

Daniel Talk 3

“Thou hast not humbled thy heart”

BELSHAZZAR'S REIGN – BEASTS,
MORE BEASTS AND AN IMPIOUS
FEAST

Chapters 7,8 and 5

Neb's image and Daniel's four beasts compared

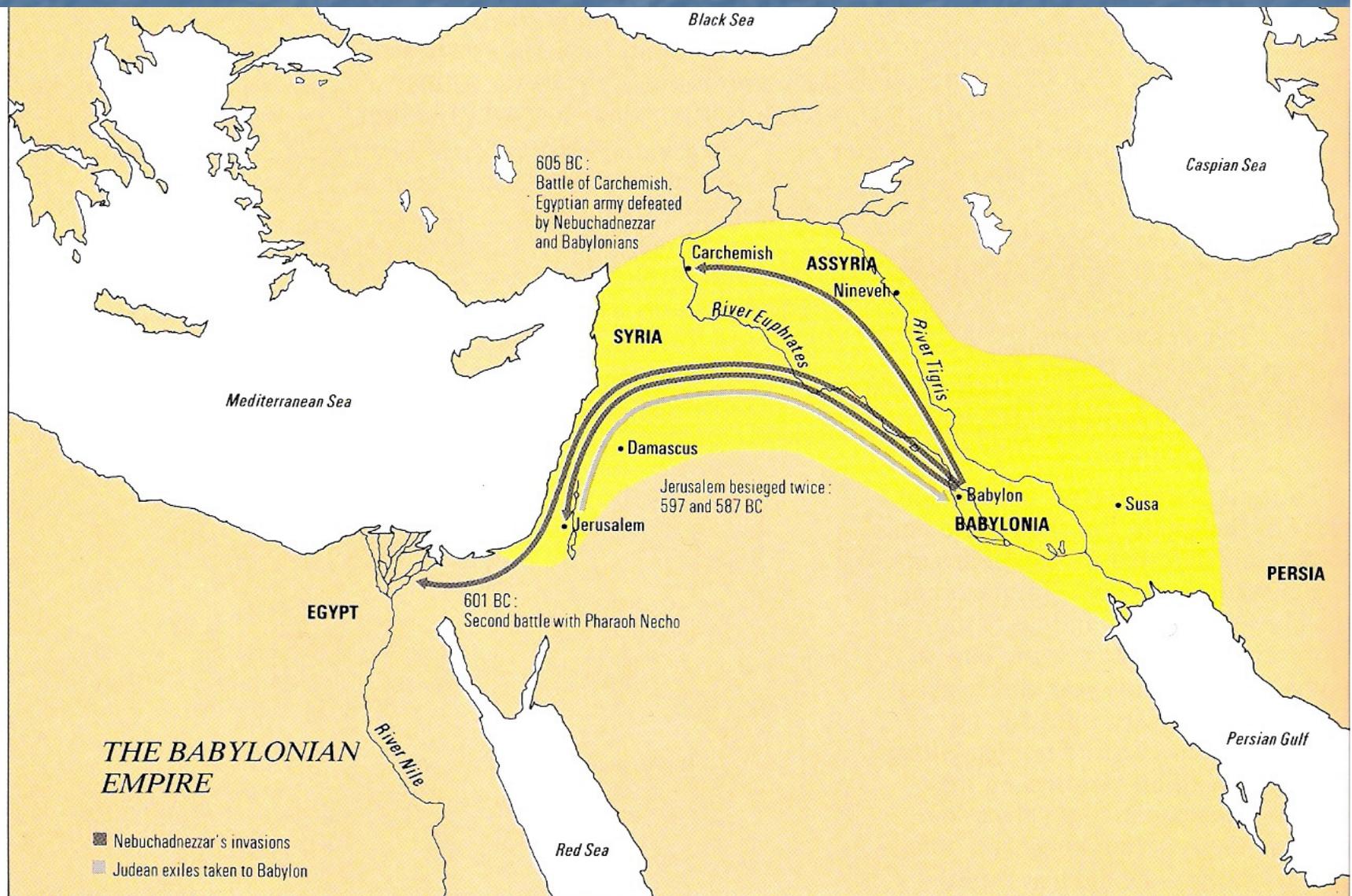
Neb's image

- Golden head
- Breast and arms of silver
- Belly and thighs of brass
- Legs of iron
- Feet of clay and iron

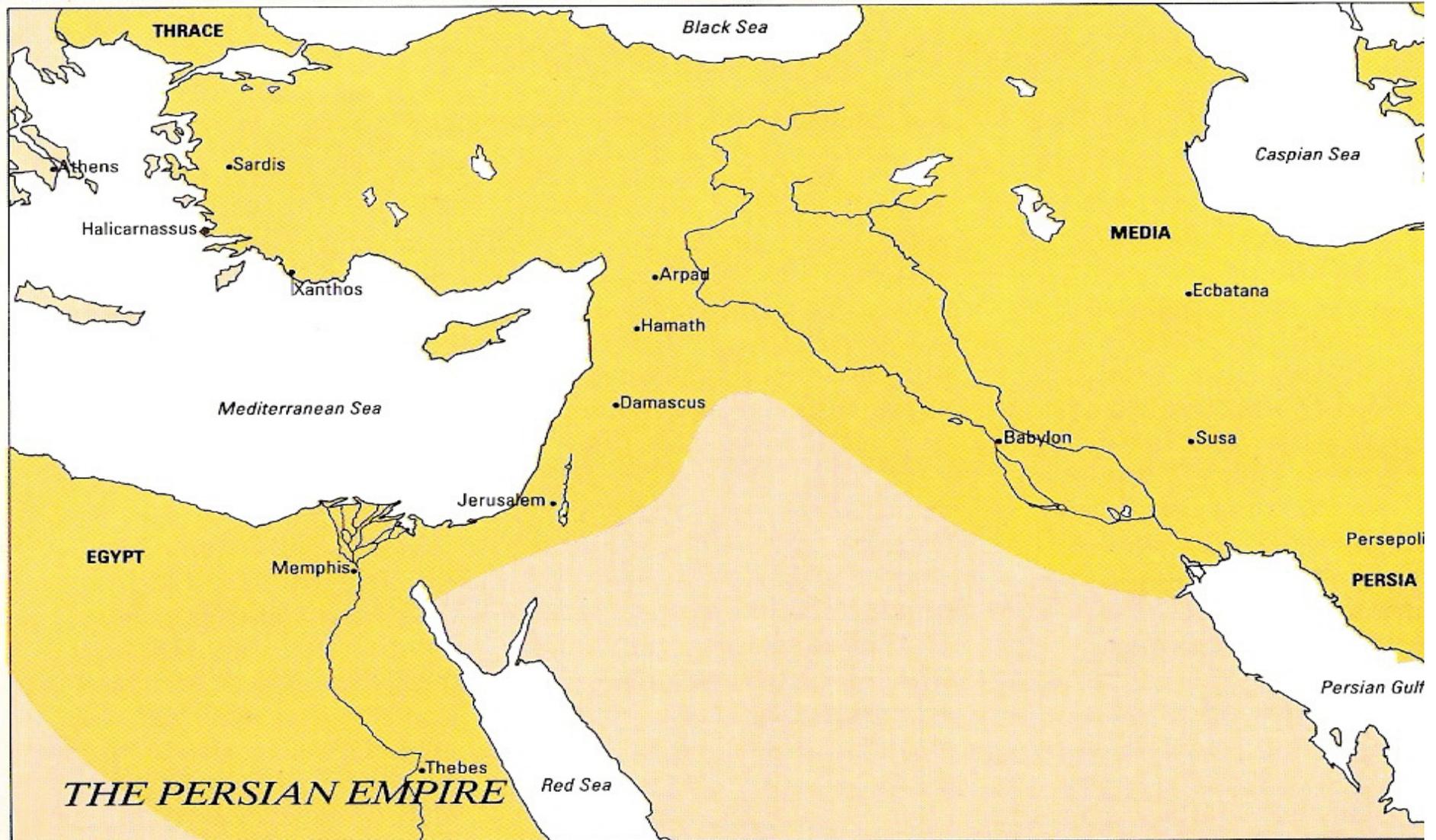
Daniel's 4 beasts

- Lion with man's heart
- Bear raised on one side
- Winged leopard with 4 heads
- 4th Dreadful beast:-iron teeth and brass claws
- Divided into 10 kingdoms

Map of Babylonian Empire



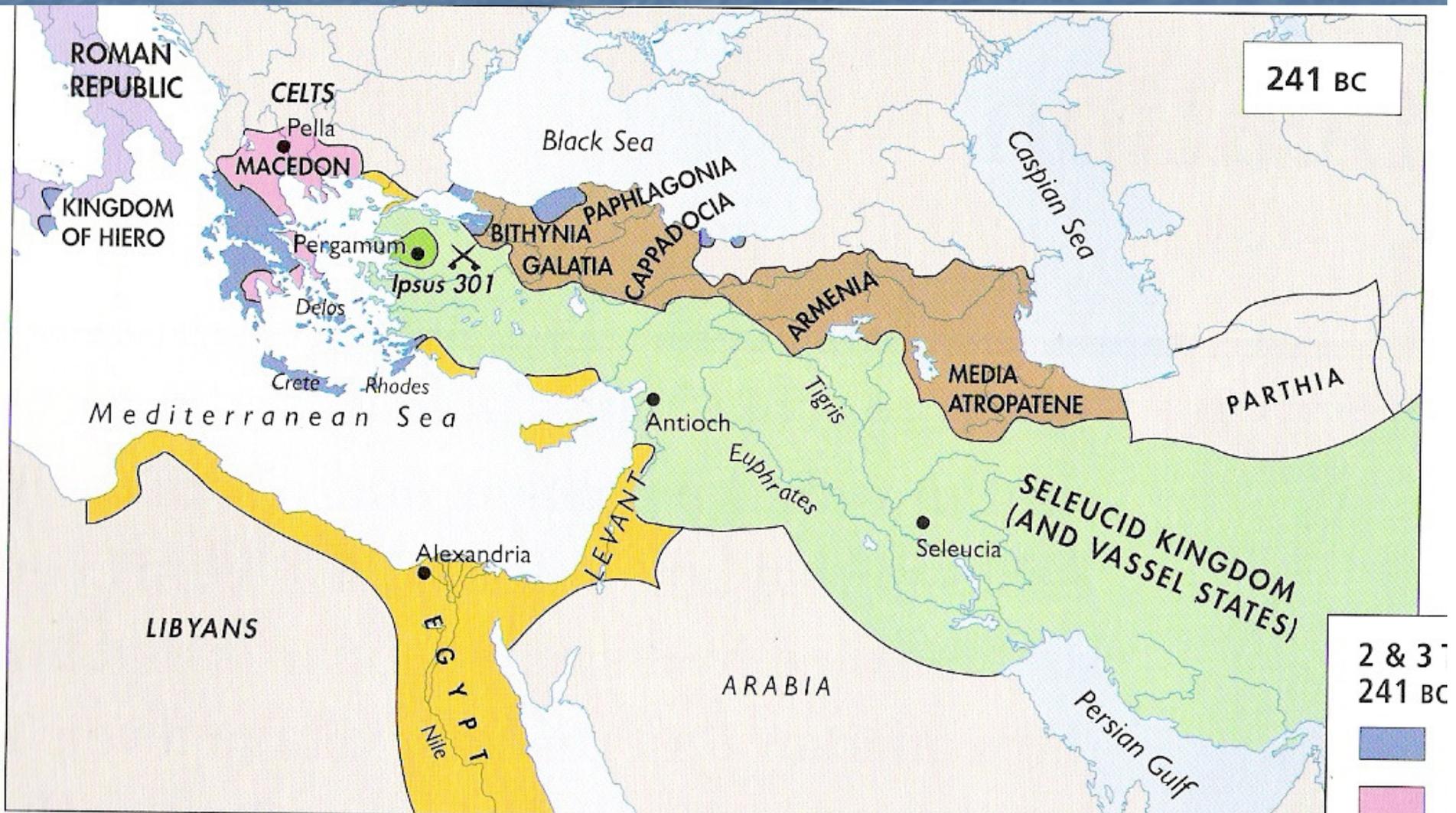
Map of Persian Empire



Map of Greek Empire



The divided Greek empire after the death of Alexander



The Roman Empire at the time of Julius Caesar



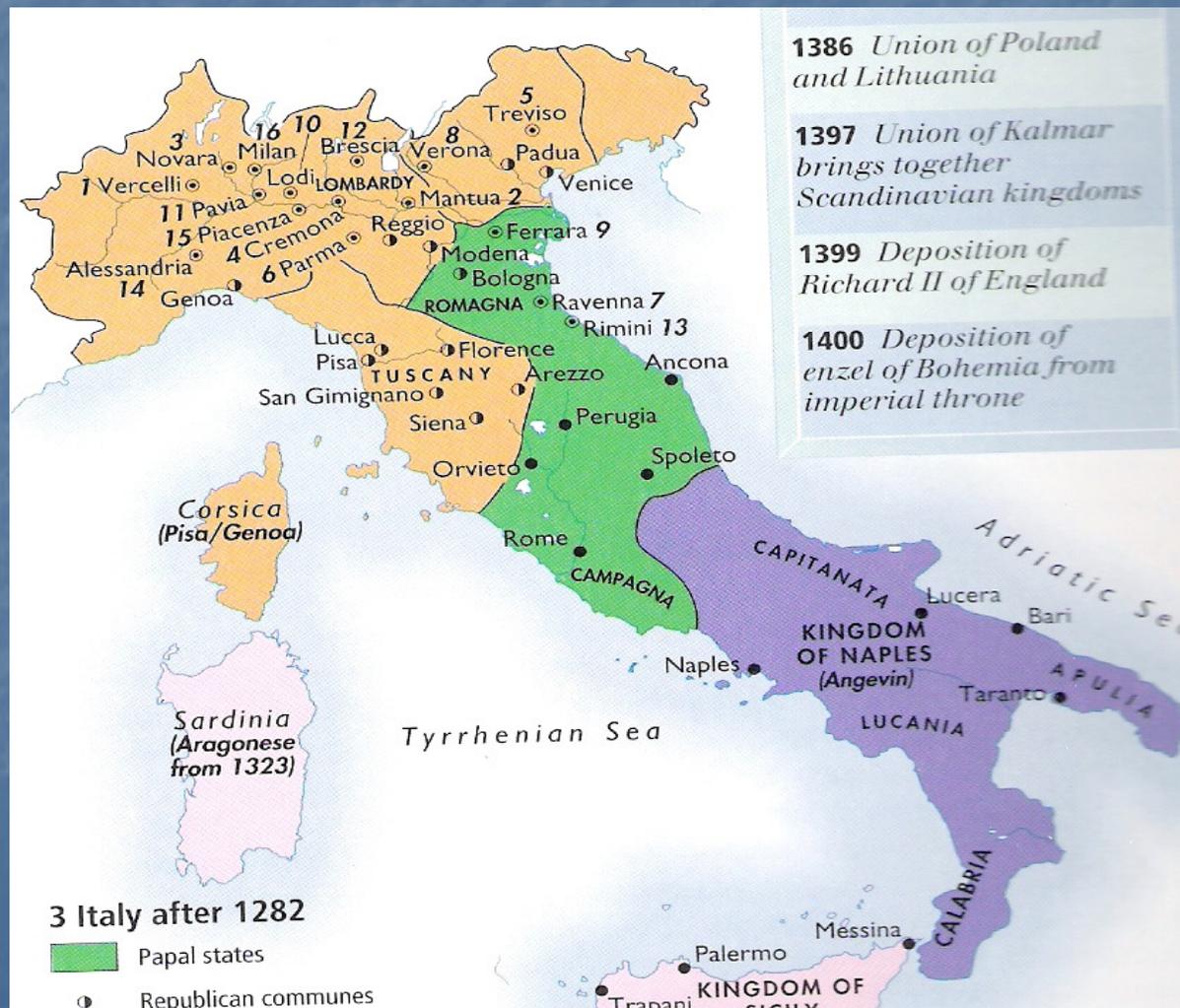
Development of the 4th beast

- After the barbarians began to invade the Roman Empire, it disintegrated into about 10 kingdoms in the West.
- The Bishop of Rome increased his power when the capital moved to Constantinople.
- The Papal system became established in about 606 A.D.
- The Eastern Roman empire continued until the Ottomans conquered Constantinople in A.D.1453.

Development of the little horn

- The Papacy gained political power and became a “horn” as well as an ecclesiastical system through the conquest, by Pepin, King of the barbarian Franks, of three kingdoms in Italy – the state of Rome, the kingdom of the Lombards and the exarchate of Ravenna.
- This is the plucking up of three of the first horns by the little horn.
- A triple crown was worn by the Pope to commemorate this conquest.

The states of the church given by Pepin, A.D.758, were Rome, Lombardy and Ravenna (Gibbon)



The little horn of the 4th beast: the Papacy

- The eyes - called the Holy "See" because through the confessionals, priests, bishops and cardinals, the Papacy can see what is going on among the faithful.
- Mouth (verse 25) blasphemes God by claiming to speak for God and His Son. See 2 Thess. 2:3,4.
- Makes war with the saints [lasts for a period of "3½ times"]. Crusades to "liberate" Jerusalem. Spanish Inquisition and many tortured and forcibly converted to Catholicism. Heretics burned at the stake, Bibles destroyed, translations of Bible ruthlessly suppressed. Huguenots massacred.

Inquisition (Holy Office)

- Started by Pope Gregory IX in response to “heresies” of the Cathari and Waldenses in A.D.1231.
- Inquisitors from Dominican and Franciscan orders used torture and burning to extort confessions.
- Later in Spain, Jews, Moslems and Protestant Christians were tortured.
- The Holy Office is now the “Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith”.

The Inquisition Hall of Torture, from Foxe's "Book of Martyrs"



The little horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them

- A.D. 1536 William Tyndale was strangled and burned at the stake in Belgium: he had translated most of the Scriptures into English.
- A Bible and Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" used to be chained on the reading – desk in every church.
- A petition in the Litany of the Church, now omitted, ran "From the Bishop of Rome and all his enormities, Good Lord deliver us".
- A.D. 1572 30,000 Huguenots (French Protestants) were massacred in Paris and other French cities by Catholics.

William Tyndale, translator of the Bible from Hebrew and Greek, who vowed that a ploughboy would know more of the Scriptures than a papal cleric, if God spared his life.



Destruction of the Papal System

- Verses 9 –14 depict a court room scene.
- The thrones are cast down. Jesus and the Saints are in control (Rev.20:4).
- Ancient of Days (Jesus) has been given power to judge. Similar description to Daniel 10 and Rev.1. Countless saint are with him - see Psalm 149:5-9.
- 4th beast destroyed and its body given to the burning flame.
- The first three beasts lose their dominion, but continue in existence during the millennium.

The coming of the one like the Son of Man with the clouds of heaven

- Daniel 7:13. Compare Matthew 26:64 when Jesus spoke to Caiaphas. The clouds are the saints – see Rev.19:14; 20:4 and 2 1 Thess.4:17.
- The victory of the prey over the persecuting beasts (like the stone striking Neb's image).

Persecution of the Saints by the Papacy for 3½ times

- 3½ times = $3\frac{1}{2} \times 360$
- =1260 days
- =1260 years (one day for a year)
- Decree of Justinian in A.D. 533 enjoined obedience to the will of the Roman Bishop upon all the churches of the Empire.
- Also Decree of Phocas in A.D. 606.

Fulfilment of the 1260 years

- Decree of the Emperor Justinian in A.D. 533. Add 1260 years – A.D.1793 the date of the “reign of terror” in the middle of the French Revolution when the power of the Papacy in France was overthrown.
- Decree of the Emperor Phocas A.D.606. Add 1260 years - A.D.1866 when the temporal power of the Papacy was broken and the Papal States were taken away, leaving just the tiny Vatican City.

“The Judgement shall sit”

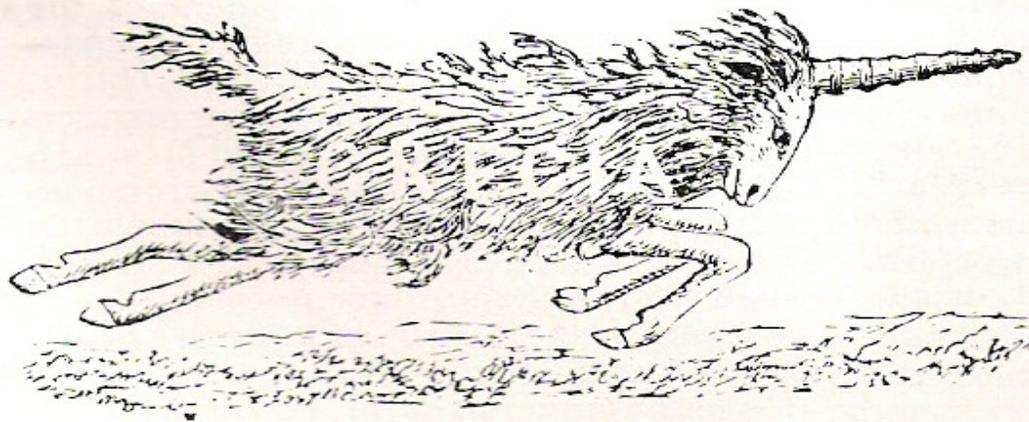
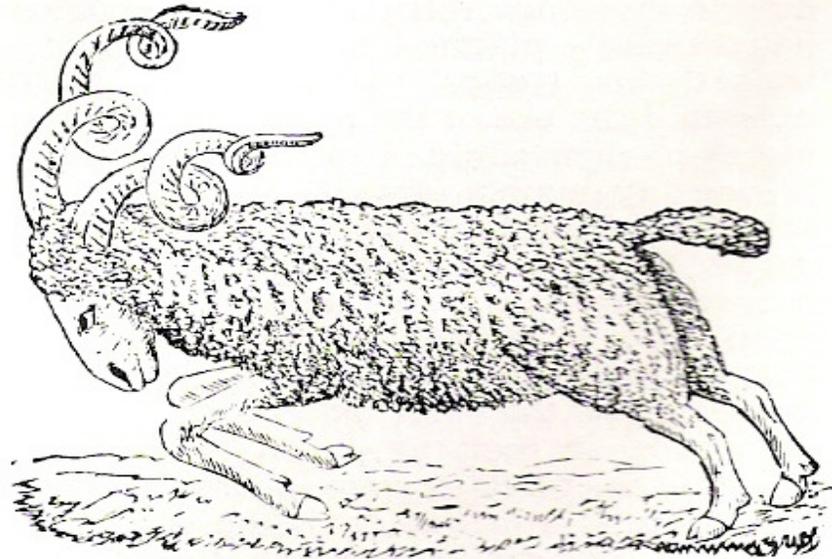
- “They” shall take away his dominion.
- “The saints execute the judgement written” - Psalm 149:5 – 9.
- The kingdom of Israel is restored and given to the people of the saints of the most High (the people are the mortal nation of Israel).

Two years later.....another vision for Daniel (now 83 years old?)

- Sees ram being charged by a he – goat.
- In Shushan palace (where Cyrus was consolidating his power). Was Daniel an ambassador for Belshazzar in a foreign country at this time?

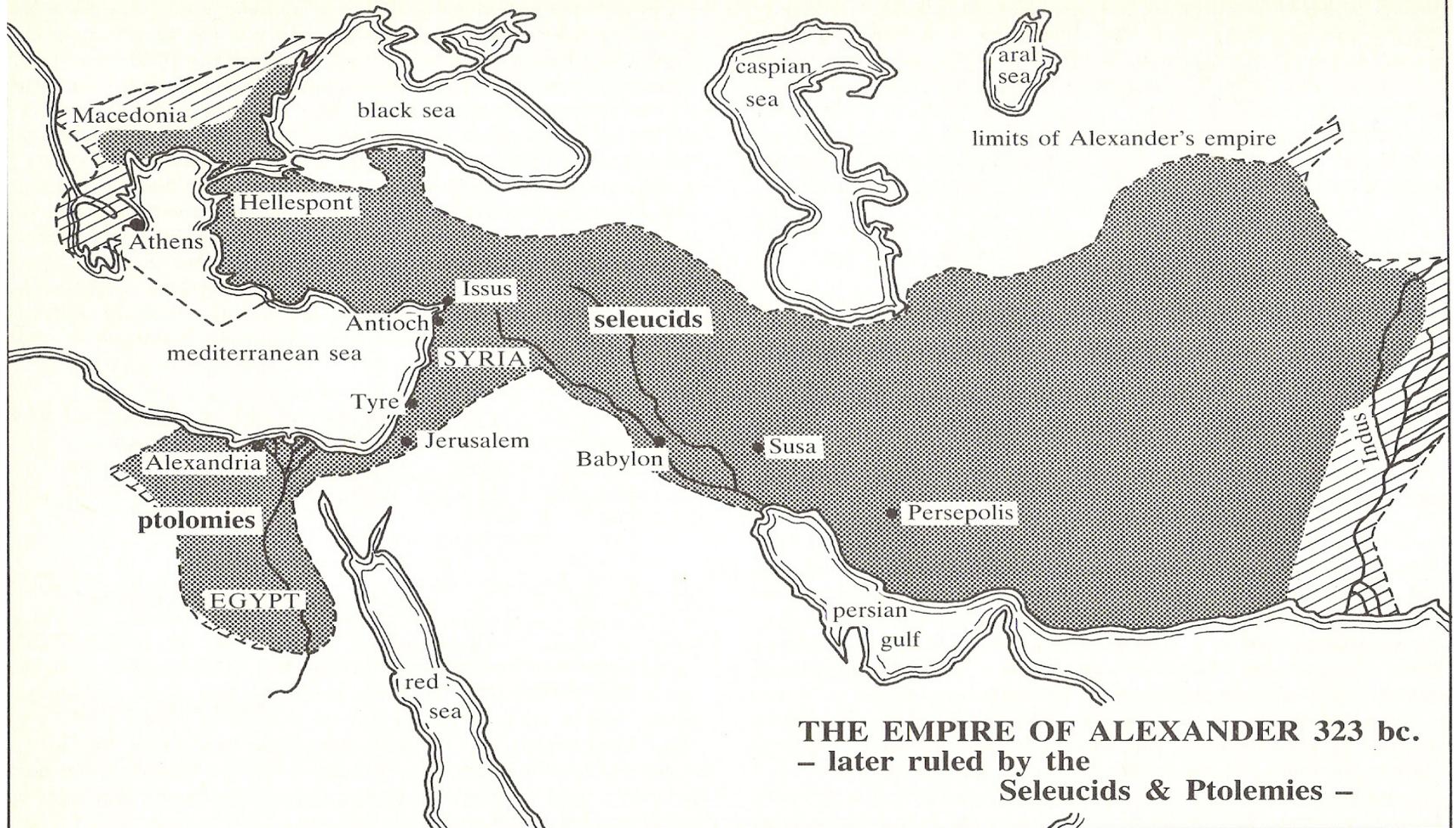
The Persian Ram is attacked by the Grecian He-Goat

The Ram —
or Medo Persia
attacked by



the Grecian Goat.
The notable horn
representing
Alexander the Great.

The Empire of Alexander 323 B.C.



The great warrior Alexander fights King Darius of Persia (right) at the battle of Issus [Pompeian mosaic]



Persia versus Greece

- Two-horned ram is the Medo-Persian empire.
- The higher horn came up last (Persia).
- It pushes west, north and south (the conquests of Cyrus).
- The he-goat from the west touched not the ground and had a notable horn ("horn of sight"). This was Alexander the Great. In 12 years he conquered the civilised world.
- Explanation given in verses 20 and 21.

Alexander the Great enters Babylon in triumph



Alexander defeats the Persians

- Battle of Granicus B.C.334. Battle of Issus B.C.333.
- Captured Tyre B.C. 332 (Ezekiel 26) and Egypt B.C. 331, where he founded Alexandria.
- Captured Babylonia and moved eastwards to India by B.C.326.
- Zechariah 9 describes his march from Damascus after the Battle of Issus.

Alexander's empire carved up by his generals

- Alexander died, aged about 32 years old, of a fever in B.C.322 without an heir.
- His generals fought over the empire which was divided into four parts.
- Out of the northern part eventually came the power of Rome (the little horn of the goat).
- Explanation given in verses 22 to 25.

The power of Rome

- Little horn of the Goat is primarily the eastern part of the Roman empire.
- It is primarily a MILITARY horn whereas the little horn of the dragon is an ECCLESIASTICAL horn with “eyes” and “mouth”.
- It waxed great - like the iron of the image which subdued the other powers.

Rome's dominion over Israel

- Stars of heaven cast down (Luke 21:25).
- Magnified himself to the Prince of the host (Jesus).
- Took the daily sacrifice away and cast down the Sanctuary (the Temple at Jerusalem) in A.D.70., because of the "transgression" which was the Jews' rejection of Jesus.
- Cast the Truth down to the ground: both Christians and Jews were persecuted by Rome.

“The wonderful numberer”

- Palmoni (“the wonderful numberer”) is asked by an angel (a holy one) how long the vision of the treading down of the sanctuary and the removal of the daily sacrifice would be.
- Daniel is told: 2,300 evening – mornings (Genesis 1:5) to its cleansing.

2,300 days

- Literally 6 years and 4½ months.
- 2,300 day/years from the ram and he-goat conflict B.C. 334/333 brings us to A.D.1967.
- The Six Day War was a lightning strike (popularly regarded as miraculous) by Israel against her Arab neighbours.
- It resulted in the reunification of Jerusalem under Jewish rule for the first time since Zedekiah, the last king of Judah.
- Jesus spoke of the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24).
- Judah has been an evening/morning sacrifice for 2300 years.

Gabriel helps Daniel to understand the vision

- He seeks for the meaning (through prayer?).
- A man, Gabriel (verse 16) comes near to Daniel.
- He tells him the vision is at the time of the end, which must be at the time of Daniel's resurrection (verse 18).
- The ram and he-goat introduce the "indignation" against Israel which only ends when the Lord comes.

“The king of fierce countenance”

- Is also foretold in Deut. 28:49-52. (The Roman eagle / the Latin tongue).
- Mighty power: iron stage of the image.
- God and Jesus gave them their power. (Dan.4 :17; Matt.22:7).
- The king shall destroy the mighty and holy people (A.D.70).
- The little horn of the goat established its headquarters in Constantinople (verses 9,25).

“The king of fierce countenance”

- Causes craft (deceit) to prosper . False teaching? Started by the Roman church and continued by the Greek and Russian Orthodox churches?
- Stands up against Christ but broken without hand (same expression used of the destruction of Neb’s image).
- It was a vision which would be for “many days”.
- Daniel was made ill by these revelations, but conscientiously continues with the King Belshazzar’s business.

Daniel 5: the last year of the joint rule of Belshazzar and his father Nabonidus

- Daniel now possibly 93 years old.
- Belshazzar was Crown Prince in the absence of his father and “king in all but name”.
- Daniel possibly retired? Not interested in being at the feast.
- Daniel knew what was in store for the kingdom of Babylon.

Nabonidus, father of Belshazzar



Belshazzar's impious feast

- The Babylonians allowed women at their feasts but the Persians did not.
- They drank from the Jerusalem Temple cups, praising the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood and stone (image materials!).
- Seeing the fingers of a man's (angel's) hand, Belshazzar was terrified (Isaiah 21:3,4 and 9).

“Belshazzar’s Feast”: Rembrandt



Belshazzar's knees knock

- The magi etc. are called and offered the third place in the rulership of Babylon.
- The Queen is called (must be Nabonidus' wife called Nitocris) and remembers Daniel, who is not at the drunken feast.
- Daniel is offered the 3rd rulership and rewards but refuses them (Genesis 14:23).
- He says that the Most High God is the possessor of heaven and earth (Gen 14:19) and had given Belshazzar's grandfather the kingdom (2:37,38; 4:17,25, 26).

Belshazzar's knees knock – a precis of Daniel's speech!

- When Nebuchadnezzar became too proud, he became insane and lived like an animal.
- He came to his senses and realised that God rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever he pleases.
- You, Belshazzar, knew this, but have not humbled your heart.
- You have presumed to use the vessels of the house of the LORD to praise idols of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood and stone, and not glorified your Creator.

“Thou hast not humbled thy heart”

The writing on the wall:

- MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN
 - Mene- numbered (finished)
 - Tekel - weighed
 - Peres – divided (halved)

(These are also names of weights, sometimes used as currency.)

The writing on the wall

Ezekiel 45:12 can give a numerical value to the four terms:

- 20 gerahs = 1 shekel; 50 shekels = 1 mina

Applying these values to the writing on the wall:

- 1 mina = 1000 gerahs (twice = 2000 gerahs)
- 1 shekel = 20 gerahs
- A half mina = 500 gerahs
- Total is 2520 gerahs, corresponding with the number of years in seven times.

“In that night was Belshazzar the King slain”

- This fulfils Isaiah 45:1 where Cyrus is named nearly 200 years before.
- Xenophon, a historian, says Cyrus opened the dykes so that he could enter Babylon in the channel of the river beneath its walls.
- Herodotus says that Cyrus addressed his army prior to taking Babylon with these words:
“Many of them are asleep; many of them are intoxicated; and all of them are unfit for battle”.

Who was Darius the Median?

- Daniel 5 :31 says Darius took the Kingdom of Babylon.
- Isaiah 45:1 says it was Cyrus who took the Kingdom.
- Daniel 6:8 can read “ Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius EVEN in the reign of Cyrus the Persian”.
- So Darius and Cyrus may be one and same person.

A foreshadowing of the conquests of the Lord Jesus

- Isaiah speaks of Cyrus as the LORD'S Anointed (45:1).
- Rev 16:12 (the sixth vial) says the symbolic Euphrates (the Turkish Empire) would dry up to prepare the way for the kings who are out of the sun's rising.
- Jesus is symbolised by the Sun (Mal 4:1) and the Saints by the kings.

The drying of the political Euphrates

- The Turkish (Ottoman Empire) gradually fell apart during the 19th century.
- Turkey sided with Germany in the First World War and lost control of Syria and Palestine in 1917.
- Britain received a Mandate from the League of Nations in 1922 to rule Palestine, having already promised the Jews a national home.
- For the Kingdom of God to be re-established, the Jewish people must be back in the land of Israel.

Exhortation from Belshazzar's impious feast

- We must learn of Jesus who is meek and lowly in heart (Matthew 11:29)
- We must desire the kingdom of God more than anything else in the world (Matthew 6:33)
- *The signs of Christ's return should make us more Christ-like in our behaviour (1 Thess.5:1-8 faith ,hope and love)*