

"History & Hostility" **Daniel 11:1-35**

1. In the first year of Darius the Mede's reign over Babylon, we see in verse 1 that the angelic messenger supported Darius in some way. While Darius was a Persian king, he was being used by God to accomplish His purpose so this is why this was done. The angel then informs Daniel in 11:2 that the present leadership in the Persian Empire would be succeeded by 4 rulers. What do we learn in this verse about the fourth ruler (Xerxes or Ahasuerus from the book of Esther who ruled from 485 to 465 B.C.)?

2. In verses 3-4, we then read about the rise of Greece and Alexander the Great. What do we observe about his reign and authority in these verses?

We have already seen Alexander's rise foreshadowed in the book of Daniel by:

- ◆ The bronze belly and thighs of Nebuchadnezzar's statue in Daniel 2:32
- ◆ The winged leopard with 4 heads in Daniel 7:6; and
- ◆ The prominent or "conspicuous" horn of the goat in Daniel 8:5

3. In a span of just 4 years (334-330 B.C.), Alexander conquered much of the known world (Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, the Medo-Persian Empire, and even as far as India). But at the peak of his meteoric rise in power, Alexander died at the age of 32 in 323 B.C. from malaria with complications from alcoholism. A few years after his death, the kingdom is divided among his 4 generals (see Daniel 8:22). These 4 rulers, as prophesied by the "four heads" of Daniel 7:6 and the "four points" of the compass in Daniel 11:4 are: Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander.

What do we know about the power and authority of this kingdom from Daniel 8:22?

Why do you think it was characterized in this way?

4. In verses 5-20, we read of the conflict that will occur between the Ptolemies (the kings "of the South" who ruled over Egypt) and the Seleucids (the kings "of the North" who ruled over Syria).

We see in verse 16 that one of the kings of the north will occupy and "stay for a time in the Beautiful Land". What is the "Beautiful Land" (see also Daniel 8:9)?

5. Verses 21-35 reintroduces us to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (the "little horn" that we first met in Daniel 8:9-12, 23-25). Antiochus IV was a Seleucid king who ruled from 175-163 B.C. How is he described in verse 21?

As Pastor Roger mentioned in a previous sermon, Antiochus took to himself the name Epiphanes which means "Illustrious One" but the Jews nicknamed him, "Epimanes", which means "the Madman". On December 16, 167 B.C., Antiochus sets up "the abomination of desolation". He erects an altar to Zeus outside the temple and offers a pig on the altar. A small remnant refuses to worship the pagan god and instead, remains faithful to the one true God.

How can we remain faithful to Christ and hold fast in our faith in the midst of persecution and hostility toward the things of God?