

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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RETURN TO ME SAYS THE LORD

Recently, I was waiting for the bus for Jerusalem, when two young men asked me for directions to a synagogue, which I gladly gave them. One replied, "We want to pray, but we have already been to that synagogue, and it is locked up tight."

I asked, "If every synagogue were locked, would you not pray?"

They looked strangely at me. Then one asked, "How can you pray without a minyan?" A minyan is ten people required to conduct a Jewish worship service.

I responded, "God is not looking to see if you pray in a synagogue. He looks at your heart. If you pray to Him from your heart, your prayer will be heard in heaven."

He asked, "How can you pray without a tallit and without tefillin?" A tallit is a prayer shawl, and tefillin are phylacteries.

I replied, "Those things are not important. The Lord wants our hearts, our very lives."

As we were talking, more people joined the conversation. Some of the men belonged to the synagogue that was locked, and, because they know me, one asked, "Why are you always against everything we do? Who are you to say our traditions are not true? Why are you trying to brainwash

these young men?”

I said, “My duty is to bring them closer to God—not according to the old traditions, but according to Zechariah 1:3: “Return to Me,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will turn to you.” Zechariah also refers to your old traditions: ‘Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.’” But they did not hear nor heed Me, says the LORD’” (Zech. 1:4).

It was like a small miracle to be able to give them facts from the Bible. It was also a small miracle the bus was late, giving me more time to share the truth with them.

Eventually the two young men said they wanted to repent, and they asked me to take them to the rabbi. I said, “If you really want to repent, you do not need a rabbi. Go before the Lord and open your hearts before Him. Then you will know you are saved from your sins, and you will not have to wear those funny clothes. God is pleased when you come before Him and say, ‘Lord, save me!’ You can say, just as King David did in Psalm 25:1–2, ‘To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in You; let me not be ashamed.’”

I read the remainder of Psalm 25, along with some other passages, including Jeremiah 31:33: “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

As soon as I spoke the word “covenant,” some of the older men said to the young men, “You must fear him. He is speaking from the New Testament, the book those Christians believe!” I told them how blind they were as I showed them I had read from the prophet Jeremiah. All were surprised.

This was the first time most of them had seen that the Jewish prophets spoke about the New Covenant.

I then showed them some Old Testament passages that clearly speak of the Lord Jesus.

I pray I will have more opportunities to meet with them, especially the two young men, and tell them how they can truly repent by putting their faith and trust in the Messiah.