The Rise of Christianity

Mount of the Beatitudes on the Sea of Galilee in Israel

- Mount of the Beatitudes on the Sea of Galilee in Israel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 30</td>
<td>Jesus preaches in Galilee and Judaea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 312</td>
<td>Constantine accepts Christianity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 726</td>
<td>Emperor Leo III removes icons from churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1054</td>
<td>Orthodox and Catholic Churches separate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The First Christians

Studying the past helps us to understand the present. During the Roman Empire, Jesus of Nazareth began preaching a message of love and forgiveness. His life and teachings led to the rise of Christianity. This religion had a great influence on the Roman Empire and on people throughout the world.

The Christian Church

Religion shapes how culture develops, just as culture shapes how religion develops. Although the Romans at first persecuted the Christians, in time, Christianity became the official religion of Rome. Early Christians organized the church and collected the New Testament of the Bible.

The Spread of Christian Ideas

As different societies interact, they often bring about change in each other. The church and government worked closely together in the Byzantine Empire. Christians founded new communities and spread their faith throughout Europe.

View the Chapter 11 video in the Glencoe Video Program.

Sequencing Information  Make this foldable to help you sequence information about the rise of Christianity.

Step 1  Fold a piece of paper from top to bottom.

Step 2  Then fold back each half to make quarter folds.

This makes an accordion shape.

Step 3  Unfold and label the time line as shown.

Step 4  Fill in important dates as you read like those shown.

Reading and Writing  As you read the chapter, write the important events that occurred in the rise of Christianity.
A cause is the reason that something happens. The result of what happens is called an effect. Learning to identify causes and effects helps you understand why things happen in history. By using graphic organizers, you can sort and analyze causes and effects as you read. As shown below, a single cause can have several effects. A single effect can also be the result of several causes.

In A.D. 313 Constantine issued an order called the Edict of Milan. It gave religious freedom to all people and made Christianity legal. Constantine began giving government support to Christianity. With the help of his mother, Helena (HEHL • uh • nuh), he built churches in Rome and Jerusalem. He also let church officials serve in government and excused them from paying taxes.

— from page 512
Monks and nuns began to serve in many capacities in Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox life. They ran hospitals and schools and aided the poor. They also helped preserve Greek and Roman writings. One important duty was to serve as missionaries (MIH shuh NEHR eez). Missionaries teach their religion to those who do not believe.

— from page 519
The First Christians

Looking Back, Looking Ahead
You learned that the Romans ruled many areas of the Mediterranean. In one of these areas, Judaea, a new religion, Christianity, began.

Focusing on the Main Ideas
- Roman rule of Judaea led some Jews to oppose Rome peacefully, while others rebelled. *(page 501)*
- Jesus of Nazareth preached of God’s love and forgiveness. According to Christian scriptures, Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead. *(page 502)*
- Jesus’ life and a belief in his resurrection led to a new religion called Christianity. *(page 506)*

Locating Places
- Jerusalem *(juh•ROO•suh•luhm)*
- Judaea *(ju•DEE•uh)*
- Nazareth *(NA•zuh•ruhth)*
- Galilee *(GA•luh•LEE)*

Meeting People
- Jesus *(JEE•zuhs)*
- Peter
- Paul

Content Vocabulary
- messiah *(muh•SY•uh)*
- disciple *(dih•SY•puhl)*
- parable *(PAR•uh•buhl)*
- resurrection *(REH•zuh•REHK•shuhn)*
- apostle *(uh•PAH•suhl)*
- salvation *(sal•VAY•shuhn)*

Academic Vocabulary
- decade *(DEH•KAYD)*
- reside *(rih•ZYD)*

Reading Strategy
**Summarizing Information** Complete a diagram like the one below showing the purposes of early Christian churches.

Where & When?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.D. 1</th>
<th>A.D. 50</th>
<th>A.D. 100</th>
<th>A.D. 150</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 30</td>
<td>Jesus preaches in Galilee and Judaea</td>
<td>A.D. 66</td>
<td>Romans force Jews out of Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 66</td>
<td>Jews in Judaea rise up against Rome</td>
<td>A.D. 135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

History

Social Science Standards
WH6.7.5 Trace the migration of Jews around the Mediterranean region and the effects of their conflict with the Romans, including the Romans’ restrictions on their right to live in Jerusalem.

WH6.7.6 Note the origins of Christianity in the Jewish Messianic prophecies, the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth as described in the New Testament, and the contribution of St. Paul the Apostle to the definition and spread of Christian beliefs (e.g., belief in the Trinity, resurrection, salvation).
The Jews and the Romans

Main Idea  Roman rule of Judaea led some Jews to oppose Rome peacefully, while others rebelled.

Reading Connection  Suppose you were separated from your home and could not easily return to it. What effect might this have on you? Read to learn how the Jews were forced to leave their capital city.

As you learned earlier, during the 900s B.C., two great kings, David and Solomon, united the Israelites and created the kingdom of Israel. Its capital was Jerusalem (juh • ROO • suh • luhm). This unity did not last long, however. Israel divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. These small kingdoms were later taken over by more powerful neighbors. Israel was destroyed, and its people scattered. But the Jews, the people of Judah, survived.

Roman Rule  In 63 B.C. the Romans took over Judah. At first, they ruled through Jewish kings. Then, in A.D. 6, Emperor Augustus turned Judah into a Roman province called Judaea (ju • DEE • uh). Instead of a king, a Roman governor called a procurator (PRAH • kyuh • RAY • tuhr) ruled the new province on the emperor’s behalf.

The Jews argued among themselves over what to do about the Romans. Some favored working with the Romans. Others opposed Roman authority by closely following Jewish traditions. Still others turned their backs on the Romans. They settled in isolated areas and shared their belongings.

The Jews Rebel  Some Jews believed that they should fight the Romans and take back control of their kingdom. These people, called Zealots, convinced many Jews to take up arms against the Romans in A.D. 66. The rebellion was brutally crushed. The Romans destroyed the temple and killed thousands of Jews. A Jewish general named Josephus (joh • SEE • fuhs) fought in the war but later sided with the Romans. He wrote about the horrors of Jerusalem’s fall in his work History of the Jewish War.

The Jews rebelled again in A.D. 132 and were again defeated. This time the Romans forced all Jews to leave Jerusalem and banned them from ever returning to the city. Saddened by the loss of Jerusalem, many Jews found new homes elsewhere.

By A.D. 700, the Jews had set up communities as far west as Spain and as far east as central Asia. In later centuries, they settled throughout Europe and the Americas. In their scattered communities, the Jews remained committed to their faith by studying and following their religious laws.

Reading Check  Explain  Why did many Jews leave Judaea after the A.D. 132 revolt?
The Life of Jesus

Main Idea  Jesus of Nazareth preached of God’s love and forgiveness. According to Christian scriptures, Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead.

Reading Connection  If you could give people advice on how to behave, what would you tell them? Why? Read to learn how Jesus thought people should behave.

During Roman times, many Jews hoped that God would send a messiah (muh•SY•uh), or deliverer. This leader would help them win back their freedom. The Israelite prophets had long ago predicted that a messiah would come. Many Jews expected the messiah to be a great king, like David. They thought the messiah would restore the past glories of the Israelite kingdom.

A few decades before the first Jewish revolt against Rome, a Jew named Jesus (JEE•zuhs) left his home in Nazareth (NA•zuh•ruhth) and began preaching. From about A.D. 30 to A.D. 33, Jesus traveled throughout Judaea and Galilee (GA•luh•lee), the region just north of Judaea, preaching his ideas. Crowds gathered to hear him teach and lecture. He soon assembled a small band of 12 close followers called disciples (dih•SY•puhlz).

What Did Jesus Teach?  According to the Christian Bible, Jesus preached that God was coming soon to rule the world. He urged people to turn from their sins. He also told them that following Jewish religious laws was not as important as having a relationship with God, whom Jesus referred to as his Father.

The main points of Jesus’ message are given in a group of sayings known as the Sermon on the Mount. In them, Jesus made it clear that a person had to love and forgive...
from the heart and not just go through the motions of following religious laws. Among Jesus’ sayings were “Blessed are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy” and “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.”

Jesus told his listeners to love and forgive each other because God loves and forgives people. According to Jesus, God’s command was simple. He repeated the age-old Jewish teaching: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” Jesus also stressed the Jewish teaching: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” This message of love and forgiveness helped shape the values many people in Europe and America hold today.

To present his message, Jesus often used parables (PAR•uh•buhlz). These were stories that used events from everyday life to express spiritual ideas. In the story of the Prodigal (wasteful) Son, Jesus told how a father welcomed back his reckless son with open arms. He forgave his son’s mistakes. In another parable, he told of a shepherd who left his flock unguarded to go after one lost sheep. Both stories taught that God forgives mistakes and wants all people to turn away from bad deeds and be saved.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the best known. In this story, a man is beaten by robbers. A priest and another religious leader passed by the injured man. However, a Samaritan, a member of a group of people who lived in what is now northern Israel, stops to help the victim. He treats the man’s wounds and pays for his stay at an inn. Jesus asked his followers, “Which man do you think truly showed love to his neighbor?”
JESUS OF NAZARETH
c. 6 B.C.—A.D. 33

Much of what we know about Jesus, whose life and teachings established the Christian religion, is based on accounts found in the New Testament in the Christian Bible. According to the New Testament, Jesus’ birth was guided by God. An angel visited Mary, Jesus’ mother, to tell her she was going to have a baby. The angel told Mary her baby would be called the Son of God. An angel also visited Joseph, Mary’s fiancé, and instructed him to marry her.

Jesus was humbly born in a stable beside barn animals in the town of Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph had traveled there to take part in a census ordered by the Romans. Shepherds and wise men, possibly princes from neighboring kingdoms, followed a brightly shining star to find and honor Jesus in the stable. Christmas is a celebration of Jesus’ birth.

The Christian Bible tells very little about the middle years of Jesus’ life. He grew up in Nazareth, a small town in Galilee, where he learned the carpenter’s trade from Joseph. Later in life, Jesus set out to share his religious teachings. At this point, the Christian Bible provides many stories of Jesus’ travels and the miracles he performed. The accounts of Jesus’ miracles, such as giving a blind man sight, raising a man from the dead, and calming a storm at sea, brought many followers to his teachings. When Jesus entered Jerusalem the week before his death, he was greeted by cheering crowds. One of Jesus’ closest followers, however, betrayed him and turned him over to Roman authorities. Jesus was questioned by Roman officials and sentenced to death. Soon afterwards, reports that he had risen from the dead would lead to a new religion—Christianity.

“I am the light that has come into the world.”
—Jesus of Nazareth, John 12:46

What event does Christmas celebrate? What aspects of Christmas today are not related to its traditional meaning?
What Is the Crucifixion? Jesus and his message drew strong responses from people. His followers spoke of instances in which they believed he healed the sick and performed other miracles. They said he was the long-awaited messiah. Other Jews rejected him and said he was a deceiver. Above all, Judaea’s Roman rulers feared the effects of Jesus’ preaching. A person who could spark such strong reactions was capable of threatening law and order.

About A.D. 33, Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, an important Jewish holiday. There he was greeted by large, cheering crowds. In an event known as the Last Supper, Jesus celebrated the holiday with his 12 disciples. Fearing trouble, leaders in Jerusalem arrested Jesus and charged him with treason, or disloyalty to the government. According to Christian scriptures, Jesus was crucified, or hung from a cross until dead. This was Rome’s way of punishing political rebels and lower-class criminals.

After Jesus’ death, his followers made a startling claim. They announced that Jesus had risen from the dead. Christian tradition states that Mary Magdalene, one of Jesus’ followers, was the first to see Jesus alive again. Others, including Jesus’ disciples, reported seeing him as well. The disciples also pointed to his empty tomb as proof that Jesus was the messiah. These reports of Jesus’ resurrection (REH•zuh•REHK•shuhn), or rising from the dead, led to a new religion called Christianity.

Reading Check Describing What were the main ideas Jesus taught during his life?

According to the Bible, just before his death, Jesus gathered his disciples together for a meal known as the Last Supper. Why did the Romans fear Jesus?
The First Christians

**Main Idea** Jesus’ life and a belief in his resurrection led to a new religion called Christianity.

**Reading Connection** Have you ever read news stories about people sacrificing their lives to help others? Read to learn about the sacrifice Christians believe Jesus made for everyone.

Jesus’ disciples began to spread the message of Jesus and his resurrection. Small groups in the Greek-speaking cities of the eastern Mediterranean accepted this message. Some were Jews, but others were not.

Those who accepted Jesus and his teachings became known as Christians and referred to him as Jesus Christ. The word Christ comes from Christos, a Greek word for “messiah.”

The early Christians formed churches, or communities for worship and instruction. They met in people’s houses, many of which were owned by women. At these gatherings, Christians prayed and studied the Hebrew Bible. They also shared in a ritual meal like the Last Supper to remember Jesus’ death and resurrection.

**Who Were Peter and Paul?** Apostles (uh•PAH•suhlz), or early Christian leaders who had been chosen by Jesus to spread his message, played an important role in the growth of Christianity. Perhaps the two most important were Peter and Paul.

Peter was a Jewish fisher. He had known Jesus while he was alive and had been one of the original 12 people Jesus had called to preach his message. Christian tradition states that he went to Rome after the death of Jesus and helped establish a church there. Today, the leader of Catholic Christians resides in Rome.

Paul of Tarsus was another important Christian leader. He was a well-educated Jew and a Roman citizen. Paul at first worked to stop Christian ideas from spreading in Jerusalem. The chief Jewish priest in Jerusalem then sent him to Damascus (duh•MAS•kuhs), a city in Syria, to stop Christians in the city from spreading their ideas.

While on the road to Damascus, Paul had an unusual experience. According to Christian belief, he had a vision of a great light and heard Jesus’ voice. Paul became a Christian and spent the rest of his life spreading Jesus’ message. Paul traveled widely, founding churches throughout the eastern Mediterranean.

---

**Primary Source** Sermon on the Mount

Jesus encouraged his disciples with the Sermon on the Mount.

“Happy are you when men insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how the prophets who lived before you were persecuted.”

—Matthew 5:11–12

▲ Jesus and his followers

**DBQ Document-Based Question**

Why does Jesus tell his followers to ignore—even rejoice in—persecution?
PAUL OF TARSUS
C. A.D. 10–65

Without the apostle Paul, Christianity might not have become one of the world’s most widely accepted religions. It was Paul who spread the word about Jesus to the Gentiles, or non-Jews, and helped Jesus gain acceptance as the messiah.

Paul was a Jew from Tarsus, a major city in Asia Minor. His father was a Roman citizen, and his family followed the laws and rules of the Pharisees—a Jewish group that stressed the need to follow Jewish laws. His parents named their son Saul after the first king of the Jews. The first trade Saul learned was tent making. Around age 10, he was sent to Jerusalem to attend a school under the direction of the famed Pharisee teacher Gamaliel. Saul received a well-rounded education. He learned the language and history of the Romans, Jews, and Greeks.

When Saul was in his twenties, he opposed Christians and their newly formed church in Jerusalem. He was on his way to Damascus in Syria to try and stop the spread of Christian ideas there when a vision of Jesus led him to accept Christianity.

Saul began using the Latin name Paul after his conversion to Christianity. He traveled extensively, preaching and writing to Gentiles. He also wrote many important letters, known as epistles, to churches in Rome, Greece, and Asia Minor. These letters are included in the Christian Bible. Paul convinced many people that if they died as Christians, they would have eternal life. Even though Paul’s only meeting with Jesus was supposedly in his vision, Paul visited more places and preached to more people than most of the apostles who had known Jesus in person.

Paul worked as a missionary for around 35 years. His writings helped different Christian communities understand the basic doctrines and principles of Christianity, and are studied by Christians today.

“I showed how you should work to help everyone.”
—Paul, Acts 20:35

Can you think of any groups of people in today’s world who are persecuted for their beliefs?
What Do Christians Believe? From the beginning, Christians taught that Jesus was the Son of God and had come to save people. By accepting Jesus and his teachings, people could gain salvation (sal-VA-shuhn), or be saved from sin and allowed to enter heaven. Like Jesus, after death they would be resurrected and join God in everlasting life.

Because of their faith in Jesus, Christians began to understand God in a new way. Like the Jews, Christians believed in the God of Israel and studied the Hebrew Bible. However, most Christians came to believe that the one God existed in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This idea became known as the Trinity, which comes from a word meaning “three.”

Reading Check Identify Who were Peter and Paul, and why were they important?

This painting shows the apostle Peter preaching to followers. What was the role of apostles in the spread of Christianity?

What Did You Learn?

1. What are parables, and why did Jesus use them?
2. What do Christians believe they will gain by accepting Jesus and his teachings?

Critical Thinking
3. Summarize Information
   Draw a diagram like the one below. Add details to identify some of the Christian beliefs taught by Jesus.

4. Analyze Why were the Jews looking for a messiah? Did Jesus fulfill most Jews’ expectations for a messiah? CA H.R.5.

5. The Big Ideas
   How does the study of Jesus’ life and death help people understand Christianity? CA H.12.

6. Expository Writing
   Write an essay explaining why Paul is important to the history of Christianity. CA 6WA2.2.

7. Reading
   Identifying Cause and Effect
   Write a brief essay describing the results of the crucifixion of Jesus by the Romans. CA H.I.2.