Old Western Culture
A Christian Approach to the Great Books

THE ROMANS

THE AENEID
Vergil and Other Roman Epics

Wesley Callihan
Old Western Culture
A Christian Approach to the Great Books
Year 2: The Romans

Unit 1
The Aeneid
Vergil and Other Roman Epics

Please Note: This workbook may be periodically updated, expanded, or revised. Download the latest revision at www.RomanRoadsMedia.com/materials.
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About Roman Roads Media

Roman Roads combines its technical expertise with the experience of established authorities in the field of classical education to create quality video resources tailored to the homeschooler. Just as the first century roads of the Roman Empire were the physical means by which the early church spread the gospel far and wide, so Roman Roads Media uses today’s technology to bring timeless truth, goodness, and beauty into your home. By combining clear instruction with visual aids and examples, we help inspire in your children a lifelong love of learning. As homeschool graduates themselves, our producers know the value of excellent educational tools, and strive to ensure that Roman Roads’ materials are of the highest caliber.

About Old Western Culture

Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books is an integrated humanities course designed to give students an overview of Western culture by studying the great books from a Christian perspective. The video series consists of four courses, designed to be completed over four years:

Year 1: The Greeks
Unit 1: The Epics—The Poems of Homer
Unit 2: Drama and Lyric—The Tragedies, Comedies, and Minor Poems
Unit 3: The Histories—Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon
Unit 4: The Philosophers—Aristotle and Plato

Year 2: The Romans
Unit 1: The Aeneid—Vergil and other Roman Epics
Unit 2: The Historians—Livy, Tacitus, Sallust, Caesar, Plutarch, and Cicero
Unit 3: Early Christianity—Clement, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and Eusebius
Unit 4: Nicene Christianity—Athanasius, Augustine, and Boethius

Year 3: Christendom
Unit 1: Early Medieval—St. Benedict, Bede, Charlemagne, and Alfred the Great
Unit 2: The Defense of the Faith—Anselm, Geoffrey of Monmouth, The Golden Legend
Unit 3: The Medieval Mind—Dante and Aquinas
Unit 4: The Reformation—Erasmus, Calvin, Cranmer, Spencer, and Chaucer

Year 4: The Moderns
Unit 1: Early British Poetry—Metaphysical Poets, Milton, Shakespeare, and Bunyan
Unit 2: The Rise of Enlightenment—Bacon, Descartes, Locke, Rousseau, Jefferson, Burke, and de Toqueville
Unit 3: Later British Poetry—Neo-Classical Poetry, Victorian Poetry, and Romantic Poetry
Unit 4: The Novels—Austen, Dickens, Dostoevsky, and Hugo

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Introduction and Overview

If you could take only ten books to a deserted island on which you were to be marooned for the rest of your life, what would they be? As Mortimer Adler says, this is no game—we are all in precisely that position. We are simply unable to read all the books there are; therefore, we had better choose well. Some books exercise our minds by their rigor and move our spirits by their beauty with every reading. Some books help us communicate with our culture because they have been a common element in education for centuries. Some books aid our understanding of the physical world by a clear exposition of careful observations by powerful minds. But only a very few books do any of these things well. And as C. S. Lewis says, old books give us a radically different perspective on life and our assumptions, and no modern books can do this at all, no matter how good they are.

As Christians, we understand that ours is a historical faith, one that originated, developed, and grew in certain times at certain places. To study and understand the long stream of history and thought and to comprehend our place in that stream is to increase our appreciation of our cultural inheritance, our ability to use wisely and build faithfully upon that inheritance, and our ability to understand and respond to God’s work in history.

The conclusion we may draw from all of this is that the old books are best, and the best of the old books are the best of all. That is why we read the great books. Join us in Old Western Culture as we explore the best of the old books from a Christian perspective!

About the Instructor

Wesley Callihan grew up on a farm in Idaho and earned a bachelor’s in history from the University of Idaho in 1983. He has taught at Logos School, the University of Idaho, and New St. Andrews College (all in Moscow, Idaho) and at Veritas Academy in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He has written curriculum for a number of Christian Schools, including several members of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools. Veritas Press has published his great books study guides for homeschoolers. Mr. Callihan speaks regularly at conferences for classical Christian educators in home and private schools and teaches summer intensive Latin courses. He has written columns and short fiction for Credenda/Agenda and Antithesis, and contributed...

Wes and his wife, Dani, have six children, four of them married, and six grandchildren. Wes and Dani and the two remaining kids live near Wes’s parents in an old farmhouse in northern Idaho, where they all use the cold winters as an excuse to read and the hot summers as another excuse to read.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books is a four-year course of study designed for grades 9–12. Each year of Old Western Culture is a double-credit literature and social studies course. The four units that make up each year may also be used individually as one-quarter electives.

RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE

Old Western Culture is designed to accommodate a traditional nine-week term (for a thirty-six-week school year). A recommended schedule is provided below. We expect the average student to spend one to three hours per day on this course: first completing the assigned readings and answering the workbook questions under the “Reading” header, and then watching the lectures and answering the video questions under the “Lecture” header.

Special note about this unit’s reading load and questions: This term’s reading assignments and accompanying questions cover a small portion of very dense material (mostly Aristotle). Students should not get hung up on any particular reading passage or related study question if it does not make sense after one or two careful readings. Rather, they should move on to the lecture, which will likely shed some light on the difficult passage. If students still have questions after watching the lecture and rereading the passage, they can email Mr. Callihan at askmrc@romanroadsmedia.com.

MATERIALS

• DVD Lessons. Instructor Wes Callihan’s deep knowledge of the classics and decades of teaching experience are a rich resource for homeschool families.
• **The Great Books.** *Old Western Culture* immerses students in reading the classics themselves rather than just reading about them. Families have several options for acquiring the texts:
  1. Purchase the recommended translations. Visit the *Old Western Culture: The Greeks* page at romanraodsmedia.com, and click on the “Books” tab for Amazon links.
  2. Use copies you already own, even if they’re not the recommended translations. Mr. Callihan frequently emphasizes the benefit of referencing multiple translations.
  3. Download ebook versions of the original source texts at romanroadsmedia.com/materials. These digital text versions are not the recommended translations, but they are satisfactory.

• **The Student Workbook.** Purchase a hard copy, or download a free PDF at romanroadsmedia.com/materials. The workbook questions allow students to test their understanding of the reading assignments and the lectures.

• **Section Numbers and References.** In order to maintain the flexibility to use multiple translation options, we have avoided referencing original works by edition-specific page numbers. Instead we provide the book/chapter or section or line number where applicable.

• **Guide to the Art.** This insert included with every DVD extends the curriculum into an exploration of ancient art and more recent artistic responses to the literature.

• **Additional Resources.** Visit romanroadsmedia.com/materials for an up-to-date list of additional resources.

**ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS**

In addition to the reading, lectures, and workbook questions, students will complete the following:

• **Term Paper.** Students may choose any topic of interest from the readings or lectures. We recommend a paper length of 750–1,200 words.

• **Final Exam.** Visit www.romanroadsmedia.com/materials to download the most recent final exams. Two options, Exam A and Exam B, are provided. The exams are similar in style and difficulty, but the content varies. Students who score lower than 90 percent on Exam A should take Exam B two days later to help reinforce subject mastery.

**AGE LEVEL**

In *Old Western Culture* students will encounter mature themes such as paganism, sexual immorality, detailed battle descriptions (mostly in actual reading), and nudity in classical painting and sculpture. We recommend the series for ages fourteen and above, but of course parents will want to consider the maturity levels of their children and decide whether *Old Western Culture* will be appropriate.
# Recommended Nine-Week Schedule

Key: 🎥 Watch Lectures  📚 Answer Workbook Questions  📖 Read Texts  ✍️ Complete Additional Assignments

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Lesson 1
Overview of Roman History

Reading
No reading for this lesson.

Lecture
Watch Lecture 1, and then answer the following questions.

1. What must we study to understand the Great Books, in addition to the books themselves?

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2. Why were the founding fathers of the United States so interested in Rome’s political history?

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3. What are the three divisions or stages that we can use to broadly summarize the political history of the Roman Empire?

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4. What other force or movement is born and grows along with the Roman Empire?

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Lesson 2
Introduction to the Aeneid

READING

No reading for this lesson.

LECTURE

Watch Lecture 2, and then answer the following study questions,

1. In which period in Roman history was the Aeneid written?

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2. How did Caesar Augustus conduct himself differently from later Caesars?

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3. What was Caesar Augustus’s hope for the future of the Roman government? Who was the last Caesar to share this hope?

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4. How might Vergil have answered the accusation that his work was propaganda?

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5. Describe some epic conventions that the *Aeneid* has in common with the *Iliad* and other epics.

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Lesson 3
Aeneid I: Rome Is an Idea

Reading

Read the Aeneid, Book 1, and then answer the following questions. In each book, watch for expressions of destiny, fate, and the future. These can indicate prophecies or omens. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. As in Homer, the opening lines of this epic poem give us our subject and theme. What are they? (1.1-11)

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2. In the remainder of the opening section we have an epic question and its answer. What are they? (1.12-49)

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3. In lines 257-296, Jupiter comforts Venus with a prophecy of the future of Aeneas’s line. What is the tone of this prophecy—positive or negative, optimistic or pessimistic? What will occur in the future? What is the culmination of the prophecy?

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4. In lines 521-560, what does Ilioneus appeal to in Dido to gain sympathy for the Trojans?

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Lecture

Watch Lecture 3, and then answer the following study questions,

5. What is one way Vergil’s literary style is different than Homer’s?

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6. How do Vergil and Homer differ in their conceptions of time?

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7. What aspect of the Idea of Rome does Paul pick up on in 1 Corinthians 12?

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8. What attitude did the early Christians have towards the truths in pagan literature, such as the Aeneid?

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Lesson 4

*Aeneid II: The Fall of Troy and the Wanderings of Aeneas*

**READING**

Read the *Aeneid*, Books 2 and 3, and then answer the following questions. In each book, watch for expressions of destiny, fate, and the future. These can indicate prophecies or omens. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. According to Aeneas’s account, how was Troy deceived and what should have warned them about the horse? (2.40-56, 2.77-249)

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 1 goes here]

2. What prophetic messages does Aeneas receive during the sack of the city, and from whom does he receive them? (2.588-623, 2.671-704)

   [Answer to Question 2 goes here]

   [Answer to Question 2 goes here]

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   [Answer to Question 2 goes here]
3. What has become of Hector’s wife, Andromache? (3.294-355)

4. What experiences does Aeneas go through that are like Odysseus’s? (3.374-715)

**Lecture**

Watch Lecture 4, and then answer the following questions.

5. What fatal mistake do the Trojans make in order to get the giant horse into their city?
6. Why is Cassandra cursed? 
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7. What theme in Greek mythology might Paul be echoing in Romans 11? 
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8. Did Romans worship the Olympian gods in their personal lives? 
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Lesson 5

Aeneid III: The Tragedy of Dido

READING

Read the *Aeneid*, Book 4, and then answer the following questions. In each book, watch for expressions of destiny, fate, and the future. These can indicate prophecies or omens. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. Why does Dido fall so madly in love with Aeneas? (1.657-722, 4.1-53)

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2. Why does Aeneas abandon Dido? (4.219-278)

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3. Do you think Aeneas is right in leaving Dido? Why or why not?

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4. What does the whole Dido episode tell us about Aeneas’ character?

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Lecture

Watch Lecture 5, and then answer the following questions.

5. Why is Dido struggling with her vow to her dead husband?

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6. How does Vergil describe the state of Carthage when Dido is distracted from her duties to the city? What point does this illustrate about the Roman idea of civic duty?

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7. How does Dido convince herself that her relationship with Aeneas is legitimate?

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8. How does Dido find out about Aeneas’ intention to leave?

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9. How does Aeneas’ character grow after the tragedy of Dido?

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10. Which early Church father particularly loved the story of Dido and Aeneas?

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Lesson 6
*Aeneid IV: The Underworld*

**Reading**

Read the *Aeneid*, Books 5 and 6, and then answer the following questions. In each book, watch for expressions of destiny, fate, and the future. These can indicate prophecies or omens. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. What event in the funeral games for Anchises stands out as very different from the Greek funeral games for Patroklos in the *Iliad*? Think in terms of destiny and signs from the gods. (5.519-544, *Iliad* Book 23)

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2. What does Juno do to cause problems in this book? (5.604-663)

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3. What different regions does Aeneas find in the Underworld, and what kind of people are in each? (6.295-678)

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4. What view of the afterlife do we see in this book?

5. What is Anchises’s purpose in calling Aeneas to the Underworld, and what does he show Aeneas?
   (6.703-892)

**LECTURE**

Watch Lecture 6, and then answer the following questions.

6. What does the golden bough come to signify in later literature? What did *The Golden Bough* by James Frazer argue?
7. What is the difference between the inhabitants of the underworld as described in the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*?

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8. Whom does Aeneas see in the Underworld? Which Old Testament hero does this bring to mind?

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Lesson 7
*Aeneid* V: The Broken Truce and the Shield of Aeneas

**READING**

Read the *Aeneid*, Books 7 and 8, and then answer the following questions. In each book, watch for expressions of destiny, fate, and the future. These can indicate prophecies or omens. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. Why does King Latinus decide to give his daughter Lavinia to Aeneas rather than to Turnus? (7.45-106, 249-285)

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2. What three things does Alecto do for Juno to break the truce and stir up war? (7.286-571)

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3. Why is Aeneas so sure that Evander will be sympathetic toward him? (8.36-65)

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4. Compare and contrast Aeneas’s shield with Achilleus’s in book 18 of the *Iliad*. What does each focus on, and what does that reveal about Homer’s view of life versus Vergil’s? (8.608-728)

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**Lecture**

Watch Lecture 7, and then answer the following questions.

5. Describe the meeting between Aeneas and Latinus. Why doesn’t the story end right then and there?
6. With what does King Evander entrust Aeneas? 

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7. What images does Vulcan work into the shield Venus commissions for Aeneas?

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Lesson 8

*Aeneid* VI: The Tragedy of Nisus and Euryalo

**Reading**

Read the *Aeneid*, Books 9 and 10, and then answer the following questions. In each book, watch for expressions of destiny, fate, and the future. These can indicate prophecies or omens. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. What impression do we get of Turnus in this book—positive or negative? What are some of his character traits as a leader? (9.1-76, 123-167, 525ff.)

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2. Summarize the Nisus and Euryalus episode and compare it to Odysseus’s and Diomedes’s Night Raid in book 10 of the *Iliad*. (9.176-445)

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3. How does Jupiter resolve the furious row between Venus and Juno at the council of the gods? (10.96-117)


**LECTURE**

Watch Lecture 8, and then answer the following questions.

5. What character in the *Iliad* is similar to Turnus in *Aeneid*?
6. What piece of armor does Euryalus take from Messapus? What consequence does this soon have?

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7. After he kills Pallas, what does Turnus do? What does Vergil foreshadow about Turnus’ fate?

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Lesson 9
Aeneid V: Camilla, Juno’s Surrender, and the Death of Turnus

Reading

Read the Aeneid, Books 11 and 12, and then answer the following questions. In each book, watch for expressions of destiny, fate, and the future. These can indicate prophecies or omens. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. Summarize the Camilla episode. (11.532-867)

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2. Why do you think Vergil brings Camilla into the story?

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3. How does Jupiter at last reconcile Juno to the Trojans? (12.791-842)

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4. Compare the final battle between Aeneas and Turnus with the final battle between Achilleus and Hector in Book 22 of the *Iliad*. (12.697ff.)

5. What debt does Aeneas owe to Evander?

6. How did Camilla come to be such a proficient warrior? To what Old Testament story is Camilla’s backstory similar?
7. What does *aristeia* mean?

8. What cowardly act does Arruns commit? How does Vergil characterize him?
Lesson 10

Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*

**READING**

Read *Metamorphoses*, Books 1, 8, and 10, and then answer the following questions. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.

1. In the opening of Book 1, what are the four elements that the god separates, and where does he place each element? (I:21-31)

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2. How do Io’s father and sisters find out about her transformation by Jupiter? (I:642-667)

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3. Who designs the Minotaur’s labyrinth in Crete? (VIII:152-182)

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LECTURE

Watch Lecture 10, and then answer the following questions.

4. What stitches together episodes in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*?

5. What does Ovid say is special about Man?

6. In the first story in the *Metamorphoses*, into what animal does Lycaon transform? Why is this fitting?
7. To what particular story in the *Metamorphoses* does James Frazier appeal in his book *The Golden Borough* to illustrate his point that all world religions have a common source? How ought we to handle the similarities between the Bible and other world religions?
Lesson 11
Ovid’s Metamorphoses II

READING

Read Metamorphoses, Books 11 and 15, and then answer the following questions. Remember: Complete all reading and study questions from reading before watching the lecture.


2. Briefly list three of Pythagoras’ main doctrines as described by Ovid in Book 15.
Lecture

Watch Lecture 10, and then answer the following questions.

3. How are Orpheus and Eurydice finally reunited?

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4. What secret could Midas’ barber not keep? What, according to Ovid, are the reeds really saying when they whisper in the wind?

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5. To what Greek philosopher does Ovid devote a section of the *Metamorphoses*?

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6. What dietary restriction did Pythagoras advocate, and why?

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7. By what did Pythagoras teach the cosmos was primarily characterized?

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Lesson 12
Lucretius, Lucan, and Statius

Reading

Read the following selections from Lucretius, Lucan, and Statius. There are no reading questions for this lesson.

De Rerum Natura, Book 1
Lucretius
Edited by William Ellery Leonard

PROEM
Mother of Rome, delight of Gods and men,
Dear Venus that beneath the gliding stars
Makest to teem the many-voyaged main
And fruitful lands- for all of living things
Through thee alone are evermore conceived,
Through thee are risen to visit the great sun-
Before thee, Goddess, and thy coming on,
Flee stormy wind and massy cloud away,
For thee the daedal Earth bears scented flowers,
For thee waters of the unvexed deep
Smile, and the hollows of the serene sky
Glow with diffused radiance for thee!
For soon as comes the springtime face of day,
And procreant gales blow from the West unbarred,
First fowls of air, smit to the heart by thee,
Foretoken thy approach, O thou Divine,
And leap the wild herds round the happy fields
Or swim the bounding torrents. Thus amain,
Seized with the spell, all creatures follow thee
Whithersoever thou walkest forth to lead,
And thence through seas and mountains and swift streams,
Through leafy homes of birds and greening plains,
Kindling the lure of love in every breast,
Thou bringest the eternal generations forth,
Kind after kind. And since ’tis thou alone
Guidest the Cosmos, and without thee naught
Is risen to reach the shining shores of light,
Nor aught of joyful or of lovely born,
Thee do I crave co-partner in that verse
Which I presume on Nature to compose
For Memmius mine, whom thou hast willed to be
Peerless in every grace at every hour-
Wherefore indeed, Divine one, give my words
Immortal charm. Lull to a timely rest
O’er sea and land the savage works of war,
For thou alone hast power with public peace
To aid mortality; since he who rules
The savage works of battle, puissant Mars,
How often to thy bosom flings his strength
O’ermastered by the eternal wound of love-
And there, with eyes and full throat backward thrown,
Gazing, my Goddess, open-mouthed at thee,
Pastures on love his greedy sight, his breath
Hanging upon thy lips. Him thus reclined
Fill with thy holy body, round, above!
Pour from those lips soft syllables to win
Peace for the Romans, glorious Lady, peace!
For in a season troublous to the state
Neither may I attend this task of mine
With thought untroubled, nor mid such events
The illustrious scion of the Memmian house
Neglect the civic cause.
And for the rest, summon to judgments true,
Unbusied ears and singleness of mind
Withdrawn from cares; lest these my gifts, arranged
For thee with eager service, thou disdain
Before thou comprehendest: since for thee
I prove the supreme law of Gods and sky,
And the primordial germs of things unfold,
Whence Nature all creates, and multiplies
And fosters all, and whither she resolves
Each in the end when each is overthrown.
This ultimate stock we have devised to name
Procreant atoms, matter, seeds of things,
Or primal bodies, as primal to the world.
Whilst human kind
Throughout the lands lay miserably crushed
Before all eyes beneath Religion- who
Would show her head along the region skies,
Glowering on mortals with her hideous face-
A Greek it was who first opposing dared
Raise mortal eyes that terror to withstand,
Whom nor the fame of Gods nor lightning’s stroke
Nor threatening thunder of the ominous sky
Abashed; but rather chafed to angry zest
His dauntless heart to be the first to rend
The crossbars at the gates of Nature old.
And thus his will and hardy wisdom won;
And forward thus he fared afar, beyond
The flaming ramparts of the world, until
He wandered the unmeasurable All.
Whence he to us, a conqueror, reports
What things can rise to being, what cannot,
And by what law to each its scope prescribed,
Its boundary stone that clings so deep in Time.
Wherefore Religion now is under foot,
And us his victory now exalts to heaven.

I fear perhaps thou deemest that we fare
An impious road to realms of thought profane;
But ’tis that same religion oftener far
Hath bred the foul impieties of men:
As once at Aulis, the elected chiefs,
Foremost of heroes, Danaan counsellors,
Defiled Diana’s altar, virgin queen,
With Agamemnon’s daughter, foully slain.
She felt the chaplet round her maiden locks
And fillets, fluttering down on either cheek,
And at the altar marked her grieving sire,
The priests beside him who concealed the knife,
And all the folk in tears at sight of her.
With a dumb terror and a sinking knee
She dropped; nor might avail her now that first
’Twas she who gave the king a father’s name.
They raised her up, they bore the trembling girl
On to the altar- hither led not now
With solemn rites and hymeneal choir,
But sinless woman, sinfully foredone,
A parent felled her on her bridal day,
Making his child a sacrificial beast
To give the ships auspicious winds for Troy:
Such are the crimes to which Religion leads.

And there shall come the time when even thou,
Forced by the soothsayer’s terror-tales, shalt seek
To break from us. Ah, many a dream even now
Can they concoct to rout thy plans of life,
And trouble all thy fortunes with base fears.
I own with reason: for, if men but knew
Some fixed end to ills, they would be strong
By some device unconquered to withstand
Religions and the menacings of seers.
But now nor skill nor instrument is theirs,
Since men must dread eternal pains in death.
For what the soul may be they do not know,
Whether ’tis born, or enter in at birth,
And whether, snatched by death, it die with us,
Or visit the shadows and the vasty caves
Of Orcus, or by some divine decree
Enter the brute herds, as our Ennius sang,
Who first from lovely Helicon brought down
A laurel wreath of bright perennial leaves,
Renowned forever among the Italian clans.
Yet Ennius too in everlasting verse
Proclaims those vaults of Acheron to be,
Though thence, he said, nor souls nor bodies fare,
But only phantom figures, strangely wan,
And tells how once from out those regions rose
Old Homer’s ghost to him and shed salt tears
And with his words unfolded Nature’s source.
Then be it ours with steady mind to clasp
The purport of the skies- the law behind
The wandering courses of the sun and moon;
To scan the powers that speed all life below;
But most to see with reasonable eyes
Of what the mind, of what the soul is made,
And what it is so terrible that breaks
On us asleep, or waking in disease,
Until we seem to mark and hear at hand
Dead men whose bones earth bosomed long ago.

I know how hard it is in Latian verse
To tell the dark discoveries of the Greeks,
Chiefly because our pauper-speech must find
Strange terms to fit the strangeness of the thing;
Yet worth of thine and the expected joy
Of thy sweet friendship do persuade me on
To bear all toil and wake the clear nights through,
Seeking with what of words and what of song
I may at last most gloriously uncloud
For thee the light beyond, wherewith to view
The core of being at the centre hid.

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Pharsalia

M. Annaeus Lucanus
Edited by Sir Edward Ridley

Wars worse than civil on Emathian plains,
And crime let loose we sing: how Rome’s high race
Plunged in her vitals her victorious sword;
Armies akin embattled, with the force
Of all the shaken earth bent on the fray;
And burst asunder, to the common guilt,
A kingdom’s compact; eagle with eagle met,
Standard to standard, spear opposed to spear.
Whence, citizens, this rage, this boundless lust
To sate barbarians with the blood of Rome?
Did not the shade of Crassus, wandering still,
Cry for his vengeance? Could ye not have spoiled,
To deck your trophies, haughty Babylon?
Why wage campaigns that send no laurels home?
What lands, what oceans might have been the prize
Of all the blood thus shed in civil strife!
Where Titan rises, where night hides the stars,
‘Neath southern noons with fiery rays aflame,
Or where keen frost that never yields to spring
In icy fetters binds the Scythian main:
Long since barbarian Araxes’ stream,
And all the distant East, and those who know
(If any such there be) the birth of Nile,
Had felt our yoke. Then, then, with all the world
Beneath thee, Rome, if for nefarious war
Such be thy passion, turn upon thyself:
Not yet was wanting for thy sword a foe.
That crumbled houses and half-ruined homes
Now mark our cities; that the ancient streets
Scarce hear the footfall of the passer-by;
That mighty fragments lie beside the walls;
That hearths are desolate; that far and wide
Fields thick with bramble and untilled for years
Demand the labours of the hind in vain:
All this nor Pyrrhus caused, nor Punic chief,
Nor sword thrust deep. ‘Twas civil strife alone
That dealt the wound and left the death behind.
Yet if the fates could find no other way
For Nero’s coming, nor the gods with ease
Gain thrones in heaven; and if the Thunderer
Prevailed not till the giants’ war was done,
We plain no more, ye gods! for such a boon
All wickedness be welcome and all crime;
Thronged with our dead be dire Pharsalia’s fields,
Be Punic ghosts avenged by Roman blood;
Add, Caesar, to these ills the Mutin toils;
Perusia’s dearth; on Munda’s final field
The shock of battle joined; let Leucas’ Cape
Shatter the routed navies; servile hands
Unsheath the sword on fiery Etna’s slopes:
Still Rome is gainer by the civil war.
Thou, Caesar, art her prize. When thou shalt choose,
Thy watch relieved, to seek at length the stars,
All heaven rejoicing; and shalt hold a throne,
Or else elect to govern Phoebus’ car
And light a subject world that shall not dread
To owe her brightness to a different Sun;
All shall concede thy right: do what thou wilt,
Select thy Godhead, and the central clime
Whence thou shalt rule the world with power divine.
And yet the Northern or the Southern Pole
We pray thee, choose not; but in rays direct
Vouchsafe thy radiance to thy city Rome.
Press thou on either side, the universe
Should lose its equipoise: take thou the midst,
And weight the scales, and let that part of heaven
Where Caesar sits be evermore serene
And smile upon us with unclouded blue.
Then may all men lay down their arms, and peace
Through all the nations reign, and shut the gates
That close the temple of the God of War.
Be thou my help, to me e’en now divine!
Let Delphi’s steep her own Apollo guard,
And Nysa keep her Bacchus, uninvoked.
Rome is my subject and my muse art thou!
First of such deeds I purpose to unfold
The causes task immense what drove to arms
A maddened nation and from all the world
Struck peace away.
By envious fate’s decrees
Abide not long the mightiest lords of earth;
Too great the burden, great shall be the fall.
Thus Rome o’ergrew her strength. So when that hour,
The last in all the centuries, shall sound
The world’s disruption, all things shall revert
To that primaeval chaos, stars on stars
Shall crash; and fiery meteors from the sky
Plunge in the ocean. Earth shall then no more
Front with her bulwark the encroaching sea:
The moon, indignant at her path oblique,
Shall drive her chariot ‘gainst her brother Sun
And claim the day for hers; and discord huge
Shall rend the spheres asunder. On themselves
The great are dashed: such end the gods have set
To height of power: nor ever Fortune shares
With other lands the weapons of her spite
Against a nation lord of land and sea.
Thou, Rome, degraded, sold, the common prey
Of triple despots, of a tyrant rule
Partnered as ne’er before-thyself art cause
Of all the ills. Ye chiefs, with greed of power
Blind, leagued for evil, is your force conjoined
To hold the world in common as your prize?
So long as Sea on Earth and Earth on Air
Lean for support while Titan runs his course,
And night with day divides an equal sphere,
No king shall brook his fellow, nor shall rule
Endure a rival. Search no foreign lands:
These walls are proof that in their infant days
A hamlet, not the world, was prize enough
To cause the shedding of a brothers blood.
Concord, on discord based, brief time endured,
Unwelcome to the rivals; and alone
Crassus delayed the advent of the war.
Like to the slender neck that separates
The seas of Graecia: should it be engulfed
Then would th’ Ionian and Aegean mains
Break each on other: thus when Crassus fell,
Who held apart the chiefs, in piteous death,
And stained Assyria’s plains with Latian blood,
Defeat in Parthia loosed the war in Rome.
More in that victory than ye thought was won,
Ye sons of Arsaces; your conquered foes
Took at your hands the rage of civil strife.
By sword the realm is parted; and the state
Supreme o’er earth and sea, wide as the world,
Could not find space for two. For Julia bore,
Cut off by fate unpitying, the bond
Of that ill-omened marriage and the pledge
Of blood united, to the shades below.
Hadst thou but longer stayed, it had been thine
To keep the parent and the spouse apart,
Strike sword from grasp and join the threatening hands;
As Sabine matrons in the days of old
Joined in the midst the bridegroom and the sire.
With thee all trust was buried, and the chiefs
Could give their courage vent, and rushed to war.
Lest newer glories triumphs past obscure,
Late conquered Gaul the bays from pirates won,
This, Magnus, is thy fear; thy roll of fame,
Of glorious deeds accomplished for the state
Allows no equal; nor will Caesar’s pride
A prior rival in his triumphs brook;
Which had the right ‘twere impious to enquire;
Each for his cause can vouch a judge supreme;
The victor, heaven: the vanquished, Cato, thee.
Nor were they like to like: the one in years
Now verging towards decay, in times of peace
Had unlearned war; but thirsting for applause
Gave to the people much, and proud of fame
His former glory cared not to renew,
But joyed in plaudits of the theatre,
His gift to Rome: his triumphs in the past,
Himself the shadow of a mighty name.
As when some oak, in fruitful field sublime,
Adorned with venerable spoils, and gifts
Of bygone leaders, by its weight to earth
With feeble roots still clings; its naked arms
And hollow trunk, though leafless, give a shade;
And though condemned beneath the tempest’s shock
To speedy fall, amid the sturdier trees
In sacred grandeur rules the forest still.
No such repute had Caesar won, nor fame;
But energy was his that could not rest-
The only shame he knew was not to win.
Keen and unvanquished, where revenge or hope
Might call, resistless would he strike the blow
With sword unpitying: every victory won
Reaped to the full; the favour of the gods
Pressed to the utmost; all that stayed his course
Aimed at the summit of power, was thrust aside:
Triumph his joy, though ruin marked his track.
As parts the clouds a bolt by winds compelled,
With crack of riven air and crash of worlds,
And veils the light of day, and on mankind,
Blasting their vision with its flames oblique,
Sheds deadly fright; then turning to its home,
Nought but the air opposing, through its path
Spreads havoc, and collects its scattered fires.

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Thebaid, Book 1
Publius Papinius Statius
Translated by J. H. Mozley

[1] My spirit is touched by Pierian fire to recount the strife of brethren, and the battle of the alternate reign fought out with impious hatred, and all the guilty tale of Thebes. Whence, O goddesses, do ye bid me begin? – Shall I sing the origins of the dreadful race, the Sidonian rape and the inexorable terms of Agenor’s law, and Cadmus searching o’er the main? Far backward runs the story, should I tell of the anxious husbandman of hidden war, sowing battles in the unhallowed soil, and searching to the uttermost, relate with what song Amphion bade the Tyrian mountains move to form a city’s walls, whence came Bacchus’ grievous wrath against his kindred towers; what deed fierce Juno wrought; against whom unhappy Athamas caught up his bow, and why with Palaemon in her arms his mother quailed not to leap into the vast Ionian sea. Nay rather here and now I will suffer the sorrows and the joys of Cadmus to have gone by: let the troubled house of Oedipus set a limit to my song, since not yet may I venture to utter the theme of the standards of Italy and the triumphs of the North, or Rhine twice brought beneath our yoke and Ister twice subject to our law and the Dacians hurled down from their conspiring mount, or how in those days or scarce-approaching manhood Joe was forfended to attack, and of thee, O glory added to the Latian name, whom succeeding early to thy sire’s latest exploits Rome longs to be her own for ever. Yea, though a closer bound confine the stars, and the shining quarter of
the sky that knows nought of Pleiads or Boreas or rending thunderbolt tempt thee,
though he who curbs the fiery-footed steeds set with his own hand upon thy locks
the exalted radiance of his diadem, or Jupiter yield thee an equal portion of the great
heaven, abide contented with the governance of men, thou lord of earth and sea, and
give constellations to the sky. A time will come when emboldened by Pierian frenzy I
shall recount thy deeds: now do I pitch my harp but to the singing of Aonian arms and
the sceptre fatal to both tyrants; of their madness unchecked by death and the strife of
flames in the dissension of the funeral pyre; of kings’ bodies lacking burial and cities
drained by mutual slaughter, when the dark-blue waters of Dirce blushed red with
Lernaean gore, and Thetis stood aghast at Ismenos, once wont to graze arid banks,
flowing down with mighty heaps of slain. Which hero first dost thou make my theme,
O Chio? Tydeus, uncontrolled in wrath? the sudden chasm that gaped for the laurel-
crowned prophet? Distraught Hippomedon, too, repelling his river-foe with corpses
demands my song, and I must lament the gallant Arcadian and his wars, and sing with a
yet fiercer thrill the fate of Capaneus.

[46] Already had Oedipus with avenging hand probed deep his sinning eyes and sunk
his guilty shame in eternal night, abiding in a long and living death. But while he hugs
his darkness and the uttermost seclusion of his dwelling, and keeps his secret chamber
which the sun’s rays and heaven behold not, yet with unwearied wings the fierce
daylight of the mind hovers around him, and the Avenging Furies of his crimes assail
his heart. Then he displays to heaven those empty orbs, the cruel, pitiful punishment of
his life, and with blood-stained hands beats upon the hollow earth, and in dire accents
utters this prayer: “Gods who hold sway over guilty souls and over Tartarus crowded
with the damned, and thou O Styx, whom I behold, ghaistant in thy shadowy depths,
and thou Tisiphone, so oft the object of my prayer, be favourable now, and further my
unnatural wish: if in aught I have found favour; if thou didst cherish me in thy bosom
when I fell from my mother’s womb, and didst heal the wounds of my pierced feet; if I
sought the lake of Cirrha where it winds between the two summits of the range, when I
could have lived contented with the false Polybus, and in the Phocian strait where three
ways meet grappled with the aged king and cleft the visage of the trembling dotard,
searching for my true sire; if by wit of the foreshowing I solved the riddles of the cruel
Sphinx; if I knew exulting the sweet ecstasy and fatal union of my mother’s bed, and
passed many an unhallowed night, and begot sons for thee, as well thou knowest, yet
soon, greedy for punishment, did violence to myself with tearing fingers and left my
eyes upon my wretched mother – hear me to the end, if my prayer be worthy and such
as thou wouldest inspire my ranging heart withal. Sightless though I was and driven
from my throne, my sons, on whatever couch begotten, attempted not to give me
guidance or consolation in my grief; nay, haughtily (ah! the maddening sting!) an raised
to royalty with me long dead, they mock my blindness and abhor their father’s groans.
Do these too hold me accursed? and the father of gods beholds it, and does naught? Do
thou at least, my due defender, come hither, and begin a work of vengeance that will
blast their seed for ever! Set on thy head the gore-drenched circlet that my bloody nails
tore of, and inspired by their father’s curses go thou between the brethren, and with
the sword sunder the binding ties of kinship. Grant me, thou queen of Tartarus’ abyss,
grant me to see the evil that my soul desires, nor will the spirit of the youths be slow to
follow; come thou but worthy of thyself, thou shalt know them to be true sons of mine.”
LECTURE

Watch Lecture 12, and then answer the following questions.

1. What were the three great philosophies that competed for the minds and hearts of men in the Roman world?

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2. Why might it seem inconsistent for Lucretius to appeal to Venus at the beginning of his work? Why is it not so inconsistent after all?

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3. Why might Lucretius’s teaching seem scary or unpleasant? How does he intend to make it easier to swallow, so to speak?

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4. What does Lucan’s “epic question” tell us the subject of his work will be?

5. What shift in Roman mentality of Statius's time do the dark supernatural elements of the *Thebaid* indicate?
Answer Key
Lesson 1

Overview of Roman History

1. To truly understand a book, especially an old book, we must study its historical context. (1:15)

2. The story of the Roman Republic is the story of a people having discovered principles by which long-term stability can be enjoyed. For this reason, the founding fathers looked to the history of the Republican Period as an example in founding our nation. (10:50)

3. The three stages of the Roman Empire’s political history are 1) 250 years of monarchy, from 753 to 509 BC, 2) 500 years of republic from 509 to 30 BC, the last century of which is dominated by civil wars, and 3) 500 years of empire, from Caesar Augustus in 30 BC to the final sack of Rome in 476 AD. (28:35)

4. Christianity was born early in the Roman Empire under the reign of Caesar Augustus and grew alongside the empire. (31:30)

Lesson 2

Introduction to the Aeneid

1. Vergil was born in 70 BC, and died in 19 BC, the age of Caesar Augustus. (0:45)

2. Caesar Augustus dressed plainly and lived with his family in a simple home. He did not put on royal airs. In contrast, later Caesars surrounded themselves with pomp and all the trappings of an emperor. (4:00)

3. Augustus repeated throughout his life that the empire was a temporary phase in the history of Rome, and that he hoped someday to return the power to the Senate. Marcus Aurelius was the last Caesar to share this hope. (5:15)

4. Vergil would not have denied the charge because he believed that Augustus had done great things for Rome, and therefore wanted that belief to be propagated among his readers. Propaganda is a perfect passive participle in Latin that means “things which ought to propagated.” (7:55)

5. The Aeneid is in dactylic hexameter, and begins with an exordium, an epic question, and an invocation of the Muses. The story begins in medias res, it contains catalogs and battles with the gods, and its characters sometimes have stock epithets attached to them. (13:40)

Lesson 3

Aeneid I: Rome Is an Idea

1. The opening lines tell us this poem will recount the adventures and difficulties of Aeneas’ wanderings from Troy to Rome as he seeks to establish a new realm and home for the exiled Trojans. (0:45)

2. The question is, Why did Juno hate Aeneas and the Trojans? Her hatred had three main reasons: First, Juno loved the city of Carthage best of all cities and did not want the Trojans to conquer it sometime in the future. Second, she had just helped the Greeks defeat the Trojans and was unwilling to see the Trojans rise triumphant from ruin. Third, she was still envious because Paris had slighted her beauty in choosing Venus, Aeneas’ mother, as the fairest goddess. (5:15)

3. The prophecy is optimistic. Jupiter foresees success in war for Aeneas and his descendants, leading to a vast, undefeatable empire ripe with prosperity. The prophecy culminates with the reign of Caesar Augustus, who ushers in a new era of justice and peace. (10:50)

4. Ilioneus appeals to Dido’s mercy, compassion, and hospitality for shipwrecked fugitives and wanderers. (11:30)

5. Vergil, unlike Homer, engages in close descriptions of nature, painting powerful scenes of the natural world. (11:30)

6. The Aeneid begins with Jupiter discussing Destiny, the future of Rome hundreds of years away. Where Homer thinks mostly about the present, the past and the future feature heavily in Vergil’s story. (11:30)

7. Part of the Idea of Rome was a concept of civil duty which taught that all Romans were part of one body. Thus, to harm your fellow citizen would be to harm yourself. Paul’s discussion of a similar principle applied to the church was
not a brand new idea. Rather, Paul is appealing to a concept they already believe in, but he is showing them what the true body is: the body of Christ, not Rome. Similarly, Paul and the early Christian missionaries would have said the Romans were right to hope for a kingdom that would never end and a Caesar who would reign forever. They would have said that the real hope is not Rome and Augustus, but rather Jesus Christ and his eternal reign. (21:30)

8. The early Christians saw the truths in Pagan works as foreshadowing of what was to come, or as arrows that point to the real thing. The whispers of truth that are hidden in pagan works are fulfilled and made explicit in the Gospel. Early Christians believed that God gave some truths to Pagan cultures, not so that they would settle on them and be satisfied, but that they might be stirred up and long for something more, thus giving them a hunger for the Gospel. (24:45)

Lesson 4
Aeneid II: The Fall of Troy and the Wanderings of Aeneas

1. Sinon first gains the Trojans’ confidence by claiming to have been ill-used by the Greeks. He then lies, saying the horse is a peace offering to Minerva. Laocoon’s warning is ignored because he and his sons are killed by Minerva’s sea serpents. Cassandra’s prophecy is ignored, because Apollo cursed her never to be believed. Since fate has decreed the fall of Troy and blinded the Trojans, they believe Sinon and ignore the physical warning signs—the hollow sound and groaning of as Laocoon’s spear pierces the wooden horse and the clashing of arms as the Trojans move the horse.

2. As Aeneas is about to kill Helen, Venus informs him that Helen is not to blame. Venus unveils his eyes to see the gods themselves destroying Troy. She also warns him to go save his father, wife, and son before the Greeks overwhelm his house. Later, as Aeneas bids farewell to his wife before returning to the fight, a circle of flame appears around Iulus’s head. With a peal of thunder Jupiter confirms this omen that Iulus will preserve the Trojan race.

3. Pyrrhus took Andromache captive, but eventually married her to Helenus, a Trojan, which gave her some relief in her sorrow over Hector. After Orestes killed Pyrrhus, Helenus and Andromache became the monarchs of Chaonia.

4. Like Odysseus, Aeneas sails through the strait between Scylla and Charybdis and also lands on the Cyclops’s island. While he does not actually land on Circe’s island, he does pass near it.

5. In order to get the giant horse into their city, the Trojans begin to knock down their walls. (7:00)

6. Apollo once fell in love with Cassandra, and wanted to sleep with her. Cassandra consented reluctantly, and Apollo gave her the gift of prophecy in return. At the last moment, Cassandra changes her mind and decides not to do such an evil thing. Apollo is unable to take back his gift at this point, but, to punish her, he can add a curse: no one will ever believe Cassandra, though she always prophesies truly. (9:30)

7. In Romans 11:29, Paul says that God’s gifts and His call are irrevocable. This is a similar idea to the concept in Greek mythology that the gods cannot take back their gifts. For example, Apollo cannot take back the gift of prophecy which he gave to Cassandra. He can, however, add a curse to it.

8. The twelve Olympian gods did not figure in the personal religion of the Roman people. Rather, every family worshipped household gods, which represented the family’s ancestors. (32:30)

Lesson 5
Aeneid III: The Tragedy of Dido

1. When the Trojans first arrive in Carthage, Venus persuades Cupid to take Ascanius’s place at the banquet. Cupid uses his powers to cause Dido to admire and fall in love with Aeneas. Anna then encourages her feelings, confirming Dido in her infatuation.

2. Jupiter sends Hermes to remind Aeneas of his destiny, ordering Aeneas to continue toward It-
aly, if not for his own glory, then at least for Ascanius's sake. Aeneas, in reverence for the gods, decides he must follow their decrees.

3. Answers will vary.

4. Although Aeneas was initially ensnared by Dido’s passion and forgot his goal, once Jupiter reminded him of his destiny, Aeneas remained steadfast and focused on his purpose. He was ready to be corrected by those he ought to respect, the gods, and firm against Dido, who would influence him wrongly.

5. When Sychaeus, her husband, died, Dido swore that she would forever be faithful to him never marry another. But now that Aeneas is staying in Carthage, she is struggling with her vow because Venus is inflaming her heart with love for Aeneas. (4:30)

6. Vergil describes how construction projects have stalled, men are no longer training for war, and the rebuilding of Carthage’s city wall has come to a standstill when Dido is distracted. The Romans would have recognized her failure to do her duty to the city as a tragic and shameful thing.

7. After their rendezvous in the cave, Dido convinces herself that she and Aeneas are basically married, and that their relationship is legitimate. (10:15)

8. Dido finds out that Aeneas intends to leave her by way of rumor. Aeneas hoped to keep her in the dark about his departure. (20:45)

9. Aeneas is a very human character, a fallible hero. But after his failure with Dido, he never again makes the mistake of getting distracted from his purpose. He shows more humility and skepticism about his own integrity and shows more caution throughout the rest of the story. (30:50)

10. Augustine writes that, before he was a Christian, he loved to read and watch tragedies and to have his emotions stirred up. He loved a good cry, and the tragedy of Dido and Aeneas did it for him more than any story. Augustine calls this a perverse love of passion a kind of lust. (32:22)

Lesson 6

**Aeneid IV: The Underworld**

1. In keeping Vergil’s emphasis on fate, the arrow bursting into flames portends the future greatness the gods have destined for the Trojans and their descendants, whereas there is no sign about the future in the Greek funeral games.

2. Juno sends Isis down to stir up discontent among the women about how long they have been wandering and how far they still have to voyage, eventually inciting them to set fire to the ships.

3. Aeneas first encounters the near banks of the river Acheron, where souls who have not been buried must stay. Just across the river he finds souls of infants, those unjustly condemned to die, and those who committed suicide. Next, he comes to the Mournful Fields, the place of lovers. Aeneas then continues on to the fields of warriors. Next, he passes the walled fortress where the worst sinners are tortured. Finally, Aeneas comes to the Elysian Fields, where he finds happy souls.

4. Virgil presents an afterlife where souls receive the fruit of their life on earth. The souls of just people roam in peace and happiness, while the souls of evil people are punished endlessly.

5. Anchises calls Aeneas to the Underworld and encourages Aeneas to fulfill his destiny by showing him the throngs of souls who will be reincarnated as his renowned and glorious descendants.

6. The golden bough signifies access to secret knowledge or secret locales, access to something hidden. The Golden Bough argued that all religions have a common source and that they all serve to satisfy the human desire for hidden knowledge. (11:00)

7. Unlike Homer, Vergil includes normal people who commit normal sins in the underworld. Whereas Homer only includes Titans and famous heroes in his Tartarus, Vergil shows that you or I, should we forsake filial piety or break vows, could end up in Hades. (23:30)
8. Aeneas sees paraded before him many souls waiting to be reincarnated as his own descendants, including the great Roman heroes Romulus, Horatius, Cincinnatus, and the ancestors of Augustus. Because these souls will be born as his descendents if he completes his destiny, he is encouraged to keep pressing on. This scenario calls to mind Abraham, who is faithful to God because he looks to a city which he will never see. He sets aside his interests for the sake of future generations that he will never see. (26:00)

Lesson 7
Aeneid V: The Broken Truce and the Shield of Aeneas

1. Latinus sees two omens. The first, bees clustering on a laurel branch, indicates the arrival of a foreign prince who will conquer the land. The second, Lavinia’s hair catching fire, portends her future reign as queen and also a war. Latinus then seeks counsel from his dead father, Faunus, who tells him to marry Lavinia to a foreigner. So when Aeneas arrives, Latinus decides the omens must be speaking about Aeneas.

2. First, Alecto provokes Amata to rage, leading to frenzy among all the women and civil war in the royal house. Second, Alecto visits Turnus in a dream and incites him to war against the Trojans. Third, the Fury makes Ascanius and his young men restless and eager for strife. Ascanius then kills a pet deer, which sparks a fight between the Trojans and the Latians, further provoked to battle by Alecto.

3. Tiber, the god of the river, tells Aeneas in a dream to make an alliance with Evander, who will be friendly because the Latians have made war against Evander’s newly founded colony.

4. Achilleus’ shield depicts various scenes of life – a city at peace, a city at war, harvest of wheat and grapes, and a dance. Aeneas’ shield depicts the successive victories and growing dominance of the Roman race. This difference again reflects Vergil’s emphasis on destiny, looking forward to the future greatness of the Roman people.

5. Aeneas and Latinus meet on friendly terms, and the story seems to be nearing its end. Relations are cordial between the Trojans and the Latians, and Latinus had promised his daughter Lavinia to Aeneas. But Juno’s ancient grudge against the Trojans flares up again, and so the poem cannot end quite yet. (8:45)

8. Evander entrust Aeneas with his dear son, Pallas, and asks Aeneas to take Pallas with him and teach him the ways of war. He is basically asking Aeneas to act in loco parentis for Pallas. (26:20)

9. Vergil says that Vulcan, the Lord of Fire, knowing the prophets and the coming age, works the future story of Italy on the shield: Romulus and Remus, the theft of the Sabine women, the heroes Manlius and Cloelia, Cato giving laws, Agrippa, Antonius, Cleopatra, and long processions of conquered peoples. (27:00)

Lesson 8
Aeneid VI: The Tragedy of Nisus and Euryalo

1. Vergil paints a positive picture of Turnus, who fights with fierceness and courage, constantly rallying his troops and urging them on to fight steadfastly.

2. Nisus and Euryalos volunteer to sneak out through the Latians’ camp and carry messages to Aeneas, who is unaware that the camp is besieged. Like Diomedes and Odysseus, they successfully pass through the camp, killing many enemy warriors, all deep in a drunken sleep. Unlike the Greeks’ raid, the Trojans’ mission does not succeed because they are spotted by a legion of cavalry just arriving. Euryalos is captured and killed; Nisus dies taking revenge for Euryalos’s death. Vergil promises these men will be remembered as long as Roman power lasts, implying that the memory of great men helps Rome fulfill her great destiny.
3. Jupiter declares that he and the other gods will favor neither the Trojans nor the Latians, leaving the outcome of the war to Fortune and the Fates.

4. Juno, with permission from Jupiter, makes a phantom of Aeneas. The phantom flees from Turnus, leading him onto a ship, which Juno then drives back to Turnus’s homeland.

5. Hector from the Iliad is similar to Turnus in the Aeneid. In book 9, the Trojans are in a similar position to the Achaians during the siege of Troy, behind a half-circle fort, with the sea at their backs. And like Hector does in the Iliad, Turnus attempts to light the ships on fire. (6:00)

6. Euryalus takes the splendid battle helmet of Messapus from beside his corpse. But as Euryalus and Nisus sneak out of the camp, the moonlight reflects off Euryalus’s newfound helmet, betraying their location to a Latin patrol. Though they attempt to escape, Euryalus and Nisus die tragically because of the helmet of Messapus. (17:00)

7. After he kills Pallas, Turnus take the decorated war belt from Pallas’s corpse and gloats over it. Vergil foreshadows that there will come a time when Turnus will deeply regret killing Pallas, and will rue the day he gloated over Pallas’s corpse and took his armor as spoil. (25:00)

Lesson 9

Aeneid V: Camilla, Juno’s Surrender, and the Death of Turnus

1. Camilla is a virgin warrior, beloved by Diana. Diana cannot change Camilla’s fate to die in this war, but resolves to avenge Camilla by sending her nymph, Opis, to kill whoever slays Camilla. After Camilla has defeated several Trojans, Aruns stalks and finally kills Camilla with a javelin. Opis then pursues and kills Aruns with an arrow.

2. Vergil uses Camilla to emphasize again the concept of inescapable destiny, referring many times to both Camilla’s and Aruns’s fate to die that day as the reason behind their actions.

3. Jupiter promises that Latian, not Trojan, language, customs, and laws will govern the new nation and that the name of Troy will be forgotten.

4. Both Turnus and Hector flee from the opposing hero. In both stories Jupiter discusses the fate of Turnus/Hector with a goddess and weighs the fate of the heroes in a balance. Both Aeneas and Achilles claim Pallas, the former referring to his slain friend and the latter to Minerva, strikes the final blow. A significant difference is the appearance of a Fury, in form of a bird, flying around Turnus signifying his destiny, namely death.

5. Once he hears that Pallas is dead, Evander is devastated. Though he forgives Aeneas, Evander tells him that he owes him the death of Turnus. (10:30)

6. Camilla’s father Metabus was fleeing from his enemies with his infant daughter in his hands when his path was blocked by a river. Metabus vows to Diana that if she keeps Camilla safe, he will devote his daughter to the service of the goddess. He ties Camilla to his spear and flings it across the river, and Camilla arrives safely on the opposite bank. Thus, Camilla becomes a warrior of Diana and studies war and forsakes the company of men for the woods and service of the goddess. This calls to mind the story of Jephthah, who rashly vows that if the Lord grants him victory over the Ammonites, he will sacrifice the first thing he sees when he returns home. The first thing he sees ends up being his daughter. (13:45)

7. Aristea comes from the Greek word that means most excellent, and in literature an aristeia is a moment when the story spotlights a character, showing him in all his excellent glory. (14:30)

8. Arruns stalks Cassandra through the battlefield, staying out of sight, looking for an opening, before finally killing her with a blow from behind. Vergil describes him as a cowardly wolf that runs off after killing a sheep. We are not to think of Arruns as a hero. Here Vergil, as Homer did, makes an “enemy” soldier sympathetic and a soldier on “our side” a coward. (16:00)
Lesson 10

Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* I

1. The elements are fire, air, earth, and water. Fire is weightless and flies to the highest resting place in the heavens. Next, air is between fire and earth. Earth, the heaviest element, is beneath both fire and air. Water surrounds earth. This view of the four elements shaped science and philosophy for centuries to come, even into the Middle Ages.

2. Since Io has been turned into a cow and cannot speak, she uses her hooves to write her family a message in the dust.

3. Daedalus, the famous architect, builds a maze so complex that even he gets lost in it.

4. Metamorphoses is a collection of myths that are stitched together by changes: at the end of every episode, something or someone changes into something else. These changes or transformations sometimes serve to explain other stories or something in nature. For example, how we got a certain bird or a certain kind of tree. These transformations give the work its name. (6:30)

5. Ovid says that Man alone walks upright and can lift his head toward the skies. Man is closer to the gods than to the animals because he has reason and desire for transcendent and ultimate things. (13:15)

6. In the first story of the Metamorphoses, Lycaon tests Zeus by serving him the flesh of his son. Zeus punishes Lycaon by turning him into a wolf. This is fitting because Lycaon was already a beast, a wolf in spirit.

7. James Frazier points out parallels between Ovid’s flood myth, the biblical flood account, and various flood myths from other cultures. He claims that Christianity is not unique at all, but merely springs from the same mythical sources as many other religions. But instead of throwing the Bible out along with all other religions, we can see the remarkable similarities as evidence that the various accounts must all be based on some true event, which that the Bible describes accurately. (24:00)

Lesson 11

Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* II

1. Midas repents to Bacchus and begs for the curse to be removed. Bacchus directs him to wash himself in the headwaters of the river near Sardis. After doing this, Midas is freed, and the curse passes into the water.

2. Answers will vary, but may include:
   - Vegetarianism: Do not kill anything to eat it.
   - Metempsychosis: a kind of reincarnation in which the soul is eternal, but changes forms, even from animal to human. This is one of his justifications for vegetarianism.
   - The Eternal Flux: everything is always changing, always in motion. Change is the only thing that does not change.
   - The Four Ages of Man: Life parallels the seasons of the year. Spring corresponds to childhood, summer to adulthood, autumn to middle age, and winter to old age.
   - The Elements: The four elements—earth, air, fire, and water—can morph into each other, and are not constant.
   - Geological and Physical Changes: Geological features, such as river banks and mountains, are subject to erosion and change. Physical features, such as the qualities of a particular water source, are also subject to change.
   - Autogenesis: Called “spontaneous generation” by later scientists, this view posits that certain creatures are born from apparently very different nonliving substances. Examples Ovid uses include green frogs from mud, or snakes from decomposing human spinal marrow.
   - Transmigration/Rebirth: Life originates with the phoenix, which reproduces itself from its own ashes every five hundred years.
   - Transfers of Power: Kingdoms rise and fall, and Rome is prophesied to be the next and greatest kingdom.
   - Sanctity of Life: Similar to his doctrine of vegetarianism. Since we share the same kinds of spirits with even animals, avoid capturing or killing what is alive.
3. After Orpheus loses Eurydice, he spurns all female attention, including that of an insane group of women known as the maenads, who once a year would go berserk and destroy everything in their paths. During their rampage, they catch sight of Orpheus and decide to punish him for spurning their affection. Though he is killed brutally, Orpheus is happily reunited with his Eurydice after death. (9:30)

4. After Midas makes a fool out of himself in when he judges Pan’s music to be superior to Apollo’s, Apollo curses Midas’s by giving him the ears of an ass. Midas hides his ears under a turban, but when he goes to get a haircut, the barber learns his secret. The barber can’t bear to keep such a weird secret to himself, so he digs a hole into the ground and whispers into it the truth: “Midas has ass’s ears.” Though the barber fills the hole up, a thick bunch of reed grows on top of it, and ever since, they have whispered the truth about Midas’ ears. (20:30)

5. Ovid devotes a section of the Metamorphoses to Pythagoras, a pre-Platonic Greek philosopher. (24:00)

6. Pythagoras advocated a strict vegetarianism. He reasons that there is corn and fruit and vegetables enough to feed us, and it is a wicked thing for one body to hunger for another body, or for flesh to be fed with flesh. He also taught a sort of reincarnationism. He reasoned that, since eternal souls cycle through different incarnations, men or animals, eating another animal is equivalent to eating another human, or at least another soul. (27:30)

7. Pythagoras taught that the cosmos was primarily characterized by flux, or mutability. Nothing, he is convinced, remains the same. (29:00)

Lesson 12

Lucretius, Lucan, and Statius

1. The three philosophies that dominated the Roman world were Stoicism, Skepticism, and Epicureanism. (4:00)

2. Lucretius begins his work by appealing to Venus, whereas most epic poets begin their works with an appeal to the Muses. At first this seems inconsistent, because Lucretius, as an Epicurean and an Atomist, does not believe in the gods. But his beginning invocation is not to a goddess who is actually there, listening to him, but to a symbol of the fertility and fecundity of Earth, the creative life force, which he hopes will be with him as he writes his poem. (9:10)

3. Lucretius’s teaching may seem scary and unpleasant because he is attacking religion and discrediting belief in the gods. His audience would have grown up believing in these things and holding them dear. Lucretius recognizes that his message might be distasteful medicine, and so he intends to “sweeten the rim of the cup,” to make his teachings easier to swallow by delivering them in pleasant poetry. (16:00)

4. Lucan begins his poem by lamenting the divisiveness and destruction of civil war, and so we know the subject of his Pharsalia will be the civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great. (27:00)

5. After years of wicked emperors, many Romans moved to occult religions and mysticism, seeking satisfaction in places other than the Roman empire, which had turned out not to be so great. The mysticism and dark occult elements of the Thebaid are examples of this sort of shift in Roman culture in the first century AD. (33:00)