

# ‘Further Up and Further In’

Biblical Themes and Imagery in C.S. Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia*

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## ABSTRACT

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Clive Staples Lewis is one of the most popular and renowned authors and lay theologians of the twentieth century. Lewis is best known for *The Chronicles of Narnia* series, which has sold more than 100 million copies worldwide. As a committed Anglican who was well versed in the Bible, Lewis wrote extensively on the subject of Christianity. Lewis' thoughts on the subject were not confined to just his academic writings; his fictional work which also includes *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Space Trilogy* has biblical allusions permeating the narratives. This dissertation comprehensively explores biblical themes in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. I have identified the allusions throughout the Narnian heptalogy and have catalogued and analyzed them within the overarching themes of Christology, Creationism, the Trinity and Eschatology. This literary study has been enhanced by researching authorial intention in that I have also corroborated Lewis' theological stance as expressed within his academic writings. In light of the patterns discerned in Lewis' use of the Bible, I conclude that Lewis uses a Christocentric reading of both Old and New Testaments and that he follows a Christian reading of the canonical biblical metanarrative. Although biblical allusion is pervasive, the primary reason for it is to fill out the figure of Aslan and establish him as the Christ figure in Narnia.

## DECLARATION

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I declare that this dissertation – ‘Further Up and Further In’: Biblical Themes and Imagery in C.S. Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia* - is my own work. All quotations from other sources are duly acknowledged and referenced.

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James J. Hannan.

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# CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

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Clive Staples Lewis (29 November 1898 – 22 November 1963), more commonly known as C. S. Lewis was an Irish-born novelist, academic, lay theologian and Christian apologist. He was also a medievalist and a classicist. He is more popularly known for his fictional writings, especially *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Cosmic Trilogy* and *The Screwtape Letters*, the latter of which earned him a place on the cover of *Time* in 1947.<sup>1</sup> The *Time* cover story hailed Lewis as "one of the most influential spokesmen for Christianity in the English-speaking world."<sup>2</sup> His popularity and relevance has not diminished with *Time* magazine stating that Lewis "could arguably be called the hottest theologian of 2005" some forty-two years after his death.<sup>3</sup>

His conversion to Christianity had an overwhelming effect on his work and his wartime radio broadcasts on the subject of Christianity brought him wide acclamation.<sup>4</sup> Lewis is published extensively in both fiction and non-fictional writings and the BBC estimate that his 38 books have been translated into more than 30 languages and have sold more than 100 million copies worldwide while remaining in print fifty years after his death.<sup>5</sup>

Lewis is very popular today with Evangelical Christians who are eager for anyone, even a High-Church Anglican, to popularize basic Christian tenets and it is they who

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<sup>1</sup> Como, James. 'Mere Lewis', *The Wilson Quarterly*. Vol 18, No. 2, 1994, pp 109-117.

<sup>2</sup> Artzybasheff, B. (1947) 'Religion: Don V. Devil', *Time Magazine*, 08 Sept.

<sup>3</sup> Van Biema, David. (2005) 'Religion: Beyond the Wardrobe', *Time Magazine*, 30 Oct.

<sup>4</sup> Edwards, B., *C.S. Lewis: Life, Works, and Legacy: Volume I* (New York, 2007) p. 4

<sup>5</sup> BBC Home (2013) *Local Writing Legends* [online], available:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/learning/getwritingni/wh\\_lewis.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/learning/getwritingni/wh_lewis.shtml) [accessed 12 Oct 2011].,

Lindskoog, K.A. *Sleuthing C.S. Lewis: More Light in the Shadowlands*. (Georgia, 2001) p. 7

hold most of the Lewisian conferences and write most of the books about C.S. Lewis.<sup>6</sup> His more generally well renowned works are *Mere Christianity* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. It is for these reasons that C.S. Lewis is an ideal candidate for research into how biblical themes are used in 20<sup>th</sup> century fiction / fantasy for children.

One of the reasons why I chose this particular title for my dissertation was that *The Chronicles of Narnia* are against the grain of modern contemporary literature aimed at a youthful audience. The most popular titles which are currently written for this age bracket are the world of magic in the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling or the Twilight Saga; a series of vampire-themed fantasy romance novels by American author Stephenie Meyer. While books like those have a ‘good versus evil’ narrative, their morals are not explicitly based on biblical precepts. In contrast, C.S. Lewis’ Narnian Chronicles are heavily indebted to the principles of the Bible and it is worth cataloguing and analyzing the biblical allusions in this particular fantasy world. I intend to show that C.S. Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia* are a resplendent amalgamation of key biblical themes and imagery which are able to convey the message of the bible to an uninitiated audience. The biblical allusions, which are pervasive and conflate Old and New Testament, work to present Aslan in a Christological light as an evangelical tool.

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## 1.1 - METHODOLOGY

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For the purpose of this Masters dissertation I have catalogued and analysed the primary biblical themes and imagery based on a close examination of the Narnian heptalogy. This is in order to chart how extensively Lewis used certain themes and

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<sup>6</sup> Van Biema, David. (2005) ‘Religion: Beyond the Wardrobe’, *Time Magazine*, 30 Oct.

imagery and whether he employed some allusions more than others. I realise that there are many different sources for the allusions which Lewis utilises, e.g. Norse and Pagan Mythology, and I will note these periodically. However I will not explore them in any great detail, nor shall I attempt to note all allusions of this nature as it is beyond the scope of my dissertation. I will instead focus on the biblical themes and imagery. The aim is to ascertain the biblical sources and influences that find their way into the Narnia books and to relate this to Lewis' underlying hermeneutic and theology.

This entailed a systematic search across all the books in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series in order to identify and classify the biblical allusions and to offer a detailed analysis of the influence of the Bible on C.S. Lewis's writing for children. The overall framework of the Narnian narrative has clear correspondences with the biblical story from Genesis to Revelation, for example: the creation of the world, the entry of evil, sin and the need for redemption, faith in a higher power, journeys, salvation, the end of the world and a final state of bliss. It is therefore unsurprising that there is a plethora of biblical allusions. I have also investigated whether these biblical allusions are atomistic or are used in a more systematic manner for instance, whether there is a discernible underlying link between the biblical metanarrative and the story in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. My own observation and interpretations will be informed by what C.S. Lewis himself has said about his theology and beliefs as well as his own commentary on *The Chronicles of Narnia*. To this end I draw widely on C.S. Lewis' oeuvre to try to establish authorial intention. I am therefore not using a purely text-immanent approach, but rather I allow Lewis to be one of his own interpreters. This added perspective is valuable because Lewis himself has written

extensively on the very subjects and themes he covers in *The Chronicles of Narnia* but in a more analytical style.

Throughout my research I was able to verify that within *The Chronicles of Narnia* Lewis drew extensively upon the Bible as a source to convey biblical themes and morals as they might have happened in an alternate world for a younger audience who might not be aware of the finer details of scriptural narratives. However, I am cognisant of the possibility that some key biblical themes and imagery may not have come from the Bible directly but that Lewis may be indebted to other texts which mediate those allusions. Lewis was a medievalist and a literary critic and wrote *The Allegory of Love* (which aided the reinvigoration of the critical study of late medieval works like the *Roman de la Rose*), *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* and *A Preface to Paradise Lost* which is still received as one of the most respected criticisms of that poem.<sup>7</sup> Specifically I will demonstrate that Lewis adapted Milton's *Paradise Lost* when writing the temptation and the fall of man scene in *The Magician's Nephew* rather than Genesis 3 solely.

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## 1.2 - C.S. LEWIS AS A READER OF SCRIPTURE.

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Lewis was a close friend of *Lord of the Rings* author J. R. R. Tolkien, and both authors were leading figures in the English faculty at Oxford University and in the "Inklings", an Oxford literary group.<sup>8</sup> According to his memoir *Surprised by Joy* (1966), Lewis had been baptized and raised in the Church of Ireland but turned away from the faith during his youth. At fifteen Lewis became an atheist and confessed

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<sup>7</sup> Head, D., ed. *The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English*, 3rd ed. (New York, 2006), p. 646

<sup>8</sup> C.S. Lewis Foundation, "Chronology of C.S. Lewis" (2009),  
<http://www.cslewis.org/resources/chronocsl.html> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2010]

that he was "very angry with God for not existing. I was also angry with him for having created the world."<sup>9</sup>

Having met Tolkien for the first time in May 1926, he was influenced by Tolkien's evangelical arguments and also by G. K. Chesterton's book *The Everlasting Man*. Lewis credits both with his eventual reconversion to Christianity.<sup>10</sup> Initially he resisted conversion noting that he was brought into Christianity like a prodigal: "kicking, struggling, resentful, and darting his eyes in every direction for a chance to escape."<sup>11</sup> He depicted his final struggle in *Surprised by Joy*:

You must picture me alone in that room in Magdalen, night after night, feeling, whenever my mind lifted even for a second from my work, the steady, unrelenting approach of Him whom I so earnestly desired not to meet. That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me. In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England.<sup>12</sup>

After he initially converted to a form of theism in 1929, Lewis fully committed himself to Christianity in 1931 following a long conversation with his closest friends Tolkien and Hugo Dyson.<sup>13</sup> To the disappointment of Tolkien, who had hoped he would convert to Roman Catholicism like himself, Lewis became a member of the Church of England. Lewis claimed he returned to Christianity as "a very ordinary layman of the Church of England."<sup>14</sup>

As a committed Anglican, Lewis upheld a fundamentally orthodox Anglican theology, though in his apologetic writings he made a concentrated effort to avoid adopting the teachings of any one denomination. In his later writings he appears to

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<sup>9</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Surprised By Joy*. (London, 1966), p.115

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 228- 229

<sup>13</sup> Rhodes, M.L., *Survival at the Intersection of Faith and the Intellect*. (Indiana,2010), p. 26

<sup>14</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 1952), p. 6

have offered ideas such as purification of venial sins after death in purgatory (*The Great Divorce*) and mortal sin (*The Screwtape Letters*), which are generally considered to be Roman Catholic in nature although they are also widely held in Anglicanism.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, Lewis considered himself an entirely orthodox Anglican to the end of his life.

In regards to his interpretation of scripture, Lewis is problematic to categorise. He frequently acknowledged that he was not a theologian, but rather a "translator - one turning Christian doctrine... into the vernacular. If the real theologians had tackled this laborious work of translation about a hundred years ago, when they began to lose touch with the people (for whom Christ died) ... there would have been no place for me."<sup>16</sup>

Lewis wrote about the mythical nature of the Bible. However, he was not implying that the Bible was untrue, but rather that it has a particular quality that can also be discovered in "pagan" mythology. As Lewis looks at myth he doesn't see it as falsehood and even distinguishes it as separate from allegory. In his book *CS Lewis on Scripture*, Michael J. Christensen explains that to Lewis: "Myth is the father of abstraction and concrete particulars. Far from being less than true or factual, myth puts us in touch with reality in a more intimate way than by knowing what is merely true or factual."<sup>17</sup> Lewis suggested that God used mythology to reveal Himself to the pagan world before Christ. For Lewis, according to Christensen:

All the pagan myths were merely premonitions of "Nature's Original," as Lewis calls Christ. When the Word became flesh, when God became man in Jesus Christ, the process of myth was actualized and revelation was complete. Pagan myths, motifs, and rituals were noble yet inadequate

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<sup>15</sup> Kilby, C., *The Christian World of C.S. Lewis*. (Michigan, 1995), p. 178

<sup>16</sup> Christensen, M. *CS Lewis on Scripture*. (Tennessee, 2002), pp 23-24

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61

vehicles of divine revelation--distorted reflections of the real thing. ... "Myth became Fact," ... God's progressive revelation, which appeared only faintly in the great myths, had culminated in historic fact.<sup>18</sup>

Appreciating that the popular interpretation of the word "myth" is removed from what Lewis meant, Christensen suggests the term "literary inspiration" for Lewis' interpretation of the manner in which the Bible is inspired. "The Bible is to be approached as inspired literature. Its literary element - images, symbols, myths and metaphors - are actual embodiments of spiritual reality, vehicles of divine revelation."<sup>19</sup>

In 'Image and Content: the Tension in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia', Robert K. Johnston states that "Lewis' children's stories are primarily his attempt to ensnare a more ultimate reality in the net of fantastic images transformed into story by the connective fabric of plot."<sup>20</sup> In particular it is myth's mediative function of enabling its reader to encounter the "highest qualitative reality." It is myth which is able to transfer an atmosphere or *Weltanschauung* from the world of the literary work to that of the reader. In Lewis' introduction to George MacDonalds works he wrote concerning the mythical qualities of good stories:

It arouses in us sensations we have never had before, never anticipated having, as though we had broken out of our normal mode of consciousness and "possessed joys not promised to our birth." It gets under our skin, hits us at a level deeper than our thoughts or even our passions, troubles oldest certainties till all questions are reopened, and in general shocks us more fully awake than we are for most of our lives.<sup>21</sup>

Lewis' desire to write stories that could become myth for the reader is openly related to two conceptions: first, a belief that modern man's present myths are inadequate

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp 75-76

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 77

<sup>20</sup> Johnston, Robert. 'Image and content: the tension in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. Vol 20 No.1, 1977, pp 253-264

<sup>21</sup> Lewis, C. S., "Introduction" *George Macdonald: An Anthology* (ed. C. S. Lewis; New York: 1954), pp 16-17.

and false—that is, incapable of truly performing the mythical task; and secondly, and on the positive side, a belief in the unique role myth can play in the process of man seeking to understand reality.<sup>22</sup> According to Robert Johnston’s paper, we might say that myth permits both persons to enjoy and God to express his joy toward us. As C.S. Lewis expresses it, not only does myth allow the human spirit to reach outward, but it also creates the context in which we can hear that "voice from the world's end calling (us)."<sup>23</sup> Myth permits humans to break out of their "normal modes of consciousness" and through their imagination to grasp reality precritically, "on this side of knowledge."<sup>24</sup>

In *The Problem of Pain* Lewis dedicates chapter five to the Fall of Man in which he asserts that while he has the deepest respect for pagan myths, he has still more for myths in Holy Scripture.<sup>25</sup> In *Miracles*, Lewis illustrates that in the Old Testament the truth which initially appeared in mythical form was then later consolidated and focussed before ultimately becoming incarnate as history. Basically, myth became incarnate as history in Jesus Christ.<sup>26</sup> Lewis does not characterise myth as fiction but rather as “a real though unfocused gleam of divine truth falling on human imagination.”<sup>27</sup> Lewis does differentiate though between the Old Testament accounts of say Jonah and those of King David, with the Davidic accounts being historically akin to the Gospels while Jonah is more mythical. In Lewis’ *What are we to make of Jesus Christ?* he maintains that, due to the lack of artistry, the Gospels must not therefore be legends. The Gospels are “clumsy” and do not work up to things

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<sup>22</sup> Johnston, Robert. ‘Image and content: the tension in C.S. Lewis’ Chronicles of Narnia’, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. Vol 20 No.1, 1977, pp 253-264

<sup>23</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Surprised By Joy*. (London, 1966), p.180

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., Lewis, C. S., "Introduction" *George Macdonald: An Anthology* (ed. C. S. Lewis; New York: 1954), pp 16-17.

<sup>25</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Problem of Pain*. (New York, 2001), p. 71

<sup>26</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Miracles*. (New York, 1960), pp 133-134

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

properly.<sup>28</sup> According to Lewis, no one whose intention was to create a legend would have allowed the majority of Jesus' life to remain unknown in the manner which the Gospels do. Lewis also maintains that minor additions to the Gospel of John like when Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger (John 8:6) when the woman accused of adultery is brought before Jesus have no doctrinal value and therefore must have occurred and were witnessed by the author.<sup>29</sup> In *Surprised by Joy* Lewis states:

I was by now too experienced in literary criticism to regard the Gospels as myths. They had not the mythical taste...nothing else in all literature was just like this...And no person was like the Person it depicted; as real, as recognisable, through all the depths of time, as Plato's Socrates or Boswell's Johnson, yet also numinous, lit by a light from beyond the world, a god. But if a god—we are no longer polytheists—then not a god, but God. Here and here only in all time the myth must have become fact; the Word, flesh; God, Man.<sup>30</sup>

In *The World's Last Night* Lewis postulates that the fact that the Gospel writers include items which could undermine their position is the strongest argument for the historicity of the Gospels.<sup>31</sup>

Lewis' most detailed analysis of Scripture is found in *Reflection on the Psalms*. In the opening chapter he argues that the entirety of Scripture is in some sense, though not all parts of it in the same sense, the Word of God.<sup>32</sup> In chapter eleven, entitled 'Scripture', Lewis states:

I have been suspected of being what is called a Fundamentalist. That is because I never regard any narrative as unhistorical simply on the ground that it includes the miraculous. Some people find the miraculous so hard to believe that they cannot imagine any reason for my acceptance of it other

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<sup>28</sup> Lewis, C.S., *God in the Dock*. (London, 1998), p.75

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 75-76

<sup>30</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Surprised By Joy*. (London, 1955), p.236

<sup>31</sup> Vaus, W., *Mere Theology*. (Illinois, 2004), p. 34

<sup>32</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Reflection on the Psalms*. (San Diego, 1958), p.19

than a prior belief that every sentence of the Old Testament has historical or scientific truth. But this I do not hold, any more than St. Jerome did when he said that Moses described Creation “after the manner of a popular poet” (as we should say, mythically) or than Calvin did when he doubted whether the story of Job were history or fiction.<sup>33</sup>

In the same chapter Lewis again reiterates his opinion of Genesis. He concedes that while the Creation narrative may be developed from earlier Semitic tales, this does not undermine the significance of the Creation account for him. These earlier stories were passed on and amended, intentionally or unintentionally, until they developed into a description of “true Creation and of a transcendent Creator.” When this happens in Genesis, Lewis construed that there was no reason to “believe that some of the re-tellers, or some one of them, has not been guided by God.”<sup>34</sup> For Lewis, while Genesis may not communicate scientific or historical truth, it still provides divine truth. Therefore, in Lewis’ opinion, all Scripture, regardless of the literary style and intentions, can all be “taken into the service of God’s Word.”<sup>35</sup> About all writers and canonizers of Scripture, whether the Jewish or Christian church, regardless of amendment by redactors, Lewis concluded: “On all of these I suppose a Divine pressure, of which not by any means all need have been conscious.”<sup>36</sup>

In regard to what are considered complications in the doctrine of inspiration, including discrepancies in Matthew and Luke’s genealogies of Jesus, contradictions in the account of the death of Judas (Matt 27:5 and Acts 1:18) and Luke’s profession that he conducted research on his Gospel (Luke 1:1-4),<sup>37</sup> Lewis determined:

The human qualities of the raw materials show through. Naivety, error, contradiction, even wickedness are not removed (as in the cursing Psalms).

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.109

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp 110-111

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Lewis, W.H., *Letters of C. S. Lewis* (New York, 1975), 286–87.

The total result is not “the Word of God” in the sense that every passage, in itself, gives impeccable science or history. It carries the Word of God and we (under grace, with attention to tradition and to interpreters wiser than ourselves and with the use of such intelligence and learning as we may have) receive that word from it not by using it as an encyclopaedia or an encyclical but by steeping ourselves in its tone and temper and so learning its overall message.<sup>38</sup>

In regards to Scripture regarding eschatological doctrine, C.S. Lewis did not write a lot on the subject and his primary thoughts on the subject can be found in his essay *The World’s Last Night*. C.S. Lewis says about Matthew 24:34: (“Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.”)

The apocalyptic beliefs of the first Christians have been proved to be false. It is clear from the New Testament that they all expected the Second Coming in their own lifetime. And, worse still, they had a reason, and one which you will find very embarrassing. Their Master had told them so. He shared, and indeed created, their delusion. He said in so many words, “This generation shall not pass till all these things be done.” And He was wrong. He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else. This is certainly the most embarrassing verse in the Bible.<sup>39</sup>

Lewis’ apologetics on this verse is that Jesus acknowledged his ignorance in Mark 13:32 (“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, *nor the Son*, but only the Father) and that Jesus’ Matthew 24:34 declaration proves this.

We may conclude that Scripture, for Lewis, is “human literature, divinely inspired and authoritative, but not verbally inspired or without error.”<sup>40</sup> He viewed some parts as “more inspired” than others. Lewis did not approach the Bible with the same infallibility as some fundamentalists. Lewis remarks that “The kind of truth we demand of Scripture was, in my opinion, never even envisaged by the ancients.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Reflection on the Psalms*. (San Diego, 1958), p.112

<sup>39</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The World’s Last Night*. (San Diego, 1960), pp 97-98

<sup>40</sup> Christensen, M. *CS Lewis on Scripture*. (Tennessee, 2002), p. 11

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19

Regardless, Lewis still considered the Bible the Word of God.<sup>42</sup> While some books may not convey scientific or historical truth, they still provide divine truth.

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### 1.3 - C.S. LEWIS' BIBLE

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Lewis was an avid reader of the King James Version, also known as the Authorised Standard Version. As a medievalist Lewis was also familiar with the Coverdale Bible and being a trained classical scholar he would read frequently from the Greek text of the New Testament.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Lewis was a vocal supporter of modern translations of the bible, especially the Moffatt Translation.<sup>44</sup> The Moffatt New Translation or MNT (1926) was the work of James Moffatt (1870-1944) who was a theologian and graduate of Glasgow University. The MNT supports the JEPD theory that the first five books of the Old Testament were written from four different sources.<sup>45</sup> The MNT Pentateuch is printed in distinct typefaces according to which author Moffatt believed had composed each specific section. Also, the biblical texts of the MNT are rearranged by substituting chapter sequences based on Moffatt's personal judgments about the content, authorship, and historicity of the texts (e.g., John 15, 16, 14).<sup>46</sup>

As Lewis was a member of the Church of England, he would have heard the Scriptures of the King James Version from the lectern. However, Lewis made his feelings on the KJV clear in an essay in *God in the Dock* (1970) titled 'Modern Translations of the Bible'. This essay was originally Lewis' introduction to J. B.

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<sup>42</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Literary Impact of the Authorised Version*. (Philadelphia, 1967), pp 4-5

<sup>43</sup> Root, J., "C.S. Lewis and the Bible," in *The C.S. Lewis Bible* (New York, 2010), p. xviii

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xviii

<sup>45</sup> Moffatt, J., *The Bible: James Moffatt Translation*. (Michigan, 1994), pp 13 -17, Porter, S.E., *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism and Interpretation*. (New York, 2007), p. 364

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

Phillips' version of the bible known as *Letter to Young Churches: A Translation of the New Testament Epistles*. Lewis wrote,

...the [KJV] has ceased to be a good (that is, a clear) translation. It is no longer modern English: the meanings of words have changed...The truth is that if we are to have translation at all we must have periodical re-translation. There is no such thing as translating a book into another language once and for all, for a language is a changing thing...we must sometimes get away from the Authorised Version, if for no other reason, simply because it is so beautiful and so solemn. Beauty exalts, but beauty also lulls<sup>47</sup>

Lewis believed that we ought to welcome all new translations (when they are made by sound scholars) and warned that those who are approaching the Bible for the first time would be wise not to begin with the Authorised Version. The only exception he made was for the historical books of the Old Testament where its “archaisms suit the saga-like material well enough.”<sup>48</sup> “Among modern translations those of Dr. Moffatt and Monsignor Knox seem to me particularly good.”<sup>49</sup>

The Knox version began in 1936 when Monsignor Ronald Knox (1888 - 1957), the English theologian, priest, and crime writer was requested by the Catholic hierarchies of England and Wales to undertake a new translation of the Vulgate with use of contemporary language and in light of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.<sup>50</sup> When ‘The Holy Bible: A Translation from the Latin Vulgate in the Light of the Hebrew and Greek Originals’ (1955) or the ‘Knox Version’ was published in 1945, it was not intended to replace the Rheims version but to be used alongside it, as Bernard Griffin, the Archbishop of Westminster noted in the preface.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Lewis, C.S., *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. (London, 1998), p. 230

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 231

<sup>50</sup> Brennan, James. The Knox Bible', *The Furrow*. Vol 7, No. 11, 1956, pp 671-678

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

To conclude, C.S. Lewis was familiar with the King James Version of the Bible, despite being vocal about its flaws, and as a trained classical scholar he was able to read the Greek New Testament. Lewis was also an avid supporter and reader of modern translations. He wrote an introduction to Phillips' version and in 'God in the Dock' praised the modern translations of James Moffatt and Ronald Knox. As a result, throughout this dissertation, Lewis' allusions to biblical texts will not be expected to follow a particular translation. I will primarily use the New King James Version (unless otherwise stated) when citing biblical texts.

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#### 1.4 - LITERARY ALLUSION

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As the identification and analysis of allusion is central to my aims and methodology, it therefore warrants some definition. An allusion is best described in M.H. Abrams book *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Seventh Edition) as “a passing reference, without explicit identification, to a literary or historical person, place, or event, or to another literary work or passage.”<sup>52</sup> The *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* concurs, describing allusion as “an indirect or passing reference to some event, person, place, or artistic work, the nature and relevance of which is not explained by the writer but relies on the reader's familiarity with what is thus mentioned.”<sup>53</sup> The *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* continues with its definition by describing the technique of allusion as an “economical means of calling upon the history or the literary tradition that author and reader are assumed to share.”<sup>54</sup> According to Abrams, “most literary allusions are intended to be recognized by the generally educated readers of the author's time, but some are aimed at a special coterie.”<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Abrams, M.H., *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. (Boston, 1999), p. 9

<sup>53</sup> Baldick, C., *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. (New York, 2008), p. 9

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Abrams, M.H., *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. (Boston, 1999), p. 9

While worded slightly differently, both definitions describe allusion as a reference in literature to a person, place, event, or another passage of literature, without overt identification and relying on a shared knowledgebase between author and reader.

Also related to allusion are 'quotation' and 'echo'. The most explicit method of reference is 'quotation'. The reference of a quotation is verbatim or practically so, and is long enough to be identified as such. An allusion, while still overt by definition, is less explicit, being more fragmentary or periphrastic.<sup>56</sup> A quotation is usually 'marked', that is it may have some sort of introduction that names its source. Where it is not marked by an introductory formula, its style usually stands as different from the surrounding text, so that it is clear to the reader that the words of another are being used. An Echo is the least explicit of the three modes of allusion placing it at the bottom of the "rhetorical hierarchy."<sup>57</sup> Echoes are ambiguous enough that it is difficult to determine whether their inclusion in a text was consciously or unconsciously implemented by the author. Also, as the author did not endeavour to point the reader to the precursor, the echo is usually only picked up by the reader. The weaker forms of echo can also exist simply because the reader has the two texts in mind. One cannot say with any certainty that the author intended it even unconsciously. It could be just the reader who is bringing the two texts together and hearing one in the light of the other.

Authors can utilise allusion to institute a tone, generate an implicit connotation, contrast two objects or people, create an unfamiliar juxtaposition of references or transport the intended audience into a world of experience which is outside the confines of the narrative. Authors make the assumption that the audience will

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<sup>56</sup> Beetham, C.A., *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians*. (Leiden, 2008), p. 16

<sup>57</sup> Hollander, J., *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After*. (California, 1981), p. 44

distinguish the original sources and relate their meaning to the new context. For instance, if a teacher were to compare their schoolchildren to a band of Vikings, the students would not be aware if they are being commended or criticised unless they are aware who the Vikings were and what conducts they engaged in historically.

Literary allusion is a form of appeal to the audience to partake in an experience with the author. An allusion may “enrich the work by association and give it depth.”<sup>58</sup> When utilising the medium of allusion, the author tends to assume an established literary tradition, a body of communal familiarity with an audience sharing that tradition. There is a capacity on the part of the audience to comprehend and appreciate the reference. This definition of allusion focuses on the shared base of knowledge of author and reader. Allusion in this context is a way of drawing on an expansive piece of text or history.

For the purpose of this dissertation I read through *The Chronicles of Narnia* while looking for all manner of allusions. As I have a background in the Bible, I was actively looking for biblical resonances and was able to differentiate whether they were allusions, quotations or whether they were merely an echo.

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### 1.5 - THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA SYNOPSIS

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In 1948 Lewis continued writing *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (which he had begun a decade earlier) after a difficult philosophical debate with Elizabeth Anscombe at Oxford's Socratic Club.<sup>59</sup> Anscombe delivered a paper at a conference at the Socratic Club whereby she contested Lewis's argument that naturalism was self-refuting (as located in the third chapter of the original

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<sup>58</sup> Cuddon, J.A., and C., Preston, *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (Oxford, 1998), p. 27

<sup>59</sup> Hinten, M.D., *The Keys to the Chronicles* (Nashville, 2005), p.2

publication of his book *Miracles*). It was after this encounter that Lewis moved away from apologetics towards fantasy. According to Lewis' friend George Sayer, after the debate Lewis said regarding apologetic works "I can never write another book of that sort."<sup>60</sup> This is corroborated by Lewis' letter to Dorothy Sayers in August 2, 1946, where he stated that apologetic writings were "dangerous to one's own faith."<sup>61</sup> In his book *The Lion's World: A Journey into the Heart of Narnia* (2012), former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, concurs that Lewis was driven to writing *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as a result of the Socratic Club debate with Anscombe. Williams' goes as far as to suggest that the book was somewhat autobiographical as a fantasy picture of noble martyrdom at the hands of evil which is expressed by Aslan's death by Queen Jadis. Williams asks is it "wholly accidental that the Narnia books have such a quota of terrifying female figures assaulting the simplicities of faith, hope and love?" insinuating that Queen Jadis might be in part inspired by Anscombe.<sup>62</sup>

*The Chronicles of Narnia* is a series of seven fantasy novels by C. S. Lewis. It is Lewis' most eminent work and is considered a classic of children's literature having sold over 100 million copies and translated into more than 30 languages.<sup>63</sup> Written by Lewis between 1949 and 1954, illustrated by Pauline Baynes (who also illustrated J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*) and initially published in London between

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters of C.S. Lewis* (New York, 1988), p.382

<sup>62</sup> Williams, R., *The Lion's World: A Journey into the Heart of Narnia* (London, 2012), p.12., I consider this to be an overreading of the effects of this debate though it should be noted that some authors have accused Lewis of misogyny due to his depiction of women. Elizabeth Baird Hardy addresses this question in more detail in her book *Milton, Spenser and The Chronicles of Narnia: Literary Sources for the C. S. Lewis Novels*. (North Carolina, 2007), pp 17-50

<sup>63</sup> Lindskoog, K.A. *Sleuthing C.S. Lewis: More Light in the Shadowlands*. (Georgia, 2001), p. 7

October 1950 and March 1956, *The Chronicles of Narnia* have been popularized on stage, television, radio and cinema.<sup>64</sup>

The *Chronicles* are set in Narnia, a fictional land inspired by the backdrop of Ulster which played a significant role in the formation of the Narnian landscape.<sup>65</sup> In Narnia, magic is usual and the primary inhabitants are talking animals and characters of myth and folklore. The *Chronicles* relate the adventures and voyages of several children who play pivotal roles in the country's history. With the exception of *The Horse and His Boy*, the protagonists are all children from Earth who are magically brought to Narnia, where they are assigned by the lion Aslan to defend Narnia from various incarnations of evil. The books encompass the complete time-line of Narnia, from its creation in *The Magician's Nephew*, to its concluding destruction in *The Last Battle*.

The primary genre of the heptalogy is children's fantasy. They are also in the genre of Christian literature with each book of the series relating the triumph of good over evil. The narrative style of *The Chronicles of Narnia* is third person omniscient in the style of a friendly uncle-cum-deus ex machina. Lewis' avuncular narrator instructs the reader, specifically instructing them in how they should react to characters and events in the stories, offering a place in what Lewis called, in a different context, the Inner Ring.<sup>66</sup> As others have noted, Lewis' narrative voice uses the honeyed didacticism of a charismatic schoolmaster, an uncle, having the

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 11

<sup>65</sup> In his essay *On Stories*, Lewis wrote "I have seen landscapes, notably in the Mourne Mountains and southwards which under a particular light made me feel that at any moment a giant might raise his head over the next ridge." In a letter to his brother, Lewis would later confide "that part of Rostrevor which overlooks Carlingford Lough is my idea of Narnia." Lewis, C.S., *On Stories: And Other Essays on Literature*. (Florida, 1982), p. 8

<sup>66</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Inner Ring* (Memorial Lecture at King's College). (London, 1944)

rhetoical edge over an outsider while not having the familiarity of a parent. The omniscient narrator is genial but reserved, accessible but dissimilar to the reader.<sup>67</sup>

C.S Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* were originally published between 1950 and 1956 in the following order:

- 1) The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. (1950)
- 2) Prince Caspian. (1951)
- 3) The Voyage of the Dawn Treader. (1952)
- 4) The Silver Chair. (1953)
- 5) The Horse and His Boy. (1954)
- 6) The Magicians Nephew. (1955)
- 7) The Last Battle. (1956)

The reading order which follows the internal chronology of the book, and the order which C.S. Lewis himself recommended however is as follows:<sup>68</sup>

- 1) The Magicians Nephew.
- 2) The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe.
- 3) The Horse and His Boy.
- 4) Prince Caspian.
- 5) The Voyage of the Dawn Treader.
- 6) The Silver Chair.
- 7) The Last Battle.

Despite Lewis' own assertions that the books should be read in chronological order, some Lewisian academics have written articles promoting the importance of reading in publication order. Two of which are Doris Myers' 'The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in the Chronicles of Narnia' and 'The "Correct" Order for Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia*' by Peter J. Schakel.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Wood, Naomi. 'Paradise Lost and Found: Obedience, Disobedience, and Storytelling in C. S. Lewis and Philip Pullman', *Children's Literature in Education*,. Vol 32, No. 4, 2001, pp 237-259.

<sup>68</sup> Schakel, Peter. "The "Correct" Order for Reading the Chronicles of Narnia?" In *Revisiting Narnia*, edited by Shana Caughey, 91-102. Dallas: BenBella Books Inc., 2005

<sup>69</sup> Myers, Doris E., 'The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in the Chronicles of Narnia', *Anglican Theological Review*. Vol 66, No. 2, 1984, pp 148-160, Schakel, Peter. "The "Correct" Order for

Doris Myers article in the *Anglican Theological Review*, stresses the importance of reading in chronological order as she believes that *The Chronicles of Narnia* catalogue the various stages of Anglican spiritual development with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* being a sort of infancy narrative. Myers reasoning is that the first published book of the series has allusions to both Christmas and Easter with the inclusion of Father Christmas and the resurrection of Aslan and children are primarily introduced to their Anglican faith by these two key Christian holidays. She then continues through the rest of the books of the series and compares each with the stages of Anglican spiritual development culminating with the entrance to the afterlife with Christ/Aslan in *The Last Battle*.

Peter Schakel on the other hand believes that you should read the heptalogy in publication order for two reasons. Firstly, for literary reasons, that by beginning with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the reader is introduced to the world of Narnia and the concept of Aslan with the story's protagonist of Lucy. The reader discovers the fantasy world as it is written and benefits from disclosures made in the prequels. Schakel's second and primary reason for this reading order is that as Lewis was revising *Mere Christianity* for republication while he was writing the early *Chronicles of Narnia*, there are parallels to be made by reading the two books concurrently. Schakel believes that when reading the *Chronicles* in publication order, they mirror a sequential presentation of Christian ideas from *Mere Christianity*. Book one of *Mere Christianity* establishes the need for salvation; Book two

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Reading the *Chronicles of Narnia*?" In *Revisiting Narnia*, edited by Shana Caughey, 91-102. Dallas: BenBella Books Inc., 2005.

elucidates the plan of salvation; Book three deals with morality and Book four clarifies theological issues which cause problems for Christians.<sup>70</sup>

However, since I am not tracing diachronic development in Lewis' thinking or charting the evolution of any given character, the question of reading order does not have to be decided. Instead, this dissertation is based upon a synchronic reading of the books and is organised thematically. For the synopsis I have used the chronological order rather than the publication order as the creation of Narnia first and its culmination at the end is more narratively logical. I have however elucidated the arguments of Myers and Schakel in Appendix B.

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#### THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW (1955)

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Written as a prequel in 1954 *The Magician's Nephew* recounts the origin of Narnia where the reader learns how Aslan created the world and how evil first entered it. A boy, Digory, is tricked by his Uncle Andrew into exploring new worlds through magic rings. The rings bring Digory Kirke and his friend Polly Plummer to an interim world with a lot of pools which lead to other worlds. Digory and Polly first travel to the dying world of Charn and inadvertently bring its last inhabitant, the evil Queen Jadis (later known as the White Witch) to another world. At this other world they witness Aslan's creation of Narnia but Digory is also responsible for introducing evil. The overarching plot is the creation of Narnia as well as the introduction of evil into the new world, and there are two temptation scenes

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<sup>70</sup> Schakel, Peter. "The "Correct" Order for Reading the Chronicles of Narnia?" In *Revisiting Narnia*, edited by Shana Caughey, 91-102. Dallas: BenBella Books Inc., 2005.

reminiscent of Genesis 3, one where the protagonist succumbs and one where he resists

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#### THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE (1950)

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*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was Lewis' first Narnian book published in 1950. Set some time later than *The Magician's Nephew*, it is the story of four children: Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy Pevensie as they discover a wardrobe in the house of Digory (now an old professor) that leads to the land of Narnia. The Pevensie children help Aslan save Narnia from White Witch (Queen Jadis), who has had an evil hundred year reign of uninterrupted winter over Narnia. The crux of this story is the death and resurrection of Aslan who dies in Edmund's place. Upon his resurrection the Narnian inhabitants and the four children engage the White Witch in a battle, ending her reign. The four children become lifelong kings and queens and establish the Golden Age of Narnia before returning home at the exact moment that they left.

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#### THE HORSE AND HIS BOY (1954)

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*The Horse and His Boy* was published in 1954. The story takes place during the reign of the Pevensies in the Golden age of Narnia. A Narnian talking horse called Bree and a young boy named Shasta, who are both in bondage in the country of Calormen, are the protagonists. They meet accidentally and the book details their return to Narnia and liberty. They meet Aravis and her own talking horse Hwin who are also escaping to Narnia. It transpires that Shasta is actually Cor, the long-lost older identical twin of Prince Corin and heir to the throne of Archenland, ally of Narnia.

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#### PRINCE CASPIAN (1951)

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*Prince Caspian* (also known as *Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia*) was published in 1951 and recounts the story of the Pevensie children's second trip to Narnia. They are brought back by a magic horn which was blown by the eponymous Prince Caspian to summon help. Set centuries after *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Narnia has changed. A race of men called Telmarines have invaded Narnia and the talking animals are in hiding. The Pevensie's castle, Cair Paravel, is in ruins and all the dryads and wood nymphs have withdrawn within themselves so that only the magic of Aslan can awaken them. Heir to the throne Caspian has retreated to the woods to escape his usurping uncle Miraz. The children once again restore Narnia from a tyrannical oppressor.

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#### THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWNTREADER (1952)

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*The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* was published in 1952 and sees Edmund and Lucy Pevensie once again return to Narnia, this time accompanied by their spoilt cousin, Eustace Scrubb. They arrive through a painting of a Narnian ship and land in the ocean. They are brought aboard what turns out to be Caspian's ship *The Dawn Treader* and help the King to seek out the seven lords who were banished by Miraz when he usurped the throne. This voyage brings them to several strange lands where they meet a variety of different people and engage in different adventures. Finally they arrive at the periphery of, but do not enter, Aslan's country at the edge of the world.

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#### THE SILVER CHAIR (1953)

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*The Silver Chair*, published in 1953, is the first Narnia book that does not include the Pevensie children. A reformed Eustace Clarence Scrubb is called to Narnia by Aslan

along with his classmate Jill Pole. They are tasked with finding Prince Rilian, King Caspian's son, who has not been seen since he set out a decade earlier to avenge the death of his mother. There they are given four signs to help them in their search for the Prince and are accompanied by Puddleglum the Marsh-wiggle. They face peril and treachery on their quest before eventually finding the young Rilian.

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#### THE LAST BATTLE (1956)

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The final book of the series, *The Last Battle*, was published in 1956 and it depicts the end of the world of Narnia. Jill and Eustace again return to save Narnia from the manipulative ape Shift who has tricked the donkey Puzzle into impersonating Aslan by wearing a wild lion's skin. Shift represents an anti-Christ figure from the Book of Revelation who deceives the masses. Shift makes an arrangement with the Calormenes to have the fake Aslan allow the Calormenes to cut down the talking trees and enslave the Narnian animals. The Narnians do as they are instructed as they believe Puzzle to be the true Aslan, losing their love and belief in the fundamental goodness of Aslan. They are also informed that Aslan and Tash (The Calormene God) are one. Once the humans arrive from our world some battles ensue and we witness the final demise of Narnia in its current state. A new Narnia is created where sin has no place and the faithful inhabitants join Aslan and those who have died beforehand in a Narnian Heaven. This is the most eschatological book in the series.

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#### 1.6 - CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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In the following chapters I will catalogue and analyze what I consider to be the major themes in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. As Aslan is the principal character who is present in every book of the series, chapter two deals with Christology. I compile all allusions to Aslan as Narnia's Christ. This chapter includes a detailed chart of the

role of the lion in the Bible as well as Aslan's Christological role as creator, redeemer and provider in Narnia. Chapter three of this dissertation deals with Narnia and Genesis 1-3. This chapter includes the influence of the creation account of Genesis on the formation of Narnia as well as the introduction of evil to a new world and a temptation scene. I also examine the impact that John Milton's *Paradise Lost* had on *The Magician's Nephew*. Chapter four searches for Trinitarian echoes and asks whether there is a tangible Trinity in Narnia. I examine the role of the Father in Narnia as well as its Pneumatology. Eschatology is the subject of Chapter five which ascertains which books of the Bible influenced Lewis when writing the finale of Narnia. I will highlight how *The Last Battle* mirrors the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24-25. This chapter also evaluates Lewis' stance on Purgatory and Heaven. Chapter six then deals with minor themes in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. These are themes which I considered to be smaller in scale than those in earlier chapters or which can be considered as merely echoes. These include Mosaic themes, temptation, the Eucharist and others. I then close with my conclusion which highlights the ways in which Lewis used the Bible when writing *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

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## CHAPTER 2 - ASLAN AS JESUS: CHRISTOLOGICAL THEMES

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The one character that is prevalent in all seven books of *The Chronicles of Narnia* is the character of Aslan the Lion. Aslan is the instigator of the Creation and the final end of Narnia and in order to understand Aslan's role in these events (which will be analysed in other chapters), one must first comprehend who Aslan is.

This chapter will begin by documenting what Lewis himself had to say about Aslan, why he is portrayed as a lion and his relationship to Christianity; I will then unpack the symbolic associations of lions in the Bible and other works of literature. This is in order to ascertain whether Aslan as a lion has any distinctly biblical overtones. I will then proceed to an in-depth analysis of the incident which has the strongest sustained Christological resonances, namely the death and resurrection of Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. This section will search for the biblical allusions but will also consider the relevant models of atonement which Lewis may have been drawing on. The Gospels do not give a clearly articulated explanation of the soteriological significance of Christ's death on the cross. I therefore expect Lewis to read these texts through the lens of a more developed theology. Finally, I will conclude this chapter by exploring the brief appearances of Aslan in several of the books in light of the post-resurrection appearances of Christ. This will include the possible reasoning behind Lewis' portrayal of Aslan as a Lamb in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

## 2.1 - LEWIS ON ASLAN AS CHRIST

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In his essay *It All Began with a Picture* C. S. Lewis states:

At first I had very little idea how the story would go. But then suddenly Aslan came bounding into it. I think I had been having a good many dreams of lions about that time. Apart from that, I don't know where the Lion came from or why he came. But once he was there, he pulled the whole story together, and soon he pulled the six other Narnian stories in after him.<sup>1</sup>

Lewis was asked to clarify the Aslan-Christ correlation to a group of fifth graders in Maryland in 1954. He replied: "I did not say to myself 'Let us represent Jesus as He really is in our world by a Lion in Narnia'; I said 'Let us suppose that there were land like Narnia and that the Son of God, as he became a Man in our world, became a Lion there, and then imagine what would happen.'"<sup>2</sup> A different child called Carroll wrote to Lewis asking him about the inspiration for the name Aslan to which he replied:

Dear [Carroll],

It is a pleasure to answer your question. I found the name in the notes to Lane's Arabian Nights; it is the Turkish for Lion. I pronounce it Ass-lan myself. And of course I meant the Lion of Judah.<sup>3</sup>

Revelation 5:5 describes Jesus as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" and unsurprisingly, in another world [Narnia], the Son takes the shape of a tangible lion.<sup>4</sup>

Lewis conceived Aslan as an evangelical tool in order to introduce children to knowing and loving Christ through knowing and loving Aslan. A mother wrote to Lewis via Macmillan Publishing worried that her son Laurence loved Aslan more than Jesus. Lewis replied within ten days emphasizing that "the things he [Laurence]

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards, B.L., *C.S. Lewis: Fantasist, Mythmaker and Poet*. (Connecticut, 2007), p. 4

<sup>2</sup> Downing, D.C., *Into the Wardrobe: C. S. Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles*. (San Francisco, 2008), pp 64-65

<sup>3</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to Children*. (New York, 1985), p. 29

<sup>4</sup> Alexander, Joy. 'The Whole Art and Joy of Words: Aslan's Speech in the Chronicles of Narnia.' *MythLore* 24, No. 1, 2003, 37-48.

loved Aslan for doing and saying are simply the things Jesus really did and said. So when Laurence thinks he is loving Aslan, he is really loving Jesus, and perhaps loving Him more than he ever did before.”<sup>5</sup> Lewis himself used the name of Aslan as a synonym for God in his correspondence with Laurence two years later when writing regarding the terminal illness of his wife Joy: “I am sure Aslan knows best and whether He leaves her with me or takes her to His own country, He will do what is right.”<sup>6</sup>

Lewis explicitly discloses this intention in the closing scene from *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* where Lucy and Edmund are informed by Aslan that, just like Susan and Peter in the end of *Prince Caspian*, now they are too old to come back to Narnia. Lucy, through her tears, says, “It isn’t Narnia, you know. It’s you. We shan’t meet you there. And how can we live, never meeting you?”<sup>7</sup> To this Aslan replies that they will meet him there. And when Edmund asks Are you there too Sir?, Aslan answers, “*I am. But there I have another name. You must learn to know me by that name.* This was the very reason you why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there.”<sup>8</sup>

This insinuation that Aslan could be found in our realm stirred up the imagination of some readers, leading to an eleven year old girl from America called Hila writing to Lewis to ask what Aslan's name is in this world.<sup>9</sup> His response was:

As to Aslan's other name, well I want you to guess. Has there never been anyone in this world who (1) Arrived at the same time as Father Christmas. (2) Said He was the Son of the Great Emperor. (3) Gave Himself up for someone else's fault to be jeered at and killed by wicked people. (4) Came to

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<sup>5</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to Children*. (New York, 1985), p. 52

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.69

<sup>7</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York, 2001), p. 541

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* italics added.

<sup>9</sup> Dorsett, L. W., *C. S. Lewis Letters to Children*. (New York, 1985), p.31-32

life again. (5) Is sometimes spoken of as a Lamb.... Don't you really know His name in this world? Think it over and let me know your answer!<sup>10</sup>

Here Lewis draws attention to some of the allusions that he has intentionally woven into his depiction of Aslan. The arrival of Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is preceded by the coming of Father Christmas. Queen Jadis had instituted a century long perpetual winter. “She makes it always winter. Always winter and never Christmas.”<sup>11</sup> The coming of Aslan freed Father Christmas to return who arrives bearing gifts and announcing “Aslan is on the move.”<sup>12</sup> Several times throughout the series Aslan is referred to as Son of the “Great Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea.”<sup>13</sup> Aslan, like Christ, gave Himself up for someone else's transgression to be mocked and taunted before being killed prior to his own resurrection which will be dealt with later in this chapter. Finally in his response, Lewis had mentioned that both the earthly and Narnian incarnations of Christ are referred to as a Lamb (without mentioning a Lion). The Narnian version of Christ the Lamb which Lewis is referencing is from the closing scene from *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, which I will also discuss later in this chapter.

There are other allusions to Christ which Lewis could have mentioned in his reply except that they are less obvious to a child. The use of a lion to represent Jesus has a biblical precedent in Revelation 5 where He is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The blood of both Jesus and Aslan bring the dead back to life. In *The Silver Chair*,

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 32

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 118

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 159

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 146, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 282, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. (New York, 2001), p. 359, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn-Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 475

Prince Caspian is not only brought back to life, but is also revived into a younger version of himself by a single drop of Aslan's blood.<sup>14</sup> Similarly Christ's shed blood has the power to resurrect believers into new life (Hebrews 9:14-15). In the New Testament, Jesus breathed on his disciples in order to impart upon them the Holy Ghost (John 20:22) while Aslan used the same breathing approach to bring the creatures which Queen Jadis had turned to stone back to life.<sup>15</sup>

It should be pointed out that some academics have often gone to extremes in an attempt to deconstruct *The Chronicles of Narnia* by speculating about Lewis' envisioned true meaning for all of his symbolic Biblical imagery. To analyse the Narnian books in this manner is to miss Lewis' point in writing them.<sup>16</sup> Clearly he is not writing allegory but rather in his creation of Aslan, Lewis is using biblical allusion as signposts for the reader to follow toward Christ.

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## 2.2 - SYMBOLIC ASSOCIATIONS OF LIONS

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The lion is a symbol with a number of biblical resonances. In the biblical corpus, the lion was frequently employed allegorically in apocalyptic literature to represent rulers, mainly strong ones as in Daniel 7:4. Jacob's blessing in Genesis 49 compares the tribe of Judah, here being singled out as the royal tribe, to a lion / lioness / lion cub.<sup>17</sup> Genesis 49:9-10 states:

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<sup>14</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 661

<sup>15</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), pp 187-189

<sup>16</sup> Some scholars who have attempted to deconstruct *The Chronicles of Narnia* include Schakel, P.J., *Reading with the Heart: The Way into Narnia*. (Michigan, 2005), p. xii., Hardy, E.B., Milton, *Spenser and The Chronicles of Narnia: Literary Sources for the C.S Lewis Novels*. (North Carolina, 2007), pp 78 - 80., Holman, C. H., *A Handbook to Literature, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.* (New York, 1972), p. 13., Hourihan, M., *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature*. (New York, 1997), p.68.

<sup>17</sup> Genesis 49:8 "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you."

Judah is a lion's whelp;  
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.  
He bows down, he lies down as a lion;  
And as a lion, who shall rouse him?  
The scepter shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh comes;  
And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

This blessing would later be the basis of substantial messianic expectancy and conjecture in early Judaism (cf. e.g. 4 Ezra 12:31-33), and it is this interpretation which in all likelihood stands behind Revelation 5:5. In depictions of corporeal lions in the Old Testament, 1 and 2 Kings have references to lions as instruments of divine retribution (1 Kings 13:24-28, 1 Kings 20:36, 2 Kings 17:25-26) and one of the most courageous acts in the Old Testament is to kill a lion (Judges 14:5; 1 Samuel 17:34, 2 Samuel 1:23 and 1 Chronicles 11:22). While an exceptionally valiant individual could be called lion-hearted as in 2 Samuel 17:10, a warrior would be described as having the face of a lion (1 Chronicles 12:8). Proverbs 20:2 states that “the wrath of a king is like the roaring of a lion.” The definitive illustration of peace is Isaiah’s prophecy of a time when the lion would finish being a predator and lie down with the calf while the wolf lies with the lamb. (Isaiah 11:6). Finally, in the book of Amos, we see the divine being represented as a lion. God is said to roar from Zion (Amos 1:2), and Amos’ compulsion to prophecy is represented as akin to fearing a lion.<sup>18</sup> “A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy? (Amos 3:8). In biblical literature, then, it is the ideas of strong rulers, royalty, courage, and instruments of divine retribution that are most strongly associated with lions.

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<sup>18</sup> “The LORD roars from Zion, And utters His voice from Jerusalem; The pastures of the shepherds mourn, And the top of Carmel withers.” Amos 1:2.

These associations are not unique to the Bible. In literature lions are represented as strong predators. In an epic poem written by Peisander around 600 BCE, the hero Hercules is given twelve labours as a form of penance from King Eurystheus.<sup>19</sup> The first of these labours is the killing of the wild Nemean Lion. The Nemean Lion was strong, impervious to attack as its golden fur was impenetrable and its claws were sharper than any sword. The lion was said to be the offspring of Zeus or according to other sources, it came from Typhon or the Chimera, the latter of which also sired the lion-bodied Sphinx.<sup>20</sup> In Ernest Hemmingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) Santiago dreams of lions he saw as a child. Here lions represent youth, and with it, strength. Even the Cowardly Lion, in L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz* (1900) is ashamed as he does not live up to the reputation of lions as "all the other animals in the forest naturally expect me to be brave, for the lion everywhere is thought to be The Kings of Beasts."<sup>21</sup>

Aslan epitomises the characteristics of the lion as portrayed in both the Bible and other works of literature. Throughout the Chronicles it is remarked how Aslan is "not a tame lion."<sup>22</sup> Lions represent royalty and Aslan is repeatedly referred to as looking royal.

For when they tried to look at Aslan's face they just caught a glimpse of the golden mane and the great, *royal*, solemn, overwhelming eyes; and then they found they couldn't look at him and went all trembly... Up to that moment Lucy had been thinking how *royal and strong* and peaceful his face looked.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Burkert, W., *Greek Religion*. (Cambridge, 1985), p.209

<sup>20</sup> Scull, S.A., *Greek Mythology Systematized*. (Montana, 2003), p.307

<sup>21</sup> Baum, L.F., *The Wizard of Oz*, (Maryland, 2008), p. 30

<sup>22</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 194, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p.

500, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 677,

<sup>23</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 169

Also, the roar of Aslan is so powerful that it scares Queen Jadis into running away in a manner akin to that of Proverbs 20:2 and Amos 1:2 (quoted above).

In the fantasy world of Narnia, with its animal inhabitants, the king of the beasts would naturally be a lion. Aslan as a lion therefore works in the logic of the world of the Narnian text. It can subsequently be related to Christ as the Lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5) but this verse probably did not originally generate the basis of Aslan as a lion. It is not *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. While there is nothing distinctly biblical with Lewis depicting Aslan as a lion, it is certainly consistent with the biblical material.

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### 2.3 - ASLAN AS REDEEMER

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The most predominant example of Aslan as Jesus is in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* where Aslan takes on Jesus' redemptive role. In this account, Lewis combines a particular theological interpretation of the redemptive significance of Jesus' death with clear biblical allusion from the Passion and Resurrection narratives. The character of Edmund Pevensie has betrayed his siblings and as a result Queen Jadis has a right to his life. In the Queen's words to Aslan: "You at least know the Magic which the Emperor put into Narnia at the very beginning. You know that every traitor belongs to me as my lawful prey and that for every treachery I have a right to kill."<sup>24</sup> It is later revealed to the reader that Aslan had offered his own life in exchange for that of Edmund. The Biblical imagery in this act is as blatant as it is powerful. Not only does Aslan simply forgive Edmund but he also agrees to die for his transgression. This act is representative of Christ's death on the Cross for the sins of mankind and Edmund's act of betrayal becomes illustrative of

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<sup>24</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (New York, 2001), p.175

sin in general. Likewise, Aslan pays the ransom with his life, as did Christ: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Queen Jadis has the role of the devil and she alone has a right to traitors. Edmund (who along with his brother, is frequently referred to as a son of Adam) represents Adam and Eve's betrayal of God's commandment and it is Aslan, in the Christ role, who takes mankind's punishment of death.

These events all transpire to establish the execution narrative of Aslan. Two of the four child protagonists in the tale, Lucy and Susan Pevensie, follow Aslan to his eventual execution: "And both the girls cried bitterly (though they hardly knew why) and clung to the Lion and kissed his mane and his nose and his paws and his great, sad eyes"<sup>25</sup> Likewise, Jesus had "a large number of people [who] followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him" (Luke 23:27). Once he is in the custody of Queen Jadis and they are sure he is of no threat, Aslan is subjected to humiliation and derision: "'Stop!' said the Witch. 'Let him first be shaved!'...they worked about his face putting on the muzzle...he [was] surrounded by the whole crowd of creatures kicking him, hitting him, spitting on him, jeering at him."<sup>26</sup> The imagery of this event is profoundly similar to that of the Gospels:

Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him. (Mark 15:16-20)

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p.179

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 180

After the humiliation and torture, it is Queen Jadis who finally kills Aslan by piercing him with a stone knife. Jadis thinks that by Aslan's apparent death that she is victorious over him and that nothing will now prevent her from killing the humans, along with the other Narnians inhabitants.

Like Christ, Aslan's death is not permanent and his resurrection encompasses a similar style of biblical allusion. In the resurrection account of Luke's Gospel, it is the women who had followed Jesus that went to His tomb in Luke 24:1-3: "Very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus." Correspondingly, after Lucy and Susan remove Aslan's muzzle, they leave the Stone Table where he had been executed. In the early morning they return to find the Stone Table broken in two and the resurrected Aslan standing before them.<sup>27</sup> The Stone table upon which he had been slain "was broken in two pieces by a great crack that ran down it from end to end; and there was no Aslan."<sup>28</sup> The significance of the breaking of the Stone Table is not too obvious but it is probable that it represents the veil of the temple being torn in two while Jesus is on the cross (cf. Luke 23:44-46, Matthew 27:50-51 and Mark 15:37-38).<sup>29</sup>

Aslan explains to the female followers that while a life was required by the Deep Magic, or Law, there was a "Deeper Magic" which states that "when a *willing victim* who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp 182-184

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 184

<sup>29</sup> Mark and Matthew both have the Temple veil rent in two immediately after Jesus' death while Luke has it just prior. Regardless of chronology, the veil tears around the time of Christ's death.

crack and Death itself would start working backwards”<sup>30</sup> The key words in the above statement are “willing victim.” In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus “...was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done”(Luke 22:41-42). Jesus as “the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross” (Hebrew12:2), choose to die in humanity’s place.

It is noteworthy that it is Lucy and Susan, as females, who witness the death of Aslan. This is in keeping with the Passion accounts of Matthew and Mark:

Matthew 27:55-56: And many women were there beholding [the crucifixion] afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

Mark 15:40-41: There were also women looking on [the crucifixion] afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

Likewise it is Lucy and Susan who stay behind to bury Aslan properly.

Luke 23:55-56: And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. (cf. Mark 16:1)

Also it is the women that first bear witness to the resurrection.

Luke 24:1-3: Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. (cf. Mark 16:1-8, Matthew 28: 1-10, John 20: 1-13)

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<sup>30</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 184, Italics added.

It is clear that Lewis' account of Aslan's death and resurrection not only incorporates the larger themes of the crucifixion narratives but also the minor details like the gender of the witnesses to it.

Lewis' adaption of the death and resurrection of Aslan develops an image that does not merely echo biblical phrases about the atonement. Instead it aids the reader to "understand and experience" the reality of biblical atonement teaching.<sup>31</sup> Lewis' account is drawing on theological understandings of the atoning significance of the crucifixion, and not on the Gospel narratives in unmediated form. In his book *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*, Mark Baker compares the account of the Stone Table to the Penal Satisfaction model of Atonement.<sup>32</sup>

According to the Penal Satisfaction model of Atonement, mankind in its sin has turned away from God and so warrants divine punishment. Jesus in his death on the cross, died in the place of (as a substitution for) sinful humanity at God's behest, and in doing so he took upon himself the punishment humanity ought to have suffered.<sup>33</sup> God's desire is to be in right relationship with mankind and dwell together with us in eternity. However, human sin does not permit this as God is holy and therefore cannot be tainted by associating with one who is stained by sin. As it is impossible for humans to achieve the sinless perfection that is required, God, who is just, must punish us for our sin. God, however, provided a solution by sending His Son Jesus to earth to endure the punishment which we deserve with His death on the cross.<sup>34</sup> As Jesus has paid the price for us, God can subsequently regard us as not guilty. If we believe that we are sinners deserving of hell, but that Jesus died in our place, then we

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<sup>31</sup> Baker, M., *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*. (Wisconsin, 2011), p.233

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.115

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.167

can be in right relationship with God and go to Heaven.<sup>35</sup> Through the ‘Penal Satisfaction Model’ of atonement Jesus Christ died for mankind’s sin. He took the punishment that ought to have fallen on us and satisfied the righteousness of God so that humanity might go free if we believe on Him.<sup>36</sup>

The Stone Table in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is comparable to the Penal Satisfaction model of Atonement. The reason being is that it is Aslan who endures the penalty that was originally intended for Edmund. By taking the human Edmund’s place, Aslan fulfils the requirements of the Deeper Magic; in the same manner that Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law (Romans 8:2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death”). However, despite the similitudes, there are some significant differences. As mentioned, upon his resurrection, Aslan informed Susan and Lucy to the concept of the “Deeper Magic” of self-sacrificial love.<sup>37</sup> Self-sacrificial love has no purpose in the conveying of the Penal Satisfaction category of atonement as rooted in Western interpretations of justice. While self-sacrificial love is found in other models of atonement like the Exemplarist or Moral Influence model which is associated with the medieval theologians Peter Abelard and Hastings Rashdall.<sup>38</sup> It is the proposal that God had sent Jesus to death on the cross out of His love for mankind so that the world would be reconciled to God. Subsequently, this is a model of subjective

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.168

<sup>37</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 185

<sup>38</sup> Stott, J., *The Cross of Christ*. (Leicester, 1986), p. 217

atonement with its effectiveness lying in the idea that the “voluntary self-sacrifice of the Son moves mankind to grateful love in response.”<sup>39</sup>

Lewis goes further by conveying that self-sacrificial love is not a characteristic of Aslan alone but rather it is a “Deeper Magic” which Narnia itself is based upon. While his imagery contains many elements of Penal Satisfaction, Lewis’ atonement imagery is that of sacrificial love and not just retributive justice. Therefore to Lewis, Jesus’ death and resurrection offer a different route to salvation. In the Narnian version, Aslan’s death is not an attempt to appease God (Emperor-Beyond-The-Sea) but is instead a payment made to the devil (Queen Jadis) in the role of "the accuser of our brethren" (Revelation 12:10) who threatens mankind (Edmund) with death. To use Lewis’ imagery, God through Christ works through a Deeper Magic to release humans from this bondage of spiritual death.<sup>40</sup> By using this metaphor Lewis is able to communicate to his intended audience of children that:

- God and forces of evil are in conflict.
- God has solidarity and love for his creation.
- God will forgive and through His Son, God and man are reconciled.
- Jesus was willing to sacrifice Himself and take what we deserve so that we may partake in what Jesus deserves.<sup>41</sup>

Lewis is also able to do this in such a way that avoids suggesting that the death is to satisfy the wrath of God. The resurrection of Aslan and Jesus did not mark their end but rather the end of the forces of evil.

The biblical allusions I have noted above are corroborated by David G. Clark in *C.S. Lewis: A Guide to His Theology*. Clarke also suggests additional biblical background to the Stone Table in the Pauline Epistles, a connection I find

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Baker, M., *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*. (Wisconsin, 2011), p. 234

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

persuasive. Clarke in this work, attempts to catalogue the theology of C.S Lewis throughout his writings.<sup>42</sup> For Clark, the heart of the Christian story is that of the redemptive work of Christ. He posits that this too was Lewis' focus and points out that Lewis told and retold this event in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Mere Christianity* and *Perelandra*.<sup>43</sup> Clark goes through the events of Aslan's resurrection and compares it to that of Jesus from the four Gospels. What is noteworthy is his interpretation of the significance of the Stone Table. The Stone Table is covered in strange carvings, has been around forever and its history is unknown. Clark believes it signifies the Old Testament Law citing St. Paul who describes the Law as "the ministry of death, chiselled in letters on stone tablets" (2 Corinthians 3:7).<sup>44</sup> That Law was unforgiving and every sin must be atoned for with blood. As Christ died on our behalf that price was paid with His blood thereby "erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands" (Colossians 2:13). As the Stone Table was cracked in two, Clark also suggests that this is a metaphor for the veil of the Temple being torn in two.<sup>45</sup>

Clarke points to another possible connection between Aslan and Christ's redemptive work via the Christian doctrine of the Harrowing of Hell, which, while not described in the Gospel narratives, has been supported by reference to a number of biblical texts. Elsewhere in his book, Clark clarifies his position on Jesus' descent to the underworld. He uses the scriptures of Ephesians 4:8-10, 1

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<sup>42</sup> Clark is a Professor of New Testament and Greek at Vanguard University in California. He is also senior editor of *The Lamp-Post*, a publication of the Southern California C.S Lewis Society. Clark himself is writing from an evangelical perspective confirming that he "personally hold(s) the Scriptures to be the Word of God."

<sup>43</sup> Clark, D.G., *C.S. Lewis: A Guide to His Theology*. (Massachusetts, 2007), p. 58

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63

Peter 3:18-20 and 1 Peter 4:6 as his evidence.<sup>46</sup> Clark advocates that the scene from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* where Aslan turns the Narnians from stone to their natural form as an allegory for Jesus' descent into Hades whereby He "took captivity captive" (Ephesians 4:8). Aslan had freed them from their captivity. He accompanies this theory with the discourse of Luke 11:21-22 where Jesus explains to those who charge Him with being in league with Beelzebub that when a stronger man takes over the castle of a strong man, He can take whatever He wishes. Also, from the courtyard of Jadis, Aslan instructs the giant to destroy the gates of the castle. Clark compares this to Matthew 16:18 where Jesus informs Peter that the "gates of Hades" will not prevail against" the church. Christ had changed what the Old Testament saints knew as a permanent prison into a temporary place for souls.<sup>47</sup> Clark believes that the resurrection of Aslan/Jesus instigates a plundering of Satan/Jadis' house.

The 'Harrowing of Hell' is a part of Anglicanism due to several New Testament sources (Matthew 12:40, Ephesians 4:9, Colossians 1:18 and 1 Peter 3:18-19, 4:6) and its inclusion in the Apostle's Creed where Jesus "descended into Hell" and the contemporary version stating that he "descended to the dead."<sup>48</sup> Christ is portrayed as defeating Satan and then leading Adam and Eve, the patriarchs and

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p.137

Ephesians 4:8-10. Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

1 Peter 3:18-20. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

1 Peter 4:6. For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

<sup>47</sup> Clark, D.G., *C.S. Lewis: A Guide to His Theology*. (Massachusetts, 2007), p. 65

<sup>48</sup> Armentrout, D.S., *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church*. (New York, 2000), p. 236

the prophets out.<sup>49</sup> The language used when conveying the Harrowing of Hell in Anglican art and literature is that of Psalm 24:

Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors!  
And the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD  
strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle.<sup>50</sup>

This language highlights Christ's power and ultimate victory over death due to his resurrection. Lewis himself believed that Jesus did descend into Hell and preached to the dead there as suggested by 1 Peter 3:19 and professed by Christians when reciting the Apostles creed. However, Lewis believed that this occurred outside of our own perception of time and included those who had died both prior and subsequent to the Son of God's incarnation.<sup>51</sup> In *The Great Divorce*, Lewis has the narrator discuss with George MacDonald (MacDonald (1824 –1905) was a Scottish author, poet, and Christian minister) the question of whether anyone could reach the souls in Hell.<sup>52</sup> MacDonald told the narrator that only God could. The narrator replied would God ever go to Hell again to which MacDonald responded that God does not need to as all moments were present in the moment of Jesus' descending. The interlocutor makes clear that there is no spirit in Hell to whom Christ did not already preach.<sup>53</sup> As the author, Lewis is actually creating both characters voices, and therefore giving both sides. It is not Lewis' beliefs which are given by the narrator. In this instance, it is actually MacDonald's words which actually express Lewis' opinion. It is therefore not difficult to imagine that Lewis used the connection between the Harrowing of

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Psalm 24: 7-8

<sup>51</sup> Lewis, W. H., *Letters of C. S. Lewis*. (New York, 1966), p.238

<sup>52</sup> C. S. Lewis wrote that he regarded MacDonald as his "master": "Picking up a copy of *Phantastes* one day at a train-station bookstall, I began to read. A few hours later, I knew that I had crossed a great frontier."

<sup>53</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Great Divorce*. (New York, 1979), pp 123-124

Hell as an allusion to the freeing of the frozen Narnians within Queen Jadis' castle.

Another Narnian scene which demonstrates Aslan's Christological comparison is at the end of *The Silver Chair*. Aslan has returned Eustace and Jill to the top of 'Aslan's Mountain'. Once there they come to the stream which Jill had drunk from earlier in the book.

And there, on the golden gravel of the bed of the stream, lay King Caspian, dead, with the water flowing over him like liquid glass. His long white beard swayed in it like water-weed. And all three stood and wept. Even the Lion wept.<sup>54</sup>

The phrase "the Lion wept" mirrors that of John 11:35 prior to Jesus raising his friend Lazarus from the dead.

"Son of Adam," said Aslan, "go into that thicket and pluck the thorn that you will find there, and bring it to me." Eustace obeyed. The thorn was a foot long and sharp as a rapier. "Drive it into my paw, Son of Adam," ...Then Eustace set his teeth and drove the thorn into the Lion's pad. And there came out a great drop of blood, redder than all redness that you have ever seen or imagined. And it splashed into the stream over the dead body of the King. ... And the dead King began to be changed. His white beard turned to grey, and from grey to yellow, and got shorter and vanished altogether; and his sunken cheeks grew round and fresh, and the wrinkles were smoothed, and his eyes opened, and his eyes and lips both laughed, and suddenly he leaped up and stood before them - a very young man, or a boy.<sup>55</sup>

The long thorn which pierces Aslan's right paw echoes the spike driven into the hands of Christ. The John 11:35 parallel, as well as the raising of Caspian from the dead, highlight the resurrecting power of the blood of Aslan as Narnia's Christ.

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<sup>54</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), pp 660-661

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 661

## 2.4 - BRIEF APPEARANCES OF ASLAN

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As I have shown, Aslan is a prevalent character within *The Chronicles of Narnia*. However, his appearances vary in type. Sometimes he is corporeally present as a lion or in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* he is present in a different form like an albatross (which will be discussed in Chapter 4: Echoes of the Trinity in Narnia) and a lamb. This section however deals with the ambiguous presence of Aslan, the more covert appearances. Specifically I am cataloguing and analysing the manifestations which are akin to the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus.

In his book *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, Luke Timothy Johnson classifies the narratives of post-resurrection appearances into two categories: ‘The empty tomb account’ (which is used to counter any hoax-claims) and ‘appearance accounts’.<sup>56</sup> The typical characteristics of ‘appearance accounts’ are also apologetic. They stress the reality of Jesus’ resurrection body in order to make two points: that the one who lives is to be identified with the one who died and that the experience of His presence is not that of a ghost or phantom.<sup>57</sup> These post-resurrection appearances are sudden and surprising. Jesus appears not as a shadow of His former self but as “a more powerful and commanding presence.”<sup>58</sup> In the biblical accounts there are: the sudden intrusion of power, the reaction of fascination and fear, and the sense of being commissioned.

The closing scenes from *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* are replete with biblical allusions. After Lucy, Edmund, and Eustace had watched the mouse Reepicheep sail off in search of Aslan’s country, they wade towards a flat island where the sky comes all the way down to the grass. They behold a Lamb “so white that...they

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<sup>56</sup> Johnson, L.T., *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*. (London, 1999), pp 112-113

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

could hardly look at it.”<sup>59</sup> There is an echo here of the Transfiguration scene where Jesus’ face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. It transpires that the Lamb they are viewing is Aslan.

They are welcomed by the Lamb to “Come and have breakfast” which mirrors Jesus’ salutation in John 21:12 when Jesus said to his disciples to “Come and eat breakfast.” The allusion to the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus by the Sea of Tiberias is strengthened further by additional details incorporated into the Narnian story. In John 21:9 the disciples come ashore and “as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread.” Likewise in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* when they come ashore “they noticed for the first time that there was a fire lit on the grass and fish roasting on it.” Both counterparts initially view the Lamb / Risen Lord while He is on a beach and they are coming ashore. Christ and Aslan have already got the fire going and the meal on to cook and both the disciples and the Narnian protagonists have a breakfast of fish roasting on a spit.

The Lamb is asked by Edmund if there is a way to Aslan’s country from this world, to which the Lamb replies, “There is a way into my country from all the worlds,...but as he spoke, his snowy white flushed into tawny gold and his size changed and he was Aslan himself, towering above them and scattering light from his mane.”<sup>60</sup> Aslan changing from a lamb, to arguably his true form of a lion, with light scattering from his mane also has echoes of the Transfiguration account of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 17:1–9, Mark 9:2-8 and Luke 9:28–36). Peter, James and John witness Jesus’ true form with his face shining as the sun, and his garments

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<sup>59</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 540

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

becoming white as the light while conversing with the patriarchs before God calls him “Son.”

The Narnian protagonists’ speaking with Aslan in a form unfamiliar to them is typical of post-resurrection accounts of appearances of Jesus in the Gospels, where the disciples do not initially recognise Jesus, but it only becomes clear as they speak with him. Outside the tomb in John 20:11-18, a weeping Mary Magdalene speaks with someone she assumes is the gardener. The gardener asks her why she is weeping and after Mary explains Jesus said to her, “Mary!” she turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” and He is revealed as the Risen Christ. In the Road to Emmaus account of Luke 24:13-32, Cleopas and his companion conversed and reasoned with Jesus Himself who travelled with them. “But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him” (Luke 24:16). They do not recognize Jesus until later, when he blesses and breaks the bread at supper and vanishes from their sight=

In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Aslan makes himself known by transforming from a Lamb to a Lion. In John 1:29 & 36, John the Baptist declares of Jesus when He comes toward him, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (also Isaiah 53). Also Jesus emerges as both a Lion and a Lamb in John’s vision that is recorded in the book of Revelation. In Revelation 5:5-6, John writes, "See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.' Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders." Revelation 14 talks about Jesus as a Lamb with the 144,000 who were redeemed from the Earth. Revelation 21:14 also states that “the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

Lewis' use of a Lamb in this manner is a far more transparent analogy than his primary depiction of Aslan as a Lion. By using the image of the Lamb and the replication of the background and exact dialogue of Jesus from the Gospel of John in the scene on the beach, Lewis is clearly stating that Aslan is Narnia's Christ figure. It is notable that it is only the Johannine works which Lewis utilises for Aslan's depiction as a Lamb, namely the Gospel and Revelation. There does not seem to be any necessity within the plot of the story for Aslan to be a lamb here. What it does do is powerfully recall the Johannine material within a scene reminiscent of the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus by the Sea of Tiberius.

Another post-resurrection appearance of Christ which has a Narnian parallel is from *The Horse and his Boy*. The talking horse Bree is doubtful that Aslan is a real lion and when Aslan does arrive he orders Bree to "Touch me. Smell me. Here are my paws, here is my tail, and these are my whiskers."<sup>61</sup> This has clear echoes of the dialogue between Jesus and Thomas in John 20:27 "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

There are other more covert appearances of Aslan throughout the series. One such appearance takes place in *Prince Caspian*. The Pevensie children have returned to Narnia where 1,300 years have passed. They are en route with the sceptical dwarf Trumpkin to try and rendezvous with Caspian's forces at the Stone Table but find the course difficult. Aslan appears to Lucy to guide them in the opposite direction of the route they are taking but none of the others believe her. It is put to a vote and they decide to ignore Lucy's vision of Aslan. They travel on and encounter a difficult

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<sup>61</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: A Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 299

journey. Later that night Lucy meets Aslan who instructs her to follow Him regardless of popular opinion. She is admonished by Aslan for not forsaking the others to follow him as it was right. Lucy tries to waken the others to Aslan's presence but none of the others can see him. Peter and Susan tell her to go back to sleep and it is only Edmund who believes her despite his inability to see Aslan. They eventually agree to follow Lucy who is following Aslan and one by one the Lion appears to them; Edmund first, who had been supportive of Lucy, then Peter and finally Susan and Trumpkin. Lewis is comparing Lucy's journey with that of the Christian life. Our faith in that which is unseen is viewed as foolishness. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 1:18, states that "the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." This is an example of 2 Corinthians 5:7 which states "For we walk by faith, not by sight." Also, as Lucy is the youngest, one is reminded of what Jesus said in Matthew 18:3 "unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." One must have faith like a child to fully conceive of the Kingdom. Although I do not identify any strong allusion here, there are certainly echoes of biblical themes.

In *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* Prince Caspian, Edmund, Lucy, Eustace and Reepicheep are on an island search for one of the missing Narnian Lords. They discover a pool which turns whatever enters it into pure gold. The insidious effects of the pool's attraction is seen in the conversation that follows, as Caspian and Edmund morph into greedy rivals jockeying for position and Lucy reverts to stereotyping and name-calling. This brief but disturbing conversation is suddenly interrupted as Aslan appears briefly, huge and dazzling. This is all the youngsters

need to bring them to their senses and they flee from the temptation, renaming the island “Deathwater instead of Goldwater.”<sup>62</sup>

There is another similar scene in *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* where Aslan awakens a protagonist from a temptation trance, this time it is Lucy. She is drawn to a spell titled “An infallible spell to make beautiful her that uttereth it beyond the lot of mortals.”<sup>63</sup> The images in the book were magic and acted out the ramifications of the spell. They showed that once Lucy recited the spell, all the Kings of Narnia and its neighbours would fight each other to win her favour which resulted in the world being decimated. Another image showed her in Earth and everyone ignoring her sister Susan (who had been considered the beauty of the family). “I will say the spell,” said Lucy. “I don't care. I will.”<sup>64</sup>

But when she looked back at the opening words of the spell, there in the middle of the writing, where she felt quite sure there had been no picture before, she found the great face of Aslan himself, staring into hers. It was painted such a bright gold that it seemed to be coming towards her out of the page; and indeed she never was quite sure afterwards that it hadn't really moved a little. At any rate she knew the expression on his face quite well. He was growling and you could see most of his teeth. She became horribly afraid and turned over the page at once.<sup>65</sup>

Here, like on Deathwater Island, the sudden appearance of Aslan awakens the central character that is hypnotised by temptation.

In the same scene, Lucy recites the spell that she was sent to recite: a spell to make hidden things visible. Lucy heard a noise behind her so she turned around to see “in the doorway was Aslan himself, The Lion, the highest of all High Kings.”

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<sup>62</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 484

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 495

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 496

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

"Oh, Aslan," said she, "it was kind of you to come."  
"I have been here all the time," said he, "but you have just made me visible."<sup>66</sup>

This shows the ever present presence of God whether He is visible or not. Deuteronomy 31:6, Joshua 1:5 and Hebrews 13:5-6 all record God as promising "He will not leave you nor forsake you." Also Colossians 1:15 calls Jesus "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation."

Finally, in *The Silver Chair* Jill, Eustace and Puddleglum are searching for Prince Rilian and are supposed to use the signs which Aslan had given to Jill. Jill however has forgotten them and Aslan appears to her in a dream and tells her to repeat them. When she cannot, He carries her to the window to see the words "UNDER ME" carved on the hillside, showing them that they must look for the prince underneath the ruined city.<sup>67</sup> Here again Aslan is the one who guides the heroes.

It is clear that these post-resurrection appearances of Aslan do not have a direct biblical correlation whereby chapter and verse can be provided to show where Lewis was inspired in his choice of biblical imagery. However, the covert appearances of Aslan are in keeping with his Trinitarian role in Narnia as guider and the one who keeps the heroes safe even from their own selfish desires. The post-resurrection appearances of Aslan have characteristics of post-resurrection appearances of Jesus as laid out by Luke Timothy Johnson. When Aslan appears it is usually suddenly and he also has a commanding presence. His manifestation wakes the protagonists from acting out of selfish desires or are in doubt and he restores their commission.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 498

<sup>67</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 604

## 2.5 - ASLAN REFERENCES

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What is also worth noting is when Aslan is referenced but not present. In *The Silver Chair* the reader is told that Aslan has nine names (though we are never told what those nine names are).<sup>68</sup> The name of Aslan has an effect on those who say it or hear it. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (which is the first book to be published so therefore the introduction of Aslan) He is referred to as “on the move.”<sup>69</sup> At the name of Aslan the Pevensie children felt something:

At the name of Aslan each one of the children felt something jump in its inside. Edmund felt a sensation of mysterious horror. Peter felt suddenly brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delicious smell or some delightful strain of music had just floated by her. And Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of summer.<sup>70</sup>

It seems that there is power in the name of Aslan in the same way that there is power in the name of Jesus.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9-11).

Also, Jesus instructs us to pray in His name: “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:13-14). There is power to answer prayer in the name of Jesus.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 659

<sup>69</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 141

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

While those who are on Aslan's side have positive feelings regarding His name, those against Him feel something else. Edmund, who is seeking to betray his siblings, feels a "sensation of mysterious horror" at the name of Aslan. Likewise in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Eustace, prior to his conversion, felt similar: "Aslan!" said Eustace. "I've heard that name mentioned several times since we joined the Dawn Treader. And I felt - I don't know what - I hated it."<sup>71</sup> Later in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Queen Jadis who had been chasing the Pevensies and the beavers across the ice on a sled is slowed down when the snow starts melting. "This is no thaw," said the dwarf, suddenly stopping. "This is Spring. What are we to do? Your winter has been destroyed, I tell you! This is Aslan's doing." "If either of you mention that name again," said the Witch, "he shall instantly be killed."<sup>72</sup> This underlines the fear that the White Witch has in the name of Aslan. Another usurping ruler of Narnia, Miraz (from *Prince Caspian*) also reacts angrily to the name of Aslan when Prince Caspian tells him tales of what the Lion had done in past generations.<sup>73</sup> Jesus in Mark 13:13 in the NRSV states that "you will be hated by all because of my name" (cf. Matthew 10:21-22, Luke 21:12). It appears that those who are in enmity with Aslan hate and fear his name while those in affinity feel joy and courage.

Similarly, in *The Horse and His Boy* the people of Tashbaan told tales of a terrible Narnian demon who appeared in the form of a lion and they were scared to speak his name. Conversely, the Narnian émigré Bree was frequently swearing "By the Lion's Mane." When Aravis asked Bree "Why do you keep on swearing By the Lion and

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<sup>71</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 475

<sup>72</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 166

<sup>73</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. (New York, 2001), p. 335

By the Lion's Mane? I thought you hated lions." "So I do," answered Bree. "But when I speak of the Lion of course I mean Aslan, the great deliverer of Narnia who drove away the Witch and the Winter. All Narnians swear by him."<sup>74</sup> In *The Silver Chair*, Puddleglum says "Aslan be praised" when things are going well for the expedition.<sup>75</sup> Loyal Narnians swear by and invoke the name of Aslan in the same manner that people do with the name of God and Jesus. This is seen in Deuteronomy 6:13 and 10:20 when the Israelites are commanded to make oaths in God's name ("You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name.") Lewis is lending the name of Aslan the same power and reverential awe in Narnia that is associated with that of God or Jesus here. There are no explicit biblical allusions that I can identify here, but there is a definite echo of a biblical theme.

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## 2.6 - CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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Aslan is indeed Narnia's Christ figure, the Son of God (Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea). Aslan redeems Edmund's life through dying for him at the Stone Table by the hands of the evil Queen Jadis. This reflects elements of the Penal Satisfaction as well as the Self-Sacrificial Love models of atonement and is narrated in a manner that carries clear Gospel resonances. He is resurrected and releases the captives from Jadis' stronghold in a manner which echoes the Harrowing of Hell. The death of Aslan is ultimately more than the buying back of Edmund i.e. an individual atonement, but rather for the whole of Narnia. Aslan is "the good Lion by whose blood all Narnia was saved."<sup>76</sup> Evil's entrance into Narnia (epitomised by Queen Jadis) is recounted in *The Magician's Nephew* and results in Narnia and all its inhabitants having to

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<sup>74</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 298

<sup>75</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 636

<sup>76</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 686

suffer a perpetual winter.<sup>77</sup> Aslan prophecies in *The Magician's Nephew* that "Evil will come of that evil, but it is still a long way off, and I will see to it that the worst falls upon myself."<sup>78</sup> Aslan fulfils this prophecy through his death and resurrection in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* which results in the redemption of not only Edmund, but of all of Narnia. Aslan's death initiates the end of Jadis' despotic reign and her life, freeing Narnia.

Lewis also confirms the Aslan/Christ parallel by portraying Aslan as a Lamb and directly quoting (without reference) from the Gospel of John. While the explicit actions of Aslan reflect the life of Jesus, even his more covert appearances and the manner in which his name is used reflects that of Christ. In particular, the accounts of Aslan's brief appearances mirror elements of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus in the Gospels. These are not the only signposts linking Aslan with Jesus. There are other important comparisons. The following chapters will elucidate the biblical allusions which act as the signposts to Christ in the accounts of the beginning and the end of Narnia.

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<sup>77</sup> This will be covered in greater detail in chapter 3

<sup>78</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (New York, 2001), p.80

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## CHAPTER 3 - THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA AND GENESIS 1-3<sup>1</sup>

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Lewis began writing *The Magician's Nephew* right after the publication of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* when Roger Lancelyn Green (whom Lewis showed all his writing at the time) asked him how a lamp post came to be standing in the midst of the Narnian forest.<sup>2</sup> Lewis was captivated enough by the question to endeavour to find an answer by writing *The Magician's Nephew*, which includes Professor Digory Kirke from the first novel as a child. Lewis was unhappy with how the story was progressing and suspended work on it for five years. This resulted in *The Magician's Nephew* being the sixth book in the Narnian heptalogy though it is now 'book one' of *The Chronicles* as it portrays the creation of Narnia as well as the introduction of evil to this new world. As shown in the previous chapter, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Aslan is the Christ figure who suffered a death of atonement and is resurrected to life in an analogous manner to Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Likewise, *The Magician's Nephew* has comparable biblical allusions which reflect aspects of the book of Genesis such as the creation, original sin and temptation.

The pertinent episodes in *The Magician's Nephew* are the creation of Narnia and the elevation of certain animals to the status of talking beasts which covers several chapters, and two temptation scenes. The first of these, located in the dying world of Charn, precedes the creation of Narnia and provides the reason for the presence of evil in Narnia, and the second occurs later in the book. This second temptation scene which takes place in a garden and involves a tree with life-giving fruit, has strong

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<sup>1</sup> Certain sections of this chapter are a reworking of my undergraduate dissertation 'C.S. Lewis Reads Genesis 1-3'

<sup>2</sup> Downing, D.C., *Into the Wardrobe: C.S. Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles*. (San Francisco, 2005), p.36

echoes of Genesis 3, but, as I will show, is more directly indebted to Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In order to clearly convey the biblical themes and imagery which Lewis utilised in *The Magician's Nephew*, I will first describe the relevant scriptural narrative.

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### 3.1 - GENESIS 1-3

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The first two chapters of the Book of Genesis contain two creation stories while the third chapter, a continuation of the second creation story, details the Temptation and Fall of Man. Genesis 1:1–2:3 is the beginning of what is known as the 'Priestly' account and Genesis 2:4–24 is part of the 'Yahwistic' source.<sup>3</sup> In the Priestly account, God progressively creates the different aspects of the world over a series of six days and then rests on the seventh day or Sabbath (Genesis 1:1-2:3). Creation is spoken by God into existence. On the first day God says, "Let there be light!" and light appears. On day two God creates the firmament to separate the waters above the sky from those below. On day three God commands the waters below to recede and make dry land appear and fills the earth with all manner of trees, herbs and grass. On day four God then puts the Sun and the Moon in the sky to separate day from night and to mark the different seasons. On the fifth day, God creates the inhabitants of the sea and the sky and commands them to procreate. On day six God creates land creatures of every kind. Finally, man and woman are created after the

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<sup>3</sup> Bandstra, B. L., *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*. (Belmont, 2008), p. 576., Harris, S. L., *Understanding the Bible*. (Columbus, 2010), p. 29.

The Priestly Source is one of four sources of the Torah (along with Yahwist, Elohist and the Deuteronomist). It is predominantly a creation of the post-Exilic period when Judah was a province of the Persian Empire with the Priestly Source highlighting God's continuing presence during harsh periods. The Yahwist source gets its name as it routinely uses the term Yahweh (YHWH) for God in the book of Genesis and attributes anthropomorphic descriptions of Yahweh. While the Priestly Source is usually dated around 500 BCE, scholars approximate the date of the Yahwistic source as 950 BCE, prior to the split of the Kingdom of Israel into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah in 922 BCE.

entire world is prepared for them; they differ from the other animals in that they alone are created in God's image. Man is given dominion and care over all other created things. God institutes the Sabbath, a day of rest on the seventh and final day of creation.

In the Yahwistic account of creation, man is created after the formation of the heavens and Earth, but before the creation of plants and animals (Genesis 2:4-25). The Yahwistic creation story is the first part of the Garden of Eden narrative which is continued in the accounts of the Temptation and Cain and Abel. It is in this second account where we get the story of God taking the dirt from the ground to form a man and breathing life into him. It is also in this account where God creates the Garden of Eden and puts man there. God fills the garden with trees bearing fruit in order for man to eat. The man, called Adam, is told that he may eat the fruit of any tree except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:15). God commands him not to eat of that one tree "for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Birds and animals are then created after man in order to be his companions and helpers, with Adam charged with naming each one. When God determines that none of these is a 'suitable helper' for the man, God puts Adam into a deep sleep and removes a rib from his side, and uses it to make Eve, the first woman (Genesis 2:21-22). "For this reason," the text reads, "a man will leave his father and mother for his wife, and they shall be joined as one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

In both accounts Earth is created by God for man to have dominion over. In Genesis 1:26 and 28 God said,

Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth... Then God blessed them, and said "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and

subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

In Genesis 2:18-20 the reference to dominion is less obvious, but it is still there in the naming of the animals, where naming implies ‘power over’:

God said: “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature that was its name. So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

In the Priestly account there is no specific reason given why animals are created whereas in the Yahwistic account animals are created for the sole purpose of being man’s helper, though it is only the woman’s creation which fully meets that need.

Chapter three of Genesis chronicles the Temptation and Fall of Man. In this story, a serpent “more cunning than any beast” came to Eve and asked her “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1). By introducing doubt and then by directly contradicting what God had said, the serpent induces Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. She then offers it to Adam. As a result, God expels Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, and stations cherubim to safeguard the entrance, so that Adam and Eve will not eat from the Tree of Life. Within a Christian reading of this story, through this act of disobedience to God’s commandment, sin has entered the world which necessitated a plan of salvation (namely the redemptive action of Jesus and the cross) to reconcile mankind to God.

While it is not revealed in Genesis 3 that the serpent was Satan (the word “Satan” does not appear), Christians have interpreted the serpent as Satan. Revelation 12:9 and 20:2 both describes Satan as a serpent. “The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray.”

(Revelation 12:9). “He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years” (Revelation 20:2). Later rabbinic sources identified Satan with the serpent in Eden (Sotah 9b, Sanh 29a).<sup>4</sup> However, John H. Marks rejects the premise of the serpent as the devil: “The serpent represents cleverness and magical power, not the devil.”<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier also says that the characterisation of the serpent in Genesis 3 is not a symbol for Satan but a “narrative device and nothing more.”<sup>6</sup> I will show that Lewis however goes with the more popular Christian interpretation of the serpent as Satan the deceiver. Some of the features of Satan which are commonly accepted in Christianity come from Old Testament passages which on the surface are not about Satan at all, in particular Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14. In Ezekiel 28:11-17 the king of Tyre is described as the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty and who was located in Eden, the garden of God.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, though this time in a passage ostensibly about the king of Babylon (cf. Isaiah 14:4), Isaiah 14:12-15 describes the pride which Lucifer had which led to his downfall.

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!  
How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!  
For you have

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<sup>4</sup> Hamilton, V. (1992) ‘Satan’ in Freedman, D.N. ed., *Anchor Bible Dictionary. Volume V. O-Sh*, New York: Doubleday, 985-989.

<sup>5</sup> Marks, J. (1971) ‘Genesis’ in Laymon, C.M. ed., *The Interpreters One Volume Commentary on the Bible*, New York: Abingdon, 1-32.

<sup>6</sup> Achtemeier, E. (1995) ‘The Story of Us: A Christian Exposition of Genesis 3’ in Holmgren, F. and Schaalman, H., eds., *Preaching Biblical Text*, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing, 1-10.

<sup>7</sup> Ezekiel 28:11-17 “Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. “You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. “By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you.”

said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit.

It has become standard interpretation to read these as descriptions of Satan, who is consequently pictured as a beautiful creature whose pride resulted in his own and his cohorts downfall.

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### 3.2 - LEWIS ON GENESIS

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As I demonstrated earlier, C.S. Lewis believed in a God who created all that has ever existed and believed that the Creation account in Genesis was the “best one on the market.”<sup>8</sup> Lewis was a theistic evolutionist; he believed that the opening chapters of Genesis were told in “the form of folk tales” which left open the possibility for him to accept certain aspects of Darwinian evolution into his theology.<sup>9</sup> Lewis viewed the week of creation in Genesis 1 as a literary framework rather than viewing them as seven twenty-four hour days.<sup>10</sup> Throughout his various writings, Lewis comments on and reimagines actual and hypothetical versions of the Genesis of the cosmos and the Fall of Man as found in the first three chapters of Genesis. As well as in *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) from *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Lewis does this in *Perelandra* (1943) from *The Cosmic Trilogy* (also known as the *Ransom Trilogy* or *Space Trilogy*) and his non-fiction work like *The Problem of Pain* (1940).

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### 3.3 - THE CREATION OF NARNIA

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Throughout *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Lewis uses children as the primary heroes to appeal to a younger audience. In *The Magician's Nephew*, the main protagonists are

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<sup>8</sup> Vaus, W., *Mere Theology*. (Illinois, 2004), p.62

<sup>9</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Miracles*. (New York, 1960), p.33

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.65

two children named Digory Kirke and Polly Plummer who end up in Narnia, which is initially an “empty world”, with Uncle Andrew, a cabbie called Frank and his horse Strawberry. Also with them is Queen Jadis who was a native of Charn, a world the children had visited prior to Narnia and from which they had inadvertently brought her. She is descended from a long line of Kings and Queens that had grown evil over many centuries. As Charn's final Queen, Jadis fought against her sister in the final war and rather than submit to her sister, Jadis spoke the “Deplorable Word” and left Charn barren and void of life.<sup>11</sup> She had preferred to destroy her entire world rather than submit to her sister's authority and shows afterward a callous pride in her actions.

Once the characters had arrived in Narnia, they are led by the cabbie Frank to sing Henry Alford's hymn *Come Ye Thankful People, Come* (1844). Lewis' selection of this particular harvest hymn may have been for its humour as noted by the narrator, the incongruity of singing a song about harvest in a land void of any form of life or growth. This ironic use is not surprising as Lewis was not a fan of hymns; he believed them to be sentimental and cheap compositions whose lyrics were not good poetry and which often contained “confusing and erroneous thought and unworthy sentiment.”<sup>12</sup>

The idea of Narnia not beginning out of nothingness but as an empty world has biblical echoes. In the Priestly Account, the earth is ‘formless and empty’ (Genesis 1:2) and God proceeds to fill it (Genesis 1:3-28). The Yahwist narrative uses ‘not yet’ language to describe the world devoid of life before God begins to fill it with

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<sup>11</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), pp 41-42

<sup>12</sup> Schakel, P., *Imagination and the Arts in C. S. Lewis: Journeying to Narnia and Other Worlds*. (Missouri, 2002), p.93

creatures and vegetation (Genesis 2:4-25). While they are singing the hymn however, a tune like a “beautiful noise” is heard being sung. Out of the darkness a deep voice had begun to sing which seemed to be coming from all directions at once. The voice was then joined by other voices in harmony with it and then the whole sky was lit up with a host of stars.<sup>13</sup> Digory felt “quite certain that it was the stars themselves which were singing, and that it was the First Voice, the deep one, which had made them appear and made them sing.”<sup>14</sup> This notion of the stars singing could have come from the Renaissance concept of ‘Musica Universalis’ (literally ‘the music of the spheres’) which regarded the movements of celestial bodies as a sort of music. Lewis was familiar with this. However, it is more likely that this scenario is a representation of what is written in Job 38:7 “when the morning stars sang together” when God laid the foundations of the earth. Throughout Job 38, God describes how He created the world as He questions Job “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?”<sup>15</sup> By using this reference, Lewis is going outside Genesis to a poetic biblical account of creation.

After the stars singing grew faint, the First Voice continues singing and Aslan sings Narnia into existence. There are parallels here of Genesis 1 where God speaks the universe into existence. Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20 and 24 all begin with “God said...” while Psalm 33:6 states that “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.” Likewise, the opening paragraph of John’s Gospel “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were

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<sup>13</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 61

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 61-62

<sup>15</sup> Job 38: 4

made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”<sup>16</sup> So we see that the creation of the universe coming from the spoken Word of God is a theme that recurs in the bible. With Aslan singing the world into creation, Lewis is working with the more general biblical concept of the world being spoken into existence without referring to any of these texts in a specific way, while with the stars themselves singing back, Lewis is using a more direct biblical allusion from Job 38.

Although the creation account of Narnia differs from that in Genesis, Lewis' primary goal in writing the story of Narnia's creation was not to make an exact allegory to Genesis, but to write a children's story. In doing so he draws from select creation imagery found in Genesis and throughout the Bible, sometimes in quite striking ways. In chapter nine, the Lion begins to sing a new song. As a result of this new, softer song the valley grows green grass, spreading from the Lion “like a pool.”<sup>17</sup> First the new land gets covered in grass before heather and trees also begin to spring up from the ground. Every time the pitch of the song changed, a new type of vegetation grew until the land was covered with trees and various types of flowers. The tune then became “far wilder” and the grassy land began “bubbling like water in a pot.”<sup>18</sup> It started swelling into humps of varying sizes from mole-hills to the size of cottages. All manner of animals, insects and birds burst out of these humps to inhabit the land of Narnia. By creating the Narnian foliage and animals in this manner, Lewis is using the imagery of Genesis 1:11 when God said “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit” and Genesis 1:24 when God said “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind.” Lewis

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<sup>16</sup> John 1:1-3

<sup>17</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 64

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68

derives from the creation account of Genesis 1 a very striking way in which to portray the creation of vegetation and animals as coming forth from the earth itself. What is worth noting is that Lewis is applying a very literal reading of the 'let the earth bring forth' phrase in the text. Lewis is not just picking up the concept, but rather has actually visualised what it might look like and written that into his description of the creation of vegetation and animals in Narnia. However, while Lewis clearly adopts imagery of the creation account of Genesis, he may be as much influenced by the creation imagery from Milton's *Paradise Lost* as by the biblical text directly, as will be discussed later.

Once the animals are created, Lewis then switches to the imagery used in the creation account given in Genesis 2 when Aslan gives sentience the animals.

[Aslan] was going to and fro among the animals. And every now and then he would go up to two of them (always two at a time) and touch their noses with his. He would touch two beavers among all the beavers, two leopards among all the leopards, one stag and one deer among all the deer, and leave the rest. Some sorts of animal he passed over altogether. But the pairs which he had touched instantly left their own kinds and followed him... The others whom he had not touched began to wander away... The Lion opened his mouth, but no sound came from it; he was breathing out, a long, warm breath; it seemed to sway all the beasts as the wind sways a line of trees... Then there came a swift flash like fire (but it burnt nobody) either from the sky or from the Lion itself, ...and the deepest, wildest voice they had ever heard was saying: "Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters."<sup>19</sup>

Some of the Narnians are given consciousness by the breath of Aslan while the rest remained "dumb" animals. This ruach or life-giving breath can also be seen in Genesis 2:7 when "God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being." In *Reflections on the Psalms*, Lewis talks about evolution and comments on Genesis 2:7

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<sup>19</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), pp 69-70

specifically. Lewis, as a theistic evolutionist, believed that this verse shows that man is made of something else (dust from the ground). Evolutionary speaking, according to Lewis Man is originally an animal but it is an animal which is called by God to be something else. One of the primates was changed so that it became a human but humans remain in some capacity animals.<sup>20</sup> Human beings are taken up into a new life without relinquishing the old.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, in Narnia some animals are called to be more than animals yet they remain animals. The creation of the talking animals, therefore, reflects Lewis's understanding of the creation of human beings in a way that goes beyond the biblical text.

The emphasis on 'two' animals of each kind has echoes of the biblical account of the Flood, where the Yahwist portions of the text refer repeatedly to pairs of animals (Genesis 6:19-20).<sup>22</sup> The story of Noah and the Flood is a story of "de-creation and subsequent re-creation of the cosmos" and so there is something fitting about this Noachic echo in the story of the creation of Narnia.<sup>23</sup>

As the primary inhabitants of their world, the animals of Narnia assume the role that humans have on Earth. In the Genesis account man is produced from the earth and has life breathed into them by their Creator whereas in Narnia it is the animals. By comparing the creation of man in Genesis with the creation of the animals in Narnia, Lewis is appealing to a child's natural affinity to animals by making them the central part of the Narnian creation narrative. It is also a way of marking that the animals will be the central inhabitants of Narnia

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<sup>20</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Reflection on the Psalms*. (San Diego, 1958), p.115

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> The Priestly sections, concerned as they are with the practicalities of cultic sacrifice, have Noah taking on board seven of the clean animals (Genesis 7:2-3)

<sup>23</sup> Green, P.A. (2012) 'Noah's Vineyard: Its Narrative Significance and New Creation Trajectory', paper presented at *National Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Milwaukie WI, Nov 2012.

As they are not the primary inhabitants of Narnia, the humans take on a different role in Lewis' Narnian approach to the creation story. They are on the one hand responsible for the introduction of evil into Narnia, and on the other hand they will assist in its salvation. Human beings are also the rulers of Narnia, echoing the idea of human dominion over the animals found in Genesis.

Before Digory and Polly had arrived in Narnia they were in the dying world of Charn where they come across a row of seated statues of tall natives. While they were there they came across a bell and a hammer on a table which had the inscription:

Make your choice, adventurous Stranger; Strike the bell and bide the danger,  
Or wonder, till it drives you mad, What would have followed if you had.<sup>24</sup>

Digory is tempted by the inscription while Polly is not. This in contrast to what happened in the Eden narrative, as outlined also in 1 Timothy 2:14 when "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression." Digory's curiosity gets the better of him and he is unable to resist the temptation to ring the bell and also stops Polly from leaving Charn as he taps the bell with the hammer. As a result of the bell ringing, a spell is broken and the last statue, that of Queen Jadis, comes to life. This is therefore not a depiction of an innocent Digory being led into sin by Jadis, causing the fall of Narnia. Digory is a Son of Adam, a creature like all humanity, that is in a fallen condition and the Fall which had happened in other worlds (Earth and Charn) will eventually be played out in this innocent new world of Narnia as well.

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<sup>24</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p.35

From Charn, Jadis is first brought to Earth where her physical strength causes all manner of carnage in early twentieth century London as she attacks policeman shouting "Scum! You shall pay dearly for this when I have conquered your world. Not one stone of your city will be left. I will make it as Charn, as Felinda, as Sorlois, as Bramandin."<sup>25</sup> This is a very biblical-sounding imprecation (2 Samuel 17:12-14, Matthew 24:2). In order to take her out of London, Digory grabs onto Jadis' *heel* as he puts on the magic ring. "She kicked back with her heel and hit him in the *mouth*... His lip was cut and his mouth full of blood."<sup>26</sup> It is probable that Lewis is employing the "heel and head" imagery of Genesis 3:15 "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your *head*, and you shall bruise His *heel*." Lewis had also used this imagery in *Perelandra* when the hero Ransom crushes the head of the Un-man Weston (possessed by Satan) after receiving a bite on his heel.<sup>27</sup> In this last text, there is a more direct biblical allusion, with the Satan-figure grabbing the heel and having his head crushed by a Christ-like hero. In *The Magician's Nephew* the echo is much more oblique, and the mouth / head and heel are inverted. Nevertheless, the clear use of this imagery elsewhere in Lewis' oeuvre does make it likely that the subtle allusion here is intentional. Digory is able to take Jadis out of Earth and they end up in Narnia.

As the evil Queen Jadis had only entered Narnia as a result of Digory and Polly, Lewis presents the concept of the introduction of sin into a new world. "Before the new, clean world I gave you is seven hours old, a force of evil has already entered it; waked and brought hither by this son of Adam" Aslan asserts.<sup>28</sup> Through Aslan's speech, Lewis has compared Digory with the Biblical Adam in two ways. Firstly that

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 59

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., Emphasis added

<sup>27</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Perelandra*. (London, 2005), p. 229

<sup>28</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p.80

Digory is a male human being, and therefore a "son of Adam." However the more profound connection that Lewis implies is that just as Adam first brought sin into the world in Genesis (Romans 5:12), so too Digory is responsible for bringing evil into the newly created Narnia. Paul in Romans 5:12 states "Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin." As Aslan prophecies, "Evil will come of that evil, but it is still a long way off, and I will see to it that the worst falls upon myself...and as Adam's race has done the harm, Adam's race shall help heal it."<sup>29</sup> Aslan fulfils this prophecy in the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, as we have seen in the previous chapter, just as God's promise to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15 is fulfilled by Christ at Calvary, according to mainstream Christian interpretation.<sup>30</sup> Lewis has chosen not to go with the Genesis narrative of making Eve the one who succumbs. He is more influenced by the Pauline assertions of sin entering the world through Adam. Interestingly the concept of sin 'entering the world' is represented quite literally here with Digory literally bringing the evil Jadis into the new world of Narnia and is not interpreted according to an abstract idea of the fall at all. Here Lewis appears to be following Paul while leaving the powerful Genesis 3 imagery for a later temptation scene.

Immediately after the creation account, chapter eleven of *The Magician's Nephew* recounts Aslan's dialogue with Frank the London cabbie. Having called Frank's wife from Earth into Narnia through another song, Aslan charges them both to be the first King and Queen of Narnia.<sup>31</sup> They are told "You shall rule and name all these creatures, and do justice among them, and protect them from their enemies when

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p.80

<sup>30</sup> Genesis 3:15 is interpreted by Christians as predicting the defeat of Satan by Jesus at Calvary who destroyed the power of sin and death by sacrificing His own life for all mankind

<sup>31</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 81

enemies arise.”<sup>32</sup> Frank’s task of ruling and naming every animal is similar to Adam’s in to Genesis 1:28 (Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; *fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion* over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”) and 2:19-20 (“Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and *brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.* So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field.”) Lewis is adopting the ‘ruling’ vocabulary which is used in Genesis 1:28 and 2:19-20. He has conflated these two accounts of human’s dominion by referring to both ruling and naming. Furthermore, Frank is also instructed to “use a spade and a plough and raise food out of the earth” in a manner akin to the charge to Adam to tend and care for the Garden in Genesis 2:15.<sup>33</sup> Finally, the new King and Queen of Narnia are given a covenantal blessing from Aslan that:

You and your children and grandchildren shall be blessed, and some will be Kings of Narnia, and others will be Kings of Archenland which lies yonder over the Southern Mountains.<sup>34</sup>

This has echoes of various covenants in the Old Testament, particularly the Abrahamic covenants (Genesis 12:1-3 “I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you” and 17:6 “I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you”) with references to being blessed and having children who will be Kings who also shall be blessed. By including these covenantal

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 82, Genesis 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

<sup>34</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 82

promises, Lewis has made Frank and Helen epitomise the Old Testament patriarch and matriarch, Abraham and Sarah, the ancestors of the chosen people, as well as their role as the Narnian Adam and Eve.

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### 3.4 - NARNIA AND GENESIS 3

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Once Frank and his wife are chosen as King and Queen, chapter thirteen of *The Magicians' Nephew* is a reimagining of the story of the Tree of Knowledge from Genesis 3. This chapter revolves around Digory sent on an errand by Aslan to retrieve a silver apple from a garden in the "Western Wild." The comparisons between the Tree of Life in the Narnian garden and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden are evident. Both Trees are in the centre of their respective gardens and the gardens themselves are described as paradise-like. In the Yahwist story of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2 and 3), the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil are both in the centre of the Garden of Eden. This has led to some confusion as to whether or not there are one or two trees. Lewis however has chosen to make it one tree in Narnia.

In addition to the allusions to the Garden of Eden, there are clear allusions here to Jesus' discourse on the Good Shepherd and the sheepfold in John 10. By the gates of the Narnian garden is a sign, which says:

Come in by the gold gates or not at all, take of my fruit for others or forbear, for those who steal or those who climb my wall shall find their heart's desire and find despair.<sup>35</sup>

It is only by entering through the gate with a selfless purpose that Digory is able to take the fruit, which would eventually return life to his dying mother. There is an allusion here to John 10:7-10 and Jesus' teaching on the gate and the sheepfold.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.92

Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep... I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Life comes from going through the Narnian garden's gate or through Jesus; physical life for Digory's mother or an "abundant" life to those who enter by Jesus.

When Digory entered the garden in the correct manner he finds the right tree in the very centre of the Garden. It is loaded with silver apples which shone and cast a light of their own down on the shadowy places where the sunlight did not reach. Digory

...happened to look up through the branches towards the top of the tree. There, on a branch above his head, a wonderful bird was roosting... It was larger than an eagle, its breast saffron, its head crested with scarlet, and its tail purple.<sup>36</sup>

This bird has no biblical basis but from Lewis' interest in Norse mythology and him comparing it to an eagle, it is probable that it is eagle of Yggdrasill. In Norse mythology, Yggdrasill is the World Tree or the Tree Of Life. There are a number of animals within the tree but the two primary ones are the eagle at the top which represents the far-sighted gods and heaven and the Nithogg (literally 'striker that destroys') at the bottom that is a serpent which represents destruction.<sup>37</sup> The *Prose Edda* states that "In the branches of the ash sits an eagle, and it is very knowledgeable...Words of abuse [are] exchanged between the eagle and the Nithogg."<sup>38</sup> This incidental reference highlights Lewis' penchant for mixing classic mythologies.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Sturlson, S., *Prose Edda*. (Cambridge, 1954), pp 40-45

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

Given the allusion to John 10 in the injunction to enter by the gate, Jadis is, by implication, the thief who comes to steal, kill and destroy. This is made explicit by Lewis when he describes the manner of her entry into the garden: “Digory guessed at once that she must have climbed in over the wall.”<sup>39</sup> Jadis’s role in the Narnian garden has changed from initially being the personification of evil in Narnia to becoming a tempter modelled on the serpent in Genesis 3. Like the serpent did with Eve, Jadis, who had climbed over the garden’s wall, makes several attempts to tempt Digory to eat the silver apple: "Do you know what that fruit is?... It is the apple of youth, the apple of life....Eat it, Boy, eat it," and asking “What has that lion ever done for you?”<sup>40</sup>

Jadis encourages Digory to take the fruit for himself in a manner similar to Genesis 3:1-4 which recounts the dialogue between the “cunning” serpent and Eve:

“Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’” Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”<sup>41</sup>

The serpent introduces doubt into Eve and makes her question what God had told her in the same manner that Jadis had done with Digory. In the Narnian version though, it was Digory and not Polly who was in dialogue with the Tempter. Other than being a “daughter of Eve”, Polly does not have the same role in Narnia as Eve had in Eden. Lewis assigns Eve’s role to Digory (as the one who is tempted) or else to Frank’s wife (as Narnian matriarch).

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<sup>39</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), p.93

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 93-94

<sup>41</sup> Genesis 3:1-4

Digory's connection to Adam is not subtle as Lewis has Aslan refer to Digory and Polly as "Son of Adam" and "Daughter of Eve" throughout *The Magician's Nephew*. In the Narnian version of the Garden of Eden story however, Lewis has Digory make the right decision by resisting Jadis' temptation by not eating the apple but instead carrying out his mandate obediently. Dutifully Digory returns to Aslan and it is Jadis who eats the apple and receives endless life though Aslan remarks that "length of days with an evil heart is only length of misery."<sup>42</sup>

The difference between Eve and Digory is that Eve did not have any experience with lying and deception whereas, as an inhabitant of a fallen world, Digory does. Digory witnesses Jadis eating the fruit of the tree and while Satan lies about having consumed the apple, Jadis lies about the consequences of having done so. While the apple does indeed make her strong and practically immortal, it also induces despair:

And he began to see that there might be some sense in that last line about getting your heart's desire and getting despair along with it. For the Witch looked stronger and prouder than ever, and even, in a way, triumphant; but her face was deadly white, white as salt.<sup>43</sup>

Later, Aslan verifies to Digory (who had been tempted to take an apple home for his dying mother) that Jadis' claims were untrue. An apple stolen for his mother "would have healed her; but not to your joy or hers. The day would come when both you and she would have looked back and said it would have been better to die in that illness."<sup>44</sup> As the anticipated targets respond differently, they therefore set about changing the destinies of their respective worlds. Satan was successful in seducing Eve which created a fallen world rather than the paradise which was initially intended to mirror Heaven while Jadis' eats the apple which grants her a long life

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<sup>42</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 100

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.93

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.100

and is able to outlive the Tree of Protection and eventually take over Narnia in perpetual winter in her role as the White Witch.

As Lewis had made the Genesis 2 and 3 Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil just one tree, the Narnian tree has dual functions in *The Magician's Nephew*. Firstly it provides life to Digory's mother when the fruit was taken in a pure and righteous manner while it provided Jadis with knowledge of evil and immortality with misery. As the occasion for temptation for Digory, it is the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in an experiential way, even as it is in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3: 22-24 says:

Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, *lest he put out his hand and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever*"— therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.<sup>45</sup>

God gives the Tree of Life as the reason for the banishment from Eden. The reply of Aslan implies that Lewis understands this action of God's to be a merciful one as He is not punishing them with death so much as protecting them from 'length of misery'.

This is not the first time Lewis has depicted a Garden-of-Edenesque temptation scene in which the protagonist has not succumbed. Lewis also imagined a temptation scene in his science-fiction novel *Perelandra* (1943), the outline of which had originated in his essay *Religion and Rocketry* where Lewis imagines the outcome of fallen people meeting unfallen creatures on different planets.

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<sup>45</sup> Genesis 3: 22-24, Emphasis added

At first to be sure, they'd have a grand time jeering at, duping, and exploiting its innocence; but I doubt if our half-animal cunning would long be a match for godlike wisdom, selfless valour, and perfect unanimity.<sup>46</sup>

In *Perelandra*, Tinidril resists the temptation of the Un-man Weston (who is revealed to be possessed by Satan) who offers Tinidril a type of forbidden fruit which would make her wise in a similar manner to Genesis 3:1-4. In both *The Magician's Nephew* and *Perelandra* Lewis has evil come from outside (Charn and Earth respectively) but in the planet Perelandra and Narnia, evil is resisted and they remain a paradise. In Narnia, however, the utopian state is only temporary, as Digory's obedience wins the world a lengthy but limited reprieve.

By recounting the story of Genesis and the Fall of Man in the manner that he did in *The Magician's Nephew*, Lewis is able to simplify and incorporate the nature of good and evil into individual and clear characters. This makes the distinction between good and evil easier for a younger audience to understand and more appealing to read. He is able at the same time to explore the complexities of temptation in a way that is easy to relate to. Digory demonstrates both the tendency to succumb to temptation (in Charn) and the ability to resist it. He is thus a credible role-model precisely because he is not perfect yet demonstrates growth.

The reader of *The Chronicles of Narnia* does not need to understand the biblical allusions that Lewis has utilised in his series to appreciate them. However, Lewis has proven to be an adept implementer of biblical nuances and subtleties. While the story stands even if you do not recognise them, when you look at *The Magician's Nephew* through the lens of biblical themes and imagery, the reader can appreciate the narrative even more. For instance, the reader who recognises the allusions to the Fall

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<sup>46</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The World's Last Night and Other Essays*. (Orlando, 1987), p. 89

narrative is immediately aware of the world-changing consequences implied in the choice offered.

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### 3.5 - THE INFLUENCE OF MILTON'S *PARADISE LOST*

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*The Chronicles of Narnia*, as shown, were undoubtedly reliant on biblical themes and imagery. I have been working with the reasonable assumption that typically Lewis utilised the Bible directly for incorporating its themes into his overarching narrative. However, there are several cases where Lewis used biblical imagery and themes which are also found in other literary works which may be the direct source from which he is borrowing. One of those works is John Milton's *Paradise Lost* which Lewis was quite familiar with having written the *Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942). There are several parallels between *Paradise Lost* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* and specifically *The Magician's Nephew*. The first is the creation of animals.

As mentioned earlier, the animals which were created by Aslan came bubbling up from the earth. While this reflects the imagery of Genesis 1:11 and 24, there are elements of Milton's description of animal creation in book seven of *Paradise Lost*:

"The sixth, and of Creation last, arose  
With evening harps and matin; when God said,  
'Let the Earth bring forth soul living in her kind,  
Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth,  
Each in their kind!' The Earth obeyed, and, straight  
Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth  
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,  
Limbed and full-grown. Out of the ground up rose,  
As from his lair, the wild beast, where he wons  
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den—  
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked;  
The cattle in the fields and meadows green:  
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks  
Pasturing at once and in broad herds, upsprung.  
The grassy clods now calved; now half appeared  
The tawny Lion, pawing to get free

His hinder parts-then springs, as broke from bonds,  
And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the Ounce,  
The Libbard, and the Tiger, as the Mole  
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw  
In hillocks; the swift Stag from underground  
Bore up his branching head.<sup>47</sup>

In an example of hominisation we see how the Earth herself is “opening her fertile womb” and producing the various animals of creation. What is worth noting is that in *The Magician’s Nephew*, Lewis cites specific animals bursting forth from the Narnian earth.

The *moles* came out just as you might see a mole come out in England. The dogs came out, barking the moment their heads were free, and struggling as you've seen them do when they are getting through a narrow hole in a hedge. The *stags* were the queerest to watch, for of course the antlers came up a long time before the rest of them, so at first Digory thought they were trees. The frogs, who all came up near the river, went straight into it with a plop-plop and a loud croaking. The *panthers, leopards and things of that sort*, sat down at once to wash the loose earth off their hind quarters and then stood up against the trees to sharpen their front claws.<sup>48</sup>

Lewis’ mirrors Milton’s account of moles, stags and big cats specifically coming from the crumbling soil. This would indicate that while the creation of the animals in *The Magicians Nephew* reflects a very literal reading of the ‘let the earth bring forth’ phrase of Genesis, it is more probable that Lewis is incorporating the scene directly from Milton’s *Paradise Lost* rather than drawing directly on the biblical material. The reason for my conclusion here is that the whole scene parallels that of *Paradise Lost* and Lewis does not add biblical details which are not found in Milton’s account.

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<sup>47</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 7: 449-470

<sup>48</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), p.69, Emphasis added

Unlike the manner in which the animals are created, Milton's account of the creation of vegetation offers nothing unique and he essentially just describes Genesis 1:11 in more detail.

Let the Earth put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,  
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,  
Whose seed is in herself upon the Earth.  
He scarce had said, when the bare Earth, till then  
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,  
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad  
Her universal face with pleasant green;  
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered  
Opening their various colours, and made gay  
Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,  
Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept  
The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed  
Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,  
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: Last  
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread  
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemmed  
Their blossoms: With high woods the hills were crowned;  
With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side.<sup>49</sup>

Here Milton refers, as does the biblical text, to the earth bringing forth verdure, but he does not picture it as a bubbling forth from the earth. We can thus conclude that while Milton perhaps gave Lewis the original idea of representing the creation this way, the fact that the earlier emergence of the grass and foliage follows the same pattern is based upon Lewis' noting of the 'let the earth bring forth' in Genesis 1:11.

The primary correlation between *The Magician's Nephew* and *Paradise Lost* is Lewis' antagonist Queen Jadis and Milton's Satan. The character of Jadis, the White Witch is reminiscent of Milton's Satan of *Paradise Lost*; especially in *The Magician's Nephew*. As mentioned, Jadis had used "The Deplorable Word" to destroy her home world of Charn in a final battle with her sister to retain the throne.

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<sup>49</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 7: 309 -327

For Milton's Satan it is "'Better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven" likewise Jadis has proven that she would rather be Queen of a dead world than relinquish her throne.<sup>50</sup> To be subservient to another is as inconceivable to Jadis as it was to Milton's Satan who declared "To bow and sue for grace/With suppliant knee, and deify his power, Who from the terror of this Arm so late / Doubted his Empire/ that were low indeed."<sup>51</sup>

Jadis' deployment of the "Deplorable Word" staggers Polly who asks about the "ordinary people." Jadis' reply was "I was the Queen. They were my people. What else were they there for except to do my will."<sup>52</sup> There is an analogous comparison between Jadis' pride and that of Satan. Lewis demonstrates the danger of pride in *Mere Christianity*:

In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Unless you know God as that and therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.<sup>53</sup>

Jadis looks down on all she comes into contact with and she, like Satan, refuses to concede to any power or authority other than themselves. Likewise, both parties repudiate any attempt to place the blame with them. Jadis blames her sister for the destruction of Charn and in *Paradise Lost* Satan will not acknowledge that it was his pride which led to his demise and that of his cohorts; instead he blames God. When Satan calls out for the fallen angels to "Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!" it is not

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<sup>50</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 1: 263

<sup>51</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 1: 111-114

<sup>52</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 42

<sup>53</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 1952), p. 124

for their own sake but rather to regroup for an impending potential attack.<sup>54</sup> Jadis is portrayed as seven foot tall and identifies herself as a tragic figure with “a high and lonely destiny” while Satan’s initial appearance in *Paradise Lost* accentuates his “mighty stature” and as an “Archangel ruined.”<sup>55</sup> Both Milton and Lewis reflect widespread Christian conceptions of Satan as an originally magnificent archangel who fell due to pride (based, as I have indicated, at least in part on a particular reading of Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28) Nevertheless, I think it is clear that Lewis’ satanic figure of Jadis has more in common with Milton’s version of Satan, though biblically inspired, than that of the Bible directly.

There are a few additional details in the story of Digory’s confrontation with Jadis on his quest for the Apple of Protection to the faraway mountaintop garden which allude strongly to Milton’s work.<sup>56</sup> Having entered the garden in the correct manner, Digory notices a “fountain which rose near the middle of the garden.”<sup>57</sup> This is similar to *Paradise Lost* “Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise, into a gulf shot underground, till part rose up a *fountain* by the Tree of Life.”<sup>58</sup> Inside, Digory encounters Jadis who “was just throwing away the core of an apple which she had eaten. The juice was darker than you would expect and had made a horrid stain round her mouth. Digory guessed at once that she must have climbed in over the wall.”<sup>59</sup> Jadis’ hurdling of the wall is virtually identical to Satan’s entry into Eden from Book IV of *Paradise Lost*:

Due entrance he disdained, and, in contempt, At one slight bound high overleaped all bound Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within, Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf, whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for

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<sup>54</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 1: 330

<sup>55</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 42., Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 1: 221 + 592

<sup>56</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), pp 90-95

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p.92

<sup>58</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 9: 71-73

<sup>59</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), p.93

prey, Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve, In hurdled cotes amid the field secure, Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold.<sup>60</sup>

This manner of entry into the garden emphasises Jadis' evil, as it links here with both Milton's Satan and the thieves and robbers of John 10:1. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." The reading together of Genesis 3 and John 10 which we noted earlier in *The Magician's Nephew* is already found in Milton and is probably what inspired the connection in Lewis' work.

Similarly, both antagonists, upon entering the respective gardens, endeavour to lead their protagonists into temptation. Lewis is definitely relying more on Milton's version of Eden, the tree and temptation scene than that of Genesis 3. The Genesis account of Eden does not mention it being walled and the fruit of the tree is never revealed though it has often been portrayed as an apple (Lewis could have used a unique Narnian fruit). The idea of the 'apple' is so widespread in Western art and literature, nonetheless, that this allusion cannot be tied down to any one source. Satan and Eve's dialogue is mirrored by that between Jadis and Digory. Satan adulates Eve by calling her "Goddess humane" and endeavours to manipulate the command of God to not eat of a specific tree to that of eating from any tree.<sup>61</sup> Arguably his most successful attempt is that of demonstration in that he states that he has in fact eaten of forbidden fruit and is now availing of consciousness and intelligence:

Queen of this Universe! do not believe Those rigid threats of death. Ye shall not die. How should ye? By the fruit? it gives you life To knowledge. By the Threat'ner? look on me, Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live And life more perfect have attained than Fate Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot. Shall that be shut to Man which to the beast Is open? or will God incense his ire For such a petty trespass, and not praise Rather your dauntless

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<sup>60</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 4: 180-188

<sup>61</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 9: 732

virtue, whom the pain Of death denounced, whatever thing death be, Deterred not from achieving what might lead To happier life, knowledge of good and evil?<sup>62</sup>

Both Jadis in *The Magician's Nephew* and Satan in *Paradise Lost* have eaten the fruit prior to trying to tempt their respective protagonists while Genesis 3 does not recount the serpent having eaten the forbidden fruit. This aspect, coupled with the inclusion of a walled garden, are details which show that Lewis is reading *Paradise Lost* more closely than he is Genesis when writing the temptation scene in *The Magician's Nephew*.<sup>63</sup>

Jadis and Satan are usurpers who hate humanity. Satan sees humanity as God's attempt to replace himself and the other fallen angels while Jadis can never truly rule Narnia (from Cair Paravel) as "there isn't a drop of real human blood in the Witch" and only a human can: When Adam's flesh and Adam's bone/ Sits at Cair Paravel in throne/ The evil time will be over and done.<sup>64</sup> As the fulfilment of this prophecy will be her end, Jadis endeavours to seek out and kill every "Son and Daughter of Adam and Eve." Satan does not simply desire to terminate humanity but corrupt them into entities of anguish for God:

Since higher I fall short, on him who next  
Provokes my envy, this new favourite  
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,  
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised  
From dust: Spite then with spite is best repaid.<sup>65</sup>

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Jadis successfully tries to tempt Edmund into betraying his siblings. Jadis' methods are similar to those of Satan's temptation

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<sup>62</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 9: 684 - 697

<sup>63</sup> I am not suggesting that Lewis literally had *Paradise Lost* open in front of him when he wrote *The Magician's Nephew* but rather *Paradise Lost* was so familiar to him that it inspired his Narnian work.

<sup>64</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (London, 1955), p.147

<sup>65</sup> Milton, J., *Paradise Lost*. (London, 1674), 9: 174-178

of Eve with the intent of corrupting Adam and through him, all of humanity. Rather than killing humans, Satan and Jadis prefer to pervert and sully those they envy and the kingdoms that they have coveted.

It is apparent that Lewis' portrayal of Queen Jadis in *The Magician's Nephew* was meant to depict Satan. However, the Satan which Lewis conveys is that of Milton from *Paradise Lost*. Lewis was indebted to Milton's Satan having written *Preface to Paradise Lost* in 1942 (some thirteen years prior to the publication of *The Magician's Nephew*).

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## CHAPTER 4 - ECHOES OF THE TRINITY IN NARNIA

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As I have proven, Aslan is unquestionably the Christ figure in Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*. This chapter will investigate whether the other members of the Trinity have any role to play within Lewis' fantasy world. Before I do this however I will first determine Lewis' stance on the doctrine of the Trinity as reflected in his other writings. As Aslan is referred to as the Son of the Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea, the Emperor must symbolise God the Father. I will go through all the references to the Emperor in the seven books of the series to establish the role He plays. This will then lead me to investigate whether one can speak of a 'Narnian Pneumatology', in other words, whether Lewis draws upon biblical texts about the Holy Spirit or indeed whether there is anything parallel to the role of the Holy Spirit in this world. I will show how the Holy Spirit is present in *The Chronicles of Narnia* in the guise of the breath of Aslan. I will also assess the argument put forward by Paul A. Karkainen that the arrival of Father Christmas in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. I will then posit that there is only one instance of the Narnian God-head being presented as a triune manifestation: when Shasta meets Aslan in *The Horse and His Boy*.

In *Mere Christianity*, Lewis has a book titled 'Beyond Personality' with chapter 2 called 'the Three-Personal God'. Lewis states that while he prefers terms such as "Beyond Personality" and "Three-Personal God", he does accept the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>1</sup> For Lewis, the three persons of the Trinity are incomprehensible in that humanity's knowledge of it has not been exhaustive and

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Christian Reflections*. (London, 1967), p. 5

illustrating the Three-Personal-God is almost impossible.<sup>2</sup> Lewis talks about the descent of the Holy Spirit at the day of Pentecost of Acts 2 in *Reflections on the Psalms* where he confesses that there is a mystery there that he will not even attempt to sound.<sup>3</sup> The majority of Lewis' attempts at exemplification of Trinitarian doctrine come from his reading of the New Testament as well as writings from the early church fathers.<sup>4</sup> One of these illustrations which Lewis cited was that of Augustine whereby the Trinity is likened to a lover, his beloved and the love between them.<sup>5</sup> Also from Augustine Lewis uses the language of the relationship between the act of imagining, a mental picture and the will to imagine.<sup>6</sup> Lewis believed that every Christian experienced the Trinity when they were at prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who prompts each believer to pray. God the Son stands beside every believer during prayer, helping them to pray and praying for them. Finally, God the Father is the One to whom prayers are addressed, the One to whom the believer is communicating.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, Walter Hooper says "If *The Chronicles of Narnia* have a theological weakness, it is possibly that the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not properly represented."<sup>8</sup> It could be that the reason Lewis does not incorporate the Father and Holy Spirit more in *The Chronicles of Narnia* is that neither of them can readily be physically epitomised. In contrast, Jesus, as the second member of the Trinity, is the only person of the God-head to have become incarnate and therefore is more easily visualised. This could be why Lewis focuses his attention in the Narnian

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<sup>2</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Miracles*. (New York, 1978), pp 76-79

<sup>3</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Reflections on the Psalms*. (San Diego, 1958), p. 126

<sup>4</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Miracles*. (New York, 1978), p. 76

<sup>5</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 1952), p. 157

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 142-143

<sup>8</sup> Hooper, W., *C.S. Lewis Companion and Guide*. (New York, 1996), p. 438

tales on developing the character of Aslan as a sign of Lewis' fidelity to Scripture and to the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>9</sup>

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#### 4.1 - THE EMPEROR-BEYOND-THE-SEA

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Aslan is called the Son of the Emperor-beyond-the-Sea (sometimes Emperor-over-the-Sea). Lewis never has the Emperor-beyond-the-Sea tangibly present in the stories in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In fact He is only mentioned six times in five books of the heptalogy. In four of the six occurrences the Emperor-over-the-Sea is referenced only to identify that Aslan is His Son in: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Horse and His Boy*, *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.<sup>10</sup>

[Aslan] is the King of the wood and the son of the great *Emperor-beyond-the-Sea*. Don't you know who is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion - the Lion, the great Lion."<sup>11</sup>

"He is the great Lion, the son of *the Emperor-beyond-the-Sea*, who saved me and saved Narnia. We've all seen him. Lucy sees him most often. And it may be Aslan's country we are sailing to."<sup>12</sup>

If Aslan as His Son represents Christ, then the Emperor-beyond-the-Sea, logically, must signify God the Father. Also in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Queen Jadis refers to the Emperor's sceptre when describing the Deep Magic from the dawn of Narnian time:

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<sup>9</sup> Vaus, W., *Mere Theology*. (Chicago, 2004), p. 47

<sup>10</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 146, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 282, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. (New York, 2001), p. 359, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn-Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 475

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 146, *italics added*

<sup>12</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn-Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 475, *italics added*.

"Let us say I have forgotten it," answered Aslan gravely. "Tell us of this Deep Magic." "Tell you?" said the Witch, her voice growing suddenly shriller. "Tell you what is written on that very Table of Stone which stands beside us? Tell you what is written in letters deep as a spear is long on the firestones on the Secret Hill? Tell you what is engraved on the sceptre of the *Emperor-beyond-the-Sea*? You at least know the Magic which the Emperor put into Narnia at the very beginning. You know that every traitor belongs to me as my lawful prey and that for every treachery I have a right to a kill."<sup>13</sup>

The Emperor's sceptre denotes his Kingship, a theme common in the Bible but also a very standard image in many contexts (e.g. Psalm 45:6 and Hebrews 1:8).<sup>14</sup> Finally the demon Tash is rebuked in the name of both Aslan and His Father similar to the archangel Michael rebuking Satan in Jude 9.<sup>15</sup>

But immediately, from behind Tash, strong and calm as the summer sea, a voice said: "Begone, Monster, and take your lawful prey to your own place: in the name of Aslan and Aslan's great Father the *Emperor-over-the-Sea*." The hideous creature vanished, with the Tarkaan still under its arm. And Tirian turned to see who had spoken.<sup>16</sup>

What is worth noting is the absence of the Emperor-over-the-Sea from *The Magician's Nephew* which recounts the birth of Narnia. As Aslan is the one who sings this new world into existence it implies that Lewis is employing a Trinitarian reading of the Creation, as is found in John 1:1-3 where "all things were made through Him [Jesus], and without Him nothing was made that was made." While there is nothing about the Emperor in *The Magician's Nephew*, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Queen Jadis refers to what the Emperor did at the beginning. It is not the Emperor's activity in creation, so much as his 'underwriting' of the law of the universe "...the Magic which the Emperor put into Narnia at the

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<sup>13</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 175

<sup>14</sup> Psalms 45:6 & Hebrew 1:8 "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

<sup>15</sup> Luke 1:9 "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."

<sup>16</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 740, *italics added*.

very beginning.”<sup>17</sup> The idea of God the Father writing the Deep / Deeper Magic into the world and of the law that needs to be obeyed is consonant with a biblical understanding, but there does not seem to be any direct biblical precedent for the Deep Magic Written on the Emperor’s Sceptre.

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#### 4.2 - THE HOLY SPIRIT IN NARNIA

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While the Emperor-beyond-the-Sea is not a prevalent character in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, He remains an explicitly named ‘off-stage’ presence. However there is no character which represents the Holy Spirit in an overt style. Nevertheless, within Lewis’ heptalogy there is, to some extent, a doctrine of pneumatology in the guise of the breath of Aslan which is something that is present in each of the seven books of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. As established in Chapter 3, in *The Magician’s Nephew* it is the breath of Aslan which gives sentience to the newly created Narnian animals.

The Lion opened his mouth, but no sound came from it; he was breathing out, a long, warm breath; it seemed to sway all the beasts as the wind sways a line of trees... Then there came a swift flash like fire (but it burnt nobody)... and the deepest, wildest voice they had ever heard was saying: "Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters."<sup>18</sup>

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* it is the breath of Aslan which awakens the Narnians who had been frozen into stone by Queen Jadis back to their living selves.<sup>19</sup> In *A Horse and His Boy* Aslan breathes on Shasta to assure him that he is not a ghost. “Once more he felt the warm breath of the Thing on his hand and face. “There,” it said, "that is not the breath of a ghost.” This is followed by Aslan

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<sup>17</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 175

<sup>18</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (New York, 2001), p. 70

<sup>19</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), pp 187 - 189

referring to Himself three times as “Myself.”<sup>20</sup> The latter is the most discernible reference to the Three-part Godhead which I will go into more detail about later in this chapter.

In *Prince Caspian*, Aslan breathes on Susan to make her brave: "You have listened to fears, child...Come, let me breathe on you. Forget them. Are you brave again?"<sup>21</sup> Likewise, in *The Voyage of the Dawn-Treader* it is the breath of Aslan which makes Lucy feel braver. The eponymous ship is caught up in perpetual darkness from which it cannot escape. Lucy leant her head on the edge of the fighting top and whispered, "Aslan, Aslan, if ever you loved us at all, send us help now." The darkness did not grow any less, but she began to feel a little - a very, very little - better.<sup>22</sup>

Lucy looked along the beam and presently saw something in it. At first it looked like a cross...it was right overhead and was an albatross. It circled three times ... It called out in a strong sweet voice what seemed to be words though no one understood them. After that it spread its wings, rose, and began to fly slowly ahead, bearing a little to starboard. Drinian steered after it not doubting that it offered good guidance. But no one except Lucy knew that as it circled the mast it had whispered to her, "Courage, dear heart," and the voice, she felt sure, was Aslan's, and with the voice a delicious smell *breathed in her face*.<sup>23</sup>

While not definitive, the ornithological reference to Aslan as an albatross can possibly be compared to the baptism accounts in the Gospels (Matthew 3:16-17, Mark 1:10-11, Luke 3:22 and John 1:32) when Jesus was baptised and the Spirit of God descended *like a dove* and alighted upon Him. However, it is no doubt significant that before Lucy recognised it as an albatross, the approaching figure first “looked [to her] like a cross.”<sup>24</sup> This suggests a Christological echo in this event, perhaps of

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<sup>20</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), pp 280-281

<sup>21</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. (New York, 2001), p. 386

<sup>22</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn-Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 511

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus in John 20:21-22 where he tells his disciples not to fear and breathes on them saying ‘receive the Holy Spirit.’

In *The Silver Chair*, the breath of Aslan is used several times throughout the narrative. In the first two chapters the breath of Aslan blows both Eustace and Jill to Narnia from atop Aslan’s Mountain. Towards the conclusion of the book Aslan blows away Narnia and returns the two protagonists to Aslan’s Mountain.<sup>25</sup> Finally in *The Last Battle*, it is once again Aslan’s breath which imparts bravery, this time to the Calormene Emeth inside the stable.<sup>26</sup>

As evident, the breath of Aslan has a profuse presence within the heptalogy and is used in a similar manner as the breath or Spirit of God. The English word “spirit” comes from the Latin *spiritus*, meaning "breath", but also "spirit, soul, courage and vigour.”<sup>27</sup> In Genesis 2:7 Man is turned from the dust of the ground to a living being “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Job 32:8 also states that “But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.” This is similar to the awakenings of the animals in *The Magician’s Nephew* as well as the reawakening of the Narnians in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Likewise, throughout the Bible, the early Church was imbued with bravery from the Holy Spirit. In John 20:22 “And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” In the Book of Acts when Peter and John are arrested by the Sanhedrin and the name of Jesus is forbidden, the disciples gather together in prayer:

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<sup>25</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), pp 555-556, 560 & 660

<sup>26</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 757

<sup>27</sup> Watkins, C. *The American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots*. (Boston, 2001), p.64.

Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus. “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”<sup>28</sup>

The disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with boldness. It appears that Lewis utilises the biblical accounts of the Holy Spirit and the breath of God together and uses Aslan as the purveyor of their powers and abilities to create life and provide courage. While Aslan is the Narnian representation of Jesus, he also possesses some of the qualities accredited to the Holy Spirit.

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#### 4.3 - FATHER CHRISTMAS

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Although the inclusion of ‘Father Christmas’ in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* would hardly be considered a biblical allusion, there are some writers who have made a connection between him and the Holy Spirit. Lewis believed in the historical descent of the Spirit at Pentecost and the role of the Holy Spirit as the giver of gifts was important to him as well.<sup>29</sup> Lewis’ stepson Douglas Gresham suggests that this belief was the reason why Lewis kept the character of Father Christmas in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*; even though associates like Tolkien told Lewis that they felt Father Christmas was not conducive to the narrative.<sup>30</sup> Gresham asserts that by the giving of gifts to the three Pevensie children and the beavers, Lewis felt it was important to maintain that aspect of the story as Father Christmas is symbolic of the Holy Spirit as the giver of spiritual gifts.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Acts 4:29-31

<sup>29</sup> Vaus, W., *Mere Theology*. (Chicago, 2004), p. 93

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Gresham, D., *Lecture on ‘The Chronicles of Narnia’*. October 1998

Paul A. Karkainen also posits the comparison of the Holy Spirit to Father Christmas in *Narnia: Unlocking the Wardrobe* (originally published in 1979 as *Narnia Explored*). In the section “The Gift of Christmas”, Karkainen compares Father Christmas’ coming and bestowing gifts on the Pevensie children with the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit. Karkainen states that “Father Christmas brings gifts: tools, not toys. He gives the children things they will need in their struggle with the witch. In the same way, spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit are for the Christian’s use in the struggle with Satan.”<sup>32</sup> Karkainen believes that Peter’s gift of the sword and shield is the whole armour of God of the believer “The shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one” and “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:13). Susan is given a bow that does not easily miss and a quiver full of arrows and a little ivory horn that comes with the promise that when she blows it, “help of some kind will come to you” in the same manner that “the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses... the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us” (Romans 8:26). Finally Lucy is given a healing cordial in a diamond bottle made from the juice of the fire-flower which grows on the Sun. As one of the gifts of the Spirit is “gifts of healings” (1 Corinthians 12:9). Only followers of Christ are given spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit. Likewise in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Father Christmas’ gifts are only given to those who are seeking Aslan. Peter, Susan and Lucy, receive their gifts but Edmund misses out as he is on the side of the Queen Jadis. This denotes that Karkainen is actively seeking a biblical comparison for the Father Christmas section of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. It should be pointed out that Karkainen’s book is more evangelical than academic in its approach to biblical

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<sup>32</sup> Karkainen, P.A., *Narnia: Unlocking the Wardrobe*. (Grand Rapids, 2007), p.64

themes and imagery. Karkainen is making the connections himself and his purpose in writing the book was so that Narnia can be a teaching tool to show how “following Jesus in our world lifts us from being horizontal creatures who never look up to being happy, fulfilled inhabitants of Christ’s divine kingdom.”<sup>33</sup>

There is an important contrast between Father Christmas and the Holy Spirit however. Father Christmas had been restricted from entering Narnia. It was “always winter but never Christmas.”<sup>34</sup> In contrast, the Holy Spirit as Omni-present, Omni-temporal and Omni-powerful cannot be restrained cf. Psalm 139:7-10:

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.

However, Michael Ward in his book *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis* offers a different reason for the inclusion of Father Christmas in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. Ward believed that when Lewis wrote *The Chronicles of Narnia* he based each of the seven books on the seven planets of pre-Copernican cosmology (the Sun (Sol) the Moon (Luna), Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn).<sup>35</sup> Ward’s inspiration for his book was Lewis’ poem *The Planets* (1935). Ward’s position is that Father Christmas embodies Joviality, and Jupiter is the guiding thematic reference of that book. “Father Christmas is, in modern culture, the Jovial character *par excellence*, loud-voiced,

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.12

<sup>34</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 159

<sup>35</sup> In each chapter, Ward offers evidence of each of the planetary personalities and their manifestations in its paralleling book in the *Chronicles*: Jupiter for *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*; Mars for *Prince Caspian*; Sol for *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*; Luna for *The Silver Chair*; Mercury for *The Horse and His Boy*; Venus for *The Magician’s Nephew*; and, Saturn for *The Last Battle*.

red-faced, and jolly.”<sup>36</sup> “Father Christmas standing against the snow represents just that splash of vivid red-on-white that a tale of Joviality requires. He is the eye to the face of this story, the eye of Jupiter.”<sup>37</sup> For Ward, the less convincing argument is that the inclusion of Father Christmas was envisioned by Lewis to represent the Holy Spirit but nevertheless it is still a connection which some authors have made. Ward’s argument that the seven books which comprise *The Chronicles of Narnia* are each based on the seven planets of pre-Copernican cosmology, as well as convincing repudiation by Dr. Justin Barrett, is covered in more detail in Appendix C.

An alternative explanation for the unexpected presence of Father Christmas in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is given by Doris Myers in *The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in the Chronicles of Narnia* where she stresses the importance of reading the Narnian books in publication order.<sup>38</sup> In Myers’ article she compares *The Chronicles of Narnia* to the stages of Anglican spiritual development with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as a sort of infancy narrative of young believers. “For children born into an Anglican-style religious home, the first awareness of Christianity comes through its two great festivals, Christmas and Easter.”<sup>39</sup> As *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is about the coming of Aslan and His death and resurrection, the inclusion of Father Christmas is simply as a symbol for the Christmas holiday which in itself represents the birth of Christ.

Within *The Chronicles of Narnia* Aslan has long been established as the Christ figure and second member of the Trinity. However, Aslan is also in possession of

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<sup>36</sup> Ward, M., *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis* (New York, 2010), p. 66

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.67

<sup>38</sup> Myers, Doris E., ‘The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in the Chronicles of Narnia’, *Anglican Theological Review*. Vol 66, No. 2, 1984, pp 148-160

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

some of the characteristics and abilities of the Holy Spirit. This is especially evident with the “breath of Aslan” used to give life and provide courage. It is more likely that the inclusion of Father Christmas and the giving of gifts was Lewis’ attempt to portray the key seasonal Holidays of Christmas along with Easter as the most important dates in the Christian calendar which signify the birth and death of Jesus. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* represent Lewis’ theology of redemption, and the birth and death of Christ are of paramount importance to Christ’s redeeming work.

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#### 4.4 - MYSELF

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As I had mentioned earlier, the most discernible reference to the Trinity occurs in *The Horse and His Boy*. Shasta has been separated from his three companions and is travelling towards Narnia late at night when he becomes aware of an “Unwelcome Fellow Traveller” (the name of the chapter). He asks the “Thing or Person” “Who are you?”<sup>40</sup> The Thing informs Shasta that he is not a ghost and breathes on him. Aslan then reveals to Shasta that He is the Lion who had been watching over him and caring for him throughout his life.<sup>41</sup> Shasta then repeats the question “Who are you?”

"Myself," said the Voice, very deep and low so that the earth shook: and again "Myself", loud and clear and gay: and then the third time "Myself", whispered so softly you could hardly hear it, and yet it seemed to come from all round you as if the leaves rustled with it. Shasta was no longer afraid that the Voice belonged to something that would eat him, nor that it was the voice of a ghost. But a new and different sort of trembling came over him. Yet he felt glad too.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 280

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p.281

When Aslan first says "Myself", He says it in a "very deep and low so that *the earth shook*." Likewise in Hebrews 12:25-26: "See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from *Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth*; but now He has promised, saying, "*Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.*" (cf. Joel 3:16 "The Lord also will roar from Zion...The heavens and earth will shake" and Haggai 2:6 "For thus says the LORD of hosts: Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land"). The second "Myself" is loud and clear and gay and finally there is the "Myself", whispered so softly you could hardly hear it, and yet it seemed to come from all round you as if the leaves rustled with it.

In Marvin D. Hinten's book *The Keys to the Chronicles* he describes the three different voices to represent the Trinity as the deep voice being the Father (for power), the clear voice the son (for brightness) and the whispered voice the Spirit (with associations of Greek *pneuma* and Latin *spiritus* with breath and wind).<sup>43</sup> To this we may add the Hebrew *ru'ach* which may also be translated as breath, spirit or wind. He maintains that the matching of different words with appropriate members of the Trinity occurs occasionally in English Renaissance religious poetry, the most famous example being John Donne's 'Batter My Heart, Three-Personed God'.<sup>44</sup> "Three-Personed God" is noticeably similar to Lewis' liking of the title 'Three-Personal God'.

Batter my heart, three person'd God; for, you  
As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seeke to mend.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Hinten, M.D., *The Keys to the Chronicles* (Nashville, 2005), p.62

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Detweiler, R. *Religion and Literature: A Reader*. (Louisville, 2000), pp 74-75

In Donne's poem the narrator asks God the Father to "knock", the Son to "shine" and the Spirit to "breathe."<sup>46</sup> There are also parallels between the Narnian text and 1 Kings 19:11-12:

Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

The text from 1 Kings is part of the Elijah story and it alludes strongly to the Sinai / Moses narrative. The still small voice is linked to the rustling of the leaves. Lewis will return at other times to Mosaic themes, making the possibility of this being a Sinai reference more likely.

As I mentioned, Aslan is the one who created the world of Narnia. This is reminiscent of Old Testament passages which indicate that Aslan is the 'God' figure and not just the 'Christ' figure. But, as I have already noted, there are the opening verses of John which invite this reading. An example of where Aslan mirrors the Father is at the conclusion of the adventure in *The Silver Chair*. Eustace Scrubb and Jill Pole are about to be sent back to England from Narnia. King Caspian joins them to tackle some bullies who had been chasing the two children immediately prior to their arrival in Narnia. Jill asks Aslan "are you coming with us" to which he replies "They shall see only My back."<sup>47</sup> In Exodus 33:18 Moses asks God to "Please, show me Your glory" to which God replies in verses 22-23 So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and *you shall see My back*; but

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 662

My face shall not be seen.” Here Aslan mirrors God’s reply to Moses about only His back being visible.

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#### 4.5 - CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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As Jesus is the only member of the Trinity to have become manifest, a direct interpretation for Him is easily created by Lewis. Doing the same for God the Father and the Holy Spirit has proven to be more difficult. However, Aslan as the Son of the Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea implies that the Creator and Redeemer of Narnia exists in Son-Father relationship. While there is no additional character which can be determined to be a direct epitome for the Holy Spirit, nevertheless some authors like Karkainen view Father Christmas as evoking the Holy Spirit’s gift-giving activity. While Aslan is the Christ figure of Narnia, he does exude some of the characteristics which are associated with the Holy Spirit. This is especially evident with the breath of Aslan which has resonances of biblical themes of both the Spirit and the breath of God. There are also strong ‘Sinai’ allusions, implying that Aslan is also the Narnian embodiment of the God encountered in the Old Testament. This indicates a Christocentric reading of the Old Testament which one might expect from Lewis the Anglican.

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## CHAPTER 5 - ESCHATOLOGY IN NARNIA

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The final book of the series, *The Last Battle*, was published in 1956 and it depicts the end of the world of Narnia as well as the afterlife of some of the Narnians and those sent from our world. *The Last Battle* is the most eschatological book in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. This chapter examines how the novella aligns with biblical references to eschatology in light of Lewis's own interpretation of eschatology. It is worth noting that Lewis does not write much on eschatology and what he does write is predominantly centered on the Second Coming of Jesus. In his writings on the end times, Lewis' chosen biblical text is that of Jesus' forewarnings of Matthew 25 and 25 as is highlighted in his essay *The World's Last Night*, where it is primarily this Olivet Discourse which he uses to describe the events of the end of the world and the Parousia.

Lewis does not appear to directly use the eschatological sections of the Old Testament books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Isaiah, nor does he reference John's Book of Revelation as a primary source of Narnian eschatology as one might expect. Contemporary Christian novels about 'end times', as exemplified by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins' *Left Behind* series, find in Revelation, timelines and events that pivot around specific interpretations of the millennial reign of Christ (Revelations 20:1-4) and two 3.5 year tribulation periods of Revelations 11:2 and Revelations 12:14. Not surprisingly for an Anglican thinker, none of this is reflected in C.S. Lewis' writing here.

However, there is much rich imagery in the book of Revelation that one might expect Lewis to have borrowed. After all, in Lewis' Narnia, creatures like dragons appear frequently throughout the series. Most notably in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* where they are found on Dragon Island and Eustace is changed into one. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* when Edmund enters the courtyard of the Queen Jadis' castle he sees a dragon turned to stone and finally dragons inhabit Bism in *The Silver Chair*. A dragon would play the role of antagonist in Narnia quite well in a manner similar to Smaug in J. R. R. Tolkien's 'The Hobbit'. Revelation offers images like the great, fiery red dragon which had seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads whose tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth (Revelations 12:3-4). Archangel Michael fought this dragon before it persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child (Revelations 12: 7&13). Also the Beast of the Sea (Revelations 13:1) and the Beast of the Earth (Revelations 13:11) are mythical enough in description to have been incorporated in the eschatological nature of *The Last Battle* but Lewis does not use them. There is very little evidence of direct borrowing from Revelation. The only exception to this would be the 'beast and the prophet' which could be used to describe the characters of Shift and Puzzle.

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#### 5.1 - THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET

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The Book of Revelation speaks of a beast who will be given the authority of Satan (Revelation 13) and there will be a false prophet who is allied with the beast (Revelation 16:13). The beast and the false prophet are allied with Satan (the dragon) as adversaries to God. Together they persecute Christians and influence world leaders to convene for the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:13-16). Christ

defeats the beast and the false prophet and casts them into the lake of fire mentioned in Revelation 19:18-20.

Lewis himself identified Shift as a type of Narnian antichrist in a letter to Anne Waller Jenkins.<sup>1</sup> However, Shift is also the false prophet who convinces the other Narnians that Puzzle dressed in the lion-skin is Aslan himself. In his chapter *On the Origins of Evil* in *Revisiting Narnia*, Lawrence Watt-Evans views Shift the Ape as representing the Antichrist and he also adds that Stable Hill signifies Armageddon while Tash is Satan.<sup>2</sup> Watt-Evans agrees that Puzzle the Donkey represents the beast from Revelation 13:1-10 and uses Revelation 13:15 as a description of Shift's hold over the Narnians: "He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed." Shift's ability to present his false Aslan is what compels the Narnians to obey him, and the Calormenes kill those who resist.<sup>3</sup> Even though Puzzle represents the beast in that he is pretending to be Aslan, he has been deceived by Shift into doing so and therefore does not suffer the same fate as both Shift and the beast (Shift is eaten by Tash while the beast and the prophet are thrown into a lake of fire and brimstone (Revelation 19:20, 20:10)). The roles of Puzzle and Shift are the main Revelation allusions in *The Last Battle*. However, there are many comparisons to be made between *The Last Battle* and the prophetic writings of the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24 and 25, where parallels can be made on almost a verse-by-verse basis.

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## 5.2 - NARNIA AND THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to Children*. (New York, 1985), pp 92-93

<sup>2</sup> Watt-Evans, Lawrence. "On the Origins of Evil" In *Revisiting Narnia*, edited by Shana Caughey, 25-32. Dallas: BenBella Books Inc., 2005.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*,

In Matthew 24:3, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives as the disciples came to Him asking about the sign of His coming and the end of the age. In verses 6 and 7 of Matthew 24, Jesus warns his disciples that “you will hear of wars and rumours of wars...For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom.” In *The Last Battle*, Calormene rises up against Narnia and attempts to seize control of the entire land and its population. In Matthew 24:5 Jesus replies that “many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.” In *The Last Battle* the deceptive ape Shift manipulates the dim-witted donkey Puzzle into dressing in a lion skin and presenting himself as Aslan. Many of the talking animals and other creatures of Narnia are deceived into believing that Puzzle is Aslan, at least in the poor light of a bonfire at nightfall, and are subjugated under Calormene rule into doing manual labour in his behalf.

Also, in verse 11 Jesus states that “many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.” Rishda Tarkaan, who was the captain of the Calormenes, and Ginger the cat both became false prophets in *The Last Battle* and attempted to deceive the Narnians into believing that Aslan and the Calormene god Tash were one and the same, a hybrid called “Tashlan.”<sup>4</sup> Matthew 24:26 “Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, *He is in the inner rooms!*’ do not believe it.”<sup>5</sup> The ape Shift, along with his accomplices, do their best to convince the Narnians that Aslan (the donkey Puzzle dressed in a lion-skin) is inside a stable. They continue with their deceit long after Puzzle has been rescued by King Tirian from the stable and it is empty.

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<sup>4</sup>Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 719

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 24:26 emphasis added

As well as the deception which ensues from the rise of false prophets and messiahs, during the end times Jesus warns that the lives of believers are at risk in Matthew 24:9-10 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations *for My name’s sake*.<sup>6</sup> And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.” King Tirian, his unicorn Jewel and their fellow companions are at constant risk of death throughout *The Last Battle* for their steadfast belief in the goodness of Aslan and their reluctance to believe in Tashlan. King Tirian is arrested and tied to a tree for calling the ape Shift on his lies describing Aslan and the Calormene god “Tash” as one and the same. Before being subdued, Tirian was about to question how “the terrible god Tash who fed on the blood of his people could possibly be the same as the good Lion by whose blood all Narnia was saved.”<sup>7</sup> The deception of the ape Shift results in the persecution of Aslan’s devout followers, who appear treacherous to those who believe in the counterfeit Aslan. This is analogous to the tribulations that Jesus cautions His disciples against which are prophesied to take place before the end.

When King Tirian is rescued by Eustace Scrubb and Jill Pole from our world, they make their way to rescue the unicorn Jewel where they also end up freeing Puzzle the donkey from the stable. They are en route to the Narnian capital of Cair Paravel when they come upon a group of thirty dwarves who are being led to slavery in Calormen by two guards. After they defeat the guards, the Narnian protagonists share with the dwarves that they had been deceived by Shift and provide proof in that deception by revealing Puzzle in the lion skin. Rather than, as expected, rejoicing that the angry Aslan is actually an impostor, the dwarves instead state

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<sup>6</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>7</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 686

through their leader Gruffle that “I don’t know how you chaps feel, but I feel like I’ve heard as much about Aslan as I want to for the rest of my life.”<sup>8</sup> This highlights what Jesus had said in Matthew 24:12 “And because lawlessness will abound, *the love of many will grow cold.*” The dwarves declare that “we are on our own now. No more Aslan, no more Kings...The dwarves are for the dwarves.”<sup>9</sup> Their love has grown cold. Several times throughout the closing chapters, the dwarves repeat their new mantra of “The dwarves are for the dwarves.” They refuse to choose a side during an ensuing mêlée even going so far as to first attack other Narnians before attacking the Calormen enemy. The fact that the dwarves attack the Talking Horses of Narnia again highlights Matthew 24:10 “And then many will be offended, *will betray one another*, and will hate one another. The Dwarves have betrayed their King, kin and their God of Aslan. The cat Ginger also betrays her kin by siding with the Calormene Rishda Tarkaan in an attempt to usurp Shift and take control of Narnia.

King Tirian and his allies end up losing the final battle and are also thrown into the stable which had housed Puzzle. What is worth noting is the abruptness in which the final battle ends. King Tirian and his cohorts are one minute engaged in a violent fight for their lives and then they are thrown into the stable and the battle comes to an almost premature halt. That aspect of the story is over and the reader is left with a feeling of anti-climax. However, Lewis’ other writing on the Second Coming of Christ alerts us to the fact that this is not a weakness of plot, but rather a deliberate aspect of the story: the last battle doesn’t culminate in the end, but is more

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 707

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

interrupted by it. In his essay *The World's Last Night* Lewis repeatedly speaks on the precipitousness of the end of our world and the Second Coming:

The doctrine of the Second Coming is deeply uncongenial to the whole evolutionary or developmental character of modern thought. We have been taught to think of the world as something that grows slowly towards perfection, something that “progresses” or “evolves.” Christian Apocalyptic offers us no such hope. It does not even foretell (which would be more tolerable to our habits of thought) a gradual decay. *It foretells a sudden, violent end imposed from without; an extinguisher popped onto the candle, a brick flung at the gramophone, a curtain rung down on the play—”Halt!”*<sup>10</sup>

And also:

The doctrine of the Second Coming teaches us that we do not and cannot know when the world drama will end, the curtain may be rung down at any moment: say, before you have finished reading this paragraph. This seems to some people intolerably frustrating. So many things would be interrupted. Perhaps you were going to get married next month, perhaps you were going to get a raise next week: you may be on the verge of a great scientific discovery; you may be maturing great social and political reforms. Surely no good and wise God would be so very unreasonable as to cut all this short? Not *now*, of all moments! . . .<sup>11</sup>

Lewis continues on the subject the abruptness of the “end” by comparing life to a play. We are unaware of whether we are in the first Act or the fifth. The audience (in this case angels and the company of Heaven) many have an inkling but it is only the Author who is fully aware. That the end will come when it should we may be sure; but people waste their time in trying to guess when that will be. When it is over “we are led to expect that the Author will have something to say to each of us on the part that each of us has played. The playing it well is what matters infinitely.”<sup>12</sup>

When Aslan appears to King Tirian for the first time, He greets the king with “*Well done, last of the Kings of Narnia who stood firm at the darkest hour.*”<sup>13</sup> Similarly, in

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<sup>10</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The World's Last Night and Other Essays*. (Orlando, 1987), p. 101, *Emphasis added*.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.105

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.106

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p.747

the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:21&23 Jesus commends those who did well with the talents with “*Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things.*” Lewis is adamant that Christians must adhere to the instruction of Jesus from Matthew 24: 42-51:

Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Lewis presses the reader to “therefore, be ready at all times.”<sup>14</sup>

As mentioned, King Tirian and his allies have lost the last battle in Narnia and are thrown into the stable which had earlier housed Puzzle the Donkey. Once inside the stable however, Tirian does not experience a small dark shed as expected, instead he is outside in an area of lush vegetation and clear rivers. He is surrounded by the seven friends of Narnia which include Digory Kirke, Polly Plummer, Peter, Edmund and Lucy Pevensie as well as Eustace and Jill. The remaining dwarves are there too but their experience of the inner of the stable is different to that of the loyal friends of Narnia. Their reality is that of an actual twelve foot by six stable. The delicious fruit that the friends are enjoying are turnips and cabbage leaves to the dwarves. Aslan explains that “They will not let us help them. They have *chosen cunning instead of belief*. Their prison is only in their minds, yet they are in that prison; and

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<sup>14</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The World's Last Night and Other Essays*. (Orlando, 1987), p.108

*so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out.*”<sup>15</sup> Paul warns us in Romans 12:16 to “Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. *Do not be wise in your own opinion.*” A feat which the dwarves failed to achieve but as Jesus states in Matthew 24:13 “he who endures to the end shall be saved.”

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### 5.3 - EMETH – THE ANONYMOUS NARNIAN

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Another point worth noting is that prior to the final battle, a Calormene guard by the name of Emeth had volunteered to be the first to enter the stable to meet Tash. However, once inside the stable (which is now an area of lush vegetation) he meets Aslan.

But the Glorious One [Aslan] bent down his golden head and touched my [Emeth’s] forehead with his tongue and said, Son, thou art welcome. But I said, Alas, Lord, I am no son of thine but the servant of Tash. He answered, Child, all the service thou hast done to Tash, I account as service done to me. Then by reasons of my great desire for wisdom and understanding, I overcame my fear and questioned the Glorious One and said, Lord, is it then true, as the Ape said, that thou and Tash are one? The Lion growled so that the earth shook (but his wrath was not against me) and said, It is false. Not because he and I are one, but because we are opposites, I take to me the services which thou hast done to him. For I and he are of such different kinds that no service which is vile can be done to me, and none which is not vile can be done to him. Therefore if any man swear by Tash and keep his oath for the oath's sake, it is by me that he has truly sworn, though he know it not, and it is I who reward him. And if any man do a cruelty in my name, then, though he says the name Aslan, it is Tash whom he serves and by Tash his deed is accepted.<sup>16</sup>

This echoes Matthew 25:31-46 when Jesus commends those who fed Jesus when He was hungry, gave Him drink when thirsty, took Him in as a stranger, clothed Him when He was naked, visited when sick or in prison by doing it for the least of Jesus’ brethren. Jesus chastises those who did not do it for His brethren. Correspondingly,

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<sup>15</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p.748, Emphasis added.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.757

Aslan takes it as done towards Him those acts which are just and noble. Lewis confirms that this was in fact his viewpoint which stemmed from the parable of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25:34-40.<sup>17</sup> In a 1952 private letter to “Mrs. Ashton”

Lewis clarified his position:

I think that every prayer which is sincerely made even to a false god, or to a very imperfectly conceived true God, is accepted by the true God and that Christ saves many who do not think they know him. For He is (dimly) present in the good side of the inferior teachers they follow. In the parable of the Sheep and Goats those who are saved do not seem to know that they have served Christ.<sup>18</sup>

Also, in this respect the Calormene guard Emeth is what Karl Rahner would call an “anonymous Christian” (or an anonymous Narnian). Anonymous Christianity is Rahner’s theological theory which asserts that individuals who have not heard the Christian Gospel can still achieve salvation through Jesus Christ. Inspiration for this idea sometimes comes from *Lumen Gentium* which communicates that those “who no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and moved by grace, try in their actions to do His will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience – those too may achieve eternal salvation.”<sup>19</sup> Rahner’s expansion of the idea preceded the Second Vatican Council, and became further persistent after it received its dogmatic formulation. Rahner wrote that Non-Christians could have “in [their] basic orientation and fundamental decision accepted the salvific grace of God, through Christ, although [they] may never have heard of the Christian revelation.”<sup>20</sup> Rahner’s

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<sup>17</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Collected Letters of C.S. Lewis, Volume III: Narnia, Cambridge, and Joy*. (New York, 2007), p. 163.

<sup>18</sup> Baggett, D.J., *C. S. Lewis as Philosopher: Truth, Goodness and Beauty*. (Illinois, 2008), p. 135

<sup>19</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Paragraph 15.

<sup>20</sup> D’Costa, Gavin. 'Karl Rahner's Anonymous Christian - A Reappraisal', *Modern Theology*. Vol i, No. 02, 1985, pp 131-148

work on the topic was somewhat linked with his understandings about the mode of grace.

What is also noteworthy is Lewis' application of the name "Emeth." Lewis was rather purposeful when applying names to his characters as evident with Aslan being called Aslan as it is the Turkish word for Lion.<sup>21</sup> The word *emeth* is the Hebrew word for "truth," "faithful," or "veracity." In *Reflections on the Psalms* Lewis discusses the Hebrew word and explains that it refers to an "intrinsic validity, rock-bottom reality."<sup>22</sup> Lewis uses the analogy of a "pedestrian delight[ing] in feeling the hard road beneath his feet after a false short-cut has long entangled him in muddy fields" to describe one who seeks *emeth*.<sup>23</sup> The analogy that Lewis uses for this seeker of truth perfectly describes the character of Emeth in *The Last Battle*.

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#### 5.4 - THE END OF NARNIA

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In Matthew 24:29-31 Jesus describes the culmination of our world

Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

This prophecy of Christ in the Olivet Discourse is acted out, almost verbatim, in the conclusion of Narnia itself. Aslan calls out to Time, a great giant who raises a horn to his mouth and after a while, the friends of Narnia hear the sound of the horn:

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<sup>21</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to Children*. (New York, 1985), p. 29

<sup>22</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Reflections on the Psalms*. (San Diego, 1958), p. 61

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62

“high and terrible, yet of a strange, deadly beauty.”<sup>24</sup> This sound precipitates the sky to become full of shooting stars; “first dozens and then scores, and then hundreds, till it was like silver rain.”<sup>25</sup> Eventually all the stars of Narnia fall to earth. The Narnian stars are not the flaming gaseous spheres that they are here; rather they are glittering people with long hair like burning silver and spears like white-hot metal that land beside Aslan. This is a fitting counterpart to the story of Narnia’s creation which is accompanied by the singing of the stars. After the falling of the stars, the sun comes up and when it does, the Lord Digory and the Lady Polly looked at one another and gave a little nod of knowing. In *The Magicians Nephew* while they were in the dying world of Charn, they had once seen that world’s dying sun, and so they were aware that Narnia’s sun also was dying. It was twenty times its usual size and a very dark red. Then the Moon came up very close to the sun, and it also looked red. The Sun began shooting out great flames which drew the moon towards it and the two ran together and became one huge ball like a burning coal with great lumps of fire dropping out of it into the sea and clouds of steam rising up.<sup>26</sup> Aslan commanded Time to “Now make an end.”<sup>27</sup> The giant Time threw his horn into the sea. Then he stretched out one arm, very black and thousands of miles long, across the sky until his hand reached the Sun. He took the Sun and squeezed it in his hand “as you would squeeze an orange.”<sup>28</sup> And instantly there was total darkness. This is a graphic representation of the cosmic disturbances in Matthew 24:29.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 749

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 750

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 753

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Matthew 24:29 “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken”

Matthew 24:31 states that in the end times the Christ will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other. The arrival of the protagonists of earlier books in the series, fetched out of their own world, echo this. Likewise, in *The Last Battle*, coming up the hill towards the door inside the stable where Aslan stood, came all manner of creatures by their millions - Talking Beasts, Dwarfs, Satyrs, Fauns, Giants, Calormenes, men from Archenland, Monopods, and strange inhabitants from the remote islands of the unknown Western lands. They were all guided to making their way to the doorway where Aslan stood. The creatures came rushing on, their eyes bright from the light coming from the standing Stars. However, as they came right up to Aslan, one of two things happened to each of them. Without choice, they all looked Aslan straight in his face. When some looked, the expression of their faces changed to one of fear and hatred which lasted only for a fraction of a second before it became apparent that they suddenly ceased to be intelligent Talking Beasts. They were just ordinary animals. All the creatures that looked towards Aslan in that way swerved to Aslan's left and disappeared into His huge black shadow. Conversely, the other creatures looked in the face of Aslan and though some of them were frightened, they loved Him. Those creatures came in through the Door on Aslan's right. They included those who had previously died as result of the final battle.

There are obvious parallels here with Matthew 25:31-36:

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. *All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.* Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was

naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

The just and the unjust Narnians are judged by Aslan at the doorway in the same manner that humanity will be judged by Christ at His Throne. The dead from all over are given over to judgement according to their works. Anyone who done good deeds will “inherit the kingdom” while those who had not done good deeds for the Lord will be told “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41) or in Narnia’s case, the “black shadow” of Aslan.<sup>30</sup>

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#### 5.5 - LEWIS ON PURGATORY AND HEAVEN

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It is worth pausing for a moment to clarify Lewis’ stance on purgatory and heaven and where it fits into the Narnian world. In his book *Letters to Malcolm*, CS Lewis states “I believe in Purgatory.”<sup>31</sup> Due to the etymology of the word ‘purgatory’, Lewis writes that Purgatory was a place which will involve suffering a purging. He asserts that this view comes partly from the Tradition and partly because most real good that has been done to him in his life had involved suffering.<sup>32</sup> In *Letters to Malcolm*, CS Lewis continues clarifying his position:

Our souls demand Purgatory, don't they? Would in not break the heart if God said to us, 'It is true, my son, that your breath smells and your rags drip with mud and slime, but we are charitable here and no one will upbraid you with these things, nor draw away from you. Enter into the joy'? Should we not reply, 'With submission, sir, and if there is no objection, I'd rather be cleaned first.' 'It may hurt, you know' - 'Even so, sir.'<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 751

<sup>31</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*. (Orlando, 1964), p.108

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p.109

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

As I have demonstrated, the theology of C.S. Lewis which is conveyed in *Narnia* is corroborated by his other academic writings. However, within *The Chronicles of Narnia* Lewis wrote in contradiction to his own beliefs on the subject of purgatory. This is particularly evident when Tirian is thrown through the stable door after his final battle and he meets the seven friends of Narnia.

Seven Kings and Queens stood before him, all with crowns on their heads and all in glittering clothes, but the Kings wore fine mail as well and had their swords drawn in their hands. Tirian bowed courteously and was about to speak when the youngest of the Queens laughed. He stared hard at her face, and then gasped with amazement, for he knew her. It was Jill: but not Jill as he had last seen her, with her face all dirt and tears and an old drill dress half slipping off one shoulder. Now she looked cool and fresh, as fresh as if she had just come from bathing. And at first he thought she looked older, but then didn't, and he could never make up his mind on that point. And then he saw that the youngest of the Kings was Eustace: but he also was changed as Jill was changed. Tirian suddenly felt awkward about coming among these people with the blood and dust and sweat of a battle still on him. Next moment he realized that he was not in that state at all. He was fresh and cool and clean, and dressed in such clothes as he would have worn for a great feast at Cair Paravel.<sup>34</sup>

Here Tirian, just like Jill and Eustace before him, are clearly and immediately cleansed and clothed in their finest regalia. There was no purgatorial cleansing which precipitated it. This change of opinion from *The Chronicles* and Lewis' academic writing needs addressing. The contemporary Anglican Church of Lewis' time did not adopt an explicit position on purgatory.<sup>35</sup> This ambiguity is what may have caused Lewis to abandon incorporating purgatory into the narrative. Also, in his writings Lewis endeavoured to include aspects of Christianity where there was homogeneity with different denominations.

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<sup>34</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 740

<sup>35</sup> Hinten, M.D., *The Keys to the Chronicles* (Nashville, 2005), p.88

As there was no uniformity in belief in purgatory, Lewis therefore left it out. Lewis stated that "...the Reformers had good reasons for throwing doubt on the 'Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory' as that Romish doctrine had then become... [degraded]."<sup>36</sup> From the time of Dante's *Purgatorio*, where Purgatory had changed from being a place where people already saved were being cleansed, it had become a temporary hell in Thomas More's *Supplication of Souls* in the sixteenth century.<sup>37</sup> Lewis also attacked Catholic Bishop of Rochester John Fisher's Sermon on Psalm VI where those in Purgatory are punished so badly that they forget God due to their torture. Lewis had issue with Fisher's Purgatory as it was no longer a place of purification; instead it was a place of punishment.

A modern tends to see purgatory through the eyes of Dante, so seen, the doctrine is profoundly religious. That purification must, in its own nature, be painful, we hardly dare to dispute. But in Fisher that pain seems to have no intrinsic connection with the purification at all; it is a pain which, while it lasts, separates us from God.<sup>38</sup>

Lewis noted in his academic writings that Dante's purgative pains seem to have become merely retributive in Fisher. After rejecting More and Fisher's views Lewis continues to commend the work of Newman in *Dreams*. "The right view returns magnificently in Newman's *Dreams*" while continuing with praise for Newman's portrayal of the saved soul as begging to be cleansed, since it "cannot bear for a moment longer 'With its darkness to affront that light'."<sup>39</sup> Incidentally, this last line

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<sup>36</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*. (Orlando, 1964), p.110

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p.108

<sup>38</sup> Lewis, C.S., *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century: Excluding Drama*. (Oxford, 1973), p.163

<sup>39</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*. (Orlando, 1964), p.108

which is borrowed from Milton, explicates what he takes to be the cardinal shift that Newman represents: “Religion has reclaimed Purgatory.”<sup>40</sup>

As Lewis was aware that *The Chronicles of Narnia* were being read by a younger audience of different faith traditions, he probably excluded assimilating a purgatorial doctrine as it was nonessential and also as it could possibly be in conflict with the theology of many reader’s parents. This meant excluding biblical descriptions on purgatory like those from 2 Maccabees 12:39-46 which describes the actions of those still living who believe in something like purgatory.<sup>41</sup> 2 Maccabees is where a biblical basis for purgatory is found, but for Anglicans and other Protestants, the books of Maccabees are Apocryphal and therefore not part of their Old Testament canon.

With regards to heaven, during Lewis’ time, many people did not want to speak about it. In his chapter from *Weight of Glory* “Learning in War-Time” Lewis writes that many people did not like to talk about the idea of Heaven and Hell, even in a sermon.<sup>42</sup> But as the source of Christian teaching on the subject is Jesus, Heaven must be reckoned with.<sup>43</sup> One of the difficulties people at the time had with Heaven

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Walls, J., *Purgatory: The Logic of Total Transformation*. (Oxford, 2012), p.166

<sup>41</sup> 2 Maccabees 12:39-46 “And the day following Judas came with his company, to take away the bodies of them that were slain, and to bury them with their kinsmen, in the sepulchres of their fathers. And they found under the coats of the slain some of the donaries of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbiddeth the Jews: Then they all blessed the just judgment of the Lord, who had discovered the things that were hidden. And so betaking themselves to prayers, they besought him, that the sin which had been committed might be forgotten. But the most valiant Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they saw before their eyes what had happened, because of the sins of those that were slain. And making a gathering, he twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, (For if he had not hoped that the that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead,) And because he considered that the who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.”

<sup>42</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Weight of Glory*. (New York, 2001), p.48

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

was the biblical imagery used to describe it. According to Lewis in *Mere Christianity*:

There is no need to be worried by facetious people who try to make the Christian hope of "Heaven" ridiculous by saying they do not want "to spend eternity playing harps." The answer to such people is that if they cannot understand books written for grown-ups, they should not talk about them. All the scriptural imagery (harps, crowns, gold, etc.) is, of course, a merely symbolical attempt to express the inexpressible. Musical instruments are mentioned because for many people (not all) music is the thing known in the present life which most strongly suggests ecstasy and infinity. Crowns are mentioned to suggest the fact that those who are united with God in eternity share His splendour and power and joy. Gold is mentioned to suggest the timelessness of Heaven (gold does not rust) and the preciousness of it. People who take these symbols literally might as well think that when Christ told us to be like doves, He meant that we were to lay eggs.<sup>44</sup>

Lewis uses many images to describe Heaven to those not stimulated by the biblical imagery. One of those is of Heaven as the place of the Great Dance. Heaven is where the Master of the dance leads in the revelry, giving himself eternally to his creatures and back to himself in the sacrifice of the Word.<sup>45</sup> The delight of the Great Dance is rigorously unique to the sufferings of our present. While there is joy in the dance, it does not exist for the sake of joy; rather it exists for the sake of God.<sup>46</sup>

Another image Lewis uses for Heaven is a Platonic one. It is one of Heaven as the real world. In *Letters to an American Lady* Lewis wrote:

Think of yourself as a seed patiently waiting in the earth: waiting to come up a flower in the Gardener's good time, up into the real world, the real waking. I suppose that our whole present life looked back on from there, will seem only a drowsy half-waking. We are here in the land of dreams. But cock-crow is coming. It is nearer now than when I began this letter.<sup>47</sup>

The above excerpt is all the more poignant and relevant as it was written five months before Lewis' death.

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<sup>44</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 2002), p.137

<sup>45</sup> Vaus, W., *Mere Theology*. (Illinois, 2004), p. 211

<sup>46</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Problem of Pain*. (New York, 2001), pp 158-159

<sup>47</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Letters to an American Lady*. (Michigan, 1967), p.120

It is this Platonic model of Heaven which Lewis incorporates into the world of Narnia. After Aslan has separated the Narnians to the shadow on His left and the just on His right, He commands the remaining faithful to “Come further in! Come further up!”<sup>48</sup> As they go further up and further in they experience a country which is very familiar to them. They recognise geographical and topographical landmarks of old Narnia, the one which had just been destroyed. Despite the familiarity of these landmarks, they still remain different enough to confuse the protagonists. They all seemed bigger, brighter with the colours more vivid. Farsight the Eagle flies up and confirms that “Narnia is not dead. This is Narnia.”<sup>49</sup> To alleviate their confusion, Lord Digory has an epiphany and explains that the Narnia whose destruction they had just witnessed was not actually the real Narnia:

That [Narnia] had a beginning and an end. It was only a shadow or a copy of the real Narnia which has always been here and always will be here: just as our world, England and all, is only a shadow or copy of something in Aslan's real world. You need not mourn over Narnia, Lucy. All of the old Narnia that mattered, all the dear creatures, have been drawn into the real Narnia through the Door. And of course it is different; as different as a real thing is from a shadow or as waking life is from a dream." His voice stirred everyone like a trumpet as he spoke these words...he added under his breath "It's all in Plato, all in Plato."<sup>50</sup>

It is clear that Lewis works with a ‘new heaven and a new earth’ (Isaiah 65:17, Revelation 21:1 and 2 Peter 3:13) conception of what lies beyond the end, combined with Platonic ideas of shadow and reality (Plato’s ‘Allegory of the Cave’ from *The Republic*). Lewis emphasises the importance of the distinction between ‘reality’ and ‘shadow’. Firstly, in the shadow of Aslan’s left and then by repeatedly using the word “shadow” when differentiating between the real Narnia and the old Narnia

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<sup>48</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p.753

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.759

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

which has been concluded. The characters enter 'Further Up and Further In' into the truer, more perfect Narnia of which the old Narnia was merely a shadow. There they meet up with all the old heroes of Narnia who had died centuries ago including Mr. Tumnus the faun, Caspian, Reepicheep, Puddleglum and the first King and Queen; Frank and Helen. Within the new Narnia they all witness key areas from England. Mr. Tumnus explains that:

That country [England] and this country [Narnia]- all the real countries - are only spurs jutting out from the great mountains of Aslan. We have only to walk along the ridge, upward and inward, till it joins on.<sup>51</sup>

It transpires that the protagonists of Earthly origin get to remain in this new Narnia as they were all victims of a train crash in the old England.

"There was a real railway accident," said Aslan softly. "Your father and mother and all of you are - as you used to call it in the Shadowlands - dead. The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning." And as He spoke He no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I [Lewis] cannot write them.<sup>52</sup>

There is a comparison here with the concluding remarks from John's Gospel "And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written."<sup>53</sup>

In *Weight of Glory* Lewis asserts that the promises of the Bible regarding Heaven may roughly be reduced to five heads. It is promised (1) that we shall be with Christ; (2) that we shall be like Him; (3) with an enormous wealth of imagery, that we shall have "glory"; (4) that we shall, in some sense, be fed or feasted or entertained; and

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 766

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 767

<sup>53</sup> John 21:25

(5) that we shall have some sort of official position in the universe – ruling cities, judging angels, being pillars of God’s temple.<sup>54</sup> Lewis also postulates that Heaven is where we become fully human, a place where we come to the realisation of all that we were created to be. Heaven is the home of humanity, where everything becomes more and more itself. In that sense, Heaven will be truly home as Jewel the Unicorn suggests when he reaches the truer Narnia at the end of *The Last Battle*.<sup>55</sup>

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## 5.6 - LEWIS ON ESCHATOLOGY

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The Oxford English Dictionary defines eschatology as "The department of theological science concerned with ‘the four last things: death, judgement, heaven and hell.’” All four of these *last things* are covered in some manner in *The Last Battle* (though hell is represented as Aslan’s shadow). In regards to the eschatological beliefs of C.S. Lewis himself, as mentioned he did not write a lot on the subject. His primary thoughts on the subject can be found in his essay *The World’s Last Night* found in the book of the same name and deals primarily with the Second Coming of Christ. C.S. Lewis says about Matthew 24:34: (“Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.”)

The apocalyptic beliefs of the first Christians have been proved to be false. It is clear from the New Testament that they all expected the Second Coming in their own lifetime. And, worse still, they had a reason, and one which you will find very embarrassing. Their Master had told them so. He shared, and indeed created, their delusion. He said in so many words, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be done." And He was wrong. He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else. This is certainly the most embarrassing verse in the Bible.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Weight of Glory*. (New York, 2001), p.34

<sup>55</sup> Vaus, W., *Mere Theology*. (Illinois, 2004), p. 219

<sup>56</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The World’s Last Night and Other Essays* (San Diego, 1960), pp 97-98

John Chrysostom, the fourth century Archbishop of Constantinople, held this interpretation from his Homily LXXVII on Matthew 24:

*“Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled!”* All these things. What things? I pray thee. Those about Jerusalem, those about the wars, about the famines, about the pestilences, about the earthquakes, about the false Christs, about the false prophets, about the sowing of the gospel everywhere, the seditions, the tumults, all the other things, which we said were to occur until His coming. How then, one may ask, did He say, “This generation?” Speaking not of the generation then living, but of that of the believers. For He is wont to distinguish a generation not by times only, but also by the mode of religious service, and practice; as when He saith, “This is the generation of them that seek the Lord.”<sup>57</sup>

Lewis’ apologetics on this verse however is that Jesus acknowledged his ignorance in Mark 13:32 (“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, *nor the Son*, but only the Father) and that Jesus’ Matthew 24:34 declaration proves this. In his last interview, Lewis stated his awareness that the world could end at any moment but regardless of this, we should continue in living our Christian lives. That we should live every day as though it were our last while also planning as though it was last another hundred years.<sup>58</sup> The emphasis of Lewis is the abruptness of the end and that we should not be caught out by it.

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## 5.7 - CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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It is clear that for the most part, the eschatological views of C.S. Lewis when describing the culmination of Narnia are taken primarily from the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24 and 25. Perhaps his reason for using Matthew 24 and 25 rather than of the other end time accounts of Revelations, Ezekiel, Isaiah or Daniel is that Matthew 24 and 25 give a more orderly account of the end of days and are less open to personal interpretation. The accounts recorded in other Old Testament books or

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<sup>57</sup> Manley, J., *The Bible and the Holy Fathers for Orthodox*. (New York, 1990), p. 373

<sup>58</sup> Lewis, C.S., *God in the Dock*. (Grand Rapids, 1994), p. 266

Revelations have long been open to interpretation and debate without consensus. Lewis could have been endeavoring to circumvent the debate as to the eschatological structure of events by concentrating instead on Jesus' prophecies in the Olivet Discourse which adherents of the differing views would likely more readily agree upon. As Lewis' intended audience is that of children, the events of Matthew 24 & 25 are more easily digested by less mature readers. Also, as both the academic writings of C.S. Lewis as well as his fictional creation of Narnia highlight his interest being Christocentric, therefore he draws upon Jesus' teachings and conceives of the end of the world more in terms of the Second Coming.

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## CHAPTER 6 - MINOR THEMES

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The major biblical themes of *The Chronicles of Narnia* as shown are ‘Christological’ (Aslan as Jesus), ‘Creation and the Fall of Man’, ‘Echoes of the Trinity’ and ‘Eschatological’. However, there are a few other noteworthy minor biblical themes which permeate the Narnian heptalogy. This chapter will discuss these minor themes.

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### 6.1 - MOSAIC THEMES IN NARNIA

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Unlike Aslan as Jesus, there is no character in *The Chronicles of Narnia* that could be classified as a direct parallel to Moses. The primary candidate who comes closest to Mosaic comparison is that of Shasta from *The Horse and His Boy*. In his book *Narnia: Unlocking the Wardrobe*, Paul Karkainen compared the character of Shasta to that of Moses. His primary reasoning was that Shasta’s journey from Calormen through the desert towards the ‘promised land’ of Narnia parallels that of Moses and the Israelites in Exodus.<sup>1</sup> Also, while crossing the desert, the children of Israel were guided by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21-22), similarly for Karkainen, Shasta is given directions for finding his way through the desert; his pillar is the double peak of Mount Pire.<sup>2</sup> However, there are certain scenes from the patriarch’s life which are incorporated in a variety of other Narnian protagonists which Karkainen does not reference.

Within the characters of both Shasta and Moses there are quite archetypal themes at work and it should be noted that it is not definitive that Lewis drew his inspiration of the “orphaned hero” of Shasta directly from the biblical Moses. As a classicist

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<sup>1</sup> Karkainen, P.A., *Narnia: Unlocking the Wardrobe*. (Grand Rapids, 2007), p.79

<sup>2</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 237

scholar Lewis was well read in many of the myths and legends of the ancient near east where the theme of the orphaned hero is prevalent. For example, according to Persian legend Cyrus the Great's grandfather Astyages had a dream where his grandson would eventually usurp the throne.<sup>3</sup> Astyages ordered his steward to kill the infant child who was unwilling to slaughter the infant and instead gave him to a herdsman who raised the child as his own son. Eventually the child's noble appearance and behaviour revealed his royal origin. Astyages relented and accepted Cyrus back into the palace where he ultimately took the throne and founded what was to become the Persian Empire.<sup>4</sup> In *The Horse and His Boy* there was also a prophecy about the primary protagonist of Shasta when he was an infant that eventually he would protect Archenland, the neighboring country of Narnia, from a great evil. This prophecy causes Archenland's enemies to kidnap Shasta, take him out to sea where he is pursued by his father King Lune. The enemies then place the baby Shasta on a rowboat with a knight which washes ashore and is later found by the Calormene fisherman Arsheesh who raises Shasta as his son.<sup>5</sup> Shasta is unaware of his royal heritage, believing himself to be Arsheesh's son and a Calormene. This is despite Shasta's blonde hair and blue eyes which are in contrast to the dark hair and skin of the Calormenes.

While Shasta's orphaned hero motif mirrors Cyrus the Great's in regards to prophecy and physical disparity, he also shares his discovery and foreign adoption with that of Moses. Moses is found by the Pharaoh's daughter and raised as her own after the Pharaoh ordered the death of all the new-born males due to the Israelites growing in numbers. Exodus 2:2-4 states:

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<sup>3</sup> How, W. & J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus, Vol. I* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 383-384

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 207

So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months. But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

While in Exodus, the reed basket is watched from afar by Moses' sister Miriam, in *The Horse and His Boy* it is a knight who accompanies Shasta though Aslan later reveals that it was He who pushed the boat in which he lay to shore for a future purpose.<sup>6</sup>

There are many other cases of orphaned heroes throughout myth and legend. In Greek legend it had been prophesied that the son of Priam and Hecuba, Paris, would eventually cause the fall of Troy.<sup>7</sup> Like Cyrus, Paris was handed over to a herdsman for execution who was unable to kill the child himself. Paris was instead abandoned in the wild but was nursed by a mother bear and fed by a woodpecker. When the herdsman returned and found the child well, he brought the child to his wife. Inevitably, Paris' abduction of Helen of Troy instigated the Trojan War and the destruction of Priam's Troy.<sup>8</sup> The Assyrian Semiramis was too abandoned but raised by a shepherd. She grew up to become a warrior queen who conquered large parts of Asia.<sup>9</sup> In Roman mythology Romulus and Remus were kept alive by a wolf before being found by a herdsman and eventually founded the city of Rome.<sup>10</sup> The orphaned hero is also a popular tool of literature. Charles Dickens's 'Oliver Twist' or Pip from 'Great Expectation', Mark Twain's 'Huckleberry Finn' or Charlotte Bronte's 'Jane Eyre' are just a few of the more popular orphans who are the primary protagonists of

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281

<sup>7</sup> Rank, O. *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*. (New York, 1932), pp 15-16

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 32-33

renowned works of literature. Shasta, like Moses and other orphaned heroes all survive their childhood impediments and fulfil their destinies. In his book *Reading with the Heart: The Way Into Narnia*, Peter Schakel agrees that Lewis used what Schakel refers to as the “lost child” motif.<sup>11</sup>

This plot is one frequently used in literature. We recall such examples as the Greek myth of Oedipus, Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*, Henry Fielding’s *Joseph Andrews* and Tom Jones, along with many other plays and novels, as well as the biblical account of Moses.<sup>12</sup>

However, as there are many direct similarities with some Narnian characters and orphaned heroes, it is probable that Lewis, if not exclusively, at least included Moses as his inspiration for them.

There are other more detailed allusions which tie Shasta and Moses together at a more explicit level. In the ‘Burning Bush’ scene of Exodus 3:13-14, Moses has been charged by God to go to Pharaoh so that he may bring God’s people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.

Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

There is a similar scene in *The Horse and His Boy* when Shasta asks the Lion who he is:

"Myself," said the Voice, very deep and low so that the earth shook: and again "Myself", loud and clear and gay: and then the third time "Myself", whispered so softly you could hardly hear it, and yet it seemed to come from all round you as if the leaves rustled with it.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Schakel, P. *Reading with the Heart: The Way Into Narnia*. (Michigan, 2005), p. 83

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 83-84.

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 281

There are comparisons to be made here on the Trinity with Aslan calling Himself “myself” three times in three different manners which was discussed in chapter 4. Mosaically speaking, neither Moses, nor Shasta receives a direct answer to the name which they are seeking but both get, with their respective answers, a demonstration of the power and an indication of the very nature of God or Aslan Himself.

There is another comparison between Moses and Shasta which occurs after the ‘Burning Bush’ narrative of Exodus 3. In Exodus 4:13, Moses said, “O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever else You may send.” Once it is revealed to Shasta that he is in fact Prince Cor of Archenland and heir to the throne as the oldest of twin boys, Shasta says "But I don't want it" to which King Lune replies “Tis no question what thou wantest, Cor, nor I either. Tis in the course of law.”<sup>14</sup> Both Shasta (Cor) and Moses would prefer not to undertake their callings but would rather they were passed on to their brothers of Corin and Aaron respectively. Once their charge is accepted however, Shasta and Moses aid in the deliverance of their people from a momentous threat. However, this resistance or sense of inadequacy in the face of a call is actually very prominent in prophetic call narratives and it is not definite that Lewis based Shasta’s reluctance on that of Moses’ specifically. In Jeremiah 1 when God informs Jeremiah that “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations”, Jeremiah replied “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.”<sup>15</sup> While both Shasta and Moses share a premise of the reluctant hero, it is a theme which is common within the Old Testament and it cannot be guaranteed that it is Mosaic in origin for *The Horse and His Boy*.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp 309 -310.

<sup>15</sup> Jeremiah 1:4-6

Outside of Shasta in *The Horse and His Boy*, other Narnian characters exhibit Mosaic themes. In Exodus 2:11-12 when Moses was an adult, aware of his heritage (in contrast to Shasta), he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, so looking this way and that way and seeing no one; he killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand. In *The Last Battle*, King Tirian goes to Lantern Waste to check on his Narnian subjects. Once there, both Tirian and his companion Jewel the unicorn come across two Calormenes who had harnessed and were beating a Talking Horse. Overcome with rage when they realised that the Horse was one of their fellow Narnians, they rushed forward together and both the Calormenes lay dead. One beheaded by Tirian's sword and the other gored through the heart by Jewel's horn.<sup>16</sup> The similarities of both accounts are evident. The Israelites and Narnians had both become enslaved by a foreign power. Tirian and Moses witnessed one of the slave-drivers beating one of their fellow countrymen. Both fly into a rage and kill the respective slave-driver(s) which resulted in both protagonists having to flee for their lives.

Another possible Mosaic comparison is from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. After Aslan is killed on the Stone Table by Queen Jadis, the Table is cracked in two when Aslan is resurrected. The significance of the breaking of the Stone Table was discussed in chapter 2 but in a possible secondary meaning, it could also represent the Stone Tablets of the Decalogue which Moses carried. The Stone Table and the Stone Tablets could represent the Deeper Magic and the Law respectively.

While there is not an absolute symbol of Moses in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, it can be argued that Shasta comes closest. Shasta and Moses were both sent away from

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<sup>16</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 680

their families at birth for protection and are found floating by the shore. Moses was found in a reed basket with his watchful sister nearby while Shasta was found in a boat with a dead Archenland knight who died to protect him. Both fled from the countries in which they had grown; Shasta from Calormen and Moses from Egypt. Finally, each of them delivered their true countries / peoples of Archenland and Israel from the harm of Calormen and Egypt respectively. There are other Mosaic themes throughout the Narnian books as outlined above with scenes in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Last Battle* also. Yet as I have outlined, the theme of the orphaned hero is prevalent in ancient myth and legend as well as English literature. Consequently it is not ascertainable if Lewis adapted Mosaic themes in his portrayal of Shasta directly or whether they were general familiar themes from his own predilection for mixing myth and legend. Given that Lewis has indeed implemented key biblical themes and imagery into the world and characters of others in the Narnian Chronicles; it is probable that Moses was at least included as the basis for some of the scenes listed above.

As I have mentioned in Chapter 4 under the subheading ‘Myself’, when returning to Earth, Jill asks Aslan “are you coming with us” to which he replies “They shall see only My back.”<sup>17</sup> In Exodus 33:18 Moses asks God to “Please, show me Your glory” to which God replies in verses 22-23: “So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and *you shall see My back*; but My face shall not be seen.”<sup>18</sup> This is another Mosaic theme with Aslan in the role of God the Father. David Downing in *Into the Wardrobe* also believes that Aslan’s exchange

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<sup>17</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 662

<sup>18</sup> *Italics Added*

with Jill has echoes of Exodus 33:22-23 though he only makes a passing reference to it.<sup>19</sup>

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## 6.2 - REMEMBERING COMMANDMENTS

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In *The Silver Chair* Jill pole is met by Aslan as soon as she enters Narnia and is commanded to memorize four essential signs that will assist Eustace and her during their eventual quest for the missing prince Rilian of Narnia. Aslan stresses the importance of memorizing the signs to Jill stipulating:

...remember, remember, remember the Signs. Say them to yourself when you wake in the morning and when you lie down at night. And whatever strange things may happen to you, let nothing turn your mind from following the Signs . . . Take great care [the Narnian air] does not confuse your mind. And the Signs which you have learned here will not look at all as you expect them to look, when you meet them there. This is why it is so important to know them by heart and pay no attention to appearances. Remember the Signs and believe the Signs. Nothing else matters.<sup>20</sup>

Here Lewis is evidently alluding to Deuteronomy 6:6-9:

And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. And you shall write them on the door posts of your house and gates.

What is also significant is that the text from Deuteronomy 6 occurs after the experiences at Mount Horeb (Mt. Sinai) are recalled, with the delivering of the Decalogue. The signs are given to Jill on 'Aslan's Mountain' denoting a Sinaic correlation.

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<sup>19</sup> Downing, D.C., *Into the Wardrobe: C. S. Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles*. (San Francisco, 2008), p. 172

<sup>20</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 560

Lewis was fully aware of the struggles of resisting temptation:

Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. ... We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it: and Christ, because He was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows to the full what temptation means—the only complete realist.<sup>21</sup>

Several times in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, characters are faced with temptation. It is a theme which occurs throughout the series with some succumbing to it and others resisting. As covered in chapter 3 – ‘Narnia and Genesis 1 to 3’ Digory Kirke is tempted to eat of the apple which would provide life and take some to his dying mother, a temptation which he overcomes. In *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* Queen Jadis, now known as the White Witch, tries again with Edmund Pevensie, this time more successfully. As shown earlier, in *The Magician's Nephew*, Lewis' use of the biblical theme of temptation is drawn from Genesis 1-3 and incorporating elements of John 10, probably mediated via Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* he utilises the New Testament as his primary basis by incorporating the narratives of the temptation of both Jesus and Judas.

When Edmund first enters Narnia, the first person he meets is Queen Jadis. She wants him to bring his siblings to Narnia as there is prophecy which tells that her destruction will come at the hands of two sons of Adam and two daughters of Eve. She tempts Edmund with the promise of ruling Narnia as her adopted son, a temptation which appeals to Edmund as he already feels subjugated to the rule of his

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<sup>21</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity* (New York, 1984), p. 142

older brother Peter.<sup>22</sup> Proverbs 16:18 warns that “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” and it is Edmund’s pride which leads to his succumbing to temptation. Jadis gives Edmund some enchanted Turkish delight which he is unable to resist. "At first Edmund tried to remember that it was rude to speak with one's mouth full, but soon he forgot about this and thought only of trying to shovel down as much Turkish Delight as he could, and the more he ate the more he wanted to eat..."<sup>23</sup> This passage echoes not only the concept of Eve yielding to the temptation of eating from the tree of knowledge, but also to the New Testament doctrine of Paul in Philippians 3:18-19: "...many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.”

The lure of power is also a component in the temptation narrative of Jesus being tempted by Satan in the desert in Matthew 4:8-9 (cf. Luke 4: 5-7): "The devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.” All this I will give you," he said, "if you bow down and worship me." Both Satan and the Jadis tempt Jesus and Edmund respectively with power in exchange for service. The only difference is that Edmund acquiesced to the offer. As well as acceding to these numerous temptations offered, Edmund is also persuaded to not divulge his knowledge of Queen Jadis to his siblings and as a result ends up lying to them about his discovery of, and his venture into Narnia: "Lucy and I have been playing -- pretending that all her story about a country in the wardrobe is true."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 126

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p.125

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.129

Edmund represents the most relevant characteristic of Judas as that of the betrayer. He agrees to deliver his siblings to her, even abandoning them when the four return to Narnia and searching for her castle and more of the enchanted Turkish delight. Eventually Edmund is rescued by Aslan's forces and the ramifications of this are covered in chapter 2.

*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* has several temptation scenes. Lucy and the magician's Book of Spells which includes "An infallible spell to make beautiful her that uttereth it beyond the lot of mortals" and the lust for gold between Prince Caspian and Edmund were both covered in chapter 2 under the subheading 'Brief Appearances of Aslan'. In that section I have shown how each protagonist is awoken from their temptation by the appearance of Aslan. Regarding Caspian and Edmund and the discovery of the gold pool, Marvin Hinten in *The Keys to the Chronicles* is "reminded of the famous Scripture that "the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10)." <sup>25</sup> Interestingly, the less famous preceding verse is also relevant to that scene for Hinten which states that "...they what will be rich fall into temptation and a snare...which drown[s] men in destruction." <sup>26</sup> In the scene from *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Lord Restimar had actually drowned in the gold pool before being turned to gold. After coming to this realization, Edmund warns everyone to withdraw from the pool as "it can drown them in destruction" Hinten finds this "an interesting piece of wordplay, if this was Lewis intention." <sup>27</sup>

The primary section of the narrative from *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* which is overflowing with biblical themes and imagery including temptation is the undragoning scene with Eustace. The opening line of *The Voyage of the Dawn*

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<sup>25</sup> Hinten, M.D., *The Keys to the Chronicles*. (Nashville, 2005), p.39

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

*Treader* is well known by fans of Lewis. “There was a boy called Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and he almost deserved it.”<sup>28</sup> Eustace is first introduced in *Dawn Treader* as a tiresome, bullying, tedious sort of a child. He is the complete opposite of his cousins (and former king and queen of Narnia) Lucy and Edmund Pevensie. During his first excursion into Narnia he at first proves to be an obstacle into the endeavours of the eponymous ship’s crew. He is self-centred, bossy, constantly complains and insults those on board and by chapter five of the book he is merely tolerated by the crew. It is during chapter five however that his demeanour changes.

The *Dawn Treader* goes through a violent storm and takes refuge on an island to repair the ship, replace the mast and restock lost supplies. In an attempt to avoid hard work, Eustace wanders off and finds a cave and it is here that the crux of the story takes place. Eustace finds himself in a cave which is later revealed to be the lair of a dragon. He drinks from the dragon’s pool and discovers its hoard of treasure. Thoughts of wealth and retribution against his shipmates consume him and he places a diamond bracelet over his forearm before falling asleep thinking greedy selfish thoughts. When he awakens he finds that these tempting thoughts have transpired to metamorphose Eustace into a dragon himself. This is comparable to Fáfnir, son of the dwarf king Hreidmar of Norse mythology who also turned into a dragon due to greed.<sup>29</sup> However, for the purpose of this dissertation I will concentrate on the Christian parallels. When he is reunited with the rest of the crew, dragon-Eustace begins to see how bad his previous behavior was. He becomes a more beneficial member of the voyage’s complement by bringing a tall pine to replace the broken

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<sup>28</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 425

<sup>29</sup> Byock, J.L., *Saga of the Volsungs: The Norse Epic of Sigurd the Dragon Slayer*. (Los Angeles, 1990), pp 57-64

mast and gathering wild animals to replenish the ship's food supply. As his behavior changes, so does the crew's opinion of him.

Lord Octesian's diamond bracelet which had fitted easily over his arm as a boy was causing Eustace considerable pain as a large dragon. The pain caused fitful sleep and one night he awoke to find Aslan in front of him. Aslan led him to a garden up on the mountains and told him to bathe in a pool but first to undress. Eustace "started scratching himself and his scales began coming off all over the place."<sup>30</sup> Three times he does this and three times the scales fall off but he still remained a dragon until Aslan painfully rips into Eustace's skin and removes all the ugly layers leaving him a human boy again.<sup>31</sup> Then Aslan catches Eustace who "didn't like that much for [he] was very tender underneath now that [he had] no skin on" and threw him into the water.<sup>32</sup> When Eustace comes from the water he is a boy again. This is a dramatic Narnian portrayal of Christian baptism. Lewis himself says that there are three things that spread the Christ-life to us: baptism, belief and Holy Communion.<sup>33</sup> Eustace is essentially baptised by Aslan. Eustace's attitude continues to improve after this experience and "he began to be a different boy."<sup>34</sup> It can be said that the dragon experience was his "Road to Damascus" moment.

In this account, in addition to the sacramental imagery, I also discern echoes from the book of Acts. In Paul's Damascus conversion, he loses his sight after meeting Jesus. Paul continues to Damascus where Ananias had been instructed to seek out Saul of Tarsus. Ananias lays hands on Saul and "immediately there fell from his eyes *something like scales*, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was

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<sup>30</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York, 2001), p. 474

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 474-475

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 475

<sup>33</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity* (New York, 1984), p. 62

<sup>34</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York, 2001), p. 476

baptised” (Acts 9:18 emphasis added). Immediately after, Saul, now Paul, goes into the synagogue and preaches Jesus as Lord (Acts 9:20). Both Eustace and Paul had life-changing encounters with Aslan/Christ and were never the same afterwards. They both had scales removed, were baptised and went on to become heroes of Narnia and the Early Church respectively. While this section of the narrative is instigated by temptation, it evolves into a story which is full of Scriptural and sacramental imagery.

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## MISCELLANEOUS THEMES

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Now that I have catalogued and analysed both the major and minor biblically-inspired themes in *The Chronicles of Narnia* I will now list the subtler biblical themes and references. These are the items in Lewis heptalogy that are too short to be included in the earlier chapters but are relevant nonetheless.

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### 6.4 - COMMUNION/EUCHARIST IN NARNIA

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As mentioned earlier, Lewis says that there are three things that spread the Christ-life to us: baptism, belief and Holy Communion.<sup>35</sup> *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is the most sacramentally themed books of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. First, Eustace was baptised by Aslan in the pool, all the characters believe in Aslan and in chapter thirteen there is a scene which represents Communion. Earlier in the book, Lucy had observed that Coriakin the magician, who was a retired star “drank only wine and ate only bread.”<sup>36</sup> Later, the crew come to the Island of the Star on the periphery of “Aslan’s Country.” While they are there they come across:

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<sup>35</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity* (New York, 1984), p. 62

<sup>36</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York, 2001), p. 500

...a long table laid with a rich crimson cloth that came down nearly to the pavement. At either side of it were many chairs of stone richly carved and with silken cushions upon the seats. But on the table itself there was set out such a banquet as had never been seen, not even when Peter the High King kept his court at Cair Paravel.

The stone table, later revealed as Aslan's Table, is covered with a crimson cloth which can indicate royalty or also the blood of Aslan and Christ.<sup>37</sup> At the head of the Table are three Narnian Lords who have been in an enchanted sleep for decades. Furthermore, on the Table is The Knife of Stone which is revealed to be the weapon used by Queen Jadis to kill Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The significance of the inclusion of the Knife is that with it, Lewis is invoking 1 Corinthians 11:26 from the Authorised Version. This states that by partaking in Communion, "ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." The stone knife physically shows the death of Aslan and as 1 Corinthians 11 is about conduct at the Lord's Supper, the significance of the Knife's inclusion is evident.

It is later revealed that the enchanted sleep came upon the Narnian Lords after they got into a fight with each other and one of them took the Knife, not knowing what it was or what it represented, to attack his companions. Here again Lewis is invoking a literal reading of the biblical text of 1 Corinthians 11:29-30 (KJV) "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning the Lord's body*. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, *and many sleep*."<sup>38</sup> The Narnian Lords do not treat Aslan's Table, the Stone Knife or the banquet upon it worthily, and as a result they all fall into a mysterious sleep.

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 517

<sup>38</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:29-30 Emphasis added.

While Lewis did not write much on the sacraments, what he did write stressed their importance; especially that of Communion. “Communion is holy, for in it Christ *vere latitat* the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden.<sup>39</sup> The importance of Communion and the reverence it must be afforded from 1 Corinthians 11 are acted out quite literally in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

In the ensuing narrative of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Lewis alludes to several other biblical themes and imagery. It transpires that the island is home to an old man, who is another fallen star called Ramandu, and his daughter. It is disclosed to the Narnians that the food on Aslan’s Table is “eaten, and renewed every day” by birds, large and white, which came from the Sun.<sup>40</sup> While the birds may represent angelic beings, the food being renewed every day echoes the manna from Heaven from Exodus 16. Also,

Lucy...saw one bird fly to the Old Man [Ramandu] with something in its beak that looked like a little fruit, *unless it was a little live coal*, which it might have been, for it was too bright to look at. And the bird *laid it in the Old Man's mouth*.<sup>41</sup>

This is similar to Isaiah 6:6-7 (KJV) “Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a *live coal* in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: *And he laid it upon my mouth...*”<sup>42</sup>

Bruce Edwards in *C.S. Lewis: Fantasist, Mythmaker, and Poet* also views ‘Aslan’s Table’ as the Lord’s Table and the scene is indicative of Holy Communion.<sup>43</sup> The banquet at Aslan’s Table on Ramandu’s Island represents the Eucharist and draws

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<sup>39</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Weight of Glory* (New York, 1963), p. 19

<sup>40</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York, 2001), pp 518, 521

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 521 *Emphasis added*

<sup>42</sup> Isaiah 6:6-7 *Emphasis added*

<sup>43</sup> Edwards, B., *C.S. Lewis: Fantasist, Mythmaker, and Poet* (New York, 2007), p.77

upon 1 Corinthians 11; however in typical Lewisian fashion he has also incorporated other biblical themes and imagery into the narrative.

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#### 6.5 - PRIDE

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In *A Horse and His Boy*, Calormen, under the rule of Rabadash, plan to attack Archenland. Shasta flees to Archenland and warns King Lune of the impending assault. The Northern alliance of Archenland and Narnia are victorious over the Calormenes and Rabadash is captured. King Lune offers to free Rabadash on certain conditions which are rejected before they are heard. Aslan then appears and warns Rabadash "Take heed. Your doom is very near, but you may still avoid it. Forget your pride (what have you to be proud of?) and your anger (who has done you wrong?) and accept the mercy of these good kings."<sup>44</sup> Rabadash rejects this further warning and turns into a donkey. After this Aslan says to the donkey:

"Justice shall be mixed with mercy. You shall not always be an Ass." ... "You have appealed to Tash," said Aslan. "And in the temple of Tash you shall be healed. You must stand before the altar of Tash in Tashbaan at the great Autumn Feast this year and there, in the sight of all Tashbaan, your ass's shape will fall from you and all men will know you for Prince Rabadash. But as long as you live, if ever you go more than ten miles away from the great temple in Tashbaan you shall instantly become again as you now are. And from that second change there will be no return."<sup>45</sup>

Rabadash's pride results in his transformation into an animal. Similarly, in Daniel 4 King Nebuchadnezzar is turned into an animal by God due to his pride.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 306

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 30--308

<sup>46</sup> Daniel 4: 28-33 "At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his

Nebuchadnezzar only becomes a man again once he humbles himself and praises God. Bruce Edwards in *C.S. Lewis: Fantastist, Mythmaker, and Poet* states that “Rabadash learns humility by being turned into a donkey, in an episode reminiscent of the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar in the biblical book of Daniel.”<sup>47</sup> Marvin Hinten in *The Keys to the Chronicles* also makes the parallels with Rabadash and Nebuchadnezzar while stipulating that “although the biblical text does not specify an animal body for Nebuchadnezzar, many readers have inferred the form of an ass.”<sup>48</sup>

However, the story of Rabadash also has parallels with *The Metamorphoses of Apuleius*, which St. Augustine referred to as *The Golden Ass (Asinus aureus)*.<sup>49</sup> Lewis was very familiar with the tale as his novel *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* (1956) is a retelling of the Greek myth of Cupid and Psyche, which itself is based on a chapter of *The Golden Ass* of Apuleius. In this story, Lucius, who is trying to learn magic, turns himself into an ass while attempting to transform into a bird. Through eleven books, Lucius is involved in a series of adventures as he endeavors to regain human form.<sup>50</sup> In the final book of the series, Lucius goes to the Temple of Isis and after a series of initiations he is returned to his true form.<sup>51</sup> The main difference between Rabadash and Lucius is that the latter turns himself into an ass himself.

In her dissertation *Transformation as Disease, Reincorporation as Cure: A Comparative Case-Study of Apuleius’ Metamorphoses & C.S. Lewis’ The Horse and*

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body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws.”

<sup>47</sup> Edwards, B., *C.S. Lewis: Fantastist, Mythmaker, and Poet* (New York, 2007), p.77

<sup>48</sup> Hinten, M.D., *The Keys to the Chronicles* (Nashville, 2005), p.65

<sup>49</sup> St. Augustine. *The City of God*. (London, 2003), Book 18:18.

<sup>50</sup> Apuleius. *The Golden Ass or A Book of Changes*. Translated by Joel C. Relihan. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2007.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

*His Boy*, Midori E. Hartman draws parallels with Rabadash and Lucius.<sup>52</sup> Hartman's dissertation analysed the elements of congruity between the tales of Lucius and Rabadash, namely: (1) the disregard of a superior's warnings (Byrrhena and Aslan); (2) the "sin" of a personal lack of control (*curiositas*, pride) that leads to asinine metamorphosis; and (3) the reversal of metamorphosis through public religious ritual, thus resulting in a re-establishment in society with a new status (priesthood or eternal connection to the temple/deity).<sup>53</sup> Hartman believes that asinine transformation is a form of punishment that is often seen in literature and highlights its presence in other works like Carlo Collodi's *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1883) where Pinocchio is himself turned into a donkey. With regards to Nebuchadnezzar, Hartman does not find this to be a case of asinine transformation.

Though not a case of asinine transformation, God's punishment of King Nebuchadnezzar's Daniel 4 can be a symbolic example of it. Due to his arrogance, Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom is taken from him, he is driven from men to live with the field animals to "feed on grass like oxen"; such a punishment can be seen echoed in Rabadash's transformation.<sup>54</sup>

Nevertheless, throughout the heptalogy Lewis illustrates the danger of pride; Proverbs 16:18 states that "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Calamity accompanies every Narnian character who is prideful. Rabadash is turned into a donkey. Queen Jadis destroys Charn due to her pride, Edmund betrays his siblings due to his pride. The dwarves from *The Last Battle* do not experience the same glorious afterlife of the humble as they are "so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out."<sup>55</sup> Several characters in *The Horse and His Boy* engage in

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<sup>52</sup> Hartman, M.E. (2010) *Transformation as Disease, Reincorporation as Cure: A Comparative Case-Study of Apuleius' Metamorphoses & C.S. Lewis' The Horse and His Boy*, unpublished thesis (M.A.), University of British Columbia.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 748, Emphasis added.

prideful thoughts or actions. Bree, a talking Narnian warhorse is extremely mindful of how he looks; as he journeys towards Narnia he incessantly ensures he acts and talks in a manner suited to a warhorse of Narnian heritage. Aravis, a runaway Calormene princess, has an exceptionally lofty opinion of herself and her status. As she comes from royalty, Aravis insists on respect from those around her (whom she believes are under her). Aravis initially escaped from her home by drugging her stepmother's slave and was unremorseful of it. Later in the story (Chapter 14: 'How Bree Became a Wiser Horse') both Bree and Aravis are chastised by Aslan for their prideful thoughts and actions.

"Aslan," said Bree in a shaken voice, "I'm afraid I must be rather a fool."  
"Happy the Horse who knows that while he is still young. Or the Human either. Draw near, Aravis my daughter. See! My paws are velvety. You will not be torn this time."  
"This time, sir?" said Aravis.  
"It was I who wounded you," said Aslan. "I am the only lion you met in all your journeyings. Do you know why I tore you?"  
"No, sir."  
"The scratches on your back, tear for tear, throb for throb, blood for blood, were equal to the stripes laid on the back of your stepmother's slave because of the drugged sleep you cast upon her. You needed to know what it felt like."<sup>56</sup>

C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity* called pride 'The Great Sin' from which all other sins emanate:

The essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere flea bites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 299.

<sup>57</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 1952), pp 121-122

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## 6.6 - WATER WHICH QUENCHES THIRST

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Also from *The Silver Chair*, after Jill is separated from Eustace she finds that she is “dying of thirst.” She follows the sound of running water and comes upon a stream though is scared to drink from there is a large beside it. Three times the lion beckons Jill with "If you're thirsty, you may drink." As Jill is scared she says "I suppose I must go and look for another stream then." "There is no other stream," said the Lion.<sup>58</sup> Jill went forward to the stream, knelt down, and began scooping up water in her hand. It was the coldest, most refreshing water she had ever tasted. You didn't need to drink much of it, for it quenched your thirst at once.<sup>59</sup> The biblical inspiration from this scene could come from any number of biblical texts:

- Isaiah 55:1 “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters.”
- John 4:14 “...but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.”
- John 6:35 “And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”
- John 7:37 “...Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.”
- 1 Corinthians 10:4 “...and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.”

Also Aslan’s response to Jill that "There is no other stream" parallels Acts 4:12 “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

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## 6.7 - CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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While there are many major themes in *The Chronicles of Narnia* which have been discussed in previous chapters, Lewis also adapted minor themes in his heptalogy. Mosaic themes, temptation, pride and the sacraments (especially the importance of

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<sup>58</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), pp 557-558

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 558

Holy Communion) are all prevalent throughout the series. Lewis did not view any theme from the Bible to be too small in scale to be incorporated into his fêted work.

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## CHAPTER 7 – LEWIS’ USE OF THE BIBLE: APPROACH, STANCE AND FILTER

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In this dissertation I have demonstrated that C.S. Lewis used the biblical text as a source in the creation of the themes, imagery, plot and characters in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. This penultimate chapter will catalogue the manner in which C.S. Lewis uses the biblical material. In order to accomplish this I will be utilising the language suggested by Dr. Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg in her book *Sustaining Fictions: Intertextuality, Midrash, Translation, and the Literary Afterlife of the Bible*; namely ‘Approach’, ‘Stance’ and ‘Filter’. This chapter will also show how Lewis employs allusion and narrativisation of biblical texts when telling the story of his fantasy world of Narnia.

There are many ways in which to use biblical texts in the production of a new text. This process started even before the biblical canon as we have it was completed. For example, in the Old Testament when the writer of the book of Joshua wanted to convey the eponymous hero as the natural successor of the Israelites, he compared him to Moses by describing him leading people across a body of water on dry ground (cf. Exodus 14:1-31 and Joshua 3:14-17), experiencing appearances of God's messenger (cf. Exodus 3:2, 14:19 and Joshua 5:13-15) and facing a people with hardened hearts (cf. Exodus 4:21 and Joshua 11:20) among other comparisons. Similarly, in the New Testament when the writer of Matthew wanted to highlight Jesus as a leader, teacher and saviour, he too compared him to Moses by having him survive a ‘Massacre of the Innocents’ (cf. Exodus 1:8-2:10 and Matthew 2:16–18) and give a new law on the Sermon on the Mount which echoes Moses’ receiving of

the Law on Mount Sinai (cf. Exodus 19-23 and Matthew 7-10). The Evangelist also arranged the teaching of Jesus into five blocks within the Gospel to reflect the five books of Moses.<sup>1</sup> The Bible is full of what Michael Fishbane calls inner-biblical retellings. He claims that it is “the essence of the biblical texts to be reinterpreted.”<sup>2</sup> However, as the biblical canon is closed, meaning that the Bible can no longer be re-edited or redacted, the stories and characters of the Bible are retold from without (rather than within).

Pulitzer Prize winning author Marilynne Robinson in a *New York Times* article titled ‘The Book of Books: What Literature Owes the Bible’ said that: “The Bible is the model for and subject of more art and thought than those of us who live within its influence, consciously or unconsciously, will ever know.”<sup>3</sup> The Bible is a book-making book. That is, it is literature which inspires literature. One of the examples of biblically inspired literature where stories and characters of the Bible are retold ‘from without’ which I have already highlighted is John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* which was published in the late seventeenth century. Another work of literature which is inspired by the Bible is *East of Eden* (1952) by John Steinbeck. This is a retelling of the story of Cain and Abel set in the Salinas Valley, California, in the early twentieth century. Other examples are more subtle like Herman Melville’s utilization of biblical names and their characteristics of Ishmael, Elijah and Ahab as protagonists and antagonists in *Moby Dick* (1851).

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<sup>1</sup> For a more extensive discussion of the Gospel of Matthew’s comparisons of Jesus and Moses see: Ehrman, B.D., *A Brief Introduction to the New Testament*. (New York, 2004) pp 81-97

<sup>2</sup> Michael Fishbane, “Inner Biblical Exegesis: Types and Strategies of Interpretation in Ancient Israel,” in *Midrash and Literature*, eds. G.H. Hartman and S. Budick, 19-37 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

<sup>3</sup> Robinson, Marilynne. (2011) ‘The Book of Books: What Literature Owes the Bible, *The New York Times* [online], 22 Dec, available: [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/25/books/review/the-book-of-books-what-literature-owes-the-bible.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/25/books/review/the-book-of-books-what-literature-owes-the-bible.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0) [accessed 10 March 2013].

What becomes clear from the above examples is the vast range of ways in which the Bible can be used when creating a new text. Within literary circles, words like adaptation, allusion, imitation and influence are used when trying to convey authorial intention when dealing with “retelling” biblical stories or using the biblical text in some way in the construction of new texts. There is no standardised vocabulary which is implemented by authors and literary critics as a way of analysing the relationship between biblically inspired works and their precedent texts. However, in her book *Sustaining Fictions: Intertextuality, Midrash, Translation, and the Literary Afterlife of the Bible*, Dr. Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg attempts to create a standardised vocabulary which can be applied to how works of literature use the Bible.

Dr. Stahlberg is an associate professor of religion & Jewish studies and director of Jewish studies at Colgate University in New York. Her book is a revised version of her doctoral thesis which examines the history of the Hebrew Bible in literature. The book’s primary objective is to cultivate a vocabulary which can be applied by a biblical scholar as a way of defining, in an accurate method, what a later work of literature actually does with the Bible when it retells or reuses it.

The reason why I have chosen the language offered by Dr. Stahlberg above others is that she is one of the few academics who has addressed the issue of standardised or uniform vocabulary when dealing with the subject of allusion in literature. The second and more pertinent reason is that Stahlberg’s standardised vocabulary for ‘retellings’ deals primarily with works of literature which are biblically inspired. As this dissertation seeks to catalogue and analyse the influence of the Bible in C.S. Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Stahlberg’s proposition of a standardised

vocabulary was the most appropriate. Dr. Stahlberg posits that there are three crucial, inextricably related aspects of a retelling. That is ‘approach’, ‘stance’ and ‘filter’.

The first aspect—approach—refers to the ways in which the retelling gains entrance into the telling. More precisely, what elements of the source text does the retelling use? For example, does it borrow a phrase, a character, a plot, or a broad theme? Furthermore, does it elaborate on what was originally an underdeveloped character and/or undermine others? Does it alter the perspective from a first-person to a third-person narrative?<sup>4</sup>

The second aspect—stance—deals with the attitude of the retelling regarding the source text. It is the relationship between the telling and the retelling. How does it treat it? Is it an attempt to increase the reader’s comprehension of it, consequently safeguarding the sensibility of the source text? Or does it endeavour to substitute it, thereby rendering the original invalid or unnecessary?<sup>5</sup> One must also ask does it display the intricacies or intrinsic difficulties of the source text? Does it use the original text in a method that is divergent to its primary purpose and meaning? Is it a parody or homage to the earlier text?

Finally, the third issue—filter—which strives to ascertain the lens through which the retelling views the source text. Is the source text perceived through a specific religious or ideological lens, such as Christianity (as in *The Chronicles of Narnia*) or Marxism (as in *The Grapes of Wrath* 1939)?<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Stahlberg, L.C., *Sustaining Fictions: Intertextuality, Midrash, Translation, and the Literary Afterlife of the Bible*. (New York, 2008), p. 6

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6

<sup>6</sup> Steinbeck, J., *The Grapes of Wrath*. (New York, 2002),

Good, S. *Toward a Marxist Reading of John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath*. (Cork, 2008) is an example of a work which gives a Marxist interpretation of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Stahlberg's aspects of a retelling of "approach", "stance" and "filter" is the vocabulary that I will use as a means of describing, in a precise manner, what C.S. Lewis in *The Chronicles of Narnia* actually does with the biblical text when he reuses it.

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### 7.1 - APPROACH

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As discussed, 'approach' refers to the ways in which the retelling gains entrance into the telling and asks what elements of the source text the retelling uses. Within *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Lewis is using the biblical ideas of Creation, Redemption and Eschatology as some of the primary themes in his own heptalogy.

In approximate terms, within a Christian reading the Bible can be synopsized into four terms: 'Creation', 'Fall', 'Redemption' and 'Restoration'. This system operates as an overarching narrative which represents the entire canonical history. However, it is also repeated on numerous occasions in both individual and corporate levels. Individually the Bible tells of this cycle occurring and reoccurring in the Old Testament history of Israel. God creates Israel as a nation which is eventually enslaved by Egypt. After their deliverance they fall at Sinai when they worship the golden calf. They are redeemed by God's mercy and are restored through the second set of stone tablets which institute the Law. Another example is when God creates David as King of Israel in place of Saul. David falls by sleeping with Bathsheba and having her husband Uriah killed. David is then redeemed after being chastised by the prophet Nathan and finally he is restored to right standing with God and permitted to remain as King. This cycle continues repeatedly throughout the Old Testament when the children of Israel sin against God and His prophets and are exiled only to be redeemed and restored. Corporately, the Bible tells the story of the creation of man

and its subsequent fall from grace in Genesis 1-3. The New Testament then charts mankind's redemption from sin and separation from God by Christ with His death on the cross. It then recounts the promise of our ultimate restoration which will occur with the Parousia in the Book of Revelations.

*The Chronicles of Narnia* is a history of a world which follows this canonical biblical metanarrative in broad outline. Aslan creates the world of Narnia in the first book (chronologically), *The Magician's Nephew*. Digory Kirke is responsible for the introduction of evil into Narnia in the guise of Queen Jadis which results in her ruling the land in a century long winter. This signifies the 'Fall'. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* Aslan redeems the world (as well as the protagonist of Edmund). Finally in *The Last Battle*, Narnia is revealed to be only a "Shadowlands" which was only a signifier of a true Narnia which the inhabitants are brought to upon its conclusion. This represents a 'Restoration', or perhaps better, a 'culmination' in a new Heaven and a new Earth' (cf. Isaiah 65:17, 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1).<sup>7</sup>

*The Magician's Nephew* uses the creation account from the book of Genesis as one means for gaining entrance into the formation of Narnia. Likewise, the Olivet Discourse provides the imagery, plots sequence and some vocabulary for Lewis to literally visualise the destruction of Narnia in its current configuration in *The Last Battle* in a manner similar to that of Earth as prophesied by Christ in the Synoptic Gospels. Those are just two broader themes which Lewis adapts in his Narnian oeuvre. More specifically, Lewis incorporates certain specific phrases from the

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<sup>7</sup> Isaiah 65:17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind."

2 Peter 3:13 "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

Revelation 21:1 "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea."

Bible. This is most notable at the conclusion of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* when the protagonists are exhorted by a Lamb to “Come and have breakfast” mirroring Jesus’ salutation in John 21:12. As I established in chapter two, Lewis appropriated Jesus Christ in his portrayal of the character of Aslan.

This brings up Stahlberg’s question of does the retelling elaborate on what was originally an underdeveloped character and/or undermine others? Lewis has depicted Aslan as the Narnian Christ-figure and while Jesus could not be construed as an underdeveloped character, Lewis has definitely expanded his role in Narnia by combining facets of other members of the Trinity. While it is God who speaks Earth into existence in Genesis 1, it is Aslan, not the Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea, who sings the world of Narnia into being. Here Lewis is employing a Trinitarian reading of the Creation account, as is found in John 1:1-3 where “all things were made through Him [Jesus], and without Him nothing was made that was made.” In Genesis 2:7 it is God who turns Man from the dust of the ground to a living being.<sup>8</sup> This is similar to the awakenings of the animals in *The Magician’s Nephew*:

[when Aslan] opened his mouth... he was breathing out, a long, warm breath; it seemed to sway all the beasts as the wind sways a line of trees...and the deepest, wildest voice they had ever heard was saying: "Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters."<sup>9</sup>

As well as incorporating Old Testament aspects of God, Aslan also epitomises the Holy Spirit. This is especially evident in the several times Aslan imparts bravery to those who follow him e.g. Aslan breathes on Lucy in *The Voyage of the Dawn*

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<sup>8</sup> Genesis 2:7 “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

<sup>9</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), pp 69-70

*Treader* and Susan in *Prince Caspian*.<sup>10</sup> As I have shown in Chapter 4, this is similar to the Holy Spirit imparting bravery to the disciples in Acts 4:29-31. Lewis has a single character – Aslan – for the Christ figure. He uses both Old and New Testament allusions in his depiction of Aslan.

Although he draws upon the Garden of Eden narrative a few times, he uses the themes more broadly, and disperses them across a number of different characters. E.g. both Frank and Digory play an ‘Adamic’ role – with Frank ruling over Narnia and Digory playing out the temptation scene (here Eve’s role has been transposed onto the ‘son of Adam, not ‘daughter of Eve’ and the outcome is different).

With regards to type of allusion, there are four ways that I have determined in which C.S. Lewis used the Bible as a source in which the retelling gains entrance into the telling. They are: verbal allusion, biblical story allusion, narrativisation of biblical texts and general allusions.

The first of these, ‘verbal allusion’, is a direct correlation between dialogue or text from the Bible and the words used in some of the Narnian narratives. Verbal allusion is used several times throughout the stories. At the end of *The Silver Chair*, Eustace and Jill are being sent back to England and Jill asks Aslan “are you coming with us” to which he replies “They [the humans of our world] shall see only My back.”<sup>11</sup> In Exodus 33:18 Moses asks God to “Please, show me Your glory” to which God replies “...I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and *you shall see My back*.” Lewis has Aslan imitate God’s reply to Moses about only His back being visible. By using

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<sup>10</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 511., Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. (New York, 2001), p. 386

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 662

this verbal allusion, Lewis is implying that just as no man shall see God and live (Exodus 33:20) likewise the unqualified from our world cannot see Aslan directly.

Also as I have already mentioned in chapter two, Aslan at the conclusion of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* beckons those who are seeking Him to “Come and eat breakfast” with Him.<sup>12</sup> The accompanying imagery confirms that this is a direct verbal allusion from John 20, and as Aslan appears as a lamb, Lewis is confirming the Christological correlation using biblical dialogue.

These are two examples of literal verbal allusions where Lewis has Aslan quoting the Bible (and the words the Bible ascribes to God / Jesus) verbatim. There are however other verbal allusions which, while not literal, use terminology which is evocative of biblical ideas. For example, when Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane He took with Him Peter, James and John. He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed and said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me” (Matthew 26:38). Aslan, on the way to His death tells Susan and Lucy “I should be glad of company tonight...I am sad and lonely.”<sup>13</sup> The language which Lewis employs evokes comparisons with that of Christ which in both accounts conveys the heaviness of heart at what each counterpart is anticipating they are to be subjected to.

In *The Horse and his Boy*, Bree doubts that Aslan is a real lion so Lewis has Aslan say to Bree “Do not dare not to dare.”<sup>14</sup> He orders Bree to “Touch me. Smell me. Here are my paws, here is my tail, and these are my whiskers.”<sup>15</sup> This mirrors the

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<sup>12</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 540

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 179

<sup>14</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: A Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 299

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

“Incredulity of Thomas” scene from John 20:24-29 “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”<sup>16</sup> The language from the Narnian interpretation of the scene from John 20 highlights that both Jesus and Aslan dare Thomas and Bree respectively to doubt what their senses are telling them. These less exact type of verbal allusion can be called verbal resonances – the words themselves, while not an exact quote, are close enough in meaning and cadence to specific passages in the Bible to call them to mind for the reader.

The second way in which ways C.S. Lewis uses the Bible as a source in *The Chronicles of Narnia* is by alluding to biblical stories, either through copying elements of the plot, similar settings or through comparable characters. On a number of occasions, Lewis takes stories from the bible and places them in his fantasy world. The three prime examples of this would be the creation of Narnian and the temptation scene - both from *The Magician's Nephew* - as well as the death of Aslan from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

According to Genesis 1, God speaks the world into existence through a series marked by “And God said...”; similarly Narnia is orally created through the song of Aslan. Aslan’s song changes twice and vegetation and then animals burst forth from the soil. This is similar to Genesis 1:11 and 24 when God said “Let the earth bring forth...” and the earth brings forth both flora and faunae. Lewis employs a literal reading of Genesis 1 and visualises how it would transpire in his fantasy world. Aslan also imparts sentience to some of the animals he had created by breathing on them. Here Lewis is reworking Genesis 2:7 when "God formed the man from the

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<sup>16</sup> John 20:27

dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being." Lewis is noticeably alluding to biblical stories through replicating elements of the plot of the creation account of Genesis. Similarly, when Aslan appoints Frank and Helen as King and Queen of Narnia, Lewis works in elements of granting dominion similar to those granted to humanity in the creation narratives.

The temptation scene from *The Magician's Nephew* has most of the plot elements of the temptation scene from Genesis 3. They both take place in a new world and specifically a beautiful paradisiac. Both gardens house a Tree of Life and in each version the central character is tempted to disobey their mandate by an evil one who originates from another world. The fundamental modification is that in Lewis' version the hero resists the temptation and carries out his directive obediently.

The death and resurrection scene from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* however is far more faithful in its adaption. Aslan, like Jesus, dies in the place of another. They are both escorted to the location of their death by faithful women. Their death was done in order to fulfil the Law/Deep magic and again it is women who are the first to witness their respective resurrections. The only discrepancy is that while Aslan is resurrected the following morning, Jesus rises three days later. Though it is worth noting that while Jesus is engaging in the Harrowing of Hell the day after His death, Aslan is releasing the captives from Queen Jadis' stronghold the day after his. By adapting the stories in the manner in which he does, Lewis is constructing the story of Narnia by giving scriptural shape to its beginning as well as its redemption. This also serves to establish Aslan as the Christ-figure.

‘Narrativisation of biblical texts’ is the third way in which Lewis uses the Bible as a source in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The primary way in which Lewis utilises non-story biblical discourse is by narrativizing it. The most overt example of this is from *The Last Battle*. Lewis has taken the Olivet Discourse from Matthew 24-25 and re-crafted it as a story. Almost each prediction in Jesus’ prophecy is acted out quite literally in Narnia. When Jesus is asked what will be the sign of His coming and of the end of the age (Matthew 24:3), He responds by prophesying that one of the signs will be that false prophets will arise. In *The Last Battle* Rishda and Ginger the cat both act as false prophets. Jesus also states that a false Christ will be in the “inner room.” Shift the Ape has Puzzle the Donkey dress in a lion skin and pretend to be Aslan all while being kept in the “inner room” of a stable. Also the love of many will grow cold which is visualised in the dwarves who declare that “we are on our own now. No more Aslan, no more Kings...The dwarves are for the dwarves.”<sup>17</sup> All these things which are prophesied to precede the end in our world occur in contemporary Narnia. The final battle which takes place between Tirian’s forces and the Calormenes is abruptly ended. Jesus states that “For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” highlighting the suddenness of the end.<sup>18</sup> In his essay *The World’s Last Night* Lewis repeatedly speaks on the precipitousness of the end of our world and the Second Coming.<sup>19</sup>

During the actual end, Jesus declares that “the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken” in Matthew 24:29 which literally occurs when Aslan calls on Father

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<sup>17</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 707

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 24:27

<sup>19</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The World’s Last Night and Other Essays*. (Orlando, 1987), p. 101

Time to instigate the end. The stars fall from the Narnian sky and the Sun and the Moon join together before Father Time reaches out his giant hand and squeezes them until they are extinguished. Finally, Aslan summons all the inhabitants of Narnia and its surrounding countries from around the realm to assemble to him in order to judge them. The just go to His right and to life while the unjust go to the shadow on His left. In Matthew 25:31-33 Jesus will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the righteous on His right hand, but the unrighteous on the left.

In Jesus' teaching, right after the Son of Man has separated the goats and the sheep in Matthew 25, He explains to the sheep how they are to be judged and tells them that whatever they did for the least of His brethren were acts done for Jesus. Any good thing which was done be it clothing a stranger, feeding him, visiting the sick, were all acts done for Christ.<sup>20</sup> Likewise in Narnia, Lewis introduces the character of Emeth the Calormene who meets Aslan while seeking Tash. This all takes place after the cessation of the old Narnia. Aslan explains to Emeth that he is in right standing with Aslan as any good acts which he had done in the name of Tash are accepted by Aslan. Aslan explains to Emeth that only noble acts are accepted by Aslan regardless of their intended recipient. Likewise unjust acts are only received by Tash.<sup>21</sup> Lewis has imagined what Jesus' Olivet Discourse prophecy would look like in a fantasy world and narrativised it. He includes all the key elements from Matthew 24 and 25 on what precedes the end, how the end will be played out and even how people are to be judged.

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<sup>20</sup> Matthew 25:35-46

<sup>21</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 757

Another example of ‘narrativisation of biblical texts’ is that of celestial bodies partaking in the formation of a new world. In *The Magician’s Nephew* when Aslan is singing Narnia into creation he is joined by a choir of singing stars. Those present felt “quite certain that it was the stars themselves which were singing, and that it was [Aslan] which had made them appear and made them sing.”<sup>22</sup> As I had mentioned in chapter three, this emulates Job 38:7 “when the morning stars sang together” when God laid the foundations of the earth. This example is more the narrativisation of a poetic piece.

The final way in which Lewis used the Bible as a source in *The Chronicles of Narnia* is ‘General Allusions’; something that could be described as “Bible-esque.” One of these is the “Breath of Aslan” which is a motif which permeates the series. Several times throughout the series, Aslan uses his breath or breathes on a character for a variety of differing reasons. In *The Magician’s Nephew* Aslan breathes on the newly created creatures to imbue life upon them.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Aslan again breathes on those turned to stone in Queen Jadis’ castle to restore them to life. In both *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* Aslan breathes on both Susan and Lucy respectively in order to impart courage into them.<sup>24</sup> In *The Silver Chair* Aslan uses his breath to blow Eustace and Jill from Aslan’s mountain to Narnia at the beginning of the tale and then uses the same technique to return them later.<sup>25</sup> The motif of the breath of God recurs throughout the Bible (Genesis 2:7, Job 32:8, Psalm 33:6, Ezekiel 37:5-6, John 20:22 and 2

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<sup>22</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), pp 61-62

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 70

<sup>24</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. (New York, 2001), p. 386, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn-Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 511

<sup>25</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), pp 555-556, 560 & 660

Thessalonians 2:8).<sup>26</sup> The motif of the breath of God and Jesus has different reasons for being used and occurs several times throughout the Bible. It is used to instill life to Adam, to impart the Holy Spirit to Jesus' followers and has power to consume the lawless.

Temptation is another motif which occurs throughout the Bible. There are people who succumbed to temptation like Eve who was tempted to eat the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3. Also, Judas was tempted to betray Jesus in the four canonical Gospel accounts (Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22 and John 18). There are also people who resisted temptation in the Bible; Jesus being the most obvious from the temptation scenes in the desert from the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13 and Luke 4:1-13). Jesus even encouraged believers to pray "lead us not into temptation" in the Lord's Prayer.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, temptation is a motif which reoccurs throughout *The Chronicles of Narnia*. First Edmund succumbs to the temptation of power in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.<sup>28</sup> This results in Aslan having to die to free him from the "wages of sin." Eustace surrenders to the temptation of riches in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and is turned into a dragon. The consequence of which is that Aslan has to painfully tear away his sinful dragon nature quite literally before baptising him in a pool. Contrarily, Digory Kirke resists the temptation of

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<sup>26</sup> Genesis 2:7 "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."

Job 32:8 "But there is a spirit in man, And the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding."

Psalm 33:6 "By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

Ezekiel 37:5-6 "Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.""

John 20:22 "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

2 Thessalonians 2:8 "And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming."

<sup>27</sup> Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4

<sup>28</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 126

Jadis in the Garden from *The Magician's Nephew* to take an apple which would restore life to his ill mother. His obedience ensures her life will continue. Like temptation is a theme within the Bible, it is also a motif which Lewis employs in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Another example of general allusions which Lewis engages is of the divine provision of food. For example, Jesus' feeding of the five thousand is present in all four canonical Gospels (Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:10-17 and John 6:5-15) where Jesus miraculously feeds a multitude. In *The Last Battle* Aslan "raised his head and shook his mane. Instantly a glorious feast appeared...pies and tongues and pigeons and trifles and ices, and each Dwarf had a goblet of good wine in his right hand."<sup>29</sup> Here are echoes of the biblical imagery of Jesus providing food to His followers. Also at the end of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, at Aslan's Table on Ramandu's island food is magically renewed each day by sun-birds. Whatever is not eaten is taken away in an echo of the manna from Heaven from Exodus 16.

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## 7.2 - STANCE

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Stahlberg posits that there are three crucial, inextricably related aspects of a retelling. That is "approach", "stance" and "filter." Having dealt with 'approach' we now move on to 'stance'. In regards to 'stance' Stahlberg asks how the author treats what is being retold. Do they attempt to augment the reader's understanding of the original text, subsequently preserving the sensibility of the source? Or do they attempt to substitute it, thereby leaving the original pointless or unnecessary?<sup>30</sup> The latter point would be something akin to Philip Pullman's fantasy trilogy *His Dark Materials*

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<sup>29</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 747

<sup>30</sup> Stahlberg, L.C., *Sustaining Fictions: Intertextuality, Midrash, Translation, and the Literary Afterlife of the Bible*. (New York, 2008), p. 6

(1995–2000) where many of the characters criticize institutional religion.<sup>31</sup> Pullman has himself acknowledged that his purpose in writing *His Dark Materials* was to reverse Milton's account of a war between Heaven and Hell in *Paradise Lost*, thereby conveying the devil as the hero.<sup>32</sup> In the book's introduction, Pullman adopts Williams Blake's definition of Milton "that he [Pullman] is of the Devil's party and does know it."<sup>33</sup> This is in contrast to Lewis' stance which is never ironic with the subject matter of religion within the Narnian books and the respect with which he holds biblical themes is evident. Despite his reputation, C.S. Lewis never considered himself a biblical scholar and referred to himself as a lay theologian and "a very ordinary layman of the Church of England."<sup>34</sup> As a reader of the Bible, Lewis considered the scriptures as the Word of God,<sup>35</sup> a book that is so thoroughly sacred that it excludes, rather than invites, an aesthetic approach.<sup>36</sup> Lewis therefore took the text as is, that is, as it is laid out from Genesis to Malachi, and Matthew to Revelations. As a result of this stance, the history of Narnia itself echoes the canonical biblical metanarrative.

Lewis is definitely trying to enhance the reader's appreciation for the Bible by deferentially retelling its key stories and motifs in a fantasy world. This is especially evident after the scene mentioned above in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* when Edmund had asked Aslan if He was also present in our world. Aslan replied, "I am.

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<sup>31</sup> Pullman, P. *His Dark Materials Trilogy: Northern Light, The Subtle Knife and The Amber Spyglass*. (New York, 2011).

<sup>32</sup> Mitchison, A. (2003) 'The Art of Darkness', *Daily Telegraph* (UK) [online]. 3 November, available: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/donotmigrate/3605857/The-art-of-darkness.html> [accessed 10 March 2013].

<sup>33</sup> Osborne, P. (2004) 'The Dark Materials Debate: Life, God, the Universe...'. *Daily Telegraph* (UK) [online], 17 March. Available: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/donotmigrate/3605857/The-art-of-darkness.html> [accessed 10 March 2013].

<sup>34</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 1952), p. 6

<sup>35</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Literary Impact of the Authorised Version*. (Philadelphia, 1967), pp 4-5

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

But there I have another name. You must learn to know me by that name. This was the very reason you why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there.”<sup>37</sup> As Aslan is the Christ figure, Lewis is inviting the reader to get to know Aslan, and through association, Christ, in our own realm in, to some extent, an evangelical invitation.

Throughout this dissertation I have shown how closely Lewis’ use of biblical themes corresponds to what he writes about them in other contexts. An example of a major biblical theme would be how in Lewis’ academic writings on eschatology, he continuously stressed the imminence of the end. Lewis warned that life could end at any moment. To Lewis, Christian Apocalyptic does not even foretell a gradual decay; “It foretells a sudden, violent end imposed from without; an extinguisher popped onto the candle, a brick flung at the gramophone, a curtain rung down on the play—”Halt!”<sup>38</sup> Likewise, in *The Last Battle* the end of Narnia as it is known ends abruptly before there is a victor in the final confrontation between Calormen and loyal Narnians. This highlights how Lewis’ use of the Bible in the *Chronicles* is consistent with his understanding and positive assessment of the Bible.

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### 7.3 - FILTER

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Finally, the third issue of ‘filter’ which endeavours to identify why the retelling reuses the source text in a particular way. This issue asks whether the source text is perceived through a specific religious or ideological lens, such as Christianity or Marxism. As I have demonstrated, in *The Chronicles of Narnia* Lewis is conveying the history of a world through the lens of what has happened and what is prophesied to happen in the Bible. In particular the lens is Christological. The creation of the

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<sup>37</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. (New York, 2001), p. 541

<sup>38</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The World’s Last Night and Other Essays*. (Orlando, 1987), p. 101

world of Narnia, its demise and everything which transpires in-between is done with the presence, and most importantly, the participation of Aslan. Without Aslan there is no Narnia. Aslan as the Christ-figure is read back into Genesis texts. There is a strong Christological reading into the Narnian heptalogy with regards to the Sinai material. In the ‘Myself’ section of Chapter 4 I have demonstrated how when Aslan first speaks to Shasta to give him his name the “earth shook” and the third time he speaks “the leaves rustled with it.”<sup>39</sup> It is Aslan who says: “They shall only see my back”, alluding to the theophany on Sinai.<sup>40</sup> Also when Aslan gives the signs to Jill, he does so on top of Aslan’s mountain denoting a Sinaic correlation.<sup>41</sup> Aslan is the redeemer in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* when he dies in place of Edmund. In *The Magician’s Nephew* Aslan is the creator just as Christ is the creator according to John 1:3 (All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made). In *The Last Battle*, Aslan is the one who concludes the history of Narnia by waking Father Time. Throughout the heptalogy Aslan is the one who sustains the protagonists even when he is not corporeally present. He guides them, provides for them and assists them.

What is worth noting is Lewis’ lack of an exclusively Anglican filter. As I stated in Chapter 5 - ‘Eschatology’, Lewis excluded assimilating a purgatorial doctrine as it was nonessential and also as it could possibly be in conflict with the theology of many reader’s parents. Instead, Lewis focussed on the biblical themes and imagery which were shared by the majority of Christian denominations. For example, Lewis believed that the Second Coming of Jesus was one of the things which united the

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<sup>39</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p. 281

<sup>40</sup> Exodus 33:22-23, Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 662

<sup>41</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 560

evangelical and Anglo-Catholic adherents.<sup>42</sup> This broader appeal is again evident with the ‘Harrowing of Hell’ scene in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* which is a part of Anglicanism (as well as Catholicism, Lutheran, Calvinist and even the Latter-day Saints) due to several New Testament sources (Matthew 12:40, Ephesians 4:9, Colossians 1:18 and 1 Peter 3:18-19, 4:6) and its inclusion in the Apostle’s Creed.<sup>43</sup>

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#### 7.4 - CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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To summarise, then, Lewis approaches the text through the biblical ideas of Creation, Redemption and Eschatology as some of the primary themes in his own heptalogy. As a Christian reading the Bible can be précised into the four terms of ‘Creation’, ‘Fall’, ‘Redemption’ and ‘Restoration’, the history of Narnia emulates this biblical cycle.

Lewis stance can be characterised as positive as he endeavours to augment the reader’s understanding of the original text, subsequently preserving the sensibility of the source. Lewis is never ironic with the topic of religion within the Narnian books and the respect with which he holds the Bible and its themes is evident. As Lewis viewed the Bible as it is laid out from Genesis to Revelation, the history of Narnia mirrors the canonical biblical metanarrative from creation to culmination. Lewis’ use

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<sup>42</sup> Lewis, C.S., *God in the Dock*. (Michigan, 1994), p. 336.

<sup>43</sup> Matthew 12:40 “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Ephesians 4:9 “(Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?”

Colossians 1:18 “And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.”

1 Peter 3:18-19 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,<sup>19</sup> by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison.”

1 Peter 4:6 “For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”

of the Bible in the *Chronicles* is consistent with his understanding and positive assessment of the Bible.

Finally, the filter through which the biblical text is appropriated in the Narnian *Chronicles* is Christological. The entire history of Narnian from its creation to its demise and everything which occurs in the interval is done in the presence, and most importantly, the participation of the Christ-figure of Aslan.

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## CHAPTER 8 - CONCLUSION

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The purpose of this dissertation was to map and analyze the use of biblical themes and imagery in the writing for children of an influential Christian thinker of the twentieth century. I have shown how C.S. Lewis' heptalogy, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, is an impressive assimilation of key biblical themes and imagery which are able to convey the message of the Bible to a youthful audience. In this concluding chapter I will map the patterns I have discerned in Lewis' use of scripture and restate the observations on the manner and purpose of his biblical allusions and how it contributes to his overall endeavour. This will include analysing which biblical texts Lewis used, where he used them and finally why they are used in the manner that they are. This chapter will also briefly review the question of auxiliary influences which permeate the world of Narnia in particular classic mythologies and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The biblical allusions, which are pervasive and conflate both the Old and New Testament but showing a preference for the opening three chapters of Genesis, Sinai imagery, Matthew's Olivet Discourse, the Gospel Passion narratives and Johannine post-resurrection appearances, and which cluster predominantly around the figure of Aslan and the events of creation, redemption and eschatological culmination, work to present Aslan in a Christological light.

As noted throughout this dissertation, the Bible, while Lewis' primary source of inspiration, was not his sole muse. As C.S. Lewis was (as well as a lay theologian) a medievalist, classicist and was well educated in other mythologies, these other sources percolate into the Narnian world he created. Many of Narnia's natives are creatures from mythologies with which Lewis was familiar. As well as sentient

talking animals, there are also fauns, centaurs, dryads, nymphs and other creatures from Pagan, Norse and Greco-Roman mythologies inhabiting Narnia. As noted in Chapter 3 - The Chronicles of Narnia and Genesis 1-3, from Norse mythology's *Prose Edda*, Lewis incorporated the eagle of Yggdrasill with its saffron breast, scarlet head and purple tail into his Narnian version of the Tree of Life in *The Magician's Nephew*.<sup>1</sup> Also from Norse mythology is the story of Fáfnir, son of the dwarf king Hreidmar who turned into a dragon due to his lust for wealth which is similar to the dragonning of Eustace in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.<sup>2</sup> These subtle, incidental and passing references highlight Lewis' penchant for mixing classic mythologies into his biblical retellings.

As well as a range of mythologies, Lewis was influenced by other great works of literature. As author of *Preface to Paradise Lost*, it is unsurprising given Lewis' familiarity and expertise on John Milton's *Paradise Lost* that certain sections of Milton's magnum opus would influence Lewis' writings. The manner in which Lewis visualises the earth bringing forth the vegetation closely reflects the biblical text of Genesis 1:11.<sup>3</sup> Milton's version refers, as does the biblical text, to the earth bringing forth verdure, but Milton does not picture it as a bubbling forth from the earth. We can therefore say that this biblical allusion has been mediated via Milton, but built upon by referring back to Genesis 1:11 directly. The most striking similarity is how the creation of the animals is pictured – the animals which were created by Aslan came bubbling up from the earth as it quite literally 'brings forth' living creatures. This very literal depiction of the Genesis 1:24 account found in

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p. 92

<sup>2</sup> Byock, J.L., *Saga of the Volsungs: The Norse Epic of Sigurd the Dragon Slayer*. (Los Angeles, 1990), pp 57-64

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 1:11 "Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so."

Milton first, and the inclusion of creatures named by Milton but not Genesis that aren't going to be important for the subsequent narrative (moles, stags and big cats specifically) suggest that Lewis takes it directly from *Paradise Lost*. The case for comparison between the two is even more compelling in the depiction of Jadis the tempter. The biblical text does not have much detail here, but Milton retells the temptation scene of Genesis 3 by conflating it with John 10 and Jesus' teaching on the thief who comes in over the wall. Lewis also conflates the temptation scene of Genesis 3 with Jesus' discourse on the Good Shepherd in John 10. John 10:1 states "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." In *The Magician's Nephew*, Digory is sent to retrieve an Apple from a garden on a mountaintop. At the gates he sees a sign, which says:

Come in by the gold gates or not at all, take of my fruit for others or forbear, for those who steal or those who climb my wall shall find their heart's desire and find despair.<sup>4</sup>

Having himself entered in the correct manner, Digory meets Queen Jadis inside who was eating an apple from the tree in an unjust manner. "Digory guessed at once that she must have climbed in over the wall."<sup>5</sup> This very distinctive reading together of Genesis 3 and John 10 already found in Milton is probably what inspired the connection in Lewis' work.

However, the primary purpose of this dissertation is to catalogue and analyse biblical themes and imagery in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In light of the detailed examination of Lewis' use of the Bible as outlined in previous chapters, I am now able to map out the patterns discerned in his use of scripture.

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<sup>4</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician's Nephew*. (London, 1955), p.92

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.93

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## 8.1 - PATTERNS DISCERNED IN LEWIS' USE OF SCRIPTURE.

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In order to comprehensively discern patterns in Lewis' use of scripture one must first determine which sections of the Bible he utilises. With regards to the Old Testament, it is the themes and characters of the books of Genesis and Exodus which Lewis most noticeably employs. Substantial elements of the first two books of the Old Testament are dotted throughout the Narnian heptalogy, with the opening chapters of Genesis used for their creation and temptation scenes. Lewis draws on both the Priestly and the Yahwistic accounts, mining the latter for very striking imagery of the earth bringing forth first vegetation and then the animals. The language of domination from the Priestly source in Genesis 1 is combined with echoes of the covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12-17) when Aslan installs Frank as the first ruler of the land of Narnia. Genesis 3 is used extensively as the basis of the temptation scene, though this I have suggested is as much indebted to Milton's *Paradise Lost* as to a direct reading of the biblical text.

Lewis has a strong penchant for the Sinai material in Exodus as well as the Elijah material from 1 Kings 19:11-12 (itself a clear allusion to the Sinai material) which are the most striking of the Old Testament theophanies. When Lewis wishes to augment Aslan's divinity he draws on the Sinai words and phrases such as the thrice repeated "Myself" from *The Horse and His Boy* and the revelation to Jill in *The Silver Chair* that her school colleagues will only see Aslan's back (Exodus 33:22-23). It should be noted that Lewis does not adapt the plot of the Exodus but rather uses biblical phrases which evoke the theophany.

To a lesser extent the book of Exodus is then explicably used when a Narnian character exhibits characteristics of the patriarch Moses. This was highlighted when I

analysed the character of the orphan hero Shasta in Chapter 6. What is noteworthy is that outside of the Mosaic comparisons which I made, as well as the Sinai imagery, Lewis does not use other key themes from the book of Exodus. There is no mass Exodus of Narnians or other inhabitants of the fantasy world from an oppressive force, neither is there a period of exile. The closest association of an exodus is from *The Horse and His Boy* as Shasta and Bree endeavour to return to what transpires is the place of their birth (while Bree knows he is Narnian, Shasta initially is unaware of his royal heritage).

While fairly extensive use is made of Genesis and Exodus, there are smaller sections (typically only a single verse or two) of other Old Testament books which infiltrate into the Narnian narrative. This was displayed when I highlighted Lewis' use Job 38:7 for the creation of Narnia when the morning stars sing together during the foundation of the world.<sup>6</sup> What is especially relevant is that even when Lewis employs what could be called secondary or auxiliary imagery from other Old Testament books, he does so in order to enhance the primary imagery from Genesis and Exodus.

What is noticeable by its absence is the lack of a corporeal manifestation of a God the Father character in the world of Narnia. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Father or the Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea is only mentioned six times in five books of the heptalogy. Four of the six references of the Emperor-over-the-Sea are only used to establish Aslan as His Son. As Lewis' employs a Christocentric reading to the Old Testament, the creation of Narnia has strong allusions to Genesis 1-2 with Lewis emphasising Aslan's role in the creation account as opposed to his father the

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<sup>6</sup> Job 38:7 "When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea. Similarly, the Sinai imagery in Exodus is also applied to Aslan and not his Father. Correspondingly, any pneumatological characteristics are also attributed to Aslan and not a separate Holy Spirit allegory. In placing Aslan at the creation, C.S. Lewis is following the prologue to John's Gospel, which reads the Word back into 'the beginning'.

What I discovered and found to be of interest is that while Lewis draws significantly on the imagery of Genesis 1-3 and certain sections of Exodus and used them extensively, it is noticeable that the range of the Old Testament which he draws on is quite narrow.

When using the New Testament, C.S. Lewis has a predilection for the fourth Gospel. The Jesus of the Gospel of John is the prevailing basis for the Christ-figure of Aslan. This is especially evident with appearances of Aslan couched in the imagery and phrases of the post-resurrection appearances of Christ. This was highlighted for instance in Chapter 2 with comparisons made between Aslan and Jesus' appearance to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias in John 21.<sup>7</sup> The Narnian protagonists and the disciples in John 21:12 are welcomed by the Lamb/Risen Christ respectively to "Come and have breakfast." That passage also highlights how close verbal biblical allusions are associated with Aslan.

As the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the Christian faith, all four Gospels recount the Passion narrative. As a result, it cannot be certain that Lewis was dependant on one Gospels account over another's. It appears that Lewis uses the four Gospel's accounts as one large amalgamation of the events of Jesus' death and resurrection as a basis for the death and resurrection of Aslan in *The Lion*,

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<sup>7</sup> See also the conversation with Bree which is mentioned below.

*the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Aslan offers up his life in place of Edmund and he is subject to humiliation in a manner similar to Mark 15:16-20.<sup>8</sup> Lewis also uses the role of women in the death and resurrection of Jesus from the Synoptic Gospels with Susan and Lucy as the only protagonists present at the death as well as the resurrection of Aslan which mirrors the accounts in Matthew 27:55-56, Mark 15:40-41 and Luke 23:55-56.<sup>9</sup>

Something which I found surprising was Lewis' lack of references to another Johannine work, namely the Book of Revelation in the eschatological imagery of his concluding book of the series; *The Last Battle*. Initially, one would imagine that a writer of Lewis' calibre, with his knowledge of the Bible, taken together with the tone of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, would adapt the imagery associated with the Book of Revelation. As I highlighted in Chapter 5 – Eschatology in Narnia, the seven-headed red dragon from Revelations 12:3-4 or the Beasts of the Sea and the Earth from Revelations 13:1,11 would not be out of place in Lewis' fantasy world. The only likely allusion to Revelation is Puzzle and Shift as Beast and False Prophet of Revelation 13 and 16 respectively. Neither did Lewis use any of the Old Testament eschatological imagery from Isaiah 24-27, 33, Daniel 7-12 or Ezekiel 38-39. Instead

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<sup>8</sup> Mark 15:16-20 "Then the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they struck Him on the head with a reed and spat on Him; and bowing the knee, they worshiped Him. And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him."

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 27:55-56: "And many women were there beholding [the crucifixion] afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children."

Mark 15:40-41: "There were also women looking on [the crucifixion] afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem."

Luke 23:55-56: "And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." (cf. Mark 16:1)

Lewis favoured the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24-25 in recounting the end of Narnia.

The tribulations which precede the end according to Jesus' Olivet Discourse are acted out almost verbatim in *The Last Battle*. Nations (Calormen) rise against nation (Narnia) from Matthew 24:6-7, Puzzle (though manipulated by Shift) comes in the name/guise of Aslan and is in the "inner room" (Matthew 24:5 and 26), Rishda Tarkaan and Ginger the cat both act as false prophets (Matthew 24:11), and the love of many (in this case the dwarves) grows cold (Matthew 24:12) and they are offended and betray one another (Matthew 24:10). After the abrupt end of the final battle, Aslan instigates the end of Narnia in its current manifestation and Lewis continues to use the imagery of Matthew 24 and 25. The stars fall, the sun does not give its light and the elect are gathered from the four corners of the world to be judged by Aslan with obvious parallels to Matthew 25:31-36.<sup>10</sup> While this imagery of disturbances in the heavens is found in a number of different apocalyptic texts in Old and New Testaments, its placement in a sequence of events that follows the Olivet Discourse so closely suggests that it is the Matthew verses which are its source. Lewis' use of the Olivet Discourse reaffirms his Christocentric emphasis of the Bible as it is the end as prophesied by Christ in Matthew 24-25 which Lewis draws on as the template for the culmination of Narnia.

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<sup>10</sup> Matthew 25:31-36 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'"

Therefore, it can be concluded that Lewis predominantly uses the Bible as a source for Narnian events which focus on the creation, redemption and eschatology of the fantasy world, and to present its central figure, Aslan, in Christocentric light.

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## 8.2 - WHERE LEWIS USES THE BIBLE

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This brings us to the subject of where Lewis uses the Bible in the Narnian heptalogy. As I stated, biblical themes and imagery are clustered around Narnian events which focus on the creation, redemption and eschatological culmination of Narnia. When *The Chronicles of Narnia* are read in chronological order, rather than order of publication, they tell the story of a world from its creation to its culmination. As noted in the previous section, the first Narnian book, *The Magician's Nephew*, uses Genesis as its source while conflated with John 1:1-3.<sup>11</sup>

The second book of the series, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which emphasises the redemption of the world from the evil introduced in *The Magician's Nephew*, also has lots of material – this time drawing predominantly on the passion narratives. As I discussed in Chapter 2 – Christological Themes, the most well-known biblical theme in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series is the death and resurrection of Aslan. The Lion Aslan dies in the place of the traitor Edmund and redeems him from Queen Jadis' claim on his life.<sup>12</sup> The chapters of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* which detail Aslan's death and resurrection are heavy with biblical imagery.

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<sup>11</sup> John 1: 1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made."

<sup>12</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (New York, 2001), p.175

As Lewis uses biblical themes and imagery as inspiration for Narnian events with a prominence on the creation, redemption and eschatology of Narnia, books which do not have an emphasis on those themes like *The Horse and His Boy*, *Prince Caspian* and *The Silver Chair* are the least explicitly scriptural in tone. However, while those books are not especially biblically influenced, whenever Aslan is present in any capacity within the series, Lewis does use biblical themes and imagery to enrich his presentation of Aslan as divine. Lewis use of biblical themes is especially evident in the ‘Myself’ section of *The Horse and His Boy* as discussed in Chapter 4.<sup>13</sup> Verbal biblical allusion is also used in the same book when Aslan and Bree the talking horse have a dialogue reminiscent of the doubting Thomas scene from John 20:27.<sup>14</sup> The latter of which is again indicative of Lewis’ preference for Johannine post-resurrection appearances of Christ. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* then, as the more sacramentally themed book in the series, uses sections of the bible which augment Lewis’ stance of the importance of baptism and Holy Communion especially which I will cover in more detail in the subsequent section. Finally, as I illuminated earlier, *The Last Battle* is where Lewis primarily uses the Olivet Discourse.

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### 8.3 – THE FUNCTION OF THE BIBLICAL ALLUSIONS

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Finally we must elucidate the purpose behind Lewis’ use of biblical allusion and evaluate its affect and effectiveness. Lewis stated that *The Chronicles of Narnia* were not an allegory for Christianity; “People often think Narnia is an allegory, when in reality it is not”.<sup>15</sup> Lewis is therefore not simply retelling the story of Jesus in a

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<sup>13</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: A Horse and His Boy*. (New York, 2001), p.281

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.299

<sup>15</sup> Velarde, R., *Conversations with C. S. Lewis: Imaginative Discussions About Life, Christianity and God*. (Illinois, 2008), p. 141

fictional world, where each element of the Narnia story will correspond exactly with a piece of the biblical metanarrative. This rejection of the category of ‘allegory’ to characterise *The Chronicles of Narnia* does not mean that Lewis did not use the biblical story, as I have already shown.

As *The Chronicles of Narnia* are Christocentric in nature, there is a discernible focus on the numinosity of Aslan as Narnia’s Christ figure in that many of the biblical allusions pertain directly to him. Maybe unsurprisingly for an Anglican, Lewis’ Christian reading of Scripture is not restricted to the New Testament as he also draws liberally from a few texts in the Old Testament. This is true even for the figure of Aslan. The story of Narnia is the story of Aslan. Aslan is present and involved in the creation, redemption and culmination of his world. The fact that so much of the biblical allusion in *The Chronicles of Narnia* clusters around Aslan lends to the character a strong sense of sacredness. Aslan is never directly described as divine, but the biblical imagery, allusions and echoes create this impression nonetheless. The elusive presence of Aslan is an essential element of the Narnian world. That this is conceived in a manner evocative of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus establishes Aslan as the Christ-figure in Narnia just as strongly and definitively as does the death-and-resurrection narrative in *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

When retelling the story of the death and resurrection of the Christ-figure in Narnia, Lewis not only uses the Gospel’s Passion narratives, but rather his version is also drawing on theological understandings of the atoning significance of the crucifixion and not on the Gospel narratives in unmediated form. Lewis’ adaption of the death and resurrection of Aslan develops an image that does not merely echo biblical phrases about the atonement. Instead it assists the reader to “understand and

experience” the reality of biblical atonement teaching.<sup>16</sup> Mark Baker compares the account of the Stone Table to the Penal Satisfaction model of Atonement in his book *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* as I discussed in Chapter 2.<sup>17</sup>

Aslan is not just connected through allusion to the Jesus of the Gospels but is also connected to the divine presence at Sinai and fulfils the role of the Holy Spirit as viewed through a Christian reading of the Bible. As I have shown in my previous chapter, Lewis’ approaches the Bible through a Christocentric filter which is why he can use Old Testament allusions to establish the numinosity of Aslan. Lewis’ hermeneutic reading of scripture is clearly in evidence.

The majority of Lewis’ allusions, especially the more obscure suggestions, are aimed at “a special coterie”<sup>18</sup> of people with a background in the Bible. In view of the fact that allusions are not overtly identified, they therefore rely on a base of knowledge that is shared by both the author and the audience. For example, anyone who had no knowledge of Christianity or the Bible would not be able to recognise and appreciate any of Lewis’ more subtle references to the biblical text. Such a person reading about Aslan singing Narnia into creation in *The Magician’s Nephew* would not appreciate the comparison of Job 38:7 when God laid the foundations of the earth “when the morning stars sang together.”<sup>19</sup> Still, some of the more commonly recognised themes like Aslan as Christ the redeemer can be picked up by someone who has a very general knowledge of the life of Jesus.

Occasionally, Lewis’ employment of biblical theme and imagery may be no more than the result of his own immersion in the text and the fact that his own thinking is

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<sup>16</sup> Baker, M., *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*. (Wisconsin, 2011), p.233

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Abrams, M.H., *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. (Boston, 1999), p. 9

<sup>19</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Magician’s Nephew*. (London, 1955), pp 61-62

so thoroughly shaped by it. Generally, however, it is used to elucidate, magnify or enhance a topic or theme. The creation and culmination of Narnia are given a sense of depth and dignity by their scriptural resonances. Examples of Lewis utilising biblical themes and imagery to elucidate, magnify or enhance a topic or theme is evident in books like *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. Certain scenes in *Dawn Treader* highlight the importance of the sacraments to Lewis which in the Narnian narrative are enhanced by biblical themes. As noted in Chapter 6 – Minor Themes, Lewis himself says that there are three things that spread the Christ-life to us: baptism, belief and Holy Communion.<sup>20</sup> In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, during the undragoning scene of Eustace Clarence Scrubb, Lewis depicts the prominence of the sacrament of baptism. Aslan, strips Eustace of his sinful scaly nature, catches him and throws him into a pool of water.<sup>21</sup> This scene is enhanced by the parallels between Eustace and Saul of Tarsus' Road to Damascus moment in Acts 9. Both protagonists are converted and have scales removed from them prior to being baptised. Also near the conclusion of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Lewis deals with the sacrament of Holy Communion. Lewis uses the imagery of 1 Corinthians 11 as a warning to those who do not respect the sacrament. The Narnian Lords do not treat Aslan's Table, the Stone Knife or the banquet upon it worthily, and as a result they all fall into a mysterious sleep.

It appears, though, that the primary reason for the biblical allusions is to fill out the figure of Aslan and establish him as the Christ figure in Narnia. For example, the scene of Aslan's death contains allusions to Christ's death and resurrection in order to invite readers to relate his death with that of Jesus on the cross.

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<sup>20</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity* (New York, 1984), p. 62

<sup>21</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York, 2001), p. 475

If *The Chronicles of Narnia* are read without someone recognising the biblical allusions, they are still perfectly comprehensible but their power and purpose is diminished. Aslan can still be related to as a beloved hero and perhaps even recognised as somehow divine though only within the fictional world of Narnia. When the biblical allusions are overlooked, Aslan loses a lot of his depth and richness which makes for a poorer reading experience. But worst of all the bridge between Aslan and Jesus Christ is broken which denies the reader an opportunity to translate their affections for and experience of Aslan into an engagement with Christianity through forming a relationship with Jesus Christ. Lewis has used the Bible to encourage readers to move "Further Up and Further In." As Aslan says in the closing of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*:

"You must begin to come close to your own world now."

"...there I have another name. You must learn to know me by that name. This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 541

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# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A

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### *Outline of Narnian History So Far As It Is Known...* by C. S. Lewis

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C.S. Lewis authored a timeline which mapped out the events relating to *The Chronicles of Narnia*. He gave an "Outline of Narnian History" in manuscript form to Walter Hooper, who included it in his essay *Past Watchful Dragons: The Fairy Tales of C. S. Lewis*.<sup>1</sup> Throughout *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Lewis never clearly specified a timeline in which events in the heptalogy occurred, so Lewis' timeline is the only source for this material. While Kathryn Lindskoog and other Lewis scholars have contested the authenticity of some posthumous compositions accredited to Lewis which were edited by Hooper, the legitimacy of the timeline is generally accepted.<sup>2</sup> The timeline has been included in books on Lewis and Narnia by Paul Ford, Martha Sammons and others.<sup>3</sup>

Within the Narnian heptalogy there are two chronologies – one which happens within the lifetime of those of Earthly origin, and the other which charts the fantasy world's entire existence. In *Prince Caspian*, the Pevensie children return to Narnia to find that hundreds of years have passed since they left the world though it has only been one year in England.<sup>4</sup> Likewise in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the

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<sup>1</sup> Hooper, W., *Past Watchful Dragons: The Narnian Chronicles of C. S. Lewis*. (New York, 1979) pp. 41–44

<sup>2</sup> Lindskoog, K., (1988). *The C. S. Lewis Hoax*. (Portland, 1988) pp. 1-175

<sup>3</sup> Ford, P. *Companion to Narnia, Revised Edition*. (San Francisco, 2005) p. 465, Sammons, M.. *A Guide Through Narnia*. (Illinois, 1979) p. 54

<sup>4</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. (New York, 2001), p. 325

children grew old in Narnia though they returned to England the exact moment they left.<sup>5</sup>

In *Reflections on the Psalms* Lewis uses Plato and the Bible as sources for the idea of God being outside time.<sup>6</sup> Lewis found in Plato (whom he considered a “theological genius”) a theology of time whereby the very conditions of time and space under which it exists – are produced by the will of a perfect, timeless, unconditioned God who is above all and outside of what He makes.<sup>7</sup> Lewis mentions how Psalm 90:4 affirms that a thousand years were to God like a single yesterday. Also 2 Peter 3:8 states that not only is one day like a thousand years but a thousand years is also like one day to God. Lewis believed that the Psalmist was conveying that God was everlasting, that is, His life was infinite in time.<sup>8</sup> The epistle however takes God out of time as we perceive it altogether.<sup>9</sup>

Also, in *Mere Christianity* Lewis has a chapter called “Time and Beyond Time” where he talks about God being outside time.<sup>10</sup> In that chapter, Lewis differentiates how we encounter and understand time in contrast to how God experiences it. He states that “God, I believe, does not live in a Time-series at all. His life is not dribbled out moment by moment like ours: with Him it is still 1920 and already 1960.”<sup>11</sup>

Our life comes to us moment by moment. One moment disappears before the next comes along: and there is room for very little in each. That is what Time is like. And

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<sup>5</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 196

<sup>6</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Reflections on the Psalms*. (San Diego, 1986), pp 79-80

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 1952), pp 166-171

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p.168

of course you and I tend to take it for granted that this Time series—this arrangement of past, present, and future—is not simply the way life comes to us but the way all things really exist. We tend to assume that the whole universe and God Himself are always moving on from past to future just as we do.<sup>12</sup> Given this understanding of God's relationship to time, we can extrapolate that Lewis believed that God was Omni-temporal. Therefore there would be no reason for time in Narnia to mirror that of Earth.

I include a Timeline for Narnia and how it relates to the passage of time in England.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.167

<sup>13</sup> Hooper, W., *Past Watchful Dragons: The Narnian Chronicles of C. S. Lewis*. (New York, 1979) pp. 41–44

Narnian years	Narnia	English years	England
-	-	1888	Digory Kirke is born
-	-	1889	Polly Plummer is born.
1	Creation of Narnia. The beasts made able to talk. Digory plants the Tree of Protection. The White Witch Jadis enters Narnia but flies into the far North. Frank I becomes King of Narnia.	1900	Polly and Digory carried into Narnia by magic Rings.
180	Prince Col, younger son of Frank V, leads certain followers into Archenland (not then inhabited), and becomes first King of that country.	-	-
204	Certain outlaws from Archenland fly across the Southern Desert and set up the new kingdom of Calormen.	1927	Peter Pevensie is born.
300	The empire of Calormen spreads mightily. Calormenes colonise the land of Telmar to the West of Narnia.	1928	Susan Pevensie is born.
		1930	Edmund Pevensie is born.
302	The Calormenes in Telmar behave very wickedly and Aslan turns them into dumb beasts. The country lies waste. King Gale of Narnia delivers the Lone Islands from a dragon and is made Emperor by the islands' grateful inhabitants.	1932	Lucy Pevensie is born.
		1933	Eustace Scrubb and Jill Pole born.
407	Olvin of Archenland kills the Giant Pire.	-	-
460	Pirates from our world take possession of Telmar.	-	-
570	About this time lived Moonwood the Hare.	-	-
898	The White Witch Jadis returns to Narnia out of the Far North.	-	-
900	The Long Winter begins.	-	-
1000	The Pevensies arrive in Narnia. The treachery of Edmund. The sacrifice of Aslan. The White Witch defeated and the	1940	The Pevensies, staying with Digory (now Professor) Kirke, reach Narnia through the Magic Wardrobe.

	Long Winter ended. Peter becomes High King of Narnia.		
1014	King Peter carries out a successful raid on the Northern Giants. Queen Susan and King Edmund visit the Court of Calormen. King Lune of Archenland discovers his long-lost son Prince Cor and defeats a treacherous attack by Prince Rabadash of Calormen.	-	-
1015	The Pevensies hunt the White Stag and vanish out of Narnia.	-	-
1050	Ram the Great succeeds Cor as King of Archenland.	-	-
1502	About this time lived Queen Swanwhite of Narnia.	-	-
1998	The Telmarines invade and conquer Narnia. Caspian I becomes king of Narnia.	-	-
2290	Prince Caspian, son of Caspian IX, born. Caspian IX murdered by his brother Miraz who usurps the throne.	-	-
2303	Prince Caspian escapes from his uncle Miraz. Civil War in Narnia. By the aid of Aslan and of the Pevensies, whom Caspian summons with Queen Susan's magic Horn, Miraz is defeated and killed. Caspian becomes Caspian X of Narnia.	1941	The Pevensies, while waiting to board the train to their school, are pulled into Narnia.
2304	Caspian X defeats the Northern Giants.	-	-
2306 -7	Caspian X's great voyage to the end of the World.	1942	Edmund, Lucy and Eustace reach Narnia again and take part in Caspian's voyage.
2310	Caspian X marries Ramandu's daughter.	-	-
2325	Prince Rilian born.	-	-
2345	The Queen killed by a Serpent. Rilian disappears.	-	-
2356	Eustace and Jill appear in Narnia and rescue Prince Rilian. Death of Caspian X.	1942	Eustace and Jill, from Experiment House, are carried away into Narnia.
2534	Outbreak of outlaws in Lantern Waste. Towers built to guard that region.	-	-
2555	Rebellion of Shift the Ape. King Tirian rescued by Eustace and Jill. Narnia in the hands of the Calormenes.	1949	Serious accident on British Railways.

The Last Battle. End of Narnia. End of the World.

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## APPENDIX B

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### The Reading Order for *The Chronicles Of Narnia*

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As I mentioned in Chapter 1 – Introduction, I was not tracing diachronic development in Lewis’ thinking or charting the evolution of any given character, the question of reading order did not have to be decided. Instead, the dissertation was based upon a synchronic reading of the books and was organised thematically. However, some authors have posited that reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* in publication order rather than chronological was of paramount importance for different reasons. Below I include two arguments from different Lewisian academics on why the series should be read as published.

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#### The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in *The Chronicles Of Narnia* by D. E. Myers

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Myers, Doris E., ‘The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in the Chronicles of Narnia’, *Anglican Theological Review*. Vol 66, No. 2, 1984, pp 148-160. Doris E. Myers was a communicant of the Episcopal Church. Myers taught medieval literature, fantasy, and English linguistics at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. Other publications include *Understanding Language* (Boynton-Cook, 1984) and articles on Tolkien, Lewis, and Chaucer.

She states that, in her opinion, Lewis was not writing allegory, which shows us what is true, but fairy story, which shows us what is desirable. “When critics reduce Lewis’ fairy stories to allegory, they diminish the specific literary pleasure for which the stories were designed and obscure the masterly portrayal of religious feelings at different stages in life.”<sup>1</sup> Myers’ article talks about the spiritual style of Lewis’

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<sup>1</sup> Myers, Doris E., ‘The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in the Chronicles of Narnia’, *Anglican Theological Review*. Vol 66, No. 2, 1984, pp 148-160

Narnian Chronicles and the importance of reading them in publication order rather than chronologically. She maintains that the tales portray an Anglican emphasis on the individual's gradual growth in faith as opposed to a dramatic peak during conversion. The importance of this is especially evident with *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Last Battle*; books one and seven chronologically but published sixth and seventh.

Myers' believes that the Chronicles of Narnia catalogue the various stages of Anglican spiritual development with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* being a sort of infancy narrative. "For children born into an Anglican-style religious home, the first awareness of Christianity comes through its two great festivals, Christmas and Easter. The young child does not know why these holidays are so important; he simply accepts the joyous celebration."<sup>2</sup> Father Christmas appears in the story as does the primary aspects of Easter with Aslan being resurrected from the dead. *Prince Caspian*, though book four, was published second and it represents the second stage of spiritual development according to the Anglican pattern. As the child grows, the simple delights of Christmas and Easter may begin to diminish and they become conscious that the events described in the Old and New Testament occurred a long time ago, and that some even doubt whether they transpired at all. This sense of doubt and disillusionment is well dramatized in the way the four children return to a Narnia whose Golden Age has long past. It is a disposition linked with early adolescence, the usual age of confirmation. Incongruously, Anglican children are confirmed in their faith just at the time that they begin seriously to doubt it. Lewis too admits that he was confirmed "in total disbelief."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Surprised By Joy*. (London, 1966), p.161

Next is *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* which Myers claims represents an individual's inquiry into what it means to be a member of the church and that it explores two aspects of membership: participation in the sacraments and ethical behaviour. The principles of the story are commendably suitable to exploring the feelings associated with being a member. The story takes place on a ship, a traditional image of the church.<sup>4</sup> Like the church, the *Dawn Treader* has a hierarchical government, a mission to seek the lost, and a rather specialized vocabulary and code of behaviour.

The next two books return to the routine complications of living according to Christian principles in an inimical environment. *The Horse and His Boy*, written fourth, was published after *The Silver Chair* so as to group the three books recording Caspian's reign together. Both deal with the spiritual tasks of young adults. In both, the protagonists learn about God's providence and the need for self-discipline.<sup>5</sup> Some minor details contribute to the prevalent tenor of young adulthood in *The Silver Chair*. Eustace is horrified to see Caspian as an old man suggesting the disturbance adolescents feel when they recognise that their parents are aging and that time is inevitable. *The Horse and His Boy* emphasises more on social maturity with the four protagonists all having to discover who they really are and how they fit in the structure of their respective worlds.

That brings the reader to *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Last Battle*. These books are supposed to bookend the seven Narnian stories with *The Magician's Nephew* detailing the genesis of Narnia, but to a Myers reading in publication order, *The Magician's Nephew* is an account of mature middle age. In middle age, the Anglican

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<sup>4</sup> Myers, Doris E., 'The Compleat Anglican: Spiritual Style in the Chronicles of Narnia', *Anglican Theological Review*. Vol 66, No. 2, 1984, pp 148-160

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

Christian is habitually preoccupied with “nurturing, with sustaining both the new generation and the aging parents.”<sup>6</sup> Digory's mission is concerned with both. The golden apple will safeguard Narnia's youthful purity while also curing his mother's illness.

Myers believes that the emotional influence of the last two chronicles may also be overlooked because of their similitude to Genesis and Revelation. Indeed, Huttar makes this biblical resemblance the principle of unity binding the chronicles together, calling their literary form a "scripture."<sup>7</sup> To Myers, this is an overemphasis on a cognitive principle of unity rather than the more important emotional principle. Although the end of the world does indeed occur in *The Last Battle*, for her the emphasis of the tone of the book is the feelings explored which are those faced by the elderly Anglican in their own last days. Although the protagonists of *The Last Battle* are said to be young, their behaviour and a lot of their attitudes are that of the old. King Tirian, described as being young, sounds more like an old man who is witnessing the splendid world of his youth being devastated. He states, "If we had died before today we should have been happy"; Jewel the Unicorn responds with, "Yes, we have lived too long."<sup>8</sup> The companionship of King Tirian and Jewel also comes across as elderly as each had saved the other's life in the wars and because they were so close "they did not try to comfort one another with words."<sup>9</sup>

*The Chronicles of Narnia* for Myers, present, in a form appealing to young and old alike, the whole scope of a Christian life according to the Anglican style of gradual growth rather than sudden conversion. While the reader can enjoy Lewis' tales

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Huttar, Charles. "C S Lewis' Narnia and the 'Grand Design'." In *The Longing for a Form: Essays on the Fiction of C. S. Lewis*, edited by Peter Schakel, 119-135. Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1977.

<sup>8</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*. (New York, 2001), p. 679

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.708

without being aware of the Anglican spiritual style, or even the most apparent Christian inferences, an accurate critical appreciation of the books must recognise the differences between one style of Christianity and another. “When Lewis wrote theological essays, he wrote as a "mere Christian"; but when he wrote fairy stories, the content was coloured by the Anglican style of spirituality in which he was nurtured. To this extent style—Anglican style—was the man himself.”<sup>10</sup>

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The “Correct” Order for Reading *The Chronicles Of Narnia* By Peter J. Schakel

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‘The “Correct” Order for Reading the Chronicles of Narnia’ by Peter J. Schakel is a chapter in *Revisiting Narnia: Fantasy, Myth and Religion in C.S. Lewis’ Chronicles* edited by Shanna Caughey. In his paper, Schakel also posits that it is important to read the *Chronicles* in order of publication. Schakel starts off by cataloguing the history of the current publication order which puts *The Magician’s Nephew* first and which was not introduced until 1980 in the “Fontana Lions” set by HarperCollins. He references Walter Hooper who comments that in these editions “for the first time the books were given the order that Lewis said they should be read in.”<sup>11</sup> This numbering system became uniform in 1994 and it used internal chronological order at the suggestion of Lewis’ stepson, Douglas Gresham who quoted Lewis’ April 23 1957 reply to a letter from American fan Laurence Krieg who was having an argument with his mother about the order “I think I agree with your [chronological] order for reading the books more than with your mother’s. The series was not planned beforehand as she thinks.”<sup>12</sup> Schakel however, says that “if he

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<sup>10</sup> Huttar, Charles. "C S Lewis' Narnia and the 'Grand Design'." In *The Longing for a Form: Essays on the Fiction of C. S. Lewis*, edited by Peter Schakel, 119-135. Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1977.

<sup>11</sup> Hooper, W., *C.S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide*. (London, 1996), p. 408

<sup>12</sup> Schakel, Peter. "The “Correct” Order for Reading the Chronicles of Narnia?" In *Revisiting Narnia*, edited by Shanna Caughey, 91-102. Dallas: BenBella Books Inc., 2005.

[Lewis] is suggesting that the order makes no difference to the reading experience, then he is simply mistaken.”<sup>13</sup>

Like Myers, Schakel believes that the correct order for reading the Chronicles is in publication order, though Schakel offers two different reasons for doing so. His first reason is for literary purposes. It is in the first published book, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* where the reader is introduced to the world of Narnia and the concept of Aslan. The reader discovers the world and its primary inhabitant together with the story’s protagonist of Lucy. References are made and then explained as the story progresses. If the reader first reads the first chronological book of *The Magician’s Nephew* then there is no discovery or introduction made in *Wardrobe* and the literary artistry is detracted from. Schakel offers other reasons where the artistry and skill of Lewis’ writing is diminished if the books are read in chronological order but he also offers a different, more religious opinion as to why the books should be read in publication order.

Schakel states that the full religious significance of the Chronicles depends on viewing them as a unified series and on reading them in order of publication.<sup>14</sup> Lewis was revising *Mere Christianity* for republication while he was writing the early Chronicles of Narnia. Schakel believes that when reading the Chronicles in publication order, they mirror a sequential presentation of Christian ideas from *Mere Christianity*. Book one of *Mere Christianity* establishes the need for salvation; Book two elucidates the plan of salvation; Book three deals with morality (explaining how Christians should live as both individuals and as a body of believers in light of their

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

salvation); while Book four clarifies theological issues which cause problems for Christians.<sup>15</sup>

For Schakel, the layout of the four books of *Mere Christianity* is premeditated and obtaining their full effect is dependent on reading them in order: "It is after you have realised that there is a real Moral Law, and a Power behind the law, and that you have broken that law and put yourself wrong with that Power -- it is after all this, and not a moment sooner, that Christianity begins to talk.<sup>16</sup> The discourse in Book three (Christian Behaviour) would not mean the same if it were the opening argument of *Mere Christianity*. Coming as it does after the sections on "Right and Wrong" as a Clue to the Meaning of the Universe and What Christians Believe, it grows out of the premises about law, grace, and faith laid out in the earlier parts.<sup>17</sup> It is the first published book of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* which lays out the theological basis of the subsequent books in the same manner that Book one of *Mere Christianity* is the foundation of the ensuing three sections. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Mere Christianity* both begin by establishing the presence of moral law or the "Deep Magic from the Dawn of Time."<sup>18</sup> Subsequent themes from *Mere Christianity* are replicated in the ensuing *Chronicles*. *The Magician's Nephew* when read in order of publication, that is with the earlier books creating a context for the theme of morality, mirror the way that books one and two of *Mere Christianity* set up the theme in book three.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*. (London, 2002), p. 31

<sup>17</sup> Schakel, Peter. "The "Correct" Order for Reading the Chronicles of Narnia?" In *Revisiting Narnia*, edited by Shana Caughey, 91-102. Dallas: BenBella Books Inc., 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (New York, 2001), p. 182

For Schakel and Myers, reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* in publication order rather than chronological order is of paramount importance. It is only by reading them in publication order that the full impact of *The Chronicles* can be experienced. Myers seems herself to read the Chronicles as an allegory of sorts for the (Anglican) Christian life, having insisted that it is not to be read this way in relation to Scripture while Schakel posits that they mirror a spiritual development as laid out by Lewis in *Mere Christianity*. Both authors seem to ignore Lewis' comments that the reading order be either a) chronological or b) did not matter.<sup>19</sup> Schakel even considers that Lewis himself, even as the author, did not fully recognise the importance of the reading order. While it can be supercilious to think that one may know the work of an author even better than the author himself, literary theory tends not to place a lot of weight on authorial intention. It is true, perhaps, that the author himself, knowing all the books so intimately might not be mindful of what a reader may pick up or miss out on by taking one order or the other. Also, sometimes the skill of an author is such that more goes into their work than they are consciously aware of. They might have written something just because they felt intuitively that it was 'right', and a reader or critic can more explicitly put their finger on what the author was achieving.

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<sup>19</sup> Hooper, W., *C.S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide*. (London, 1996), p. 408

## APPENDIX C

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Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis (2010) By  
Michael Ward

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As I referenced in Chapter 4 – Echoes of the Trinity in Narnia, the inclusion of Father Christmas was influenced by the planet Jupiter according to Michael Ward. Ward is a self-described leading expert on the works of C.S. Lewis. He is a Senior Research Fellow at Blackfriars Hall in the University of Oxford, and a writer and speaker.<sup>20</sup> As an Anglican clergyman, he served as Chaplain of St Peter's College in the University of Oxford from 2009 to 2012 and as Chaplain of Peterhouse in the University of Cambridge from 2004 to 2007. Between 1996 and 1999 he was Warden of The Kilns, Lewis's Oxford home. He studied English at Oxford, Theology at Cambridge, and has a PhD from St Andrews.

In his book *Planet Narnia* Ward has methodically laid out his “well researched” opinion how the Narnia stories were designed to communicate the physiognomies of the seven planets according to medieval cosmology and to a certain extent, astrology. As the differentiation between astronomy and astrology was indistinct in the middle ages: therefore Lewis was utilising the no-longer-classified-as-planets celestial bodies of, Sol (the Sun), and Luna (the Moon), then Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. According to Ward, Lewis regarded the planets as beyond mere physical bodies; they were symbols of spiritual value and perpetuity. As a result, Lewis covertly laid out the seven books of *The Chronicles* so that the plot of each book reflected a pre-Copernican medieval cosmological framework. However, significantly it is in the detail that the symbolism and allegory is at its richest,

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<sup>20</sup> Planet Narnia (2012) *Michael Ward* [online], available: <http://www.planetnarnia.com/michael-ward> [accessed 19 Oct 2012].

thereby reflecting the characteristics of the planets.<sup>21</sup> In each chapter, Ward offers evidence of each of the planetary personalities and their manifestations in its paralleling book in the *Chronicles*: Jupiter for *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*; Mars for *Prince Caspian*; Sol for *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*; Luna for *The Silver Chair*; Mercury for *The Horse and His Boy*; Venus for *The Magician's Nephew*; and, Saturn for *The Last Battle*.

Ward's inspiration for his book was Lewis' poem *The Planets* (1935).<sup>22</sup> In this poem Lewis writes a type of ode to each of the seven medieval planets. It was when Ward read Lewis' oration on Jupiter when he was struck by the similarities between it and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. "And woes mended, of winter passed / And guilt forgiven, and good fortune." It was this line which caused Ward to investigate the cosmological parallels with *The Chronicles*. Jupiter corresponds with joviality. The plot of *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* is of the return of Jupiter, the reappearance of joy and feasting, the arrival of Aslan, and the fall of the White Witch—winter passed / and guilt forgiven.<sup>23</sup> Ward also references such illustrations as the formation and engagement of Calormene and Narnian armies in *Prince Caspian* as substantiation of Mars.<sup>24</sup> Likewise the recurrent presence of gold and the prodigious light of the sun that pervades *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is evidence of Sol.<sup>25</sup> Luna or the Moon represents *The Silver Chair* as silver is associated with the Moon. A lot of the journey takes places during night. Also Prince Rilian and the Headmistress of Experiment House are individually labelled as

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<sup>21</sup> Brazier Paul. 'Planet Narnia. By Michael Ward'. *Heythrop Journal* . Vol 51, No. 1, 2010, pp 164-166

<sup>22</sup> Complete poem in Appendix D

<sup>23</sup> Ward, M., *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis* (New York, 2010), pp 42, 54, 57-59

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 87-88

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 111-113, 115

"lunatic."<sup>26</sup> *The Horse and his Boy* is represented by Mercury. In his poem *The Planets* Lewis writing on Mercury states "Merry multitude of meeting selves, Same but sundered." The antagonist Shasta, or Cor, is reunited with his twin Corin. In the same poem Mercury is described as "madcap rover, Patron of pilfrers" and Shasta goes on several raids to gather supplies. Mercury is commonly identified with the Greek Hermes, fleet-footed messenger of the gods, and Shasta is sent to quickly bring a vital message to Archenland.<sup>27</sup> Venus is associated with *The Magician's Nephew*. Lewis said on Venus "In grass growing, and grain bursting, Flower unfolding, and flesh longing, and shower falling sharp in April." All of which occur in *The Magician's Nephew*. Finally in *The Last Battle* it is the destruction of Narnia and the concluding appearance of Father Time as the presence of Saturn.<sup>28</sup>

Ward deduces how the various cosmological and astrological themes are merged into the Narnian narratives without diverting from the inner core of Lewis's composition. While 'Planet Narnia' is a comprehensible book, it is unsurprisingly cosmologically dense. 'Planet Narnia' is a thorough, meticulously researched book. Ward has studied the subject matter himself and has revealed an in-depth knowledge of medieval cosmology without relying on the conclusions and comments of other Lewsian specialists.

However, in response to Michael Ward's thesis, Dr. Justin Barrett of The Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology at University of Oxford addressed some of the points he did not agree with in 'Mostly Right: A Quantitative Analysis of the Planet Narnia Thesis', VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review 27 (on-line

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<sup>26</sup> Lewis, C.S., *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. (New York, 2001), p. 626 & 663

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp 276 - 296

<sup>28</sup> Ward, M., *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis* (New York, 2010), pp 198-201

supplement), 2010.<sup>29</sup> In his paper Barrett summarises Ward's approach as ascertaining specific words, phrases, passages, and events in each of the seven Chronicles of Narnia that correspond to the concepts, moods, images, and themes that Lewis himself associated with each of the planets in his other work.<sup>30</sup> Barrett's stance is that Ward "omits a critical type of data" that is essential for drawing confident conclusions of this sort, namely, baseline frequencies. For example, in his discussion of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* Ward draws attention to the considerable number of references to redness e.g. the Witch's mouth, Maugrim the wolf's mouth, Tumnus's red muffler and reddish skin, the red lion on Peter's shield amongst several others. To Barrett, what is omitted is evidence that the frequency of redness in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is any more substantial than in any of the remaining books in the series. If *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* was consciously or unconsciously composed to represent Joviality and the other books were not, the reader would not only expect to see Jovial themes within, but Jovial themes at a comparatively greater rate than the other books. However, *Prince Caspian* has several references to redness which are not accounted for in *Planet Narnia*.

Barrett used Ward's book to determine which concepts constitute each of the seven planets' profiles. He charted the regularity of each concept for each of the seven books in the Chronicles and then used statistical tests to determine: (A) whether any book was greater in planet concept frequency than might be expected by chance and (B) whether the book that was greatest in frequency was the book identified by

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<sup>29</sup> Barrett Justin. 'Some Planets in Narnia: A Quantitative Investigation of the Planet Narnia Thesis'. *SEVEN: An Anglo-American Literary Review*. Vol 27, No. 1, 2010, pp 1-18

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

Ward.<sup>31</sup> After exhaustive quantitative investigation of the *Planet Narnia* thesis, Barrett's conclusion is that the results of these evaluations provide mixed support for Ward's theory. Barrett's evidence indicates that if any of 'The Chronicles of Narnia' were composed with Saturn as the inspiration, it would be *The Silver Chair* and not *The Last Battle*. Similarly, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* exhibits no credible evidence of Jovial influence more notable than the other books and unquestionably not greater than *The Silver Chair*. However, *Prince Caspian* does emerge as more Martial than any of the other books, though the verification is inconclusive. What is significant is that books three through six of the series all work according to Ward's thesis. *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"* indeed has more Solar imagery than the other Chronicles and more than could be accredited with coincidence. An analogous strong affiliation is prevalent between *The Silver Chair* and Luna, *The Horse and His Boy* and Mercury, and *The Magician's Nephew* and Venus.<sup>32</sup>

Barrett's conclusion therefore is that given the evidence available, it does not appear that Ward's thesis withstands scrutiny. That Lewis intentionally composed the seven books of the Chronicles, and each with a different medieval planet as the source for moods, themes, images, and concepts, is not supported.<sup>33</sup> There is not enough proof to imply that Ward has deciphered Lewis' code for all seven books. What is more probable and what is supported by Barrett's data is that Lewis utilised medieval astrological concepts as inspiration for most of the books. The unbalanced configuration of results indicates that Lewis did not methodically adhere to a predetermined structure.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

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The Planets 1935 by C.S. Lewis

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Lady Luna, in light canoe,  
By friths and shallows of fretted cloudland  
Cruises monthly; with chrism of dews  
And drench of dream, a drizzling glamour,  
Enchants us – the cheat! changing sometime  
A mind to madness, melancholy pale,  
Bleached with gazing on her blank count'nance  
Orb'd and ageless. In earth's bosom  
The shower of her rays, sharp-feathered light  
Reaching downward, ripens silver,  
Forming and fashioning female brightness,  
Metal maidenlike. Her moist circle  
Is nearest earth. Next beyond her  
Mercury marches – madcap rover,  
Patron of pilfrers. Pert quicksilver  
His gaze begets, goblin mineral,  
Merry multitude of meeting selves,  
Same but sundered. From the soul's darkness,  
With wreathed wand, words he marshals,  
Guides and gathers them – gay bellwether  
Of flocking fancies. His flint has struck  
The spark of speech from spirit's tinder,  
Lord of language! He leads forever  
The spangle and splendour, sport that mingles  
Sound with senses, in subtle pattern,  
Words in wedlock, and wedding also  
Of thing with thought. In the third region  
Venus voyages...but my voice falters;  
Rude rime-making wrongs her beauty,  
Whose breasts and brow, and her breath's sweetness  
Bewitch the worlds. Wide-spread the reign  
Of her secret sceptre, in the sea's caverns,  
In grass growing, and grain bursting,  
Flower unfolding, and flesh longing,  
And shower falling sharp in April.  
The metal copper in the mine reddens  
With muffled brightness, like muted gold,  
By her fingers form'd. Far beyond her  
The heaven's highway hums and trembles,

Drums and dindles, to the driv'n thunder  
Of Sol's chariot, whose sword of light  
Hurts and humbles; beheld only  
Of eagle's eye. When his arrow glances  
Through mortal mind, mists are parted  
And mild as morning the mellow wisdom  
Breathes o'er the breast, broadening eastward  
Clear and cloudless. In a clos'd garden  
(Unbound her burden) his beams foster  
Soul in secret, where the soil puts forth  
Paradisal palm, and pure fountains  
Turn and re-temper, touching coolly  
The uncomely common to cordial gold;  
Whose ore also, in earth's matrix,  
Is print and pressure of his proud signet  
On the wax of the world. He is the worshipp'd male,  
The earth's husband, all-beholding,  
Arch-chemic eye. But other country  
Dark with discord dins beyond him,  
With noise of nakers, neighing of horses,  
Hammering of harness. A haughty god  
Mars mercenary, makes there his camp

And flies his flag; flaunts laughingly  
The graceless beauty, grey-eyed and keen,  
Blond insolence – of his blithe visage  
Which is hard and happy. He hews the act,  
The indifferent deed with dint of his mallet  
And his chisel of choice; achievement comes not  
Unhelped by him – hired gladiator  
Of evil and good. All's one to Mars,  
The wrong righted, rescued meekness,  
Or trouble in trenches, with trees splintered  
And birds banished, banks fill'd with gold  
And the liar made lord. Like handiwork  
He offers to all – earns his wages  
And whistles the while. White-feathered dread  
Mars has mastered. His metal's iron  
That was hammered through hands into holy cross,  
Cruel carpentry. He is cold and strong,  
Necessity's song. Soft breathes the air  
Mild, and meadowy, as we mount further  
Where rippled radiance rolls about us

Moved with music – measureless the waves'  
Joy and jubilee. It is Jove's orbit,  
Filled and festal, faster turning  
With arc ampler. From the Isles of Tin  
Tyrian traders, in trouble steering  
Came with his cargoes; the Cornish treasure  
That his ray ripens. Of wrath ended  
And woes mended, of winter passed  
And guilt forgiven, and goof fortune  
Jove is master; and of jocund revel,  
Laughter of ladies. The lion-hearted,  
The myriad-minded, men like the gods,  
Helps and heroes, helms of nations  
Just and gentle, are Jove's children,  
Work his wonders. On his white forehead  
Calm and kingly, no care darkens  
Nor wrath wrinkles: but righteous power  
And leisure and largess their loose splendours  
Have wrapped around him – a rich mantle  
Of ease and empire. Up far beyond  
Goes Saturn silent in the seventh region,  
The skirts of the sky. Scant grows the light,  
Sickly, uncertain (the Sun's finger  
Daunted with darkness). Distance hurts us,  
And the vault severe of vast silence;  
Where fancy fails us, and fair language,  
And love leaves us, and light fails us  
And Mars fails us, and the mirth of Jove  
Is as tin tinkling. In tattered garment,  
Weak with winters, he walks forever  
A weary way, wide round the heav'n,  
Stoop'd and stumbling, with staff groping,  
The lord of lead. He is the last planet  
Old and ugly. His eye fathers  
Pale pestilence, pain of envy,  
Remorse and murder. Melancholy drink  
(For bane or blessing) of bitter wisdom  
He pours out for his people, a perilous draught  
That the lip loves not. We leave all things  
To reach the rim of the round welkin,  
Heaven's heritage, high and lonely.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> C.S. Lewis, "The Planets", *Poems* (1st pub. May 1935)

