

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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

GOD HAS HEARD

Recently several Orthodox women stopped my wife and me as we walked down the street. "Do you keep the Sabbath?" one asked.

I told her I keep most of what is written in the Bible, but I do not follow the rabbinical commentaries. "How can you say our rabbis' writings are not kosher?" one woman asked.

"Tell me," I began, "what is more important, to worship God according to rabbinical traditions or to worship Him according to the Bible?"

They did not know what to say. Finally one woman asked, "Do you come to synagogue every morning to pray?"

"I pray at home every morning," I replied. Again they were surprised. "But how can you pray when there is no one to listen to you or say 'amen'?"

"I open my heart before our Lord," I told her. "I am not interested in having people listen to me, as you are. The Lord hears my prayers. When Hannah went to the house of prayer in Shiloh to beg God for a son, did she pray in a loud voice? Or did she pray from her heart?"

The women remained quiet. So I continued, "We know she prayed silently, from the depths of her soul [1 Sam 1:13]. Yet what did the high priest tell her afterward? 'Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition

which you have asked of Him' [v. 17]. Later she gave birth to a son and named him Samuel, which means 'God has heard.'

"If you only pray in a loud voice so all can hear, but you do not pray from the depths of your soul, your prayers have no value."

"You are interesting," said another woman. "Where did you learn this?"

"Surely not from your rabbis," I replied. "I have received all of this by faith through reading the Bible and by praying from my heart before God." They began to ask many questions. "Tell me who you are," one said. "Are you one who believes in the New Testament?"

I told them, "My duty as an Israeli, whom the Lord has chosen, is to proclaim His truth."

One woman replied, "What you are telling us is written in the New Testament."

"You see how blind you are?" I replied. "You do not even know these important verses from the Bible." I showed them where all this was written.

"Read!" I said. I opened my Bible to Isaiah 49:3: "And He said to me, 'You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'" I told them to read through verse 6, where it is written, "I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth."

Since we live in Jerusalem, I also asked them to read Isaiah 2:3, where it says, "For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."

"This is what is written in God's holy Word," I said. "I do my best to work for His glory, unlike your false teachers who lead people astray. You are so

confident you are serving God. But think about what you are doing.”

Then one asked, “Did you serve in the army when you were young?” The ultra-Orthodox do not serve in the army.

I said, “I fought in every war from 1948 through 1973. Now our sons serve. We have 15 grandchildren, and they are beginning to serve. The Lord commands us, ‘Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s’” (Mt. 22:21).

We left on friendly terms. I pray God used my wife and me as His servants to help open their eyes to the truth.