**Constantinople: The City of Constantine**

Constantine I was dissatisfied with Rome as his capital. He rebuilt Istanbul and renamed it Constantinople. Rome, Latin speaking, and pagan began its slow decline. Constantinople, Greek, and Christianity became the leader. It remained a leader for 1000 years.

**Location For Trade**
Byzantium was on the waterway between the Black and Aegean Sea. It was at the crossroads of the trading routes between Europe and Asia. Harbor was safe for fishing boats, merchant ships, and warships. It controlled the sea trade between Kievan Rus and Mediterranean. A major east-west trade route passed through Constantinople.

**New Capital**
It took four years to rebuild Constantinople. Streets were narrow. Apartment houses were crowded. Columns, marbles, doors and tiles were taken from the temples of Rome and moved to Constantinople. The greatest works of Greek and Roman art were erected in the squares and streets. Government buildings and palaces were designed in the Roman style. It had an oval arena for races called the Hippodrome. Constantine erected a high column with a statue of himself at the top.

**Defense of the City**
The sea protected the city on three sides. A huge wall protected the fourth. A chain was stretched across the north harbor for even more protection.

**Government**
The political life was a copy of Rome. The city operated under Roman laws and rules. Officials took charge of building roads, bridges, wells, and caravan shelters. Army followed Roman military customs. The poor received free bread. Circuses and chariot races were put on by the government.
Family
Family was the center of social life. Wealthy people moved to Constantinople because Constantine offered to build them palaces.

Jobs
Most people were farmers, herders, or laborers.

Churches
Constantinople was a Christian city dedicated to God. Church leaders were consulted about important events. Church leaders exerted great influence over the people. Church buildings were the most magnificent in the city. Church relics were gathered from all over the Christian world. They were displayed in monuments, palaces, and churches. The bodies of saints rested in beautiful shrines. Thousands prayed at these shrines to cure their ills. Created illuminated manuscripts and stained-glass windows.

Christian Values
Byzantines believed that Christians should take care of each other. The poor, the old, and the blind were taken care of.

Population
Greeks, Turks, Italians, Slavs, Persians, Armenians, and Jews lived in Constantinople. People were well-educated. People spoke Greek. Latin was the official language for government business. Most people became Christians. All called themselves Romans.

Trade and Industry
Trade and industry were controlled by the government. The city had shops, factories, and banking houses. Main industry was textiles. 550, silkworms smuggled out of china. Beautiful fabrics and clothes were made of raw silk.

Justinian I
Justinian
Constantine's son ruled after he died. Then came a general named Julian. 521, Justinian appointed Counsel. 527, Justinian, a Macedonian, was emperor. He was the greatest Byzantine emperor. He had been a general in the army. He was trained in law, music, architecture, and theology.
He chose people for ability rather than wealth or social status. People who came near him had to bow down and kiss his hands and feet.

**Responsibilities**
- Controlled the army and navy.
- Made the laws.
- Headed the church and the government.
- He was the supreme judge.
- He could declare war or make peace.

**Theodora**

Theodora was an actress.

There was a law that actresses could not marry high government officials.

After Justinian became emperor, he abolished the law.

She entertained guests and attended ceremonies.

Convinced Justinian to allow women to own land equal to their dowry.

Widows could raise her children without government interference.

In 532, senators had organized a revolt.

Theodora was urged to leave.

Theodora convinced her husband to fight.

The rebels were trapped, and 30,000 were killed.

**Plague**

This outbreak may have originated in Ethiopia or Egypt.

It moved northward until it reached the large city of Constantinople.

542 May, plague strikes Constantinople.

It lasted four months.

Disease killed 10,000 people a day.

By the end of the summer, 300,000 people had died.

Justinian survived the plague.

**Law and Public Works**

Justinian Code organized and rewrote the laws.

It was a summary of Roman law.

He built churches, bridges, monasteries, and forums.

Built a system of forts connected by a network of road.

He rebuilt Antioch when it was destroyed by an earthquake.

**Hagia Sophia**

Greatest accomplishment was the church Hagia Sophia, "Holy Wisdom."

It was the religious center of the Byzantine Empire.

It had a gold altar and marble walls.

Gold and silver ornaments and mosaics decorated the church.

A huge dome was the central part.

Later called St Sophia.

It is the 4th largest cathedral in the world.
Conquest
Justinian wanted to reunite the eastern and western parts of the empire. To do this he needed to conquer the German Kingdoms. Appointed Belisarius to reorganize and lead the army. Set up a heavily armed cavalry unit. Navy was improved. They used Greek Fire that burned when in contact with water. The formula is still not known. Controlled Mediterranean Sea. Won back much of Italy and North Africa.

The Church in the Byzantine Empire
The emperor was the head of the government and the head of the church.

Organization
The leader of the Church in Constantinople was called the Patriarch. He was chosen by the emperor. Metropolitans under him were in charge of important areas. Under them were the bishops and priests. Most priests were married. High church officials came from monasteries and were not married.

Monasteries
Helped the poor. Ran schools and hospitals for needy children. The sent missionaries to keep the peace in neighboring lands. Missionaries translated parts of the Bible.

Cyril
Traveled among the Slavs. Gave the Slavs a new alphabet. Called Constantine, name Cyril given after death. Created by Cyril and called the Cyrillic alphabet. Cyril and his brother Methodius are the patron saints of Europe.

Icons
Icons are religious images used in worship. Churches covered their walls with them. 726, Pope Leo orders a stop to the use of icons. Most people refused to give them up. 843, emperor allows their use. Council in Rome declared that Leo was no longer a church member.
The Patriarch would not recognize the Pope in Rome as the head of the church. Pope broke ties with the Byzantine empire. Pope turned to the Franks for help. 800, the Pope crowned Charlemagne as the Emperor of the Romans. 1054, break between Western and Eastern Christianity.

**Decline of the Empire**
The Byzantine Empire lasted 1100 years. It was the richest and most beautiful city in Europe. Its people were the most educated. They preserved Greek culture and Roman law. They spread Christianity. It helped spread the growth of trade. It gave the world new techniques in fine arts.

**Farmers and Land**
Early emperors depended on farmers to make up the army. Farmers were given land. By the 1100s, soldiers were not needed because their borders were safe. The emperor changed the policy and took the farmers’ land away. Once they lost their land, the farmers had no reason to remain loyal to the empire.

**Trade**
1080, Vikings conquer land in the southern part of the empire. They threaten to attack Constantinople. There were not enough soldiers to defend the city. Emperor turned to Venice for help. The Venetians defeated the Vikings. The Emperor gave Venice tax-free status in all of the empire's cities. Soon, Venetian ships and merchants controlled the trade. The empire suffered a great loss of income.

**Attack on the Empire**
Christians from the West attack. Muslims from the East attack. Asia Minor was lost. The empire lost their supply of food, materials, and soldiers. Eventually the Byzantine Empire was only a small area around Constantinople.

**End of the Empire**
The population dropped to less than 100,000 people. Docks and marketplaces were empty. The Emperor was poor. 1453, Turkish armies with guns attack Constantinople and conquer the Byzantines.