

Week 2 -Year 2 Byzantine Empire and the Eastern Orthodox Church

General Information for All Grades

This week is devoted to learning about the lands and culture of the Byzantine Empire. Last year, we learned that in A.D. 395, the Roman Empire was split permanently into the Western Roman Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire. The Western Roman Empire, which was already weakened, quickly disintegrated when savage barbarian tribes from the north attacked it, while the Eastern Roman Empire became the Byzantine Empire. The word “Byzantine” comes from Byzantium, the Greek name for a city on the Bosphorus, a strait that forms part of a waterway that connects the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. There, Constantine the Great built the great capital city of the Eastern Roman Empire, Constantinople, on the ruins of Byzantium, which is how the Byzantine Empire got its name.

The people who founded and ruled the Byzantine Empire were Romans and thought of themselves as Romans. Part of the reason this Greek name was applied to a part of the Roman Empire, however, is that this “Eastern half” of the empire adopted many aspects of Greek thought, art, and philosophy. As it grew and prospered, it also incorporated many cultural elements from its trading partners: the Persians, Turks, and Chinese. Today, we call this mixture of art forms, ideas, and ways of living “Middle Eastern” culture.

The Byzantine Empire was strongest under one of its earliest and greatest emperors—Justinian I. Under Justinian, the Byzantines conquered lands that had been lost by the Western Roman Empire, expanded trade with the Far East, and created beautiful works of art and architecture in a style all their own. You will be looking at pictures of Byzantine art this week, and we have suggested many fun hands-on projects for you to try, in order to help you become more familiar with the Byzantine style.

Most accounts of the Byzantine Empire will summarize events that happened slowly over hundreds of years. Try to remember, as you read, that by modern standards, this empire lasted a very long time—over 1000 years! That’s more than four times longer than the United States has been a country! So, when reading about the strong years and the weak years of this empire, think in terms of America’s life so far—225 years. Compare how you feel about the age of your country with how people in the time of the Byzantine Empire must have felt about their government waxing and waning in strength, until finally it was completely overthrown by its enemies. Imagine how long it had been in place, and how amazing the fall of that aged empire must have seemed to those who lived when it happened!

READING

ALL - ENRICHMENT or READ ALOUD

- ☐ **Story of the Middle Ages, By Samuel B. Harding p 40-52, 166-176**
- ☐ **Streams of Civilization Vol 1: 192-198, 265-266**
- ☐ **Story of the World Vol. 2: Chapters 3, 4&5**
- ☐ **Famous Men of the Middle Ages**

LG Reading Assignments:

- ☐ Read aloud with ALL

UG Reading Assignments

- ☐ Aladdin and Other Tales from the Arabian Nights, by Rosalind Kervin (Week 1 of 3) p 1-47, 145-198

DIALECTIC Reading

- ☐ Story of the Middle Ages, by Christine Miller: Cptrs XXI, XXVI, XXIX-XXXIII, L.
- ☐ The Lantern Bearers, by Rosemary Sutcliff (Week 2 of 3)

RHET Reading

- ☐ Anna of Byzantium by Tracy Barrett (Week 1 of 2)
- ☐ Church History in Plain Language, by Bruce Shelley, chptrs. 12,15, and 17
- ☐ The Story of Painting p 34-51

- Lower Grammar Words - This week you will write, recognize and locate on a map...

Europe

Asia

Africa

Antarctica

North America

South America

Australia

Atlantic Ocean

Pacific Ocean

Indian Ocean

Arctic Ocean

Upper Grammar Words (All Lower Grammar Words +)

Dewey Decimal System

atlas

abstract

mosaic

fresco

cathedral

icon

illumination

monk

monastery

precipice

Lower and Upper Grammar People (Preschool and Pre-K - would be great to know who Constantine & Clovis are.)

Justinian I

Theodora

Saint Patrick

Augustine

Ethelbert

Gregory I (the great)

Athanasius