

KINGDOM OF ROME

753 TO 510 B.C.

FOUNDING OF ROME TO EXILE OF TARQUINS

ERA SUMMARY – KINGDOM OF ROME

The stories surrounding the earliest years of the kingdom of Rome are steeped in legend, but they add much romance and interest to the history of the city that grew to be the capital of the western world. According to legend, the founder of Rome was [Romulus](#), son of Mars and descended from Venus on his mother's side. After a dramatic childhood, during which they were raised by humble shepherds, Romulus and his twin brother Remus discovered they were of royal descent and decided to found a city on the hill on which they spent their youth.

In order to attract citizens to come and live in his city, Romulus declared Rome a sanctuary. Men in debt; slaves ill-treated by their masters, criminals on the lam, all were granted citizenship and protected from their enemies. In this manner, Rome grew quickly. Romulus solved the problem of a severe shortage of women by kidnapping maidens from the surrounding villages. This unsurprisingly caused wars with many of Rome's neighbors, most importantly the Sabines. The happy outcome of the [War with the Sabines](#), however, proved to be the joining of the two nations into one. The Sabines were given one of the hills of Rome to settle, and after the rule of Romulus the well-respected Sabine philosopher, [Numa Pompilius](#), became king.

Numa's reign was long and prosperous for Rome. The city had already established itself as a warlike nation, always ready to defend and expand its territory. Numa, however, sought peace with Rome's neighbors and improved general piety and morals. He was responsible for creating the calendar, declaring early Roman holidays, and establishing worship customs, including the roles of priests and the vestal virgins. However, the king who followed Numa was the warlike [Tullus Hostilius](#), who declared war on Alba and established Rome's predominance over Alba as the foremost city in Latium. Hostilius was followed by [Ancus Marcius](#), son of the peaceful Numa Pompilius, who like his father sought peace with the surrounding kingdoms.



TARQUIN AND THE SIBYLLINE BOOKS

Ancus died in 616 B.C., and for the following century, the throne was held by the Tarquin family, who were not native Romans but rather of Greek and Etruscan heritage. The first two Tarquin kings, [Tarquin the Elder](#), and [Servius Tullius](#) were worthy kings who did much good for the city. Under their reigns the swamp in the center of Rome was drained and the Forum was built. They constructed many public building surrounding the Forum, which became the market-place and seat of city government. The Tarquins also built the Circus Maximus for chariot racing and sporting events, and Servius built the Servian wall, which encompassed all Seven Hills of Rome. Servius was known for passing laws that favored the poor, which made him unpopular with many of the wealthier citizens. He was ultimately murdered by his own daughter and her husband, a son of the Elder Tarquin. This younger Tarquin, known as [Tarquin Superbus](#), or Tarquin the Proud, then seized the throne. After an oppressive reign of twenty-five years, he was exiled by a group of outraged citizens after his son was accused of assaulting [Lucretia](#), a Roman noblewoman.

[Junius Brutus](#) and [Publicola](#) led the effort to oust the Tarquins, and were early consuls and heroes of the republic. Their courageous leadership helped foster unity during the first rocky years, and both made great personal sacrifices for the good of the state. During these first critical years, Rome's enemies allied themselves with the exiled Tarquin Superbus and marched against Rome, with the object of restoring him to the throne. [Horatius](#) and [Mucius Scaevola](#) were both heroes of the war against [Lars Porsena](#), an Etruscan general who was allied with Tarquin. The first phase of the [War against the Tarquii](#) was brought to a quick close, leaving the government of Rome securely in the hands of the Senate. But the Tarquin family continued to make alliances with other enemies of Rome, and it was not until the *Battle of Lake Regillus*, nearly ten years later, that the last of Tarquins were finally defeated.

CHARACTERS – KINGDOM OF ROME

LEGENDARY ROME

Aeneas	~ 1200 BC	Hero of Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i> . Prince of Troy who escaped from the burning city and after a long voyage, settled in Italy and became the ancestor of Romulus.
Rhea Silvia	~ 771 BC	Legendary mother of Romulus and Remus. Daughter of Numitor, king of Alba Longa, forced to become a Vestal Virgin by her usurping uncle, Amulius.
Numitor	~ 771 BC	Deposed king of Alba Longa; restored to his throne by his grandsons, Romulus and Remus.
Romulus	771-716 BC	Legendary founder of the city of Rome, with brother Remus.
Remus	771-753 BC	Twin brother of Romulus, killed in a conflict over who should rule the new city.
Tarpeia	~ 740 BC	Maiden who opened gates of Rome to the Sabines. Gave name to Tarpeian Rock from which Roman traitors were hurled.

KINGS OF ROME

Numa Pompilius	d. 674 BC	Second king of Rome, instituted calendar, holidays, worship practices.
Tullus Hostilius	d. 642 BC	Third king, conquered Alba, made Rome the greatest city of the Latins.
Horatii	~ 650 BC	Three brothers who won man-to-man combat to resolve Rome/Alba dispute.
Ancus Marcius	d. 617 BC	Fourth king, conquered Latins, built Sublican Bridge across the Tiber.
Tarquin the Elder	d. 559 BC	Fifth king, built great sewer, circus, temple of Jupiter, and forum.
Servius Tullius	d. 535 BC	Sixth king, built Servian Wall; helped plebeians, murdered by daughter.
Tarquin Superbus	~ 535 BC	Killed Servius and usurped throne, eventually overthrown but tried to regain throne by force.
Tullia	~ 535 BC	Helped her husband Tarquin Superbus murder her father Servius Tullus, and seize the throne of Rome.
Cumaean Sibyl	~ 535 BC	Legendary priestess who presided over the Oracle at Cumae. Presented the Sibylline Books to Tarquin Superbus.

WAR AGAINST TARQUINII

Lucretia	d. 510 BC	Virtuous Maiden, killed herself after assault by son of Tarquin Superbus.
Junius Brutus	d. 509 BC	First Consul of Rome; executed sons for plotting against the republic.
Publicola	d. 508 BC	Consul of Rome during the wars with Porsena.
Lars Porsena	~ 508 BC	Etruscan king, and supporter of the Tarquins who raised an army to march against Rome.
Horatius	535–509 BC	Hero who held the Sublican Bridge against Porsena's entire army.
Mucius Scaevola	535–509 BC	Hero who burned his right hand to defy Porsena.
Cloelia	~ 510 BC	Roman hostage who swam across the Tiber to escape from Lars Porsenna.

TIMELINE – KINGDOM OF ROME

- 753** **Rome founded by [Romulus](#) and Remus, twin descendents of Aeneas.**
Romulus declares Rome a sanctuary city for slaves and debtors.
Capture of Sabine maidens and subsequent [War with the Sabines](#).
- 715-674** Reign of [Numa Pompilius](#)
Updated Roman calendar, assigned holidays
Established priests and vestal virgins
- 673-642** Reign of [Tullus Hostilius](#)
Combat of Horatii and Curatii
- 650** [Conquest of Alba Longa](#)
- 616-579** Reign of [Tarquin the Elder](#)
Built sewer, Circus Maximus, Forum
- 579-535** Reign of [Servius Tullius](#) begins after the murder of Tarquin the Elder
Servian wall built around Rome.
Citizens organized into classes based on wealth
- 535-510** [Tarquin Superbus](#) murders Servius, his father-in-law, and assumes the throne.
Acquired Sibylline books from a Greek priestess.
[War with Volscians](#), besieged city of Gabii.
Built temple of Jupiter on Capitoline hill.
- 510** [Lucretia](#) commits suicide after being attacked by Sextus Tarquin.
- 510** **The last king of Rome, [Tarquin Superbus](#), is expelled; Roman republic is founded.**
- 510-496** [Wars against Tarquin and his allies](#)
- 508** [Horatius](#) repels the army of [Lars Porsena](#) at the *Battle of Sublican Bridge*.
- 496** **Final defeat of Tarquin at the *Battle of Lake Regillus*.**

RECOMMENDED READING – KINGDOM OF ROME

CORE READING ASSIGNMENTS *

- Haaren - [Famous Men of Rome](#) [Romulus](#) to [Mucius the Left-Handed](#) (7)
Guerber - [Story of the Romans](#) [The First Settlers](#) to [The Twin Gods](#) (26)
Macgregor - [The Story of Rome](#) [The Lady Roma](#) to [The Divine Twins](#) (25)

SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Dalkeith - [Stories from Roman History](#) [Of Romulus and Remus](#) to [Of Horatius](#) (2)
Church - [Aeneid for Boys and Girls](#) *entire book*
Harding - [City of the Seven Hills](#) [The Peninsula of Italy](#) to [Stories of Mucius and Cloella](#) (6)
Tappan - [Story of the Roman People](#) [Legends of the Kings](#) to [Tarquinius Tries to Return](#) (3)
Morris - [Historical Tales - Roman](#) [How Rome Was Founded](#) to [The Battle of Lake Regillus](#) (9)
Church - [Stories From Livy](#) [Romulus and Numa](#) to [Lars Porsenna](#) (7)

ALSO RECOMMENDED

- Church - [Stories from Ancient Rome](#) [The Beginnings of a State](#) to [A Life and Death Struggle](#) (2)
Gould - [Children's Plutarch - Romans](#) [The Twins](#) to [Why the Romans Bore Pain](#) (3)
Tappan - [Old World Hero Stories](#) [How Rome was Founded](#) (1)
Gilman - [The Story of Rome](#) [Once Upon a Time](#) to [How a Proud King Fell](#) (5)
Kaufman - [Young Folks Plutarch](#) [Romulus](#) to [Publicola](#) (3)
Abbott - [Romulus](#) *entire book*

* *Level I and II Study Questions are based on Core Reading Assignments.*