

Receiving Jesus 領受耶穌：神人與我們同在

Matthew 馬太福音 1:18-25

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I read a story during the week of a boy who desperately wanted to play Joseph in the Sunday School pageant. When he was instead cast as the landlord of the inn in Bethlehem, with one line, he was very disappointed.

我本週讀到一個故事，講的是一個男孩極其渴望在主日學的聖誕劇中扮演約瑟。然而，當他被分配扮演伯利恆旅店的老闆，只有一句台詞時，他非常失望。

He protested the role. Unfortunately for him, he was stuck playing the landlord. He was so disappointed but kept it to himself. All the rehearsals went off without a hitch, and he said his famous line -- 'there is no room in the inn' - without issue.

他抗議這個角色。不幸的是，他只能扮演老闆。他很失望，但把情緒藏在心裡。所有的排練都順利進行，他說他那句著名的台詞——「客店裡沒有地方」——也毫無問題。

However, on the day the Christmas pageant was presented, he got his revenge. When it got his moment, Mary and Joseph knocked on the door and asked him if he had a room for them. The boy smiled and said, "Yes, sure, we have lots of room. Come on in!"

然而，在聖誕劇正式上演的那天，他報了仇。當他的時刻到來，馬利亞和約瑟敲門，問他是否有房間給他們。男孩微笑著說：「當然有，我們有很多空房。快請進！」

Mary & Joseph did not know what to do so turned to the pageant directors who were stunned. After an awkward silence, the audience erupted with laughter.

馬利亞和約瑟不知所措，轉向當時目瞪口呆的劇目指導。一陣尷尬的沉默後，觀眾爆發出笑聲。

I suppose if you want a male part in the Christmas pageant, and want your moment in the spotlight, then Joseph is the best option. He is at the centre of the action.

我想，如果你想在聖誕劇中扮演男性角色，並希望成為焦點，那麼約瑟是最好的選擇。他處於故事的中心。

What is a bit unusual though, is that for a patriarchal society like first century Palestine, **Joseph** plays a passive part in the whole Christmas narrative. Once we are clear of the Christmas scenes he is hardly mentioned again.

然而，有點不尋常的是，對於像一世紀巴勒斯坦那樣的父權社會，約瑟在整個聖誕敘事中扮演著被動的角色。一旦聖誕場景結束，他就幾乎不再被提及。

An angel did come to Joseph, and told him, only him, one thing -- the child's name. Verse 23, *the child is to be called Immanuel -- God with us.*

確實有一位天使來到約瑟那裡，只告訴他一件事——孩子的名字。第 23 節說，「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」。）（馬太福音 1:23，和合本修訂版）

Here is what we learn from the name IMMANUEL: **Jesus is God, Jesus is human, and Jesus is with us.**

從以馬內利這個名字，我們學到：**耶穌是神，耶穌是人，並且耶穌與我們同在。**

JESUS IS GOD 耶穌是神

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.

在第 20 節，天使告訴約瑟，馬利亞腹中所懷的孕不是從人來的，而是從天父來的。

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. 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.”***

約瑟只是在次要的意義上作耶穌的父親。神才是真正的父親。然而，關於耶穌身份最直接的宣告出現在第 23 節。馬太引用《以賽亞書》7:14，「必有童女懷孕生子；人要稱他的名為以馬內利。」（以馬內利翻出來就是「神與我們同在」。）

For centuries Jewish scholars had known that prophecy, but they had not thought it should be taken literally. This promise is greater than anyone imagined. Jesus Christ is “God with us.” This statement is startling to a Jew. The Jewish view of God made them the least open to the idea that a human being could be God of all people.

幾個世紀以來，猶太學者都知道這個預言，但他們不認為應該按字面理解。這個應許超越了任何人的想像。耶穌基督是「與我們同在的上帝」。這個宣告對猶太人來說是驚人的。猶太人對神的看法使他們最不可能接受一個人類可以是萬民之上帝的想法。

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

東方宗教相信神是一種非人格的力量，滲透萬物。他們將某些人視為神聖的特別偉大顯現，這並不罕見。

Western religions believed that gods could disguise themselves as human beings for their own purposes. Jews believed in a God who was both personal and infinite. God was not a being within the universe but the source of it all. The Hebrew worldview was against the idea that a human being could be God.

西方宗教相信神可以為了自己的目的偽裝成人。猶太人相信的神既是個人位格的，又是無限的。神不是宇宙內的一個存在，而是萬有的源頭。希伯來世界觀反對人可以是神的觀念。

And yet Jesus Christ---by his life, by his claims, and by his resurrection---convinced his closest Jewish followers that he was more than a prophet telling them how to find God, but God himself come to find us.

然而，耶穌基督——藉著他的生命、他的宣告和他的復活——說服了他最親近的猶太門徒，他不僅僅是告訴他們如何找到神的先知，更是神親自來尋找我們。

All his main Jewish followers declared it. The opinion of these authors would not mean much, however, if Jesus had not 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.

他所有主要的猶太門徒都宣告了這一點。然而，如果耶穌沒有在生平記述中不斷宣告他的神性身份，這些作者的觀點就意義不大。耶穌不斷地赦罪，這是只有神能做的。他還宣告：「我要再來審判這地」，這也是只有神能做的。

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).

這位猶太人耶穌基督在許多時候、用許多方式說「我是神」，成千上萬的人相信了他，並來敬拜他（使徒行傳 2:41）。

Every Christmas people all over the world give lip service to this without thinking out its implications. If Jesus really is God, what does that mean for us practically?

每年聖誕節，全世界的人們口頭上承認這一點，卻不思考其含義。如果耶穌真的是神，這對我們實際上意味著什麼？

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，這是一個理智上的轉折點。有人論證，基督教最偉大的神蹟不是基督從死裡復活，而是上帝以人的樣式進入世界。

The late theologian J.I. Packer puts it bluntly: *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. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as this.*

已故神學家 J.I. Packer 直言不諱地說：上帝成為人；神聖的兒子成了猶太人；全能者以一個無助的人類嬰孩的樣式出現在地上，除了躺著、凝視、扭動和發出聲音外什麼也做不了，需要被餵食、換尿布，並像其他孩子一樣被教導說話。你越想這件事，就越覺得驚人。虛構故事中沒有任何事物比這更奇幻。

Secondly, the claim that Jesus is God also causes a personal crisis.

其次，耶穌是神的宣告也會引發個人的危機。

Whenever you see Jesus acting in the Gospels he evokes extreme responses from people. Some are so furious with him they try to throw him off a cliff and kill him. Others are so terrified they cry out, “Depart. ... Get away from me!” Others fall before him and worship him.

無論何時你在福音書中看到耶穌行事，他都會引發人們極端的反應。有些人對他如此憤怒，試圖把他推下懸崖殺死他。有些人非常恐懼，哭喊著：「離開……離開我！」還有些人俯伏在他面前敬拜他。

Why the extreme reactions? Not because of the good things he did, but because of who he claimed to be. He claims to be the God who created all things, the source of all life, and the one who defines all reality.

為什麼有如此極端的反應？不是因為他所行的善事，而是因為他所宣告的身份。他宣告自己是創造萬物的神，一切生命的源頭，以及定義一切現實的那一位。

If he is, then we must centre our whole life on him. However, if he is not, then he is someone to hate or run away from because he is the greatest fraud in history. He is dangerous.

如果他是，那麼我們必須將整個生命以他為中心。然而，如果他不是，那麼他就是一個應該被憎恨或逃離的人，因為他是歷史上最大的騙子。他是危險的。

No other response makes any sense. Paying a benign response to him at Christmas makes no sense. Either he is God, or he is not. He is crazy and dangerous, or infinitely wonderful.

任何其他回應都沒有意義。在聖誕節對他報以溫和的回應是沒有意義的。他要麼是神，要麼不是。他要麼是瘋狂危險的，要麼是無限奇妙的。

Thirdly, the claim that Jesus is God also gives us the greatest possible hope.

其三，耶穌是神的宣告也給了我們最大可能的盼望。

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

這位創造、決定並定義一切現實者說，我們的世界並非全部，死後仍有生命與愛，並且邪惡與苦難終有一天會結束。

This is hope for a world with all its unending problems, and hope for you and me with all our unending failings.

這是對一個充滿無盡問題的世界的盼望，也是對面對所有無盡失敗的你我的希望。

A God who was only perfect and justice would not have come down to us. He would have simply demanded that we pull ourselves together and be moral and good to merit a relationship with him.

一個僅僅完美和公義的神不會降臨到我們中間。他只會要求我們振作起來，有道德、行善，以配得上與他建立關係。

On the other hand, a God that was an “all-accepting god of love” would not have come to Earth either.

另一方面，一個「全接納的愛之神」也不會來到世上。

This God of the modern imagination would have just overlooked sin and evil and 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 sin could not be shrugged off.

這位現代想像中的神只會忽略罪惡與邪惡，按我們的本相接納我們，並讓我們維持原狀。這兩種神都不會費心於聖誕節。然而，聖經中的神是無限良善和完美的，所以我們的罪不能被輕忽。

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 and do what we cannot. Christmas is hope for us.

他也是無限慈愛的。他知道我們永遠無法攀爬到他那裡，所以他降臨到我們這裡。神必須來做我們無法做到的事。聖誕節是我們的盼望。

JESUS IS HUMAN 耶穌是人

This interaction between Joseph and the angel reveals Jesus is God, but also that Jesus is human. What difference does it make to the way we live?

約瑟與天使之間的這段互動揭示了耶穌是神，同時也揭示了耶穌是人。這對我們的生活方式有什麼影響？

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....*

J.I. Packer 這樣寫道：神的兒子倒空自己、成為貧窮，意味著放下榮耀；自願限制能力；接受艱難、孤獨、虐待、惡意和誤解；最後，經歷一種如此巨大的痛苦——靈性上的痛苦甚至超過身體上的——以致於他的心思在預見這痛苦時幾乎崩潰的死亡。這意味著對不可愛之人至極的愛.....

*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)*

聖誕精神不會在勢利的基督徒身上閃耀。因為聖誕精神是那些像他們的主一樣，畢生以使自己貧窮為原則而活之人的精神——耗盡並被耗盡——為了使他們的同胞富足，付出時間、麻煩、關心和顧念，以任何看似需要的方式去行善——不僅僅是對他們自己的朋友。（J.I. Packer, 《認識神》，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. All because God became one of us.

神成為人並倒空自己的榮耀這一事實，意味著我們不應該只想與那些有權力、有光彩、有人脈、能為我們開路的人交往。我們需要願意去接觸那些沒有權力、沒有美貌、沒有金錢的人。這全是因為神成為了我們中的一員。

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.”* 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).

神成為我們中的一員，也意味著在苦難中有無限的安慰。《希伯來書》2:17 說耶穌成為與我們一樣，「凡事應當與他的弟兄相同。」緊接著的下一節告訴我們，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 does not help. Then we meet someone who has been through the same thing.

當壞事發生，真正的苦難臨到我們時，會感到非常孤獨。我們周圍的人可能會表達同情，但這並無幫助。然後，我們遇到了一個經歷過同樣事情的人。

We pour our heart out to them and listen to their opinions because they have been through the same thing. The coming of God into this world ultimately means that he suffered, and he triumphed through suffering. Jesus now has an infinite power to comfort.

我們向他們傾心吐意，並聽取他們的意見，因為他們經歷過同樣的事情。上帝來到這個世界，最終意味著他受了苦，並且通過受苦得勝。耶穌現在擁有無限的安慰能力。

This God is unlike the god of any other faith. Have you been betrayed? Have you been lonely? Have you been destituted? Have you faced death? So has he!

這位神不同於任何其他信仰的神。你曾被背叛過嗎？你曾感到孤獨嗎？你曾一貧如洗嗎？你曾面對死亡嗎？他也都經歷過！

Jesus has been 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.

耶穌去過所有你去過的地方。他現在就在你所處的黑暗中，甚至更陰暗的。他瞭解苦難，並有能力安慰、堅固並帶你度過。

JESUS IS WITH US 耶穌與我們同在

God's plans were infinitely greater than a short visit and gifting us with a good example and some helpful teaching. His plan was always to be with us.

神的計劃遠超過一次短暫的來訪，去賜給我們一個好榜樣和一些有益的教導。他的計劃始終是一直與我們同在。

Jesus chose twelve apostles and appointed them so that they would be with him. Chosen to be in Jesus' presence, conversing with him, learning from him, having his comfort moment by moment.

耶穌揀選了十二使徒，設立他們，是為了要他們和他同在。被揀選進入耶穌的同在，與他交談，向他學習，時刻得著他的安慰。

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，那位不可親近的神成為一個可以被認識、被愛的人。這帶給我們的震驚，遠不及它本應帶來的。

In the Old Testament, God appears to Abraham as a smoking furnace, to Israel as a pillar of fire, to Job as a hurricane or tornado. When Moses asked to see the face of God, he was told it would kill him---so great, so high and unapproachable is God.

在《舊約》中，神向亞伯拉罕顯現為冒煙的火爐，向以色列顯現為火柱，向約伯顯現為狂風或旋風。當摩西請求見神的面時，他被告知那會殺死他——神是如此偉大、如此崇高、不可親近。

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 a baby.

聖誕節的信息意味著透過耶穌基督，你可以遇見上帝。你可以親身認識他，無需恐懼。當神在耶穌基督裡顯現時，他是一個嬰孩。

This time he has come not to bring judgment but to bear it, to pay the penalty for our sins, to take away the barrier between humanity and God, so we can be together. Jesus is God with us. Are you really with him? Do you know him, or do you only know about him?

這一次他來不是要施行審判，而是要承擔審判，為我們的罪付上代價，除去人與神之間的隔閡，使我們可以在一起。耶穌是與我們同在的神。你真的與他同在嗎？你認識他，還是僅僅知道關於他的事？

There is one crucial trait necessary for having a personal relationship with Jesus, and it is one that many are most likely to overlook. An intimate relationship with Jesus always requires courage.

要與耶穌建立個人關係，有一項關鍵特質是必需的，而這正是許多人最可能忽略的。與耶穌親密的關係總是需要勇氣。

We cannot 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. Jesus' entire mission is summed up in v21: **“He will save his people from their sins”**.

除非我們有勇氣承認自己是罪人，否則我們無法親身認識耶穌。承認我們選擇拒絕我們的創造主，並按自己的方式生活。耶穌的整個使命總結在第 21 節：**「他要將自己的百姓從罪惡裡救出來。」**（馬太福音 1:21）

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

首先並且最重要的，耶穌來是為了赦免我們。你願意說：*「我是一個道德上的失敗者。我沒有盡心、盡性、盡力、盡意愛神。我沒有愛人如己。因此，我是有罪的，在我需要任何其他東西之前，我需要赦免和寬恕？」*

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

承認這些事需要極大的勇氣。這意味著丟棄我們舊的自我形象，並透過耶穌基督獲得一個新的自我形象。這承認是耶穌能帶入我們生命的一切其他事物的基礎——所有的安慰、所有的盼望、所有喜樂的謙卑，以及一切其他事物。

The only way we can get the strength to be so courageous is by looking to Jesus. If it takes courage to be with him, consider that it took infinitely more courage for him to be with us.

我們能獲得如此勇敢的力量唯一方法，就是仰望耶穌。如果與他同在需要勇氣，那麼請想想，他與我們同在需要無限更大的勇氣。

Apart from Christianity no other religion says one of the attributes of God is courage.

除了基督教，沒有任何其他宗教說勇氣是神的屬性之一。

He became mortal and vulnerable so that he could suffer, be betrayed, and killed. He faced our darkness so we can have light. This enables us to face any darkness ourselves and still have the light of hope.

他成為會死、脆弱的人，以便他能受苦、被背叛、被殺害。他面對我們的黑暗，使我們可以有光。這使我們能夠面對任何黑暗，並且仍然擁有盼望之光。

In the Christmas carol "*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*" there is a line where we sing: "Mild, he lays his glory by." Which means is he did it voluntarily, willingly, and lovingly. No one forced him. 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!

在聖誕頌歌《聽啊！天使高聲唱》中，有一句我們唱道：「捨棄榮華離天上。」這意味著他是自願、甘心、充滿愛意地做的。沒有人強迫他。他為了愛我們，面對了難以想像的痛苦、死亡和黑暗。耶穌為什麼有勇氣為我們做他所做的一切？是愛！

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

我們如何獲得勇氣承認自己是罪人，需要他的赦免並與他建立關係？方法是一樣的。

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.

看見他為你所做的一切，會激發出你對他的愛——然後你將會有勇氣把他放在你生命的中心，然後他就會與你同在，你與他同在。

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。