

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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

ZVI IS STRICKEN WITH A HEART ATTACK WHILE WALKING IN JERUSALEM

Recently I suffered a serious heart attack while walking in Jerusalem. I was rushed to the hospital, where I remained unconscious for more than 24 hours. The doctors told my family I was clinically dead and there was no hope for my recovery. They said that even if I did survive, I would be helpless, and my memory would be gone.

My family and believers around the world began to pray. After three days, I improved, and all life-support equipment was disconnected. In another week, I was discharged from the hospital.

I had faced death many times before during the Holocaust in Europe and the wars here in Israel. I am happy to say, along with our Lord Jesus, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Lk. 23:46). I am always ready to meet my God.

While I was in the hospital, I shared a room with an elderly man. One day one of his visitors asked me in Hebrew, "What is your position?"

I replied, "When we get to our eternal home, no one will ask what position we held on Earth. We will not be judged according to our standing in society."

He then asked, "What type of work do you do?"

“I am a carpenter,” I replied. He made a sour face and asked the others in German, “Would it be possible to change rooms?”

I responded in German, “You are free to do whatever you like, but God does not care if you are rich or poor. Everyone will have to stand alone before Him in judgment.”

My roommate was listening happily, but his family was unhappy. One asked if I had graduated from a university. I told him, “Psalm 111:10 says, ‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,’ but this wisdom is far from you.” They did not know how to respond, since they were all university graduates and I was a mere carpenter.

One asked, “Do you read books such as Shakespeare?”

I replied, “The answers to the questions of life and death are found only in one Book. You have been trying to impress me with your position in society, but this Book says, ‘When [one] dies he shall carry nothing away; His glory shall not descend after him’” (Ps. 49:17).

They had become very interested in what I was saying, and asked to see the Book to which I had been referring. The hospital was a very religious, Orthodox institution; and I knew it would upset them to see the New Testament. I silently prayed and then showed it to them.

They all said, “You are a Christian!”

“I am a better Jew than any of you,” I replied.

“But you have brought a Christian book into this place,” they protested.

“When the rabbi comes tomorrow, we will tell him that you want to make us Christians.”

I responded, “You can tell the rabbi whatever you like, but remind him he spends a lot of time reading the Bible, and the New Testament is an important part of the Bible. The Old and New Testaments are closely related. For example, Isaiah 40:3 says, ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”’ The New Testament says in Mark 1:2–3: ‘My messenger will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.”’ Your rabbi teaches you stories written by other rabbis, but now you must choose between the truth of God and their traditions.”

I believe strongly in Paul’s words to the Roman believers: “All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). Because of my heart attack, I had the opportunity to witness to doctors, nurses, patients, and even the rabbi at the Orthodox Jewish hospital.