

Daniel:

God's Divine
Ambassador

New Hope
Baptist Church
Winter Bible Study
2010



The Story Thus Far:

- ❖ 605 B.C.: Nebuchadnezzar took over Judah
 - ❖ Took Daniel and other aristocratic youths to Babylon to serve his kingdom
 - ❖ Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah became Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
- ❖ 586 B.C.: Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, carried last of the Jewish leadership into exile
- ❖ 539 B.C.: Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon

The Story Thus Far:

- ❖ Chapter 1: Daniel & Friends remained faithful to God and the Covenant
- ❖ Chapter 2: Daniel received a vision from God both revealing and interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream
 - ❖ Foretold world history, including the 4 major empires (including Babylon)
- ❖ Chapter 3: The golden image; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego delivered from the fiery furnace by “the Son of God”
- ❖ Chapter 4: Nebuchadnezzar's boanthropy

Daniel's Visions

- ❖ Chapter 7: The 4 Beasts and “Ancient of Days”
- ❖ Chapter 8: The Goat and 4 Horns
- ❖ Chapter 9: The 70 Weeks and the “Prince”
- ❖ Chapter 10: Spiritual Warfare
- ❖ Chapter 11: Enemies of God's People
- ❖ Chapter 12: Tribulation, Resurrection, and Final Victory

The Vision of Ch. 7

- ❖ Date: “First year of Belshazzar” (c. 556-555 B.C.)
- ❖ “I saw in my vision by night”
- ❖ “The four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea”
 - ❖ Sea in prophecy often represents the Gentile nations
 - ❖ “Winds:” cf. Revelation 7:1: “After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree”

The Vision of Ch. 7

- ❖ v. 3: “Four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another”
 - ❖ Signified 4 major world empires:
 - ❖ Babylon
 - ❖ Persia
 - ❖ Greece
 - ❖ Rome/possibly future empire

The Beasts: Babylon

- ❖ v. 4: “The first was like a lion and had eagles’ wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it”
- ❖ Babylon conquered Mesopotamia
 - ❖ Pride of the ancient world
- ❖ Conquered by Persia, 539 B.C.; never again served as a capital city
- ❖ City of Babylon disappeared in c. 2nd century B.C.



Neo-Babylonia



The Beasts: Persia

- ❖ v. 5: “another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, ‘Arise, devour much flesh’”
- ❖ Off-balance: Persia eclipsed Media in the Medo-Persian Empire
- ❖ “Three ribs:”
 - ❖ Lydia (conquered 546 B.C.)
 - ❖ Babylonia (conquered 539 B.C.)
 - ❖ Egypt (conquered 526 B.C.)



Persian Empire



The Beasts: Greece

- ❖ v. 6: “After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it”
 - ❖ Alexander the Great (Macedonia/Greece):
 - ❖ Crowned king of Macedonia, 336 B.C. (only 20 years old)
 - ❖ 334 B.C.: Crossed the Dardanelles to conquer the Persian Empire



Alexander's Battles



Alexander's Empire

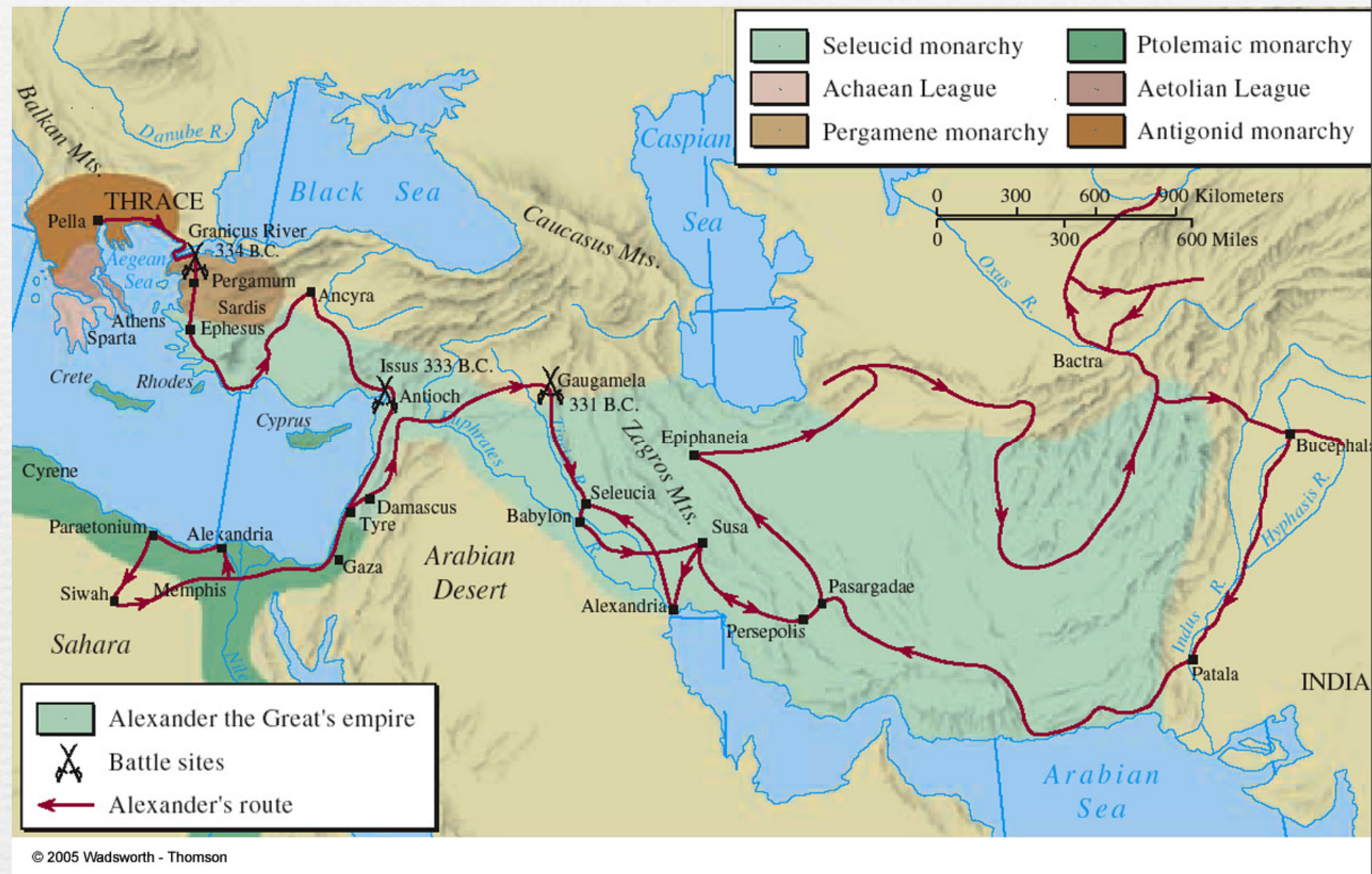


- ❖ Conquered the Persian Empire in less than 3 years
 - ❖ Swiftness of the Leopard

The Leopard: Greece

❖ v. 6: “After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it”

- ❖ 323 B.C.: Alexander died at age 32
- ❖ Empire split between 4 generals



The Beasts: Rome/(Future?)

- ❖ “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns”
- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of chapter 2:
 - ❖ Legs of iron: Roman Republic; never lost a major war
 - ❖ Feet partly of iron and partly of clay: Roman Empire; militarily strong, politically and economically weak

Rome

- ❖ Founded 753 B.C.
- ❖ 509 B.C.: Romans overthrew the last king and established the Roman Republic
- ❖ Most of Republic history spent in wars of expansion or defense
- ❖ 46 B.C.: End of the Republic
- ❖ 30 B.C.: Founding of the Roman Empire
- ❖ A.D. 410: Sack of Rome
- ❖ A.D. 476: Fall of Rome



Roman Hostilities

- ❖ Rome spent much time, blood and treasure in conquest
- ❖ Eventually conquered all of Western Europe and the Mediterranean Sea
- ❖ Characteristics:
 - ❖ Highly disciplined troops
 - ❖ Sophisticated war machines, weapons, armor, and tactics
 - ❖ Ferocious fighters
 - ❖ Brutally suppressed all attempts at revolt
- ❖ Rome lasted longer as an imperial power than all the other empires combined (over 700 years)

Roman Empire



The Future?

- ❖ v. 8: “I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things”
- ❖ Who does the “little horn” represent?
 - ❖ Antiochus Epiphanes IV?
 - ❖ Roman emperors?
 - ❖ Popes?
 - ❖ Turks?
 - ❖ We don't really know?

The Future?

- ❖ Key points:
 - ❖ Arrogant, claims divinity (2 Thessalonians 2:3,8; 2 Thessalonians 2:4)
 - ❖ Will “war with the saints” and prevail (v. 21; Revelation 13:7)
 - ❖ v. 25: “shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time”
- ❖ Quite possibly, the Antichrist that will arise prior to the return of Christ (Revelation 11, 13)

The *Real* Future

- ❖ vv. 11-19: The beast will die
 - ❖ “And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire.”
 - ❖ Rev. 19:20: “And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence* had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur”
- ❖ “As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time”

The *Real* Future

- ❖ vv. 21-27: “As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom”
- ❖ “And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.”

John Calvin's prayer:

- ❖ “Grant, Almighty God, whatever revolutions happen daily in the world, that we may always be intent on the sight of thy glory, once manifested to us in thy Son. May the splendor of thy majesty illuminate our hearts, and may we pass beyond the visible heavens, the sun, the moon, and every shining thing; and may we behold the blessedness of thy kingdom, which thou proposest to us in the light of thy Gospel. May we walk through the midst of the darkness and afflictions of the world, content with that light by which thou invitest us to the hope of the eternal inheritance which thou hast promised us, and acquired for us by the blood of thine only begotten Son. — Amen.”