

with the events described in the previous verses. Although 12:5-13 may be considered as a conclusion to the book as a whole, it is obvious that these verses are presented as part of the same vision that began in chapter 10.

This prophecy, which gives additional detail about some of the situations discussed in previous chapters, is mostly in plain language. It contains no extended symbols and comparatively few figures of speech. Yet many of its statements are expressed in language that is somewhat vague. It rarely mentions countries by name, and many of its statements about the activity of individuals are rather cryptic in nature. After the predicted event had occurred it would be easy to see that the fulfillment exactly corresponded with the prediction, but in many cases it would have been very difficult to tell in advance exactly what was going to happen. This is particularly true since there are few indications of time in the passage.

As stated in 10:1, this message was received by Daniel in the third year of Cyrus, who was the first king of Persia, the second of the four great kingdoms. The message begins at 11:2 and looks forward through a long period of secular history. Verse 2 deals with the relation of Persia to Greece, which would later become the third great kingdom, and verse 3 tells how this Greek empire would be established.

(2) Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will appear in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. (3) Then a mighty king will appear, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases.

Those commentators who take the Maccabean view of the date of Daniel interpret verse 2 as saying that there would be only four more kings of Persia after Cyrus. Such a view assumes that the alleged writer was completely wrong in his idea of Persian history. Even more important, it loses the essential thought of the passage. The point of