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Chapter 4 Reading Guide:

Classical Civilizations in the Mediterranean and Middle East

1. Make a Venn diagram/comparison chart in your notebook as you read this chapter, comparing key Greek and Roman characteristics and developments.

*The Persian Empire: A New Perspective in the Middle East*

1. What major political styles and innovations characterized the Persian Empire?
2. What religion originated in the Persian Empire? What were its main characteristics? What world religions would it influence?
3. What country presently exists where much of the Persian Empire was located? Who would conquer the Persian Empire?

*Patterns of Greek and Roman History*

1. What type of political structure did Greece adopt? How did its geography influence this trend? How did Athens and Sparta fundamentally differ?
2. How did Alexander the Great influence Greece? Why is the period after his death called the Hellenistic period? Which society conquered this region by the first century B.C.E.?
3. What factors led to the decline of the Roman Empire?
4. Which Roman emperor adopted Christianity? Why?

*Greek and Roman Political Institutions*

1. Describe the similarities and differences between the political “glue” of classical China versus Mediterranean cultures.
2. What political similarities did classical Mediterranean societies share with classical India?
3. What does democracy literally mean? What is a direct democracy? What Greek city-state embraced this form of government? Who were considered citizens?
4. As you read the “Thinking Historically” box on page 89, start making a chart or Venn diagram in your notebook comparing major similarities among the classical regions.
5. What structures and policies did the Roman *empire* put in place in order for the emperor to rule a vast, diverse region effectively (many to include here!)?

*Religion and Culture*

1. What type of religion did the Greeks and Romans adopt? What world religion originated and spread during the Roman Empire? What type of bond did the official Greco-Roman religion provide? What limitations did this type of religion have?
2. What ethical values did moral philosophers such as Aristotle embrace?
3. What primary interest shaped Greek approach toward science? What more practical genius defined Roman achievements?
4. How did the Greco-Roman religion influence their art and literature?
5. What type of visual arts became the legacy of Mediterranean civilizations?
6. What popular activities defined Greece versus Rome?

*Economy and Society in the Mediterranean*

1. What occupation did most people hold? What happened to their situation over time?
2. What commodity drove expansion efforts in the Mediterranean?
3. What were the main goods that drove trade within the Mediterranean?
4. How were merchants treated/viewed in the Mediterranean compared to other classical civilizations? Why?
5. How were slaves viewed? What types of jobs did they perform? What is the relationship between warfare and slavery?
6. Why didn’t Greece or Rome create technological innovations for agriculture or manufacturing?

*Toward the Fall of Rome*

1. Why and how was the fall of Rome more severe than the decline of classical China and India?
2. What religion influenced Jewish beliefs in this era?