

Eastern Roman Empire

(395-1453 AD)



The Hagia Sophia was a temple built by Justinian, completed in 537. With its dome rising 182 feet, it was the largest temple in existence for a thousand years until the cathedral in Seville, Spain.

- 330 Constantine starts construction of a new capital city on the site of the old Greek colony of Byzantium (hence the term *Byzantine* for the eastern Roman empire)
- 395 At the death of Theodosius I, the Roman Empire is split into two halves (eastern and western) and never again re-united..
- 527-565 Justinian I rules. He re-conquers much of the western Roman empire (from the local Germanic tribes)
- 627 Last of major battles between Persians and Byzantines; defeat of Persian forces at Nineveh
- 636 Battle of Yarmuk; Muslim Arabs defeat Byzantine forces
- 1071 Defeat of Byzantine forces by Seljuk Turks at Manzikert
- 1204 Fourth Crusade results in sack of Constantinople
- 1354 Turks crossed over into Europe and initiated conquests of Slavic tribes that provided them with huge manpower resources
- 1453 Turks conquer Constantinople, the last outpost of Greek civilization

Major issues:

- Hostile neighbors from all sides
- Government intervention in religious disputes created disloyalties
- Separation from Egypt and Syria hamstrung imperial finances