

# Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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## JESUS MY RABBI

Sometimes I go to the ultra-Orthodox synagogues where I have long discussions about faith. You cannot go there and immediately begin telling people about Jesus. You must have patience. When I question what they believe, or when they start to understand in whom I believe, they usually become angry and threaten to throw me out.

Recently I met several men who attend one of the ultra-Orthodox synagogues I have visited. When our discussion turned to the Holocaust, one said, "If you had gone through what we went through in those days, you would not speak as you do."

"I passed through all the seven halls of hell," I replied. "And I was jealous of those who had died. I was a skeleton; the Gestapo almost beat me to death; and all this began when I was 10 years old."

Now they all were paying attention. "We would like you to come to our great synagogue and speak about what happened to you," one said. I was shocked. Here was an opportunity to tell them about the Lord.

When I arrived at the synagogue, they welcomed me warmly and listened intently to everything I said about the Holocaust. Then came the questions: "What synagogue do you attend? Who is your rabbi? Which rabbi taught you to pray?"

I was waiting for them to ask, because if I had mentioned the Lord, they

would have become angry. But because they brought up the subject, I gave them my entire testimony, explaining how I came to know Jesus Christ. Of course, I could not say Jesus Christ, but rather, Yeshua Hamashiach in Hebrew.

As soon as I mentioned Yeshua they all shouted at me. “This is the biggest insolence against heaven!” one yelled.

“But you asked me who my rabbi is and how I came to know God,” I said. “I read the Bible and started to know the Lord and receive Him as my Savior. Why? Because I read Isaiah 53, where it is written, ‘He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed’” (v. 5).

They were extremely surprised and asked many questions. I told them I do not need their many rabbis to tell me how to dress and think. I have the Lord and His Word. I led them to Deuteronomy, where it is written, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you (for the LORD your God is a jealous God among you)” (6:4–5, 14–15).

They know these verses well because they pray them every morning. Yet they do not understand what they say because they are blind to the truth. They revere their rabbis so much they have practically turned them into gods, believing what the rabbis tell them instead of God’s Word.

“Whom are you following?” I asked them. “I believe in the living God, not as you. I follow God, not men.”

Then they asked how I came to such an understanding of Scripture. I told them, “I do not read books written by rabbis, fictional stories made up by

men. I read only what was written by the Holy Spirit of God. What He wrote is what is important. And I believe it. Is this not good enough for you?" This time they had no reply. They became friendly again, and we finished our long conversation. They were nice to me, and one told me, "This is not the last time we will speak. We will see you again." I hope so.