Romans*

Romans 1:1-7 (1) Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,
(2) (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)
(3) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;
(4) And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:
(5) By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:
(6) Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:
(7) **To all that be in Rome**, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Unlike most other churches to whom he wrote, Paul did not establish the church in Rome. Actually, no one knows who first carried the Gospel to Rome, but most likely it was some of the Jews and proselytes who had come from Rome to Jerusalem for the observance of Pentecost and who were converted before returning to Rome (Acts 2). Rome was built on seven hills as is also revealed in (Rev 17:9): they are the Aventine Hill, the Caelian Hill, the Capitoline Hill, the Esquiline Hill, the Palatine Hill, the Quirinal Hill, and the Viminal Hill. Throughout the history of Rome, the urban limits of the city were considered to be the area within the city walls. Originally, these consisted of the Servian Wall, which was built twelve years after the Gaulish sack of the city in 390 BC. This wall contained most of the Esquiline and Caelian hills, as well as the whole of the other five. Rome outgrew the Servian Wall, but no more walls were constructed until almost 700 years later. Rome, the capital city of Italy, is historically known as the 'City of Seven Hills.' And according to tradition, the original settlement that developed into the capital of the

Roman Kingdom was ruled by a succession of seven kings. During the course of its expansion Rome become a republic, not governed by an emperor or king, but by the Roman senate. However by the time of Christ, the Republic had ceased to exist, it was by now the Roman Empire, of which Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, turn with me to;

Daniel 2:40-44 (40) And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

(41) And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

(42) And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

(43) And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

(44) And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

This fourth Kingdom was the Roman Empire and it was in the days of these Roman Kings that God set up the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. During this historical period Rome was the ultimate power of the known world, with the kings and governors of the many provinces being in subjection. The mixture of iron and clay also shows that these kingdoms would try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each other through intermarriage, but they did not hold together, just as iron and clay do not mix. Herod Antipas may be one of the most important figures during the life of Jesus Christ, for he ruled in Galilee, the region where Jesus performed the majority of His ministry.

Pontius Pilate, Roman prefect of Judaea, is best known as the judge at Jesus' trial and the man who allowed the crucifixion of Jesus. As prefect, he served under Emperor Tiberius. As governor of the Jews at the time of the Crucifixion, Pilate did not consider Jesus guilty and wanted to release him, however under pressure from the crowds in Jerusalem, Pilate sentenced Jesus to death on the cross, having first washed his hands to indicate his lack of responsibility for Jesus' fate, let's turn to;
Matthew 27:22-26 (22) Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.
(23) And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.
(24) When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.
(25) Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.
(26) Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.
When Paul wrote to the Church at Rome, it is believed there were about four congregations in the city at that time, both Jew and Gentile. On one occasion Jesus came to him saying; Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome (Acts 23:11). *There were certainly both Jews and Gentiles in the Churches of Christ in Rome (Romans 16:16), the name Paul had spoken of to describe the church Jesus purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). The book of Romans contains about sixty quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures, as well as extensive doctrinal sections concerning the Jews in God's plan, yet it is obviously addressed to Gentiles also. Let's turn to;*
Romans 1:13-17 (13) Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but

was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.
(14) I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.
(15) So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.
(16) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
(17) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.
Except for Jewish reprisal, the Christians were generally accepted and were not considered a threat by Rome until later. In what may have been the first Roman persecution was ordered by Claudius when he charged Herod Agrippa to suppress the churches of Christ. Under that charge James was executed with the sword in Jerusalem in the year 45 A.D. However under Emperor Nero persecution began in earnest.
{When the Jews were deprived of their power, by the heathen, and their time was past, in which they had persecuted and slain the saints of God, the Lord God nevertheless suffered His church to be visited by the refining fire of presecution, namely, through the power of the heathen; of whom the Emperor Nero was the first tyrant. Martyrs Mirror}
In the first chapter of the book of Romans Paul addresses immoral behaviors that are contemporary in our present time;
Romans 1:24-32 (24) Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:
(25) Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.
(26) For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

(27) And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.
(28) And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
(29) Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
(30) Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
(31) Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
(32) Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.
Because of this Christian teaching by Paul, one political correct review had this to say; How about getting your nose out of the Bible (which is ONLY a book of stories compiled by MANY different writers hundreds of years ago) and read the declaration of independence (what our nation is built on), where it says 'All Men are Created equal,' and try treating them that way for a change!
Well, we keep our nose in the Bible because the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Christians just want to share the good news because all men are created equal and deserving of equal consideration to God's salvation plan. Listen, Christians' do not treat one immorality differently than any other. All immoralities are sin and all need to be repented of. Sodom was destroyed because of homosexuality. Some believe the word "know" means "to get aquainted," however further study reveals a more intimate relationship was the intention of the men in Sodom. According to Paul, homosexual offenders willingly dishonour their own bodies

between themselves by their own unnatural lifestyle according to their own desire. Therefore God will give them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay", saith the Lord. Therefore warn them without vengeance.
Turn with me to;
Romans 12:17-21 (17) Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.
(18) If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.
(19) Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.
(20) Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.
(21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.
In spite of what one may believe, homosexuality is condemned in both the old and new testaments. God's will is; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (Jam 5:20). *God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,* But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things (Romans 2:2). *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and for this reason Christ came to earth to give His life that all may have life and life more abundantly. But how could all manner of sin be forgiven if blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is not? Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost may be regarded as a continual and obstinate rejection of the gospel, and hence is an unpardonable sin, simply because as long as a sinner remains in unbelief he voluntarily excludes himself from pardon. Now turn to;*
Romans 5:6-10 (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

(7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.
(8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
(9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.
(10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.
*There are many subjects Paul wrote about in Romans, even "**nots**". Its a funny thing concerning knots in a board. A loose knot does not help the integrity of the board and in fact the board is weakened. At the beginning a loose knot was offered to Eve, her resolve in God's command was weakened by the loose knot,* thou shalt not surely die. *But Eve has not been alone in accepting loose knot advice. Contrary to loose knots, God's nots are solid, they have integrity and will strengthen the character of the individual.* For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Romans 13:9). *Now concerning the Lord's baptismal ordinance for remission of sin, a commonly held loose knot advice is, "baptism is not necessary." That is not what the Apostle Paul had to say. Do not take my word, turn to;*
Romans 6:1-7 (1) What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
(2) God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
(3) Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?
(4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

(5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
(6) Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
(7) For he that is dead is freed from sin.
Search as you will, scriptural baptism is the only way to have part in His death, burial and resurrection. In His death He condemned sin in the flesh and the way into His death is by the ordinance of baptism to be raised in newness of life sin free. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (Romans 8:3). *For further confirmation, look to;*
Colossians 2:12-14 (12) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.
(13) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;
(14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;
So here is the deal. Christ condemned sin in the flesh when He was crucified on the cross. Therefore to be a partaker with Christ in condemning sin in your own flesh, you must be crucified with Him which is signified by your obedient faith in baptism. Now turn to;
Romans 8:10-11 (10) And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
(11) But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.
Is His resurrection important? Then being buried with Him by baptism into death is critical to obtain the desired result

which is, "raised in the likeness of His resurrection."
For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death in the act of baptism, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us (Romans 8:34). *Is His crucifixion important? Then so is being baptized into His death, for it is there that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. In the book of Romans are the fundamental facts of the salvation plan established by Jesus Christ, written by Paul;*
Believe; **Romans 10:9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
Faith; **Romans 10:17** So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
Repentance; **Romans 2:4** Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?
Confession; **Romans 10:10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
Baptism; **Romans 6:3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?
Faith in Christ is the effect of belief, and repentance, confession and baptism is the effect of faith. Baptism is a personal sign and proof of addition into the visible Church of Christ, without which, no one can be recognized as a member of the Church. Jesus was born and died in a Roman world. The Roman Empire circled the Mediterranean Sea. What we call Europe, North Africa, and much of the Middle East was part of the largest political unit the world had ever seen. Around 500 B.C. the Roman Republic was formed. The Republic worked well for about 400 years, untill rebellion and political intrigue began to tear at the fabric of Roman society and

power. Sounds familiar doesn't it? Judea came under Roman jurisdiction in 63 B.C. when the armies under General Pompey used a political squabble as an excuse to invade Judea and conquer Jerusalem. Rome ruled through puppet kings and appointed bureaucrats from then on. In A.D. 66 the Jews of Judea rebelled against Roman rule. The revolt was crushed in A.D. 70, the temple was destroyed and thousands of Jews were slaughtered. Jesus had warned of the impending doom and the destruction of the temple. Don't take my word, turn to;
Matthew 24:1-2 (1) And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.
(2) And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.
The temple had to be destroyed before the holiest of all could be opened for all, listen to this; The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: (Heb 9:8). *God is not willing that any should be lost. He has given the free gift of grace by Faith in Christ that is the effect of belief. Obedience to the ordinance of baptism is the effect of faith in Christ; only those who first believe the testimony of God, and by faith repent of their sins, and confess Jesus is the Son of God, and are baptized into His death, have the full and explicit testimony of pardon. This is the gospel. The gospel invitation is beckoning, also prayer requests for other reasons, in either case come while we gently persuade with song.*

This message approved by
Jack Warford
a minister of Christ

Barnes' Notes on the Bible
The Holy Ghost - Who appointed all this. The whole arrangement in the service of the tabernacle is represented as having been under the direction of the Holy Spirit, or this was one of his methods of teaching the great truths of religion, and of keeping them before the minds of people. Sometimes that Spirit taught by direct revelation; sometimes by the written word, and sometimes by symbols. The tabernacle, with its different apartments, utensils, and services, was a permanent means of keeping important truths before the minds of the ancient people of God.
This signifying - That is, showing this truth, or making use of this arrangement to impress this truth on the minds of people that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest.
That the way into the holiest of all - Into heaven - of which the Most Holy place in the tabernacle was undoubtedly designed to be an emblem. It was the place where the visible symbol of God - the Shekinah - dwelt; where the blood of propitiation was sprinkled, and was, therefore, an appropriate emblem of that holy heaven where God dwells, and whence pardon is obtained by the blood of the atonement.
Was not yet made manifest - The way to heaven was not opened or fully understood. It was not known how people could appear before God, or how they could come with the hope of pardon. That way has now been opened by the ascension of the Redeemer to heaven, and by the assurance that all who will may come in his name.
While as the first tabernacle was yet standing - As long as it stood, and the appointed services were held in it. The idea is, that until it was superseded by a more perfect system, it was a "proof" that the way to heaven was not yet fully and freely optioned, and that the Holy Spirit "designed" that it should be such a proof. The apostle does not specify in what the proof consisted, but it may have been in something like the following.
(1) it was a mere "symbol," and not the "reality" - showing that the true way was not yet fully understood.
(2) it was entered but once a year - showing that there was not access at all times.
(3) it was entered only by the High Priest - showing that there was not free end full access to all the people.

(4) it was accessible only by Jews - showing that the way in which all men might be saved was not then fully revealed.
The sense is, that it was a system of types and shadows, in which there were many burdensome rites and many things to prevent people from coming before the symbol of the divinity, and was, therefore, an "imperfect system." All these obstructions are now removed; the Saviour - the great High Priest of his people - has entered heaven and "opened it to all true believers," and all of every nation may now have free access to God; see Hebrews 9:12; compare Hebrews 10:19-22.

Seven Hills of Rome Italy
Written By: The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica
Seven Hills of Rome, group of hills on or about which the ancient city of Rome was built. The original city of Romulus was built upon Palatine Hill (Latin: Mons Palatinus). The other hills are the Capitoline, Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Caelian, and Aventine (known respectively in Latin as the Mons Capitolinus, Mons Quirinalis, Mons Viminalis, Mons Esquilinus, Mons Caelius, and Mons Aventinus).

Roman Republic Ancient state [509 bc-27 bc]
Written by: The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica
Roman Republic,
Rome, ancient: Italy, 298-201 BC [Credit: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.]
the ancient state that centred on the city of Rome, from the time of the events leading up to the founding of the republic in 509 bce, through the establishment of the Roman Empire in 27 bce. A brief treatment of the Roman Republic follows. For full treatment, see ancient Rome.
The early historical record
The early Roman Republic (509–264 bce) and the preceding regal period (753–509 bce) are the most poorly documented periods of Roman history. Historical writing in Rome did not begin until the late 3rd century bce, when Rome had already completed its conquest of Italy, established itself as a major power of the ancient world, and become involved in a gigantic struggle with Carthage for control of the western Mediterranean. The earliest Roman histories were brief résumés of facts and stories, but gradually historians embellished the sparse factual material (such as the list of annual magistrates from the beginning of the republic onward, religious records, and the texts of some laws and treaties) with both native and Greek folklore. Consequently, over time, historical facts about early Rome suffered from patriotic reinterpretation involving exaggerations of the truth, the suppression of embarrassing facts, and invention.
Ancient Roman historians initially differed over the precise date of Rome's foundation. By the end of the republic, however, it was generally accepted that Rome had been founded in 753 bce and that the republic had begun in 509 bce, following the overthrow of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the last of Rome's seven kings. According to tradition, the first six kings had been benevolent rulers, but the last was a cruel tyrant who was overthrown by a popular uprising. The prevalent modern view is that the monarchy at Rome was incidentally terminated through military defeat and foreign intervention. This theory sees Rome as a site highly prized by the Etruscans (the people of the central Italian region of Etruria) in the 6th century bce. Porsenna, the Etruscan king of Clusium, defeated the Romans and expelled Tarquinius Superbus. Yet before Porsenna could establish himself as monarch, he was forced to withdraw, leaving Rome without a king. Rather than restoring their king, the Romans replaced the kingship with two annually elected magistrates called consuls.
During the early Roman Republic, important new political offices and institutions were created, and old ones were adapted to cope with the changing needs of the state. According to the ancient historians, these changes and innovations resulted from a political struggle between two social orders, the patricians and the plebeians, that began during the first years of the republic and lasted for more than 200 years. The discrepancies, inconsistencies, and logical fallacies in the account of Livy, one of Rome's greatest historians, make it evident that this thesis of a struggle of the orders is a gross oversimplification of a highly complex series of events that had no single cause.
Early government
The two consuls (who had come to replace the king) were primarily generals whose task it was to lead Rome's armies in war. In times of military emergency, when unity of command was sometimes necessary, Rome appointed a dictator in place of the consuls, who, however, could not hold supreme military command for longer than six months.
The Senate, which may have existed under the monarchy and served as an advisory council for the king, now advised both magistrates and the Roman people. Although in theory the people were sovereign and the Senate only offered advice, in actual practice the Senate wielded enormous power because of the collective prestige of its members.
During the republic there were two different popular assemblies, the centuriate assembly and the tribal assembly. The centuriate assembly was military in nature; it voted on war and peace and elected all those magistrates who exercised imperium (military power). The tribal assembly was a nonmilitary civilian assembly that elected those magistrates who did not exercise imperium. It did most of the legislating and sat as a court for serious public offenses.

In 451 bce Rome received its first written law code, inscribed upon 12 bronze tablets and publicly displayed in the forum. Its provisions concerned such matters as legal procedure, debt foreclosure, paternal authority over children, property rights, inheritance, and funerary regulations. This so-called Law of the Twelve Tables was to form the basis of all subsequent Roman private law.

The expansion of Rome

During the 6th century bce, Rome became one of the more-important states in Latium—owing to the achievements of its Etruscan overlords—but Tibur (Tivoli), Praeneste, and Tusculum were equally important Latin states. Although the Latins dwelled in politically independent towns, their common language and culture produced cooperation in religion, law, and warfare. (This cooperation has come to be known as the Latin League.) The Latin states occasionally waged war among themselves, but in times of common danger they banded together for mutual defense.

Toward the end of the 5th century bce, the Romans began to expand at the expense of the Etruscan states, possibly propelled by population growth. Rome's first two major wars against organized states were fought with Fidenae (437–426 bce), a town near Rome, and against Veii, an important Etruscan city. Before Roman strength increased further, a marauding Gallic tribe swept down the Po River valley and sacked Rome in 390 bce; the invaders departed, however, after they received a ransom in gold. Forty years of hard fighting in Latium and Etruria were required to restore Rome's power. When Rome became increasingly dominant in the Latin League, the Latins took up arms against Rome to maintain their independence. The ensuing Latin War (340–338 bce) was quickly decided in Rome's favour.

Rome was now the master of central Italy and spent the next decade pushing forward its frontier through conquest and colonization. After three wars against the Samnites in the north (the third in 298–290 bce) and the Pyrrhic War (280–275 bce) against Greek towns in the south, Rome was the unquestioned master of Italy.

Carthage: Punic Wars [Credit: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.]

Soon, Rome's success led it into conflict with Carthage, an established commercial power in northern Africa, for control of the Mediterranean. The ensuing battles, known as the Punic Wars, spanned the years 264–146 bce. Two great military geniuses were among the leaders in these wars. Hannibal led the Carthaginian forces from about 220 to 200, when he was defeated by the Roman commander Scipio Africanus the Elder. The Romans occupied Carthage and eventually destroyed it completely in 146.

The defeat of this powerful rival sustained the Romans' acquisitive momentum, and they set their sights on the entire Mediterranean area. To the east, the Romans defeated Syria, Macedonia, Greece, and Egypt, all of which had until then been part of the decaying Hellenistic empire. The Romans also destroyed the Achaean League and burned Corinth (146 bce). Won through massive effort and with inevitable losses, the newly acquired lands and diverse peoples populating them proved a challenge to govern effectively. The Romans organized the conquered peoples into provinces—under the control of appointed governors with absolute power over all non-Roman citizens—and stationed troops in each, ready to exercise appropriate force if necessary.

In Rome proper, the majority of citizens suffered the consequences of living in a nation that had its eyes invariably trained on the far horizon. Roman farmers were unable to raise crops to compete economically with produce from the provinces, and many migrated to the city. For a time the common people were placated with bread and circuses, as the authorities attempted to divert their attention from the gap between their standard of living and that of the aristocracy. Slavery fueled the Roman economy, and its rewards for the wealthy turned out to be disastrous for the working classes. Tensions grew and civil wars erupted. The ensuing period of unrest and revolution marked the transition of Rome from a republic to an empire.

Maccari, Cesare: Cicero Denounces Catiline [Credit: © DeA Picture Library/age fotostock]

Notable figures in the civil wars included Gaius Marius, a military leader who was elected consul seven times, and Sulla, an army officer. The later stages of the civil wars encompassed

the careers of Pompey, the orator Cicero, and Julius Caesar, who eventually took full power over Rome as its dictator. After his assassination in 44 bce, the triumvirate of Mark Antony, Lepidus, and Octavian, Caesar's nephew, ruled. It was not long before Octavian went to war against Antony in northern Africa, and after his victory at Actium (31 bce) he was crowned Rome's first emperor, Augustus.