

in order to fit them into a system; 2) even more important, there is a tendency to overlook vital matters if they do not appear clearly to fit into a general scheme.

## **2. Circular Reasoning**

A second common error is that of circular reasoning. It is easy to draw conclusions from a passage of Scripture and then to find the same results in another passage, even though it may actually be dealing with a different subject or looking at the same subject from quite a different angle. It is true that it is desirable to explain the complex in the light of the simple; yet if the difficulties of a complicated passage are too lightly brushed aside, a large part of its important meaning may be missed.

The Bible expresses the mind of the infinite God, and it is reasonable to expect that any part of it may throw valuable light on any other part. Studies that bring together the teaching of various sections of the Scripture and show their interrelation are important and useful. Yet the purpose of the present treatise is somewhat different. Realizing fully the great danger of circular reasoning, it is our endeavor, so far as possible, to see exactly what are the possibilities of each passage, taken by itself.

Thus in the present work an attempt will be made to see what can be said about the prophecies of Daniel without bringing into consideration evidence from other Biblical passages except when their bearing is so clear that no intelligent person should question it. Important as it is to use the light of the New Testament in interpreting the Old Testament, this will be to a large extent avoided in the present discussion. In fact, our use of New Testament passages will be restricted to a few very clear New Testament teachings. The same attitude will be taken toward other Old Testament books, except where the relevance is absolutely unmistakable. Even in the book of Daniel itself earlier predictions will be studied without light from later ones, though it will be considered proper in studying Daniel's later predictions to note their relation to his earlier ones.