

# Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

<https://www.foi.org/zvikalisher/>

## FAITH BY THE SWORD—OR FAITH BY LOVE?

Israel is a small country, and at times we feel as if we are sheep among wolves. But even though we are small, we remain strong because the Lord is with us.

Most people living in Israel, both Jews and Arabs, do not know the Lord. The Arabs especially are far from knowing about His love. But we believers are God's witnesses to tell them of that love.

There is a saying, "If Muhammad won't come to the mountain, the mountain will come to Muhammed." It is like that with us, but it is difficult to go to an Arab village and preach the Word of God.

One day some of my Arab neighbors came to my home extremely upset, saying, "How can we receive Bibles when they include the New Testament?"

They were very confused, so I said, "Before you receive the Bible, I will explain it to you, if you wish." They agreed and appreciated my help. I then opened my New Testament and told them how to put their faith in the Lord Jesus. The mention of that name surprised them, and they asked, "How can you speak about Jesus? You are a Jew."

So began a long discussion about faith in the Lord Jesus and the difference between faith by the sword and faith by love. I told them, "Your faith comes by the sword, and those who do not believe as you do are

killed. God has given freedom to every creature. He has said, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love'" (Jer. 31:3).

One Arab remarked, "God said that only to the people of Israel."

I quickly turned to John 3:16 to prove that God's love is available to all nations, including the Arabs. "It is written, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' [Mk. 12:31]. It does not say, 'Love the Jew, or the American, but not the Arab.' Loving your neighbor means loving your enemy as well."

Then they wanted to know how I came to believe on the Lord, since I am Jewish. I replied, "Our faith does not come from propaganda literature or by force, but by God's mercy and love. What the Lord did for us, He did because of His love. You, as Arabs, came to me, a Jew, and I received you as best friends, even though I know you hate me with all your hearts. But the Lord said we are to love those who hate us and pray for them because love is of God."

Still not understanding what I meant, one asked, "Why do you serve in the army if you love your enemies?"

I explained, "I serve because I am a citizen of Israel. Even Jesus said, 'Render...to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's' [Mt. 22:21]."

I then related an incident that occurred during the 1967 Six-Day War. I went to the home of a wealthy Arab family and found gold and diamonds worth millions of dollars. The owners were afraid I would take their possessions, but I assured them, "I am only looking for guns and ammunition. But if a soldier who was not a believer had come to search your home, your possessions would have been taken."

As I finished my story, I explained to my guests, "This is the big difference

between those who believe in Jesus and those who do not. And, it does not matter if they are Jews, Arabs, or any other nationality.”

They did not believe my story, so I offered to take them to the home of this Arab family so that they could ask them about it themselves. But they finally accepted the fact that even war cannot break our love for our enemy because the love of our Savior is in us.

Please pray that these Arab neighbors and the thousands of other Arabs in Israel will be reached with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.