

Chapter 7: The Empires of Persia Reading Questions

Eyewitness – p. 131

1. How was Cyrus able to defeat the powerful kingdom of Lydia?
2. What advantages did Persian administration have over Mesopotamian administration?

The Rise and Fall of the Persian Empires – p. 132

3. The first rulers of Persia belonged to the _____ dynasty.
4. From what empires did the Medes and Persians migrate?
5. Who was the first Achaemenid emperor? What did he conquer (give their ancient names)?
6. Why was administration under Darius's reign difficult?
7. What was Persepolis?
8. What is a satrap?
9. How did Darius prevent satraps from overthrowing the empire?
10. Darius did three things to standardize rule throughout his kingdom. What were they?
11. How did a good road and communication system help Darius rule his empire?

Decline and Fall of the Achaemenid Empire – p. 135

12. What is a qanat? What advantages did they give the Persians?
13. How did Darius treat the cultures of the people he conquered?
14. Locate the region of Ionia on a map. Make a note of where it is.
15. Who started the Persian Wars? Why?
16. What allowed Alexander the Great to defeat the Persians?

The Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanid Empires – p. 137

17. Why did many Persians revolt against Seleucid rule?
18. Why were Parthian horses better than their nomadic counterparts?
19. How did the Parthians avoid the revolts that plagued the Seleucids?
20. The Persian empire was briefly rebuilt by the _____ dynasty before being conquered by expanding Muslims.

Imperial Society and Economy – p. 139

21. Why did the Persians move from a clan governmental system to an educated bureaucracy?
22. Who were the most powerful members of Persian society?
23. Much of the Persian empire consists of desert and dry climates. How did the Persians overcome this?
24. How did the Persians get their slaves?
25. Who was Gimillu and what can we learn from him?

Economic Foundations of Classical Persia – p. 141

26. Like the modern U.S., the ancient Persians produced most of their crops in certain areas and transported them to places they were needed. What areas grew crops?
27. How do standardized coins improve trade?
28. Persia was famous for its long-distance trade. Did this trade mostly involve necessities or luxuries?

Religions of Salvation in Classical Persian Society – p. 142

29. How did the religion of the Persians change over time?
30. Describe the earliest Persian religion.
31. What happened to Zarathustra that led him to start a religion?
32. What are the *Gathas*? How were they preserved?
33. What happened to the *Gathas* and Avesta that causes us to have little knowledge of Zoroastrianism?
34. Describe Zoroastrian beliefs.
35. Why would Zoroastrianism have been especially popular among the elite?

Religions of Salvation in a Cosmopolitan Society – p. 143

36. Why did Zoroastrianism undergo a resurgence under Sassanid rule?
37. What happened to the Zoroastrians?
38. What beliefs are common to Zoroastrianism and Judeo-Christian theology?