I was given a task I had been set: Jesus as a Jew, a lad raised in Galilee, having had the highest understanding of Creation and of the Creator. It turned out that in this adventure I met Jesus as a Jew, as a lad raised in Galilee, having had the identical training as did I in a Jewish family just like my own... And he brought with him into his public life the very same instincts and truth that you and I both recognize as the divine reality of God's love for each and every person and for all of Creation.

When it was given to me that Jesus was in fact a bestowal of our Creator, having come here to master the difficult life on this world of rebellion, to reveal to us the Heavenly Father’s love, mercy, and power, and to show us the Father's way, I then understood what Chanukah was all about: the Father’s joining with us in the very same instincts and truth that run the imperial systems of the West—most notably in the United States and NATO countries—and Russia, as well as the oppressive systems of the East, including those in power now in China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Israel, and all the other oppressive realities. On a personal level, we (myself included) must overthrow the parts of our own consciousness and egos that still seek domination or excessive control and hence don’t fully recognize that love, nonviolence, cherishing and rejoicing in the Other in the earth, and responding with awe and wonder to all of existence are not only the goal, but the way to achieve it.

Send your Letters to the Editor to letters@tikkun.org

Rabbi Lerner responds:
I believe Jesus was a great Jewish prophet who, like you and me, took seriously the Torah's command to “love our neighbor” and also to “love the stranger” (the Other—ve’ata’vir ha’aretz). It if helps you to do that by giving Jesus greater status than the rest of us human beings, terrific, though that doesn't work for me. What matters to me is that we arrive at the same practical conclusions, which include a desire to maximize love on the planet and to overthrow all the kingdoms of arrogance, as the Jewish High Holiday services call for (ve’ata’vir memshelet zadone meen ha’aretz).

We should overthrow those governments that run the imperial systems of the West—most notably in the United States and NATO countries—and Russia, as well as the oppressive systems of the East, including those in power now in China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Israel, and all the other oppressive realities. On a personal level, we (myself included) must overthrow the parts of our own consciousness and egos that still seek domination or excessive control and hence don’t fully recognize that love, nonviolence, cherishing and rejoicing in the Other in the earth, and responding with awe and wonder to all of existence are not only the goal, but the way to achieve it.