

"You Have No Answer For That!"

Ron Roberts

Recently the elders met with a false teacher after our evening worship service. He promoted the AD 70 doctrine. Throughout our 2 hour discussion he would make a statement and tell us, "**You have no answer for that!**" This particular teacher used to be a faithful Christian and preacher. Therefore, he knew what we believed before we ever entered into the discussion. He knew God's truth and he rejected it.

He had his select verses that he used to teach his doctrine. These were difficult passages mostly from Revelation, Daniel 12, Matthew 24, and Zechariah. False teachers often form absolute interpretations of difficult passages first. This allows them to look superior to others who have not yet concluded what the text means. With their doctrine already formulated they then dismiss simple passages that reject their error by juggling definitions, misusing figurative language, and drawing parallels that may not exist to show **consistency** in their beliefs.

Consistency does not equal accuracy. There is manmade consistency. We can site one verse that is talking about one thing and then find another verse that is discussing something completely different. We point out both verses have the same word and therefore claim they teach the same thing. There is **manmade consistency** in our flawed interpretation. We claim they teach the same thing because they contain the same word. This makes false teachers sound credible. This would be like me saying, "I swatted a fly," and someone else reading "Superman can fly". Are we talking about the same thing? The common word is in both statements, but once it is used as a noun and then it is used as a verb. The subjects are completely different. One is truth and one is fantasy. The **consistency is manufactured** by focusing on one word that we claim has a singular definition.

After stringing a variety of verses together and claiming they were parallel points, he would pronounce, "**You have no answer for that!**" Let me state clearly, having no answer is better than having the wrong answer. There is no shame in saying, "I do not know." There is great shame in teaching error.

Sometimes we do not have an answer for the false doctrine because it is **unclear as to what the man is teaching**. He has selected his verses in advance and has formed his doctrine long before the discussion. He then pronounces his view and requires his adversaries to pinpoint every verse's exact meaning.

Sometimes we do not have an answer because it **requires further study**. We have an answer but it is not coming forth without further study. Actually he should say, "You have no answer on the tip of your tongue."

Mostly though, we had an answer. It was just **not an answer he would accept**. He would explain away every passage we would provide by changing the definition, claiming a truth is not taught because a certain word is not there, or producing a parallel for the verse with an unfamiliar passage.

Two main points came out of the study that we would like to share with you. First, he contended that Hades was gone. He claimed the place we read about in Luke 16 was only there temporarily. At the destruction of Jerusalem Jesus took the souls in Paradise to Heaven. The souls in torments were sent to Hell. He said this is **the resurrection** and therefore we should not look to a future and final resurrection.

He teaches that Hades has ended and that the world never will end. Any passage that mentions the world's ending must be talking about the end of the **age** (his singular definition), and therefore refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

He pointed out Gen.8:21-22 as teaching God will never again destroy the world. "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, **I will not again curse the ground** any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; **neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.** 22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

God makes this promise to Noah after he comes off the ark and offers a sacrifice to God. Did God say He would never destroy the world? Notice the underscored phrase, "*as I have done.*" God was promising not to destroy the world with a flood as He had done. Does not the phrase "*While the earth remaineth*" suggest an end to this world?

In the next chapter God sets his rainbow in the sky and explains to Noah a covenant that He is establishing. Gen 9:8 *And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,* 9 *And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;* 10 *And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.* 11 *And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.*

Gen 9:15 adds, "And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

If we had no answer for our visitor it would not prove he was right. We did have an answer to this error. We told him God promised to not destroy the world with a flood. But he would not accept our answer. His doctrine is formed. His conclusions are reached. He is looking for converts to his error and is not looking for corrections. We pray he may reconsider his position.