

# The Child Arrives 那孩子來臨了

Matthew 馬太福音 1:18-25

USED 使用時間: 24th/25th December 2024 年 12 月 24 日/25 日

It is the height of ambition for many 5-year-olds at Christmas time. Only a few years earlier, they were Jesus, now too old to be Jesus, the very next best thing is to be Mary. 對許多 5 歲孩子來說，聖誕節是他們最大的抱負。就在幾年前，他們還是耶穌，現在已經太老了，不能作為耶穌了，接下來最好的事情就是可扮演馬利亞。

Each year, only one girl reaches such dizzying heights of drama. From these two central roles, there is a descending order of importance: the Magi, the angels, the shepherds, King Herod, the sheep, donkeys, and cows.

每年，只有一個女孩達到如此令人眼花撩亂的戲劇高峰。從這兩個中心角色開始，重要性依序遞減：博學之士、天使、牧羊人、希律王、羊、驢子和牛。

In there somewhere is **Joseph**. He often plays a passive part with very few lines. Quite remarkable for a patriarchal society.

在那裡某處還有約瑟。他經常扮演被動角色，台詞很少。對於一個父權社會來說，這是相當了不起的。

There is normally a scene where the angels come to the shepherds and Mary, but not Joseph. The scripts often forget that an angel also came to Joseph.

通常有一個場景，天使向牧羊人和馬利亞顯現，但沒有向約瑟顯現。劇本常常忘記天使也來向約瑟顯現。

There is at least one thing the angel told exclusively to Joseph. It is in v23, "*the child is to be called Immanuel – God with us.*"

至少有一件事是天使專門告訴約瑟的。在第 23 節中，「人要稱他的名為以馬內利。(以馬內利翻出來就是「上帝與我們同在」。)」

There are three main things we learn from the name IMMANUEL: **Jesus is God, that he is human, and that he is with us.**

我們從以馬內利這個名字中可學到三件主要的事情：耶穌是神，祂是人，祂與我們同在。

## 1. JESUS IS GOD 耶穌是神

Matthew drives home the core message that Jesus is not simply a great teacher or even some angelic being but the divine God himself.

馬太清楚地傳達了核心訊息：耶穌不僅是一位偉大的老師，或甚至是某些天使般的生物，而是神聖的上帝本人。

In verse 20, the angel tells Joseph that the human life growing inside Mary has come not from any human being but from the heavenly Father.

在 20 節中，天使告訴約瑟，馬利亞所懷的孕不是來自任何人，而是來自天父。

Joseph will be Jesus' father only in a **secondary sense**. God is the real father. However, the most direct statement of Jesus' identity comes in verse 23.

約瑟只是在次要意義上成為耶穌的父親。上帝才是真正的父親。然而，對耶穌身分最直接的陳述是在第 23 節。

Matthew quotes from Isaiah 7:14, "*The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel,*" which means "God with us."

馬太引用《以賽亞書》7:14，「必有童女懷孕生子，給他起名叫以馬內利，意思是「神與我們同在」。

For centuries Jewish scholars had known that prophecy, but they had not thought it should be taken literally. Matthew is saying this promise is greater than anyone imagined. Jesus Christ is "God with us" because the human life growing in the womb of Mary was a miracle performed by God Himself.

幾個世紀以來，猶太學者都知道這個預言，但他們不認為應該從字面上理解它。馬太說這個應許比任何人想像的都偉大。耶穌基督是「神與我們同在」，因為在馬利亞腹中所懷的孕是神親自創造的奇蹟。

Matthew was a Jew, which makes this statement even more startling. The distinctive Jewish view of God made them the least open to the idea that a human being could be God of all people.

馬太是猶太人，這使得這句話更加令人震驚。猶太人獨特的上帝觀使他們最不接受所有人中的人類可以成為上帝的想法。

Eastern religions, at the time, believed God was an impersonal force permeating all things. It wasn't unusual for them to regard some human beings as particularly great manifestations of the divine.

當時的東方宗教相信上帝是一種滲透到萬物中的非人格力量。他們將某些人看作是神聖的特別偉大的體現，這並不罕見。

Western religions believed that gods would disguise themselves as human beings for their own purposes. Jews, however, believed in a God who was both personal and infinite.

西方宗教相信神明會為了自己的目的而偽裝成人類。然而，猶太人相信一位有位格且無限的上帝。

God was not a being within the universe but was instead the ground of its existence and infinitely transcendent above it. Everything in the Hebrew worldview was against the idea that a human being could be God.

上帝不是宇宙中的一個生物，而是宇宙存在的基礎，無限超越於宇宙之上。希伯來世界觀中的一切都反對人類可以成為上帝的想法。

God was far too transcendent. Jews would not even pronounce the covenant name “Yahweh” - the name for God - nor spell it.

上帝實在是太超越了。猶太人甚至不會直念聖約的名字「耶和華」——上帝的名字——也不會拼寫它。

And yet Jesus Christ—by his life, by his claims, and by his resurrection—convinced his closest Jewish followers that he was not just a prophet telling them how to find God, but God himself come to find us.

然而耶穌基督——透過他的生命、他的宣稱和他的復活——讓他最親密的猶太追隨者相信，他不僅是一位先知，告訴他們如何找到上帝，而且是上帝親自來尋找我們。

Matthew is not the only biblical author to teach this. John, the Apostle, Paul, a Jew and a Pharisee, the apostle Peter, another Jewish man, all declared it.

馬太並不是唯一教導這一點的《聖經》作者。使徒約翰、猶太人和法利賽人保羅、另一位猶太人使徒彼得都宣告了這一點。

The opinion of these authors would not mean much, however if Jesus hadn't declared his divine identity all through the biographical accounts. Jesus is constantly forgiving sin, which only God can do. He also claims, “I am going to come back to judge the earth,” and only God can do that.

然而，如果耶穌沒有透過傳記記載宣告祂的神聖身份，這些作者的觀點就沒有太大意義。耶穌不斷地赦免罪，這只有神才能做到。他還聲稱，「我要回來審判全球」，只有上帝才能做到這一點。

At many times and in many ways, Jesus Christ, a Jewish man, said, “I am God,” and thousands believed him and came to worship him (Acts 2:41). Many know this claim and give it lip service at Christmas without thinking out its implications.

猶太人，耶穌基督，多次以多種方式說：「我是神」，成千上萬的人相信他並來敬拜他（使徒行傳 2:41）。許多人都知道這個說法，並在聖誕節時只是口頭上說說而已，卻沒有考慮到其含義。

If Jesus really is God, what does that mean for us practically?

如果耶穌真的是神，那對我們來說實際上又意味著什麼？

Firstly, **it is an intellectual turning point**. Some have argued that the supreme miracle of Christianity is not the resurrection of Christ from the dead but the coming of God into the world as a human.

首先，這是一個思想上的轉捩點。有些人認為基督教的最高奇蹟不是基督從死裡復活，而是上帝以人的身分來到世界。

Of all the things that Christianity proclaims, this is the most staggering. The late Canadian theologian JI Packer puts it bluntly:

在基督教所宣揚的所有事情中，這是最令人震驚的。已故加拿大神學家巴刻直言不諱地說：

*God became man; the divine Son became a Jew; the Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, unable to do more than lie and stare and wriggle and make noises, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child.*

神成為人；神聖的兒子成為猶太人；全能的上帝以一個無助的人類嬰兒的形式出現在地球上，除了躺著、凝視、扭動和發出聲音之外，他什麼都做不了，需要像其他孩子一樣被餵食、被換尿布和學習說話。

The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as this. The claim that Jesus is God is an intellectual turning point, but it also **causes a personal crisis**.

你越想，就越令人震驚。小說中沒有什麼比這更奇妙的了。聲稱耶穌是神是一個智力上的轉捩點，但它也引起了個人危機。

A crisis is a fork in the road. The assertion “Jesus Christ is God” is exactly that. Whenever you see Jesus acting in the Gospels, you see him putting people into motion. He is like a giant bowling ball.

危機是岔路口。「耶穌基督是神」的斷言正是如此。每當你在福音書中看到耶穌行事時，你都會看到祂使人動起來。他就像一個巨大的保齡球。

Wherever he goes, he breaks up old patterns. He sends people off in new directions. Jesus evokes extreme responses from people. Some are so furious with him that they try to throw him off a cliff and kill him.

無論他走到哪裡，他都會打破舊的模式。他帶領人們走向新的方向。耶穌引起了人們的極端反應。有些人對他非常憤怒，試圖把他扔下懸崖並殺死他。

Others are so terrified they cry out, “Depart. ... Get away from me!” Others fall before him and worship him.

其他人則非常害怕，大聲喊道：「走開。……離我遠一點！」其他人俯伏在他面前並敬拜他。

Why the extreme reactions? It's because of who he claims to be. If he is who he said he is, then you must centre your whole life on him. He claims to be the God who created all things, the source of all life, and the one who defines all reality.

為何會有如此極端的反應？這是因為他聲稱自己是誰。如果他就是他所說的那個人，那麼你的一生就必須以他為中心。他自稱是創造萬物的神、一切生命的源頭、定義一切現實的神。

So, if he is not who he said he is, then he is someone to hate or run away from because he is the greatest fraud in history. No other response makes any sense. Paying a benign

response to him at Christmas makes no sense. Either he is God, or he isn't. He's crazy and dangerous or infinitely wonderful.

因此，如果他不是他所說的那個人，那麼他就是一個值得憎恨或逃避的人，因為他是歷史上最大的騙子。其他任何回應都沒有任何意義。在聖誕節對他做出善意的回應是沒有意義的。他要么是神，要么不是。他是瘋狂而危險，或者無限精彩。

So, thirdly, the claim that Jesus is God also **gives us the greatest possible hope.**

因此，第三，耶穌是神這個說法也給了我們最大的希望。

The one who creates, determines, and defines all reality says that our world is not all there is, that there is life and love after death, and that evil and suffering will one day end.

創造、決定和定義一切現實的那個人說，我們的這個世界並不是所有的一切，死後還有生命和愛，邪惡和痛苦終有一天會結束。

This is not just hope for the world, despite all its unending problems, but hope for you and me, despite all our unending failings. A god who was only perfectly good would not have come down to us in Jesus Christ.

這不僅是對世界的希望，儘管它有無窮無盡的問題，也是對你和我的希望，儘管我們有無窮無盡的失敗。一個完全善良的神明不會透過耶穌基督降臨在我們身上。

He would have simply demanded that we pull ourselves together, that we be moral and good enough to merit a relationship with him. On the other hand, a god that was an “all-accepting god of love” would not have needed to come to Earth either.

祂只會要求我們振作起來，要有道德，夠優秀，來配得上與祂建立關係。另一方面，一位「無所不包容的愛之神明」也不需要來到地球。

This god of the modern imagination would have just overlooked sin and evil, embraced us for who we are and left us the way we are. Neither of those gods would have bothered with Christmas. The biblical God, however, is infinitely good and perfect, so our sins cannot be shrugged off. It must be dealt with.

這位在現代想像中出來的神明只會忽視罪惡和邪惡，擁抱我們原本的樣子，然後讓我們保持原來的樣子。這些神明都不會關心聖誕節。然而，《聖經》中的上帝是無限良善和完美的，所以不能對我們的罪不屑一顧。必須處理它。

He is also infinitely loving. He knows we could never climb up to him, so he has come down to us. God had to come himself and do what we couldn't do. Christmas means there is hope. It is a light shining in the darkness.

他也有無限的愛。他知道我們永遠無法爬到他身邊，所以他下來到了我們身邊。上帝必須親自來，做我們做不到的事。聖誕節意味著有希望。它是黑暗中閃耀的光。

## 2. JESUS IS HUMAN 耶穌是人

This interaction between Joseph and the angel reveals Jesus is God, but also that Jesus is one of us—he is human.

約瑟和天使之間的互動揭示了耶穌是神，但也表明耶穌是我們中的一員——他是人。

Christmas tells us Jesus was truly and fully God and truly and fully human. But what difference does it make to the way we live that God has become fully human?

聖誕節告訴我們耶穌是真正、完全的神，也是真正、完全的人。但神成為完全的人對我們的生活方式有什麼影響呢？

J. I. Packer puts it like this: *For the Son of God to empty himself and become poor meant a laying aside of glory; a voluntary restraint of power; an acceptance of hardship, isolation, ill-treatment, malice, and misunderstanding; finally, a death that involved such agony—spiritual even more than physical—that his mind nearly broke under the prospect of it. It meant love to the uttermost for unlovely people....*

巴刻這樣說：神的兒子倒空自己、變得貧窮，就意味著放棄榮耀；他的榮耀就被丟棄了。自願限制權力；接受困難、孤立、虐待、惡意和誤解；最後，他的死亡帶來瞭如此巨大的痛苦——屬靈方面的痛苦甚至超過了肉體上的痛苦——一想到這一點，他的心就幾乎崩潰了。這意味著對不可愛的人的至極的愛…。

*The Christmas spirit does not shine out in the Christian snob. For the Christmas spirit is the spirit of those who, like their Master, live their whole lives on the principle of making themselves poor—spending and being spent—to enrich their fellow humans, giving time, trouble, care and concern, to do good to others—and not just their own friends—in whatever way there seems need. (J.I. Packer, Knowing God (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1973), p.63-64)*

基督教勢利小人身上並沒有散發出聖誕精神。因為聖誕節精神是那些像他們的主人一樣，一生都遵循著讓自己貧窮——付出和被付出——來豐富他們的人類同胞，奉獻時間、麻煩、關心和關愛，以任何似乎需要的方式為他人做好事——而不僅僅是他們自己的朋友。（巴刻，《認識神》（伊利諾州唐納斯格羅夫：IVP，1973年），第63-64頁）

The fact that God became human and emptied himself of his glory means we should not want to hang out only with the people with power and glitz, who are networked and can open doors for us. We need to be willing to go to the people without power, without beauty, without money. That is the Christmas spirit because God became one of us.

上帝道成肉身並倒空了自己的榮耀，這一事實意味著我們不應該只想與有權有勢、浮華的人交往，他們有關係網，可以為我們打開大門。我們需要願意去幫助那些沒有權力、沒有美貌、沒有金錢的人。這就是聖誕精神，因為上帝成為我們中的一員。

God becoming one of us also means infinite comfort in suffering. Hebrews 2:17 says Jesus was made like us, “**fully human in every way**”.

神成為我們中的一員也意味著在苦難中的無限安慰。《希伯來書》2:17 說耶穌與我們一樣，「他凡事…與他的弟兄相同」。

The very next verse tells that this means “*because he himself suffered when he was tried and tested, he is able to help those who are being tried and tested*” (Hebrews 2:18).

下一節告訴我們，這意味著「既然他自己被試探而受苦，他能幫助被試探的人。」（希伯來書 2:18）。

When something bad happens, and real suffering comes to us, it feels so lonely. People around us may express sympathy, but it doesn't help. Then we meet someone who has been through the same thing.

當不好的事情發生，真正的痛苦降臨到我們身上時，我們會感到非常孤獨。我們周圍的人可能會表達同情，但這無濟於事。然後我們遇到了一個經歷過同樣事情的人。

They know what it is like. We pour your heart out to them. We listen to them and their opinions because they have been through the same thing.

他們知道那是什麼樣子。我們向他們傾訴你的心聲。我們傾聽他們和他們的意見，因為他們也曾經歷過同樣的事情。

The coming of God into this world on the first Christmas ultimately means that God suffered and that Jesus triumphed through suffering. Jesus now has an infinite power to comfort. Christmas shows us a God, unlike the god of any other faith. Have you been betrayed? Have you been lonely? Have you been destitute? Have you faced death? So has he!

上帝在第一個聖誕節來到這個世界，最終意味著上帝受苦，而耶穌透過苦難得勝。耶穌現在擁有無限的安慰力量。聖誕節向我們展示了一位上帝，與任何其他信仰的神明不同。你被背叛過嗎？你孤獨過嗎？你曾經一貧如洗嗎？你面對過死亡嗎？他也一樣！

Christianity says God has been in all the places you have been. He has been in the darkness you are in now and more. He knows suffering and has the power to comfort, strengthen, and bring you through.

基督教說上帝一直在你身旁與你經歷所有的一切。他曾經經歷過你現在所經歷的黑暗，甚至更多。他了解苦難，並且有能力安慰、加力！並帶你渡過難關。

### 3. JESUS IS WITH US 耶穌與我們同在

It would have been astonishing enough if the Son of God had become human and simply lived temporarily among us and then left, leaving a set of teachings. His plans were infinitely greater than that...his plan was always to be with us.

如果神的兒子成為人類，只是暫時生活在我們中間，然後離開，留下一套教義，那已經就夠令人驚訝了。祂的計劃遠不止於此……祂的計劃是永遠和我們在一起。

Jesus chose twelve apostles and appointed them so that they would be with him. What does “with him” mean? It means being in Jesus' presence, conversing with him, learning from him, and having his comfort moment by moment.

耶穌揀選並任命了十二位使徒，好讓他們與祂在一起。「跟他在一起」是什麼意思？這意味著與耶穌同在，與他交談，向他學習，並時時刻刻得到他的安慰。

In Jesus, the unapproachable God becomes a human being who can be known and loved. This does not stun us as much as it should.

在耶穌裡，難以親近的上帝成為了一個可以被認識和愛的人。這並沒有讓我們感到震驚。

In the Old Testament, anytime anyone drew near to God, it was completely terrifying. God appears to Abraham as a smoking furnace, to Israel as a pillar of fire, and to Job as a hurricane or tornado.

在《舊約》裡，任何時候任何人親近神都是非常可怕的。上帝在亞伯拉罕面前顯現為冒煙的火爐，向以色列顯現為一根火柱，對約伯顯現為颶風或龍捲風。

When Moses asked to see the face of God, he was told it would kill him—so great, so high and unapproachable is God.

當摩西要求見上帝的面時，他被告知這會殺死他——上帝是如此偉大、如此崇高、不可接近。

The message of Christmas means that through Jesus Christ, you can meet God. You can know him personally and without terror. When God showed up in Jesus Christ, he was not a pillar of fire, not a tornado, but a baby.

聖誕節的信息意味著透過耶穌基督，你可以遇見上帝。你可以親自認識他，而不會感到恐懼。當神在耶穌基督身上顯現時，祂不是火柱，不是龍捲風，而是一個嬰兒。

This time, he has come not to bring judgment but to bear it, to pay the penalty for our sins, and to take away the barrier between humanity and God so we can be together. Jesus is God with us.

這一次，祂來不是要帶來審判，而是要承受審判，為我們的罪付上刑罰，並除去人類與神之間的障礙，使我們能夠在一起。耶穌是與我們同在的神。

Every Christmas, millions of people sing, “Jesus, our Immanuel,” but are they really with him? Do they know him, or do they only know about him?

每年聖誕節，數百萬人都會唱「耶穌，我們的以馬內利」，但他們真的與他同在嗎？他們認識他，還是只知道他？

There is one crucial trait necessary for having a personal relationship with Jesus, and it is one that Christians in Western society are most likely to overlook.

與耶穌建立個人關係必須具備一個關鍵特徵，而西方社會的基督徒最有可能忽略這個特徵。

An intimate relationship with Jesus always requires courage. We can't know Jesus personally unless we have **the courage to admit we are a sinner**. Admit that we choose to reject our creator and live life our way.



與耶穌建立親密的關係總是需要勇氣。除非我們有勇氣承認自己是罪人，否則我們無法親自認識耶穌。承認我們選擇拒絕我們的創造者並按照我們的方式生活。

Jesus' entire mission is summed up in v21: "***He will save his people from their sins***".

第 21 節總結了耶穌的整個使命：「**他要將自己的百姓從罪惡裏救出來。**」

First and foremost, Jesus came to forgive us. Are you willing to say, "*I am a moral failure. I don't love God with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind. I don't love my neighbour as myself. And, therefore, I am guilty, and I need forgiveness and pardon before I need anything else*"?

首先也是最重要的，耶穌來饒恕我們。你願不願意說：「我是一個道德上的失敗者。我沒有盡心、盡性、盡力、盡意地愛神。我不愛我的鄰居如同愛我自己。因此，我有罪，在我需要其他任何東西之前，我需要寬恕和赦免」？

It takes enormous courage to admit these things because it means throwing our old self-image out and getting a new one through Jesus Christ.

承認這些事情需要巨大的勇氣，因為這意味著拋棄我們舊有的自我形象，並透過耶穌基督獲得新的自我形象。

And yet that is the foundation for all the other things that Jesus can bring into our life—all the comfort, all the hope, all the joyful humility, and everything else.

然而，這是耶穌可以帶進我們生命的所有其他事物的基礎——所有的安慰、所有的希望、所有喜樂的謙卑，以及其他一切。

How do we get the strength to be courageous like that? By looking at Jesus himself. If we think it takes courage to be with him, consider that it took infinitely more courage for him to be with us.

我們要如何才能獲得這樣的勇氣呢？透過觀察耶穌本人。如果我們認為和他在一起需要勇氣，那麼想想他和我們在一起需要更多的勇氣。

Only Christianity says one of the attributes of God is courage. No other religion has a god who needs courage.

只有基督教說上帝的屬性之一是勇氣。沒有其他宗教有需要勇氣的神。

He became mortal and vulnerable so that he could suffer, be betrayed, and killed.

他變得凡人且脆弱，以至於他可以受苦、被背叛和被殺害。

Look at him facing our darkness so we can have light. That will enable us to face any darkness ourselves and still have the light of hope.

看看祂面對我們的黑暗，好讓我們擁有光明。這將使我們能夠面對任何黑暗，同時仍然擁有希望之光。

In the Christmas carol "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing", there is a line where we sing: "Mild, he lays his glory by."

在聖誕頌歌《新生王歌》中，有一句歌詞，我們唱：「捨棄榮華離天上」

What that means is he did it voluntarily, willingly, and lovingly. No one forced him. It wasn't just a duty.

這意味著他是自願、心甘情願、充滿愛心地這麼做的。沒有人強迫他。這不僅僅是一種責任義務。

He faced unimaginable pain and death and darkness out of love for us. Why did Jesus have the courage to do what he did for us? Love!

出於對我們的愛，他面對難以想像的痛苦、死亡和黑暗。為什麼耶穌有勇氣為我們做這些事？愛！

How do we get the courage to admit we are a sinner and need his forgiveness and a relationship with him? The same way.

我們怎樣才能有勇氣承認自己是罪人，需要祂的寬恕並與祂建立關係？同樣的方式。

See him doing all that he did for you, will draw out your love for him—and then you will have the courage to put him into the centre of your life, and then he will be with you, and you with him.

看到他為你所做的一切，就會激發你對他的愛——然後你就會有勇氣把他放在你生活的中心，然後他就會和你在一起，你也會和他在一起。

Immanuel: Jesus is God, Jesus is human, Jesus is with us.

以馬內利：耶穌是神，耶穌是人，耶穌與我們同在。