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Proverbs 26:4, “**Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.**”

Proverbs 26:5, “**Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.**”

The wise man Solomon spoke of not answering and then of answering the folly of a foolish man (or woman). These two verses are neat (really good) in what they teach of how we are to deal with the foolish. At first glance, Solomon would appear to be contradicting himself - “**Answer not**” then “**Answer**”. However, that is not the case. The underlying meaning is of how we are to respond. We can fall into the same ditch with him if we answer him according to the same manner of which he has foolishly spoken, or we can answer him with godly wisdom and it will be a snare unto him. Peter alludes to how our conversation should be in I Peter 1:15, “**But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;...**” And as Paul said, “**For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.**” The words coming forth from our mouth should always be tempered with kindness, thoughtfulness, truthfulness, and godliness. Not only should this be true when we are around the Saints of God, but also when we are around the foolish. It is so easy to be ‘*caught up*’ with like speech when we are surrounded by those who do not think and act godly on a regular basis. It is at these times when we need to lean on the Lord for His help. In II Peter 3:3, Peter speaks of the coming “**in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.**” More than likely these “**scoffers**” will have vain questions and foolish words because they themselves are fools. Peter goes on to say further down in verse 11 how “**ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.**” Be not foolish yourself, keep your conversation godly and thus answer a fool in a manner that it will dissolve the situation, and at most, that you not displease the Lord. Think About It!