Bible, Matthew 3:3). Of which movement would John the Baptist have been a part, the zealots or the apocalyptic (Messianic) movement?

4. Although Constantine legalized Christianity, he wasn't baptized until he was on his death bed. This was quite common at the time. Why do you think this was?

5. Imagine someone has asked you what the "legacy" of the Roman Empire is. What would you say? In other words, have we adopted any ideas or concepts from the Roman Empire?

**Lesson Summary**

In this lesson, we discussed the Hebrews, the Phoenicians, the Greeks, and the Romans. The overall theme of the lesson was how they influenced us, meaning Western civilization. The Hebrews was the only civilization we discussed that adopted (and retained) monotheism, or the concept of only one god. Their story has been brought down to us in the words of the Old Testament, and the Jewish Law (the Ten Commandments) has been directly adopted by most of the Western world.

The Phoenicians developed the phonetic alphabet and passed it on to the Greeks, who in turn passed it on to the Etruscans, who then passed it on to the Romans. This is but one example of how ancient civilizations have influenced us in the present. The Greeks developed philosophy, medicine, science, architecture, and art (such as plays), all of which continue to influence us today.

We cannot forget the Romans either. If it were not for the Romans, Christianity would not have thrived at all, or it would have just remained a Jewish sect. The Romans utilized many concepts learned from the Greeks and invented new ones, including a senate, which have been adopted by the West. This period of history—classical civilization—has been instrumental in the development of world history particularly in the West.

That is not, however, the end of history. We will now turn to Africa, Asia, and the Americas. First, however, take a few minutes to review the lesson and then complete the Speedback assignment.
Lesson 2 Speedback Assignment

Mark all answers here, then transfer them to your Speedback answer form. You may either submit your completed answer form to Independent Study for processing, or you may use WebGrade for immediate grading. See your Read Me First pamphlet for instructions.

This assignment is closed notes and closed book.

1. The Mesopotamians and the Egyptians referred to the Hebrews as the "Hapiru," or homeless nomads. Why was this?
   a. The Hebrews wandered from the east side of the Tigris River before settling down in the Mesopotamian Valley.
   b. The Hebrews wandered from Mesopotamia, following Abraham to Egypt, and then throughout the Sinai Peninsula before finally settling down in Palestine.
   c. The Hebrews began wandering and are still wandering to this day.
   d. There is no plausible reason to think that the Egyptians or Mesopotamians would call the Hebrews "homeless nomads."

2. Which of the following is the basis for the religion of Judaism?
   a. the New Testament
   b. the Ten Commandments
   c. the Old Testament
   d. b and c

3. The first permanent monotheistic religion in history was probably that of the
   a. Hebrews
   b. Phoenicians
   c. Romans
   d. Greeks

4. W_rld h_st_ry _s th_gr__t! I, of course, agree! What is wrong with this sentence, and which civilization's alphabet is it based on?
   a. There are too many vowels; it is based on the Hebrew alphabet
   b. There are too many vowels; it is based on the Roman alphabet.
   c. There are no vowels; it is based on the Greek alphabet.
   d. There are no vowels; it is based on the Phonetic (Phoenicians') alphabet.

5. Read the following paragraph: You are a world-renowned archeologist who is digging one day in the ancient city of Knossos, the main city of the Minoan civilization. You come across one of the palaces, which has murals (paintings) on one of the walls with Linear A writing on it. As you read the writing, you discover that this is actually a map to a burial tomb filled with ancient treasure. What is wrong with this paragraph?
   a. Knossos was not the main city of the Minoan civilization
   b. There were no murals on the walls of the Minoan palaces.
   c. Minoans did not build palaces.
   d. Linear A has never been deciphered; although there is writing in Linear A, we do not know what it says.
6. The Mycenaean civilization attacked Greece in 1450 BC. Around 1100 BC, it was destroyed as well. In the lesson material, I wrote that it was destroyed "probably as a result of internal strife." Based on that sentence, which of the following is most correct?
   a. We do not know for sure why it was destroyed, but that it was because of internal strife is a good assumption.
   b. They kept good records of their history, and therefore we have good knowledge of why they were destroyed.
   c. They attacked the Persians, who had a habit of destroying all records.
   d. none of the above

7. Homer wrote down the stories of the Iliad and the Odyssey, both of which taught moral lessons to the Greeks. What does this tell us?
   a. The Greeks were concerned about the morality of their children.
   b. The Greeks had a large pantheon of deities, such as Zeus and Athena.
   c. The Greeks learned, once again, how to write.
   d. all of the above
   e. a and b only

8. Imagine you lived around 600 BC in a polis in which all of the citizens had a voice in politics—everyone could vote to make the laws. What type of government is this?
   a. a monarchy
   b. an oligarchy
   c. a democracy
   d. a tyranny

9. The Delian League is an example of
   a. federalism
   b. monarchy
   c. oligarchy
   d. none of the above

10. Who won the Persian Wars, and who won the Peloponnesian Wars?
    a. Persians; Greeks
    b. Greeks; Persians
    c. Greeks; Spartans
    d. Greeks; Athenians

11. Read the following story:
    **The Doe and the Lion**
    A doe hard pressed by hunters sought refuge in a cave belonging to a lion. The lion concealed himself on seeing her approach, but when she was safe within the cave, sprang upon her and tore her to pieces. "Woe is me," exclaimed the doe, "who have escaped from man, only to throw myself into the mouth of a wild beast?" In avoiding one evil, care must be taken not to fall into another. (Source: GospelLink 2001, Deseret Book Company, 2000.) This is most likely an example of
    a. a biblical story
    b. Aesop's fables
    c. Aristotle's teachings
    d. Plato's political philosophy

12. What happened to the empire of Alexander the Great?
    a. His children ruled it.
    b. It regained its independence upon his death.
    c. His generals, after a long civil war, split it up into separate kingdoms.
    d. Nothing; he never gained an empire.
13. Eratosthenes, Aristotle, and Aristarchus all had which of the following in common?
   a. They all believed that the sun revolved around the earth.
   b. They all believed the earth was flat.
   c. They all believed that the earth revolved around the sun.
   d. They all believed that the earth was a sphere.

14. When the Etruscans entered Italy, there was already a group of people living in Rome. Who were they?
   a. the Etruscans
   b. the Romans
   c. the Greeks
   d. the Ionians

15. The Romans utilized a senate in their government. However, this was comprised (with the exception of one of the consuls) of the aristocrats, or members of the rich elite. The plebeians had their own assembly, the Plebeian Assembly. But who protected the plebeians in the senate?
   a. the senators
   b. the consuls
   c. the tribunes
   d. Nobody; they were left unprotected.

16. At the end of the Punic Wars, the soldiers came home to find their farms in terrible shape. What did many of them do?
   a. They sold them to aristocrats, who made them into large estates, collectively called latifundia.
   b. They continued to work the lands as best they could.
   c. They moved to the cities.
   d. a and c

17. What happened to Gaius and Tiberius Gracchus, as well as Julius Caesar, when they tried to give land to the poor?
   a. They succeeded in giving a great deal of land away.
   b. They upset the senators.
   c. They were all killed.
   d. all of the above

18. What were the favorite sports of the Romans?
   a. gladiatorial fighting and chariot racing
   b. gladiatorial fighting and boxing
   c. sporting events and chariot racing
   d. execution of Christians

19. Imagine you are a Jew living at the time of Christ. You hear about Christ and decide that he must be there to rid Palestine of the Romans and bring about an era of peace. Which movement are you a member of?
   a. the apocalyptic movement
   b. the zealotry movement
   c. the messianic movement
   d. a and c

20. Which event(s) led to Rome becoming Christian?
   a. The Germanic tribes that invaded Rome were Christian and imposed their religion on the Romans.
   b. Constantine legalized Christianity in AD 312.
   c. Theodosius made Christianity the religion of Rome in AD 380.
   d. b and c