

Apples of Gold

Zvi Kalisher's life-changing spiritual conversations

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

HOW CAN GOD HAVE A BIRTHDAY?

In the days preceding Christmas, many in Israel ask believers, "How can God have a birthday?" They ask me, "Why do you want the Jews as partners in your fantasy to dance around the golden calf with Christians?"

I recently answered a group of such people, "If you have any more questions, ask, and I will answer—but the answer may surprise you."

They fired off many questions: "Why are you so happy at this time of year?" "Why do you make such a big celebration on Christmas?" "Was not Jesus only a human?" "Why have you created such a fantasy about him?" "Who was Jesus?" "Why did he come?"

I responded, "I will answer you, but let me first tell a story. Once, on a cold winter day, a man noticed a small bird outside his window. The bird wanted to come in and warm itself, but the window was closed. The man opened the window to let it come in, but the bird became frightened and flew away. The man felt sorry and wished he could become a bird so he could invite it inside.

"The Jewish people are like that poor bird," I told them. "Our forefathers were afraid of what they could not see. But God loved them and did not want them to fly off on their own and be lost forever. So, in His great mercy, He sent His Son as a man. His Son spoke with us in our language, telling us what God was like and how much He loved us. Then He suffered and died in our place so we could be reconciled to God. Because of this,

we can be happy in the Lord and praise His name.”

They listened intently, but when I finished, one of them said, “That was a nice story, but it is only for Christians. There is nothing written in our Jewish Bible about Jesus.”

I replied, “Now I will show you that surprise. I will show you from the Jewish Scriptures a song sung in the Hebrew language by Christians at this time of year to welcome our Savior.” I read Zechariah 9:9: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation.”

I continued, “Jesus came to Earth because humanity had sunk deep into sin, and God wanted to change hearts and provide lasting atonement. On the Day of Atonement, we pray, ‘Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin’ [Ps. 51:2]. Jesus came to cleanse us from sin forever.”

One replied, “This is only a Christian story, found in Christian books. It is not for Jews.”

I countered, “You can read about the Messiah in your own Jewish Bible. Such passages as Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6–7, and Isaiah 53 will clearly portray who He is. If you have time, I will be glad to read and discuss them with you, and I can show you many others.”

I was delighted they were willing to read the Scriptures with me. When we were finished, I asked, “Now do you understand why I am so happy in Him? Do you think the stories of the rabbis are true and more relevant to the Messiah than what we have read from the Scriptures?”

“Oh no!” one said. “The Bible is the only book.”

I asked, "If that is so, what are you waiting for? Why not believe in your hearts all we have read? Then you, too, can share in this joy."

They all were glad I had explained the significance of Christmas, and they promised to think carefully about all I had said and to read the Scripture passages again.

There are many people in the world, and each should have the opportunity to hear the good news of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. All who yield their lives to Him will receive salvation, forgiveness, and eternal life.