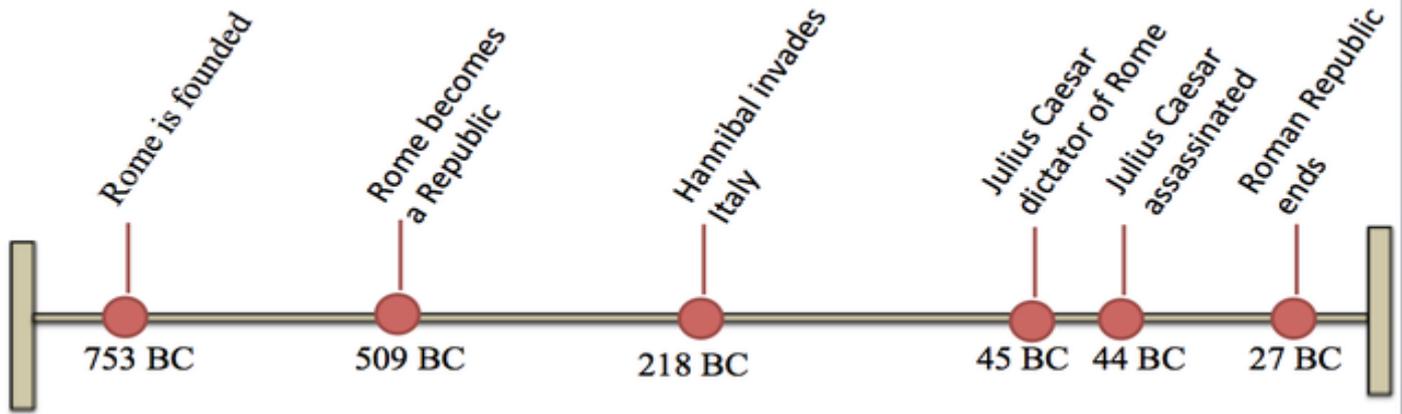


Roman Republic



Rome Republic

753 B.C. - Rome is founded

Rome was founded by Romulus. Romulus was the first of the seven Roman kings. The original name of Rome was Roma.

509 B.C. - Rome becomes a republic

The last king is expelled and Rome is now ruled by senators. There is a constitution with laws and Rome becomes a complex republican government.

218 B.C. - Hannibal invades Italy

Hannibal leads the Carthage army to attack Italy. This becomes part of the Second Punic War.

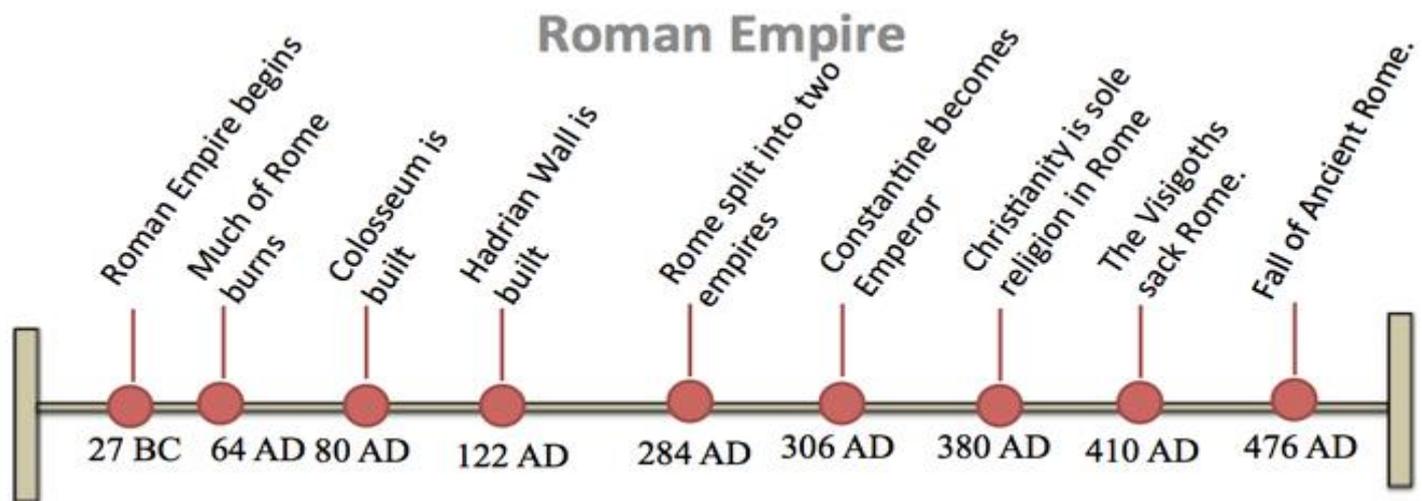
45 B.C. - Julius Caesar becomes the first dictator of Rome

Julius Caesar defeats Pompey in a civil war. He becomes the supreme ruler of Rome. This is the end of the Roman Republic. He hires Sosigenes, an Egyptian astronomer, to work out a new 12-month calendar.

44 B.C. - Julius Caesar is assassinated

Julius Caesar is assassinated on the Ides of March by several Roman Senators including his friend Marcus Brutus. They hope to bring back the republic, but civil war breaks out instead.





Roman Empire

27 B.C. - Roman Empire begins

Octavius appoints himself "Augustus", which means the first emperor.

64 A.D. - Much of Rome burns

Nero set fire to Rome and blames the Christians for it.

80 A.D. - Colosseum is built

The Colosseum was built in 80 AD. The completion of the Colosseum was celebrated with 100 days of games. The Romans invade Scotland.

122 A.D. - Hadrian Wall is built

The Hadrian Wall was built in 122 AD. It was a long wall built across northern England in an effort to keep the barbarians out.

284 A.D. - Rome splits into two empires

Emperor Diocletian divides the Roman Empire in two to make it easier to rule. He created the Western Empire and Eastern Empire each with its own leader. The land was split where the West was formed by Spain, France, England, Italy and parts of Germany. All areas to the east of this were part of the Eastern Empire.

306 A.D.- Constantine becomes Emperor

Before this, Rome persecuted the Christians. Constantine was Rome's first Christian emperor and he is considered to have been a strong ruler. He believed that Rome as a city was too far away from vital areas of the empire to be of value from a governmental level. Constantine, therefore, moved the capital of the empire to a new city – Constantinople. This was a new city that was built on the old city of Byzantium. This turned out to be a poor decision. Constantinople was too far from Rome and in the eastern empire. This left the western empire very vulnerable.

380 A.D. - Christianity is sole religion in Rome

Theodosius I proclaim Christianity as the sole religion of the Roman Empire.

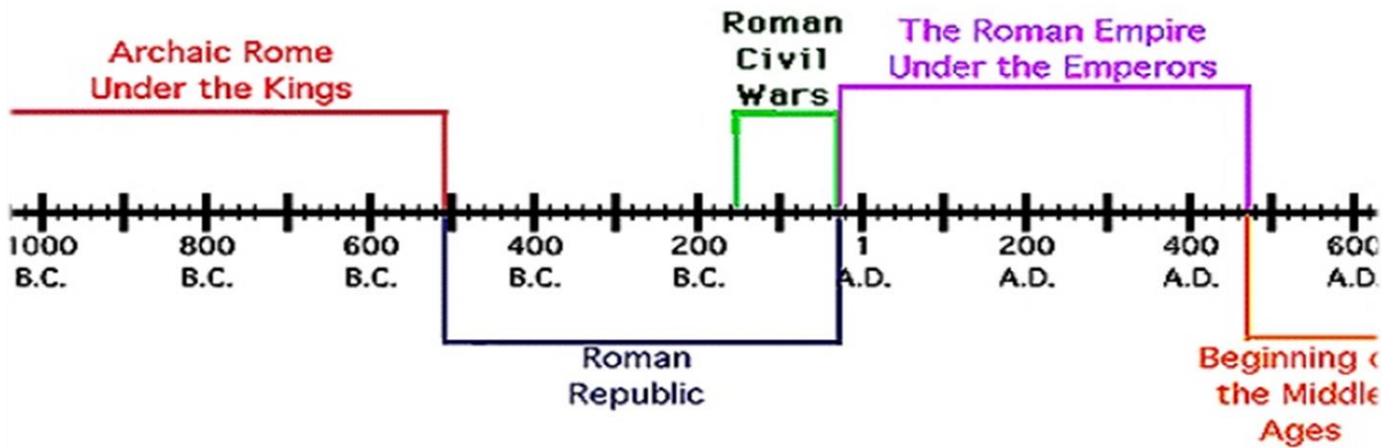
410 A.D. - The Visigoths sack Rome

This was the first time in 800 years that the city of Rome has fallen to an enemy. It was a huge uproar.

476 A.D. - Fall of Ancient Rome

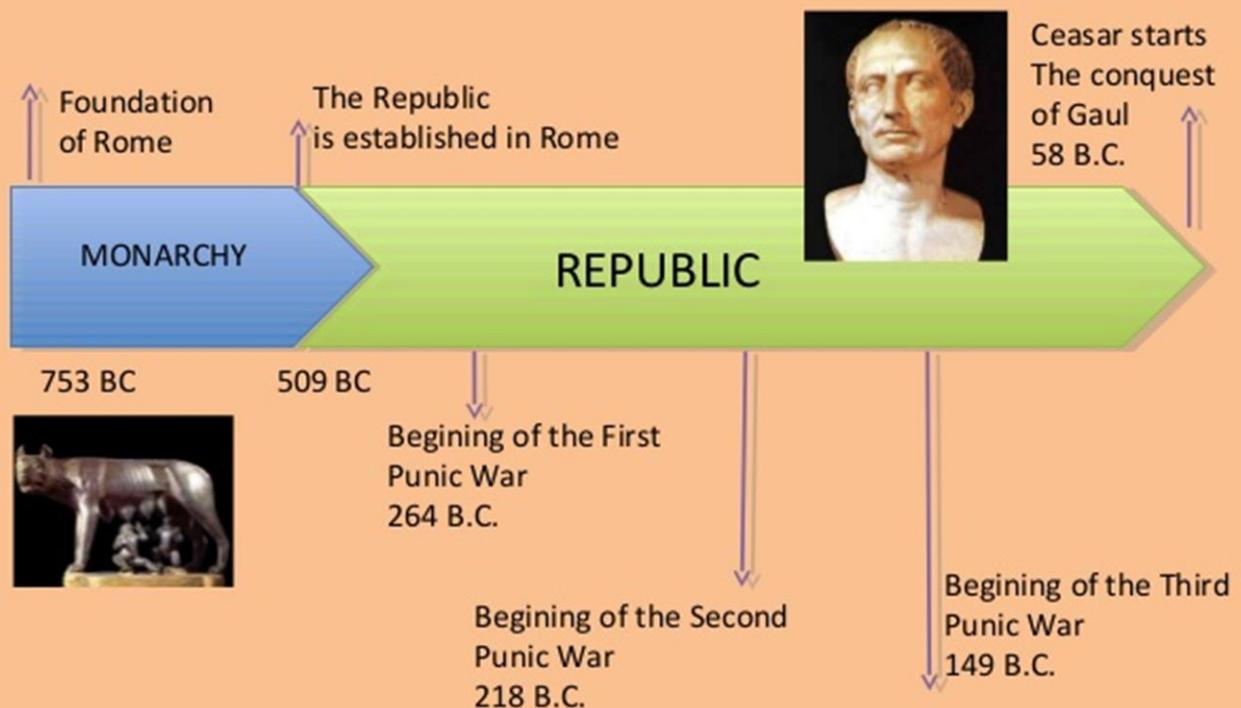
End of the Western Roman Empire and the fall of Ancient Rome. The last Roman Emperor Romulus Augustus is defeated by the German Goth Odoacer. This is the start of the Dark Ages in Europe.

TIMELINE OF ANCIENT ROME

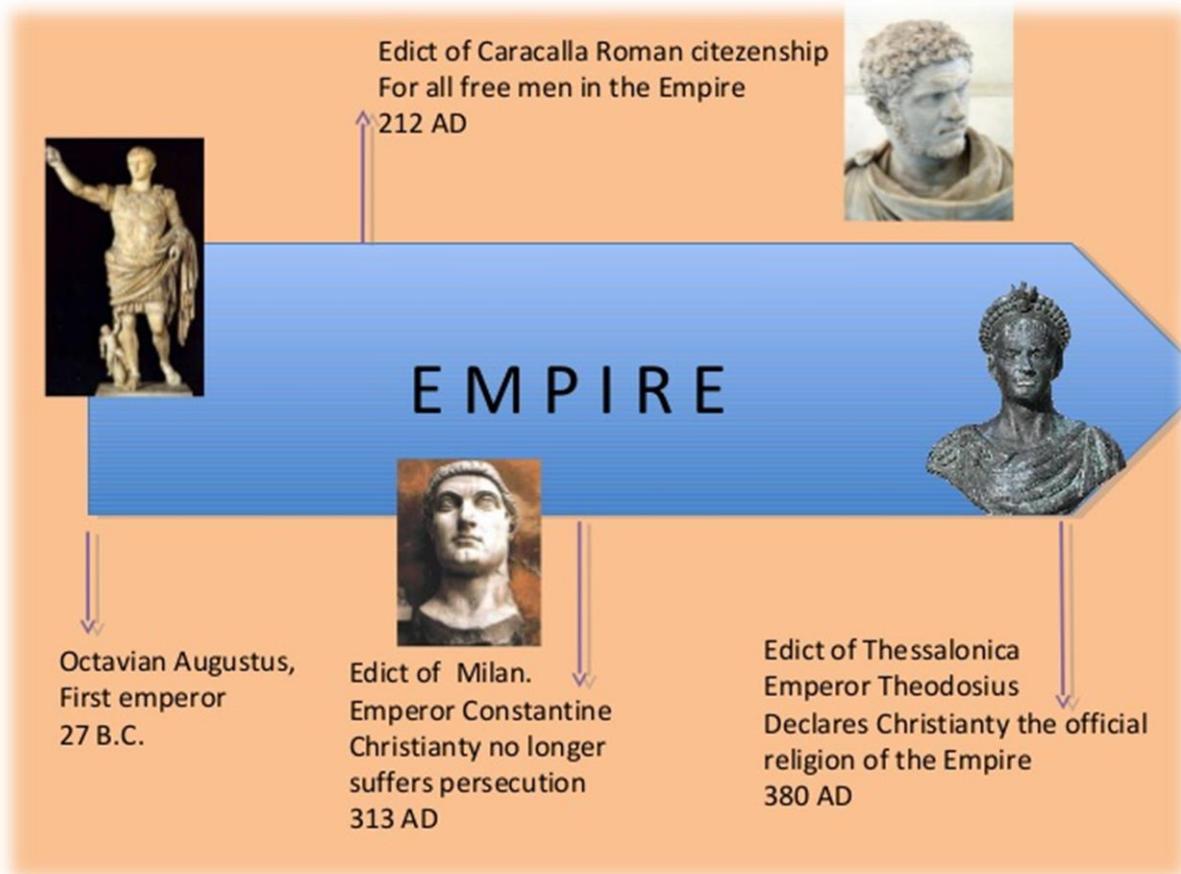


Roman Monarchy and Republic

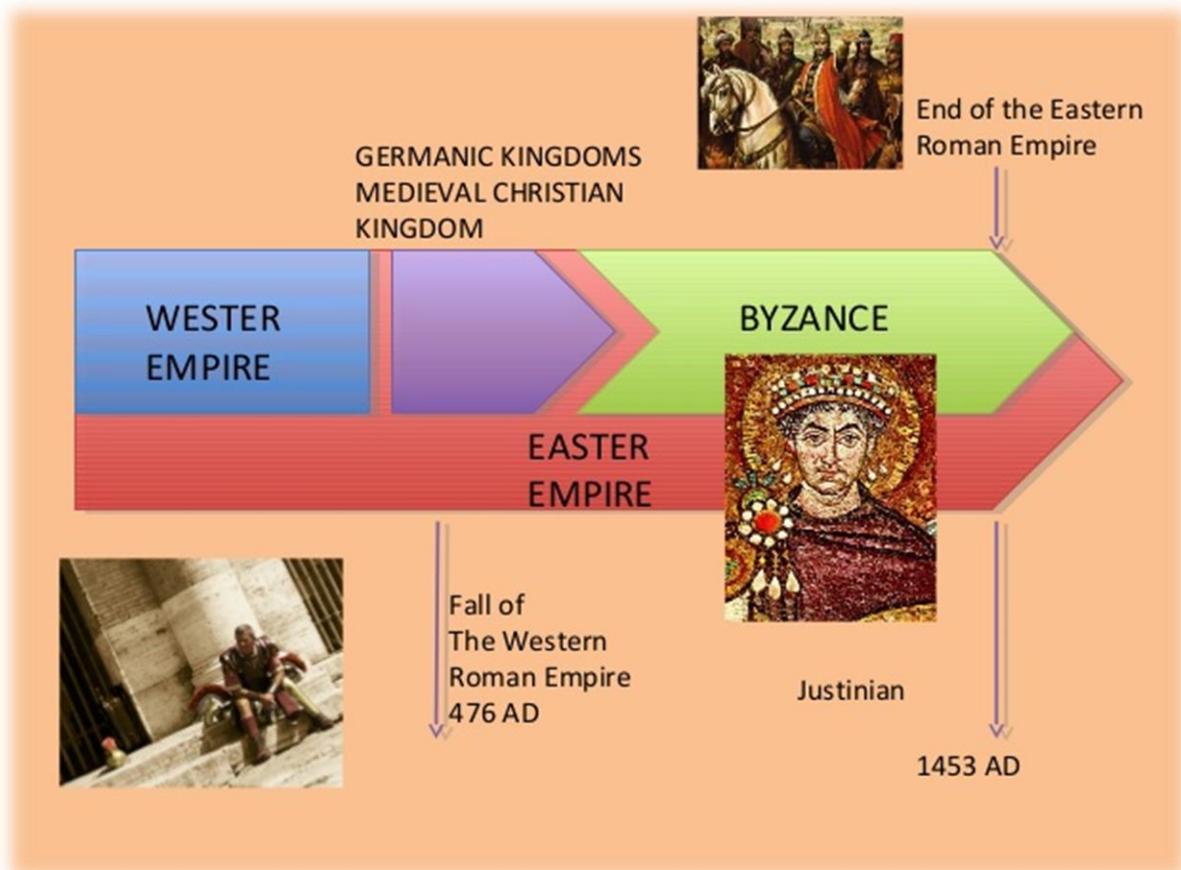
Timeline of periods and events in Roman history



Roman Empire



DECLINE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE



FALL OF ROME...

The fall of the Roman Empire, its decline or its continuation in East-Rome is a topic that fascinated many historians through the years. "Fall", "Decline" and/or "Continuation" is three separate themes. I have here gathered a few different theories. Try to find some more on your own...

"The decline of Rome was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness. Prosperity ripened the principle of decay; the causes of destruction multiplied with the extent of conquest; as soon as time or accident had removed the artificial supports, the stupendous fabric yielded to the pressure of its own weight. The story of its ruin is simple and obvious; and instead of inquiring why the Roman Empire was destroyed, we should rather be surprised that it had subsisted so long."

- Edward Gibbon (England) 1766, 1788

"La civilisation romaine n'est pas morte de sa belle mort. Elle a été assassinée."

- André Piganiol (Frankrike) 1947

"Die Germanen haben nicht als Kulturfeinde die römische Kultur zerstört oder gar vernichtet, sondern sie erhalten und weitergeführt. - Die römische Welt ward von innen heraus durch die Germanen allmählich gewonnen... die Beseitigung des weströmischen Kaisertums... kaum als ein Ereignis von einschneidender Bedeutung aufgefasst worden ist. Das weströmische Reich ist ohne Erschütterung eingeschlafen."

- Alfons Dopsch (Österreich) 1918-20

"What lay behind and constantly reacted upon all causes of Rome's disintegration was, after all, to a considerable extent, the fact that the people who built Rome had given way to a different race."

- Tenney Frank (USA) 1916

"The main phenomenon which underlies the process of decline is the gradual absorption of the educated classes by the masses and the consequent simplification of all the functions of political, social, economic, and intellectual life, which we call the barbarization of the ancient world."

- M.I. Rostovtzeff (Ryssland-USA) 1926

Why did the Roman Empire Fall?

1. Invasions by Barbarian tribes

The most straightforward theory for Western Rome's collapse pins the fall on a string of military losses sustained against outside forces. Rome had tangled with Germanic tribes for centuries, but by the 300s "barbarian" groups like the Goths had encroached beyond the Empire's borders. The Romans weathered a Germanic uprising in the late fourth century, but in 410 the Visigoth King Alaric successfully sacked the city of Rome. The Empire spent the next several decades under constant threat before "the Eternal City" was raided again in 455, this time by the Vandals. Finally, in 476, the Germanic leader Odoacer staged a revolt and deposed the Emperor Romulus Augustulus. From then on, no Roman emperor would ever again rule from a post in Italy, leading many to cite 476 as the year the Western Empire suffered its deathblow.

2. Economic troubles and overreliance on slave labor

Even as Rome was under attack from outside forces, it was also crumbling from within thanks to a severe financial crisis. Constant wars and overspending had significantly lightened imperial coffers, and oppressive taxation and inflation had widened the gap between rich and poor. In the hope of avoiding the taxman, many members of the wealthy classes had even fled to the countryside and set up independent fiefdoms. At the same time, the empire was rocked by a labor deficit. Rome's economy depended on slaves to till its fields and work as craftsmen, and its military might had traditionally provided a fresh influx of conquered peoples to put to work. But when expansion ground to a halt in the second century, Rome's supply of slaves and other war treasures began to dry up. A further blow came in the fifth century, when the Vandals claimed North Africa and began disrupting the empire's trade by prowling the Mediterranean as pirates. With its economy faltering and its commercial and agricultural production in decline, the Empire began to lose its grip on Europe.

3. The rise of the Eastern Empire

The fate of Western Rome was partially sealed in the late third century, when the Emperor Diocletian divided the Empire into two halves—the Western Empire seated in the city of Milan, and the Eastern Empire in Byzantium, later known as Constantinople. The division made the empire more easily governable in the short term, but over time the two halves drifted apart. East and West failed to adequately work together to combat outside threats, and the two often squabbled over resources and military aid. As the gulf widened, the largely Greek-speaking Eastern Empire grew in wealth while the Latin-speaking West descended into economic crisis. Most importantly, the strength of the Eastern Empire served to divert Barbarian invasions to the West. Emperors like Constantine ensured that the city of Constantinople was fortified and well guarded, but Italy and the city of Rome—which only had symbolic value for many in the East—were left vulnerable. The Western political structure would finally disintegrate in the fifth century, but the Eastern Empire endured in some form for another thousand years before being overwhelmed by the Ottoman Empire in the 1400s.

4. Overexpansion and military overspending

At its height, the Roman Empire stretched from the Atlantic Ocean all the way to the Euphrates River in the Middle East, but its grandeur may have also been its downfall. With such a vast territory to govern, the empire faced an administrative and logistical nightmare. Even with their excellent road systems, the Romans were unable to communicate quickly or effectively enough to manage their holdings. Rome struggled to marshal enough troops and resources to defend its frontiers from local rebellions and outside attacks, and by the second century the Emperor Hadrian was forced to build his famous wall in Britain just to keep the enemy at bay. As more and more funds were funneled into the military upkeep of the empire, technological advancement slowed and Rome's civil infrastructure fell into disrepair.

5. Government corruption and political instability

If Rome's sheer size made it difficult to govern, ineffective and inconsistent leadership only served to magnify the problem. Being the Roman emperor had always been a particularly dangerous job, but during the tumultuous second and third centuries it nearly became a death sentence. Civil war thrust the empire into chaos, and more than 20 men took the throne in the span of only 75 years, usually after the murder of their predecessor. The Praetorian Guard—the emperor's personal bodyguards—assassinated and installed new sovereigns at will, and once even auctioned the spot off to the highest bidder. The political rot also extended to the Roman Senate, which failed to temper the excesses of the emperors due to its own widespread corruption and incompetence. As the situation worsened, civic pride waned and many Roman citizens lost trust in their leadership.

6. The arrival of the Huns and the migration of the Barbarian tribes

The Barbarian attacks on Rome partially stemmed from a mass migration caused by the Huns' invasion of Europe in the late fourth century. When these Eurasian warriors rampaged through northern Europe, they drove many Germanic tribes to the borders of the Roman Empire. The Romans grudgingly allowed members of the Visigoth tribe to cross south of the Danube and into the safety of Roman territory, but they treated them with extreme cruelty. According to the historian Ammianus Marcellinus, Roman officials even forced the starving Goths to trade their children into slavery in exchange for dog meat. In brutalizing the Goths, the Romans created a dangerous enemy within their own borders. When the oppression became too much to bear, the Goths rose up in revolt and eventually routed a Roman army and killed the Eastern Emperor Valens during the Battle of Adrianople in A.D. 378. The shocked Romans negotiated a flimsy peace with the barbarians, but the truce unraveled in 410, when the Goth King Alaric moved west and sacked Rome. With the Western Empire weakened, Germanic tribes like the Vandals and the Saxons were able to surge across its borders and occupy Britain, Spain and North Africa.

7. Christianity and the loss of traditional values

The decline of Rome dovetailed with the spread of Christianity, and some have argued that the rise of a new faith helped contribute to the empire's fall. The Edict of Milan legalized Christianity in 313, and it later became the state religion in 380. These decrees ended centuries of persecution, but they may have also eroded the traditional Roman values system. Christianity displaced the polytheistic Roman religion, which viewed the emperor as having a divine status, and also shifted focus away from the glory of the state and onto a sole deity. Meanwhile, popes and other church leaders took an increased role in political affairs, further complicating governance. The 18th-century historian Edward Gibbon was the most famous proponent of this theory, but his take has since been widely criticized. While the spread of Christianity may have played a small role in curbing Roman civic virtue, most scholars now argue that its influence paled in comparison to military, economic and administrative factors.

8. Weakening of the Roman legions

For most of its history, Rome's military was the envy of the ancient world. But during the decline, the makeup of the once mighty legions began to change. Unable to recruit enough soldiers from the Roman citizenry, emperors like Diocletian and Constantine began hiring foreign mercenaries to prop up their armies. The ranks of the legions eventually swelled with Germanic Goths and other barbarians, so much so that Romans began using the Latin word "barbarus" in place of "soldier." While these Germanic soldiers of fortune proved to be fierce warriors, they also had little or no loyalty to the empire, and their power-hungry officers often turned against their Roman employers. In fact, many of the barbarians who sacked the city of Rome and brought down the Western Empire had earned their military stripes while serving in the Roman legions.

SOURCE: <https://www.history.com/news/8-reasons-why-rome-fell> (visited 9/9 2019)