

# Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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

## THE ONE BORN IN BETHLEHEM

Not long ago, one of our Jewish neighbors invited me to visit him at his home. I gladly accepted, since I had been waiting a long time for this invitation so I could share with him about faith in Christ.

He and his wife received me warmly, and my neighbor asked, "Do you know why I invited you?"

I answered, "Because we are good neighbors and friends."

"No," he said. "I invited you to listen to one of our great rabbis preach on television about Shabbat [which is the Sabbath]."

He even invited some of his Orthodox friends so he would not be alone when he needed to answer my questions.

The rabbi spoke about prayers, which books people must have, and which prayers God receives best. I listened for two hours. My neighbor and his friends thought they had put me in my place since I was silent. Finally, they began to ask me questions. "What do you have to say about all you have heard?" one asked.

"What I have to say is written in Ecclesiastes 1:2: 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.'"

"How can you say such a thing?" he asked with surprise. "He is a famous

rabbi. And what you say is ‘vanity’? Of course, you do not pray! You do not even have a prayer book!”

“Did our great prophets pray using your prayer books, or did they pray from the depths of their hearts? God heard their prayers. My faith is in the Lord, who hears us when we pray from our hearts. I do not trust in what men say about prayer, no matter how famous they are,” I said.

One replied, “You are telling us what you have learned from this Christian book, the New Testament, where it is written about This Man, Jesus!”

I replied, “How blind you are. You do not even know where it is written that we should pray with our hearts.” So I opened my Bible and read to them from Deuteronomy 6:5–6: “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.”

They looked at each other with great shame. But they did not give up trying to convince me I was wrong. One man replied, “But those who believe in This Man, Jesus, have strayed from the Bible.”

I showed them my Bible, consisting of both testaments in Hebrew. They were extremely surprised that we who believe in Christ read the Bible. After a few hours of discussion, several of the men wanted to know how I came to know the Lord.

I told them it was because I read the Bible only, not a big stack of other books. They became angry and started shouting there was no way I could believe in Jesus by reading the Hebrew Scriptures.

So I opened my Bible to Isaiah 53 and read it to them. They asked why I was reading from the New Testament. I showed them I was reading from one of Israel’s major prophets. They looked at my Bible and began to read

Isaiah 53 for themselves.

“We will have to ask our rabbis about this,” one said. “But you believe in This One who was born in Bethlehem. Where is it written that God was to be born in Bethlehem?”

I told them to look in my Bible and read Micah 5:2: “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

After this they were all quiet. Pray God will help them to see with their hearts and understand that Jesus is God—and that He loves them.