

Persian Wars

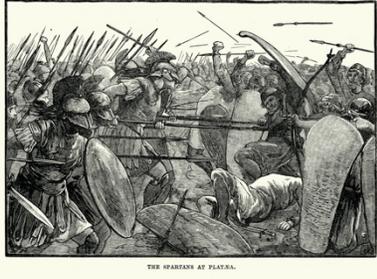


Figure 1: Spartans fought Persian forces at the Battle of Plataea. It was the last attempt by the Persians to invade mainland Greece.

By 500 B.C. Persia ruled a large empire that was centered in what is now Iran. The Persians had conquered a number of ancient Greek cities, called city-states, that lay along the eastern Mediterranean Sea. In about 499 B.C. these city-states rebelled against their Persian rulers. This rebellion started the Persian Wars, a long series of battles between the Greeks and the Persians.

During the rebellion Athens sent 20 ships to help the Greek rebels. Athens was a powerful city-state on the Greek mainland. Despite the help from the Athenians, the rebels lost to the Persians.

The Persians vowed revenge against Athens for its part in the rebellion. In 490 B.C. a Persian army invaded mainland Greece. The Athenians faced the Persians in battle on the plain of Marathon, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) from Athens. Although there were fewer Athenians than Persians, the Athenian troops badly defeated the Persians.

Ten years later the Persians returned. This time both their army and navy were huge and powerful. One battle followed another. Finally, in 480 B.C. the Greeks defeated the Persians in a great sea battle in the Strait of Salamis. (The Strait of Salamis is a narrow body of water a few miles west of Athens.) Another Greek victory came the following year.

Smaller battles raged for the next 30 years, but the Persians never again conquered the Greeks. In 449 B.C. the Greeks and the Persians agreed to a final peace treaty.

MLA Citation

"Persian Wars." *Britannica School*, Encyclopædia Britannica, 7 Dec. 2019.
school.eb.com/levels/middle/article/Persian-Wars/390833. Accessed 26 Dec. 2019.

APA Citation

Persian Wars. (2019). In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Retrieved from
<https://school.eb.com/levels/middle/article/Persian-Wars/390833>