

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

Birth order can affect your status and privilege in a family. You know how it is like if you have multiple siblings. My wife is the youngest of four girls. On the one hand, she was a spoiled kid when she was small. Her parents gave her better treatments, and her three sisters protected her. But on the other hand, she was sometimes being left out and even harassed. If the oldest sibling did not want to wash dishes, she would ask the next sister to do it. Guess who would get the last straw? In comparison, I am the second child in my family. Therefore, I got a mixed-bag when I grew up. I felt the honor to watch over my younger siblings. I knew my older brother loved me. But sometimes he used me to practice his wrestling skills. Ouch! Even now, I still admire him in many ways. He is the most intelligent person among the four of us. From the world's standard, he also has the most successful career. However, being the oldest and richest child also means more responsibilities. My older brother spends much time and money to care for our parents. I am grateful to him for all that he does. In chapter 2 of Hebrews, the author describes Jesus as our Superior Brother. What does that title imply? Among other things, Jesus sets an example for us like an oldest sibling. There are many things we should learn from Him. Jesus identified with us through His death, and He calls us to identify with Him in our lives.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 信息的肯定 Message Affirmed (v. 2-4)

First of all, the author reminds his readers that the salvation message they received was affirmed. Let us read from **2:1-4**. God proclaimed His truth through various messengers like prophets and apostles. Those messages became parts of our Bible. Moreover, God also used supernatural means to affirm His messages. We see the words signs, wonders and miracles in verse 4. “Signs” are like notice boards. Drivers will pay attention to the signs by the roads. They tell you speed limit, how to get to a certain place or a road construction ahead. Jesus performed miraculous signs to heal the sick and cast out demons to prove that God’s Kingdom had arrived. “Wonders” focus on the response of people. They were amazed by what they saw. The third word “miracles” points to the source of supernatural power. People interpreted that it must be from God. The author says God does not only send us information and inspirations, He also gives us the Holy Spirit. He is the third person of the Trinity God. The Holy Spirit comes into a person’s heart the moment he/she receives Jesus. Paul says in Romans 8:16 – **The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children**. The presence of the Holy Spirit confirms our salvation by changing our lives. A Christian will love God and His Word. On the flip side, he/she should hate sins. Those experience affirms our new life. The point is not about whether you love God 100 or 50%. The contrast is whether you love God or you do not. God gives an assurance in our hearts if we are truly saved. But many Israelites in the Old Testament did not believe the message God sent them. Therefore, God disciplined them. The author uses that failure to warn his readers. He says in verse 3: **How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation...?** The history of their ancestors verifies that God is always faithful. But they still rebelled against God. What are the consequences if the readers of Hebrews ignored the message they received? Would they lose

their salvation? Verse 1 to 4 of this chapter is the first of the five warnings in the book. Last time we said that this letter was written to some Jewish Christians. The author urged them not to deny Jesus. In general, Baptists believe in the doctrine of “once saved, always saved.” It means that after you become a believer, nothing can undo that status. Jesus promised us in John 10:27-28 – **27 “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”** The message is very clear. Even a prodigal son cannot end his relationship with his parents. Salvation is God’s gift and not our effort. We mentioned earlier a few indications of a new life in God. We will not repeat that. If all that we have said is a correct understanding, then the author was encouraging some genuine believers, not non-believers. He cautions them not to “ignore” God’s salvation. The term means being careless. He warned them not to neglect what they believed, rather than not to reject what they heard. It is like you should not ignore a warning light on the dashboard of your car or ignore signals of a possible health issue. Even if those Christians denied Jesus later, they would not lose their salvation. But they would lose the blessings that come with a close relationship with the Lord. For example, God’s peace, joy and grace in this life, as well as God’s eternal rewards for His faithful followers. The same admonition is for us too. There may be times when we turn cold to spiritual matters. Perhaps hardships in life cast doubt to our faith. Or we stumble in sins and feel ashamed to pray and attend church meetings. Do not drift away from the faith because of sin or complacency. It is never too late to turn back to God. God’s message in the Bible is affirmed through witnesses and our personal experience. His truth is not just religious information. It is useful to every aspect of our life, such as parenting, friendship and career. It is beneficial to us.

## 2. 使命的完成 Mission Accomplished (v. 5-11)

God’s message of salvation is affirmed by various means. Next, the author tells us that Jesus’ mission was also accomplished. What mission are we talking about? Let us read **verse 5 to 11**. Most of us should know that verse 6 to 8 are quoted from Psalm 8. The passage states both the frailty and dignity of mankind. We are weak and powerless in many ways. To say that we are a little lower than the angels is an understatement. For one, we cannot fly like angels! We also have a limited life-span, but angels live forever. However, we have utmost dignity because we are the only living thing created after God’s image. God gave us a soul to communicate with Him. Because of that unique status, God assigned us the responsibility to rule over His created world. But of course, Adam failed and so do we. We pollute the environment and waste natural resources God provides. Adam even rebelled against God and sin thus came into our world. As a result, the harmonious relationship between mankind and other living things was disrupted. Genesis 9:2 reads: **“The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands.”** God said that to Noah after the flood. Why were animals afraid of humans? In the next verse, God said that from now on people could eat meat. Humans were vegetarians before the flood. Now animals run for their lives when they see people, especially the Cantonese! Adam failed to fulfill God’s purpose. That unfinished mission was accomplished by Jesus. Verse 9 of the Hebrews passage repeats a few topics mentioned earlier. Like Adam, Jesus was also made a little lower than the angels when He became a man. But compared to Adam, Jesus received all the glory and honor, and He subdued the whole creation under His feet. Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father. How did Jesus accomplish all that? It was through His death. Jesus became a man and finished what God asked Adam to do. Jesus lived a perfect

life without sinning. He also submitted Himself to the Father and even died on the cross. Then verse 10 adds other meanings to Jesus' suffering: **In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.** It was necessary for the Father to send Jesus to the cross to save us. Here it says Jesus is the "author" of our salvation. The Greek word means a pioneer or a role-model. Another usage of the word is in 12:2, when the writer says that Jesus is "the author and perfecter of our faith." Jesus begins and completes our faith. He showed us how to live by faith through obeying God's will. Jesus was made perfect through His suffering. It does not mean Jesus would be imperfect if He did not go to the cross. Jesus' perseverance proves His perfect submission to God. Jesus accomplished God's mission in His earthly life. He opened the door to save anyone who puts his/her faith in Him. Because of all that, Jesus set a perfect example for us. To a certain extent, if our Superior Brother could do it, so can we. He is an encouragement to the readers of Hebrews and to us. Jesus willingly chose to suffer for our sake. He triumphed by relying on God. The Hebrews readers were humiliated or even martyred because of their faith. We will also face many difficulties. Few people in their sound mind will volunteer to suffer. We may prefer the path of least resistance to go to heaven. But very often suffering is a necessary means to perfect our faith. It humbles us and makes us realize how weak we are. It helps us understand that we must depend on God in this journey of faith.

### 3. 僕人的受苦 Minister Afflicted (v. 14-18)

The salvation message from God was affirmed. Jesus Christ had accomplished His mission. Thirdly, Jesus was afflicted like a minister when He came into the world. Let us look at **verses 14 to 18**. Affliction was the path for Jesus to receive His glory and honor. This section further elaborates why Jesus must be afflicted. First, in verse 14, Jesus was afflicted so that He could destroy the authority of Satan over death. It is true that God creates life and determines our longevity. The Bible tells us that death is a penalty of sin. Adam died and every person will eventually face death too. Satan uses that reality to enslave us with fear. Various religions come up with different theories to minimize the fear of death. First is nothingness. We simply vanish after leaving this world like blowing off a candle. Second is reincarnation. Just try harder to accumulate enough brownie points, hoping that you can become a better creature than a pig or a dog in your next life. Third is the idea of a paradise. You can get there only if you do enough good work in this life. All three propositions are contrary to the Bible. Jesus is the only way for us to enter into eternity. He conquered death by dying for us. Jesus takes away our fear about death by resolving the mystery of death. All who put their trust in Jesus will see Him after departing this world. I met several elderly Christians who told me calmly that they were ready to see the Lord. But they were all in decent health conditions when they said so. Then they passed away peacefully weeks or even days later. Somehow, God gave them a signal that it was about time to go home. That is truly a blessing. Jesus' affliction did not only remove our fear about death. Secondly, verse 17 says Jesus was afflicted so that "**He might become a merciful and faithful high priest.**" Jesus served as the perfect High Priest and offered Himself on the cross as the ultimate sacrifice to pay for our sins. Jesus showed His faithfulness by obeying God's will. Besides being faithful, Jesus was also merciful. He did everything because He loved us. I expect a doctor or a mechanic to be faithful when I seek help from them. I hope that they will do a good job. Beyond that, it will make me feel better if they show some mercy. Perhaps they can say something like: "I know how you feel because I had the same issue before. But don't worry. I'll

take care of it.” Jesus became a man to experience firsthand what it was like to live as a human. He did that to show us His mercy. Verse 18 says: **Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.** The word “tempt” in the Bible can refer to both an enticement to sin, or a trial of our faith. Satan tempts us to stumble us, but God can use the same event to test and grow our faith. Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness before He began His ministries. He also went through many tests in His life. His personal experience makes our prayer more precious and effective. We do not only pray to a God high up there somewhere. We pray to a Lord who was once down here with us. It is true that Jesus had never been dumped by a girl. But He was abandoned and betrayed by the people He loved. Jesus was never laid off from a job. But He surely knows what frustration or a broken dream feels like. Jesus had never been sick. But He understands our limitations and weaknesses. We have a Lord who can sympathize with us in every way. He never despises us for our doubt, worry and lack of faith. Pour out your heart to Him. Jesus knows how you feel. He has enough grace for any need you may have.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

Jesus identified with us through His death, and He calls us to identify with Him in our lives. Our Superior Brother experienced what we may face. We can live a victorious life when we receive Jesus into our hearts, and follow His example of obedience to God. Let me conclude with a beautiful story about the love between two brothers. Chad had a rare liver disease. The cause is unknown, and so is the cure. Unfortunately, Chad’s illness progressed quicker than his doctor had expected. Liver transplant was the only hope for him. Chad was on a waiting list for organ donation. But it did not seem that he could wait much longer. Another option would be a living donor. The family called everyone for help. Chad’s brother Ryan was a good match. Chad was grateful for Ryan’s heart. But he did not want Ryan to take the risk. “You would do the same for me, wouldn’t you?” Ryan asked. That settled the argument. Ryan is the kind of person who would not hesitate to give it all to the people he loved. On the day of the operation, all the family members gathered at the hospital. They had the best doctors and facilities. Everything went well until Ryan went into a cardiac arrest two days after the surgery. Unfortunately, he passed away two days later. Chad had to live with a huge scar on his body, as well as an immense guilt in his heart. But Chad committed to spend the rest of his life the way Ryan did: have faith in God and show compassion to others. Though Ryan was gone, a part of him continued to live inside Chad. One brother gave a priceless gift so that another brother can live. Jesus Christ, our Superior Brother, offered Himself on the cross so that all who believe in Him will have a new life. We are called to follow His example of sacrificial love.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

出生的次序會影響你在家庭中的地位和特權。如果你有幾個兄弟姐妹，你便能體會。我的太太有三個姐姐。一方面，她小時候是個被寵壞的孩子。她的父母給她很多優惠，她的三個姐姐也保護她。但另一方面，她有時會被忽略，甚至被欺負。如果大姐不想洗碗，她會叫下一個妹妹來做。猜猜誰是最終的幸運兒？相比之下，我是家裡的老二。因此，在我成長時甜苦都嘗過。我覺得有義務照顧我的弟弟妹妹。我也知道我的哥哥愛我，雖然有時他用我來練習他的摔跤技巧。即使是現在，我仍然在很多方面欣賞他。他是我們四個人中最聰明的。從世界的標準來看，他有最成功的事業。然而，最年長和最富有的孩子也意味著更多的責任。我哥哥花很多時間和金錢來照顧我們的父母。我感謝他所做的一切。在希伯來書第 2 章，作者將耶穌描述為我們超越的弟兄。這個頭銜有什麼意思？耶穌為我們樹立了榜樣，就像一個大哥或大姐那樣。我們在許多方面應該向耶穌學習。耶穌通過祂的死與我們認同，祂呼召我們在生命中也與祂認同。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 信息的肯定 Message Affirmed (v. 2-4)

首先，作者提醒他的讀者，他們收到的救恩信息是肯定的。讓我們讀 2:1-4。神通過先知和使徒等不同的使者宣講祂的真理。這些信息成為我們聖經的一部分。此外，神還使用超自然的方式來肯定祂的信息。我們在第 4 節看到神蹟、奇事和異能這三個用詞。「神蹟」就像佈告欄。司機會注意路邊的標誌。它們告訴你限速，如何到達某個地方或前方在修路。耶穌行神蹟醫病趕鬼，證明神的國已經來臨。「奇事」是指出人們的反應。他們對所看到的現象感到驚訝。第三個字「異能」是指超自然力量的來源。人們理解那股力量一定是來自神。作者說神不僅給我們信息和啟示，祂還賜給我們聖靈。聖靈是三位一體真神的第三個位格。在一個人接受耶穌的那一刻，聖靈就進入他的心。保羅在羅馬書 8:16 中說：**聖靈與我們的心同證我們是神的兒女**。聖靈的同在改變我們的生命，證明我們已經得救。基督徒會愛神和祂的話語。另一方面，他們應該恨惡罪。這些經歷肯定了我們的新生命。重點不在於你是百分之一百還是百分之五十愛神。其對比是你愛神或是不愛神。神在我們心裡給我們一個保證，使我們知道自己真的得救。但是舊約中的許多以色列人不相信神給他們的信息。因此，神管教他們。作者用這個失敗的教訓來警告他的讀者。他在第 3 節中說：**我們若忽略這麼大的救恩，怎能逃罪呢...？**他們祖宗的經歷證明神是信實的。但他們仍然背叛神。如果希伯來書的讀者忽視他們收到的信息，會有什

麼後果？他們會失去救恩嗎？本章的第 1 至第 4 節是書中五個警告中的第一個。上次我們說這封信是寫給一些猶太基督徒的。作者敦促他們不要否認耶穌。一般來說，浸信會相信「一次得救，永遠得救」的教義。這意味著當你成為信徒之後，沒有什麼因素能改變這個事實。耶穌在約翰福音 10:27-28 中應許我們：27「我的羊聽我的聲音，我也認識他們，他們也跟著我。28 我又賜給他們永生；他們永不滅亡，誰也不能從我手裡把他們奪去。」耶穌的信息非常明確。就算是一個浪子也不能終止他與父母的關係。救恩是神的禮物，而不是我們的努力。我們前面提到了在神裡面新生命的一些跡象，我們不會重複那些重點。如果我們所說的都是正確的理解，那麼作者是在鼓勵一些真正的信徒，而不是非信徒。他提醒他們不要「忽略」神的救恩。這個字的意思是粗心大意。他警告他們不要忽視他們所相信的，而不是拒絕他們所聽到的。就像你不應該忽視汽車儀表板上的警告燈或忽視健康問題的信號一樣。即使那些基督徒後來否認耶穌，他們也不會失去他們的救恩。但他們會失去與主密切關係所帶來的祝福。例如，今生的平安、喜樂和恩典，以及神將會賜給忠實跟隨者的永恆獎賞。同樣的警告也適用於我們。有時我們可能會對屬靈的事情冷淡。也許生活中的困難會使我們對信仰產生懷疑。或者我們因為犯罪，不好意思禱告和參加教會聚會。不要因為罪或懶惰而偏離信仰。趕快回轉向神，永遠不會太晚。神透過祂的見證人和我們的個人經歷來肯定聖經中的信息。祂的真理不僅僅是宗教信息。它適用於我們生活的各方面，例如教養兒女、友誼和事業，給我們帶來益處。

## 2. 使命的完成 Mission Accomplished (v. 5-11)

神的救恩信息通過各種方式得到肯定。接下來，作者告訴我們，耶穌完成了祂的使命。這是指什麼使命？讓我們來讀第 5 至 11 節。我們大多數人應該知道，第 6 至 8 節是引用自詩篇第 8 篇的。這段經文指出人類的軟弱和尊嚴。我們在很多方面都是無能為力的。說我們比天使微小一點是太客氣了。至少我們不能像天使一樣飛翔！我們的壽命也是有限的，但天使永遠活著。然而，我們有更高的尊嚴，因為我們是唯一按照神的形象被造的生命。神給我們靈魂來與祂交流。由於這個獨特的地位，神賦予我們管理世界的責任。但當然，亞當失職，我們也失職。我們污染環境，浪費神供應的天然資源。亞當甚至背叛了神，因此罪進入世界。結果，人類與其他生物之間的和諧關係被破壞了。創世記 9:2 說：「凡地上的走獸和空中的飛鳥都必驚恐，懼怕你們，連地上一切的昆蟲並海裡一切的魚都交付你們的手。」神在洪水過後對挪亞說這段話。為什麼動物害怕人類？在下一節經文中，神說從此之後人們可以吃肉了。在洪水之前，人類是食素的。現在動物一看到人就逃命，尤其是廣東人！亞當沒有完成神的任務。那未完成的使命是由耶穌完成的。希伯來書第 9 節重複了前面提到的幾個主題。像亞當一樣，耶穌在成為人之後也比天使微小一點。但與亞當相比，耶穌擁有所有的榮耀和尊貴，所有受造物都服在祂的腳下。耶穌現在坐在天父的右邊。耶穌是如何做到這一切的？是通過祂的死。耶穌成為人，

完成了神要亞當該做的事情。耶穌沒有犯罪，活出一個完美的生命。祂將自己交託給天父，甚至死在十字架上。第 10 節解釋耶穌受苦的其他含義：**原來那為萬物所屬為萬物所本的，要領許多的兒子進榮耀裡去，使救他們的元帥，因受苦難得以完全，本是合宜的。**天父必須把耶穌送上十字架才能拯救我們。這裡說耶穌是我們救恩的「元帥」。這個字在希臘的意思是先鋒或榜樣。這個字也出現在 12:2，作者說耶穌是「我們信心的創始成終者」。耶穌開啟並完成了我們的信心。祂向我們展示如何順服神的旨意並憑信心生活。耶穌因受苦得以完全。這並不意味著如果耶穌不上十字架，祂就是不完美的。耶穌的忍耐證明了祂對神的完全順服。耶穌在世上完成了神的使命。祂打開了救恩之門。因為這一切，耶穌為我們樹立了一個完美的榜樣。在某種程度上，如果我們這位超越的弟兄可以做到，我們也可以。耶穌是希伯來書的讀者和我們的鼓勵。耶穌甘願為我們受苦。祂因著倚靠神而得勝。希伯來書的讀者因為信仰而受羞辱甚至殉道。我們也會面對很多困難。沒有幾個頭腦清醒的人會自願受苦。我們可能寧願順風順水便上天堂。但很多時候，苦難是磨練我們信心的必要過程。困難使我們謙卑下來，讓我們明白自己是多麼的軟弱。它幫助我們了解，在這個信仰之旅中，我們必須依靠神。

### 3. 僕人的受苦 Minister Afflicted (v. 14-18)

來自神的救恩信息得到肯定。耶穌基督已經完成祂的使命。第三，耶穌降世時成為一位受苦的僕人。讓我們看**第 14 至 18 節**。苦難是耶穌獲得榮耀和尊貴的途徑。這一段進一步解釋耶穌必須受苦的原因。首先，在第 14 節中，耶穌的受苦敗壞了撒旦對死亡的權柄。神創造了生命並決定了我們的壽命。聖經告訴我們，死亡是對罪的懲罰。亞當死了，每個人最終也將面臨死亡。撒旦利用這個事實來嚇我們，綑綁我們。各種宗教提出不同的理論，嘗試減少對死亡的恐懼。首先是虛無，說一個人離開世界就像關燈一樣消失。二是輪迴。你要努力積功德，希望下輩子能成為比豬狗更好的生命。第三是極樂世界。只有在今生中做得夠好的人才能到那裡。這三個假設都不符合聖經。耶穌是我們進入永恆的唯一途徑。祂為我們而死來戰勝死亡。耶穌解開死亡之迷，消除了我們對死亡的恐懼。所有信靠耶穌的人在離開世界後便與祂同在。我曾經遇到了幾位年長的基督徒，他們平靜地告訴我他們已經準備好見主了。當他們這樣說時，他們的健康狀況都不錯。然後他們在幾週甚至幾天後便平靜地去世。神彷彿給他們一個信號，表示該回家了。這真是一種祝福。耶穌的苦難不僅消除了我們對死亡的恐懼。其次，第 17 節說耶穌受苦是為了「**成為慈悲忠信的大祭司**」。耶穌是完美的大祭司，祂在十字架上獻上自己成為終極的贖罪祭。耶穌通過順服神的旨意來表明祂的信實。耶穌不只信實可靠，祂也有慈悲憐憫之心。祂所做的一切都是因為祂愛我們。當我向醫生或修車師傅求助時，我希望他們是可靠的，相信他們能解決我的困難。除此之外，如果他們表現出憐憫之心，我會感覺更好。也許他們可以這樣說：「我知道你的感受，我以前也遇到過同樣的問題。但別擔心，我會處理的。」耶穌成為一個人，親身體驗作為人的感受。祂這樣做是為

了向我們顯示祂的憐憫。18節說：他自己既然被試探而受苦，就能搭救被試探的人。聖經中的「試探」這個字可以指罪的誘惑和信心的考驗。撒旦引誘我們使我們跌倒，但神可以使用同樣的事情來考驗和增加我們的信心。耶穌在開始祂的事奉之前在曠野受到撒旦的試探。祂一生中也嘗過許多考驗。祂的親身經歷使我們的禱告更加寶貴和有效。我們不僅向一位高高在上的神禱告。我們也是向那位曾經在地上生活的主禱告。誠然，耶穌從來沒有被女孩用過。但是祂被祂所愛的人撇棄和背叛。耶穌從未被解僱，但祂肯定知道挫折或夢想破滅的感覺。耶穌從未生病。但祂了解我們的有限和軟弱。我們有一位在各方面都能同情我們的主。祂從不因我們的懷疑、擔憂和信心不足而輕視我們。向祂傾心吐意吧！耶穌知道你的感受。祂有足夠的恩典來滿足你的任何需要。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

耶穌通過祂的死與我們認同，祂呼召我們在生命中也與祂認同。我們超越的弟兄經歷了我們可能面臨的事情。當我們接受耶穌進入我們的心中，並效法祂順服神的榜樣時，我們就能過得勝的生活。讓我以一個兩兄弟的美麗故事作為結束。阿德患有罕見的肝病。病因不明，但是也沒有治療的方法。不幸的是，阿德病情的進展比醫生預期的要快。肝臟移植是他唯一的希望。阿德一直在等待器官捐贈，但似乎他時日無多了。另一個辦法是找一位活體捐贈者。於是家人打電話向各方求助。阿德的弟弟瑞恩是一個合適的捐贈者。阿德很感激瑞恩的心，但他不想讓瑞恩冒這個險。「你也會為我做同樣的事，不是嗎？」瑞恩問道。這便解決了爭論。瑞恩是那種會毫不猶豫地把一切都獻給他所愛的人的人。手術當天，全家人都聚集在醫院。他們有最好的醫生和設備。一切都很順利，直到瑞恩在手術兩天後忽然心臟停頓。可惜他兩天後就去世了。阿德不只在身上留下巨大的傷疤，他內心也有無限的愧疚。但阿德決定要像瑞恩那樣度過餘生：對神有信心，對別人表現出同情心。雖然瑞恩走了，但他的一部分繼續住在阿德裡面。一位弟弟獻上一份無價的禮物，讓他的哥哥能活下去。耶穌基督，我們超越的弟兄在十字架上獻出自己，讓所有相信祂的人都有新的生命。祂呼召我們效法祂犧牲的愛的榜樣。