

It's Just a Great Story 這只是一個偉大的故事

John 約翰福音 1:1-14

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In 1961 the Russian, Yuri Gagarin, was the first person into space. Nikita Khrushchev was the Russian premier at the time. Khrushchev said that when Gagarin went into space, he discovered there was no God there.

1961 年，蘇聯的尤里·加加林成為首個進入太空的人類。尼基塔·赫魯曉夫是當時的蘇聯總理。赫魯曉夫說，當加加林進入太空時，他在那裡沒有看到上帝。

In response to this, Oxford Professor CS Lewis wrote an article called "The Seeing Eye". Lewis writes that if there were a God who created us, He would not be discovered by going up into space.

對此，牛津大學教授魯益師撰寫了一篇名為「看東西的眼睛」的文章。魯益師寫道，如果有一位創造了我們的上帝，他不可能是通過進入太空而被發現。

God would not relate to human beings the way a person on the first floor relates to another person on the second floor. Both are the same beings, just at a different level.

上帝與人類的關係不會像住在一樓的人與住在二樓的另一個人的關係那樣。兩者都是同一種生物，只是不同層數而已。

Lewis wrote that God would relate to humanity the way Shakespeare relates to Hamlet.

魯益師寫道，上帝與人類的關係就像莎士比亞與《王子復仇記》中的主角哈姆雷特的關係一樣。

Shakespeare is the creator of Hamlet and his world. Hamlet has no way of knowing his creator unless Shakespeare was to reveal information about himself in the play.

莎士比亞是哈姆雷特和他的世界的創造者。除非莎士比亞在劇中透露有關他自己的信息，否則哈姆雷特無法認識他的創造者。

Lewis's point is that the only way we can know God is if God writes himself into the story of history so that the other characters in the story can know of him.

魯益師的觀點是，我們認識上帝的唯一方法是上帝將自己寫進歷史故事中，這樣故事中的其他人物才能認識他。

The claim of Christmas, the claim of Christianity, is that this is exactly what God has done. God did not just write information about himself, but he wrote himself into the drama of history.

聖誕節的宣告，基督教的宣告，就是這正是上帝所做的。上帝不僅寫下了關於他自己的信息，他還把自己寫進了歷史的戲劇中。

Is that just too unbelievable?

這是不是太不可思議了？

As we have looked at the believability of Christmas over the past few weeks, James has been suggesting that the story of Christmas ISN'T just a good story in our heads. It's a TRUE story that happened in history.

當我們在過去幾週研究聖誕節的可信度時，詹姆斯一直在暗示聖誕節的故事不僅僅是我們頭腦中的一個好故事，它是歷史上發生過的真實故事。

He has looked at the evidence for Jesus being a real person, that the New Testament accounts of his life weren't made up, and that the miracles they describe haven't been disproved by science. 他研究了耶穌是真實存在的證據，新約聖經對他生平的記載並非虛構，其中描述的奇蹟也沒有被科學推翻。

This still leaves us with the SO WHAT question. The main point I want to make tonight is that if it isn't true, we don't just lose the wonder of Christmas; we lose everything. We lose life and meaning. Good and evil. Even you and me.

這仍然給我們留下了「哪又如何？」的問題。今晚我想表達的主要觀點是，如果這不是真實的，我們不僅會失去聖誕節的奇妙，還會失去一切。我們會失去了生命和意義。善與惡。甚至你和我。

NO NEW STORY 不是新的故事

In his global bestseller, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari tells the story of humanity from the beginning.

在他的全球暢銷書《人類大歷史：從野獸到扮演上帝》中，以色列歷史學家哈拉瑞講述了人類從石器時代至 21 世紀的演化與發展史。

Harari rejects the claims of Christianity, but he recognises its influence. He actually argues that our deepest moral beliefs today are not self-evident truths. They are, in fact, biblical beliefs. 哈拉瑞否定基督教的主張，但他承認它的影響。他實際上爭辯說，我們今天最深刻的道德信仰並不是不證自明的真理。它們實際上是聖經的信仰。

This is how he puts it: *The idea of equality is inextricably intertwined with the idea of creation. If we do not believe in the Christian myths about God, creation and souls, what does it mean that all people are equal?*

他是這樣說的：平等的理念與創造的觀念密不可分。如果我們不相信關於上帝、創造和靈魂的基督教神話，那麼人人都是平等意味著什麼？

Most people in our society have a sense that human rights are good, racism is wrong, women and men are equal, that murder is evil, and the rich should not oppress the poor. But why?

我們社會中的大多數人都認為人權是好的，種族主義是錯誤的，男女是平等的，謀殺是邪惡的，富人不應該壓迫窮人。但為什麼？

If there is no God, then these are not moral facts. They are opinions.

如果沒有上帝，那麼這些就不是道德事實，而是觀點。

British historian Tom Holland makes a similar point. He stopped believing in God as a kid but, after years of research, found himself drawn to Jesus.

英國歷史學家湯姆·霍蘭德也提出了類似的觀點。他從小就不再相信上帝，但經過多年的研究發現自己被耶穌吸引了。

This was mainly because he found that many of the values he held dear were intimately connected to Jesus.

這主要是因為他發現他所珍視的許多價值觀都與耶穌密切相關。

Human equality and rights, equality of men and women, love for foreigners, and care for the poor, vulnerable and marginalised are specifically Christian beliefs.

人類平等和權利、男女平等、愛異族人、關心窮人、弱勢群體和邊緣化群體是基督教的具體信仰。

History shows us that it was only as Christianity spread that these beliefs became generally accepted. The ancient world laughed at them.

歷史告訴我們，只有隨著基督教的傳播，這些信仰才被普遍接受。古代世界嘲笑他們。

The temptation now is to assume that we can keep the values but get rid of the God behind them. 現在的誘惑是假設我們可以保留這些價值觀，但擺脫背後的上帝。

Harari explains what happens if we do: *As far as we can tell from a purely scientific viewpoint, human life has absolutely no meaning. Humans are the outcome of blind evolutionary processes that operate without goal or purpose. Our actions are not part of some divine cosmic plan...Hence any meaning that people ascribe to their lives is just a delusion.*

哈拉瑞解釋瞭如果我們這樣做會發生什麼：就我們從純科學的角度來看，人類的生命絕對沒有意義。人類是沒有目標或目的的盲目進化過程的結果。我們的行為不是某個神聖宇宙計劃的一部分……因此，人們賦予他們生命的任何意義都只是一種幻想。

I acknowledge some people think their lives have no meaning at all. I suspect, though, deep down, none of us really want Harari to be correct.

我承認有些人認為他們的生命根本沒有意義。不過，我懷疑，在我們內心深處，沒有人真的希望哈拉瑞是對的。

If there is no God, then we are left with the reality that we live and die, and we decay, which is it. That is a bad news story.

如果沒有上帝，那麼我們就只剩下我們生，我們死，我們腐爛的現實，僅此而已。這是一個壞消息。

Christmas is the alternative.

聖誕節是另一種選擇。

GOOD NEWS STORY 好消息故事

The Christmas story is the good news story. We just read out a portion from the beginning of John's gospel in the New Testament. John begins not with Jesus's birth but with the universe's birth.

聖誕故事是好消息的故事。我們剛讀了新約《約翰福音》開頭的一部分。約翰不是從耶穌的誕生開始，而是從宇宙的誕生開始。

He mentions a key figure who he calls "the Word". I'll reread the first five verses for us:
他提到了一個他稱之為「道」的關鍵人物。我會再讀一遍前五節：

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

太初有道，道與神同在，道就是神。這道太初與神同在。萬物都是藉著他造的，沒有一樣不是藉著他造的。凡被造的，在他裏面有生命，這生命就是人的光。光照在黑暗裏，黑暗卻沒有勝過光。

As John unfolds, we discover the figure known as the 'Word' is Jesus. The Bible teaches that the creator God is one God in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – who have always existed in perfect love together.

隨著約翰展開，我們發現被稱為「道」的人物就是耶穌。聖經教導說，造物主上帝是三位一體的神——聖父、聖子和聖靈——他們始終一直以完美的愛共存在一起。

The very first Christmas marks the moment when God the Son, the WORD, the Creator of all, became a human being with a specific purpose.

第一個聖誕標誌著神的聖子、「道」、萬物的創造者，成為具有特定目的的肉身的那一刻。

John tells the story of our lives being part of a loving, cosmic plan. I'll reread it from v9:

約翰講述了我們的生命是一個充滿愛的宇宙計劃的一部分的故事。我從第 9 節開始再讀：

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognise him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

那光是真光，來到世上，照亮所有的人。他在世界，世界是藉著他造的，世界卻不認識他。他來到自己的地方，自己的人並不接納他。

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

凡接納他的，就是信他名的人，他就賜他們權柄作 神的兒女。這些人不是從血生的，不是從情慾生的，也不是從人的意願生的，而是從 神生的。

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

道成了肉身，住在我們中間，充充滿滿地有恩典有真理，我們也見過他的榮光，正是父獨一兒子的榮光。。

This text says that Jesus is the story's author and lead character. The God who made the universe enters it to rescue us.

這段經文說耶穌是故事的作者和主角。創造宇宙的神進入其中去拯救我們。

Instead of being celebrated, he is rejected. Instead of being honoured, he is killed. But his death was written into the script as the central part. It wasn't an accident.

他沒有受到慶祝，而是遭到拒絕。他沒有受到榮譽表彰，而是被殺了。但他的死被寫進了劇本，作為中心部分。這不是偶然的。

If it is true that there is a God who made us and loved us, then that is fantastic news. Christmas is fantastic news.

如果真的有一位創造我們並愛我們的上帝，那真是個好消息。聖誕節是個好消息。

Our lives are meaningful. There is such a thing as good and evil. Justice and love, and all God's purposes, will win out in the end.

我們的生命是有意義的。善與惡是有分別的。正義和愛，以及上帝的所有旨意，最終都會勝出。

Christmas is also terrible news, humbling news because we all need saving from the judgement we rightly deserve for living as if God doesn't exist.

聖誕節也是一個可怕的消息，令人謙卑的消息，因為我們都需要從我們過得好像神不存在一樣，理應受到的審判中，拯救出來。

Some of us are deeply aware of sin, even if we don't use that word. If there is a God who sees everything and knows everything, then we know that isn't good.

我們中的一些人深深地意識到罪惡，即使我們不使用這個詞。如果有一位神看到一切，知道一切，那麼我們知道這並不是好的。

On one level, that is good and healthy. The Christmas story, the message of Christianity, is not a self-help message where you are told you are mostly enough and God gives you extra help up.

在一個層面上，這是好的和健康的。聖誕節的故事，基督教的信息，不是一個自助的信息，告訴你你基本上已經做夠了，上帝會給你額外的幫助。

Every time we see Jesus helping someone in the gospels, it's those who knew they weren't enough. They are the ones Jesus welcomes.

每次我們看到耶穌在福音書中幫助某人，都是那些知道自己還不夠的人。他們是耶穌所歡迎的人。

Those who were considered too bad or too broken were the preferred company of Jesus.
那些被認為太壞或太破碎的人是耶穌首選的最喜歡的同伴。

If you are unsure yourself, let me ask you: how would you feel if we projected onto this screen every thought you've ever had? I would be crushed if it was just today's tally.
如果你不確定自己是好是壞，讓我問你：如果我們把你曾經有過的每一個想法都投射到這個屏幕上，你會有什麼感覺？如果只是以今天的統計，我也會覺得崩潰。

God sees it all. This is terrible, but it is not the end of the story.
神看到了這一切。這很可怕，但這並不是故事的結局。

In the Christmas story, we are told Jesus is presented with three gifts by the astrologers from the east. The gift of myrrh would have thrown any new mother. It was used to embalm the dead. It was a symbol of death.

在聖誕節的故事中，我們被告知耶穌被來自東方的占星家贈送了三份禮物。任何新媽媽都會因「沒藥」這份禮物帶來不安。因為它是用來對死者進行防腐處理。那是死亡的象徵。

Jesus came into this world to die. That is what he needed to do to bring about reconciliation between God and humanity. Jesus would die for the sins of humanity.

耶穌來到這個世界是為了去捨命。為了實現上帝與人類之間的和解，這就是他需要做的。耶穌會為人類的罪而死。

About 33 years after his birth, he was crucified outside of Jerusalem. But his death was not the end of the story because three days later, his tomb was empty, and Jesus appeared to his followers...alive.

他出生大約 33 年後，在耶路撒冷城外被釘死在十字架上。但他的死並不是故事的結局，因為三天後，他的墳墓是空的，耶穌……活著……向他的追隨者顯現。

He faced death to defeat death. He paid for our sins so that we don't have to. He knows our secret thoughts, most profound failures, and shame, but he loves us all the way to death and back. All we have to do is trust him.

他面對死亡是為了戰勝死亡。他為我們的罪付出了代價，以致我們不必這樣做。他知道我們的秘密想法和最深的失敗和恥辱，但他愛我們是至死不渝的。我們所要做的就是相信他。

YOUR STORY 您的故事？

The Christmas story is part of GOD'S STORY of time and eternity. It has four main chapters.
聖誕故事是上帝關於時間和永恆的故事的一部分。它有四個主要章節。

In chapter 1, the God who stands outside creation always exists and created all things by speaking them into existence.

在第 1 章中，站在受造物之外並始終存在的神通過說話創造了萬物使萬物存在。

It's the only storyline with a divine being creating all things out of love.

這是唯一一個神以愛創造萬物的故事的情節。

In chapter 2, people reject the love of God. All people live life with no consideration for God. Relationships with God and each other are deeply fractured. All brokenness and evil in the world are connected to chapter 2.

在第 2 章中，人類拒絕了上帝的愛。所有人都過著不考慮上帝存在的生活。與上帝和彼此的關係深深地破裂了。世界上所有的破碎和邪惡都與第 2 章有關。

Chapter 3 is God's plan to reverse all the wrongs we have created. This plan is worked out through history and finds its culmination in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Christmas and Easter story.

第 3 章是上帝扭轉我們所造成的一切錯的計劃。這個計劃是通過歷史實現出來的，並在耶穌基督的生、死和復活中達到頂點。是聖誕節和復活節的故事。

Jesus takes the judgement of God for our rebellion against God upon himself. He dies the death we should have died but rose victorious over sin. Everyone who trusts in Jesus is gathered back into a relationship with God and each other.

耶穌將上帝對我們的悖逆的審判歸咎於自己身上。他受了我們應該受的死，但復活戰勝了罪。每個信靠耶穌的人都會重新與上帝和彼此建立關係。

Chapter 4 of God's story is not the end of the story. It's the beginning of a chapter with no end. It's a chapter where Jesus reigns forever with his people in a world of perfection and peace.

上帝故事的第 4 章不是故事的結尾，而是沒有結尾的一章的開始。在這一章中，耶穌與他的百姓永遠統治著一個完美與和平的世界。

This is the good news of the Christmas story written in history.

這是載入歷史中的聖誕節故事的好消息。

Another story has arisen in the last couple of hundred years. It's taken up residence in the soul of the West for the past 60 years in particular.

在過去的幾百年裡還出現了另一個故事。特別是在過去的 60 年裡，它一直佔據西方人的靈魂。

The technical term for it is Philosophical Naturalism. It's a fancy name for MATERIALISM.

它的專業名詞是「自然主義哲學」。是「唯物主義」的一個特別裝飾過的名字。

It's a **three**-chapter story. The first chapter states no supernatural or spiritual power rules the physical universe. Everything that can be seen and measured results from an explosion that appeared out of nothing billions of years ago.

這是一個有三個章節的故事。在第 1 章中，物質宇宙不是受超自然或屬靈的力量統治。一切可以看到和測量的東西都是數十億年前忽然出現的爆炸的結果。

Chapter 2 of the story is that, against all odds, humanity evolved from prehistoric soup to be the dominant species on the earth.

故事的第 2 章講述了人類克服重重困難從史前進化為地球上優勢的主要物種。

Despite what people might feel, there is no such thing as absolute right or wrong. If you feel it, that's due to a chemical reaction in the brain.

不管人們可能會覺得什麼，沒有絕對的對或錯之分。如果你感覺到它，那是由於大腦中的化學反應。

Everything is an accident, so life has no absolute purpose. So make the most of it, do whatever it takes to be happy because chapter 3 will come.

一切都是偶然的意外，所以生命沒有絕對的目的。所以要充分利用它，盡一切努力讓自己快樂，因為第 3 章會到來。

Chapter 3 is the end. The sun will burn up, humanity will become extinct, and there is no form of afterlife or survival of the conscience. The story of materialism is that this life is it.

第 3 章是一切的終結。太陽將燃燒殆盡，人類將滅絕，沒有任何形式的來世或良心的生存。唯物主義的故事就是只有今生。

The Christmas story says we have a loving creator who has triumphed over evil at great cost to himself to love you dearly, and we look forward to a day when everything wrong will be made right, and we'll live with him in blissful joy for eternity.

聖誕節的故事說我們有一位充滿愛心慈愛的造物主，他以對於自己巨大的代價戰勝了邪惡，深愛著你，我們期待有一天，一切錯誤都會被糾正，我們將與他一起生活在永恆的幸福的喜悅中。

Which story is your story?

哪個故事是你的故事？

The Christmas story is unbelievably good news. Joining Jesus' story is the most real and wonderful thing that can happen to you. But to get to that point, we have to start by seeing humanity is, we are, the villain in the story, and Jesus is the hero.

聖誕節的故事是令人難以置信的好消息。加入耶穌的故事是可能發生在你身上的最真實、最美妙的事情。但要達到這一點，我們必須首先看到人類是，我們是，故事中的反派，而耶穌是英雄。

This Christmas, get written into Jesus' story by giving your life to him. Make your story a good one, one that will go on living as Jesus himself goes on living.

這個聖誕節通過將你的生命獻給耶穌而被寫入耶穌的故事中。讓你的故事成為一個好故事，一個將會繼續存在的故事，就像耶穌自己繼續活著一樣。