The 1st millennium BC

Greece and Rome: the West begins.

From Homer, about 800 years before Christ, to the birth of the Roman Empire. The Greeks invented philosophy, history, drama, geometry and democracy. The Romans built a republic under written law and joined the Mediterranean into one world.

What rose

c. 750 BC. Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, the first great works of the West. Source: Homer

508 BC. Athens founds the first democracy. Source: Athenian democracy

c. 450 BC. Rome writes its law on the Twelve Tables. Source: Twelve Tables

447–432 BC. The Parthenon is built. Source: Parthenon

c. 387 BC. Plato founds the Academy; Aristotle later teaches there. Source: Platonic Academy

c. 300 BC. Euclid's Elements, the textbook of geometry for two thousand years. Source: Euclid's Elements

c. 240 BC. Eratosthenes measures the size of the Earth. Source: Eratosthenes

What fell or stalled

The Greek cities lose their freedom to Macedon after the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC. Source: Battle of Chaeronea (338 BC)

The Roman Republic ends in civil wars, and Augustus becomes the first emperor in 27 BC. Source: Fall of the Roman Republic

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