



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Study Guide #13: **War and Empire in the Aegean**

**The Persian Wars.** In 546 B.C., the Persian king Cyrus conquered the kingdom of Lydia and gained the Greek city-states in Asia Minor, known as Ionia. As long as the Greeks paid their taxes and contributed to the royal army, Cyrus did not interfere with their cities' local governments or customs. However, when Darius I came to power soon after 522 B.C., he raised taxes, angering the Greeks. The Ionian Greeks revolted in 500 B.C. but received support only from Athens and Eretria and were defeated. In 490 B.C., the Persians took revenge on Eretria and Athens for intervening. Eretria was destroyed, but Athens fought back and managed to defeat the Persians at the battle of Marathon.

In 480 B.C. the Persians, led by the new emperor Xerxes, invaded Greece again. They defeated a badly outnumbered army of Spartans at Thermopylae and destroyed Athens. The Athenians continued the war, however, and brought together an alliance of Greeks under Spartan command. The Athenian general Themistocles lured the Persian fleet into a trap in the Salamis strait, where the ships were easy targets for the Greeks. Xerxes went home, leaving a powerful army occupying Greece. The next year a Greek army defeated the Persians at Plataea and won the war. While these battles ensured Greek independence, the Persian Empire remained powerful, and its leaders continued to interfere in Greek affairs from time to time.

**The Golden Age of Athens.** To defend against the Persians and to protect trade, Athens and most of the Greek city-states and many islands joined together to form the **Delian League**. Athens gradually turned the League into its own empire, promising stability and prosperity to its subject cities but demanding an annual payment of money. Athens became rich from the League, using League contributions for such things as the construction of the Parthenon.

Athens achieved wealth and power and completed its democratic form of government under the leadership of Pericles. His thirty-year rule, from 460 to 429 B.C., is known as the Age of Pericles. It was during this time that direct democracy reached its height. All electoral and legislative matters were controlled by the citizens under the concept one citizen, one vote. Every year, about 1,000 public officials were chosen from among the people, with no one holding the same office more than once. All public officials were paid from public funds, and citizens controlled the legislative, the executive, and the judicial functions of Athenian government.

**The Peloponnesian War.** The city-states of Greece, particularly Corinth, began to ally themselves against Athens because of Athens's arrogant rule. Turning the Delian League into Athens's own empire undermined the concept of the polis, which was founded on absolute independence and self-reliance. Because Athens was supported by the other city-states of the League, it was no longer independent. Furthermore, although Athens remained independent, it did not even attempt to rule the subjects of its empire in a democratic manner. As a result, tensions between Athens and other city-states, particularly Corinth, increased. In the end, many city-states looked to Sparta for protection, recognizing its military strength and its long-standing rivalry with Athens.

In 432 B.C., Sparta and its allies declared war against Athens. The Spartans invaded Attica, the region around Athens from which the city drew its basic food supply. The entire Athenian population withdrew behind Athens's walls. These walls linked the city with the harbor at Piraeus, giving the Athenians access to the sea and allowing them to bring in food. However, as the siege of Athens continued for years, disease swept through the overcrowded population and killed huge numbers of Athenians, including Pericles. The war continued, while internal strife further weakened Athens. In 404 B.C., Athens surrendered to Sparta and became a second-rate power in Greece.

**Answer the questions below in your own words and in complete sentence. Highlight your evidence.**

**1.** What change did Darius I make that angered his Greek subjects?

---

---

---

**2.** At what three major battles did the Greek city-states defeat the Persians?

---

---

---

**3.** What did Athens get from the other members of the Delian League?

---

---

---

**4.** What political movement reached its height in Athens during the Age of Pericles?

---

---

---

**5.** What were the two causes of the Peloponnesian War?

---

---

---

**6.** What problems took place within Athens's walls during the Peloponnesian War?

---

---

---