

Isaiah was not a welcome guest at the feast, but after he began to speak they let him continue because he was criticizing the Ephraimite nobles and this pleased the leaders of the banquet, who otherwise might have quickly stopped him from talking. For several verses he denounced the drunkenness and pride of the nobles of Ephraim. When he had thus gained the interest of those present, so that it would be difficult for the Judean nobles to stop him, he said: "And these also stagger from wine and reel from beer: Priests and prophets stagger from beer and are befuddled with wine. . . All the tables are covered with vomit and there is not a spot without filth" (vv. 7-8). Scholars agree that the next verse quotes the Judean nobles as they express their irritation. They ask, "Who is it he is trying to teach?" They say he is following his usual type of moralizing and treating them like children. Most readers have to go over verse 7 very carefully before they see what it was that had so upset these men! It is all too easy to take verse 7 as a continuation of Isaiah's criticism of the Ephraimite nobles, instead of realizing that he has turned his attention to the Judean nobles to whom he is speaking. In order properly to bring out the thought we must assume that Isaiah emphasized the word "these." In English we have no way to indicate that "these" is emphasized, except perhaps to underline it or to put it in italics, neither of which is possible in Biblical Hebrew.

In Daniel 12:8 the situation is similar. In reading Daniel's question we may readily assume that he stressed the word "these," so that he was understood to mean: "I haven't altogether understood what you said about those events; now please tell me about these."