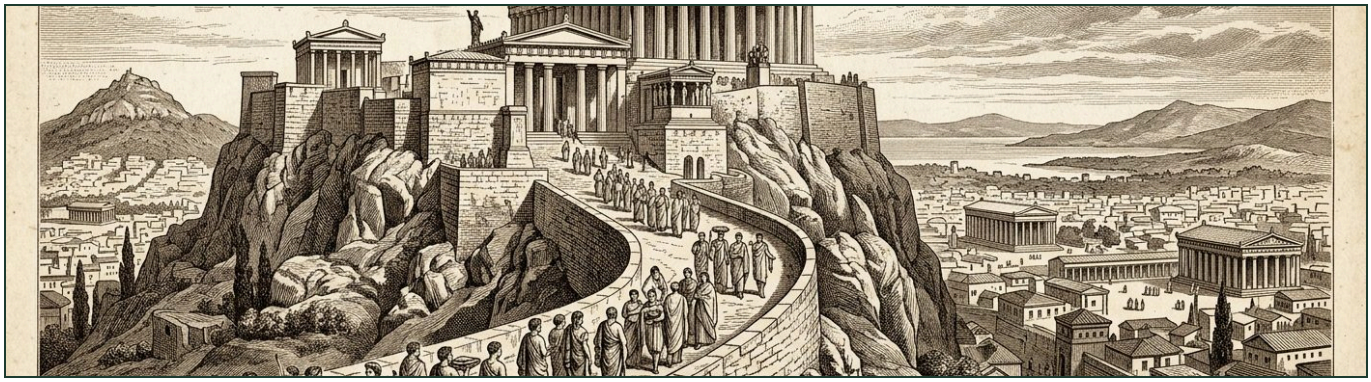


800 BC – 31 BC

Ancient Greece Timeline

Ancient Greece gave the world democracy, philosophy, the Olympics, and some of history's greatest art and literature, flourishing in independent city-states along the Mediterranean.

776 BC

First Olympic Games

The first recorded Olympic Games are held at Olympia in honor of Zeus, bringing city-states together in peaceful athletic competition.

> **Why it mattered:** *The Olympics united rival Greek city-states every four years in a truce — a tradition the modern world revived in 1896 and still observes today.*

~750 BC

Homer's Epics Written Down

The oral poems of Homer — the Iliad and the Odyssey — are written down, becoming the foundation of Greek literature.

> **Why it mattered:** *Homer's epics shaped Greek culture, values, and identity for centuries — and are still read and taught today as foundational works of Western literature.*

507 BC

Athenian Democracy

The Athenian leader Cleisthenes introduces democratic reforms giving citizens a direct vote in the government of Athens.

> **Why it mattered:** *Athens became the world's first democracy, planting the idea that ordinary citizens — not kings or gods — should govern themselves.*

490 BC

Battle of Marathon

Athens defeats a much larger Persian invasion force at Marathon; legend says a messenger ran to Athens to announce the victory.

> **Why it mattered:** *The victory preserved Greek independence and democracy; the messenger's legendary run gave us the marathon race.*

Ancient Greece Timeline *continued*

480 BC

Battle of Thermopylae

A small Greek force led by 300 Spartans holds a narrow mountain pass against the massive Persian army for three days before being defeated.

> **Why it mattered:** *Though the Spartans died to a man, their sacrifice bought time for Greece to regroup — and became one of history's most celebrated acts of courage.*

461–429 BC

Golden Age of Athens

Under the statesman Pericles, Athens builds the Parthenon, fosters great playwrights and philosophers, and reaches its cultural peak.

> **Why it mattered:** *Athens in this era gave the world democracy, the philosophy of Socrates, the plays of Sophocles and Euripides, and architectural masterpieces still admired today.*

431–404 BC

Peloponnesian War

Athens and Sparta fight a devastating war that tears the Greek world apart and ends with the defeat of Athens.

> **Why it mattered:** *The war exhausted the city-states, leaving them weakened and vulnerable — opening the door for Macedon to the north to conquer all of Greece.*

338 BC

Philip II Conquers Greece

Philip II of Macedon defeats the Greek city-states at the Battle of Chaeronea and unites them under Macedonian control.

> **Why it mattered:** *The era of independent city-states ended; Greece became the launching pad for Philip's son Alexander to conquer the ancient world.*

336–323 BC

Alexander the Great

Alexander conquers Egypt, Persia, and lands as far as India in one of history's greatest military campaigns before dying at age 32.

> **Why it mattered:** *Alexander spread Greek language, culture, and ideas across the ancient world — creating the Hellenistic Age, a blending of Greek and Eastern civilization.*

146 BC

Rome Conquers Greece

Rome defeats the Greek city-states and destroys Corinth, ending Greek independence and making Greece part of the Roman world.

> **Why it mattered:** *Greek independence ended, but Greek culture lived on inside Rome — Roman education, literature, and art were so deeply shaped by Greece that the Romans themselves said they had conquered Greece militarily but Greece had conquered them culturally.*