

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

“If I had known earlier...” We all have regrets in life. We feel bad about some decisions we made. Some people studied a major or started a job they do not like later. Or perhaps some people believe in their so-called friends who eventually were betrayed them. A more common regret is buyers’ remorse. You follow the advice from others or you are totally convinced by advertisements. But the products you bought did not live up to your expectations. Fortunately, you can ask for a refund in most cases. You can go back and choose something else. But certain decisions like accepting Jesus have long-lasting effects. There will also be serious consequences for believers to give up on their faith. Sometimes we may feel that God does not bless us the way we anticipate. Or perhaps He seems to be faraway when we need His help. Remember the readers of Hebrews were tempted to forsake Christianity and go back to their traditional beliefs. Doing so would avoid persecutions from their Jewish peers and the Romans. In this passage, the author warns them against such a wrong decision. God would always be with them. Therefore, they must walk with Him by faith. The reminder to them and to us are the same: our faith in God is demonstrated by our faithfulness to God.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 穩妥的道路 The Pathway Is Secure (v. 19-25)

The author urges his readers not to go back to the old way for a few reasons. First, it is because the pathway to salvation is secure. Let us read from **verse 19-25**. Jesus was our superior sin offering. He shed His blood to save us. Jesus has removed our sins and our guilt. He has opened a new and living way for us to go to God. The old and dead end of animal sacrifice has become obsolete. Since Jesus has finished the salvation work, the author motivates us to be diligent in five ways. First, we should **approach** God by faith. Verse 22 says: **let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith...** In Jesus, we have been accepted as God’s children. There should be no doubt, fear or hesitation. Such confidence is not based on what we have done. There is nothing we can bargain with God. Our assurance is based on what Jesus did for us. Second, we must **believe** in the hope God gives us. Look at verse 23: **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering...** Our hope, just like our faith, is in the Lord. Back in chapter 6, the author asks us to hold onto our hope in God like an anchor of our soul. I admire people who have the gut to raise their arms in the air when riding on a roller-coaster. I will hold onto the guardrail with one hand and hold onto my glasses with another hand. Do not say that I am a chicken. At least I am brave enough to get on the ride! We must hold onto God because He will never fail us. The next three items on the list are about our relationship with each other. Number three is to **care** for one another. Verse 24 reads: **And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.** We need to motivate each other to put love into actions. Your caring effort will be contagious. I remember a Bank of America TV commercial where one person helps a stranger. Then the second person is inspired to help the third person. It triggers a chain reaction! You do not need to do anything big in a church setting. You can help little kids bring their food to the table, fetch a cup of tea for senior folks or hold the door for the person

behind you. Just observe, then serve! Our church will be a better place when we practice that. Fourthly, we should **devote** our time to church meetings. The author says in verse 25: **not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some...** Some readers of this letter stopped meeting out of fear for persecution. For the past two years or so, many Christians worshipped from home due to the pandemic. But internet and TV programs cannot replace a church. Everyone loves family gatherings over holidays. You feel the joy of eating and chatting together. It will defeat the purpose if people just grab some food and go to their own rooms. Likewise, worship is a corporate activity when we sing, pray and listen to a sermon together. Sometimes, we decide whether or not to come based on the dinner menu or fellowship topics. We should avoid a consumer mindset that asks: “What can I get from this?” Instead, we should come with a family mentality. That brings us to the fifth point about **encouraging** each other. Look at the second half of verse 25: **but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.** The “Day” here refers to Jesus’ second coming. We should encourage each other more diligently as Jesus is returning. Religious persecution will become more serious. The readers must stay together. They should also encourage those who were thinking about leaving the church to return. As for us, we should encourage church members to come back for worship. Hope that everyone will build up a habit of weekly meetings. Your small group leader or I will keep encouraging you to read Bible at home, attend Friday fellowship and Sunday school and bring your Bible to the church. It will be more effective if you motivate others to do the same things. Such positive peer pressure can motivate others to grow.

## 2. 嚴重的懲罰 The Penalty Is Severe (v. 26-31)

The pathway to the Father is secure. Next, the author warns that the penalty for those who ignore the truth is severe. Let us look at **verse 26-31**. This is the fourth of the five warnings in this book against rejecting salvation grace. Let us recap a few things. First, most of the readers of this letter were believers. Second, we stress that the Bible teaches “once saved, forever saved.” Since salvation is a gift from God, there is nothing we can do to cancel out our salvation. Therefore, thirdly all believers, even disobedient ones, will enter heaven. With all that in mind, let us study the section we just read. Verse 26 says the people being warned “**go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth.**” They understood that Jesus is the only way to salvation. The specific sin here is about forsaking Jesus. Unlike Peter who later repented for denying Jesus three times, the people in question here refused to turn back. The second half of the verse states that for people like that “**there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.**” There is no alternative way to save them if they denied Jesus. God will hold them accountable for their sins in eternity. Verse 29 elaborates the indictments on them. First, they “**trampled underfoot the Son of God.**” They despised Jesus as an ordinary person. The picture is like after a soldier defeating an enemy, he humiliated him by stepping over him. Second, those people also “**profaned the blood of the covenant**” that Jesus shed. The word “profane” here means to trivialize. They treated the blood of Jesus no different from the blood of any person. Therefore, they ignored the covenant made in His blood as well. Third, they “**outraged the Spirit of grace.**” The word “outrage” has the connotation of insulting. To insult the Holy Spirit is to rebel against His presence and power in one’s life. Rather than submitting to the Holy Spirit, they returned to an independent life without God. We introduced the word “apostasy” some time ago to define this serious sin for those who abandoned the faith they once held. One possible cause for apostasy is leaving fellowship from other believers. A sheep that escapes its pen will get hurt or even be attacked by wild animals if

it wanders further away. Christians who do not attend church regularly lack a support group that encourages each other. Gradually, they become cold about spiritual matters. Eventually, they feel that life is happier without God. This is a heavy message for us. We need to show care to fellow members, especially to those who do not have a steady church life. But ultimately, each of us is responsible for our own relationship with God. You cannot read the Bible or attend church for your family members! Spiritual growth is like exercise. You will get weaker if you stop working hard. God will not ignore apostate Christians forever. There will be a judgment for them. The New Testament mentions two forms of judgment. Revelation 20 describes the great white throne judgment. God will pronounce the final sentencing to non-believers. The result is alienation from God eternally. Hell is a terrible place not only because of the never-ending torment. But it is also because there will be no hope. The Bible tells us that there will be a different judgment for believers. A better description is an award ceremony. Paul says in 2 Timothy 4:7-8 that: **7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.** Paul had no fear of dying for what he believed. In fact, He looked forward to seeing God because he would receive a prize. Even apostate believers will eventually be saved. They will not lose their place in heaven. But they will lose the prize God prepares for faithful Christians. It is like every employee will get their base salary. However, the size of year-end bonus will depend on their performance.

### 3. 確實的應許 The Promises Are Sure (v. 32-39)

The pathway to salvation is secure and the penalty for rejection is severe. Thirdly, the author convinces his readers to persevere because God's promises are sure. Let us read from **verse 32-39**. Those believers proved their faithfulness to God in a few ways. First, verse 32 says that they **"endured a hard struggle with sufferings."** We derive the word "athlete" from the Greek term for "struggle." They suffered a great deal for their faith like a contestant who gives it all in a sport competition. Second, they were also **"being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction"** (v. 33). They were openly accused and punished. There is a Chinese saying that reads: "a soldier can be killed, but not shamed." Public humiliation damages one's morale, and scares the comrades. Those believers showed **"compassion on those in prison"** (v.34). At that time, inmates must depend on their families and friends to provide for their food and clothing. Visiting prisoners condemned for sharing the gospel takes a lot of courage! Remember Jesus' disciples all fled when the Lord was arrested. Fourth, the second half of verse 34 says they **"joyfully accepted the plundering of your property."** They were not devastated when their belongings were seized. They considered it an honor to identify with Jesus in His suffering. Nowadays, people easily complain about slow internet, traffic jam or weight gain. We will be more thankful to the Lord when we see the living conditions of believers in other countries, and the oppression they face. Many Biblical characters went through afflictions too. Being faithful to the Lord does not ensure us a smooth-sailing. God may use hardship to examine our faith. He also permits Satan to test us. Satan will focus more on those who truly love the Lord, actively witness to others and diligently serve in the church. Whether it is from God or from Satan, suffering proves that we believe in what is right. The readers remained faithful because they knew that God's promises are sure. We see a few promises in this passage. First, God would offer **"a better possession and an abiding one"** (v. 34). That was why they took it lightly when their homes were ransacked. They considered themselves travelers in this world. Their houses were like hotel rooms for a brief stay.

God had prepared a better and permanent home. Second, God would give them “a great reward” (v. 35) when they “have done the will of God” (v. 36). God never tells us what kind of gifts that will be. But since the Lord gives us many good things in this life, I do not think His eternal reward will disappoint us. The third promise is based on the book of Habakkuk: “37 Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; 38 but my righteous one shall live by faith...” The prophet knew that his people were unfaithful to God. But he questioned why God would use a wicked nation like Babylon as a means of judgment. God answered that Babylon would finally fall. He will exercise a righteous judgment when “the coming one will come,” which foretells Jesus’ second coming. God says eventually “my righteous one shall live by faith.” Those who live a faithful life will continue to live eternally in heaven. God’s promises bring us comfort and hope. They help us persevere in a health, financial or relational crisis. God promises to never leave us nor forsake us. Go to His throne of grace and ask for strength to endure. We must prepare to suffer for our faith. Your non-believing family members and friends, classmates and teachers, colleagues and supervisors may give you a hard time. They may treat you unfairly, ridicule you or even slander and falsely accuse you behind your back. Do not get frustrated or even cast doubt as if God fails to protect you. Pour out your heart before the Lord. Share your burdens to fellow Christians. We need each other’s support in this journey of faith.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

Our faith in God is demonstrated by our faithfulness to God. The problems we face are real and sometimes the temptation to give up our faith is also real. But God’s Word is true. We do not know the future. But God does. He is faithful to watch over us. We must persevere even when we have yet to see the light at the end of the tunnel. While we cannot change our circumstances, we can change our conduct. A story was told about Alexander the Great. He was a great military general who directed his mighty army and conquered almost the entire known world in his time. Alexander once had a soldier who was guilty of being a coward in battle. Alexander requested to talk to the young man in-person. “Son, what’s your name?” demanded Alexander the Great. “Alexander, sir.” The king repeated his question: “What is your name?” “My name is Alexander, sir,” the soldier repeated. A third time and more loudly Alexander the Great asked, “What is your name?” A third time the soldier meekly said, “My name is Alexander, sir.” Alexander the Great then looked at the young man straight in the eye. “Soldier,” he said with intensity, “either change your name or change your conduct.” We bear a glorious name as the soldiers of Jesus. Let us follow our Commander and march on with faith.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

「早知今日，何必當初！」我們都有過遺憾。我們後悔做了某些決定。有些人拿到學位甚至開始工作後才發現自己不喜歡那個專業。或是有些人誤信朋友而最終被他們出賣。一個更常見的遺憾是買錯了東西。你聽從別人的建議，或者你完全相信廣告的介紹。但是那個產品沒有達到你的期望。還好在大多數情況下，你可以退貨，然後選擇別的東西。但是某些決定，比如接受耶穌，會產生長遠的影響。信徒放棄信仰也會有嚴重的後果。有時我們可能會覺得神並沒有像我們預期的那樣祝福我們。或者，當我們需要神的幫助時，祂彷彿很遙遠。記得有些希伯來書的讀者想要放棄信耶穌，回到他們的傳統信仰。這樣做便能避免猶太同胞和羅馬人的迫害。在今天的經文中，作者警告他們不要放棄。神永遠與他們同在。因此，他們必須憑信心與神同行。對他們和我們的提醒是相同的：我們對神的信心表現在我們對神的忠心。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 穩妥的道路 The Pathway Is Secure (v. 19-25)

基於幾個原因，作者鼓勵他的讀者不要回到以前的信仰。首先，因為通往救恩的道路是穩妥的。讓我們讀 **19-25 節**。耶穌是我們超越的贖罪祭。祂流血拯救我們，除去了我們的罪債和罪疚。祂為我們打開了一條又新又活的路，讓我們可以來到神面前。獻動物為祭的舊方式和死胡同已經被廢棄了。因為耶穌完成了救恩工作，作者從五個方面激勵我們要更長進。首先，我們應該憑信心**接近神**。第 22 節說：**…就當存著誠心和充足的信心來到神面前**。在耶穌裡，我們已經被接納成為神的兒女。不應該有任何懷疑、恐懼或猶豫。這種信心不是由於我們做了些什麼。我們沒有可以與神討價還價的餘地。我們的信心是基於耶穌為我們所做的一切。第二，我們必須**確信神給予我們的盼望**。請看第 23 節：**也要堅守我們所承認的指望…**。我們的盼望，就像我們的信心一樣，是在於主。在第 6 章，作者說我們必須抓住神的盼望如同我們靈魂的錨。我佩服那些坐雲霄飛車時有膽量舉起雙手的人。我會一隻手抓緊防護欄，另一隻手抓住眼鏡。不要說我是個膽小鬼，至少我有勇氣坐上去！我們必須緊緊抓住神，因為祂永遠不會讓我們失望。接下來的三個項目是關於我們彼此之間的關係。第三是**互相關懷**。第 24 節寫道：**又要彼此相顧，激發愛心，勉勵行善**。我們要互相鼓勵，把愛心化為行動。你的關懷行動能感染別人。我記得美國銀行的一個電視廣告，有一個人幫助了一個陌生人。然後第二個人受到啟發去幫助第三個人。就這樣引起連鎖反應！你不需要在教會裡做很偉大的事情。你可以幫助小

孩把食物端到餐桌上，為長輩倒一杯茶，或者幫你後面的人開門。細心注意，然後服務他人！當我們這樣做時，我們的教會將成為一個更美好的地方。第四，我們應該**投入**在教會的**聚會**中。作者在第 25 節中說：**你們不可停止聚會，好像那些停止慣了的人...**。這封信的一些讀者因為害怕受到迫害而停止聚會。最近兩年多來，受疫情的影響，很多基督徒在家裡敬拜。但是網路和電視節目不能取代教會。我們都喜歡跟家人在過節時聚餐。一起吃飯聊天是樂趣。但是如果每個人拿了食物便回到自己的房間，那就失去意義了。同樣，敬拜是一項集體活動，我們一起唱詩歌、禱告和聽講道。有時候，我們會根據晚餐菜單或團契主題來決定是否來聚會。我們不應該有這種的消費者心態，只想到自己能從中得到什麼。我們應該帶著家庭成員的心態來。這就跟作者第五方面的提醒相關：**互相鼓勵**。請看第 25 節的後半部分：**...倒要彼此勸勉，既知道那日子臨近，就更當如此**。這裡的「日子」是指耶穌的再來。當耶穌快要回來時，我們應該更加努力地互相鼓勵。讀者必須常常聚在一起，因為宗教迫害將會更加嚴重。他們也應該鼓勵那些想離開教會的人回來。至於我們，我們需要鼓勵在家中的弟兄姐妹回來聚會，使各人都養成每週聚會的習慣。你的小組長或我會繼續鼓勵你在家裡讀聖經、參加週五團契和主日學，並帶聖經到教會來。但如果你激勵其他人做同樣的事情，效果可能會更好。這種積極的同輩壓力可以激發別人一同成長。

## 2. 嚴重的懲罰 The Penalty Is Severe (v. 26-31)

通往天父的道路是穩妥的。接下來，作者警告說，那些忽略真理的人會面對嚴重的懲罰。讓我們看**第 26-31 節**。這是本書中對於拒絕救恩的五個警告中的第四個。讓我們回顧一些事情。首先，這封信的大部分讀者都是信徒。其次，我們強調聖經教導「一次得救，永遠得救」。既然救恩是神的賞賜，沒有人會喪失已經得到的救恩。因此，第三，所有的信徒，包括悖逆的信徒，最終都會進入天堂。讓我們來探討剛剛讀過的經文。第 26 節說，那些被警告的人「**得知真道以後，若故意犯罪**」。他們明白耶穌是得救的唯一途徑。這裡具體的罪是關於離棄耶穌。這裡的人拒絕回頭，與三次不認耶穌但後來悔改的彼得不同。經文的後半部分說，對於這樣的人，「**贖罪的祭就再沒有了**」。如果他們否認耶穌，就沒有其他方法可以得救了。神會在永恆中追討他們的罪。第 29 節進一步列出他們的罪。首先，他們「**踐踏神的兒子**」。他們把耶穌看作一個普通人。踐踏就像一個士兵在打敗敵人後踩在他的身上羞辱他。其次，這些人也「**將那使他成聖之約的血當作平常**」。這裡的「當作平常」的意思就是不把它當一回事。他們對待耶穌的血與任何人的血沒有兩樣。因此，他們也忽略了用祂的血所立的約。第三，他們「**褻慢施恩的聖靈**」。「褻慢」的意思是侮辱。羞辱聖靈就是抗拒祂在一個人生命中的同在和能力。他們不順服聖靈，彷彿回到不認識神的生命中。我們之前提過「背道」這個詞，用來形容那些放棄信仰的人所犯嚴重的罪。背道的一個起因是離開信仰的群體。迷失的羊如果越走越遠，很容易會受傷甚至被野獸攻擊。不經常去教會的基督徒缺乏一個互

相支持的群體。漸漸地，他們對屬靈的事情會變得冷淡。最終，他們覺得沒有神的生活更自在。這對我們來說是一個沉重的信息。我們需要關心會友，尤其是那些沒有穩定教會生活的人。但歸根結底，我們每個人都要對自己與神的關係負責。你不能為你的家人讀聖經或參加聚會！靈命成長就像運動。如果你停止努力，你會變得軟弱。神不會永遠忽視背道的基督徒，他們將受到審判。新約提到了兩種形式的審判。啟示錄 20 章描述了白色大寶座的審判。神將對非信徒宣布最終的判決。結果是永遠與神分離。地獄是一個可怕的地方，不僅因為永無止境的折磨，也是因為不再有盼望。聖經告訴我們，神對信徒會有另一種的審判。一個更貼切的形容是頒獎典禮。保羅在提摩太後書 4:7-8 中說：**7 那美好的仗我已經打過了，當跑的路我已經跑盡了，所信的道我已經守住了。8 從此以後，有公義的冠冕為我存留，就是按著公義審判的主到了那日要賜給我的；不但賜給我，也賜給凡愛慕他顯現的人。**保羅不害怕為信仰殉道。事實上，他期待見到神，因為他會得到獎賞。就算是背道的信徒最終也會得救。他們不會失去在天堂的位置，但他們拿不到神為忠心基督徒準備的獎賞。就像每個員工都會領到底薪。但是，年終獎金的多寡將取決於他們的工作表現。

### 3. 確實的應許 The Promises Are Sure (v. 32-39)

通往救恩的道路是穩妥的，拒絕救恩的懲罰是嚴重的。第三，作者勸勉他的讀者要堅持，因為神的應許是確實的。讓我們看**第 32-39 節**。這些信徒在幾方面證明了他們對神的忠誠。首先，第 32 節說他們「**忍受大爭戰的各樣苦難**」。英文「運動員」這個字是從希臘文「爭戰」這個詞語演變過來的。那些信徒為信仰受了許多苦，就像在體育競賽中全力以赴的選手一樣。其次，他們也「**一面被毀謗，遭患難，成了戲景，叫眾人觀看**」（第 33 節）。他們被公開指控和受懲罰。中文有一句諺語說：「士可殺，不可辱」。當眾羞辱會打擊士氣，並嚇到同伴。那些信徒卻「**體恤了那些被捆鎖的人**」（第 34 節）。在那個時候，囚犯必須依靠家人和朋友來供應衣服和食物。探訪因為傳福音而被判刑的囚犯需要很大的勇氣！記得當耶穌被捕時，祂的門徒都四散了。第四，第 34 節的後半部分說，他們的「**家業被人搶去，也甘心忍受**」。當他們的財物被充公時，他們並沒有覺得可惜。他們認為與耶穌一同受苦是一種榮耀。如今，人們很容易因為網路太慢、塞車或體重增加而抱怨。當我們看到其他國家信徒的生活狀況，並他們所面對的逼迫，我們會更加感謝主。許多聖經人物也同樣經歷過苦難。對主忠心並不保證我們會一帆風順。神可能會用苦難來試驗我們的信心，祂也允許撒旦試探我們。撒但會集中火力對付那些真正愛主、積極傳福音、在教會中熱心事奉的人。無論是來自神還是來自撒旦，苦難證明我們相信的是正確的。讀者能夠保持忠心，因為他們知道神的應許是確實的。我們在這段經文中看到了一些應許。首先，神會預備「**更美長存的家業**」（第 34 節）。這就是為什麼當他們的家園被搶光時，他們不為所動。他們看自己是世上的客旅，他們的房子就像是短暫停留的旅館。神已經為他們準備了一個更美和永久的

家。其次，當他們「行完了神的旨意」（36節）後，神會給他們「大賞賜」（35節）。神從來沒有告訴我們那將會是什麼禮物。但既然主在今生給了我們很多美好的東西，我認為祂永恆的獎賞不會讓我們失望。第三個應許是引用自哈巴谷書：

「37 因為還有一點點時候，那要來的就來，並不遲延；38 只是義人必因信得生。」先知知道他的子民對神不忠，但他質疑為什麼神會使用像巴比倫那樣邪惡的國家作為審判的工具。神回答說巴比倫最終會滅亡。當「那要來的就來」時，指到耶穌的再來，到時候神便要執行公義的審判。神說最終「義人必因信得生」。那些一生對主忠心的人將繼續在天堂裡生活。神的應許帶給我們安慰和盼望。它們幫助我們在健康、財務或人際關係的危機中堅持下去。神應許永遠不會撇下我們，也不會丟棄我們。放膽來到祂的施恩寶座前，祈求力量來忍耐。我們必須做好心理準備為信仰受苦。你不信的家人和朋友、同學和老師、同事和上司可能會找你麻煩。他們可能不公平地對待你，嘲笑你，甚至在背後誹謗和誣告你。不要覺得沮喪甚至懷疑神，以為祂沒有保護你。你可以在主面前傾心吐意，並與其他信徒分享你的重擔。在這段信仰旅程中，我們需要彼此扶持。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

我們對神的信心表現在我們對神的忠心。我們面對的問題是真實的，有時想要放棄信仰的意念也是真實的。但神的話語也是真實的。我們不知道未來如何，唯有神知道。祂信實地看顧我們。就算我們還沒有看到隧道盡頭的曙光時，我們也必須堅持下去。雖然我們無法改變我們的環境，但我們可以改變我們的行為。有一個關於亞歷山大大帝的故事。他是一位偉大的元帥，他帶領一支強大的軍隊，幾乎征服了整個世界。亞歷山大曾經有一個士兵，他在戰爭中表現貪生怕死。亞歷山大要求親自審問那個年輕人。亞歷山大大帝問道：「孩子，你叫什麼名字？」「總司令，我名叫亞歷山大。」國王重複他的問題：「你叫什麼名字？」士兵回答：「長官，我的名字是亞歷山大。」亞歷山大大帝提高他的聲音，第三次問道：「你叫什麼名字？」這一次士兵低聲地說：「指揮官，我叫亞歷山大。」亞歷山大大帝直看這個年輕人，嚴厲地說：「士兵，要不然改變你的名字，要不然改變你的行為。」作為耶穌的精兵，我們有一個榮耀的名字。讓我們跟隨我們的元帥，憑著信心往前邁進。