

0. 300 - Thermopylae and Rise of an Empire - Story Preface

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This statue of Leonidas is located in the city of Sparta. Photo by Praxinoa, online courtesy Wikimedia Commons. License: [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)

[The Spartans]
*are the equal of any men
when they fight as individuals;
fighting together
as a collective,
they surpass all other men.*

Demaratus (former Spartan king) to Xerxes
Reported by [Herodotus](#) in *Histories* 7.104

Xerxes, also called the Great King, was on the move. The Persian leader - who considered himself a god - had amassed a huge army. Herodotus says it numbered 1,700,000 men from forty subject countries. Their destination? Greece.

Inheriting a substantial empire from his father - Darius I - Xerxes already had nearly everything a king could want. The ruins, for example, of his palace at Persepolis - in today's Iran - are magnificent. But the battle, against Greece, would be personal.

This fight was about revenge.

Visual Vocabulary Builder for this Story

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/300-Thermopylae-and-Rise-of-an-Empire>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

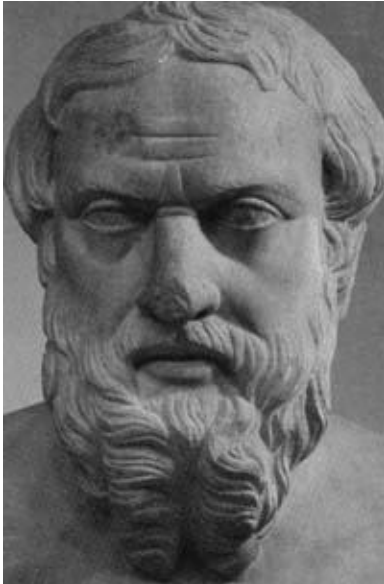
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Questions 2 Ponder

Does Collaboration Lead to Better Results?

When Demaratus said that Spartan warriors, fighting together, surpassed "all other men," he was making a point about collaboration.

Do you think that collaborating with others, as a team, always leads to better results? Why, or why not?



Herodotus

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Xerxes I - King of the Persians

Image online, courtesy [Livius](#).

Quoted passage, from *The Histories*, by Herodotus.

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Xerxes On the Move

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Darius I - King of the Persians

Image online, courtesy [Livius](#).

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Map 2.3 The Persian Empire By 513 B.C. the Persian Empire not only included more of the ancient Near East than had the Assyrian Empire, but it also extended as far east as western India. With the rise of the Macedonians and Persians, the balance of power in the Near East shifted east of Mesopotamia for the first time.



Map of the Persian Empire

Image online, courtesy [Utah State University](#) website.

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Xerxes - Ruins of the Palace Entrance

Image online, courtesy [Livius](#).

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300 - Xerxes Leaves His Palace

Information and image online, courtesy [Livius](#).

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Palace of Xerxes - Magnificent Sphinx Stairs

Image online, courtesy [Livius](#).

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