

Editorial

Our theme topic for this issue is Dan 11:2-15. Sometimes the most effective way of showing what a thing means is to show what it does not mean. There is a good example of this in the passage under review. Daniel had been perplexed because he thought the temple in Jerusalem would not be rebuilt until the end of an extraordinarily long prophetic time period (Dan 8:14). The angel tried to explain that it would be rebuilt almost immediately (Dan 9:25), but while this information was comforting it was also confusing. How could one and the same temple be both restored and in need of restoration in the same sense at the same time? Finally the angel shows that the problem is really not a problem because the temple Daniel had in mind is not the one he himself had been talking about in the earlier prophecy.

There would be a later group of Jewish patriots who had the same concept of the temple that Daniel had. They would rebel against a despotic king in order to establish the very vision that the angel was trying to help Daniel understand at the time. But they would not be able to fulfill it--they would fail--because their efforts were directed toward the wrong temple. This was the only sense in which they can be said to have failed. The point was inescapable and I suggest that Daniel understood it. The temple of Dan 8:14 is in heaven and not on earth. It was not a temple that could be cleansed by human efforts.

Also in this issue is part 3 of my series on the Ten Commandments. In it I discuss the challenging topic of Christian perfection. No one is qualified to write on such matters, and yet we should not use this fact to bar the topic from discussion. It is a legitimate one but must be approached with humility.

The point of the above paper is that Christian perfection has to do with Christ and resides in the individual's relationship with Him. The proper object of our efforts is therefore the perfecting of a relationship. In terms of the classic three-part outline format for systematic theology--(a) God, (b) man, and (c) the relationship between them--I argue that Christian perfection has to do most directly with point (c).

It is customary to view this relationship as benefitting only ourselves, but this is self-centered. God needs us as well. How can one be a king if he has no subjects? We of course are not God's only creatures. If we are lost He will still be King. But the covenant relationship between God and His people, found in every part of Scripture, describes an arrangement with two parts rather than one. The generation which sees Christ come will contain individuals who have grasped this point and have personally entered that relationship by faith.

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Editor