

# ALEXANDER THE GREAT



Alexander III of Macedon (356 – 323 BC), commonly known as Alexander the Great, was a king of Macedon or Macedonia, a state in the northeastern region of Greece.

By the age of 30, he was the creator of one of the largest empires in ancient history, stretching from the Ionian Sea to the Himalaya. He was undefeated in battle, and is considered one of the most successful commanders of all time.

Born in Pella in 356 BC, Alexander was tutored by the famed philosopher Aristotle. In 336 BC, he succeeded his father, Philip II of Macedon, to the throne after he was assassinated. Philip had brought most of the city-states of mainland Greece under Macedonian domination, using both military and diplomatic means.

Upon Philip's death, Alexander inherited a strong kingdom and an experienced army. He succeeded in being awarded the generalship of Greece and, with his authority firmly established, launched the military plans for expansion left by his father. In 334 BC, he invaded Persian-ruled Asia Minor and began a series of campaigns lasting 10 years. Alexander broke the power of Persia in a series of decisive battles, most notably the battles of Issus and Gaugamela. Subsequently, he overthrew the Persian king Darius III and conquered the entirety of the Persian Empire.

Alexander died in Babylon in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II at the age of 32. The story is told that Alexander, upon his deathbed, commanded that when he was carried forth to the grave, his hands should not be wrapped, as was the custom, in grave cloths, but should be left outside the bier so that all men might see that they were empty; there was nothing in them.

He was born in one empire and the conqueror of another – the possessor while he lived, of two worlds, of the East and of the West, and of the treasures of both. Yet, now that he was dead, he could not retain even the smallest portion of these treasures.

The poorest beggar and he were now equal in terms of the material goods they held in death.

It is truthfully said that whatever wealth one has acquired on this earth cannot be taken with him or her after death.

For believers in Christ, however, service to Him and other people in His name results in treasures laid up in heaven.