

Antichrist. There are instances as early as the time of Jerome of evangelical writers seeking to find Antichrist even in passages that are obviously speaking of the crisis produced by Antiochus. Some do this by assigning to the crisis described in chapter 7, passages that clearly refer to the crisis described in chapter 8, and some who recognize that parts of it refer to the persecution under Antiochus say that statements about him should be considered as also having a typical fulfillment in Antichrist. Since we know nothing about the future Antichrist except what is predicted in the Scripture, there is no way to disprove the possibility that similar events might occur, but sound principles of interpretation require that each statement in prophecy be expected to have only one fulfillment unless there is clear evidence that the statement points to more than one event. Although many commentators fail to recognize it, there are cogent reasons for considering that 12:7 and 12:10-12 deal with two different series of events.

There is a great difference between the prediction in verse 7 and the one in verses 10-12. Verse 7 involves two statements: (1) the power of the holy people is to be finally broken; (2) when this is done, "all these things will be completed."

There is no statement in verses 10-12 that corresponds to either of these two predictions in verse 7. They contain no suggestion that the power of the holy people is to be shattered. Historically, the very opposite is true; so far from being finally broken, the power of the Maccabees kept growing stronger, until in the end they were able to gain for Judea complete freedom from the power of the Seleucid rulers.

The second statement in verse 7, that "all these things will be completed," gives the impression of predicting an eschatological event. In verses 10-12 one gains the opposite impression. Thus it says: "the wicked will continue to be wicked." The impression is given that, as in the historical crisis under Antiochus, the goal is not establishment of a new situation, but merely restoration of the conditions that preceded the actions of Antiochus, and in fact, aside from