

FOR THE LOVE OF MUSLIMS

Lessons for Online Missionaries dealing with Muslims

Lesson 15: Answering Tough Questions

As an Online Missionary, from time to time you may be confronted with obscure questions from an internet contact. Even if you think you don't know how to answer the specific question, there are some steps you can follow to ensure you give your best effort. As you read the example email and the response below, note how the OM researched and found an answer to some very obscure questions.

Email example:

I am a young man from Pakistan. I have not prayed to receive Christ and I would like to investigate more. The link that I am going to share with you shows mistakes in the Bible. It is: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGmo5cp8te0>. I hope you will reply to me!
-Husain

The OM researched and responded by doing the following steps:

1. He watched the video (a speech by Dr. Zakir Naik).
2. He went to www.biblegateway.com to print out the verses mentioned.
3. He did research on the problem areas.
4. He wrote a response:

Dear Husain,

Thank you for bringing this video to my attention. This is the first time I have seen it. Translating words from one language into another is difficult. I used to live in Korea. I wanted a "yellow" cover put over my pillow. I looked in my dictionary and found that yellow is "noran" in Korean. I asked the shopkeeper to make a "noran" pillow cover. When I came to collect it the next week I found that he had made an orange cover. I was very angry. Then a friend told me that "noran" could also mean "orange." The Koreans describe color differently than I do. Since I was in their country I needed to learn to describe things their way.

1. *Do hares chew the cud? It is known that rabbits practice what is called "refection," in which indigestible vegetable matter towards certain bacteria and is passed as droppings and then eaten again. This process enables the rabbit to better digest it. This process is very similar to rumination, and it gives the impression of chewing the cud. So, the Hebrew phrase "chewing the cud" should not be taken in the modern technical sense, but in the ancient sense of a chewing motion that includes both rumination and refection in the modern sense.*
2. *Do ants have a king? The Bible says: "Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and*

gathers its food at harvest.” What is this proverb saying? It tells the sluggard to get to work. Ants do not have a commander who forces them to work. Yes, the ants are organized. But they work hard without being forced to. You should do the same.

- 3. Do serpents eat dust? There is a very common phrase in my community “Eat my dust.” It means that I am going to travel quickly and you will soon be far behind me. When I follow another car down a dusty road I also “eat their dust.” I am not being nourished by it. In fact, most of the dust is going in my lungs. In the verses quoted, “eat dust” would mean (1) crawl on the ground or (2) receive no nourishment.*
- 4. Are there fowls with four feet? Here is the actual portion of the Bible: “All flying insects that walk on all fours are to be detestable to you. There are, however, some winged creatures that walk on all fours that you may eat: those that have jointed legs for hopping on the ground. Of these you may eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket or grasshopper. But all other winged creatures that have four legs you are to detest” (Leviticus 11:20-23). It looks like these people count legs differently than I do. It says that locusts, katydid, crickets and grasshoppers “walk on all fours.” Since they have four or more legs you are free to eat them (and my wife and I have).*
- 5. Mythical animals. I looked up his reference and did not find any mention of unicorns. Animal and plant names change from time to time. I am a biology major, and I know scientists are always changing animal names. It is also true that animals are becoming extinct, so it would be very possible that there were animals alive in Moses’ time which have all died out by now (passenger pigeons are one example).*

Now my turn to ask you a question: “What do you think we must do to get into heaven/paradise?”

*Looking forward to your next email,
Robby*

Robby was respectful, thorough, accurate, and calm in his responses to these obscure issues, which are non-issues as far as the gospel is concerned. He was wise to end with a question that brought the discussion back to an important issue. You can do the same.

Send comments/questions to flmcomments@nayajeevan.org