

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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

THE UNFRIENDLY NEIGHBOR

One week a neighbor came to my home to confront me about my faith in Christ. He was not friendly and sure he could outsmart me.

He began to insult me. Then he asked, "What is the greatest wisdom on Earth? Since you say you worship God, tell me what the Bible says."

I replied, "You call yourself a good man who worships the Lord. You tell me what the Bible says."

"But I want you to give me the answer," he said. "What does God want us to do?"

I told him I would indeed answer him from the Bible. I said, "You spend your life reading fictitious stories composed by rabbis rather than following God's Word. You think you are wise, but you are far from faith in the Lord. You worship men instead of God, and you believe falsehoods instead of truth."

He said, "I know you believe in this one." He meant Jesus.

Soon his friends arrived. Now he was even more confident. One asked, "Show us about whom you have believed. Is He mentioned in the Bible?"

"Ah. Now we have come to an important point," I said. And I read to them from Isaiah 53:

But 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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors (vv. 5–6, 12).

Immediately they all began jumping up and down. One demanded, “Where is this written in the Bible? You have made this up! If our rabbis were here, they would put you in your place!”

I answered, “I did not write the Bible. Read this for yourself.” I handed them my Bible. So they began to read. And they began to open their eyes and, with time, their hearts.

After a while one said, “You must be a man of wisdom. So, do you have a good answer for us about wisdom?”

“My answer is also from the Bible,” I replied. So I read, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (Ps. 111:10).

They asked me many questions and wanted to know where I learned about faith. I told them I read the Bible. And because I know the Lord, I am full of wisdom and try to do His will. I also told them He told His servants, “Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves” (Lk. 10:3)

Then they became angry and hostile: “But people who believe in this one, as you do, are no longer Israelis and have no right to be here!”

“Is that so?” I asked. “You say you are such faithful Israelis. Have you

fought for this country in all the many wars we have had? Did you fight in the War of Independence in 1948?" Of course, none of them fought in any wars because the ultra-Orthodox do not join the military.

"I suppose you will tell us you took part in all those wars," one said sarcastically.

So I showed them my army papers. Then they began to listen more intently and asked many questions. And they also wanted to know how I came to know Jesus as my Savior.

So I opened my Bible and taught them about the one who was wounded for their transgressions. We had a long conversation. It was a big surprise—and a welcome one.