

# AD 538 Siege of Rome

The First Siege of Rome during the Gothic War lasted for a year and nine days, from 2 March 537 to 12 March 538. The city was besieged by the Ostrogothic army under their king Vitiges; the defending East Romans were commanded by Belisarius, one of the most famous and successful Roman generals. The siege was the first major encounter between the forces of the two opponents, and played a decisive role in the subsequent development of the war.



Siege of Rome (537–538). Accessed Jan. 16th, 2024. In *Wikipedia*.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege\\_of\\_Rome\\_\(537%E2%80%93538\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Rome_(537%E2%80%93538))

March 12 – Siege of Rome: King Vitiges of the Ostrogoths ends his siege (after 374 days) and abandons Rome. He retreats with his Gothic army northeast along the Via Flaminia. Belisarius attacks the Goths when they have crossed the Milvian Bridge. After fierce resistance, Vitiges routs in panic, and many are slain or drowned in the river.

538. Accessed Jan 16, 2024. In *Wikipedia*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/538#cite\\_note-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/538#cite_note-1)

"Therefore, as soon as our Most Glorious Imperial Pretorian Prefects appointed throughout the extent of the entire Roman Empire receive notice of this law, they will publish it in all the departments of their government, that is in Italy, Libya, the Islands, the East, and Illyria; in order that all persons may know how greatly We have their interests at heart. We dedicate this law to God who has inspired Us to accomplish such great things, and who will recompense Us for having enacted this constitution for the security of Our subjects. It shall also be communicated to Our citizens of Constantinople.

Given at Constantinople, on the Kalends of June, during the twelfth year of the reign of Justinian, and the Consulate of John."<sup>481</sup>

<sup>481</sup> Scott, S. P., trans., ed. *The Civil Law [of Justinian]*, 17 vols. Union, NJ: Lawbook Exchange, 2001, Justinian, *The Novels-69*, 16:266, June 1, 538.

Justinian the Great, was Eastern Roman emperor from 527 to 565.

Justinian I. Accessed Jan. 16th, 2024. In *Wikipedia*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justinian\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justinian_I)