

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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HOW CAN WE BELIEVE IN JESUS AND STILL SAY THAT WE ARE JEWS?

After living in Israel for 36 years, many know me. Some greet me with “Shalom!” Others say something like, “Are you still alive? People like you should be dead!”

When I received one such greeting recently, I replied, “No, my dear, that is not so. It is written, ‘I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord’” (Ps. 118:17).

“What can you, a Christian, possibly tell me about the Lord?” he asked. I said, “The Lord has given me salvation, love, and peace in my heart through His Holy Spirit. This is why the Lord has kept me alive—through the Holocaust and four wars here in Israel—so that I can tell others of His mighty deeds.”

He then said “You want me to accept this new faith that you believe in—your Jesus?”

I responded, “The Lord Jesus did not come to make a new faith. He came to give us everlasting life through His suffering.”

“I know all about His suffering,” he said sarcastically.

I then asked, “Would you like me to read about His suffering?” He agreed, so I read Isaiah 53, “the forbidden chapter” for Jewish people. Suddenly

this man who was so sure of himself was now interested in hearing about the Lord.

Such people have spent their entire lives listening only to their revered rabbis and reading many books of tradition. So when I present facts from the Bible, they become curious and want to hear more. It is important to articulate that Christians do not believe in a new faith, but in the one true God.

People walked by as we conversed, and one man said, "Israel is not the right place for a Christian. If you want to speak about Jesus, go somewhere else, but do not do it here!"

I then asked everyone, "Do you know where the first information about the Lord came from?" They were all quiet as fish. I said, "The first information about the Lord came from your own Bible."

"That is not true!" they all shouted together, like a mixed chorus. "How can we believe in Jesus and still say that we are Jews?"

I asked them, "Who is a complete Jew—the one who has studied books filled with superstitions, or the one who believes what is written in the Bible?"

I had never met people with such deep hatred for those of us who believe in the Lord Jesus. They kept repeating, "Jesus came to make a new faith, and because you believe in Him you have left the faith of our fathers."

I told them, "If you would read the Bible instead of your books of tradition, you would see this is untrue."

One said, "You are talking about the New Testament, but that does not belong to our Holy Bible."

I told him, “Jeremiah 31:31 says, ‘Behold, the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.’ The term New Testament is actually the Hebrew phrase brith Hadasha. Jesus said ‘Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled’” (Mt. 5:17–18).

Surprisingly, all were listening closely, so I asked, “Do you still think Jesus came to make a new faith? Or do you realize He came to fulfill the Hebrew Scriptures? We must have faith in Him, or we will be lost forever.” One replied, “Reluctantly, we must admit you are right.” I told them, “Now, through the love of the Lord, we can speak together as friends. Strive to learn more about the Lord and His great love for all people, and you will be able to stand against the false teachers who abound in our midst.”

They all responded, “Amen.”