

Remembering My Flight to Israel with Thirsty Rabbinic Students, Zvi Kalisher

After two weeks in Canada, I am now home in Jerusalem. My flight back was fruitful, as I had a good conversation on the airplane with a friendly group of young Orthodox students who were flying to Israel for the first time. They were so happy and excited.

As it is written in Isaiah 49:6, "You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth." So I was determined to share with them about the Lord's salvation.

The group had many young people and a few older rabbis. As we started talking to one another, we formed a nice friendship. When they became more interested in learning about me, I began to talk about how I came to believe in the truth of God's Word. I told them that when I started to read the Bible, I began to find the Lord our Savior, *Yeshua Hamashiach*, throughout the Scriptures. They were extremely surprised. "How can this be, that a Jew believes in Jesus?" one asked.

"You see," I said, "I do not read other books. I just read the Bible, where it is clearly written about the Lord." Then they asked me where the Bible mentions Him. I had been waiting for that question. The rabbis, however, were not happy. "Enough for today!" one said, no longer so friendly. "No way!" the young students responded. "This conversation is interesting. It is not every day we hear about such things," one said.

Then a student asked me, "If you say Jesus is written about in the Bible, why is He not written about in the Talmud?" I answered him with another question: "Which book is more important? The Bible, which was written by the Holy Spirit of God, or commentaries like the Talmud, which were written by people?" When the rabbis heard me mention the Holy Spirit, they became angry. One of them yelled to the group, "Do not listen to him!" He speaks about the Holy Spirit like those Christians!" "What do you have to say about that accusation?" one of the young boys asked me.

I opened my Bible to the Psalms and asked, "Does this book belong to us or to another faith?" They all replied Psalms is an important book in the Jewish Bible. "If so," I said, "then read Psalm 51, and you will find that it speaks about the Holy Spirit, whom your rabbis are against." Then one of them read Psalm 51:11 aloud: "Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." "It is clearly written about the Holy Spirit," I said. "Who was King David?" Did he not belong to our nation, Israel? You sing many times 'Messiah, Messiah ben David,' and your rabbis so quickly forget all that is written in the Holy Bible. But they remember well all that is written in those many fictitious storybooks. You must remember that you belong to the nation of Israel, whom the Lord has chosen."

I explained to them the Lord has instructed us as His Chosen People to bring His salvation to the Gentiles (cf. Isa. 49:3-6). "How shall we bring His salvation to them? With a big stack of commentaries or with the Holy Bible, written by the Holy Spirit of God?" They agreed we should use the Bible. The rabbis were extremely unhappy, but they could not force me out since we were all in the air on an airplane. Then the students began to question the rabbis. One asked, "Why do you hide the full truth from us? Should we not go to people with the Bible, rather than with a big stack of books filled with stories? This man - who is not a rabbi - has believed according to the Bible."

The rabbis were silent. Finally, one of them said, "As it is written in Deuteronomy, 'Follow justice and justice alone.'" "Amen," said Zvi. (*Zvi Kalisher, Israel My Glory, July/Aug 2018*)