

Church History



Church History

- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1st-3rd centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4th-5th centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6th-10th centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11th-13th centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14th-15th centuries
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16th century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17th-18th centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19th century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20th century
- *The Postmodern Age* AD 21st century



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- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4th-5th centuries
 - *Constantine: The Thirteenth Apostle*
 - *The First Ecumenical Council*
 - *The Constantinian Line*
 - *The Establishment of Christendom*
 - *The Second Ecumenical Council*
 - *Fathers of the New Church*
 - *Things Fall Apart...*



The Rise of Christendom

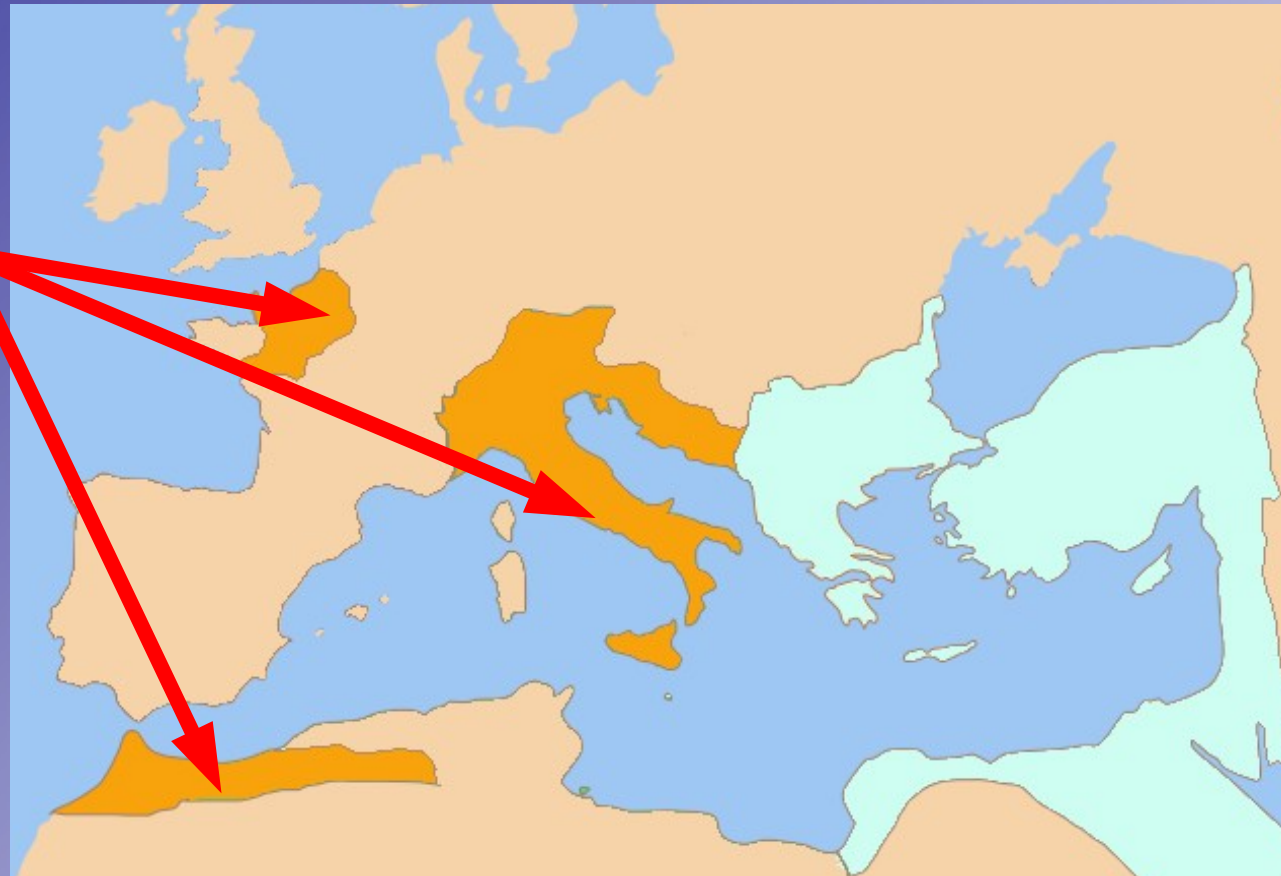
- The Fall of the Roman Empire took a while
 - 410 Alaric and his Visigoths sacked Rome
 - It was a horrific three days, but then it was over
 - The Visigoths had no desire to *occupy* Rome, but rather just to take its spoils



The Rise of Christendom

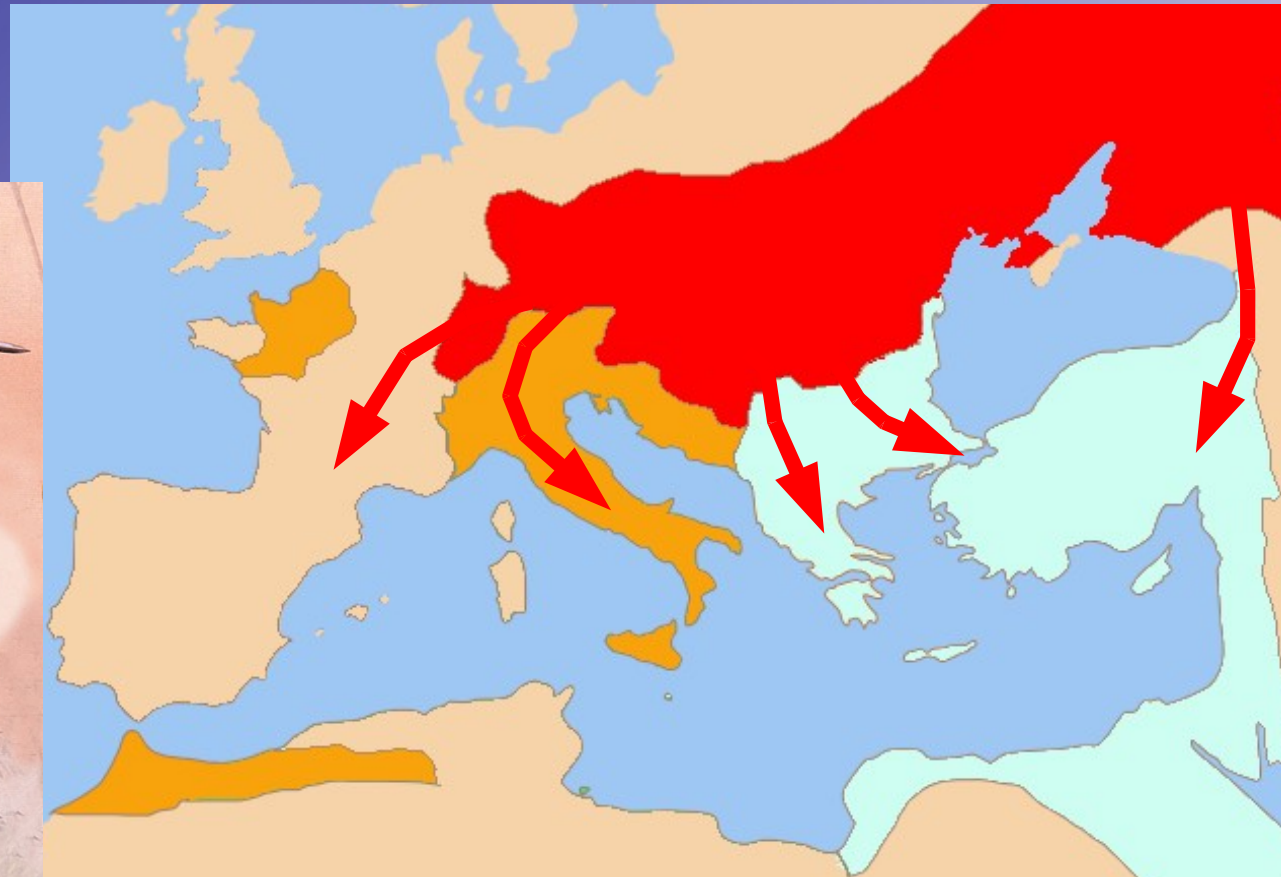
- The Fall of the Roman Empire took a while
 - 410 Alaric and his Visigoths sacked Rome
 - It was a horrific three days, but then it was over
 - But the constant stream of barbarian raids and invasions throughout Europe nibbled away at the Empire, changing the political landscape

- The Western Empire was in tatters



The Rise of Christendom

- The Fall of the Roman Empire took a while
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410 Alaric and his Visigoths sacked Rome
 - But by far, the most increasingly powerful and dangerous group of barbarians were the Huns, whose empire dwarfed Rome and who were continually encroaching on Roman territory
 - For decades, emperors like Honorius had been paying the Huns tribute (i.e.; protection money) to prevent them from a wholesale invasion
 - Honorius even hired the Huns as mercenaries and stationed them in Roman territory to try to fend off the Visigoths



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 - For decades, emperors like Honorius had been paying the Huns tribute (i.e.; protection money) to prevent them from a wholesale invasion
 - Luckily, they'd always been a nomadic people, with no central leadership, so it was more like keeping wild dogs at bay than fighting an all-out war
 - All that changed when Rugila took over and began *uniting* the Huns
 - Suddenly, Rome was forced to *triple* their demanded tribute



The Rise of Christendom

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - One of the ways that relative “peace” was maintained in those days was the exchange of high-level hostages
 - This could be done through marriage (as it was done later in Europe)—where one king would marry his daughter off to another king’s son, and hopefully create a tentative bond between kingdoms that way
 - Or it could be done by simply *trading* important people to one another—usually, sons



The Rise of Christendom

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 - Around 410, a teenaged Roman aristocrat named Flavius Aetius was sent off to live as a hostage in the Hunnic court of King Rugila
 - There, he was treated well, learned the Hunnic language, and trained in their own arts of war—which he found that he excelled at
 - Aetius was the perfect hostage choice—as a Roman *aristocrat*, he looked good to the Huns but as a Roman born in *Bulgaria* (i.e.; the *wrong side* of the Danube) the Romans wouldn't feel too bad if they never got him back—they considered him half-barbarian anyway



The Rise of Christendom

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 - Around 410, a teenaged Roman aristocrat named Flavius Aetius was sent off to live as a hostage in the Hunnic court of King Rugila
 - At the same time, the nephew of Rugila—named Attila—was sent off to live as a hostage in Rome
 - There, he was treated poorly, learned Latin, and trained in the *Roman* arts of war—which he found that he excelled at, too



The Rise of Christendom

- Funky little teaching moment²—

You'll notice that Roman art depicted these two as antitheses of one another—which they were

- They were like flip-sides of the same coin
 - And after they each were returned to their people years later, they spent the rest of the next few decades as near-equal opponents on the battlefields—Aetius is the only person who ever *beat* Attila the Hun in the field
 - Ironically, they had actually become good friends—Aetius understood Attila's motivations and respected his abilities, and Attila felt that Aetius was the only Roman he could relate to
- Before open hostilities broke out, they spent a great deal of time with one another and learning from one another
- In fact, Aetius even used an army of Huns to defeat the Burgundians in 436



The Rise of Christendom

- Funky little teaching moment³—
 - But Attila didn't look like this, obviously
 - He didn't have horns on his head
 - He didn't have pointed ears
 - All of that was literally “demonizing” Attila—an early example of mass-media propaganda
 - But he did come by that image naturally—in fact, he called himself “*Flagelum Dei*” (the “Scourge of God”)—a title that the Romans totally took seriously and took to heart



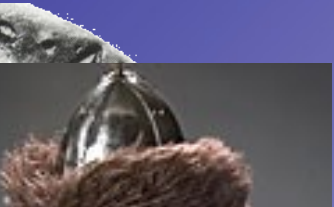
The Rise of Christendom

- Funky little teaching moment³—
 - But Attila didn't look like this, obviously
 - So what *did* Attila look like?
 - The common misconception is that he looked Oriental, since he came from Mongolia
 - But that's not true—
 - The Huns didn't *come* from Mongolia (don't confuse them with the Mongols of Genghis Khan, who came eight centuries later)
 - The Huns probably came from what would now be Kazakhstan, pushed westward by the expansion of the proto-Mongolian Rouran Empire



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 - In addition, the Huns had spent the past 70 years pillaging in Europe, taking women from various villages and including them in the Hunnic gene pool
 - So some people have thought to depict him as some handsome, European-looking guy and others as a big, oafish thug



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 - But we do have actual, unbiased physical descriptions of Attila from the time period
 - He was dark-skinned and broad-shouldered, with a flat nose, thin beard, and broad cheekbones
 - Personally, I think the best depiction of him was Jack Palance in the 1954 film, *Sign of the Pagan*
 - He had the right face and build, and looked half European, half Kazakh



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 - Luckily, they'd always been a nomadic people, with no central leader, so it was more like keeping wild dogs at bay than fighting an all-out war
 - **When Rugila died in 435, Attila and his brother Bleda took over ruling the Huns**
 - Within a few years, the brothers went off on a hunting trip, and only Attila returned...



The Rise of Christendom

- The Fall of the Roman Empire took a while

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Alaric and his Visigoths sacked Rome

Jerome completed his Latin Bible

- But the classic depictions of Jerome working in his study are totally wrong
 - Jerome was actually a hermit, who lived a strictly ascetic lifestyle, without a home of his own, so he compiled most of his work while travelling from place to place, studying and teaching himself Biblical languages
 - Jerome's three major contributions were
 - 1) putting together a *complete* Bible, rather than just bits and snippets here and there, as was common at the time



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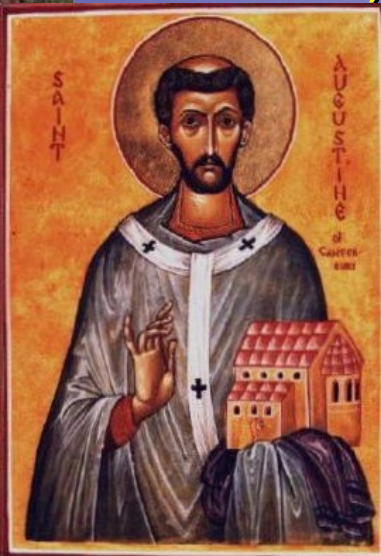
1) putting together a *complete* Bible

2) going back to the *original* writings

whenever possible

- Prevailing wisdom was that it was better just to use the Septuagint (which was the *Greek* translation of the Old Testament) as a basis for translation

- Augustine even argued that the *Septuagint* was the inspired version, and *not* the original Hebrew



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- 1) putting together a *complete* Bible
- 2) going back to the *original* writings
- 3) **producing a Bible that the general populace could *actually read for themselves*, in their own language**

- By this time, most of Europe was speaking Latin, and the Greek text was becoming inaccessible for them

- Thus, it was called the "*versio vulgata*" or "Vulgate" Bible (i.e.; the Bible for the common people —like our *English* word, "vulgar")



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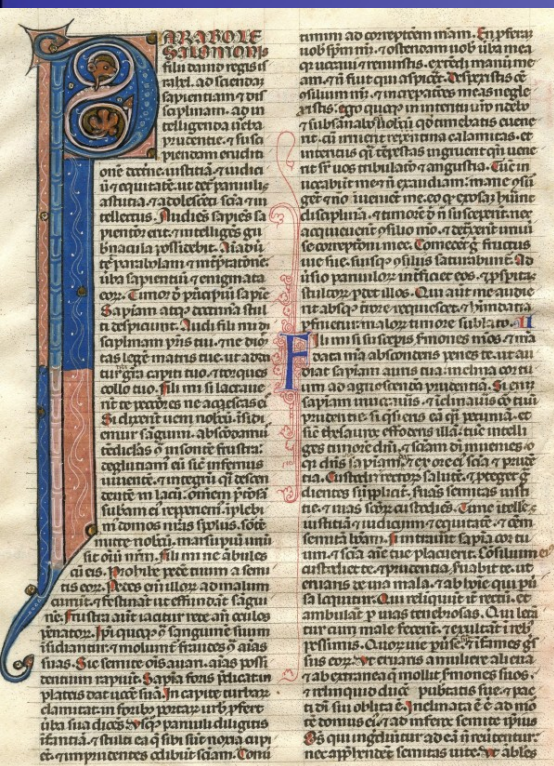
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- (NOTE: this was 800 years before the Church officially declared it an excommunicable offence for a common Christian to own a Bible)



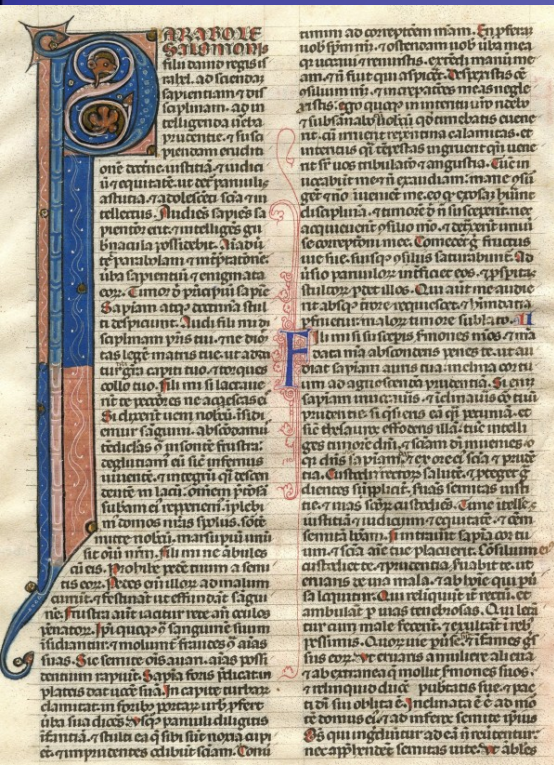
The Rise of Christendom

- Funky little teaching moment—
 - Funny bit of irony about the Latin Vulgate Bible...
 - Jerome had understood sections of Scripture like Acts 2 and Revelation 14 to suggest that the Gospel would be shared in the personal languages of people around the world
 - Thus, just like the Celtic scholars were producing their own Celtic translations of Scripture, he wanted to create a Latin translation for mainland Europe, so that everyone could read the Bible
 - But that all *changed* after Rome fell



The Rise of Christendom

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 - Once the barbarian languages became the normative ones, the Church again pressed the importance of *Latin* as God's *holy* language... that, increasingly, only *priests* could speak...
 - Thus, rather than continue Jerome and Patrick's missions to bring the Gospel message to people in their *own* languages, Rome required that people should learn *God's holy* language in order to approach Him or—better still—just let the Roman Catholic priests approach God, since the common man wouldn't be able to really understand Him
 - Thus, Jerome's Latin “*versio vulgata*”—the Bible translated for the common people—became a symbol of how God was not for the common man, but only for the holy elite
 - For the first time in the history of the Church, Christianity became truly socially exclusivist, and the Church actively made it *difficult* for people to come to know the Lord



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 - Having said that, we have to admit that there are still people *today* who insist that the Church really should use only the *King James Version* of the Bible from 1611 (as God intended all along), even though it's increasingly inaccessible to the common man
 - (Ironically, if for no other reason than that the unusual wording “sounds more like *holy* language” than our modern, mundane English, which they consider too “vulgar” to be truly worshipful—thus, the irony...)

