

## Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 2019 平安夜和圣诞节

Luke 2:1-20 路加福音 2: 1-20

Once upon a time there was a young lady due to be married to the handsome woodworker. They were about to journey to a distant land when Mary's Angel Godfather Gabriel came down and said – Good news! You will bear a prince! Joseph the woodworker and Mary set off to their distant hometown of Bethlehem. The Evil romans had called a census, and so everyone had to go to their home down.

很久很久之前，有一位年轻的女子要嫁给一位英俊的木匠。他们正要前往一个遥远的地方，这时马利亚的天使教父加百列来说：“好消息！你要怀孕生一个王子！”木匠约瑟和马利亚出发前往遥远的家乡伯利恒。邪恶的罗马人已经叫全国人民都登记户籍，所以每个人都不得不回去他们的家乡。

When they arrived, the town was full! Not even peoples guest rooms where free! Mary gave birth to the prince – Jesus! And they lay him down in a manger with all the talking and singing animals. The shepherds Bozo, Flopso, and Greg came to visit and the mysterious Magi came and gave gifts. And everyone learnt a good lesson about love and sharing. And that's the end of the story.

当他们到达时，镇上已满了人！客店里都没有地方！马利亚生下了王子——耶稣！他们把他放在马槽里和所有会说话和唱歌的动物在一起。牧羊人保苏、弗洛苏和葛格前来探访，神秘的博士也来了，并送了礼物。每个人都学到了关于爱和分享的美好一课。这就是故事的终结。

That's a lovely fairy tale isn't it. We love a good fairy tale. Movies and TV shows are full of great fairy tales. They're in the stories we read and tell our kids. And Christmas can often look like a fairy tale. That story that I told is mostly like the story of Christmas. When it's like that though, we can lose so much of the beauty of Christmas. When it gets turned into a nice fairy tale it disconnects it with the historical event, and the enormity that God became Human.

那是个可爱的童话，不是吗？我们喜欢童话故事。电影和电视节目充满了伟大的童话故事。它们在我们读给和告诉我们的孩子的故事中。圣诞节通常看起来像一个童话故事。我讲的那个故事也像是圣诞节的故事。但当我们如此看时，我们可以失去太多圣诞节的美丽。当它被变成了一个漂亮的童话故事，它与历史事件脱节了，上帝成为人类的这么浩大的事实也脱节了。

So tonight as we look at the old old story of Christmas, we'll put that story back into its context. We'll see how when that story is back in the bigger picture it's part of God's story for salvation.

所以今晚/天当我们看圣诞节的古旧的故事时，我们将把这个故事与它的背景连起来。我们将看到当这个故事回到更大的画面时，它是神拯救故事的一部分。

## Fairy tales of Salvation

### 救恩的童话

At the start of Luke's retelling of Jesus' birth, he grounds it in history.

在路加重述耶稣诞生的开始，便以历史为基础。

He starts verse 1,

他开始第1节

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register.

在那些日子，凯撒奥古斯都降旨，叫全国人民都登记户籍。2 这第一次登记户籍是在居里扭作叙利亚总督的时候行的。3 众人各归各城，办理登记。

Caesar Augustus was a man named Octavian. He was the Son of Julius Caesar' Nephew. He became the sole ruler of the Roman Empire after he defeated Antony and Cleopatra. And then he was given the title Augustus, which means Majestic or Holy. He was the first Emperor to encourage people to worship him as a god. There was a fantastical story that he was miraculously conceived by a serpent.

凯撒奥古斯都是一个叫奥塔维亚的人。他是朱利叶斯凯撒侄子的儿子，在击败安东尼和克利奥佩特拉之后，他成为罗马帝国的唯一统治者。然后，他被授予奥古斯都的称号，意味着雄伟或圣洁。他是第一个鼓励人们崇拜他为神的皇帝。有一个奇幻的故事，说他是由一条蛇孕育的。

There is an inscription in the British museum that says;

大英博物馆里有一个铭文，上面写着：

He is God, the Son of God and Saviour. Bringer of peace and hope and good news.

他是神，是神的儿子和是救世主。是和平、希望和好消息的使者。

This is was all happening between 5-10 years before Jesus Christ was born. And it was spread around as the gospel, good news. It was good for the emperor's rule to encourage stories. It gave him a mandate from heaven. "I've taken over, I'm in control and even the gods are for me."

这一切都发生在耶稣基督出生前的5-10年之间。被作为福音，好消息到处传播。鼓励故事对皇帝的统治是有好处的。给了他来自上天的任命。"我已经接管了，我控制了一切，甚至神也是为我服务。"

It is no mistake that Luke mentions the ruler who described himself as the Son of God and saviour at the start of Jesus' tale.

路加在耶稣故事开始时提及这位自称为神的儿子和救世主的统治者并非偶然的。

## God's story of salvation

### 神的救恩故事

Luke speaks into this historical situation. While there is a fairy tale being spread around as good news, Luke speaks about the real good news, and the true saviour of the world.

路加对这个历史情况说话。当有一个童话被传播为好消息时，路加谈到了真正的好消息，以及世界真正的救世主。

Luke brings a contrast between Augustus and a baby. One who calls himself the son of God and the other who is called the son of God by God himself. We'll see this contrast when we get to the angel's message.

路加在奥古斯都和婴儿之间形成了鲜明的对比。一个自称为神的儿子，另一个被上帝自己称为神的儿子。当我们来到天使的信息时，我们将看到这个对比。

Joseph and his fiancé Mary have headed to Bethlehem because of Augustus' census. And they give birth after they arrive. But there was no guest room available, so they placed their baby, Jesus, into a manger.

由于奥古斯都的人口普查，约瑟和他的未婚妻马利亚要前往伯利恒。他们到达后就生了孩子。但是没有客房，所以他们把孩子耶稣放在马槽里。

An angel brings good news of a saviour. Not Augustus, but the true saviour. Angels in the bible often conjures up images of big fluffy wings. But the term Angel just means messenger. They're God's posties, they deliver his mail. God sends a message with his messenger into this era. A message to counter the ruler who has set himself up with his own fairy tale as the God and Saviour.

天使带来了救世主的好消息。不是奥古斯都，而是真正的救世主。圣经中的天使经常被形容为有大蓬松翅膀的图像。但天使这个词只是意味着信差。他们是上帝的邮递，他们送他的邮件。上帝差他的信差给这个世代发信息。一个对抗为自己建立了童话作为上帝和救世主的统治者的信息。

The angel speaks in verse 9,

天使在第9节中说，

An angel of the lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you; you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'

9 有主的一个使者站在他们旁边，主的荣光四面照着他们，牧羊人就很惧怕。  
 10 那天使对他们说：「不要惧怕！看哪！因为我报给你们大喜的信息，是关乎万民的：11 因今天在大卫的城里，为你们生了救主，就是主基督。12 你们要看见一个婴孩，包着布，卧在马槽里，那就是给你们的记号。」

A saviour! The one true saviour has been born. And he is the Messiah, which means that he is the one chosen and anointed by God, not some Roman ruler. Wrapped in a manger, which is a beautiful contradiction, of very high place and power and lowly position.

救世主！一个真正的救世主诞生了。他是弥赛亚，意味着他是上帝选择和膏立的，而不是罗马统治者。包着布，卧在马槽里是一个美丽的矛盾，非常高的位置和权力和低的地位。

This is God's story of salvation. That salvation would come to a people desperate to be saved.

这是上帝的救恩故事。救赎会来到渴望得救的人民。

God's story of salvation is written in a way no fairy tale would tell it. Yes, there is a miraculous birth, but to an unlikely mother. Born in a town of little importance or significance. The good news sent by God himself does not go to those who can write songs about it, or send it out fastest on horseback. The good news doesn't go to royalty or spread in the fastest way. God sends his messenger out to the shepherds. Disliked, dirty, despised people of questionable character and taste. They get visited by a whole army of angels praising God.

神的救恩故事是用一种童话无法讲述的方式写成的。虽然有一个奇迹般的诞生，但是在一个不太可能的母亲身上。出生在一个无关紧要或无足轻重的小镇。上帝自己发送的好消息不会去给那些能写歌的人，也不会马背上最快地发送出去。好消息不会传到皇室，也不会以最快的速度传播。上帝差他的信差送到牧羊人那里。不喜欢，肮脏，被鄙视，有可疑的品格和品味的人。他们受到一大队赞美上帝的天兵同那天使的拜访。

As unlikely as the birth is, the story continues. The shepherds visit Mary, Joseph and Jesus and then spread the news.

虽然出生的可能性不大，故事仍然继续。牧羊人拜访马利亚、约瑟和耶稣，然后把新闻传开。

The good news about this Saviour is that he has come to even the lowliest of the low. Even they have a place before him. Even they have a role to play in this new king's kingdom.

关于这个救世主的好消息是他到了人类的最低层。即使他们在他面前也有一席之地。即使他们在这个新的国王的王国里也有一个角色。

God's story of salvation continues in ways that we would not write it.

神的救恩故事以我们不会为之写作的方式继续。

The great God-man, Jesus, who never disobeys his father is ridiculed and murdered. Shamed before all people on the cross. His best friends flee and hide. This salvation does not look mighty like Caesar Augustus'. It is not a triumphant tale like we would tell. But Jesus' triumph, God's story of salvation, is shown in weakness. This salvation is not a battle but a man humbly being led to a tree to die.

伟大的神人，耶稣，从不不服从他的父亲，被嘲笑和谋杀。在十字架上在所有的人面前被羞辱。他最好的朋友逃走了，躲了起来。这种救赎看起来不像凯撒奥古斯都那样强大。这不是我们讲述的一个胜利的故事。但耶稣的胜利，神的救恩故事，却显在软弱中。这种救赎不是一场战斗，而是一个人谦卑地被领到一棵树上死去。

He was raised three days later, but he doesn't appear to his enemies and destroy them in an attempt to gain a victory. The real enemy was defeated. Sin and Death itself. This is not a fairy tale. This is no propaganda to prop up an ruler's power. This is not a story that we would write. But this is how the God of the universe would intervene and save his people. This good news is proclaimed one quiet night to shepherds about a boy that was born, who is our saviour.

三天后，他被复生，但没有他在他的敌人面前出现，去摧毁他们试图获得胜利。真正的敌人被打败了。罪与死本身。这不是童话故事。这不是支援统治者权力的宣传。这不是一个我们要写的故事。但这就是宇宙之神如何介入和拯救他的人民。这个好消息在一个安静的夜晚被宣布给牧羊人，关于一个男孩我们的救主的出生。

## **Our Story is God's story**

### **我们的故事是上帝的故事**

Now at this point we could leave it all there. We could leave it in the past. Even if it is all true, that Jesus is the Son of God and the saviour of the world. The Angels told the truth. Maybe it's just a 2,000 year old truth. Why care?

现在，我们可以把它留在那里。我们可以把它留在过去。即使一切都是真的，耶稣是神的儿子，是世界的救世主。天使们讲了实话。也许这只是一个2000年前的真理。为什么要关心？

It is good news today because it's not just an old story of God's. We are part of God's story.

今天这还是个好消息，因为它不仅仅是神的古老故事。我们是神的故事的一部分。

This is still our story. And we need this story.

这仍然是我们的故事。我们需要这个故事。

Yes, technology has changed. Life expectancy has changed. The quality of food, and housing, and education has all changed. But who we are at our core is still the same. People desperate for a saviour.

虽然科技已经改变。寿命预期也改变了。食品、住房和教育的质量都发生了变化。但是，我们的核心仍然是一样的。人们渴望救世主。

We have become more advanced, but we are still fighting wars. Wars against other countries, other ethnicities, other members of our family. Each writing our own story of what we want to save us.

我们已经变得更加先进，但我们仍在打仗。对其他国家，其他种族，我们家庭的其他成员的战争。我们每个人都在写自己想怎样被拯救的故事。

We want to be in control of our story, and have our own version of our saviour.

我们希望控制我们的故事，并拥有自己版本的救主。

If you were going to write a fairy tale about yourself, I'm not sure what kind of person you'd be. The strong warrior, ready to save other people. The princess in the high tower waiting for someone else to save you. The person in charge of the kingdom. These are all wish fulfilment. Because we want to have value, and have someone care enough about us that they'd fight a dragon. We wish we had enough power to influence a country.

如果你要写一个关于自己的童话故事，我不知道你会是什么样的人。坚强的战士，准备拯救别人。在高塔里等着别人来救你的公主。王国的负责人。这些都是愿望的实现。因为我们想要有价值，想有人关心我们甚至为我们与巨龙争战。我们希望我们有足够的力量来影响一个国家。

We want to write our own fairy tales, with us as the hero. We'll be the saviour. Or this thing will be the saviour. When we do that, we're pretty much the same as Caesar Augustus, who wrote his fairy tale story with himself at the centre.

我们想写我们自己的童话故事，以自己为英雄。我们成为救世主，或者这东西将是救世主。当我们这样做时，我们和凯撒奥古斯都差不多，他把自己写在了中心。

Our story has already been written. It is a part of God's bigger story.

我们的故事已经写好了。是上帝更大故事的一部分。

God's story of salvation is not written the way we would write it. But we need this Christmas to remind us that we are the ones who need to be saved. Saved from making life all about us. Saved from our sins.

神的救恩故事不是跟据我们的想法来写。我们需要这个圣诞节来提醒我们，我们是需要拯救的那些人。使我们从生活全部是关于我们中被拯救出来。从我们的罪中拯救出来。

In God's story of salvation, we are not the hero or the princess. We are most like the shepherds. To God we are sinful, dirty, damaged. But this Christmas story reminds us that God loves these kinds of people. The angel came and told them the news first! That Jesus had been born and that they had a role to play in his story of salvation.

在上帝的救恩故事中，我们不是英雄或公主。我们最似那些牧羊人。对于上帝，我们是罪恶的，肮脏的，破碎的。但是这个圣诞故事提醒我们，上帝深爱这类人。天使先来告诉他们这个消息！耶稣已经出生，他们在他的救恩故事中扮演一个角色。

We don't need to build our lives up into great fairy tales because God already has us in his story.

我们不需要把我们的生活建成伟大的童话故事，因为上帝已经把我们放在他的故事里。

Like the shepherds, God shares the good news with us. He takes us to see the birth of Jesus. Not because we are special or the hero, but because God is special. He is the hero. And he invites us to be a part of his story of salvation.

和牧羊人一样，上帝与我们分享好消息。他带我们去看耶稣的诞生。不是因为我们是特别或英雄，而是因为上帝是特别的。他是那英雄。他邀请我们成为他救恩故事的一部分。

I love how the shepherds respond to meeting a baby. Vs 17,

我喜欢牧羊人对遇见婴儿的反应。17节，

They spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child. And all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

他们看见，就把天使论这孩子的话传开了。18 听见的人都诧异牧羊人对他们所说的话。

Vs 20,

20节，

the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen.

牧羊人回去了，因所听见所看见的一切事，正如天使向他们所说的，就归荣耀于上帝，赞美他。

They get invited to be like the angels. The angels came and shared God's message and then sang praising God. And then the shepherds come and visit Jesus, and go off sharing God's message about this saviour and praising God.

他们被邀请像天使一样。天使们来了，分享了神的信息，然后唱着赞美上帝。然后牧羊人来拜访耶稣，便去分享上帝关于这个救世主的信息，并赞美上帝。

They were the lowly people and get brought into God's story. They had the chance to see it and spread God's story with great joy!

他们是卑薄的人，被带进神的故事中。他们有机会看到，并传播上帝的故事与极大的喜悦！

We are invited into God's story of salvation just like the Shepherds. Desperate people who need a saviour so that we don't make our own.

我们被邀请进入神的救恩故事，就像牧羊人一样。绝望需要救世主的人，以便我们不为自己造救主。

And we're invited to share God's good news with the rest of the world. And we can praise God, like the shepherds and the angels saying Glory to God in the highest heaven.

我们被邀请与全世界分享上帝的好消息。我们可以赞美上帝，就像牧羊人和天使一样说，在至高之处荣耀归与上帝！

Christmas isn't a fairy tale. It is a reminder of how much we need God to save us. And how he invites us to be part of his story. The story that is told again every year at Christmas and every Sunday. Take time to dwell on Jesus like the shepherds did, and let's praise God now.

圣诞节不是童话故事。它提醒我们多么需要上帝来拯救我们。以及他如何邀请我们成为他故事的一部分。每年圣诞节和每个星期天都会再讲这个故事。花点时间像牧羊人那样在耶稣身上多花些时间，现在让我们一起赞美上帝。