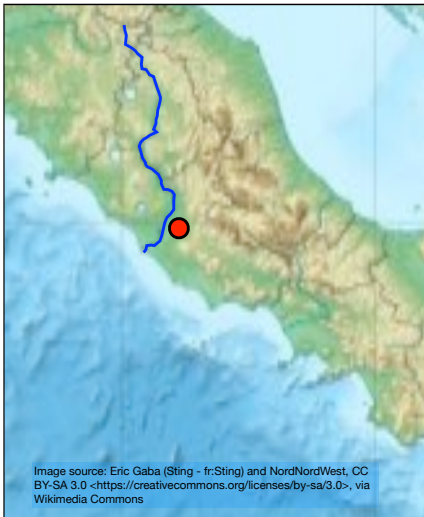# The Roman Empire

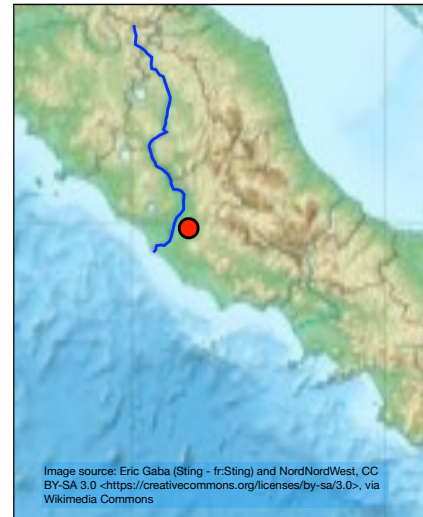History and Development

The City of Rome

Physical Setting

Physical Setting

- Rome began as a small village near the Tiber River on the Italian Peninsula.

- The river begins in the Apennine Mountains and flows to the Tyrrhenian Sea, with Rome located to the east of the river.

https://www.studentsofhistory.com/geography-of-the-roman-world

Physical Setting

- The Tiber River is the second longest river in Italy and was a source of freshwater and rich soil needed to support the development of people, animals, and crops of Rome.

- The river also provided easy transportation and served as a defense system against attacks coming from the other side of the river.

https://www.studentsofhistory.com/geography-of-the-roman-world

Physical Setting

- The Alps and Apennine Mountain ranges were natural barriers that helped protect Rome.

- The Alps provided a northern roadblock that forced invaders to move through narrow easily defendable passages.

- Covered in forest, the hills and mountains are made of volcanic rock. The Romans used this hard and spongy rock to build the foundations for their structures.

https://www.studentsofhistory.com/geography-of-the-roman-world

Physical Setting

- The Apennine Mountains divide the Italian peninsula in half, and protected Rome from invasion on the east.

- Being close to the Tyrrhenian Sea provided the Romans with a rich source of food through fishing.

- It also allowed Rome to trade with cities in Greece, northern Europe, and North Africa.

Tyrrhenian Sea

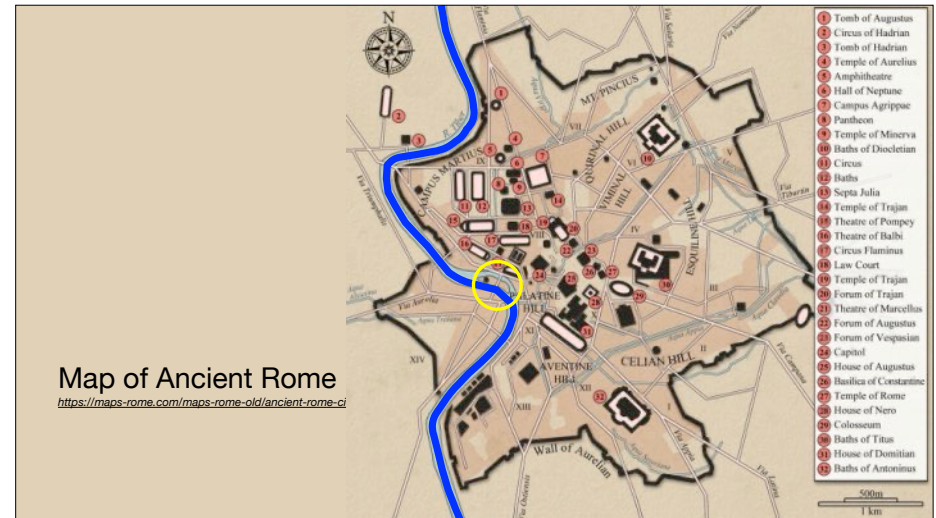https://www.studentsofhistory.com/geography-of-the-roman-world

Physical Setting

- Inspired by the Phoenicians' skilled shipbuilding, the Romans copied their designs to build their own ships.

- They built a navy which assisted them in conquering neighboring territories.

- Eventually, the Roman Empire took control of all of the Mediterranean Sea's shores.

https://www.studentsofhistory.com/geography-of-the-roman-world

Map of Ancient Rome

https://maps-rome.com/maps-rome-old/ancient-rome-ci

1 Tomb of Augustus
2 Circus of Hadrian
3 Tomb of Hadrian
4 Temple of Aurelius
5 Amphitheatre
6 Hall of Neptune
7 Campus Agrippae
8 Pantheon
9 Temple of Minerva
10 Baths of Diocletian
11 Circus
12 Baths
13 Septa Julia
14 Temple of Trajan
15 Theatre of Pompey
16 Theatre of Balbi
17 Circus Flaminus
18 Law Court
19 Temple of Trajan
20 Forum of Trajan
21 Theatre of Marcellus
22 Forum of Augustus
23 Forum of Vespasian
24 Capitol
25 Basilica of Constantine
26 House of Augustus
27 Temple of Rome
28 House of Nero
29 Colosseum
30 Baths of Titus
31 House of Domitian
32 Baths of Antoninus

Tiber River at Tiber Island, Rome
Image source: https://www.romesightseeing.net/tiber-island/
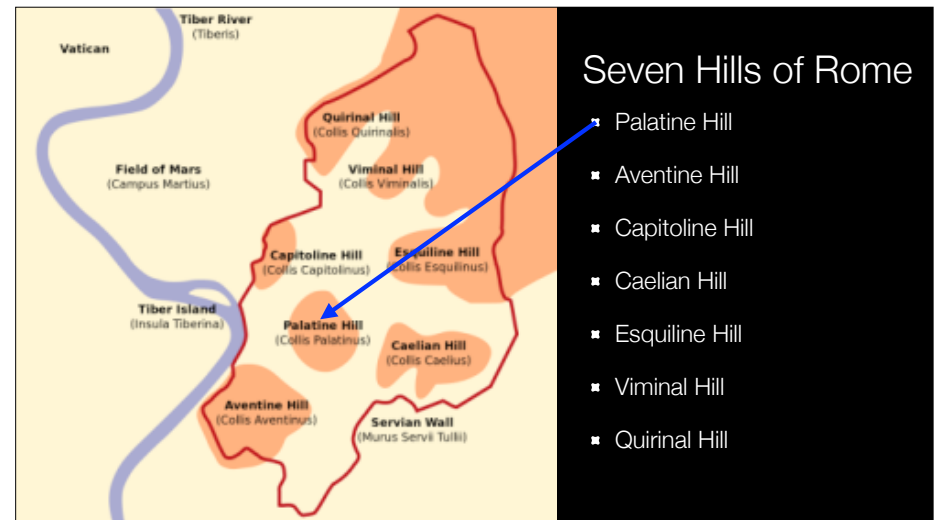
The City of Rome
The Seven Hills

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- East of the river Tiber, the "seven hills" form the geographical heart of Rome, within the walls of the city.

- The seven hills were first occupied by small settlements that were not grouped. As the people of the settlements began to interact, the groups bonded, draining the marshy valleys between them and turning them into markets.

- Later, in the early 4th century BCE, the Servian Walls were constructed to protect the seven hills.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_hills_of_Rome

Seven Hills of Rome

- Palatine Hill
- Aventine Hill
- Capitoline Hill
- Caelian Hill
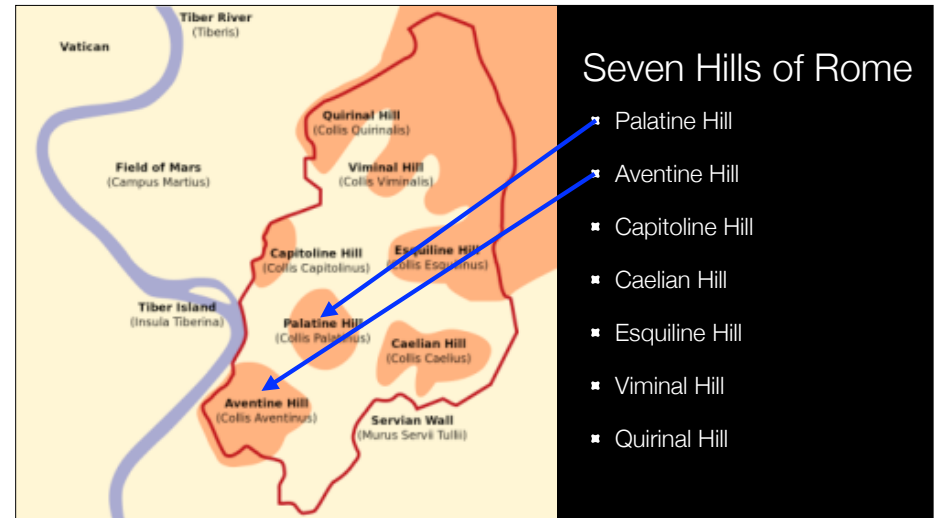- Esquiline Hill
- Viminal Hill
- Quirinal Hill

Slide 1

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- According to Roman mythology, Romulus and Remus were abandoned in the Tiber River. They were saved thanks to a she-wolf who suckled them. As they grew older, they argued over where to establish a new city, Romulus vying for Palatine Hill and Remus preferring the Aventine Hill. Eventually, Romulus killed Remus and laid the foundation for the city on Palatine Hill on April 21st, 753 BCE.

- During the Republican period, many rich Romans had houses on this hill. By the Imperial era, there was just one huge palace for the emperor. In fact, the English word 'palace' derives from the word Palatine.
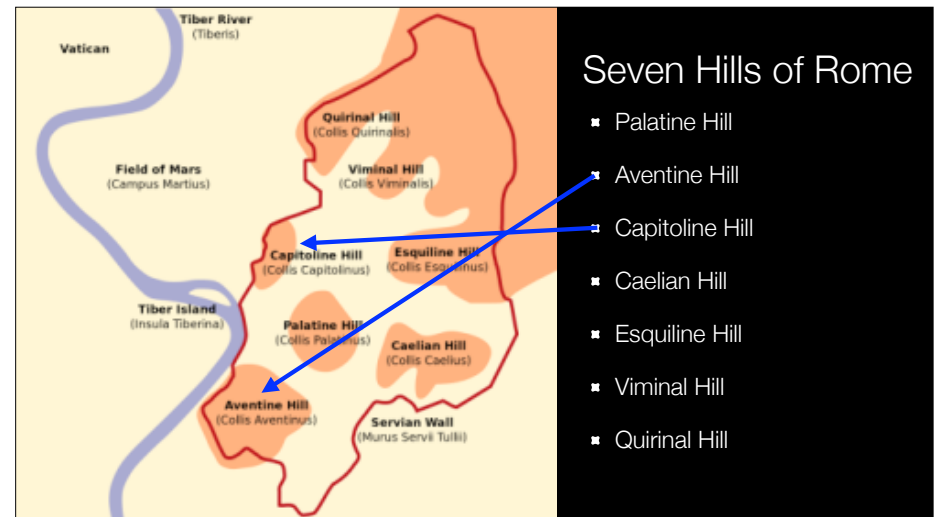
https://theromanguy.com/italy-travel-blog/rome/what-are-the-seven-hills-of-rome/

Slide 2

Seven Hills of Rome

- Palatine Hill
- Aventine Hill
- Capitoline Hill
- Caelian Hill
- Esquiline Hill
- Viminal Hill
- Quirinal Hill

Slide 3

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- Aventine Hill, just off the Circus Maximus, boasts some of Rome's most interesting views and attractions. Largely a wealthy residential area now, its main interest for tourists is the Basilica di Santa Sabina all'Aventino, one of the oldest basilicas in Rome, built between 422 and 432 CE.

- The church's orange grove is one of the hill's highest points, with a spectacular view across the city with the Vatican at its center. There's also Rome's rose garden, which is worth a visit during springtime, and the Knights of Malta keyhole in Piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta.
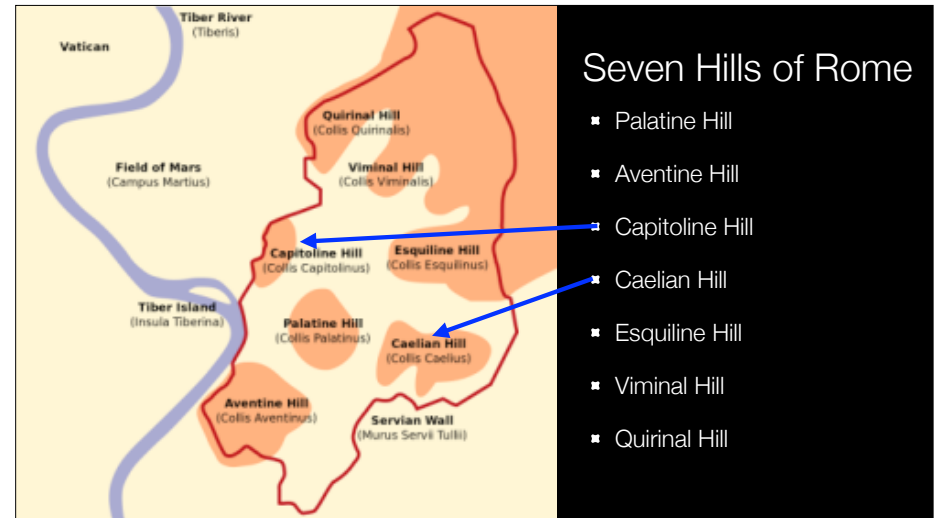
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Slide 4

Seven Hills of Rome

- Palatine Hill
- Aventine Hill
- Capitoline Hill
- Caelian Hill
- Esquiline Hill
- Viminal Hill
- Quirinal Hill

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- <u>Capitoline Hill</u> overlooks the Roman forum and is one of the most important areas in the Roman era. It is home to the Temple of Jupiter Best and Greatest, the Temple of Juno and the Tabularium. Over time, it has retained that importance. In the 16th century, the hill was landscaped by Michelangelo. It features concentric designs on its pavement and the la Cordonata staircase seen from Piazza Venezia.

- Today, it is the site of Rome's mayoral buildings and the Capitoline Museums, which hold many Roman treasures – if you head to Piazzale Caffarelli, you'll be rewarded with an excellent view across Rome's rooftops from the hill's highest point.
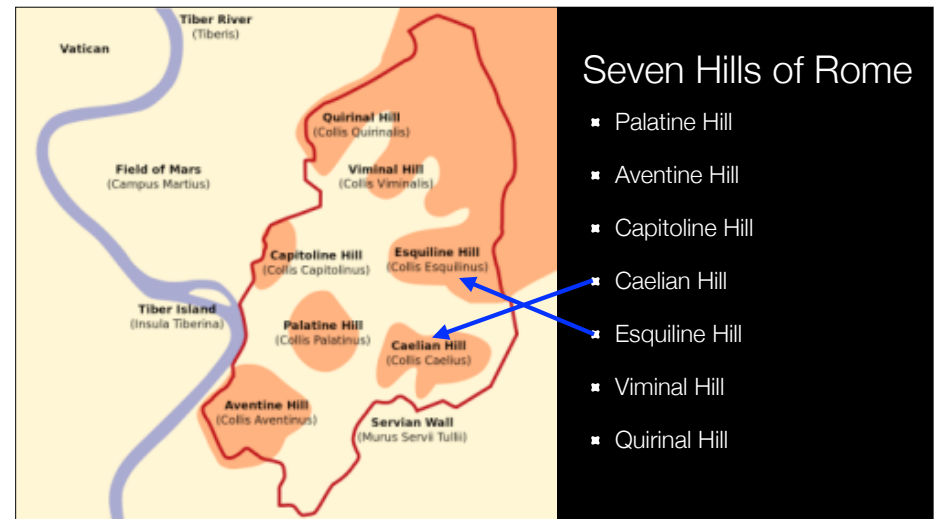
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Seven Hills of Rome

- Palatine Hill
- Aventine Hill
- Capitoline Hill
- Caelian Hill
- Esquiline Hill
- Viminal Hill
- Quirinal Hill

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- <u>Caelian Hill</u> is a leafy area to the south of Rome providing a little respite from the usual throngs of tourists. It was once the residential district of Rome's wealthy families – the Beverley Hills of Rome, if you will – and evidence of elaborately decorated villas has been discovered beneath the ground.

- Here, you can explore the Basilica of Santi Giovanni e Paolo and the ancient Basilica of Santo Stefano Rotondo nearby, as well as Villa Celimontana and its gardens.

https://theromanguy.com/italy-travel-blog/rome/what-are-the-seven-hills-of-rome/
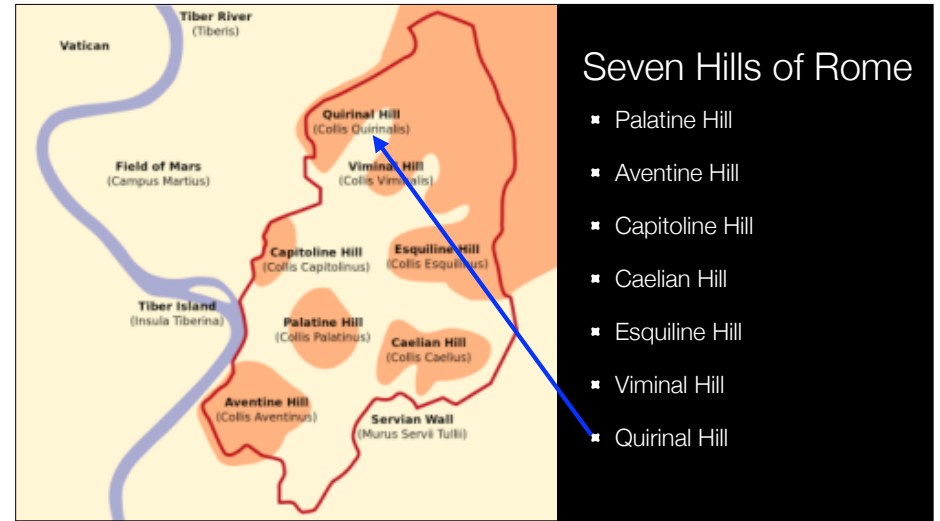
Seven Hills of Rome

- Palatine Hill
- Aventine Hill
- Capitoline Hill
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- Esquiline Hill
- Viminal Hill
- Quirinal Hill

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- Wedged in between Termini station and the Colosseum is Esquiline Hill, most famous for being where Emperor Nero built his extraordinary Domus Aurea, Golden House, the grandest villa built in Roman civilization. After the palace was finished, the Emperor exclaimed: "Finally, a palace worthy of my presence."
- Other attractions on this hill include the 'Arch of Gallienus', one of the original Republican city gates, which can now be easily overlooked after being rammed unceremoniously between modern buildings.
- Today, the Esquiline Hill is topped with the beautiful Santa Maria Maggiore, one of the four papal basilicas of Rome, and the largest church in Rome dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

https://theromanguy.com/italy-travel-blog/rome/what-are-the-seven-hills-of-rome/

Seven Hills of Rome

- Palatine Hill
- Aventine Hill
- Capitoline Hill
- Caelian Hill
- Esquiline Hill
- Viminal Hill
- Quirinal Hill

Tiber River (Tiberis)
Vatican
Quirinal Hill (Collis Quirinalis)
Field of Mars (Campus Martius)
Viminal Hill (Collis Viminalis)
Capitoline Hill (Collis Capitolinus)
Esquiline Hill (Collis Esquilinus)
Tiber Island (Insula Tiberina)
Palatine Hill (Collis Palatinus)
Caelian Hill (Collis Caelius)
Aventine Hill (Collis Aventinus)
Servian Wall (Murus Servii Tullii)

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- Viminal Hill is the smallest of Rome's seven hills, marked by the central Termini station, it is also the site of the Baths of Diocletian and the Palazzo Massimo which is an awesome collection.
- Highlights include the beautiful frescoes from the so-called House of Livia, and an array of very famous statues. You'll find the statues of Augustus as Pontifex Maximus, the Terme Ruler, and the Terme Boxer.

https://theromanguy.com/italy-travel-blog/rome/what-are-the-seven-hills-of-rome/

Seven Hills of Rome

- Palatine Hill
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- Viminal Hill
- Quirinal Hill

Tiber River (Tiberis)
Vatican
Quirinal Hill (Collis Quirinalis)
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Caelian Hill (Collis Caelius)
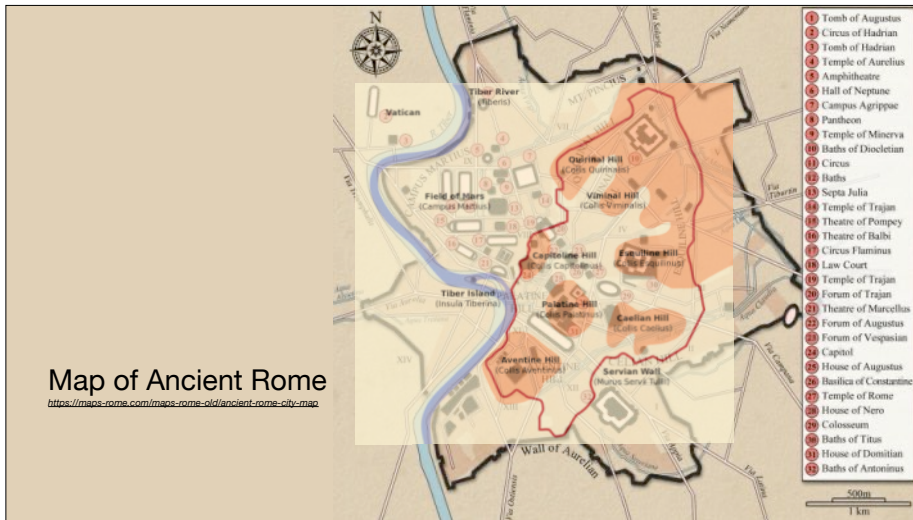Aventine Hill (Collis Aventinus)
Servian Wall (Murus Servii Tullii)

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- The highest of the seven hills, Quirinal Hill is the seat of the President of the Italian Republic who lives within the Palazzo del Quirinale. Originally it was part of a group of hills that included Collis Latiaris, Mucialis and Salutaris, but these have all since been lost due to the building from the 16th century onwards.

- The hill first became part of Rome, along with the Viminal Hill, during the reign of Servius Tullius in the 6th century BCE. Right in the middle of Rome's bustling center, this hill doesn't really feel like a hill at all. In fact, it's difficult to believe that years ago this was the highest summit in Rome. Nearby attractions include the Trevi Fountain, Palazzo Barberini and Via del Corso, the city's main shopping street.

https://theromanguy.com/italy-travel-blog/rome/what-are-the-seven-hills-of-rome/

Seven Hills of Rome

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Map of Ancient Rome
https://maps-rome.com/maps-rome-old/ancient-rome-city-map

Map of Ancient Rome
https://maps-rome.com/maps-rome-old/ancient-rome-city-map

ROME
Mapograph • Seven Hills of Rome Explained • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKl8kKe3BHQ

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- In modern Rome, five of the seven hills are the sites of monuments, buildings, and parks.
- The Capitoline Hill is the location of Rome's city hall, and the Palatine Hill is part of the main archaeological area.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_hills_of_Rome

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- In the Book of Revelation, the Whore of Babylon sits on "seven mountains" often understood as the seven hills of Rome, a reference to the pagan Roman Empire.

  And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I marveled greatly. But the angel said to me, "Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come. This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; (Revelation 17:6-9 ESV)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_hills_of_Rome

Seven Hills
Rome's Physical Setting

- Protestants later associated these mountains with the Catholic Church (as the Pope is patriarch of Rome).

The Roman Empire
Historical Development

Roman Empire
Historical Development

Roman Monarchy (753 BCE – 509 BCE)

- According to legend, Rome was founded by Romulus and Remus, twin brothers who are said to have been raised by a she-wolf. After a dispute, Romulus killed Remus and became the first king of Rome, naming the city after himself.

- Romulus established many of Rome's early political and social institutions, including the Senate (a council of elders).

- Under the monarchy, Rome's early social structure divided citizens into two classes: *patricians* (the aristocratic families) and *plebeians* (commoners).

OpenAI. (2024). *ChatGPT (Version GPT-4) [Large language model]*. OpenAI. https://chat.openai.com/

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- Rome gradually expanded its influence over neighboring territories, primarily through warfare. The kings led campaigns against neighboring tribes, such as the Sabines, Etruscans, and Latins.

- Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of the regal period, was a tyrannical ruler whose oppressive reign led to widespread dissatisfaction and eventually to the overthrow of the monarchy in 509 BCE.

OpenAI. (2024). *ChatGPT (Version GPT-4) [Large language model]*. OpenAI. https://chat.openai.com/

Roman Empire

Roman Republic (509 BCE – 27 BCE)

- The monarchy was replaced with a republic, governed by elected officials called magistrates, and a Senate, which became the key advisory body.

- The new system was designed to prevent the concentration of power in one person. Two consuls were elected annually to share executive authority, and other offices like praetors, quaestors, and censors were established.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- Plebeian (commoner) demands for political equality and protection from patrician (aristocratic) dominance lead to a series of conflicts, but resulted in victories like a voice in government and the power to veto unfair laws, the right to have their own assembly, and ultimately (in 450 BCE) the Law of the Twelve Tables, Rome's first written code of laws, provided legal protections.

- The Republic aggressively expanded its territory through warfare and alliances, its main rivals in Italy being the Etruscans, Samnites, and Gauls.

- Rome later entered into the Punic Wars (264-146 BCE) against Carthage, a powerful North African city-state, and eventually expanded into Spain, Greece, and Asia Minor, becoming a dominant power in the Mediterranean world.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- The later Republic saw the rise of powerful military leaders who used their armies to gain political power, leading to a series of civil wars.

- Julius Caesar rose to prominence after his successful campaigns in Gaul. His crossing of the Rubicon River in 49 BCE, in defiance of the Senate, marked the beginning of a civil war between him and the Senate, led by Pompey. Caesar emerged victorious and declared himself dictator for life in 44 BCE, but was assassinated by a group of senators led by Brutus and Cassius.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- After his assassination, Rome was plunged into another civil war. His grand-nephew and adopted son Octavian allied with Mark Antony and Lepidus in the Second Triumvirate to defeat Caesar's assassins.

- However, conflict soon arose between Octavian and Mark Antony, leading to the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE, where Octavian defeated Antony and his ally, Cleopatra of Egypt.

- In 27 BCE, Octavian was granted the title *Augustus* and became the first Roman emperor, marking the transition from the Republic to the Roman Empire.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

Roman Empire (27 BCE – 476 CE)

- Augustus initiated the *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace), a period of relative peace, stability, and prosperity across the empire that lasted for more than two centuries (27 BCE – 180 CE).

- During this time, the empire expanded its borders, fostered trade, and built significant infrastructure like roads, aqueducts, and monuments.

- Augustus reformed the military, reorganized the provinces, and instituted many administrative and cultural reforms to stabilize and strengthen the empire.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- During this period, Rome expanded to its territory significantly. Eventually its borders extended from the British Isles to the Sahara Desert, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Euphrates River, creating one of the largest empires in history.

- After Augustus, the Julio-Claudian Dynasty ruled (16–68 CE), including emperors like Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.

- The Flavian Dynasty (69–96 CE), founded by Vespasian, saw the construction of the Colosseum. Titus destroyed Jerusalem in 70 CE and dealt with the aftermath of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, which destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- Five good emperors ruled between 96 and 180 CE and led the empire to its greatest heights: Nerva restored stability, Trajan expanded the empire to its maximum extent, Hadrian consolidated the empire's borders, Antoninus Pius oversaw a peaceful and prosperous reign, and Marcus Aurelius, a philosopher-king, defended the empire from Germanic invasions.

- In the third century, the empire entered a period of severe instability. A series of short-lived emperors, many of whom were military leaders, led to political chaos. Invasions from Germanic tribes, Persians, and internal rebellions threatened the empire's cohesion.The economy faltered with rampant inflation and a breakdown of trade networks.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- Diocletian restored stability by instituting wide-reaching reforms.

- He divided the empire into two halves, the Eastern and Western Roman Empires, governed by a *Tetrarchy* (rule of four), where two senior emperors and two junior emperors ruled jointly. He also reformed the army, economy, and administration, stabilizing the empire after decades of crisis.

- But Diocletian also launched the Great Persecution (303–311 CE), one of the last and most severe attempts to suppress Christianity.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- **Constantine the Great** ended the persecution of Christians with the **Edict of Milan** in 313 CE. He also founded the city of Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) as the new capital of the Eastern Roman Empire in 330 CE.

- Constantine was the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity, and under him, Christianity began its rise to dominance in the empire.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- From the 4th century onward, the Western Roman Empire faced increasing internal and external pressures. Internally, the empire experienced economic difficulties, political instability, and corruption.

- Externally, invasions by Germanic tribes and the Huns under Attila, put immense strain on the empire's military and resources.

- In 410 CE Rome was sacked by the Visigoths and in 455 CE by the Vandals. The Western Roman Empire effectively ended in 476 CE when emperor Romulus Augustulus was deposed by the Germanic chieftain Odoacer.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

Byzantine Empire (330 CE – 1453 CE)

- After the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 CE, the Eastern Empire, called the Byzantine Empire, preserved Roman law, culture, and institutions while evolving its own distinct Christian and Greek-influenced identity.

- **Constantine** established the city of Constantinople as the new capital of the Roman Empire in 330 CE. Built on the site of ancient Byzantium, it became a major cultural, political, and economic hub. Its strategic location on the Bosporus Strait allowed it to control trade routes between Europe and Asia, making it a vital center of commerce and power.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- The Byzantine Empire regarded itself as the continuation of the Roman Empire, maintaining Roman law and administration.

- The empire managed to fend off various invaders, including the Ostrogoths and the Huns, and maintain stability in the eastern Mediterranean.

- **Justinian I** was one of the most important and ambitious emperors of the Byzantine Empire. He restored former territories like parts of North Africa (from the Vandals), Italy (from the Ostrogoths), and parts of Spain (from the Visigoths).

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- He compiled the *Corpus Juris Civilis* (Body of Civil Law), also known as the Justinian Code, which organized and updated Roman laws and became the foundation of legal systems in many later European states.
- He commissioned construction of the *Hagia Sophia* in Constantinople, a masterpiece of Byzantine architecture and the largest cathedral in Christendom for nearly a thousand years.
- Despite his achievements, Justinian's reign was marked by internal strife, most notably the Nika Revolt, a massive uprising in Constantinople, brutally suppressed with the deaths of thousands. His wars drained the empire's resources, and after his death, many of the reconquered territories were lost.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- In the 7th century, the Byzantine Empire faced a new and powerful enemy: the Islamic Caliphates. After the rise of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, Muslim forces began to rapidly expand and the Byzantine Empire lost large territories, including Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and parts of North Africa.
- The Iconoclasm (image-breaking) controversy was a major religious and political conflict. Beginning in 726 CE with Emperor Leo III's ban on religious images (icons) due to concerns that their veneration was idolatrous, led to tensions between the imperial government and the Orthodox Church. The controversy ended with the restoration of the veneration of icons in 843 CE, an event celebrated in the Orthodox Church as the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- Following the resolution of the Iconoclasm crisis, the Byzantine Empire entered "golden age" with successful campaigns agains the Bulgarian Empire; a flourishing of Byzantine art, architecture and literature; the spread of Orthodox Christianity to the Slavic peoples; and the increase of its wealth bolstered by its strategic location as a center of trade between Europe and Asia.
- But a turning point came in 1071 CE when, at the Battle of Manzikert, the empire suffered a devastating defeat at the hands of the Seljuk Turks which significantly weakened the Empire and opened the door to further Turkish advances into Byzantine territory.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- In response to the Seljuk advances, Emperor Alexios I Komnenos called for Western help, which led to the launch of the First Crusade.
- But in 1204 CE, during the Fourth Crusade, Crusaders from Western Europe turned against Constantinople, sacking the city, a defeat from which it never recovered.
- By the 15th century, the Byzantine Empire had been reduced to little more than the city of Constantinople and a few surrounding territories. On May 29, 1453, Constantinople fell to the forces of the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II, marking the end of the Byzantine Empire and the final collapse of the Eastern Roman Empire.

Roman Empire
Historical Development

- The fall of Constantinople is considered one of the most significant events in world history, as it marked the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance, as many Greek scholars fled westward to Italy, bringing classical knowledge with them.

OpenAI. (2024). *ChatGPT (Version GPT-4) [Large language model]*. OpenAI. https://chat.openai.com/

Roman Expansion Map on Google Earth
Mapograph
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOzwzqXZRiM

Watch the date in the upper left corner

The Roman Empire
The Sixth World Power

Patriarchs
Egyptian Bondage
Moses
Egyptian Empire 1250 BCE
Image source: https://www.worldhistory.org/New_Kingdom_of_Egypt/

Fall of Israel
Assyrian Empire
Image source: William Schlegel, Satellite Bible Atlas

Fall of Judah
Babylonian Captivity
Babylonian Empire
Image source: William Schlegel, Satellite Bible Atlas

Story of Esther
Persian Empire
Image source: William Schlegel, Satellite Bible Atlas

Greek Empire
Image source: William Schlegel, Satellite Bible Atlas

The Roman Empire
Life of Jesus
Life of Paul