

## The Ancient Greeks

### Lesson 3 Greece and Persia

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

*Why does conflict develop?*

#### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *How did the Persians rule a vast empire?*
2. *How did the Greeks defeat the Persians?*

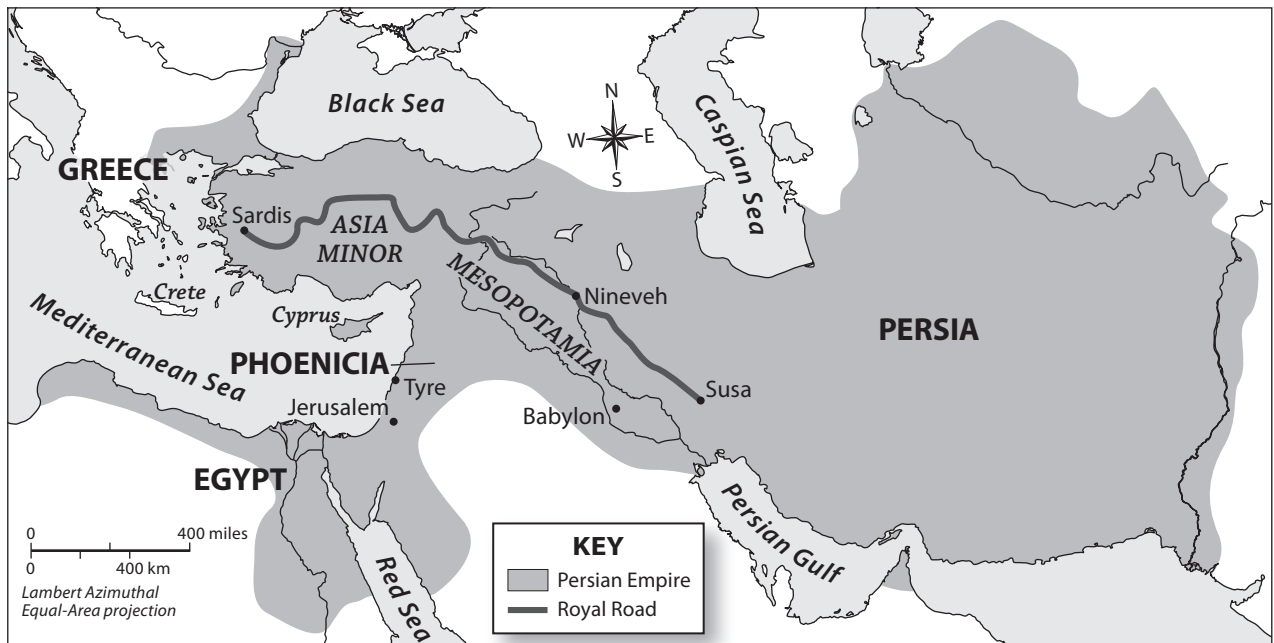
#### Terms to Know

**satrapy** a province in ancient Persia

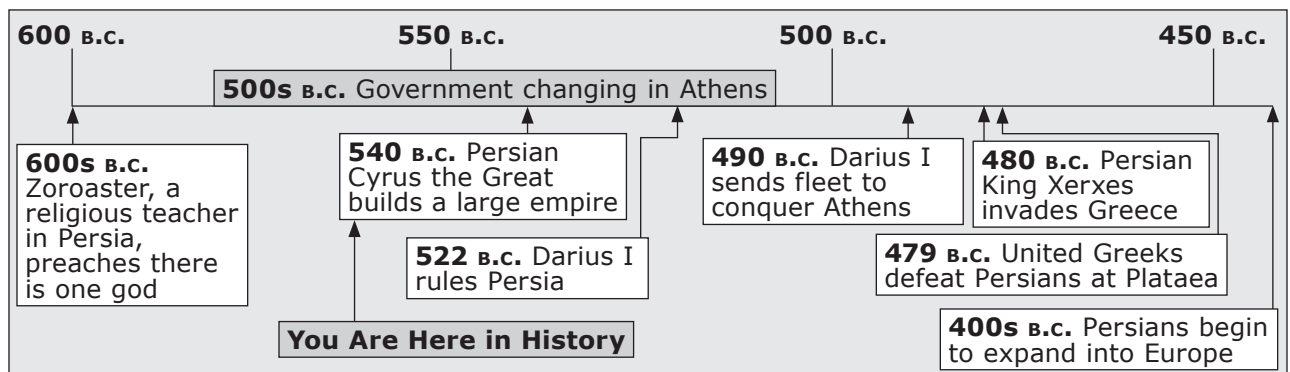
**satrap** the governor of a province in ancient Persia

**Zoroastrianism** a Persian religion based on the belief in one god and founded by the religious teacher Zoroaster

### Where in the world?



### When did it happen?



## The Ancient Greeks

### Lesson 3 Greece and Persia, *Continued*

#### Persia's Empire

While Greek city-states were going through changes in their governments, the Persians were building a large empire in southwest Asia. Persia was located in what is today called Iran.

In the 500s B.C., a Persian king named Cyrus the Great built a powerful army. Cyrus conquered Mesopotamia, Syria, and Judah. He also conquered Greek city-states that were in the area of Anatolia. Today Anatolia is called Turkey. The Persian empire became the largest in the ancient world.

Cyrus ruled fairly. He allowed the people he conquered to keep their own languages, religions, and laws. After Cyrus, new rulers continued to expand the empire. Persia controlled Egypt, western India, and lands northeast of Greece.

The Persians improved the network of roads that had been built by the Assyrians. They built an important road called the Royal Road. On this road, travelers could get food, water, and fresh horses at roadside stations. Before the road was built, it would take a messenger about three months to travel from Persia to Anatolia. Using the road, the time was cut to just seven days.

The Persian Empire kept expanding. Darius I ruled Persia from 522 B.C. to 486 B.C. He divided the empire into provinces to make it easier to manage. He called the provinces **satrapies**. Each satrapy was ruled by a governor who was called a **satrap**. The governor collected taxes and recruited soldiers for the Persian army.

#### Zoroastrianism

- Founded in the 600s B.C. by a religious teacher named Zoroaster
- Believed in one god named Ahura Mazda
- Believed people could choose good or evil
- Teachings, prayers, and sacred songs written down in a holy book

At first the Persians worshiped many gods. Then in the 600s B.C., a religious teacher named Zoroaster started preaching a new religion. It was called **Zoroastrianism**.

Zoroaster taught that there was one god, named Ahura Mazda. He was the creator of all things and the leader of the forces of good. Zoroaster believed people were free to choose between good and evil, but at the end of time,



#### Marking the Text

1. Underline the names of the lands that Persia conquered and controlled.



#### Drawing Conclusions

2. Why was it important that Cyrus the Great let conquered people keep their own languages, religions, and laws?

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#### Defining

3. Define the word *satrap*.

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#### Marking the Text

4. Circle the name of the god of Zoroastrianism.

## The Ancient Greeks

### Lesson 3 Greece and Persia, *Continued*



#### Listing

5. In the graphic organizer, list facts about aspects of the Persian Empire.



#### Reading Check

6. How did Persian rulers unite their vast empires?

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#### Contrasting

7. How was Greek civilization different from Persian civilization?

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#### Marking the Text

8. Circle the word that is the name of a long-distance race.

goodness would win. Most Persians accepted Zoroastrianism. They also began to view the monarchy as sacred. Persian kings believed they ruled by the power of Ahura Mazda.

Persian Empire	Facts
Cyrus the Great	
Royal Road	
satrapy	
Zoroastrianism	

### The Persian Wars

In the 400s B.C., the Persians wanted to expand their empire into Europe. They soon clashed with the Greeks who had a very different civilization. The Persians believed in an all-powerful king. Many Greeks believed that citizens should choose their own rulers.

The Persians already controlled Greek city-states in Anatolia. In 499 B.C. these city-states revolted. The Athenians sent warships to support the Greek rebels. The Persians crushed the revolt. The Persian king Darius I was angry at Athens for interfering.

In 490 B.C. Darius I sent a fleet of 600 ships to invade Greece. The Persians landed at Marathon. The Athenians knew they were outnumbered and would lose if they attacked. The Persians then decided to board their ships and attack Athens by sea. When the strongest Persian fighting units were on the ships, the Athenians attacked. The Persians suffered a terrible defeat.

According to Greek legend, a young runner raced to Athens with the news. He reached Athens and cried out "Victory." Then he fell and died from exhaustion. Today, marathon races are named for that famous run.

The Persians vowed revenge against the Athenians. In 480 B.C. a new Persian king named Xerxes invaded Greece with a large army and thousands of warships. His force even had its own supply ships.

The Greek city-states joined together to fight the Persians. Sparta's King Leonidas supplied the most soldiers. Themistocles of Athens directed the Greek navy. His plan was to attack the Persian supply ships. That would cut off the Persian army's supplies.

## The Ancient Greeks

### Lesson 3 Greece and Persia, *Continued*

For three days Spartan soldiers fought the Persians at Thermopylae. The Spartans fought bravely but could not stop the Persians. Many troops abandoned the battle. Only 300 Spartan soldiers remained and fought to the death.

The Spartans' heroic fight gave Themistocles and the Athenians time to carry out the plan. The Athenian fleet lured the Persian fleet into the strait of Salamis near Athens. A strait or channel is a narrow strip of water between two pieces of land. The large, heavy Persian ships crowded together in the channel. The Greek ships were smaller and could maneuver more easily. The Greek navy destroyed most of the Persian fleet.

The Persian army continued to attack. It marched to Athens and burned the city. Finally in 479 B.C. the last battle was fought. With improved fighting and better weapons, the Greek forces defeated the Persians at Plataea, northwest of Athens.

The Persian Empire now faced many challenges. Its army was no longer able to defend the whole empire. The people grew unhappy with their government and paying heavy taxes. The royal family disagreed over who should rule.

Persia weakened and became open to outside attacks. In the 300s B.C., Persia was invaded by a young and powerful Greek ruler named Alexander. The Persian Empire ended and a new Greek empire grew. It eventually became even larger than the Persian Empire.

#### Check for Understanding

List two advantages that should have helped the Persians defeat the Greeks at Marathon in 490 B.C.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

How did the Greeks finally defeat the Persians?

3. \_\_\_\_\_



#### Marking the Text

9. Underline the names of important battles in the text.



#### Reading Check

10. After the losses in Greece, why did the Persians grow unhappy with their government?

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11. Place a two-tab Foldable along the dotted line to cover the Check for Understanding. Title the anchor tab *Soldiers and Sailors*. Label the top tab *Land* and the bottom tab *Sea*. Use both sides of the tabs to outline what you remember about important events occurring on land and sea.