

A.D. 70 DOCTRINE (REFUTATION)

Jon Macon

The A.D. 70 doctrine holds that all prophecy was fulfilled by the year A.D. 70. The adherents of this doctrine teach that there will be no literal second coming of Christ, no literal end to this physical world, no literal resurrection from the dead, no literal day of judgment, and no literal heaven or hell. The bottom line is that this doctrine is terribly false and no one can believe it and be saved!

Manner and time of prophecy

In Revelation 19:10, the angel of God told John in the vision, “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” The A.D. 70 doctrine claims that this phrase means all prophecy is “spiritual” in nature, which to them means it can have no literal fulfillment. Since Revelation 1:1-3 declared that the book would reveal things that “must shortly come to pass,” and “the time is at hand,” A.D. 70 people say that means *all* Bible prophecy would have to be completely fulfilled by the year A.D. 70. Concerning those passages in Revelation from which they derive their views about the “manner” and “time” of prophecy, it should first of all be noticed that the context of Revelation 19:10 is not dealing with the question of literal versus figurative. This verse is pointing out that John should not worship the angel who was speaking to him as if the prophecy originated with him. Rather, this was the testimony of Jesus, and it is his testimony that is the “spirit,” referring here to the *source*, of the prophecy. The prophecy came from God not the angel, and John should therefore worship God, not the angel. Also, Revelation 1:1-3 does not mean that every single thing in Revelation or any other book of the Bible would be fulfilled within a couple of years or so. Besides, the evidence is overwhelming that Revelation was written long after A.D. 70 anyway.

Contradicting scripture

So many scriptures contradict the A.D. 70 doctrine, it is difficult to understand how anyone could believe it. First of all, heaven is the “true,” literal dwelling place of the Father and the Son (Heb 9:24; 6:20). Jesus literally ascended to heaven to prepare a literal place for us (John 14:2). Also, in Acts 1:11 the angels told the apostles that Jesus would return in the same way that he left this earth. Clearly, Jesus did literally ascend to heaven, which means he will literally come back.

Furthermore, when he comes again, all the faithful will be literally

A.D. 70 DOCTRINE (REFUTATION)

(continued)

resurrected or changed (1 Cor 15:35-54; 1 Thes 4:13-18). Christians will literally meet Christ in the air and go to literally be with him in literal heaven. This world is temporal and will be literally burned up (2 Cor 4:18; 2 Pet 3:10-13). Here is an important point to remember: the fact that Jesus' ministry and teachings are centered on eternal, spiritual things does not in any way mean that there is no such thing as anything literal in the New Testament. Spiritual and literal are not opposites. For example, heaven is both a literal and a spiritual place, and the resurrection will be both spiritual and literal. The New Testament describes the doctrine of the sect known as the Sadducees: *"For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both"* (Acts 23:8). When they came to Jesus with their false doctrine that denied the resurrection, the Lord said to them, *"Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God"* (Matt 22:29). He told them, *"He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err"* (Mark 12:27). This doctrine crept into the Lord's church during the First Century (only about ten years before A.D. 70!). In Corinth, there were those who were teaching that there is no resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15:12). In 2 Timothy 2:16-18, we are taught to *"shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."* The A.D. 70 people are nothing more than modern day Sadducees. They are just like Hymenaeus and Philetus. Their word is eating like cancer today, and they overthrowing the faith of some. As Jesus said, they do greatly err. Believing in a literal coming of Christ, a literal end of the world, a literal resurrection, a literal judgment day, and a literal heaven as our eternal dwelling place is not fleshly thinking; it is believing the word of God! Let us not be deceived by the A.D. 70 doctrine or allow it to gain a following wherever we are. This false doctrine illustrates the grave dangers of taking the wrong approach to Revelation, of taking the literal figuratively and of contradicting other scriptures.