

Alexander the Great Summary

The story begins in 480 B.C.E. when the empire of Persia invaded ancient Greece. Sparta and Athens band together to stop the oncoming invasion and takeover of their territory. The Greek armies held their ground for a year, but fell to the Persian armies in 479. In 338 B.C.E. Phillip of Macedonia leads his new army against the armies of Greece, and becomes its ruler in 337. This led to a Greek alliance known as the Hellenic League. In 336, as Phillip was set to launch a war against Persia, he was murdered by his own bodyguard. His son Alexander, age 20, and tutored by Aristotle, succeeds him. And in 334 B.C.E. Alexander began his military campaign against Persia.

The first battle happens in Asia Minor, where Alexander faces the Persian army at the River Granicus. Alexander's army was probably slightly outnumbered, as tended to be the trend throughout this conquest. Alexander orders his troops to immediately assault, rather than wait until dawn to attack. At one moment Alexander almost dies, but is saved due to Black Cleitus preventing the fatal attack. Due to the fast onslaught from Alexander's army, the Greek mercenaries serving the Persian army did not have time to retreat, and were brutally massacred by Alexander's army.

18 months into his campaign, Alexander's army found itself in Cilicia, prepped to cross the Nur mountains into Syria. However, the main Persian army attempts to trap Alexander's conquest here, with King Darius the Third roughly 100,000 troops trekking behind Alexander's army, removing the single path of escape. This meant that Alexander was forced to fight. The Macedonians attacked quickly, catching the Persian army off guard. Alexander raced toward King Darius, who fled from the Macedonians. The Macedonians quickly massacred the rest of the Persians, and so was the battle of Issus.

At this point in time Alexander marches toward central Persia. King Darius sent Alexander a letter, offering his daughter for marriage, a fortune of gold, and half the Persian Empire for peace. Alexander refuses, as he saw his destiny as ruling the world, and desired all of the empire. This led to Alexander's further advancements to Central Persia, and the Battle of Gaugamela. Persia arrives with somewhere between 50,000 and 80,000 troops, outnumbering Alexander's armies two to one.

The battle goes overwhelmingly in the favor of the Macedonians, as Alexander's armies lose only a few hundred compared to the Persian's loss of thousands. After routing the great army, Alexander made his way to Babylon, the main capital of Persia at the time, where Persian officials recognized him as their new ruler. He then traveled to Susa, where he took his seat upon the royal throne of Persia. In 330 B.C.E. Alexander arrived in Persepolis, Persia's ceremonial capital. While he wanted to appear as a liberator to Persia, he instead burns the city as retribution for the destruction done to Greece's sacred temples.

King Darius flees to the east, in hopes of raising a new army. However, he is instead murdered by one of his own governors, Bessus. Alexander buried him in Persepolis alongside his ancestors. Alexander was not exempt from attempted murder from those close to him either. Around this same time, he uncovered a plot for his assassination from Philotas, one of his most respected commanders, along with his father Parmenion. Philotas is executed and Parmenion murdered before he can flee or revolt.

Around this time, Alexander's armies began to weary from continued lengthy conquest. They longed to go home after 8 years of conquest with no end in sight. This is when Alexander gets into a heated drunken argument with Cleitus the black, one of his best generals and lifesaver, and is filled with remorse, yet continues to become more distant. Alexander requested his men to

perform a ritual meant only for gods in front of him, increasing their anger with him. As more and more assassination attempts unravel, Alexander brutally executes those involved.

Before traveling into India, the Macedonia armies mutiny, desiring to go home and hearing of larger armies in India. Alexander and his armies travel homeward. Along the way, at Persepolis, Alexander murders rulers deemed unjust, and then marries 80 Macedonian countrymen to Persian women in Susa, as an act of unity between the two countries. On his trek back, he stops in Babylon, where he develops a fever and dies at the age of 32.

Alexander the Great's impact on world history holds large even today, as much of the technology and civilization held great influence on the course the world would take. He died undefeated in battle, leaving a mark that cannot be ignored. Many empires came after him, but the most notable came a few centuries later in Rome.