

1. The book of Daniel is more autobiographical than some of the other prophetic books. Many of its chapters deal with important events in Daniel's career. Even in the prophetic chapters his feelings and emotions are described at a number of points: cf. 7:15, 28; 8:17, 27; 10:8-10, 11c, 16-17. Note the words of personal comfort to Daniel in 10:11 and 19. We will need to keep this aspect in mind if we are properly to understand verses 9 and 13 of this chapter.
2. Since most of the predictions in Daniel's vision would be of greater importance to later times than to his own, it would be especially important that the book be carefully preserved. This need is mentioned in verses 4 and 9.
3. In view of the great amount of attention given in the book to two great crises, one under Antiochus in the second century before Christ and the other expected to occur under Antichrist near the end of the present age, it is natural to expect the conclusion to say something about each of these crises. A crisis is discussed in the prediction in the latter part of verse 7, and one is discussed in verses 10-12. It would seem very strange if one of the two previously mentioned crises were discussed in both of these passages and the other not mentioned in the conclusion at all.

The passage begins with a command to Daniel: "close up and seal the words of the scroll until a time of end" (v. 4).

This command assumes that Daniel's book is soon to be finished, and orders Daniel to close and seal it. In a very few cases the word "seal" is used in the Old Testament for closing something up so that it is not available, as in sealing a fountain, but this is not its usual significance. It generally refers either to authenticating something or to protecting and preserving it for a later purpose, as in sealing a contract or a letter.<sup>1</sup> Daniel must order that the words of the scroll be carefully preserved "until a time of end"<sup>2</sup> (i.e., the time