

Précis 34: CSS 1989

Write a précis of the following passage and suggest a suitable title: (20)

THE GREATEST civilization before ours was the Greek. They, too, lived in a dangerous world. They were a little civilized people, surrounded by barbarous and always threatened by the greatest Asian power Persia. In the end they succumbed, but the reason they did was not the enemies outside were too strong, but that their spiritual strength had given way. While they had it, they kept Greece unconquered. Basic to all Greek achievements was freedom. The Athenians were the only free people in the world. In the great empires of antiquity. Egypt, Babylon, Abyssinia and Persia splendid though they were with riches and immense power, freedom was unknown. The idea it was born in Greece and with it Greece was able to prevail against all the manpower and wealth arrayed against her. At Marathon and at Salamis overwhelming numbers of Persians were defeated by small Greek forces. It was proved there that one free man was superior to many submissively obedient subjects of a tyrant. And Athens, where freedom was the dearest possession, was the leader in those amazing victories.

Greece rose to the very height, not because she was big, she was very small; not because she was rich, she was very poor, not even because she was wonderfully gifted. So doubtless were others in the great empires of the ancient world who have gone their leaving little for us. She rose because there was in the Greeks the greatest spirit that moves in humanity, the spirit that sets men free."

Freedom: A Strength of Greek Civilization

The Greek people, an independent nation, was surrounded by other barbarous nations. Once, its spirit of freedom faded away, the powerful enemies conquered it. Before that, Athenians were the only free nation ^{amongst powerful Egypt and Babylon.} Its small number defeated the powerful Persian forces at Salamis. It proved the strength of one free man over tyrants. It progressed through poverty, against resourful nations that left no mark ^{of} their existence. Hence, the spirit of freedom made it a greatest civilization.

Total words: 251

Precis words: 82