

# Notes 6.4 - What Have the Romans Ever Done for Us?

## Roman Government

Roman **Republic** founded in 509 B.C.E.

Was a **representative democracy** which meant that unlike the Greeks, representatives were elected to make decisions

-Like the Greeks, only free male citizens voted for representatives

Had power divided across three **branches of government**:

**Senate** - the rich families and distinguished elders

Citizen **Assembly** and Tribunes (plebians)  
- voice of the common people

**Consuls** - “Executive Branch” - two co-leaders to check each others power  
- Had the power of **Veto** - (Latin for “I refuse”)

Sharing of power and responsibility created **checks and balances** between the branches of government. If one branch was making irresponsible decisions, the other branches could block them.

## Roman Law

Laws called “**Twelve Tables**” were standardized across the entire Roman Empire. Citizens were protected by legal rights.

**Jury Trials** (borrowed from the Greeks) - the right to be judged by your peers.

What made the Romans so influential?

They conquered most of the areas around the Mediterranean Sea and brought “**Pax Romana**” (Roman Peace) for over 700 years.