

Can we trust the Bible 我們可以信聖經嗎？

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I really like all the stories that add up to be the colours of Christmas. The Christmas lights and decorations, Santa and his elves, the movies and Christmas carols. My family is about to set up our Christmas tree, and we bought a new one because the smell is just so important to me for it to feel like Christmas.

我真的很喜歡所有加起來成為聖誕節色彩的故事。聖誕燈飾和裝飾、聖誕老人和他的小精靈、聖誕電影和頌歌。我一家人即將立起我們的聖誕樹，我們買了一棵新的，因為氣味對我來說是如此重要，因為它讓我感覺像聖誕節。

But this week, I thought I'd try to understand the origin of all these stories. So, I started with Santa Claus.

但這週，我想去嘗試了解所有這些故事的起源。我會從聖誕老人開始。

One author describes the history of Santa as involving a “building project by a Byzantine emperor, a story about a father preparing to sell his own daughters into prostitution, a hoard of stolen human bones reputed to have magical properties, armies of Crusading knights, Protestant zealots, the author of “Rip Van Winkle” and “Sleepy Hollow,” a poem you probably read as a child but didn't realise how influential it was, a “Nast”-y nineteenth-century political cartoonist, and Coca-Cola.” All of this adds up to the mystery and magic of Santa.

一位作者將聖誕老人的歷史描述為涉及「一位拜占庭皇帝的建築工程，及一個關於一位父親準備將自己的女兒賣去作娼妓的故事，有一堆被認為具有神奇屬性的被盜屍的人骨，十字軍中的騎兵，新教徒狂熱者、《李伯大夢》和《斷頭谷傳奇》的作者，一首你可能小時候讀過但沒有意識到它有多大影響力的詩，一個不太受歡迎的 19 世紀的政治漫畫家，和可口可樂。」所有這些都增加了聖誕老人的神秘和魔力。

I feel like I could do a deep dive into each of those sentences.

我覺得我可以深入研究這些句子中的每一句。

What about the elves? They come from German and Scandinavian folk stories. Elves were house gnomes with magical powers to protect homes from evil spirits. The stories were modernised in the 1800s and look like Santa's little helpers we see now.

精靈呢。它們來自德國和北歐的民間故事。精靈是擁有神奇力量的侏儒，可以保護家園免受惡靈的侵害。這些故事在 1800 年代進行了現代化改造，看起來就像我們現在看到的聖誕老人的小幫手。

Christmas Trees? One article I read suggested that the evergreen tree represents pagan themes of fertility and new life in the darkness of winter. This is why holly, ivy, and mistletoe are used because they are few of the flowering plants in winter.

聖誕樹呢？有一篇文章表明，這棵常青樹代表了異教徒的生育主題和冬季黑暗中的新生命。這就是使用冬青、常春藤和槲寄生植物的原因，因為它們是屬於很少會在冬季開花的植物之中。

But then, as one legend goes, an English monk, Boniface, was doing missionary work in Germany in the eighth century. And the story goes that he saw some native Germans sacrificing to the oak trees. So Boniface grabbed his axe, and chopped down the tree to stop the pagans from worshipping them, and the legend has it that a fir tree grew out of the fallen oak. The fir tree has a triangular shape and represents the Trinity. And so they were brought into the house.

但是，有一個傳說這樣說，一位英國教士博尼法(Boniface)在8世紀往德國傳教。據說他看到一些德國人向橡樹獻祭。於是博尼法拿起他的斧頭，砍倒了這棵樹，以阻止異教徒崇拜它們，傳說從倒下的橡樹中長出了一棵杉樹。樅樹呈三角形，代表三位一體。於是他們被帶進了屋子。

Now I could talk about the weird origins of the Christmas story for ages. But I find it fascinating how what just seems to be common knowledge and practice about Christmas has been an amalgamation of pagan worship, ancient folklore, legends, and corporate greed over the last 2 thousand years.

現在我可以談論聖誕節故事的奇怪起源了。但我覺得有趣的是，在過去的2000年裡，關於聖誕節似乎是常識和實踐的東西是異教崇拜、古老的民間傳統、傳說和企業貪婪的結合。

The stories of Christmas just seems like an amalgamation and exaggeration from their original stories. Will we ever be able to find out the true origin of Santa? Probably not. What about the Christmas tree or the elves? No.

聖誕節的故事似乎只是對他們原來故事的融合和誇張。我們是否能夠找出聖誕老人的真正來源，可能不會。聖誕樹或小精靈呢？不。

What about that other story at Christmas? The story of God becoming a person, born as a baby to die on the cross, raised to life so we might have life.

聖誕節的另一個故事呢？上帝成為一個人的故事，作為嬰兒出生，死在十字架上，復活，這樣我們就可以擁有生命。

Is this just another hodgepodge story of a special baby? A man who could do miracles. Resurrection stories. Waiting for a dead man to come back to save them. A nation that was squashed, hoping for redemption.

這只是一個特殊嬰兒的另一個大雜燴故事嗎？一個可以創造奇蹟的人。復活的故事。等待一個死人回來拯救他們。一個被壓扁希望得到救贖的國家。

Is this just another exaggeration or amalgamation of stories that we'll never know the origin of? Can we trust anything the Bible says?

這只是我們永遠不知道其起源的故事的另一種誇張或融合嗎？我們可以相信聖經所說的一切嗎？

This month, we're asking, Is Christmas Unbelievable? Asking some pointed questions at Christmas. If you have any questions, send them through, and answer straight after.

這個月，我們問聖誕節是否令人難以置信？在聖誕節問一些尖銳的問題。如果您有任何問題，請發送，然後直接回答他們。

Challenge for us today is to question whether we believe the story of Jesus at Christmas just because it's the story we know, if there was an exaggeration, or if it was real and can believe. 我們今天的挑戰是質疑我們是否僅僅因為耶穌在聖誕節的故事是我們知道的而相信耶穌，或者是否有誇大，或者它是真實的並且可以相信。

If there is actually a truthful core to it, is there any way we can know what that is? 如果它真的有一個真實的核心，我們有什麼辦法可以知道那是什麼？

Because if there has been an exaggeration, what can we believe? 因為如果誇大了，我們還能相信什麼？

1. Eyewitness to the truth 真相的目擊者

In John's record of the gospel, there is a character who sits in this same position, asking the same question, what can I believe?

在《約翰福音》的記載中，有一個人物坐在同樣的位置上，問同樣的問題，我能相信什麼？

His name is Thomas, and he missed out on seeing the risen Jesus when he appeared to his disciples. 24-25a

他的名字叫多馬，當耶穌向門徒顯現時，他錯過了看到復活的耶穌的機會。24節-25節上。

24 Now Thomas (also known as Didymus[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

24 那十二使徒中，有個叫低土馬的多馬，耶穌來的時候，他沒有和他們在一起。25 其他的門徒就對他說：「我們已經看見主了。」

He, like us, missed out on seeing the risen Jesus. But he didn't believe the story. Verse 25b 他像我們一樣，錯過了看到復活的耶穌。但他不相信他們所說的。25節下

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

多馬卻對他們說：「除非我看見他手上的釘痕，用我的指頭探入那釘痕，用我的手探入他的肋旁，我絕不信。」

He says not that he couldn't believe or was finding it hard, but - I will not believe. 他不是說他不敢相信，或者他覺得很難接受，而是——我絕不信。

Can you imagine if you're 11 best friends all came up and excitedly told you that something you'd been waiting for had finally happened?

您能想像一下，如果您是 11 個最好的朋友，他們全都過來興奮地告訴您，您一直在等待的事情終於發生了。

He, even then, was living in a post-truth environment. I don't believe your truth, but only my truth. He's not risen unless I've seen him.

即使在那時，他也生活在後真相環境中。我不相信你的真理，只相信我的真理。除非我看見他，否則他還沒有復活。

Now Thomas doubted because he hadn't seen it for himself. He would only trust his own physical sense, his sight and his sense of touch.

多馬懷疑，因為他沒有親眼看到。他只會相信自己的身體感覺，他的視覺和他的觸覺。

Jesus is good to Thomas, even though he doubted him. Verse 26-28.

耶穌對多馬很好，儘管他懷疑他。第 26-28 節。

26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." 28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

過了八日，門徒又在屋裏，多馬也和他們在一起。門都關了，耶穌來，站在當中，說：「願你們平安！」27 然後他對多馬說：「把你的指頭伸到這裏來，看看我的手；把你的手伸過來，探入我的肋旁。不要疑惑，總要信！」28 多馬回答，對他說：「我的主！我的上帝！」

Thomas reacts and calls him God. Jesus speaks to us reading.

多馬做出反應過來並稱他為上帝。耶穌對我們在說，

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

29 耶穌對他說：「你因為看見了我才信嗎？那沒有看見卻信的有福了。」

This is written so that you might believe. Verse 31

這是為了讓你相信。第 31 節

31 But these are written that you may believe[b] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

31 但記載這些事是要使你們信耶穌是基督，是上帝的兒子，並且使你們信他，好因著他的名得生命。

John wrote down the records of the eyewitnesses to be trustworthy with the purpose of us believing in Jesus!

約翰寫下目擊者的記錄，是為了我們信耶穌是可信的！

Trusting others is how we have always operated. I'm not an expert in science, a historian, social scientist. We have always listened to other people's expert opinions.

信任他人是我們一直以來的生活方式。我不是科學專家、歷史學家、社會科學家。我們一直聽取其他人的專家意見。

We think we are people who must check everything, but we don't. Has anyone else checked the weather app today?

我們認為我們是必須檢查一切的人，但我們沒有。今天還有其他人查看天氣應用程序嗎？

We are people who routinely trust others. The same goes for history.

我們是一個經常信任他人的人。歷史也是如此。

If there are all these eyewitnesses, why is there such a lag between the events and the writing? Surely that just means that it's open to change and exaggeration.

如果有所有這些目擊者，為什麼事件和寫作之間存在如此的滯後，肯定只是意味著它可以改變和誇大。

Jesus is reported to have been crucified around AD 30. And yet the earliest, Galatians, was written around 50 AD. And the gospels about Jesus, Mark is around 50-60 AD and John, the latest, around 90 AD.

據報導，耶穌在公元30年左右被釘在十字架上。然而，最早的《加拉太書》是在公元50年左右寫成的。而關於耶穌的福音書，《馬可福音》大約在公元50-60年，《約翰福音》是最新的，大約在公元90年左右。

Can we trust the reports if they were written later? Maybe they've been added to over time. Maybe it's like a game of telephone, where you start with a phrase at the start, and by the time you get to the end, it's different.

如果這些報告是後來寫的，我們能相信嗎？也許它們是隨著時間的推移而添加的。也許這就像一場傳話遊戲，你以個短語作開始，到最後的時候變成不一樣了。

So, maybe the story that starts with a really influential Jewish leader is told and retold over so much time that the original story is lost completely, and Jesus has turned into God himself, who could walk on water!

所以，也許從一位真正有影響力的猶太領袖開始的故事被講述和重述了很多次，以至於原來的故事完全丟失了，耶穌變成了可以在水面上行走的上帝！

One historian, Richard Bauckham, argues that one of the key reasons there is a time delay between the events and the writing is because the eyewitnesses were dying out.

一位歷史學家理查德·鮑克姆認為，事件發生與寫作之間存在時間延遲的主要原因之一是目擊者逐漸離世。

Unlike the game of telephone with kids, the stories about Jesus weren't passed along a single line. They were proclaimed in synagogues, and Jesus preached to thousands of people at a time. Large crowds followed him, and he taught a smaller group of 12 disciples.

與孩子們的傳話遊戲不同，關於耶穌的故事不是通過一條線傳遞的。它是在會堂裡被宣告，耶穌一次向成千上萬的人傳道。一大群人跟著他，他也教導了一小群 12 名門徒。

There are so many specific names of people in the Bible. Mary Magdalene, Peter and Andrew, sons of Jonah. James and John, sons of Zebedee. Even Thomas Didymus is here. In the news immediately after Jesus' death and resurrection, you could go up to these people and say, hey Thomas, I heard you doubted that Jesus was alive, and then he appeared. What happened?

Did you put your finger in his side?

聖經中有很多人的具體名字。抹大拉的馬利亞、彼得和安得烈是約拿的兒子。西庇太的兒子雅各和約翰。甚至低土馬的多馬也在這裡。在耶穌死而復活後的新聞中，你可以走到這些人面前說，嘿，多馬，我聽說你懷疑耶穌還活著，然後他出現了。怎麼了，你把手指探入他的肋旁了嗎？

And then, he'd sigh, or his face would light up remembering that day and tell you. But what do you do when eyewitnesses start dying out? You write it all down.

然後，他會嘆氣，或者他的臉會因為想起那一天而發光，然後告訴你。但是當目擊者開始離世時你會怎麼做，你把它都寫下來。

If this is true, then the gospels are not like the child at the end of the game telephone saying this is what I think I heard. But the first child. This is it. This is the phrase.

如果這是真的，那麼福音書就不會像傳話遊戲結束時的孩子說，這就是我認為我聽到的。而是像第一個孩子。就是這個。就是這個短語。

This is what really happened. And the beauty is that when it's written down, there were still people around to be able to prove it was real. You could still go and clarify that it was real.這就是真實發生的事情。美妙之處在於，當它被寫下來時，周圍仍然有人能夠證明它是真實的。你仍然可以去澄清它是真實的。

One of my children recently thought it would be a good idea to start spreading some rumours. They were at school saying that they had COVID. Yeah, they said, my parents did a test this morning, and they sent me even though I had COVID.

我的一個孩子最近認為開始傳播一些謠言是個好主意。他在學校說他感染了新冠病毒。他說，是的，我父母今天早上給我做了一個測試，即使我感染了，他們還是把我送來。

A teacher called Alisa, aaaaah. We've heard this report – you are the eyewitness to the COVID test. We assume it's not true. Does he have COVID? What? No, we tested them, but that didn't happen! Have you ever heard someone make exaggerated claims and call them out? 老師電聯我太太，呵，我們聽到了這個報告—您是病毒測試的目擊者，我們認為這不是真的。他有新冠肺炎嗎？什麼？不是，我們有做測試，但那沒有受感染！你有沒有聽過有人誇大其詞並大聲疾呼。

Stop letting facts get in the way of a good story!

不要讓事實妨礙一個好故事！

The Bible can be trusted that it has not been exaggerated. It was written very early, and if it wasn't what really happened, people would have called it out.

可以相信聖經是沒有被誇大的。寫於很早的時期，如果不是真實發生的事情，人們就會大聲疾呼。

Don't be silly. I was there that day when you say, "he walked on water". He was just great at surfing it's like he walked on water.

不，別傻了，那天你說「他在水上行走」時我也在場。他只是擅長衝浪，就像在水面上行走一樣。

But that's not what happened. Eyewitnesses like Thomas, were around long after they were written down. So, what we have recorded is what really happened.

但事實並非如此。像多馬這樣的目擊者，在記錄被寫下來之後仍活了很久。所以，我們所記錄的是真實發生的事情。

2. Embarrassing Truth 尷尬的真相

Not only that, but the Bible has a Ring of truth to it.

不僅如此，聖經聽起來也像是真實的。

The ring of truth is a test to see whether a story sounds like a fanciful and exaggerated story, or real history. The idea of it says that when people lie or make up a story they don't add material that will make them lose credibility.

聽起來是真實的是一種測試，看一個故事聽起來像是一個虛構和誇張的故事，還是真實的歷史。它的意思是說，當人們撒謊或編造故事時，他們不會添加會使他們失去可信度的材料。

I know a man who broke his leg. Now he could have just said that he fell over, but the truth is more embarrassing. He was trying to show his son how to do a cool trick on his bike on a half pipe, thought that he was much younger than he actually was, fell, and broke his leg. One version of the story adds embarrassment and shame to it. It's not the story you'd choose to tell unless it was true.

我認識一個人，他摔斷了腿。他可以直接說他摔倒了，但事實更令人尷尬。他是因為試圖在半圓的單車管道向他的兒子展示如何在他的自行車上做一個很酷的把戲，認為自己比他的實際年齡年輕得多，摔倒了，摔斷了腿。故事的一個版本增加了尷尬和恥辱。除非這是真的，否則你不會選擇講這個故事。

If you were going to make up a story to try and convince people that Jesus not only came back to life after he died but is also God – you would want to make it the most plausible story ever. But the gospels are actually really embarrassing.

如果你要編一個故事來試圖讓人們相信耶穌不僅死後復活了，而且還是神...你會想讓它成為有史以來最可信的故事。但福音故事實際上真的很尷尬。

Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends, and he had a key hand in the writing of Mark's gospel about Jesus. If I were Peter, and I was involved in writing it I would have made myself look

better. Instead, Mark records Peter betraying Jesus 3 times, his most cowardly and moral failure. Peter was a key leader in the early church. The only way he'd let this be told was if it was actually true.

彼得是耶穌最親密的朋友之一，他在《馬可福音》關於耶穌的寫作中起了關鍵作用。如果我是彼得，而且我參與了寫作，我會讓自己看起來更好。相反，馬可記錄了彼得3次背叛耶穌，這是他最懦弱和道德上的失敗。彼得是早期教會的重要領袖。他讓這件事被告知的唯一原因是因為它真正是真實的。

If I was writing about Jesus' resurrection, I'd want it to be as believable as possible. 2 key aspects of the resurrection are embarrassing. And they both involve the first eyewitnesses. 如果我寫的是耶穌的復活，我希望它盡可能可信。復活的2個關鍵方面令人尷尬。他們都涉及第一批目擊者。

John records that Mary Magdalene went to Jesus' tomb but found it empty. Standing there crying, Jesus came up to her and said, John 20:15; 約翰記載說，抹大拉的馬利亞去了耶穌的墳墓，卻發現它是空的。站在那裡哭泣，耶穌走到她跟前說，《約翰福音》20:15，

15 He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

耶穌問她：「婦人，你為甚麼哭？你找誰？」馬利亞以為他是看園子的，就對他說：「先生，若是你把他移了去，請告訴我，你把他放在哪裏，我去把他移回來。」

Mary confuses Jesus with a gardener. That is such an obscure and embarrassing point that is likely only recorded because it happened.

馬利亞誤以為耶穌是園丁。這是如此模糊和令人尷尬的一點，很可能只是因為它發生了才被記錄下來。

In all four gospels about Jesus the first witnesses are women. Luke 24:10-11 says, 在關於耶穌的所有四本福音書中，第一批見證人都是女性。《路加福音》24:10-11 說，

10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. 11 But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.

10 把這些事告訴使徒的有抹大拉的馬利亞、約亞拿，和雅各的母親馬利亞，還有跟她們在一起的婦女。11 她們這些話，使徒以為是胡言，就不相信。

In the first century Jewish culture, women's testimony wasn't accepted in court. People didn't listen to them and Jesus' friends the disciples also didn't believe them! If you wanted a ridiculous story, like Jesus coming back to life, to be believed you would not say that women were the first one's to see him alive, get confused that he's actually a gardener – unless it actually happened.

在一世紀的猶太文化中，法庭不接受婦女的證詞。人們不聽他們的話，耶穌的朋友門徒們也不相信他們！如果你想要一個荒謬的故事，比如耶穌復活，你不會說女人是第一個看到他活著的人，以為他是看園子的——除非它真的發生了。

It's another deeply embarrassing aspect for the early church leaders. An exaggerated story told by a bunch of women was easily discredited. And again, the women's names were recorded so you could actually go and ask these eyewitnesses.

這是早期教會領袖另一個非常尷尬的方面。一群女人講的誇張的故事很容易被抹黑。再一次，這些婦女的名字被記錄下來，這樣你就可以去問問這些目擊者。

None of this on it's own is proof. But when it's read, it holds together as a story that has a ring of truth to it. One that clearly suggests that the gospels can be read as history and not an exaggeration.

這一切本身都不是證據。但是當它被閱讀時，它作為一個具有真實性的故事結合在一起。一個清楚地表明福音書可以被視為歷史而不是誇大其詞的。

3. How to deal with story if not exaggerated 如果不是誇張，如何回應這個故事？

So the stories about Christmas like Santa, the elves, Christmas trees have been exaggerated over many years boiling together to make this interesting hotpot of Germanic / American / religious and cultural mishmash.

像聖誕老人、精靈、聖誕樹等關於聖誕節的故事被誇大了很多年，沸騰在一起，形成了這個有趣的日耳曼/美國/宗教和文化大雜燴。

But the story at the heart of it; God become a man, born and placed in an animals food trough. Raised to be murdered in the most embarrassing and shameful place – crucified publicly on a cross. That story is true.

但它的核心故事；上帝成為一個人，出生並被安置在動物的食槽中。長大後在最尷尬和可恥的地方被謀殺——被公開釘在十字架上。那個故事是真的。

It hasn't been exaggerated, but it was recorded by eyewitnesses and has the ring of truth to it. 它並沒有被誇大，但它是由目擊者記錄下來的，並且具有真實性。

Stories aren't the only places that have exaggeration. We are also people who like to exaggerate.

故事並不是唯一被誇大的地方。我們也是喜歡誇大其詞的人。

We tell ourselves that we've got everything together. We don't need help from God. We pretend that we've got it together.

我們告訴自己，我們已經把一切安排妥當。我們不需要上帝的幫助。我們假裝我們可以處理一切任何的事情。

Very rarely do we reveal the deep embarrassing and shameful truth of who we are. We might let a good friend see us fully. Or sometimes let the mask of our identity slip.

我們很少透露我們是誰的深刻尷尬和可恥的事實。我們可能會讓好朋友充分了解我們。或者有時讓我們身份的面具滑落。

But God sees through all our exaggeration, the walls and masks we put on. He knows deeply who we are. He knows our secret sins and our shame. But despite that he offers us love and forgiveness. 1 Peter 2 says that we are chosen and precious to God.

但是上帝看穿了我們所有的誇張，看穿了我們所戴的牆和面具。他深知我們是誰。他知道我們隱秘的罪惡和恥辱。但儘管如此，他還是給了我們愛和寬恕。《彼得前書》2章說，我們是上帝所揀選、所珍貴的。

This is no exaggeration. It might sound like a wild tale, that we could be loved, chosen, and considered precious to the God of the universe. But this is the wonderful truth of the gospel. 這一點都不誇張。這聽起來像是一個荒誕的故事，我們可以被愛、被揀選，並被宇宙之神認為是珍貴的。但這是福音奇妙的真理。

We who were once far off are brought close in Jesus.
我們曾經遠離的人在耶穌裡被拉近了。

Today, as you head out, remember this – many people will tell you tales about how great they are to try to get you to buy things, or think more of them.

今天，當您離開時，請記住這一點……許多人會告訴您他們是多麼偉大的故事，試圖讓您買東西，或者多想想他們。

There is only one God who would shamefully and embarrassingly die on the cross showing his love for you. Hold close to him this Christmas.

只有一位上帝會羞恥地、尷尬地死在十字架上，以表達他對你的愛。這個聖誕節緊緊靠近抱住他。