



# WORKSHEET

## Ancient: Episode 2

The Age of Conflict

### Quote

Hope is the pillar that holds up the world. Hope is the dream of a waking man.  
(Pliny the Elder)

### Summary

We continue our journey through ancient Rome. We learn how the depravity and tyranny of Emperor Nero burned indelible scars into the Roman Empire, witness chariot races at the Circus Maximus, and walk the ruins of the Colosseum where they held gruesome gladiator games. We investigate the extreme persecution of Christians during this era of Roman history and the paradoxical impact it had on the growth of Christianity. We end with a tour of one of the most intricately engineered temples of the ancient world, the Roman Pantheon.

### Discussion Questions

1. Why was Nero so deeply hated by his subjects?

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2. Describe how Nero's extreme persecution of Christians backfired.

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3. What was the Circus Maximus?

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4. How did the Colosseum get its name?

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5. What were some of the false crimes Christians were accused of when they were sentenced to death? Name at least two:

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6. All of Jesus' disciples, except for John, were ultimately executed. Why is this significant?

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7. What were some of the architectural feats constructed by the ancient Romans? Name at least three:

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8. What are some of the mythological gods that were named in this episode, and what were their roles or interesting facts about them?

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## Suggested Reading

Pliny the Younger on Christians

### Side Road

More than two centuries ago, a massive ship was swallowed by the ocean off the coast of the Greek island of Antikythera. In 1900, sponge divers discovered its remains and deep-sea expeditions have been launched ever since. Explorers have uncovered fascinating treasures from the wreckage, including fragments of marble statues, intricate glassware, ceramic jars, gold jewelry, and the only “dolphin” weapon ever discovered. In 2014, a global team of divers, archaeologists, technicians, engineers, and filmmakers started a full excavation to uncover more of the ship and reconstruct its backstory. In 2016, a 2,000-year-old human skeleton nicknamed *Pamphilos* was found. Perhaps the most interesting discovery has been a collection of bronze pieces of a complex device, now referred to as the Antikythera Mechanism. The apparatus consisted of gears and dials that could determine the position of the sun, moon, Mercury, and Venus on any given date. The Antikythera Mechanism, which dates to about 70 BC, is essentially an astronomical calculator that is way ahead of its time. Currently, it can be seen with other artifacts from the wreck at the National Archaeological Museum of Athens.