

verses 2 and 3 is to show that a Persian king would make a great attack against Greece, but that eventually Greeks under Alexander would conquer the Persian empire. The intent of verse 2 is not to say that there will be only four more kings of Persia, but to call attention to the fourth king after Cyrus and to tell something important about him.

Cyrus was succeeded by his son Cambyses. Then came the brief reign of the usurper called Pseudo-Smerdis. A cousin of Cambyses named Darius asserted a claim to the throne and overcame Pseudo-Smerdis, but immediately rebellions broke out in many parts of the empire. Darius succeeded in putting down these uprisings and then proceeded to perfect the organization of the empire and to establish the basis on which it continued with great strength for nearly two centuries.

The areas that Cyrus had conquered included Asia Minor. The Greek cities in western Asia Minor tried repeatedly to gain their independence, and in this effort they frequently received help from their friends on the Greek mainland in Europe. In order to put a stop to this interference Darius sent a large army and navy to attack Greece, but two great efforts were repulsed.

Darius now decided to make an all-out effort to conquer Greece, and ten years were spent in building up a mighty force to accomplish this purpose. Before the ten years had passed Darius died and was succeeded by his son Xerxes, the fourth king after Cyrus (10:1; 11:2). He inherited far greater riches than any previous king of Persia. The latter part of Daniel 11:2 declares, "When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece."

The great army that Darius and Xerxes had prepared was composed of men from many racial and linguistic groups. It was so large that it is said to have required a whole week to march over the bridge that Xerxes ordered constructed across the Hellespont from Asia into Europe.

The Greeks were very proud of the fact that this tremendous army failed in its effort to conquer Greece. This was by no means a sign of weakness in Persia. The army