

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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

SO LONG OUR HOPES ARE NOT YET LOST

Deuteronomy 20:1 says, "Do not be afraid, for the LORD your God is with you." Here in Israel, we live in the light of this promise day by day, as we face Scud missile attacks from Iraq. We are sure of God's protection; therefore, we can sing confidently the words of our national anthem, "Hatikva": "Od lo av-da tik-va-te-nu," which means "Our hope is not yet lost."

Even with missiles being dropped on us nightly, people continue their daily routines with high morale because they know God has said, "I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night" (Isa. 62:6). Although most of our people do not believe in the Messiah, they do trust in the promises of God to His Chosen People.

There are, however, many new immigrants in Israel, especially from the Soviet Union, who do not know the promises of God since they have lived all their lives under Communism. As soon as they arrive, the ultra-Orthodox try to convert them into their fold of Judaism. They tell the émigrés not to have any contact with Christians. But truth ultimately conquers. And people are most interested in learning the truth in times of trouble, such as Israel is experiencing now.

I consider it an obligation to comfort such people with the Word of God, and I am thankful the Lord has enabled me to speak their language. When I first talk with a new immigrant, it is not with warnings but in the spirit of friendship. Then, when I have gained his trust, we can be open with each

other, and I can share my faith.

Initially, the émigrés are surprised to find a Jewish person who believes in Christ, especially in Israel. Even as missiles are raining down, they seem more interested in knowing how and why a Jewish person can believe in Jesus. One émigré told me, “It is impossible for a Jew to praise the name of this One whom Jews have hated through the centuries.”

I replied, “I have heard many say this. You have been brainwashed against believers from the moment you stepped off the plane. But if you read the Jewish Scriptures for yourself, you will understand how to have true faith in God. I do not have with me any of the old commentary books—no stories, no traditions. But if you want it, I will give you a Bible in the Russian language. Then you can make your own decision about God.”

Even though the immigrants have been instructed to stay away from believers, they are independent and want to make their own decisions in their new land, and they are open to discussion. Of course, some are skeptical. Some have asked me if believers in the Lord are against the Jewish religion.

I responded, “I am not against any religion if it is in accordance with the Bible. As it is written in Deuteronomy 12:32, ‘Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.’ But, I am sorry to say, most of the people of Israel are far from being the ‘holy people to the LORD your God’ that He has instructed them to be in Deuteronomy 7:6. I only want to help you find the Lord, your Savior. Then you will truly be His Chosen People.”

These immigrants were very moved by our conversation. They said they had learned more in one hour than they did during several days of instruction from their assigned “guides.” I pray the Lord will give me more opportunities to speak with Soviet immigrants. I am also praying that, as

they read the Scriptures, the Lord alone will be their Guide and lead them into His truth, which alone will make them free (Jn. 8:32). Finally, during these difficult days, I “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: may they prosper who love you” (Ps. 122:6).