



# The Emperor Justinian and the Byzantine Empire (Greenwood Guides to Historic Events of the Ancient World)

By James Allen Evans

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## The Emperor Justinian and the Byzantine Empire (Greenwood Guides to Historic Events of the Ancient World) By James Allen Evans

When Justinian first assumed the title of Roman Emperor in 527 CE, his inherited empire?now based in Constantinople? had lost almost all of its connection with the Eternal City itself, and was threatened from within by profound theological splits, and from without by the various barbarian kingdoms that surrounded it. By taking military action against the barbarian Ostrogoths, Visigoths, and Vandals, and signing an eternal peace with Persia, Justinian managed to reclaim much of the lands formerly held by Rome; while through his incessant legislation and monetary contributions to an extensive building program, he sought to reestablish the old Roman cultural institutions of order and architectural beauty in his newly won kingdom. This inveterate reformer and innovative leader, whose name remains on the beams of the Hagia Sophia, and whose influence extends into the legal practices of the present time, remains as compelling a man today as he was to his original historians almost 1500 years ago.

Designed as an accessible introduction to Justinian's reign and his time, *The Emperor Justinian and the Byzantine Empire* offers readers and researchers an appealing mix of descriptive chapters, biographical sketches, and annotated primary documents. An overview of the world of Late Antiquity is presented in the introduction, and is followed by chapters on the shape of the Empire, the Nike revolt of 532, the legal achievements of Justinian, the Empress Theodora, and Justinian's building program. The narrative chapters conclude with a section discussing the imperial achievements as a whole. An annotated bibliography and index are also included in this work.

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"[A] handy, reliable account of the era complete with biographies of notable characters, a very useful glossary of terms, and a selection of major documents bearing on the reign of Emperor Justinian. The glossary is particularly welcome because the nonspecialist readership often finds Byzantine religious and theological concepts daunting. The twenty documents, selected by Evans, shed light on the rule of Justinian and the complex issues and relationships of that time....[t]his work does much to open up for upper-division undergraduates, graduate students, and general readers the Byzantine world of Emperor Justinian. One can say that Evans has accomplished his task and has produced a readable work on that important era." - **The Historian**

"[F]or high school to college collections....[p]roviding an introduction to Justinian's reign and time. Biography blends with history using annotated primary documents to provide a review of the Late Antiquity and its influences....An excellent reference." - **MBR Bookwatch**

#### About the Author

**James Allan Evans** is Professor Emeritus of Classical Near Eastern and Religious Studies at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. He has published several works on ancient Greece and Rome, including *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power*.

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