

引言 INTRODUCTION

It exists as long as you believe it does. If you do not, then it does not exist. Those statements sum up the traditional Chinese religious belief system. Some people believe that ghosts are the spirits of dead people who cannot find a resting place. People worship a wide variety of deities they believe in. A rock and a tree can be gods. A monkey, a pig and national heroes can also be elevated to become gods. People burn incense and bow down to statues. Those worshippers may not have much clue why they worship their gods in certain ways. They just follow what others do. They sincerely believe that those idols can bless them and protect them. What if one god does not work? No problem. There are plenty of other gods they can choose from. To them religion is like a buffet line. Just grab whatever that suits your taste. Few people ever doubt their beliefs. They trust all the fairy stories as if they were history. The Bible tells us that there is only one true God. Our relationship with Him is a matter of choice. God's choice! We do not choose Him among the many deities. It was God who chose those people He intended to save before He created the world. However, merely knowing that the God of the Bible exists will not lead to salvation. In our passage today, Paul tells us that Israel as a nation missed out in God's salvation plan. They had the knowledge, but they lacked the heart. Ultimately, they would be responsible for their decision. We do not need to figure out a path to heaven. There is only one gospel because Jesus is the only way to salvation.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 猶太人的失敗 Failure of the Jews

Paul begins by talking about the failure of the Jews to receive salvation. Paul explains two human reasons for their failure. The first reason is found in **9:31-32**: 31 But Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. 32 Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “stumbling stone.” The Jews sought after righteousness. But they attempted to get there by their works, namely, by obeying the law. The law reflects God's requirement for righteousness. The moral principles define God's standard of right from wrong. The sacrificial rituals provide temporary removal of sins. The civil regulations govern people's life in the society. However, abiding by the law can never save anyone. God wanted the Israelites to turn to Him when they saw their inability to fulfill His requirements in the law. The Israelites used the wrong means to pursue a right goal. It is like getting lost on a wrong path when you travel to a certain destination. Perhaps your GPS points you to a different direction, or you enter an incorrect address. The Israelites were on the wrong track. We see the second reason for their failure in **10:2-3** – 2 For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. 3 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. The Jews created their own version of righteousness. The Pharisees in Jesus' time is a good example. They had much knowledge about the law and they taught people about it. They thought they had attained the righteousness they were looking for. But they essentially made an idol out of the law and their traditions. Many people in the world are like that. For example, some people

want to stay health by doing exercise and adopting certain diets. Gradually, they become addicted to working out and they worship their appearance. They have to keep doing more to feel good. Other people try to get rich. They pursue prosperity and a better life for their families. However, they end up as workaholics. They work even harder to stay ahead of their competitors. We will fail when we make up our own rules and do not follow God's commands. The only way to salvation is by faith in Jesus. If we go back to verse 32, Paul uses an interesting term to describe Jesus. He is the "stumbling stone" to the Jews. The term is cited from the book of Isaiah. Jesus will be like a rock on a path that trips those who overlook Him. On the contrary, those who put their trust in Jesus, the stone will be a stepping block to salvation. The apostle Peter also quotes the same Old Testament passages in [1 Peter 2:7-8](#) – 7 Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone," 8 and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message – which is also what they were destined for. Jesus is a precious capstone to those who receive Him. In the ancient times, architects used a capstone (also called a cornerstone) as a reference point to build a house. Whether the final structure will be straight or slanted depends on that rock. The Jews failed because they denied Jesus. They wanted to access God in their own way. Every religion in the world is like that too. Human logic tells us that there is no free lunch. We feel that we have to do something in exchange for eternal life. Therefore, people do good works, donate money to the charity, offer a roasted pig to deities (but the worshippers eat it later!) or participate in religious rituals. They will all fail. Jesus is the only way, truth and life. No one can come to the Father except through Him. We are not saved by baptism, attending church or signing up for membership either. Only Jesus can save us. Once we are saved, we will forever be saved.

2. 主耶穌的信實 Faithfulness of the Lord

The Jews as a race failed to achieve God's righteousness. However, their mistake does not nullify the faithfulness of our Lord. Let us look at [10:6-8](#) – 6 But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the deep?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming. Paul was quoting from Deuteronomy 30. At that time, God clearly told Moses that he could not enter Canaan. Before Moses passed the baton to Joshua, he invited the new generation of Israelites to reconfirm their covenant with God. All the men in the previous generations perished in the wilderness because they disobeyed God. Moses urged his people not to follow the footsteps of their ancestors. Obedience to the law was the only way to maintain their relationship with God. Moses laid out God's promises if the Israelites would listen to the Lord, and God's curse when they violated the law. God's requirements were clear and accessible. His law was not far above the sky or deep in the ocean. God had etched His commands in people's hearts. Just trust and obey Him, and God would continue to bless them. When Paul refers to the Deuteronomy passage, he interprets it in light of the gospel of Jesus and applies it to both the Jews and the Gentiles. God's words to the Israelites around 1400 BC had been fulfilled in Christ. That is why the gospel of John describes Jesus as the Word. Jesus came down from heaven to proclaim the good news of salvation. He rose from the dead to prove that He is God. Jesus had completed the salvation work. God's plan has been made known to the world. Whoever responds by faith will be saved. God brought the Israelites into Canaan out of

His grace. It was not because they were more numerous or they were morally superior than other nations. The Promised Land was a resting place for them. They were no longer slaves in Egypt. They concluded 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Now they had a homeland. The symbolic meaning is that only in Christ can we be freed from the bondage of sin and enjoy the blessing to be God's people. The author of the book of Hebrews draws an analogy between God's rest on the seventh day of creation, the Israelites' rest in Canaan and our eternal rest in Christ. He says in **Hebrews 4:1-2** – 1 Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. 2 For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. The writer encourages his Jewish peers not to follow the negative example of their ancestors. They did not enter the rest God had prepared for them because they did not receive God's words by faith. God had been faithful to the Israelites and to us. Just like Paul describes it, today we receive the same "word of faith." The same message that God proclaimed thousands of years ago is still valid today. Christianity is not a new religion. It is not a western religion either. It is a global faith that is available to all who receive Jesus by faith. The only message every church now has should be about Jesus. We do not preach a social message to make the society better. What we share is not a moral lesson to make people more noble. What we convey is the gospel of Jesus Christ. We should not be shy to talk about sins. If a person does not realize the severity of sin, then he/she will not see the need for the Savior. Jesus came, died and rose for us. That is our message for the fallen world.

3. 凡信者的結局 Fate of the Believers

The Jews had failed but our Lord remains faithful. He will bring His people into eternal glory. That is the fate of all the believers. Most Christians should be familiar with **10:9** – That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Salvation can only be achieved through Jesus. Nowadays a typical person may have ten or more passwords: garage door-opener, phones, emails, bank accounts, credit cards and many others. You have to enter all the numbers and letters correctly to get through. Likewise, Jesus is the only key to open the door to heaven. We have to receive Him by faith. Here, Paul tells us the two criteria that express a person's faith in Jesus. We must believe in our hearts that Jesus rose from the dead. The power to come back to life after death proves that Jesus is God. Skeptics throughout human history tried to refute that truth. But they have all failed. There are some objective evidences to support Jesus' resurrection. But ultimately, we have to bridge the gap of our logic with faith. Besides believing that God raised Jesus from the dead, we must also confess with our lips that Jesus is our Lord. The word "confess" means saying the same thing. For example, when we confess our sins, we agree 100% with God's definition of the offense. We do not excuse ourselves that we made a mistake or we were being ignorant. Similarly, when we confess that Jesus is our Lord, we concur that Jesus is the Lord over all things. It took much courage for the first century Christians to declare that Jesus was their Lord. Caesar was the Emperor in the Roman world. People must embrace their kings as lords. Therefore, believers risked their lives if they pledged allegiance to Lord Jesus and not to their Emperors. Many believers were tortured and died for their faith as a result. The same thing happens even to this day in many countries. We may think that this country highly regards the Christian faith. But oppression of Biblical values in schools, work-places and the political arena is nothing new. Atheists expect Christians to tolerate their secular views but not the other way

round. Let me use an example that is not that sensitive to illustrate the point. Say I like to wear green shirts. In the past, people may think that I have the freedom to choose whatever color, as long as I wear a shirt. Those who hate green color may keep their opinion to themselves. Nowadays, not only do people openly announce that green is ugly, they will force me to get rid of all my green shirts and allow me to wear only blue ones like them. We saw people demolished statues of some American heroes and pioneers. They believe that those sculptures are symbols of racism. Some experts predict that if our government does not do something to stop the trend, before long rioters may tear down crosses and burn churches with some outrageous excuses. What will you do when that happens? Will you still confess that Jesus is your Lord if you will suffer loss in doing so? Following Jesus comes with a cost. Indeed, there will be blessings. But there will also be hardship when we stand up for Christ. God has given us the obligation to tell others about Jesus. According to the Bible, people will end up in one of two destinations depending on the decision they make in this life. Continue to read **verses 12-13**: 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” The phrase “no difference” echoes what Paul says in chapter 3. People of any race make no difference because every person is a born-sinner. We all fall short of God’s glory. There is also no difference for how a person can be saved. We have to put our trust in Jesus. Regardless of nationality, social background, wealth, age or any factor, all who call on the name of the same Lord Jesus Christ will be saved.

結論 CONCLUSION

There is only one gospel because Jesus is the only way to salvation. The Jews failed because they denied Jesus. They would rather believe in their own ways. But God’s truth stands forever whether people choose to receive or reject it. It is common for people to only believe in the things they accept as real. That is why fake news has its market. We are in an election year. We should watch out for fraudulent information. Four years ago, Cameron Harris created some frenzy with a phony article. He spent \$5 to buy an abandoned website called Christian Times Newspaper. He fabricated a story that Hillary Clinton conjured up a scheme to cheat in the election. That fake news claims that an electrician stumbled upon boxes of ballots pre-marked for Hillary Clinton in a warehouse. Harris patched a picture he found on Google to make the story look real. The photo was actually taken in England. A man stood in front of a few containers that labelled as ballot boxes. Within 24 hours after the story went live, six million people had read it. Within days, the authority concluded after investigation that the story was bogus. By then, Harris had already made \$22,000 from the advertisements Google placed on his site. Harris’ idea gained success because many people selectively choose to accept the information that they think is true. Afterward, former President Obama commented on the fake news phenomenon by saying: “Increasingly we become so secure in our bubbles that we start accepting only information, whether it’s true or not, that fits our opinions, instead of basing our opinions on the evidence that is out there.” In comparison, the Christian faith is true because it originates from the God of truth. It survives the most thorough scrutiny and vicious attack. It is the good news that people all over the world should listen and believe.

引言 INTRODUCTION

信則有，不信則無。這句話總結了中國傳統的民間信仰。有些人認為，鬼是一些無法找到歸宿之地的靈魂。人們崇拜他們相信的各種神明。石頭和樹木可以是神。猴子、豬和民族英雄也可以成為神。人們燒香並向神像鞠躬。他們可能不太了解為什麼他們要以某些方式來拜神。他們只是跟著別人去做。他們真誠地相信那些偶像可以祝福和保佑他們。如果一個神明不管用怎麼辦？沒問題。他們還有很多其他的神明可供選擇。對他們來說，宗教就像自助餐。你就去選適合你口味的對象即可。很少有人懷疑自己的信仰。他們把那些神仙故事當作歷史一樣。聖經告訴我們，只有一位真神。我們與祂的關係是一個選擇。是神的選擇！我們不是在眾多神明中選擇祂。是神在創造世界之前選擇了祂打算拯救的人。但是，僅僅知道聖經的神存在並不等於得救。保羅在今天的經文中告訴我們，以色列作為一個民族錯過了神的救贖計劃。他們有知識，但缺乏真誠的心。最終，他們將對自己的決定負責。我們不需要尋找通往天堂的道路。只有一個福音，因為耶穌是得救的唯一途徑。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 猶太人的失敗 Failure of the Jews

保羅首先談到猶太人的失敗，為何他們無法得救。保羅解釋了他們兩個失敗的原因。第一個原因是在 9:31-32 – **31 但以色列人追求律法的義，反得不著律法的義。32 這是什麼緣故呢？是因為他們不憑著信心求，只憑著行為求，他們正跌在那絆腳石上。**猶太人追求公義。但是他們試圖通過自己的努力達到目的，就是藉著遵守律法。律法反映出神對公義的要求。道德的原則定義了神對錯的標準。獻祭的禮儀可以暫時消除人的罪。民事法則規範人們在社會上的生活。但是，遵守律法永遠無法使人得救。神希望以色列人在看到自己無法履行律法上的要求時轉向祂。以色列人使用錯誤的方式追求正確的目標。這就像在前往某個目的地時迷路了。導航儀可能帶你走錯方向，或者你輸入的地址不正確。以色列人走錯了路。我們在 10:2-3 中看到了他們失敗的第二個原因：**2 我可以證明他們向神有熱心，但不是按著真知識；3 因為不知道神的義，想要立自己的義，就不服神的義了。**猶太人創造了自己版本的公義。耶穌時代的法利賽人就是一個很好的例子。他們精通律法，也教導別人律法。他們以為自己已經獲得了他們所尋求的義。但他們其實是把律法和他們的傳統變成偶像。世界上很多人都是這樣。例如，有些人想通過運動和飲食來保持健康。逐漸地，他們沉迷於鍛煉，他們也崇拜自己的外表。他們必須繼續做更多的運動才能感覺良好。其他人想要致富。他們希望家人能過更好的生活。但是，它們最

終成為工作狂。他們必須更加努力才不會覺得落在人家的後面。當我們制定自己的遊戲規則而不去遵守神的命令時，我們將會失敗。得救的唯一方法是相信耶穌。如果我們回到第 32 節，保羅用一個有趣的用詞來形容耶穌。祂是猶太人的「絆腳石」。這個字引用自以賽亞書。耶穌會像石頭一樣絆倒那些忽視祂的人。相反，那些相信耶穌的人，祂便成為救恩的踏腳石。使徒彼得在彼得前書 2:7-8 中也引用了這段舊約的經文— 7 所以，他在你們信的人就為寶貴，在那不信的人有話說：匠人所棄的石頭已作了房角的頭塊石頭。8 又說：作了絆腳的石頭，跌人的磐石。他們既不順從，就在道理上絆跌；他們這樣絆跌也是預定的。對於那些接受耶穌的人來說，耶穌是寶貴的基石。在古代，建築師使用一塊基石（也稱為房角石）作為建造房屋的參考點。最終結構是筆直還是傾斜取決於房角石。猶太人失敗了，因為他們否定了耶穌。他們想以自己的方式到達神那裡。世界上的每個宗教也是如此。人的邏輯告訴我們，沒有免費的午餐。我們覺得必須做些事情來換取永生。因此，人們做好事、向慈善機構捐款、為神靈獻上烤豬（但信徒們之後把它吃掉！）或參加宗教儀式。他們都會失敗。耶穌是唯一的道路、真理和生命。若不是通過耶穌，沒有人可以到天父那裡。我們也不是因為浸禮、參加聚會或登記成為會友而得救。只有耶穌才能拯救我們。而且我們是一次得救，永遠得救。

2. 主耶穌的信實 Faithfulness of the Lord

猶太人作為一個民族沒有達到神的公義。但是，他們的錯誤並沒有改變主的信實。讓我們看 10:6-8 - 6 惟有出於信心的義如此說：「你不要心裡說：誰要升到天上去呢？（就是要領下基督來；）7 誰要下到陰間去呢？（就是要領基督從死裡上來。）」8 他到底怎麼說呢？他說：這道離你不遠，正在你口裡，在你心裡。（就是我們所傳信主的道。）保羅引述申命記 30 章。當時，神清楚地告訴摩西，他不能進入迦南。在摩西將接力棒交給約書亞之前，他邀請了新一代的以色列人再次確認他們與神的約。前幾代的人因為不順服神而死在曠野。摩西敦促他的子民不要犯祖先的錯誤。遵守律法是維持他們與神的關係的唯一途徑。摩西闡述了聽從耶和華的祝福，以及違反律法時的咒詛。神的要求很明確，也很容易理解。祂的律法不是遠在天上，也不是在海洋深處。神已經在人們心中銘刻了祂的命令。只要信靠並順服祂，神就會繼續祝福他們。當保羅引用申命記的經文時，他把其中的含義延伸到耶穌的福音，並把它應用在猶太人和外邦人身上。神在公元前 1400 年左右對以色列人所說的話已經在基督裡實現了。因此，約翰福音將耶穌描述為道。耶穌從天上降下來，宣揚得救的好消息。祂從死裡復活，證明祂是神。耶穌已經完成了救恩工作。神的計劃已為世人所知。凡以信心回應的人就能得救。神出於祂的恩典將以色列人帶入迦南。這不是因為他們人數眾多或是他們的道德水平比其他國家優越。應許之地是他們的安息之地。他們不再是埃及的奴隸。他們結束了在曠野 40 年的漂流。現在他們有了家園。其背後的象徵意義是，只有在基督裡，我們才能擺脫罪的束縛，享受成為神子民的祝福。希伯來書的作者對神在創世第七日的安息、以色列

人在迦南的安息和我們在基督裡的永恆安息作了類比。他在希伯來書 4:1-2 說 - 1 我們既蒙留下，有進入他安息的應許，就當畏懼，免得我們中間或有人似乎是趕不上了。2 因為有福音傳給我們，像傳給他們一樣；只是所聽見的道與他們無益，因為他們沒有信心與所聽見的道調和。作者鼓勵他的猶太同胞不要效法祖先的負面榜樣。他們沒有進入神為他們準備的安息，因為他們沒有憑信心接受神的話。神一直對以色列人和我們保持信實。就像保羅描述的那樣，今天我們相信的是同樣的道。神在幾千年前宣告的信息今天仍然有效。基督信仰不是新的宗教。它也不是西方的宗教。它是普世的信仰，提供所有人機會來相信並接受耶穌。任何教會唯一的信息應該是關於耶穌。我們不是傳播社會福音以改善社會。我們所分享的也不是道德教育。我們傳達的是耶穌基督的福音。我們不應該不好意思談論罪。如果一個人沒有意識到罪的嚴重性，那麼他便不覺得需要救主。耶穌來了、受死，並為我們復活。這是我們對墮落世界的信息。

3. 凡信者的結局 Fate of the Believers

猶太人失敗了，但我們的主仍然信實。祂會將祂的子民帶進永恆的榮耀裡。那是所有信徒的結局。大多數基督徒應該熟悉 10:9 - 你若口裡認耶穌為主，心裡信神叫他從死裡復活，就必得救。一個人只能通過耶穌而得救。如今，每個人都擁有一大堆密碼：車庫的門、手機、電子郵箱、銀行帳戶、信用卡等。你必須正確輸入所有數字和字母才能通過。同樣，耶穌是打開通向天堂之門的唯一鑰匙。我們必須憑信心接受祂。保羅在這裡告訴我們兩個表達對耶穌信心的基礎。首先，我們必須堅信耶穌從死裡復活才能得救。從死裡復活的能力證明耶穌是神。人類歷史上的懷疑論者都試圖推翻這個真理。但是他們都站不住腳。有一些客觀的證據支持耶穌的復活。但最終，我們必須以信心跨越邏輯的鴻溝。除了相信神使耶穌從死裡復活之外，我們還必須口裡承認耶穌是我們的主。「認」這個字的意思是說同樣的話。例如，當我們認罪時，我們必須百分之百同意神對罪的定義。我們不能編藉口說自己只是不小心犯錯或是出於無知。同樣，當我們承認耶穌是我們的主時，我們同意耶穌是萬主之主。第一世紀的基督徒需要很大的勇氣去承認耶穌是他們的主。凱撒是當時羅馬的皇帝。人們必須擁戴國王。因此，信徒們如果效忠於主耶穌而不是皇帝，他們就會碰到生命危險。結果，許多信徒遭迫害，甚至為信仰而殉道。直到今天，在許多國家還是發生了同樣的事情。我們可能認為美國尊重基督信仰。但是在學校、工作場所和政界壓迫聖經價值觀並不是什麼新鮮事。無神論者要求基督徒接納他們的世俗觀點，但他們卻拒絕接受聖經的標準。讓我用一個無傷大雅的例子來說明這一點。假設我喜歡穿綠色襯衫。過去，人們可能會認為只要我穿衣服，我有自由選擇任何顏色。那些討厭綠色的人可能會保留自己的意見。如今，人們不僅公開宣布綠色難看，還會強迫我丟掉所有綠色的衣服，允許我跟他們一像只能穿藍色。我們看到一些人拆毀了一些美國英雄和先賢的雕像。他們認為這些雕塑是種族主義的象徵。一些專家預測，如果我們的政府不採取任何行動阻止這種趨勢，那麼

不久之後，暴徒可能會一些離譜的藉口拆掉十字架，並燒毀教堂。發生這種情況時你會怎麼做？如果你會蒙受損失，你是否仍然承認耶穌是你的主？跟隨耶穌是要付代價的。神的確會祝福我們。但是當我們為基督站起來時，可能也會面對阻力。神已給我們傳福音的責任。根據聖經，一個人根據自己一生的決定最終進入兩個目的地之一。繼續閱讀第 12-13 節：**12 猶太人和希利尼人並沒有分別，因為眾人同有一位主；他也厚待一切求告他的人。13 因為「凡求告主名的，就必得救。」**「並沒有分別」這句話與保羅在第 3 章中所說的互相呼應。任何種族的人都沒有分別，因為每個人都是天生的罪人。我們都虧缺了神的榮耀。我們得救的方式也沒有區別。我們都必須相信耶穌。不論國籍、社會背景、身價、年齡或任何其他因素，凡求告主名的人就必得救。

結論 CONCLUSION

只有一個福音，因為耶穌是得救的唯一途徑。猶太人失敗了，因為他們否認耶穌。他們寧願相信自己的方式。但是，無論人們選擇接受還是拒絕，神的真理永遠存在。人們通常只相信他們接受的事物為真實。這就是為什麼假新聞有它的市場。我們正處於選舉年。我們特別要提防假信息。四年前，卡梅倫·哈里斯 (Cameron Harris) 以一篇虛假的報導引起轟動。他花了 5 美元購買了一個廢棄的網站，名為《基督教時報》。他編了一個故事，說希拉里·克林頓 (Hillary Clinton) 計劃在選舉中作弊。那則虛假消息稱，一名電工偶然在某處的倉庫中發現了幾箱投希拉里·克林頓的假選票。哈里斯還貼了一張他在 Google 上找到的照片，使故事看起來更似真實。這張照片實際上是在英國拍攝的。一個人站在幾個標有選票的箱子前。故事上線後的 24 小時內，有 600 萬人閱讀了那個故事。幾天之後，當局在調查後得出結論說這個故事是假的。在那時，哈里斯已經從 Google 在他網站上張貼的廣告中賺了 22,000 美元。哈里斯之所以成功，是因為有許多人只選擇接受他們認為是真實的信息。隨後，前總統奧巴馬對假新聞現象發表了評論，他說：「我們就像生活在一個安全的泡沫裡，以至於我們只接受符合我們觀點的信息，無論那些消息是真的還是假的。我們的結論卻不是基於證據。」與之相比，基督信仰是真實的，因為它源於真理之神。它可以抵受最徹底的審查和惡意攻擊。那是一個好消息，全世界的人都應該聆聽並接受。