

FAIRWAYS

Parts I, II, III
13-20

RELIGION: A FORCE OF CHANGE

Religion was crucial in reshaping Europe after the fall of Rome. Religions influence the values and behaviour of individual people and society as a whole. The Romans, like the Germanic peoples, had believed in many gods. Each god had specific powers and responsibilities. Roman religion was a fantastic mix of Greek gods, Roman gods, and emperors who had become gods. To a certain degree, the Romans had allowed conquered peoples to practise their own religions as long as they paid their taxes and did not rebel against Roman rule.

After the fall of Rome, a few religions grew beyond anyone's expectations. Throughout the Middle Ages, most of the people of North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe believed in Judaism, Christianity, or Islam. These three religions are closely related. Christianity grew out of Judaism, and Islam confirmed the message of both. Christians, Jews, and Muslims all believe in only one god.

Christianity, through the Roman Catholic Church, had the greatest effect on the people of western Europe. The Church was important politically because it supported various monarchs,

and important socially because it had such a strong influence on people's values. Finally the wars and persecutions that were carried out in the name of religion caused death and suffering and affected the history of the whole Mediterranean world.

Judaism: the religion of the Jews

Qur'an: the holy book of Islam; *qur'an*, in Arabic, means "reading"

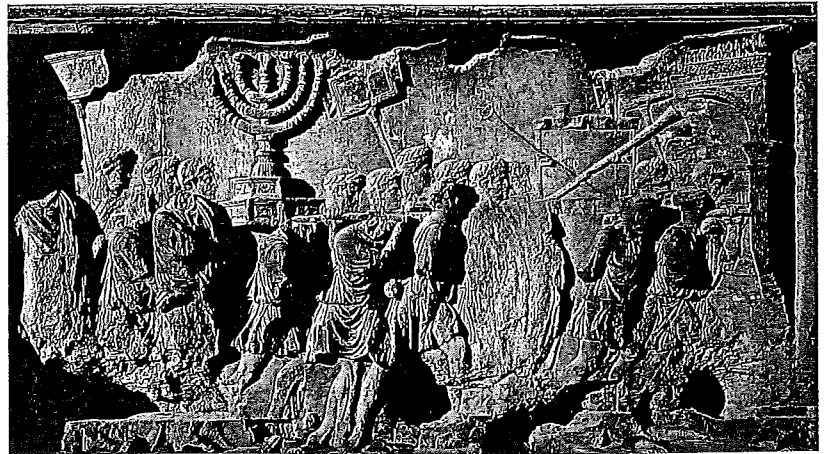
DID YOU KNOW?

The Jewish holy book, the Torah, is part of the Christian Bible and is mentioned in the holy book of Islam, the Qur'an.

JUDAISM

Judaism took shape in Israel over 3000 years ago, and is still a vital religion today. Central to the Jewish faith is a conviction that the Jewish people have a special relationship with God as His chosen people. To protect this relationship, Jews keep

Figure 1-3 This section of a triumphal arch in Rome records the destruction of the Jewish Temple by Roman soldiers. The soldiers take away booty. How did the sculptor indicate that the soldiers were sacking a Jewish building?

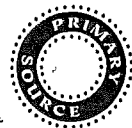


The Jewish Covenant

In this passage from the book of Exodus, God explains the close relationship that will exist between God and the Jewish people. The relationship is to be protected by a covenant, a kind of contract between God and the people. What do the Jewish people have to do to keep their end of the bargain?

The Lord called to [Moses] from the mountain, saying, "Thus shall you say to the House of Jacob and declare to the Children of Israel: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me. Now then, if you will obey Me faithfully and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possessions above all the peoples. Indeed, all the earth is Mine, but you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

—Exodus 19



to persecute: to attack or harass someone for a specific reason, for example, race, religion, or politics

creed: the official belief of a religion

God's laws. These include the Ten Commandments, which Jews believe God gave to Moses as part of the Torah, the most important of the Jewish Holy Books.

The Torah has existed for many centuries. Over time, Jewish teachers and prophets have added comments and interpretations that form the Talmud, a guide for life and belief.

On several occasions in Roman times, the whole Jewish population was forced to move to distant lands far from their homes. In Jewish

tradition, the final scattering of the Jewish people from Palestine was known as the Diaspora, or scattering. The Diaspora caused active Jewish communities to develop in most of the major

cities of the Mediterranean world. Often **persecuted**, even in their new communities, Jews held on to their traditions and their belief in their covenant with God.

Figure 1-4 These Canadian Muslims pray facing Mecca, just as their ancestors did over 1400 years ago.



ISLAM

Islam, which comes from the Arabic word for "submission," began in the seventh century. This religion is based on the Qur'ân, which Muslims (believers of Islam) know as the word of God revealed to the Prophet Mohammed. All Muslims try to follow the rules for worship and living that have been laid out in the Qur'ân. Islam spread rapidly into Asia, Africa, and finally Europe, when the Muslims conquered Spain in 711. Today a major population of Muslims live in the Balkan region of Eastern Europe. (For more information on Islam, see Chapters 4 and 10.)

HOW TO...

Manage Your Time

Have you ever left a research assignment till the last minute, only to find that the reference book you simply *must* have has been signed out of the library? Or has it happened that, despite your good intentions, you don't have time to polish a report and add illustrations?

If you really want to get things done on time, make a plan and follow it. For example, let's assume you've been assigned the following research assignment:

1. Visit your school or local library to research the history of the Jewish people. Include a list of things Jews have done

to maintain their sense of community and identity. (You may wish to interview a Jewish friend or family member.)

As for any research assignment, draw up a list of the steps you need to take.

Making a timetable is the key to getting your project done on time. Make a chart with a box for every date from now to the due date. Then jot in any times you cannot work on the assignment because of classes, extra-curricular activities, a job, volunteer work, homework, or other assignments. Now decide how much time you need for each step listed above and

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Plan a timetable. ✓
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Choose or narrow my topic. ✓
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Collect my research materials. ✓
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Conduct my research, taking notes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Write first draft.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Revise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Make visuals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Create the good copy.

block off time for each on your timetable. Be sure to leave time for illustrations, graphs, a table of contents, and so on. Always be generous with your time. Research tasks almost always take longer than we expect.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity was founded in Palestine by the **apostles** of Jesus Christ. Jesus taught that the two greatest commandments were to love God with your whole being and to love your neighbour as yourself. Jesus and his apostles were Jews who felt that their religious leaders paid too much attention to the letter rather than the spirit of the Jewish Law. To the Jewish authorities of the time, much of what Jesus taught seemed to go against their traditions and the Law. At the same time, the Romans were very nervous about anyone who might lead an uprising against them. They killed Jesus by nailing him to a cross, which was the method of execution reserved for common criminals.

The followers of Jesus believed that Jesus died and was raised from the dead so that all people could share in eternal life. The story of Jesus is told in the **Gospels** of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the New Testament of the Christian Bible. In the beginning, Christianity was an extension of Judaism. Jesus' disciples,

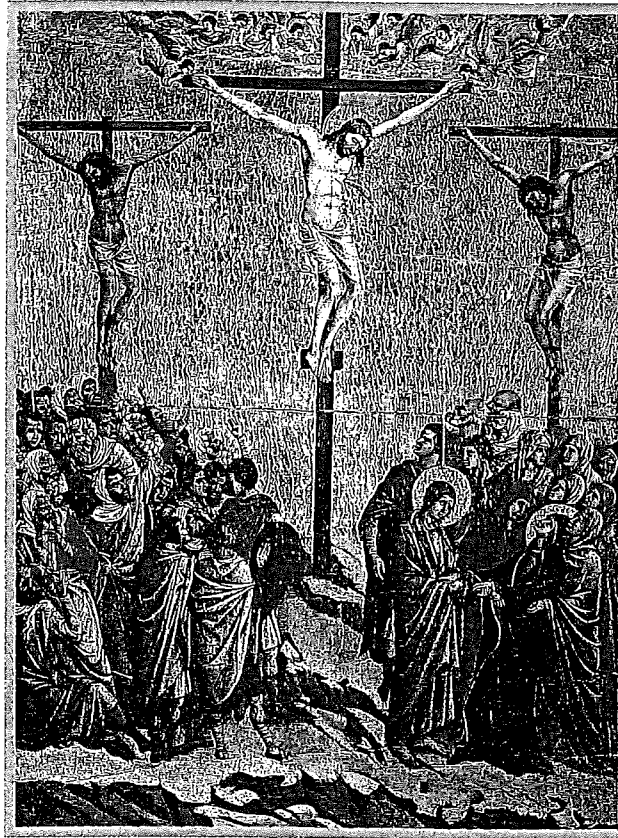


Figure 1-5 The death of Jesus Christ has inspired artists throughout the ages. This is a painting from the late Middle Ages by the Italian artist Duccio di Buoninsegna. What aspects of the Crucifixion did Duccio emphasize? Why?

all of whom were Jews, believed that he was the Jewish Messiah: the Son of God and the Saviour of the Jewish people.

The new religion spread quickly, following the trade routes of the Roman Empire. The man most

apostles: the first twelve disciples, or followers, of Jesus

gospels: the first four books of the New Testament of the Christian Bible

Blessed Are.....

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his disciples what human qualities God especially loved. These teachings are called the Beatitudes and are very important to Christians. Summarize the main message of the passage given here.

And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:
"Blessed are the pure in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

—Matthew 5:2-11



to baptize: to sprinkle with or dip into water as a sign of purification from sin and of admission into a Christian church

convert: changing religion; one who has changed religion

social outcast: someone who has no power or influence in society; someone a community has rejected

DID YOU KNOW?

The Pentateuch, which is the first five books of the Old Testament of the Christian Bible, comes from the Jewish Torah.

responsible for this was St. Paul, who travelled extensively building Christian communities. His many letters provided guidance for Christians both then and now.

One reason for Christianity's early popularity was that Jesus preached that all people, including the poor, were precious to God. If people were **baptized** and led good lives, they would go to heaven after they died, no matter how poor and powerless they had been in life. This revolutionary message had great appeal in the Roman Empire, where many people were not just poor but kept in backbreaking slavery for their entire lives.

As the new religion spread and the number of **converts** grew, the Romans

began to persecute Christians who refused to worship the gods of Rome. For this many were condemned to die in the arena, burned alive as human torches, torn to pieces by wild animals, or slain by gladiators. Rather than destroying Christianity, however, the persecutions made the new religion stronger.

In 313 C.E., the Roman emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and issued the Edict of Milan, which legalized Christianity throughout the empire. Christians quickly moved into positions of power in the army and government. The religion of **social outcasts** soon became the official faith of the Roman Empire.

LINK-UP

What's Right and What's Wrong

You're in a music store and you see someone slip a CD into his jacket and leave. Do you think stealing is wrong? Ever wondered where you got that opinion? In Canada we learn our values from several sources, including our families and friends and the media (for example, television shows). Religious teachings are also a source of social values.

Sometimes we get the same message—for example, that theft is wrong—from several sources. So what's the connection? In all civilizations, religion, entertainment, and personal morality develop together. For example, religion affects community standards, which affect the content of television shows, which affects personal opinion, which affects religion,

and so on. Many Canadians who are not religious hold a set of values similar to those of religious Canadians because we all learn how to behave from our society and our roots. So studying our religious roots makes sense for all of us; we can learn about our history, our ties to one another, and why we now live in peace together.



The Christian Persecutions

Tacitus, a well-respected Roman historian, wrote about Roman civilization during the period in which Christianity began. His comments reveal what the Romans thought of the first Christians. For example, he says that the Christians' "originator, Christ, had been executed in Tiberius' reign by the governor of Judaea, Pontius Pilatus." Normally only criminals are executed. What does the use of the term "executed" tell us about how Romans viewed Christ?

Tacitus goes on to explain how

the Roman emperor Nero used the excuse of a fire that burned through Rome to persecute Christians. Read Tacitus's account here, paying special attention to the final sentence. Though Tacitus pities the Christians, he still believes they are "guilty" and deserving of "ruthless punishment." What does this statement tell you about what the Romans thought of Christians?

First, Nero had self-acknowledged Christians arrested. Then, on their information, large numbers of others were condemned ... Their deaths were made farcical [ridiculous]. Dressed in wild animals' skins, they were torn to pieces by dogs, or crucified, or made into torches to be ignited after dark as substitutes for daylight.... Despite their guilt as Christians, and the ruthless punishment it deserved, the victims were pitied.



Two Early Religious Martyrs

Early Christian **martyrs** Perpetua, twenty-two, and Felicitas, eighteen, proclaimed their Christian faith publicly, even though they knew this action would result in their deaths. These two young women, along with some friends, were arrested and brought to the Roman amphitheatre. This excerpt describes the behaviour of Perpetua after surviving an attack by a wild animal and before she welcomes death from a gladiator. What evidence shows that Perpetua's

behaviour affected the young gladiator? How would stories of Perpetua's loyalty to her faith have affected other Christians?

When she [Perpetua] saw Felicitas crushed, she approached and gave her her hand, and lifted her up. And both of them stood once more.

[Then Perpetua spoke to her comrades:] "Stand fast in the faith, and love one another, all of you, and be not offended at my sufferings." ... The [martyrs], immovable and in silence, received the sword-thrust.... But Perpetua, that she might taste some pain, being pierced between the ribs, cried out loudly, and she herself placed the wavering right hand of the youthful gladiator to her throat.



Missionaries and the Spread of Christianity

Christian **missionaries** helped spread Christianity and aspects of the Roman culture throughout Europe. The **Roman Catholic Church** and its leader, the pope, believed that spreading the message of Christ was an important duty. The Church encouraged many promising young **priests** to take on the dangerous challenge of converting the peoples of Europe.

The process of bringing Christianity to western Europe took a long time, lasting throughout the early Middle Ages. St. Patrick converted the Irish around the middle of the fifth century, and St. Augustine converted the English in the late sixth century, but most Vikings did not become Christians until the end of the eleventh century. Christianity eventually became the only official religion of every country in western Europe.

martyr: a person tortured or killed because of his or her religious beliefs

missionary: a person sent out by a church to convert people

Roman Catholic Church: the only Christian church in western Europe until the sixteenth century

priest: a person trained and authorized to perform religious ceremonies

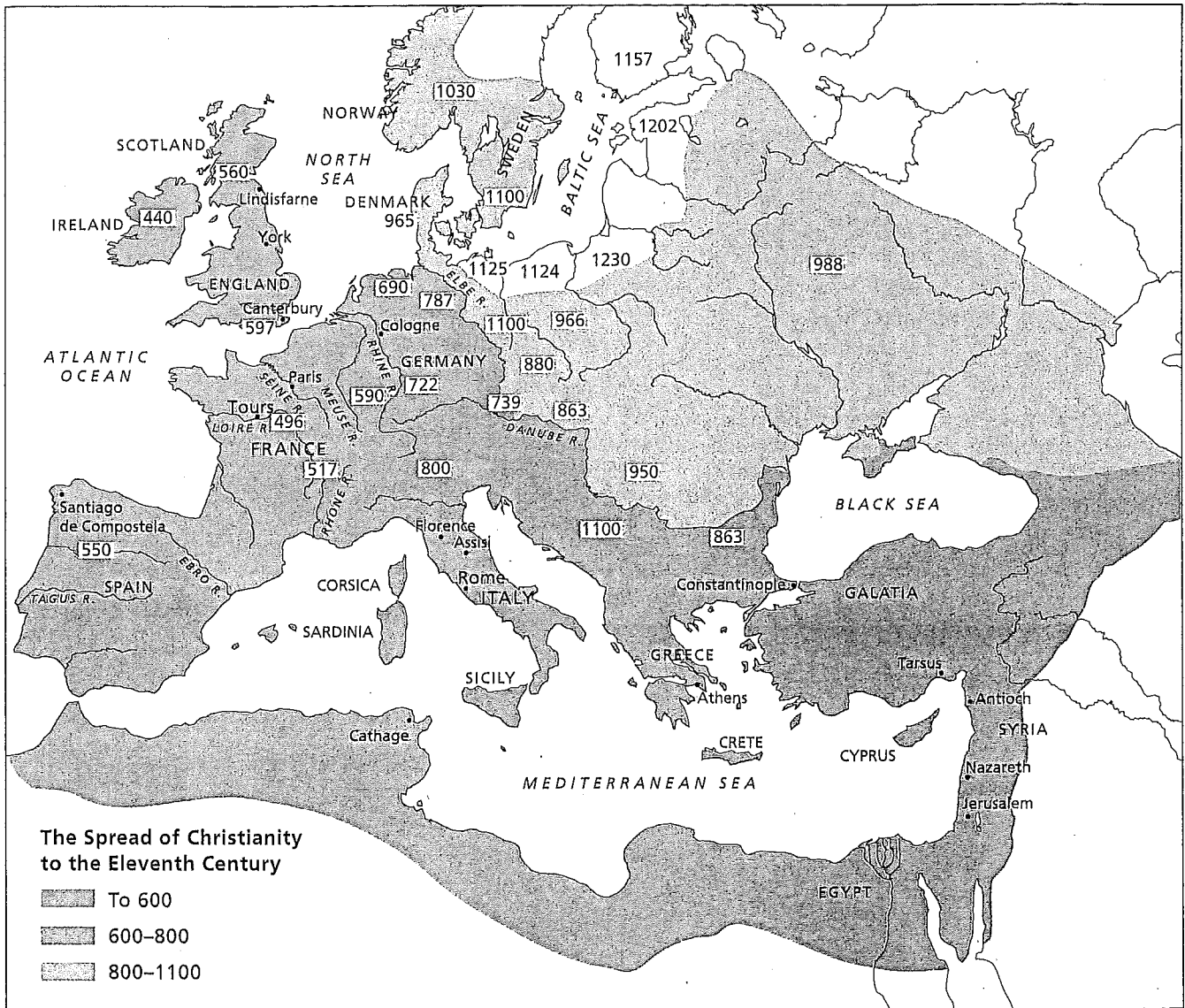


Figure 1-6 This map shows how Christianity spread across Europe during the early Middle Ages. Name two kinds of transportation routes used by the early missionaries. Examine the dates on the map to explain why many of the missionaries who converted the peoples of Germany and France came from the British Isles. Then compare this map to the one on page 120 showing the spread of Islam.

THE BYZANTINES AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Constantine the Great (280-337), the first Christian Roman Emperor, decided to make Byzantium his capital. After he refortified the city with protective walls and buildings, the city became known as Constantinople. (Today it is known as Istanbul.) On the Bosphorus Sea between the Black Sea

and the Mediterranean, Constantinople lay right between Europe and Asia, and eventually became a major centre for trade. After the western Roman Empire collapsed, the Byzantine Empire, with Constantinople as its centre, became the last stronghold of Christianity. With its great walls and a mighty navy, the city withstood the attacks of Muslim invading armies for centuries.

Until the tenth century, Christianity in the Byzantine Empire continued to develop, eventually becoming Orthodox Christianity,

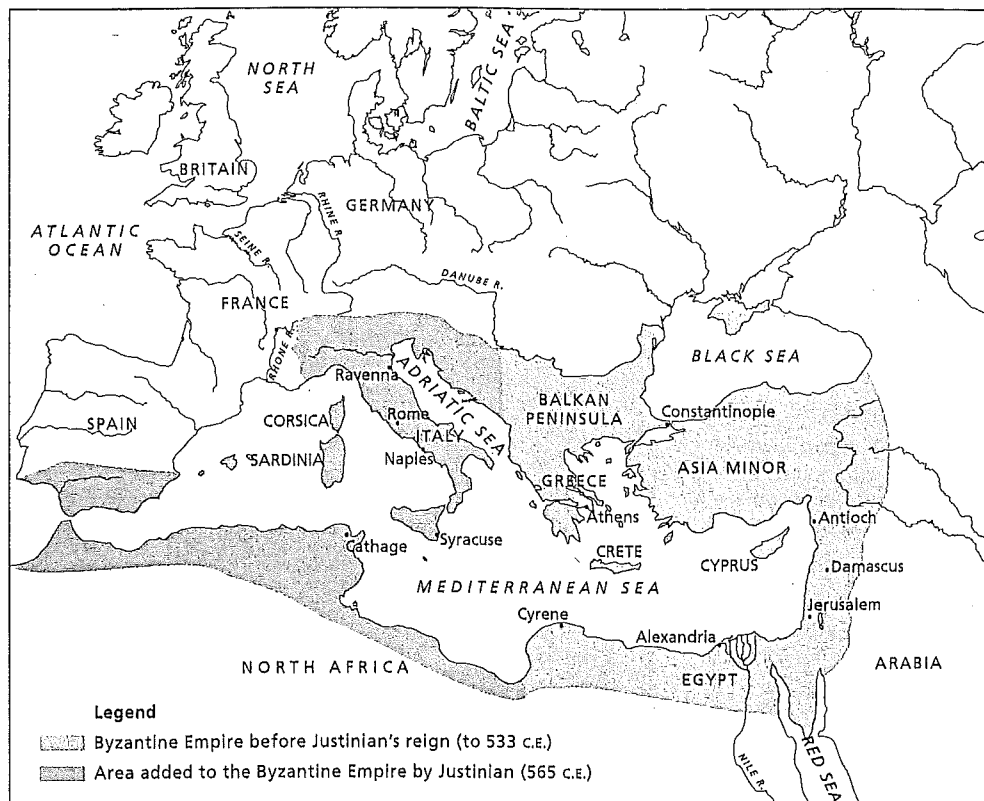
which is quite different from the Catholicism of western Europe. For one thing, Orthodox Christians do not recognize the authority of the Catholic pope, except as a respected leader of Christianity. Instead, Orthodox Christians turn to the Patriarch of the Eastern Church for guidance.

Justinian and Theodora

The Byzantine emperors were usually very religious and had important church duties to perform. After Constantine himself, two of the most important Byzantine rulers were Justinian I and Theodora, who ruled together from 527 to 565. Born a commoner, Justinian became one of the most capable leaders in the history of Europe. He had a brilliant mind and was passionately interested not just in politics but also in art, literature, religion, music, and the sciences.

Justinian collected all the written laws of the Roman Empire into a **legal code** now known as the Justinian Code. This code eventually became the basis for the law in every western European country except England. For example, Napoleon used Justinian's work as the basis for the Civil Code for France, which in turn greatly influenced the Civil Code for Quebec.

Theodora, like Justinian, came from humble origins. Her father had been a bear trainer in the Byzantine circus. For this and other reasons, her enemies ridiculed and criticized her. As a ruler, though, Theodora was just as effective and powerful as Justinian. For example, she brought in reforms that gave women the right to keep any



property they inherited. The resolute and resourceful Theodora coped well in emergencies, as well. For example, when an attempt was made to overthrow Justinian, Theodora stopped him from fleeing, and organized the defence of the throne.

Figure 1-7 The Byzantine Empire under Justinian and Theodora, about 550 C.E. How does the outline for this empire differ from that of the Roman Empire in Figure 1-1.

legal code: a collection of written laws

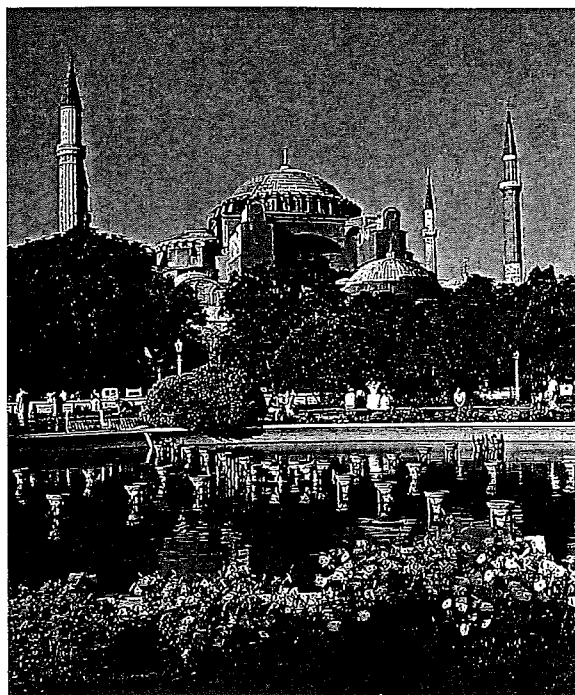
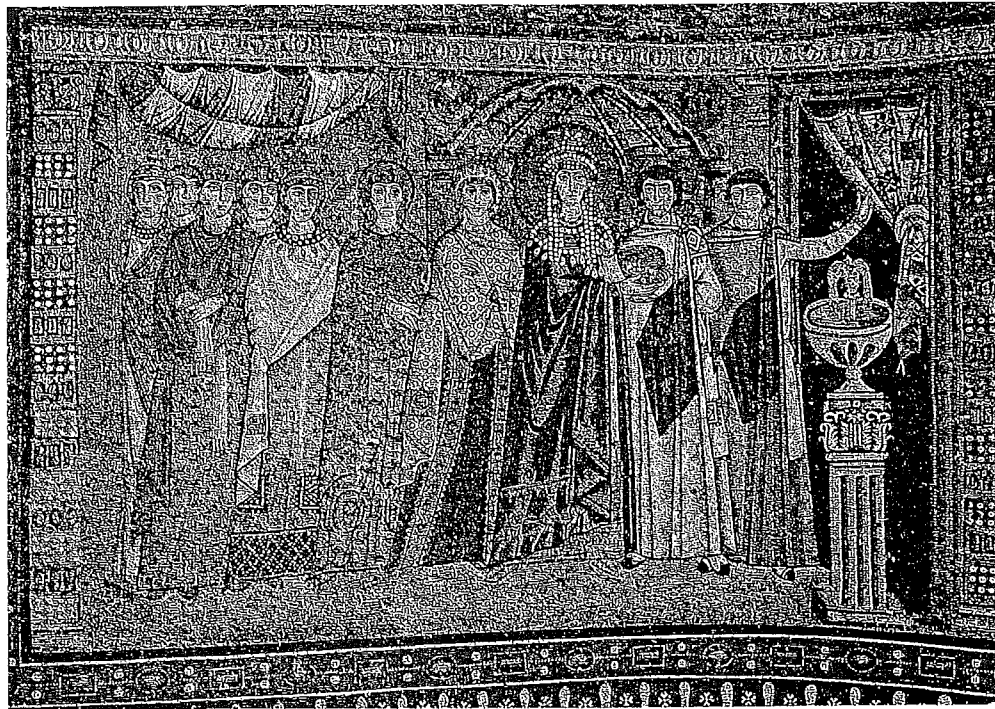


Figure 1-8 The church of Hagia Sophia (Holy Wisdom) was built in Constantinople during Justinian's reign. The building was converted to a mosque (an Islamic place of worship) in the fifteenth century and is now a museum. Suggest two reasons why Justinian would want to build such an impressive church.

Figure 1–9 This mosaic, showing the Empress Theodora and her court, is one of the finest works of art to survive from the Byzantine period. Identify two ways that the artist made Theodora and her companions look royal.



mosaic: a picture made with many pieces of stone or glass fixed in place

ACTIVITIES

1. What was the most important difference between Judaism and the religions of the ancient Greeks and Romans?
2. **a)** What was the Diaspora? What effect did it have on the pattern of Jewish settlement in Europe?
b) Over the centuries many Jews have had to leave their homes because of persecution. Where did this happen in World War Two? Why did this modern migration happen?
3. Compare the Jewish Covenant with the Islamic Covenant on page 116.
4. In pairs, create a comparison chart with the headings Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. On the side of your chart, write the headings Origin, Basic Beliefs, Important People and Leaders, Turning Points, and Other. Fill in the chart with information from this chapter and The Foundations of Islam on pages 116–19. (For help in making a comparison chart, see the feature on page 59.)
5. Explain how and why Christianity emerged as a major European religion.
6. Review the Biblical quotation on page 15.
a) What level of society do you think would be most drawn to this message? How could this have contributed to the spread of Christianity?
- b)** Do you think parts of this passage could hold meaning for Canadians who are not Christian? Explain.
7. Write a comment about a missionary from three different points of view:
a) the pope
b) someone who has recently converted to Christianity
c) someone who does not want to convert
8. Why did Constantinople become the “last stronghold” for Christianity?
9. Explain what made Justinian and Theodora great rulers.
10. Examine the mosaic of the Empress Theodora. What do her clothing and her bearing say about her? Christ preached poverty. How do you think Theodora would justify her extravagant costume?
11. Research Orthodox Christianity, using a CD-ROM and other electronic information sources if possible. What factors make it different from Roman Catholicism? In what regions did it spread? How many people are Orthodox Christians today?